

Clutha Connect

Form Results Summary

Jun 16, 2026 - Jun 30, 2026

Project: Local Government Amalgamation

Form: Clutha's Future - Local Government Amalgamation Survey

Tool Type: Form

Activity ID: 22

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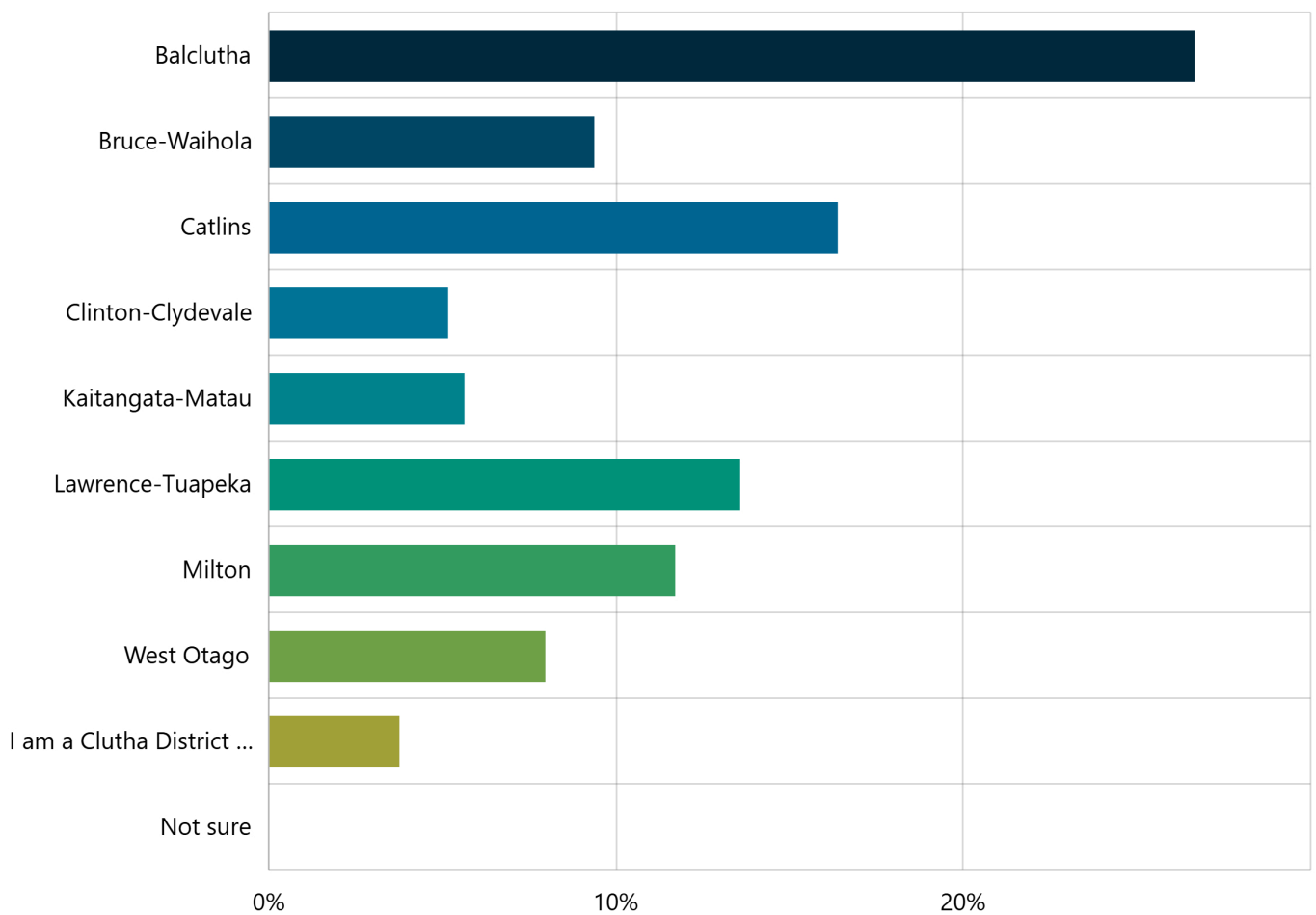
Exported By: Beki

Filter By: No filters applied.

