

Resident & Business Owner feedback

Rhodes Information Centre Stakeholder Survey

Rhodes Info Centre (RIC) has served the village in its current form since 2016 when it was an empty office space

Current RIC status

- Registered as a Non-profit Company
- Four Trustees govern the affairs of the entity
- There is a 2016 RIC Constitution
- A new RIC Memorandum of Incorporation will be developed after the Trustees update the RIC Business Model.

In terms of the (outdated) 2016 RIC Constitution:

- Members are those who support the RIC on a voluntary basis but are not customers Members are not expected to pay fees. [There is no current register of 'members']
- The original Trustees are named in the 2016 Constitution. The Trustees may appoint replacement Trustees. [Of the original Trustees, 1 remains, 3 appointed in 2022]
- Customers would apply for services to be provided by the RIC and would pay for the selected services. [There is no current register of 'customers']

Stated main RIC objectives in the 2016 Constitution:

- To establish and manage an Information Centre to disseminate information to, and facilitate the provision of products and services to, members of the public who express an interest in the products and services offered by the businesses which participate as customers of the Association
- To promote enterprise development in Rhodes and the surrounding area
- To set standards to be met in the provision of services and products, and to manage compliance with such standards by ensuring that all businesses which participate as customers observe the standards
- The ancillary object of the Association is to raise funds for the achievement of its principal objects



The RIC# is solvent only because of a founding (former) Director's interest-free loan and the rent-free use of that Director's property.

R'000	2020	2021	2022	
Revenue & income	325	325	555	Shop sales (67% in 22), booking commissions (23% in 22), WTA fees & donations/grants
Cost of Sales	(129)	(114)	(292)	Shop stock
Gross profit	196	211	263	
Operating costs	(201)	(240)	(261)	Salaries, accounting fees, maintenance, communications etc
Profit/(loss) before tax	(5)	(29)	2	

Retained income/loss YE Feb 2022 (R204 000) Director's loan YE Feb 2022 R252 000 The survey produced a good response rate, plenty of mixed views and excellent suggestions

Stakeholders are requested to comment on the Board of Trustees proposed Top 3 Focus Areas for RIC's value proposition improvements

RIC has a broad base of support and goodwill

Across all user groups, knowledge of the RIC is high and use of its products/services is reasonable. The RIC is known and respected for a reliable, consistent service. Visitors in particular, were extremely complimentary.

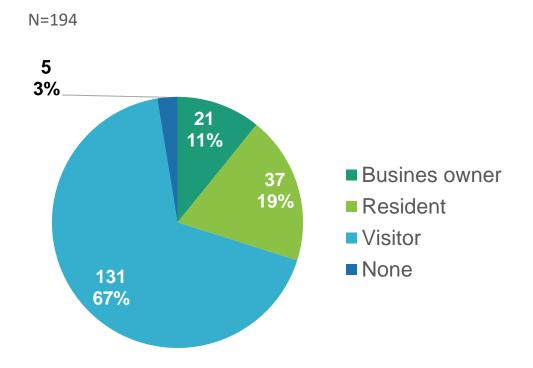
The Survey contributions identified that:

- RIC's communications and marketing can be improved.
- RIC's retail services can be enhanced through a review of product offerings, focusing on local produce.
- RIC's finances would be enhanced through this improved retail function as well as a clear and well-published (transparent) fee structure

The RIC Board of Trustees has identified the following Top 3 Focus Areas for value proposition improvements:

- 1. RIC on-line presence: upgrades to the web site, a booking system, seeking a clearer interface with local tourism businesses, and using a clear and transparent booking fee structure
- 2. RIC Retail: review of pricing, increasing locally-made produce stock, refreshing front-of-shop displays, review of stock procurement
- **3. Rhodes Marketing:** develop a comprehensive marketing plan using social media, with linkages between platforms and networks.

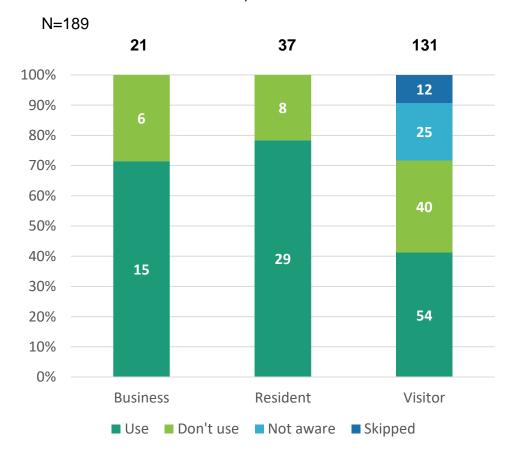
Good response with excellent completion percentage



COMPLETION RATE: 79%

TYPICAL TIME SPENT: 8m:38s

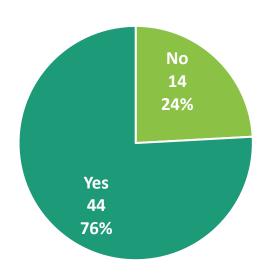
Over 65% (98) of all respondents that are aware of the RIC(152) use it. (37 respondents either skipped the question or are not aware of the RIC)



BUSINESS OWNERS & RESIDENTS: 85% use the RIC, 58% of them use it ONLY a few times a year

Use RIC services/goods

N=58



Business owners(3) don't use the RIC because

- It is inefficient
- Competes with their business
- Their business is too far from Rhodes

Transparency, even handedness and fairness to all stakeholders may make them use the RIC.

