

2023 DCTC Homeowner Survey Analysis

DCTC Board of Directors

March 21, 2023

The 2023 DCTC Homeowner survey was conducted in January, 2023 by the DCTC Board of Directors to gain a deeper insight into the thinking of our 350 homeowners. We received survey responses from over 75% of our 350 owners.

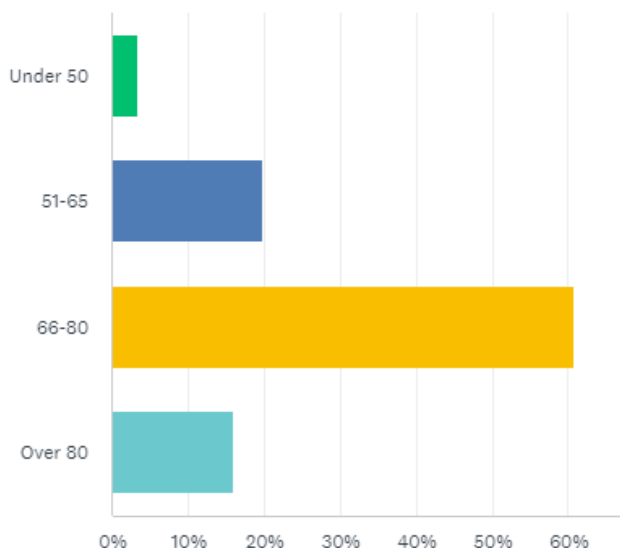
This report highlights the most important insights gained from the survey. As the DCTC Board makes decisions in the next year or two it will be able to reference this information and dig more deeply into it. This survey purposely did not go into detail about most topics or try to lay out the financial costs of various options. Future surveys may go deeper and present choices with associated costs. People's aspirations are usually tempered by financial realities, so knowledge of those costs certainly could affect opinions. Nevertheless, we have obtained some very useful information about our homeowners.

Looking at our demographics, here is some information:

- 61% of us are 66-80 years old; 23% are 65 or younger; 16% are over 80
- 35% of us have purchased our condos in the past five years, with 35% being owners for 15+ years
- Half of us rented before we bought
- 75% of us do not rent our condos
- Most of us stay here 4-7 months each season, but about 50 of our 350 homeowners stay here all year
- 78 homeowners rent their condos for an average of 3 months each season
- 70% of us are retired, and 30% of us are still working full or part-time

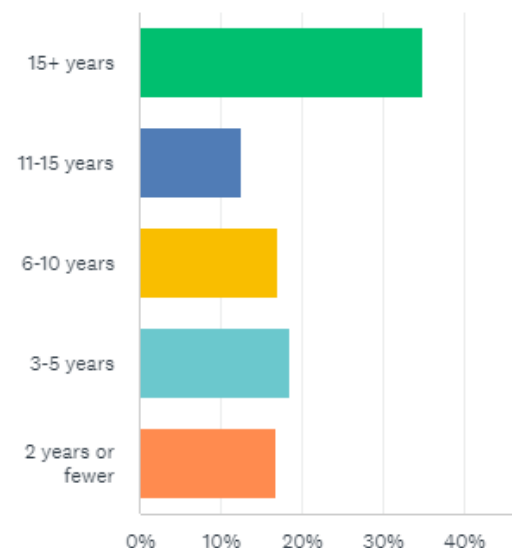
Age

Answered: 327 Skipped: 1



How long have you owned your unit?

Answered: 327 Skipped: 1

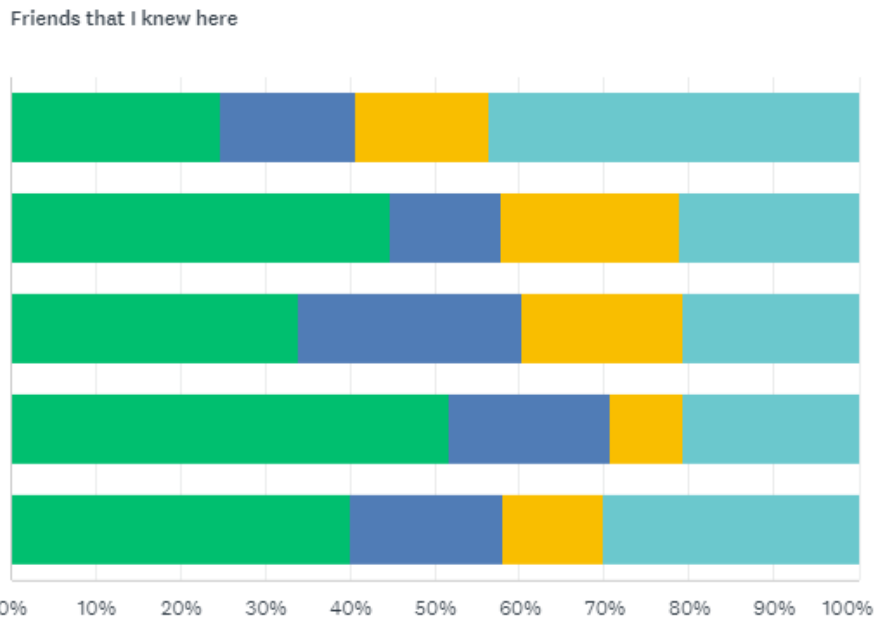


The question about **what most attracted people to DCTC when they bought their condo** revealed some interesting trends happening at DCTC.