Contribution Summary

1. Which ward do you live in?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 214 (100%)



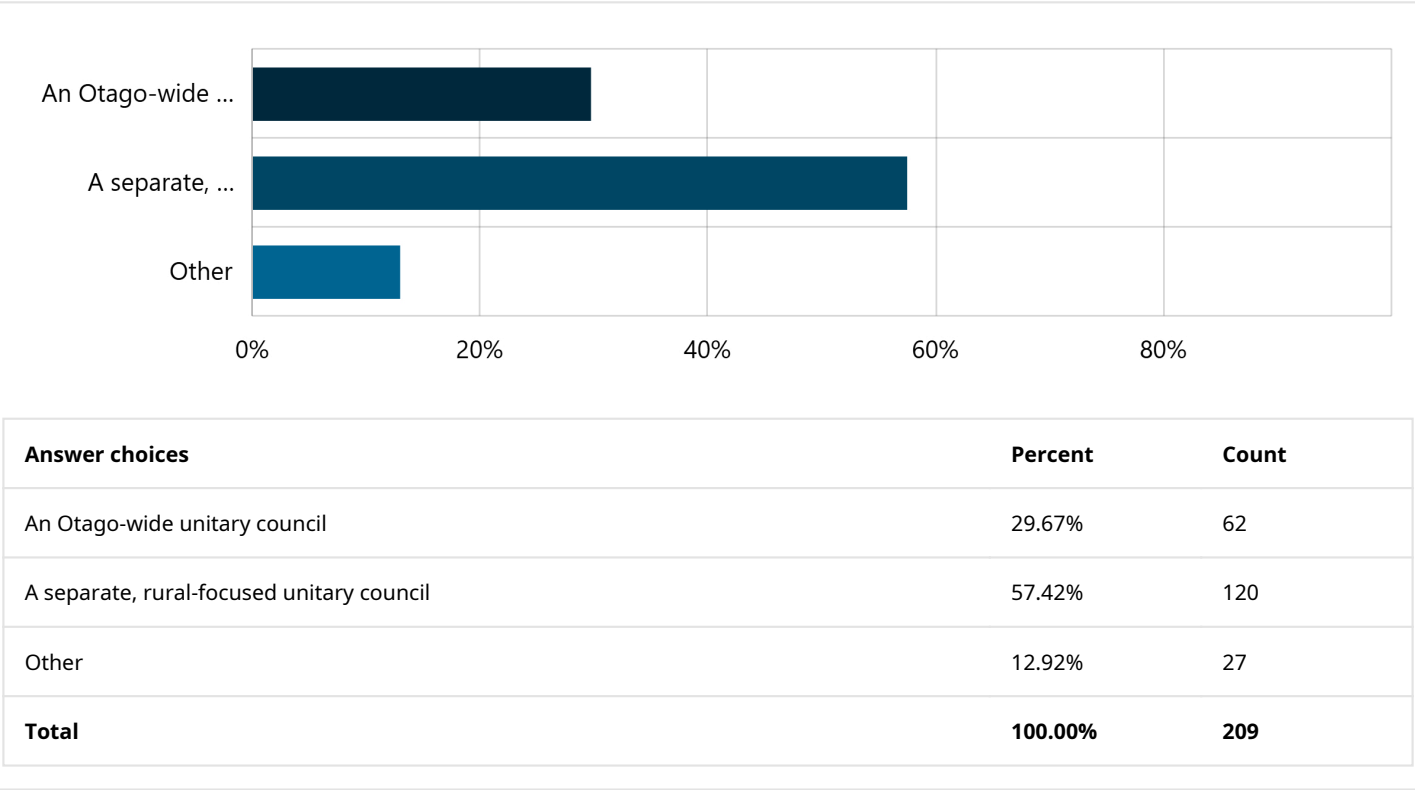
Analysis on next page.

Analysis continued, Q1.