Residents (7) don't use the RIC, are:

- Not aware of it (2)
- Don't believe it is needed (4)
- Believe it is only for the benefit of one business

More communication & enhanced service offering may result in them using it

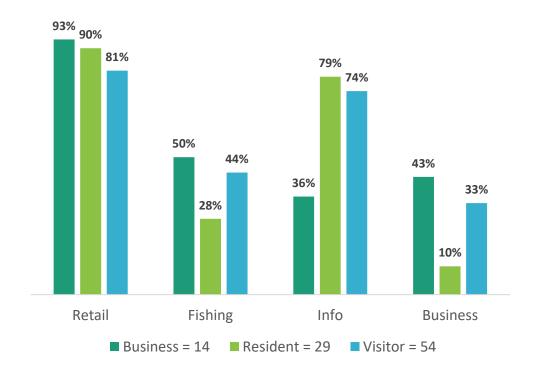
Those who do use the services vary in frequency and while the question was not posed, it is probably a mix between permanent residents and home owners with holiday homes

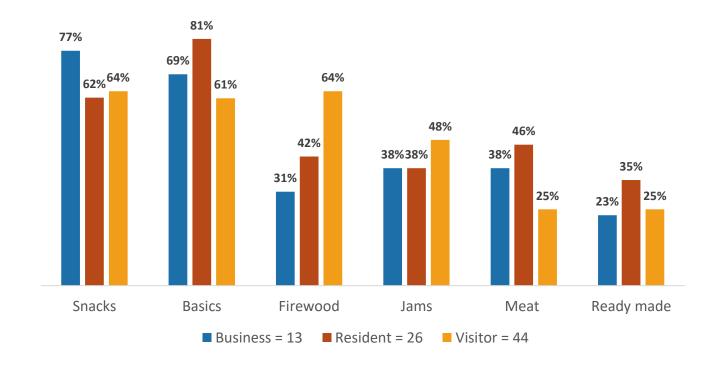
N=43



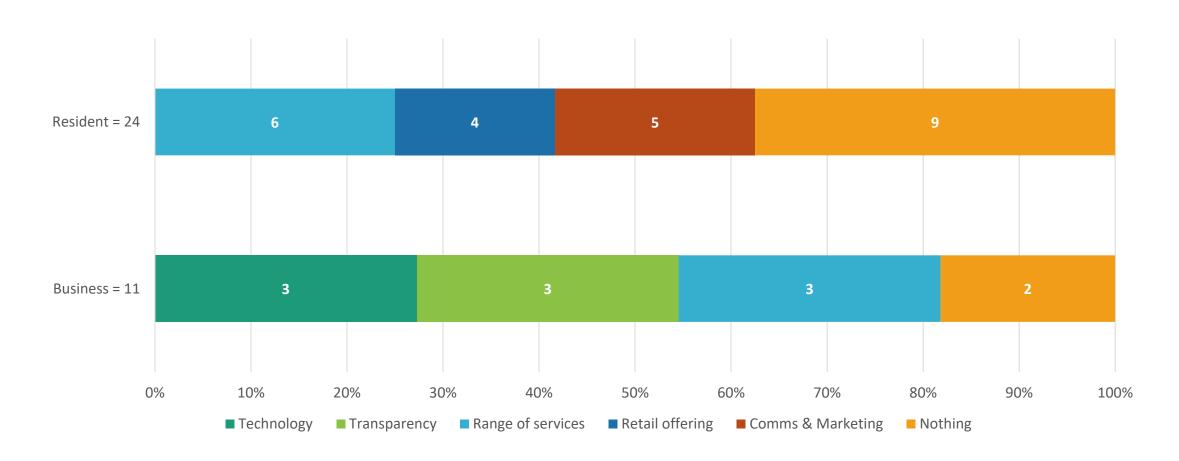
All categories use the RIC mostly for retail goods. Next, visitors and residents use it for information.

In terms of retail goods bought, snacks and household basics are most popular. Firewood is frequently bought by visitors





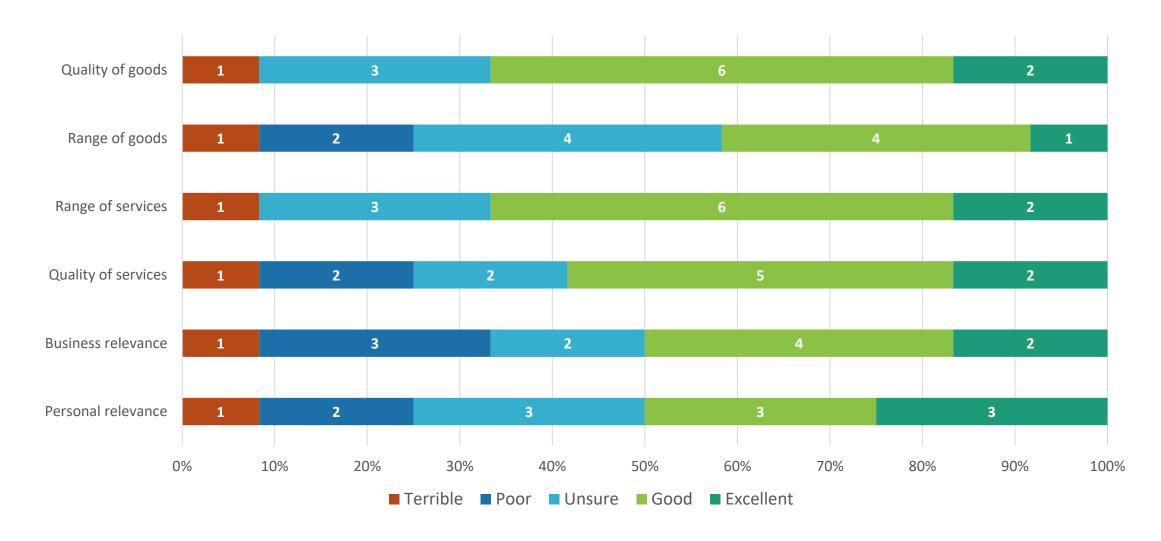
Business owners & residents: AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT 31% don't believe there are specific areas for improvement, 26% selected range of services. Business owners also see transparency and technology as areas to address