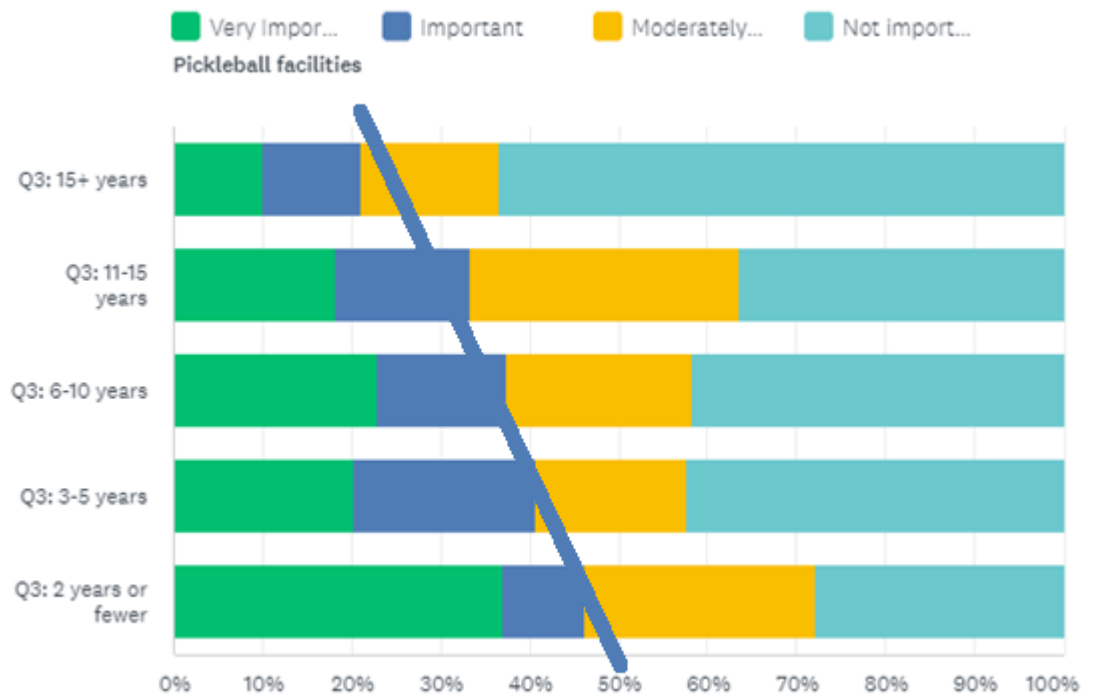
The friendly culture and social activities at DCTC remain a very important factor for buying here with 75% viewing that as Important or Very Important, including recent buyers.

The chart on the right compares how people with different lengths of ownership felt about the importance of the friendly culture. Looking at the bottom line, for example, the first red oval shows that 50% of the newest owners rated friendly culture as Very Important. The second red oval shows that 75% of new owners rated the friendly culture as either Very Important or Important.

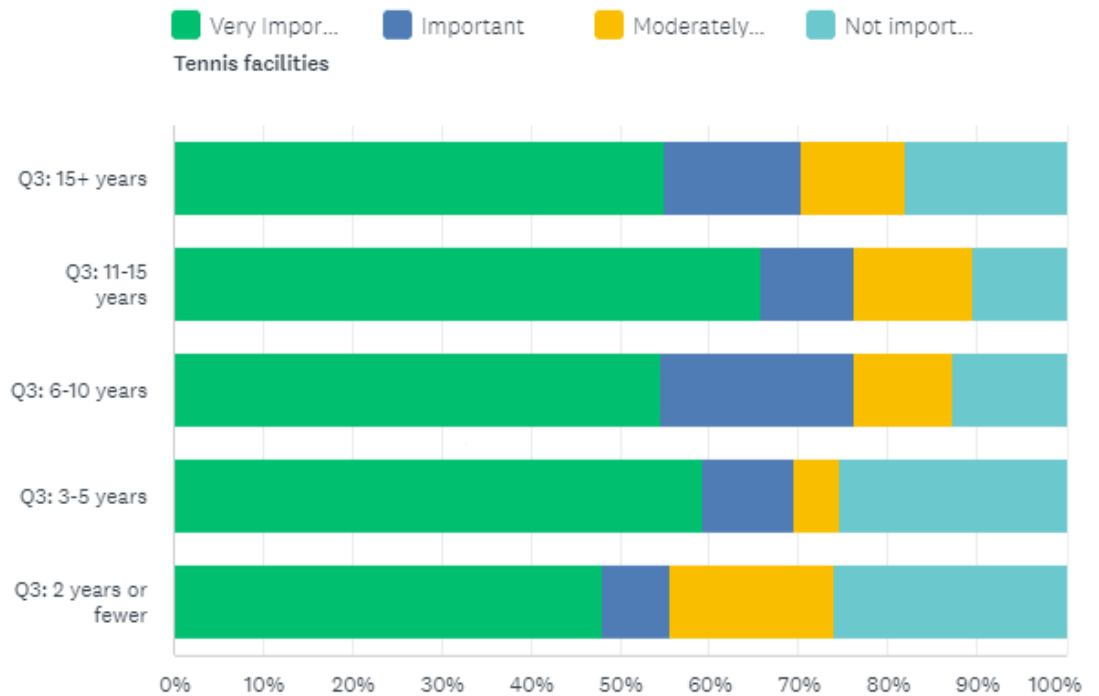
Many people bought here because they knew friends here. Interestingly, that has grown as a factor since 15 years ago.