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Balclutha	26.64%	57
Bruce-Waihola	9.35%	20
Catlins	16.36%	35
Clinton-Clydevale	5.14%	11
Kaitangata-Matau	5.61%	12
Lawrence-Tuapeka	13.55%	29
Milton	11.68%	25
West Otago	7.94%	17
I am a Clutha District ratepayer living out of the district	3.74%	8
Not sure	0%	0
Total	100.00%	214

2. Which of these options would you prefer to be part of?

Select Box | Skipped: 5 | Answered: 209 (97.7%)



3. What do you think matters most to your community if councils are amalgamated, and what would local community representation look like to you?

Long Text | Skipped: 23 | Answered: 191 (89.3%)

Tags



Tag	Percent	Count
Communities	36%	68
Local	29%	56
Rural	21%	40
Voice	20%	39
Rates	19%	36
Local representation	9%	18
Decision making	8%	16
Costs	8%	16
Otago	8%	15
Population	7%	13
Dunedin	6%	12
Identity	4%	8
Affordability	3%	6
Central Otago	2%	3
Government	2%	3
Gore	2%	3

Southland	1%	2
Queenstown	1%	2
ORC	1%	2
Employment	1%	2

Featured Contributions

I worry that the little rural areas will be underfunded and not cared about if we get absorbed by a bigger council with bigger township
Contribution 20 of 20 | 30 June 2026

Amalgamation would mean that local needs go unnoticed. Local governance is vital to ensure that the problems and issues facing each community gets a solution that fits its specific community.
Contribution 19 of 20 | 29 June 2026

That communities don't become invisible through scale , and neither should the loudest receive the most attention. Equity in efficient service delivery with less cost than the status quo has to be the primary objective. The best representative for a community will be a person who understands the strengths and challenges of not only their own communities but also has empathy with other communities in the amalgamated area. The best representative for my community could be a person who doesn't come from within the local area.
Contribution 18 of 20 | 28 June 2026

The likelihood of costs continuing to rise, as happened in Auckland following the Super City merger. The work still needs doing, and any merged authority will take years (with significant expense) to rearrange how services are delivered. It will not be an easy fix. Local Council's are doing a great job already, despite the continuous pressure being placed on them by Central Government. The benefits will be minimal, and we will be paying the additional costs for years to come.
Contribution 17 of 20 | 26 June 2026

A clear understanding of the needs of a rural community and them not being overlooked. Ensuring community voices are heard
Retaining local identity Being able to manage community assets
Contribution 16 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Loss of the Clutha identity. Loss of the small town/village and rural aspect. The possibility of having to bear the legacy infrastructure costs of Dunedin.
Contribution 15 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Reasonable rates, and reduced council wasteful spending.
Contribution 14 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Local decision-making and strong representation for rural communities are most important. I want elected representatives who understand the unique needs of places like Clutha and can advocate for local priorities rather than having decisions made from larger urban centres. Community boards or local wards with genuine influence would help ensure local voices continue to be heard.
Contribution 13 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Ward as per the Otago Regional Council. I.e. fewer wards but each ward is bigger and each elected "councilor" has a large constituency to represent.

Contribution 12 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Understanding how a rural community works eg: extensive gravel road network, lots of small townships. Not losing our voice in a big council.

Contribution 11 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Too often we have seen centralisation as a failure just look at what centralisation of our hospital services has done! Our voices get lost when we're put in a bigger bowl.

Contribution 10 of 20 | 25 June 2026

That rural communities get the same detail and attention that towns and cities do and not "thrown to the bottom of the pile" because they have fewer people living there

Contribution 9 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Ratepayers want councils to save money (not charge so much) in rates) but the reality is that this could mean loss of council services and facilities. I don't think that amalgamation will save massive amounts of money but it could lessen services provided to rural communities and weaken the voice of isolated communities. Rural communities will need Community Boards to ensure representation.

Contribution 8 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Rural residents have very different problems than urban. Would someone in another city even know where we live and how difficult rural living can sometimes be.