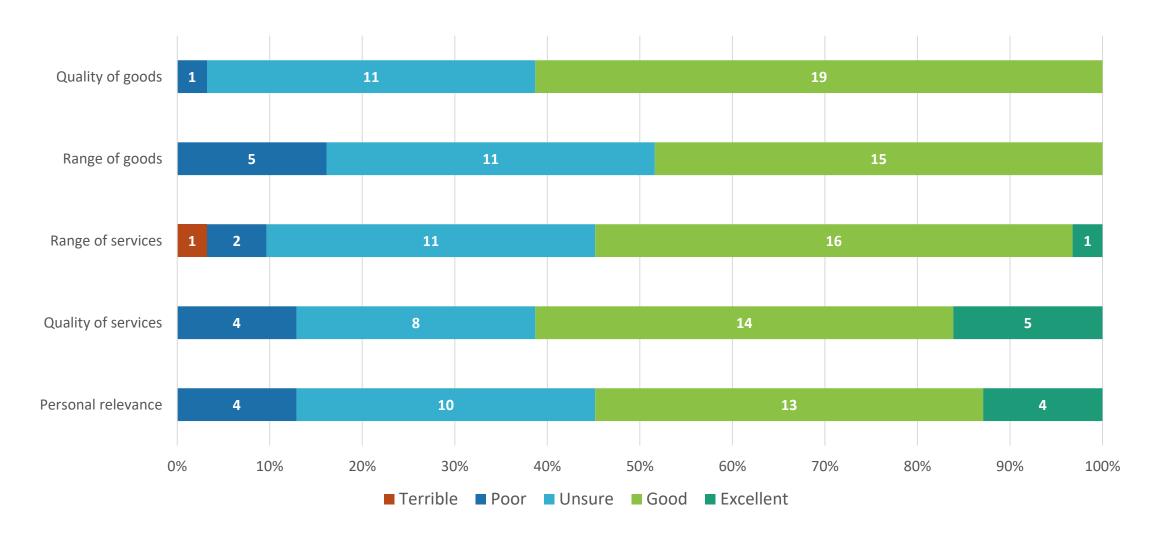
All stakeholders generally rated the RIC positively

- Range of goods is the area with more negative ratings
- Business owners who gave extremely negative ratings do not use the RIC
- There was extremely valuable input given in relation to ways to improve the areas where ratings were not as high

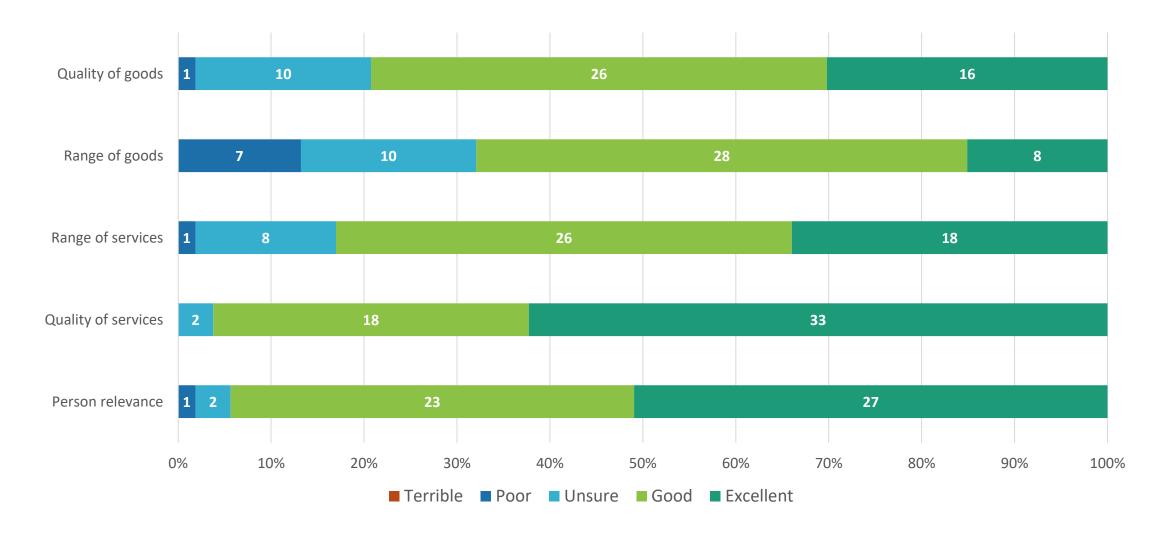
BUSINESS OWNERS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive



RESIDENTS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive



VISITORS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive



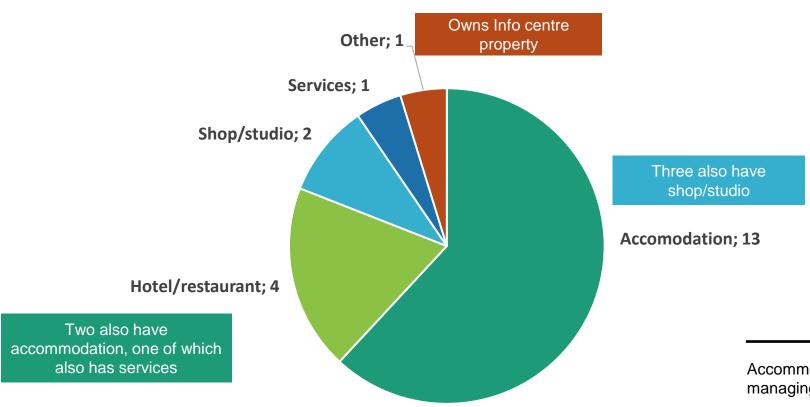
Questions addressing funding matters attracted diverse views

- Most common consensus is to retain the existing model of running the shop and charging booking fees but respondents were strongly against the shop being the only source of funding.
- Most believe the booking fee should be included in the rate quoted by the RIC
- Improved social media presence and marketing were listed as areas that could position the RIC to enhance it's ability to derive funds from services. However, charging for links was not viewed as an option
- Business owners indicated limited support for a Membership based organization
- State funding was highlighted by a number of respondents
- Residents and visitors indicated positivity to becoming "Friends of the RIC"
 - 52% of residents in favour, 16% not in favour
 - 40% of visitors in favour, 23% not in favour
 - Amount per annum varied but average from residents was R1000 and visitors R 600
 - Regular newsletters, mention on the Website were mostly what they would like in return, with some expecting discounts on goods and events