While most buying factors remained consistent when comparing newer buyers to long time owners, pickleball showed consistent growth, marked by the blue line, with 45% of new buyers now rating it as Very Important or Important:



Still looking at important factors for new buyers, tennis is one of the most important factors, higher than pickleball, although buyers who bought in the past five years don't rate it quite as highly as those who bought 5-15 years ago.



The survey questions about **participation in sports** at DCTC show a profile like the one for buying factors. There is strong continuing interest in both tennis and pickleball as well as strong interest in improving our gym.

How often do you use the tennis courts?

Answered: 319 Skipped: 8



Overall, 44% of responders play tennis once a week or more. Another 21% say they play tennis occasionally. There is a growing number of people who play tennis frequently, as shown by the green line. Only 12% of tennis players thought crowding was a problem when playing tennis.

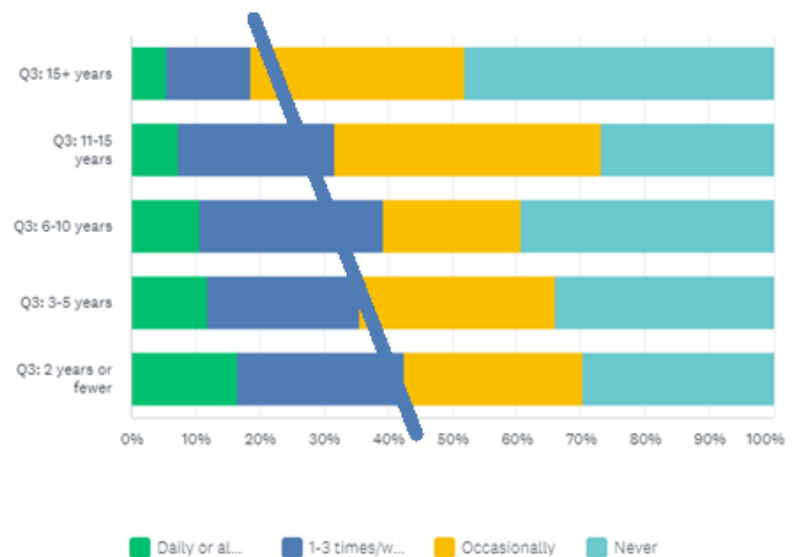
Compared to the 44% who play tennis once a week or more, 31% of responders overall play pickleball once a week or more. As shown by the blue line, 40% of newer owners play pickleball frequently. Additionally, 31% say they play pickleball occasionally compared to 21% who say they play tennis occasionally.

37% of pickleball players thought crowding was a problem vs. 12% for tennis.

There is quite a bit of crossover between the two sports. Looking at the tennis players who play tennis once a week or more, 35% of them also play pickleball once a week or more. An additional 36% play pickleball occasionally.

How often do you use the pickleball courts?

Answered: 318 Skipped: 9



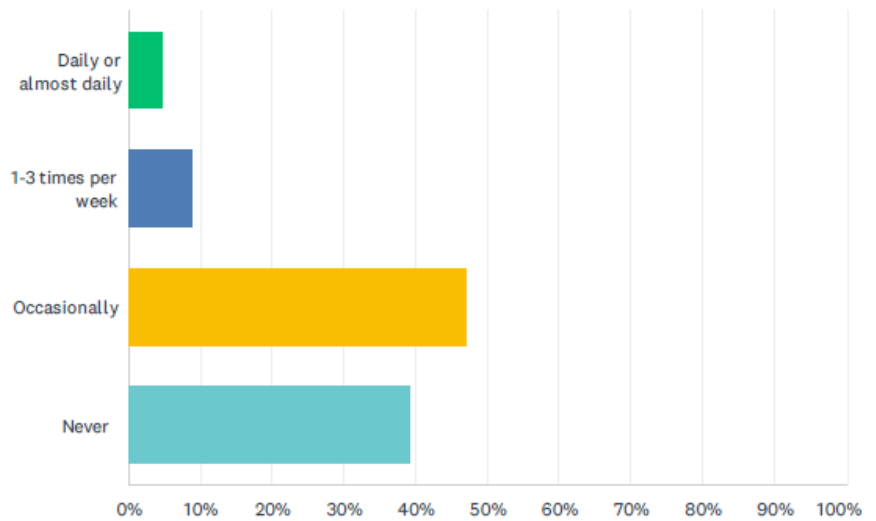
For **Gym usage** there was a more complicated story. Only 14% of responders, 44 people, use the gym one day a week or more. But...

15% of responders, more than use the DCTC gym, go to a different gym. Many use Silver Sneakers passes and go to World Gym.

For people using our gym, 36% say it is dated, crowded, and that it's difficult to get access to preferred equipment.

Q21 Do you use the DCTC gym?