Contribution 7 of 20 | 19 June 2026

That we dont get pushed to the side because we are smaller. That our rates and debt dont go up more. I feel if this happends, cluths will lose out. So it doesn't mater what representation there is. The community arent heard now, theres no way someone would work for the community.

Contribution 6 of 20 | 18 June 2026

The current system isn't working for many in our community, so I am open to amalgamation if it delivers better governance and financial stability. What matters most is retaining local representation, with guaranteed South Otago councillors and local boards that have genuine influence over decisions affecting our communities

Contribution 5 of 20 | 17 June 2026

We need to ensure that our voices are heard and our district's identity is not lost in an amalgamation so district-wide representation is extremely important. Whether that is by having community boards in each area so that we have a voice across each community in our district or some other method remains to be seen. Balclutha needs to remain a central hub for the Clutha district.

Contribution 4 of 20 | 17 June 2026

Make sure that each local communities differences are recognised. Representation for each community is a good question, waiting to see what amalgamation looks like may be easier to decide local representation.

Contribution 3 of 20 | 16 June 2026

Pricing being reasonable, transparent justification for budget spend and upkeep on current public services.
Contribution 2 of 20 | 16 June 2026

Locals looking after locals, employ our local people to work in our own community- local people know our place the best
Contribution 1 of 20 | 16 June 2026

4. What are the major benefits you would expect to see from amalgamation?

Long Text | Skipped: 21 | Answered: 193 (90.2%)

Tags



Tag	Percent	Count
Costs	25%	49
Rates	20%	39
Communities	9%	18
Rural	5%	10
Decision making	5%	9
Affordability	4%	7
Government	4%	7
Local	3%	6
Voice	3%	5
Central Otago	2%	4
Population	2%	3
Dunedin	1%	2
Local representation	1%	2
ORC	1%	2
Otago	1%	2
Employment	1%	2

Featured Contributions

No benefits at all . The small communities will be shut down

Contribution 20 of 20 | 29 June 2026

Administration costs may decrease.

Contribution 19 of 20 | 29 June 2026

I suspect there might be more funds but not sure if the spread would be fairly distributed

Contribution 18 of 20 | 27 June 2026

I would expect SIGNIFICANT rates saving, better, easier, simpler systems, communication improvement and efficiencies and more transparency in council decision-making and implementation.

Contribution 17 of 20 | 26 June 2026

Improved efficiency and effectiveness, better bargaining position for the council with contractors and other suppliers. Ability to attract more skilled staff

Contribution 16 of 20 | 26 June 2026

I would expect to see an improvement in infrastructure management.

Contribution 15 of 20 | 26 June 2026

As a rate payer hopefully a lower percentage in rate increases.

Contribution 14 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Cost efficiency. Less duplication of services ie rubbish, roading and tourism development

Contribution 13 of 20 | 25 June 2026

The Big and backwards method! There seems to be very little benefits in amalgamation to what I have seen. We get less for more dollars. Contracts to do everything, not many locals and a loss of the community spirit.

Contribution 12 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Major benefits should be less spending on the "grey areas" and keeping to core functions. In the past, amalgamations have never been cost effective in any way, and I can't see that changing much.

Contribution 11 of 20 | 25 June 2026

streamline services, cost savings less doubles up with services and costs reductions for rate payers

Contribution 10 of 20 | 25 June 2026

None. As always any money saved will be frittered away by bureaucrats.

Contribution 9 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Hopefully a reduction in rates and better sharing of resources leading to improved public transport , water provision and general upkeep of public facilities.

Contribution 8 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Potential benefits could include reduced duplication of services, more efficient administration, stronger strategic planning, and better coordination across the wider region. If managed well, amalgamation could also improve access to specialist expertise and make it easier to deliver large infrastructure projects.

Contribution 7 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Less spending waste, less ridiculous community projects Removal of all unnecessary expenditure through wages A greater focus on infrastructure and only infrastructure Councils getting back to basics

Contribution 6 of 20 | 25 June 2026

More collaboration as far as contracts, IT and resources

Contribution 5 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Real change Responsibility and ownership Tax reduction as not as many back end office staff required as using a single system and model for operations

Contribution 4 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Less communication required by government, less expenditure by government because they will just pay less as its 1 entity for the area, not a good thing.