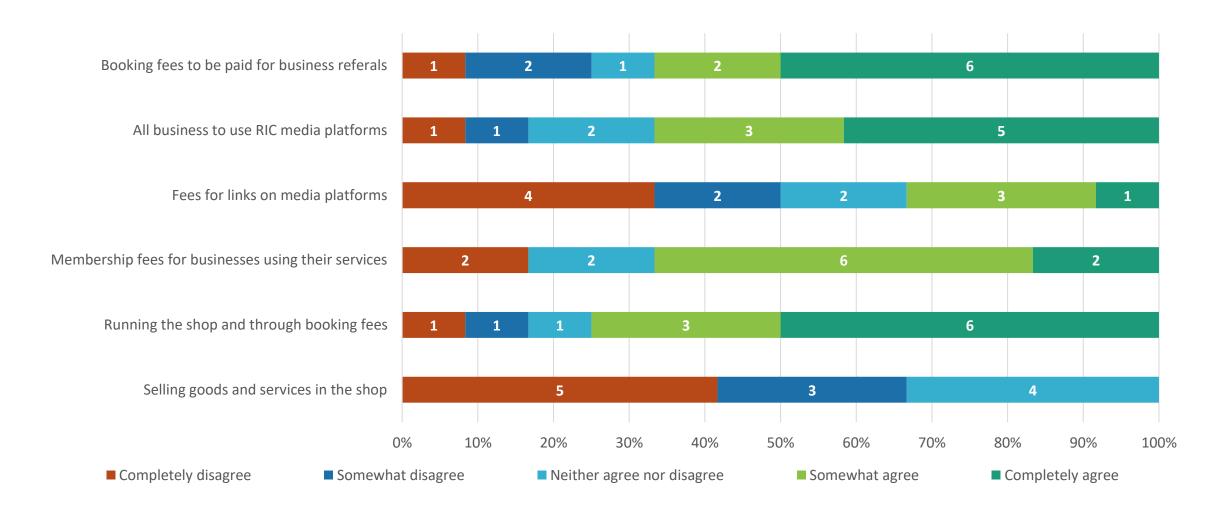
Detail that follows is for questions only, not detailed discussion



BUSINESS OWNERS: Over 71% of respondents operate accommodation businesses N=21



BUSINESS OWNERS: Views are mixed with support for booking fees and clear indication that retailing should not be the main source of funds



BUSINESS OWNERS: RIC Funding suggestions

N = 12

To improve funding

Appropriate Various state service will result organs proposed contributions Stakeholder Government Retail goods Booking No suggestion Commission contributions

Best means to charge booking fees

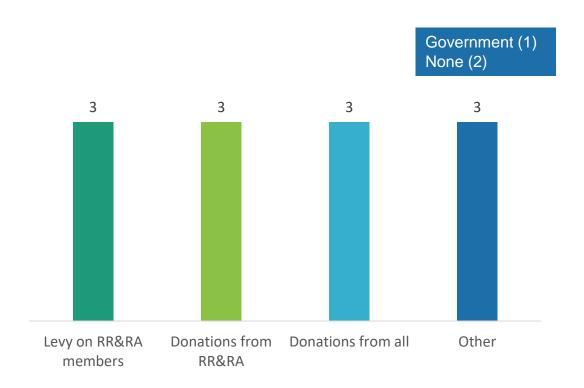


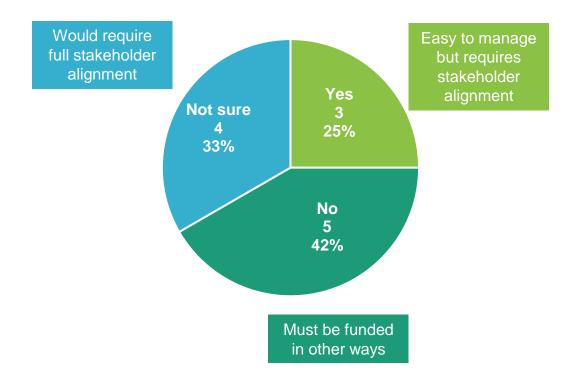
BUSINESS OWNERS: RIC Funding suggestions

N = 12

No clear consensus on other ways to complement sales revenue

Limited support for a business membership based organisation



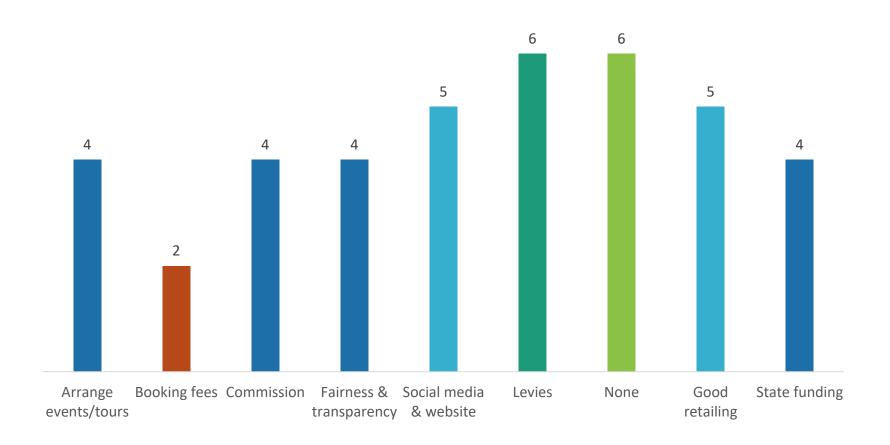


- Q22. The RIC should complement its sales revenues by...
- Q23. The RIC should be a membership-based organization?
- Q24. Thoughts on the idea of the RIC being a membership-based organization

RESIDENTS: Overall suggestions to improve funding for the RIC are extremely varied.