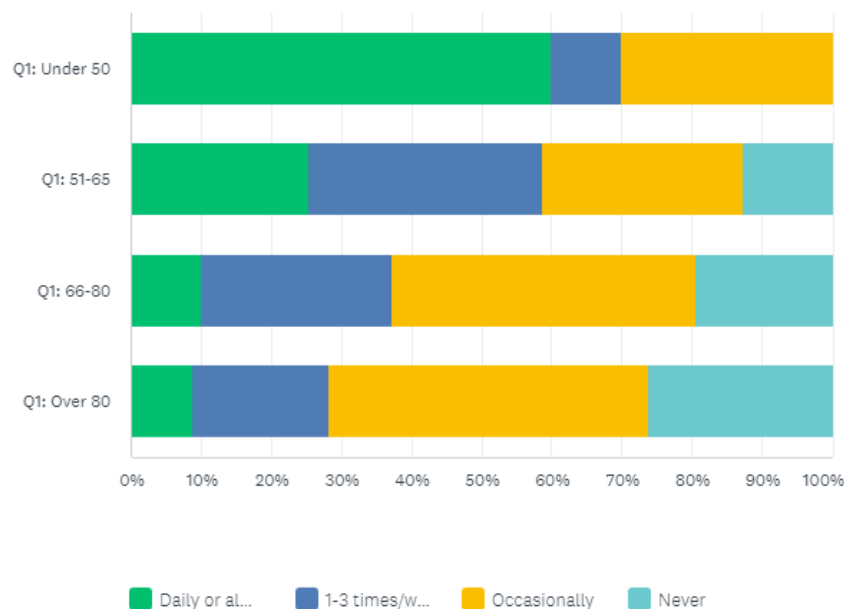
Answered: 322 Skipped: 6



If the gym was renovated and expanded to include more exercise options, way, way more people say they would use it. People saying they would use the gym one day per week or more jump from 44 to 128. There were 111 suggestions for more equipment including: weights, rowing machines, elliptical machines, squat racks, weight machines, treadmill, spin classes, yoga, kettlebell weights, circuit equipment, and just requests for a better facility. There is definitely strong interest in improving our gym facilities.

If the DCTC gym's workout area was expanded to include more exercise options, with corresponding equipment, would you use the gym?

Answered: 310 Skipped: 17



With our pools there was a nuanced and somewhat puzzling picture.

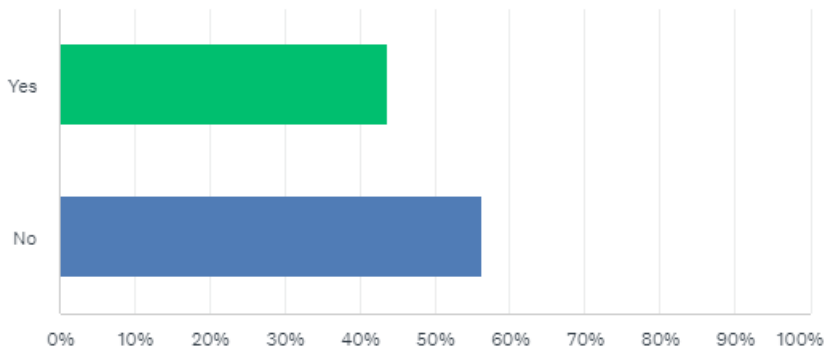
In answer to the questions about **pool usage**, the hot tubs were most popular. Heated pools are used one day a week or more by 26% of respondents, and unheated pools are used very little. In hindsight, to get better insights, it would have helped to ask people in which months they typically use the pools, or whether they use pools if the temperature is below 75 degrees.

	DAILY OR ALMOST DAILY	1-3 TIMES PER WEEK	OCCASIONALLY	NEVER	TOTAL
How often do you swim in the main pool and/or use the hot tub at pool 12?	7.57% 24	16.09% 51	43.22% 137	33.12% 105	317
How often do you use the hot tubs at other pools?	12.58% 40	22.33% 71	44.97% 143	20.13% 64	318
How often do you swim in the other heated pools?	7.91% 25	17.72% 56	46.52% 147	27.85% 88	316
How often do you swim in the unheated pools?	1.58% 5	4.43% 14	20.89% 66	73.10% 231	316

Especially since the cost of heating pools has been increasing rapidly, and since pool usage didn't seem that high, the responses to questions about eliminating or repurposing pools were quite surprising. 57% of responders did not support eliminating pools even though many did not use pools themselves.

Would you support the elimination of some pools, replacing them with patios, hot tubs, or other uses, if there were significant cost savings to the HOA?

Answered: 307 Skipped: 21



What emerged, especially in the comments, is that many people like the pools for aesthetic reasons. Here are two representative comments: "I love all the pools that create a lovely visual pathway through our DCTC community. Whether they are heated or not they offer much aesthetic value day and night. They are used for much more than just swimming, as a gathering place for parties, card playing, sunbathing and even a quiet place for reading a book next to a calming water feature. Let's find a way to keep all the pools"; "Absolutely not - the pools are one of the most treasured amenities, making the campus unique and ideal."

There were also many comments about equity, wanting the Board to look for ways to rotate which pools get heated each season.

The question about what **other sports or social activities** in which people participate proved interesting too.

With sports participation, only 57 of the 328 respondents (17%) say they don't play tennis or pickleball. Within those 57 respondents though, 25 people said they swam and 27 said they did hiking, aquafit, biking or gym. We are a very active group!

At the same time, we've got wide participation in many other non-sport social activities as shown below.

It came as no surprise that **Sunday morning donuts is by far the most popular activity of any kind at DCTC!** Only 40 of our 328 respondents have never gotten a Sunday morning donut.