Contribution 3 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Potential benefits of amalgamation could include reduced duplication of administration, shared services across a larger area, and greater consistency in planning and policy. A larger council may also have increased purchasing power, a broader resource base, and potentially a stronger voice when dealing with central government. However, I am uncertain whether these benefits would outweigh the loss of local representation and local decision-making. Any efficiency gains would need to be significant and clearly demonstrated, as there is also a risk that the needs of smaller rural communities could receive less attention within a larger Otago-wide structure.

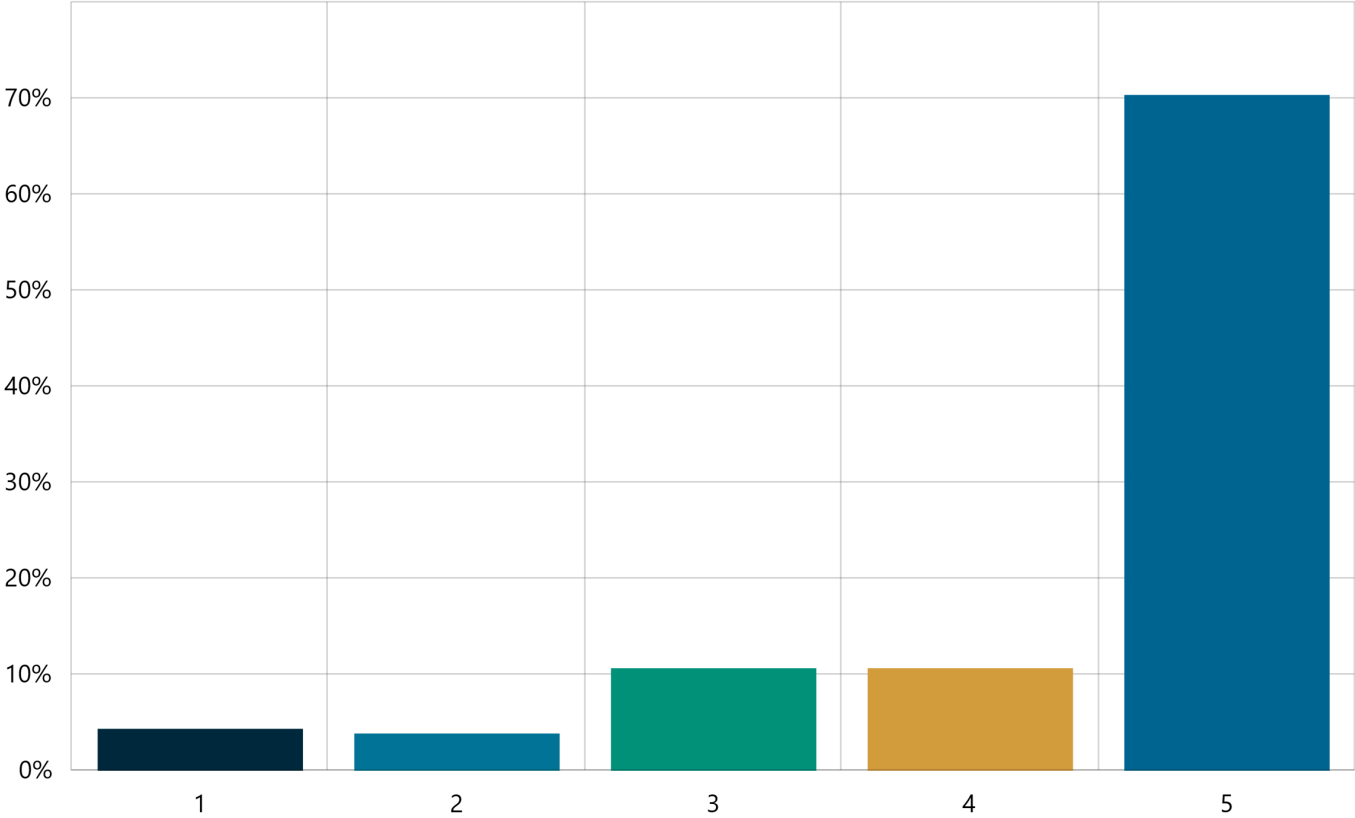
Contribution 2 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Clutha is a large area, but with limited and spread out population due to rural nature of the district. Small population means smaller ratepayer base to fund essential services - ie roading, water etc. Greater population of amalgamated entity would means costs spread over more ratepayers and greater buyer power with a larger organisation.