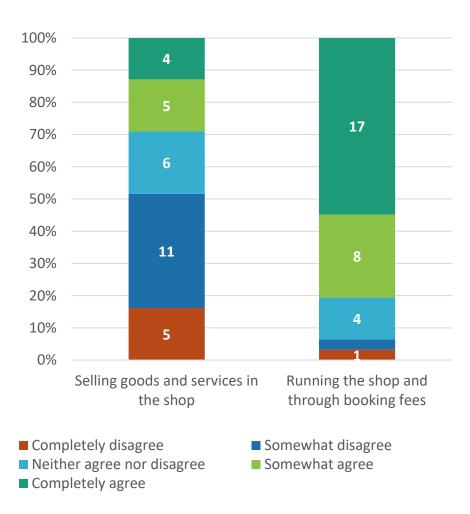
N = 31

They can however be grouped into the following general themes

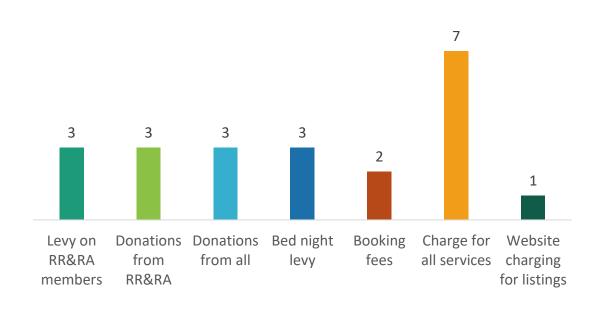


RESIDENTS: strongly support booking fees (55% completely agree) and 52% tend to disagree with selling goods and services

N = 31



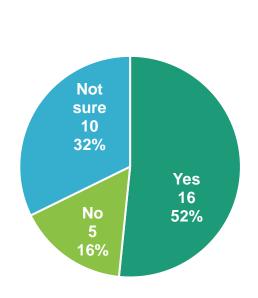
23% Believe that there should be charges for all services. Beyond that, there is no clear consensus on other ways to complement sales revenue



RESIDENTS: Becoming a "Friend of Rhodes"

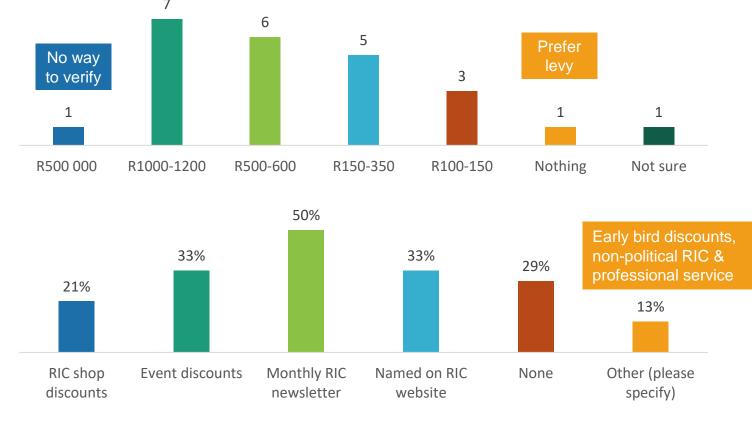
84% of respondents are prepared or not sure to become a "Friend of Rhodes"

N=31



58% are prepared to pay R500 or more, mostly in return for a monthly RIC newsletter and discounts/special offers

N=24



Q45. Would you be prepared to become a "Friend of Rhodes"?

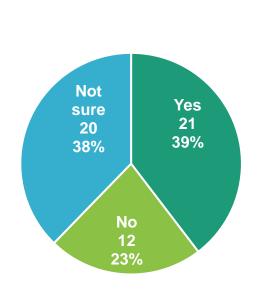
Q46. What donation do you think you would be prepared to make to the RIC per annum?

Q47. What kind of preferential RIC goods / services would you want for this donation?

VISITORS: Becoming a "Friend of Rhodes"

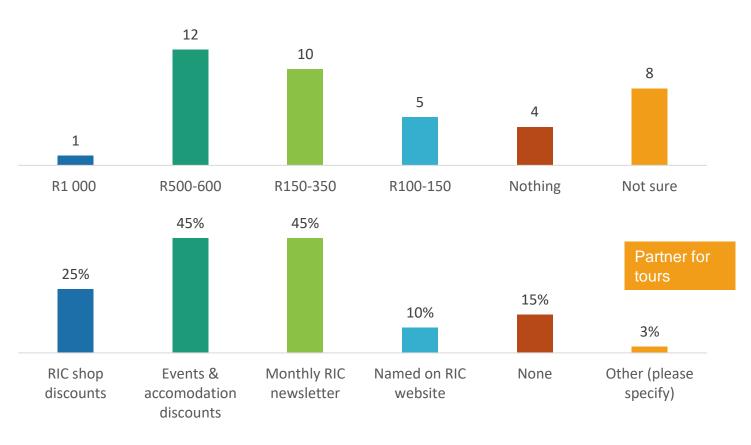
77% of respondents are prepared or not sure to become a "Friend of Rhodes"