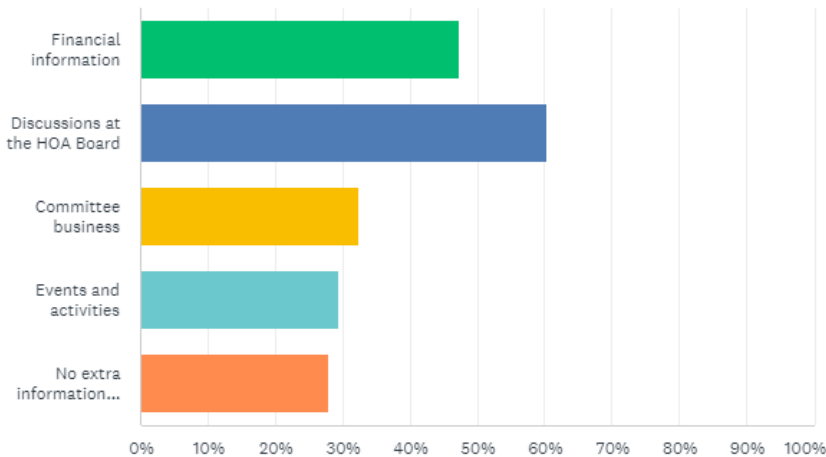
Being part of a smaller but active group is a great way to get to know people. Everyone has plenty of opportunity for that at DCTC.

	FREQUENTLY	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER	TOTAL
▼ Sunday morning donuts	46.13% 143	29.35% 91	11.61% 36	12.90% 40	310
▼ Card games	27.27% 84	13.31% 41	11.69% 36	47.73% 147	308
▼ Hiking Group	4.81% 14	12.37% 36	18.56% 54	64.26% 187	291
▼ Biking group	2.41% 7	12.37% 36	13.40% 39	71.82% 209	291
▼ Aquafit sessions	7.12% 21	7.46% 22	9.15% 27	76.27% 225	295
▼ Yoga sessions	3.07% 9	11.95% 35	11.26% 33	73.72% 216	293
▼ Bocce	4.33% 13	21.33% 64	24.33% 73	50.00% 150	300
▼ Use of books or puzzles from the DCTC library	19.68% 61	24.19% 75	19.68% 61	36.45% 113	310
▼ DCTC Gardeners	10.07% 30	6.71% 20	8.05% 24	75.17% 224	298
▼ DCTC Singers	6.08% 18	7.43% 22	6.42% 19	80.07% 237	296
▼ Quilting and other fiber arts	8.75% 26	5.05% 15	6.73% 20	79.46% 236	297
▼ Use of the dog park	15.05% 45	11.37% 34	7.36% 22	66.22% 198	299

Questions 10-13 dealt with **communication between the HOA Board and homeowners**. 60% of respondents were pleased with the amount of information they were receiving from the Board, however, a significant minority of 40% of respondents wanted more. Direct email (from the Office) and DCTC Friends listserv were cited as the most utilized sources of information. The Vintage Group website (Caliber) already contains most of the content that homeowners indicated they would like to access such as Board minutes, financial statements, HOA By-laws and Rules and Regulations but over 60% of respondents said that they never use it.

Which areas would you like more information about? Check all that apply.

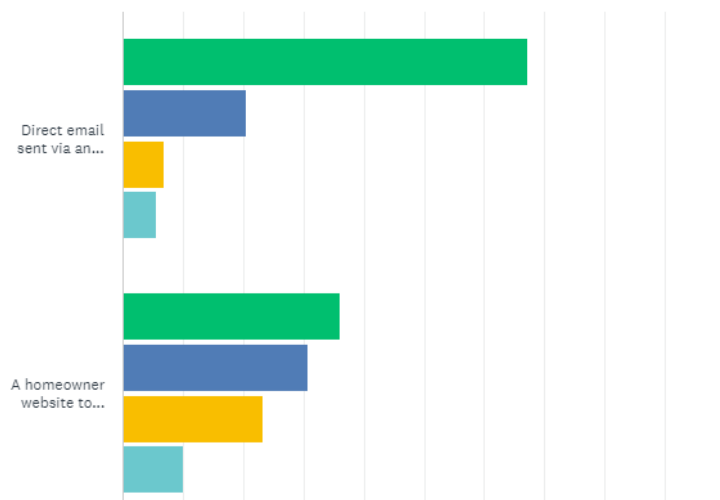
Answered: 312 Skipped: 16



Homeowners want an easily accessible source of information on HOA business and finances, and DCTC community events. The most popular solutions were a new direct email listserv that would allow the Board to communicate directly with owners and a user-friendly website that would contain a frequently updated event calendar as well as HOA documents and communications. Currently, the Board is working to implement both solutions.

Recognizing that the DCTC Friends email group contains many renters and other non-owners, which form of homeowner-only communication would work best for you?

Answered: 316 Skipped: 12



The survey included a few questions about our plans to **convert in stages from grass to desert scape**. This conversion is not really a choice for us due to the ongoing water shortage in California and the restrictions being imposed on us. Our water allocations are continually being reduced, and water rates are going up. The only alternative we have is to convert more areas to desert scape in order to use less water.

Question 31 showed our ambivalence about this forced conversion. Looking deeper though, 46% of the owners who purchased in the last two years said they *preferred* desert scape landscaping compared to 27% overall. Newer owners are much more positive about this conversion.

We received many comments and suggestions about desert scaping. Here are a few:

I bought here because of the grass. So hopefully we don't get rid of all of it. Desert scape is cool if done properly.