Contribution 1 of 20 | 24 June 2026

5. How important is it for your community to retain its local identity?

Rating | Skipped: 8 | Answered: 206 (96.3%)



1	2	3	4	5	Count	Weighted average
4.37% 9	3.88% 8	10.68% 22	10.68% 22	70.39% 145	206	4.39

6. What are your biggest concerns if the Clutha District is amalgamated?

Long Text | Skipped: 18 | Answered: 196 (91.6%)

Tags



Tag	Percent	Count
Local	23%	45
Rural	18%	35
Communities	17%	34
Voice	16%	32
Rates	13%	25
Dunedin	12%	24
Identity	11%	22
Decision making	9%	18
Costs	9%	17
Population	6%	12
Otago	6%	11
Local representation	4%	8
Government	4%	7
Queenstown	4%	7
Employment	3%	6
Southland	3%	5

Gore	2%	4
Central Otago	2%	4
ORC	1%	2

Featured Contributions

Biggest concerns that we dont put our future focused and sustainability focused glasses on and see the positives in this amalgamation. Take your time! Dont rush in - NO HEAD START needed by August 9th. Give new Council members a chance to get their feet under the table.

Contribution 20 of 20 | 30 June 2026

I worry that the little rural areas will be underfunded and not cared about if we get absorbed by a bigger council with bigger town. It's hard enough to get basic infrastructure fixed now (ie the Clydevale bridge), with an even bigger area, I feel places and issues like this will be forgotten.

Contribution 19 of 20 | 30 June 2026

Being lost in the conversation at the expense of larger areas, particularly if we merge with Dunedin City.

Contribution 18 of 20 | 30 June 2026

Loss of local identity and ability to get things done.

Contribution 17 of 20 | 29 June 2026

We will never get a say in what our smaller communities need. We will have to compete with the bigger cities like Dunedin.

Contribution 16 of 20 | 29 June 2026

getting swallowed by by the bigger centres - loosing the local voice and representation

Contribution 15 of 20 | 28 June 2026

We just become another number and are forgotten for the cool town we are

Contribution 14 of 20 | 28 June 2026

Farmers wont be listened too.

Contribution 13 of 20 | 26 June 2026

Représentation and demographic boundaries needs to be fully considered.

Contribution 12 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Amalgamated with which area? The merging of communities is most successful when it is with communities of interest. Larger council areas have the risk of the loss of local voices on local issues. This proposal is ideologically driven, and likely to not be successful.

Contribution 11 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Unfair ownership of assets. They can be used as others assets. Big will bully small.
Contribution 10 of 20 | 25 June 2026

My biggest concern is that the Clutha District's unique rural identity and needs would get lost inside a much larger council dominated by bigger urban centers. I worry that decision-makers would be too far away, physically and culturally, to truly understand the challenges of farming communities, small towns, and the specific infrastructure needs of a largely rural district like ours. I'd be concerned that our rates money could flow toward urban priorities rather than the roads, water systems, and services that matter most to people here. I'd also fear losing the direct access I currently have to local Councillors who know our community personally, replacing that with a more distant, bureaucratic structure where Clutha's voice is just one small part of a much bigger table. And honestly, I'd want to see real evidence that the promised cost savings would actually materialize, because the history of amalgamations elsewhere suggests those savings are often overstated while the loss of local representation is very real.
Contribution 9 of 20 | 25 June 2026