N=53



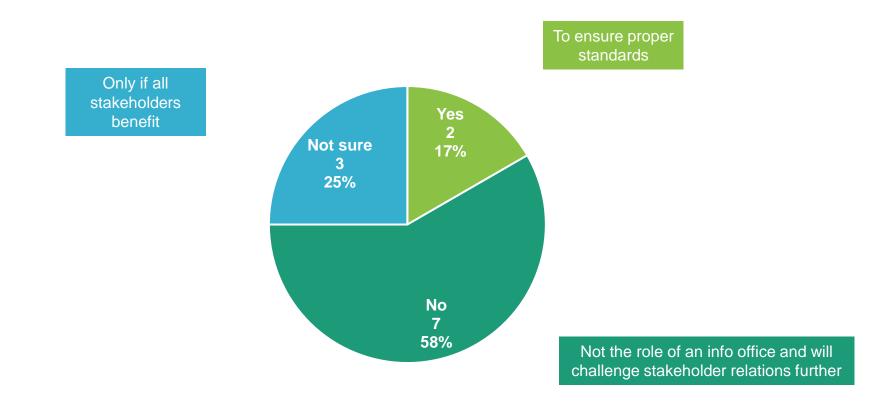
33% are prepared to pay R500 or more, mostly in return fora monthly RIC newsletter and discounts/special offers(even those prepared to pay nothing

N=40



- Q70. Would you be prepared to become a "Friend of Rhodes"?
- Q71. What donation do you think you would be prepared to make to the RIC per annum?
- Q72. What kind of preferential RIC goods / services would you want for this donation?

BUSINESS OWNERS: RIC as custodian of the "Rhodes" brand



Visitor specific matters highlighted the need for enhanced social media presence and increased marketing

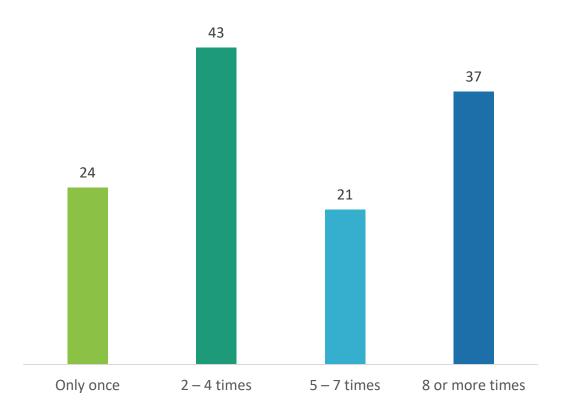
- Most people know about Rhodes through personal word of mouth and events they attend
- A significant percentage book directly or through the RIC
- 20% of visitors are not aware of the RIC, mainly as they have visited through sporting events, mainly the Trail run and WTA fly fishing festival
- Of those who are aware of the RIC, 73% are aware of the website and 62% use it. Of that, 87% use the website to plan and/or book their visit.
- The Facebook page has less awareness, with only 38% of those who are aware of the RIC, knowing about the page and 25% using it

Detail that follows is for questions only, not detailed discussion

Visitors: Times visited varies, but most people have heard about Rhodes from personal recommendations

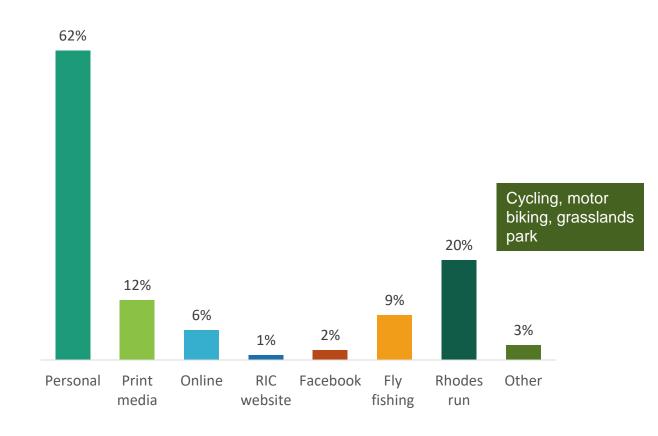
How many times visited Rhodes

N=125

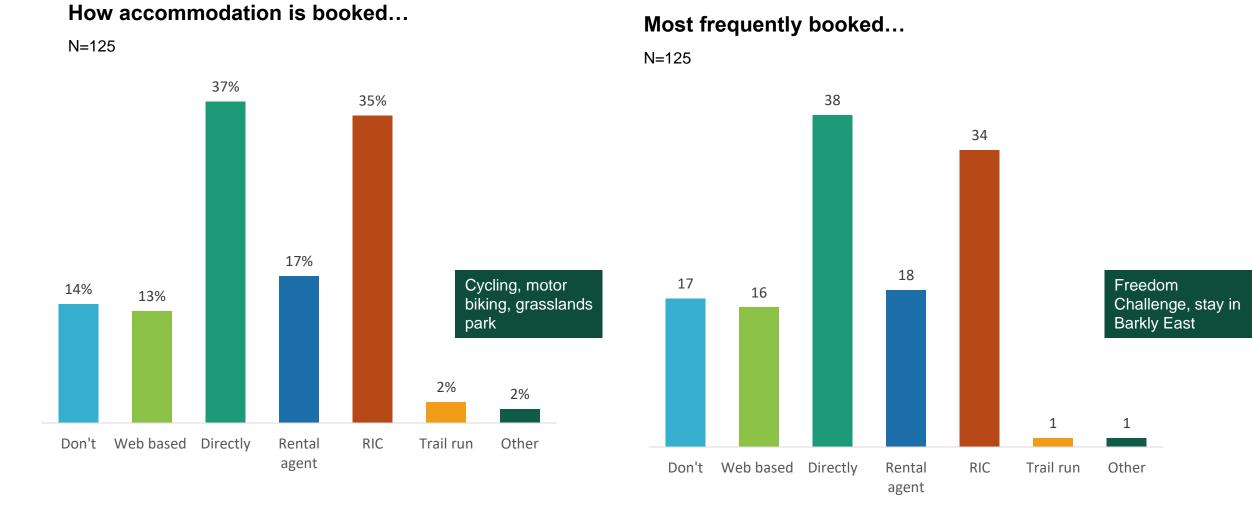


First heard about Rhodes from...