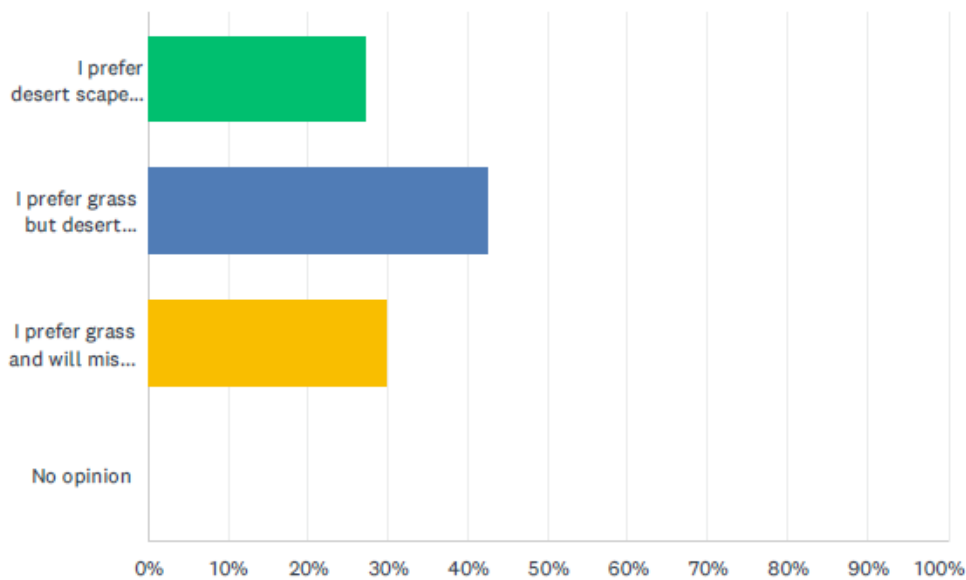
I like a mix of desert scape and grass visually--there is something soothing about the rolling grassy hills--BUT I feel strongly that 100% desert scape is the way to go for a sustainable future.

The grassy areas are one of the great assets of DCTC.

Grass in the center of campus is what makes DCTC so attractive. If we can, keep the grass in the center but convert to desert scape along Frank Feltrop.

Q31 Esthetically, how do you feel about converting to desert scape?

Answered: 315 Skipped: 13

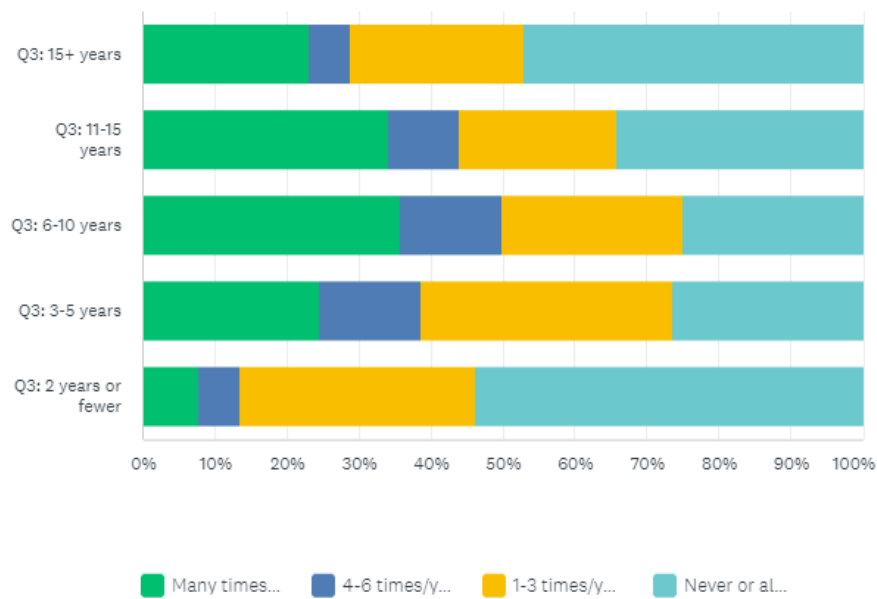


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I prefer desert scape landscaping anyway for this area so I'm fine with it	27.30%	86
I prefer grass but desert scape landscaping is OK	42.54%	134
I prefer grass and will miss it when we convert to desert scape	29.84%	94
No opinion	0.32%	1
TOTAL		315

There were a series of questions on **volunteerism and participation in social activities**. We wanted to gauge whether interest in these activities was waning. As you can see below, the number of people volunteering 1-3 times per year or more is lower among very new buyers but quite high among 3-5yr and 6-10yr owners. Some brand-new owners commented that they intended to volunteer more after they got to know people better. Others said they were still working and did not have time to volunteer but planned to do more later. Volunteerism is still thriving at DCTC.

Do you volunteer with committees and/or activities at DCTC?