1. How the unitary body will be governed and staffed. 2. Ensuring that the body does not become infected by ideological, racial or political extremism such as in Auckland and Wellington.
Contribution 8 of 20 | 25 June 2026

The community would be forced to adopt urban ideals that do not fit the region. The majority of the decision making would be made by urban based decision makers that don't understand the local requirements. The region would be used for its rates basis to fund projects in the larger centers while smaller towns and areas are left to rot. If we have to amalgamate then we would be better looking to join in further south with Southland / Gore area as they would be more relatable to our requirements.
Contribution 7 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Smaller towns continue to be an after thought. Unfortunately they are now. Community fundraising to do work around our waiholā community that the council should be doing.
Contribution 6 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Losing cultural anonymity pride and loyalty. The more we are undervalued and overlooked, the more we will continue to lose upcoming generations to urban centres
Contribution 5 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Townies decide what happens to rural lives
Contribution 4 of 20 | 24 June 2026

cdc has the best rural roading structure of any of you neighbours dont squander that. there is a sense of personal connection with a local council office and i feel strongly that needs to be retained. i feel that whatever happens in future local goverence that community groups willstill be encouraged to protect t he integrety of the local communitiesit
Contribution 3 of 20 | 18 June 2026

Loss of local autonomy. The biggest threat is amalgamation with Dunedin. Amalgamation with the other rural councils would be a lesser evil. We have very little in common with Dunedin or any cities which cater for a huge transient student population who don't pay rates directly, move on after a few years and leave the locals with the consequences. We also have very little in common with Queenstown/Wanaka. Dunedin has demonstrated it doesn't care one jot about the needs of the rural population who need to attend hospital appointments and can't use public transport. They don't care that to spend our hard earned export dollars in the city we need to be able to drive and park in the city. The improvements they make are fine for residents who live near the CBD, and especially for students, but they exclude the wider Otago population and ignore the age profile of the general population. Our voices will be drowned if we amalgamate with them
Contribution 2 of 20 | 18 June 2026

Nearby councils are more urban and they don't understand the rural needs that our district has. Plus we would be taking on other councils poorly maintained assets = more costs to the rate payers
Contribution 1 of 20 | 16 June 2026

7. Use this space to give us any other feedback about amalgamation.

Long Text | Skipped: 109 | Answered: 105 (49.1%)

Tags



Tag	Percent	Count
Communities	19%	20
Government	19%	20
Costs	16%	17
Local	15%	16
ORC	12%	13
Central Otago	10%	11
Rates	10%	11
Otago	10%	10
Decision making	10%	10
Rural	9%	9
Identity	8%	8
Gore	7%	7
Dunedin	5%	5
Southland	5%	5
Affordability	4%	4
Waitaki	3%	3

Population	2%	2
Employment	2%	2
Local representation	1%	1
Voice	1%	1

Featured Contributions

The ORC is the entity who covers all of Otago so should be the organization to lead any new entity. Poor leadership from central government dictating process even they have no idea of its outcome. Keep your hands off Port Otago use its dividend for catchment and environmental protection not a piggy bank
Contribution 20 of 20 | 29 June 2026

Amalgamation will only work if: 1. Local voices are genuinely protected, making promises is not enough. 2. Funding and service levels are fixed. Otherwise in the transition local rates/funding changes gains will be painful. 3. Who is accountable? who to call? this will cause confusion. 4. Mayors will become regional governors if regional councils are removed. This means it will enable "a mayor" to undertake or dominate transport decisions as well as environmental ones. 5. Urban priorities will dominate rural priorities, reflecting in underfunding issues. The reality will be; small communities lose their identity when they are absorbed into mega councils.
Contribution 19 of 20 | 29 June 2026

I am totally against any Amalgamation
Contribution 18 of 20 | 28 June 2026

Community spirit was discontinued after the last amalgamation. Now clutha cannot sustain the current situation. Go back to when all communities supported each other and looked after there own.
Contribution 17 of 20 | 28 June 2026

Start working for the rate payers and listen to what we have to say, that why your in that position
Contribution 16 of 20 | 27 June 2026