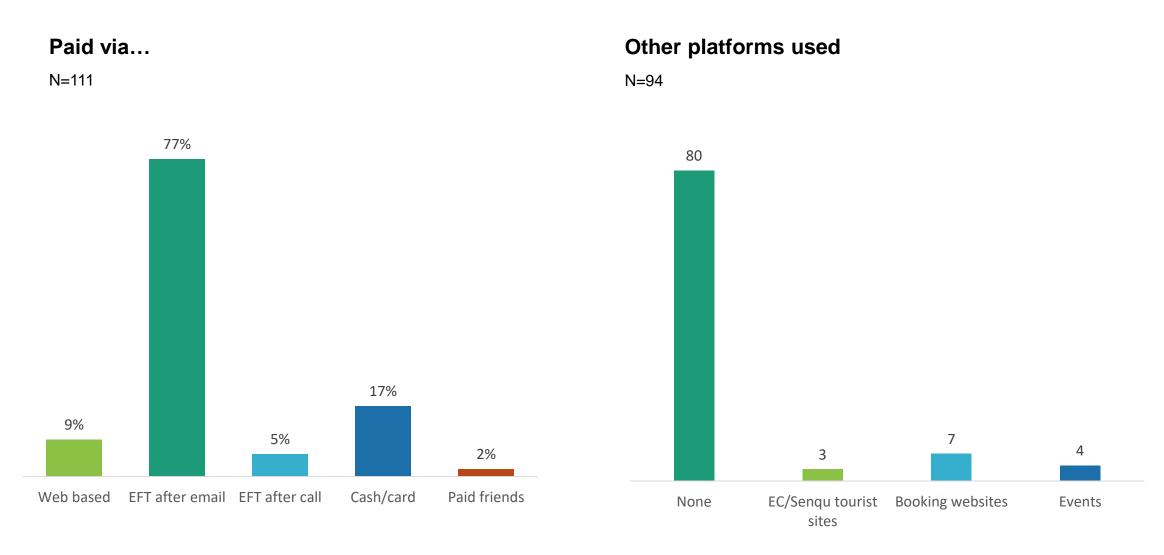
N=125



Visitors: Mostly book directly with the venue or through the RIC



Visitors: Mostly pay by EFT after receiving an emailed invoice and few use alternate platforms for booking

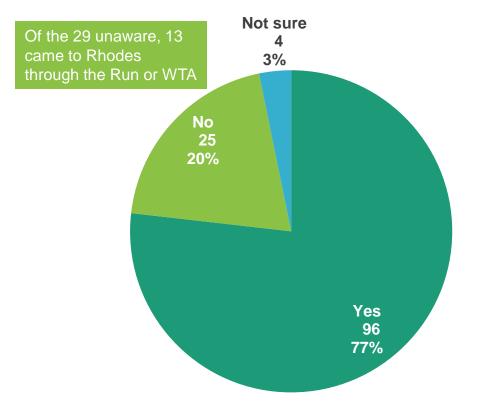


Q53 How have you paid for your accommodation?

Visitors: RIC Awareness

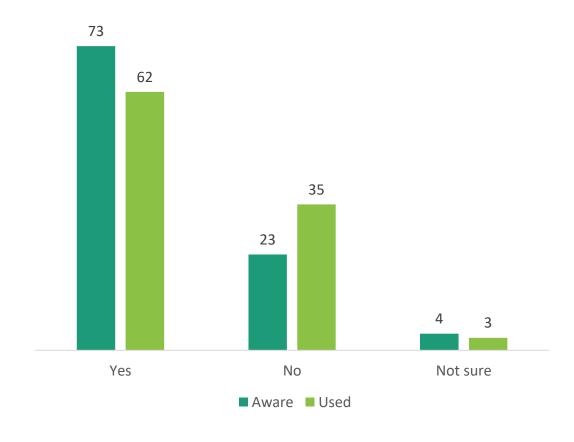
Aware of RIC

N=125



Aware of RIC website and used it

N=100



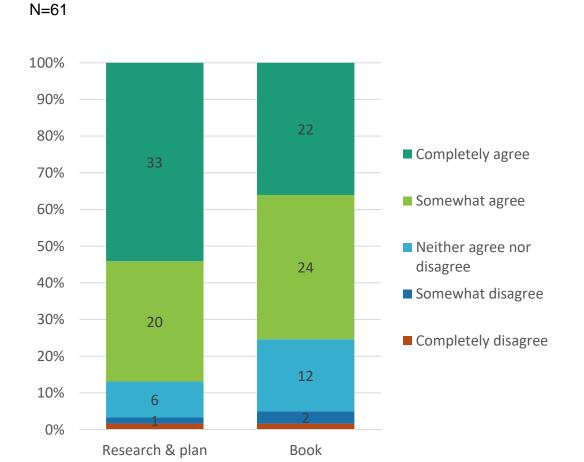
Q54. Are you aware of the RIC?

Q55. Are you aware of the RIC website?

Q56. Have you used the RIC website

Visitors: RIC website feedback

Usefulness of the website



Advice

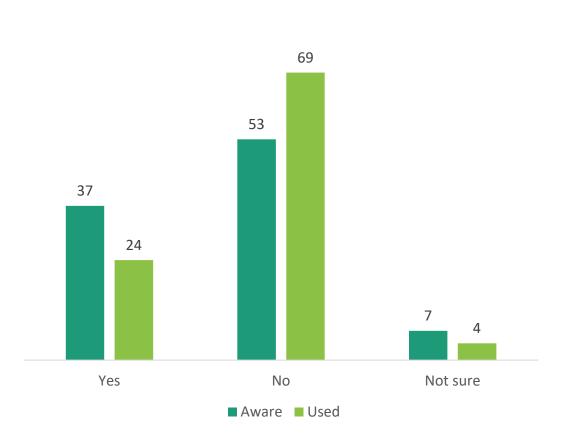
12 say its great, 47 had nothing to add

Activity info	Especially running, fly fishing
Add media	Videos & photos of town flock
Add hotel info	
Advertise businesses	
Condition updates	Roads, weather, river
Cross platform links	Associated web sites
Make it Mobile friendly	
Market events	
Monthly releases	With monthly newsletter
Promotion	Wider exposure of website, search engine optimisation
More updated	Keep events up to date and move past events
Online options	Shopping & bookings
Slow speed	Hosting domain speed is slow