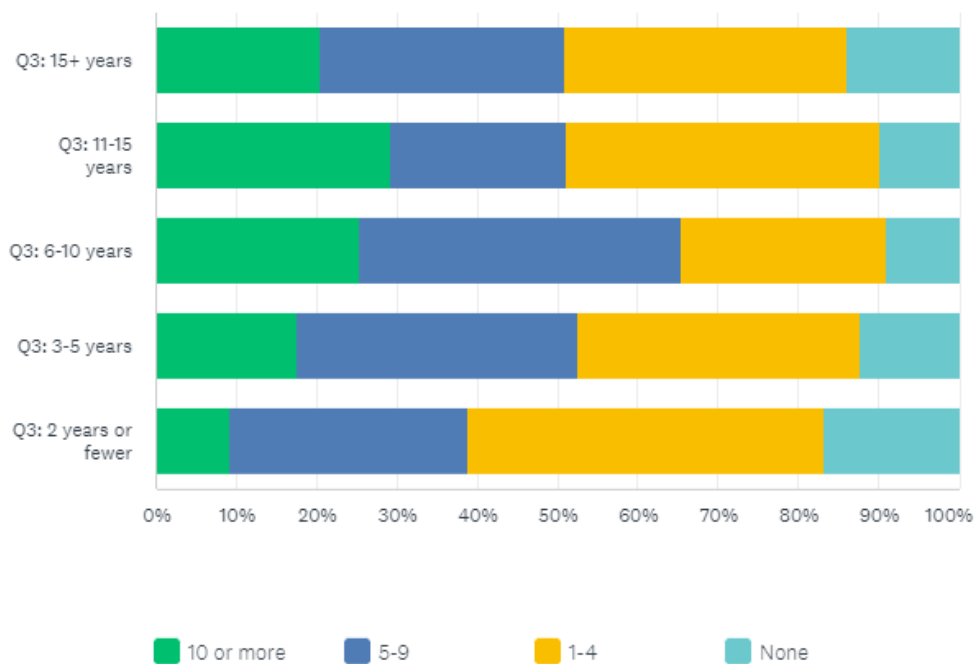
Answered: 310 Skipped: 17



Looking at **participation in our many social events**, there is a high level of participation from both new and longtime owners. The number of people who don't participate at all is a little higher for the most recent buyers, but even there 85% of new owners are participating in something.

This year, how many DCTC social events do you expect to participate in, including holiday celebrations, pizza nights, concerts, bingos, trivia nights, and any other events at the Clubhouse?

Answered: 315 Skipped: 12

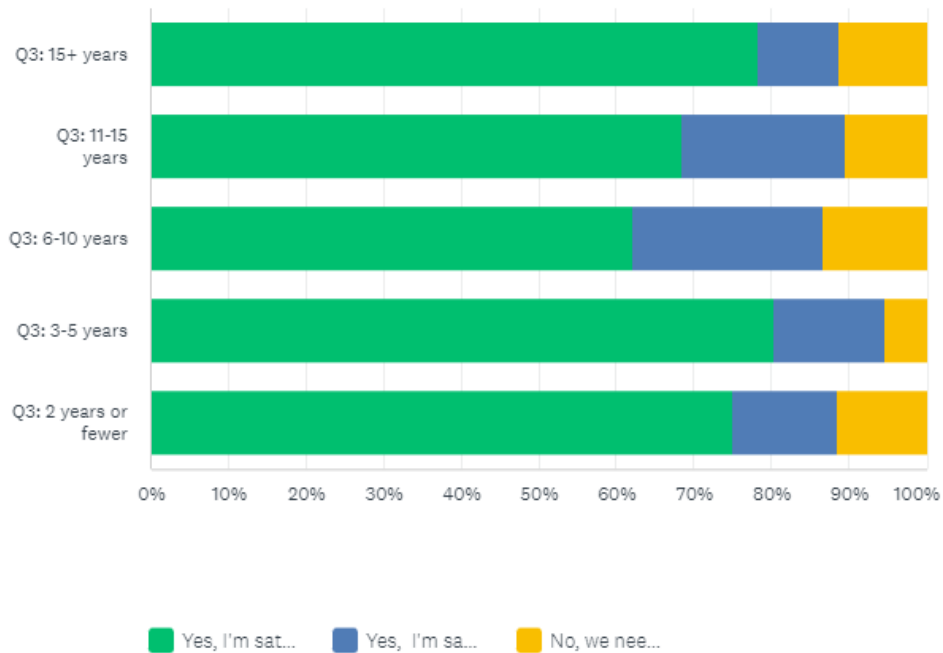


The homeowner response about **security** was consistent in all owner groupings. Overall, 75% of people are satisfied with our current level of security, with 11% thinking we need more security. Only 15% would be OK with cost-saving measures.

Because we spend \$175,000 per year (that’s \$500 per homeowner per year) for our gatehouse with 7x24 gate attendants, there have been a variety of proposals in past years to change the way we do security to make it less expensive. There does not appear to be much interest in doing that.

Are you satisfied with the current level of security at DCTC?