At the end of the day, the devil is in the detail. However clearly Clutha cannot afford to go it alone.. which means residents businesses and services etc will suffer.
Contribution 15 of 20 | 25 June 2026

I would prefer a Southern, rural amalgamation as feel we have more in common when it comes to values, demographic, industry etc, than looking north to Dunedin. Would rather we amalgarnte with Gore etc
Contribution 14 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Amalgamation may not guarantee reduced costs. AI is there to collect data. Not make your job easier. Don't rush where angels fear to tread.
Contribution 13 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Looks like amalgamation on our decisions or it will be forced on us

Contribution 12 of 20 | 25 June 2026

COUNCILS CURRENTLY DONT LISTEN SO NO AMOUNT OF FIDDLING RE AMALGAMATION IS GOING TO FIX THAT and as long as some employees can get away with claiming theyre taken out of context when they state (*on their salary)(the rises are not that much.) Well; if you have an entitled culture you will never have a working for the residents council. I personally don't entirely support amalgamation but the ORC empire building has to cease. Also creating homes / employment for aging academics should not be the focus of councils like ORC et al.

Contribution 11 of 20 | 25 June 2026

If done correctly should see rates drop and better service as single cost on multiple back end systems.

Contribution 10 of 20 | 25 June 2026

Through our community group, I've seen firsthand how much people value connection, belonging, and having a place where they feel heard. Many people in our community are struggling with isolation, mental health challenges, grief, and a lack of support networks. This is especially true for some of our elderly residents, who can often feel disconnected from services, activities, and social opportunities. Our group was established to create a stronger sense of community, encourage meaningful connections, and provide a safe and welcoming space where people can support one another. We hope to be part of a wider effort to reduce isolation and support suicide prevention by helping people feel seen, valued, and connected before they reach a crisis point. We also recognise the lasting impact suicide has on families, friends, and communities. An important part of what we do is providing support, understanding, and connection for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, helping ensure they know they do not have to walk that journey alone. Whatever decision is made around amalgamation, I hope local government continues to recognise and support the community groups, volunteers, clubs, and organisations that strengthen community wellbeing. Strong communities are built through local relationships, local knowledge, and people looking out for one another. My hope is that any future council structure strengthens these connections and ensures that people of all ages continue to feel seen, heard, supported, and connected.

Contribution 9 of 20 | 24 June 2026

Forced amalgamation is not the answer to fixing local government financial problems. Central government needs to consider other ways to fund activities so that ratepayers are not footing the bills for past decisions to keep rates low and not fund infrastructure and services.

Contribution 8 of 20 | 24 June 2026

The government needs to understand that people matter. NZ needs to be a place where people thrive & feel proud to be part of the local & national community. Small communities are not just numbers that can be moved around & combined by people sitting at a desk in central government.

Contribution 7 of 20 | 22 June 2026

I strongly support amalgamation of Clutha District Council with other Otago Councils. I understand that Clutha DC has only 18000 rateable units. This is far too small to fund everything councils need to do for their communities.

Contribution 6 of 20 | 18 June 2026

We have one of the biggest areas of land with a relative low population, there is a cost to this and having to fund a mega office in glitter and gold will diminish the value of our rate payments.

Contribution 5 of 20 | 18 June 2026

Having people in charge of the Council who don't have any idea of financial accountability or acumen. Gliding in and out of work at whatever time they please isn't on. 8 to 10 Council vehicles with one person in each heading up for a bite of lunch in Balclutha isn't smart either. Generally the employee's at the Council have taken their position as a default cushy number with little accountability. Hence why they're not working in the Private sector where accountability is paramount.

Contribution 4 of 20 | 17 June 2026

Stick to small rural communities with similar values, demographics and lifestyles of the Clutha District Council eg Gore but not Invercargill

Contribution 3 of 20 | 17 June 2026

Don't do it!!

Contribution 2 of 20 | 16 June 2026

This process feels rushed and heavy handed on the part of the national govt. Especially given the past resistance to any attempts at centralisation. Now it's simply a mandate with no alternatives considered

Contribution 1 of 20 | 16 June 2026