Answered: 305 Skipped: 22

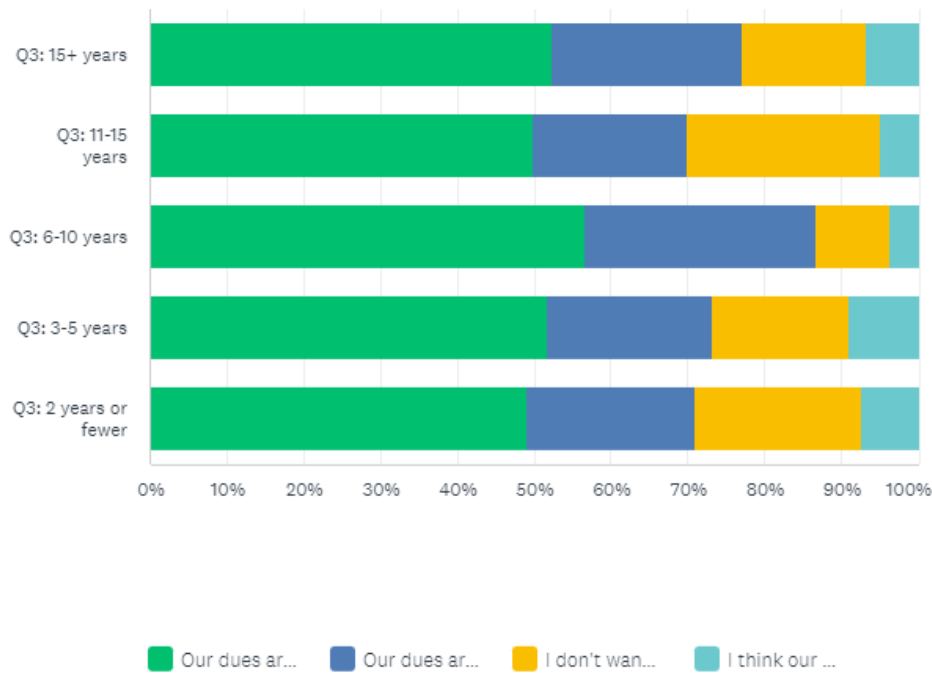


	YES, I'M SATISFIED	YES, I'M SATISFIED, AND FURTHER, I WOULD BE OK WITH TRYING COST-SAVING MEASURES TO SAVE MONEY, SUCH AS LEAVING THE GATE OPEN DURING THE DAYTIME AND STAFFING THE GATEHOUSE ONLY AT NIGHT.	NO, WE NEED MORE SECURITY, NOT LESS	TOTAL
Q3: 15+ years	78.30% 83	10.38% 11	11.32% 12	34.75% 106
Q3: 11-15 years	68.42% 26	21.05% 8	10.53% 4	12.46% 38
Q3: 6-10 years	62.26% 33	24.53% 13	13.21% 7	17.38% 53
Q3: 3-5 years	80.36% 45	14.29% 8	5.36% 3	18.36% 56
Q3: 2 years or fewer	75.00% 39	13.46% 7	11.54% 6	17.05% 52
Total Respondents	226	47	32	305

Finally, we included a question about our **annual dues**. While no one likes paying dues, 76% of homeowners overall recognized that dues need to go up over time with inflation. At the same time, it was clear from the comments that a small percentage of our owners have a very difficult time paying their dues.

Assuming that current budgeted spending is being managed efficiently with a minimum of waste, how do you feel about your monthly dues?

Answered: 309 Skipped: 18



	OUR DUES ARE FAIR GIVEN WHAT WE GET, AND I UNDERSTAND THEY NEED TO INCREASE SLOWLY OVER TIME AS OUR EXPENSES INCREASE DUE TO INFLATION.	OUR DUES ARE FAIR GIVEN WHAT WE GET, AND FURTHER, I'D BE WILLING TO CONSIDER DUES INCREASES OR SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN THE FUTURE TO SUPPORT NEW SERVICES AT DCTC THAT HAVE STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE HOMEOWNERS.	I DON'T WANT FURTHER DUES INCREASES AND WOULD BE WILLING TO CUT SERVICES IN THE FUTURE IF NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.	I THINK OUR DUES ARE TOO HIGH NOW, AND I'D LIKE TO SEE US LOOK FOR WAYS TO CUT EXISTING SERVICES AND REDUCE DUES	TOTAL
Q3: 15+ years	52.38% 55	24.76% 26	16.19% 17	6.67% 7	33.98% 105
Q3: 11-15 years	50.00% 20	20.00% 8	25.00% 10	5.00% 2	12.94% 40
Q3: 6-10 years	56.60% 30	30.19% 16	9.43% 5	3.77% 2	17.15% 53
Q3: 3-5 years	51.79% 29	21.43% 12	17.86% 10	8.93% 5	18.12% 56
Q3: 2 years or fewer	49.09% 27	21.82% 12	21.82% 12	7.27% 4	17.80% 55
Total Respondents	161	74	54	20	309

Survey Methodology

This survey was done securely and confidentially using Survey Monkey, a highly regarded online survey tool. Only homeowners who were explicitly invited could respond. Each response was tied to a condo address. We allowed up to two responses per condo. We were able to make email contact with all but 18 of our 350 homeowners and we received 328 survey responses. This included responses from 263 different condos – a 75% response rate. 65 responses were second responses from condo co-owners.

While the 65 extra responses provided more detail about homeowner opinions, they did not skew the results. Looking at multiple survey questions, comparing the reported percentages for the full 328 responses vs. just the 263 responses excluding the 65 extra responses, we found that the percentages were almost the same, within a few percentage points. Also, looking at the survey after the first 100, 150, and 200 responses came in (they were all timestamped), we found that the reported percentages did not change significantly. The large number of responses also ensured that we had statistically significant (30 or more) responses in almost all demographic categories.

One area where the survey was incomplete is that it did not include renters. We did that because for many questions we wanted only owner opinions. However, for questions about participation in sports or social activities, information from renters would have been helpful. On a percentage basis, we would expect renters to have similar opinions as owners, but on a numerical basis, we did not capture the number of renter participants in sports and social activities.

We have done some analysis of the 88 condo owners from whom we did not receive a response. 30 of them appear to be renting their units for the whole season. 20 are residing at DCTC but did not respond. We do not have email addresses for another 18. While if we had been able to get survey responses for each of these owners that would have had some effect, we don't believe it would have been significant.

Overall, we can be confident that with the strong participation of the homeowners in our survey the reported survey results give a good picture of homeowner opinions.