Visitors: RIC Facebook awareness and usefulness. Limited additional advice, other than regular posting and keeping events updated

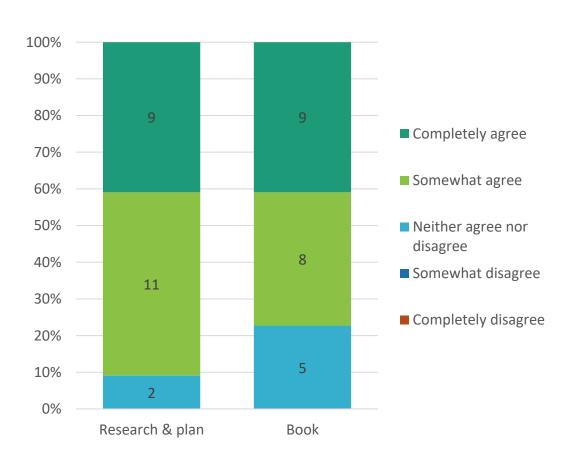
Aware of RIC Facebook site and used it

N=97



Usefulness of the Facebook page

N=22



Q59. Are you aware of the RIC facebook page?

Q60. Have you used the RIC facebook page?

Q61. The RIC website is a useful source of information to RESEARCH and PLAN AND BOOK my visit to Rhodes

Q62. Advice for the facebook page

With enhancements from any further Stakeholder feedback, the RIC Trustees and management will focus on these Top 3 Focus Areas and communicate progress on a quarterly basis

1. RIC on-line presence

Upgrades to the web site, a booking system, seeking a clearer interface with local tourism businesses, and using a clear and transparent booking fee structure.

2. RIC Retail

Review of pricing, increasing locally-made produce stock, refreshing front-of-shop displays, review of stock procurement.

3. Rhodes Marketing

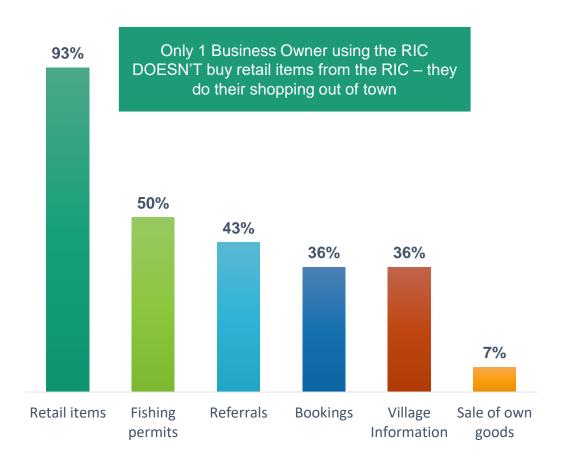
Develop a comprehensive marketing plan using social media, with linkages between platforms and networks.

Detailed slides summarized for feedback

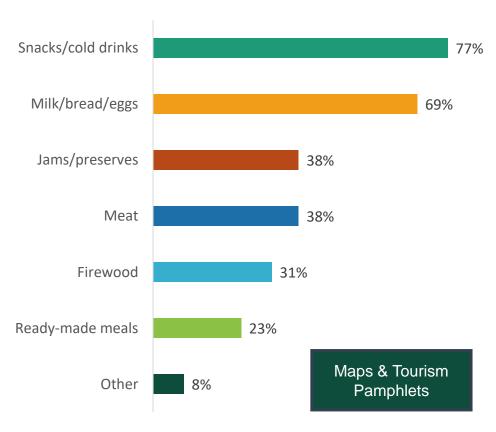
BUSINESS OWNERS: Almost all that use the RIC, buy goods from it, mainly convenience items

Services used

N = 14

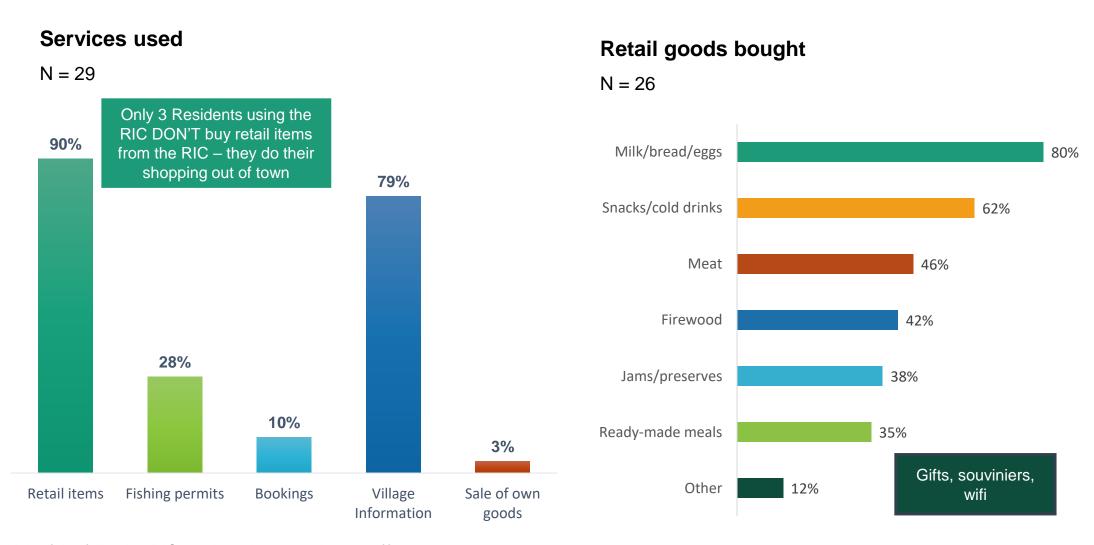


Retail goods bought



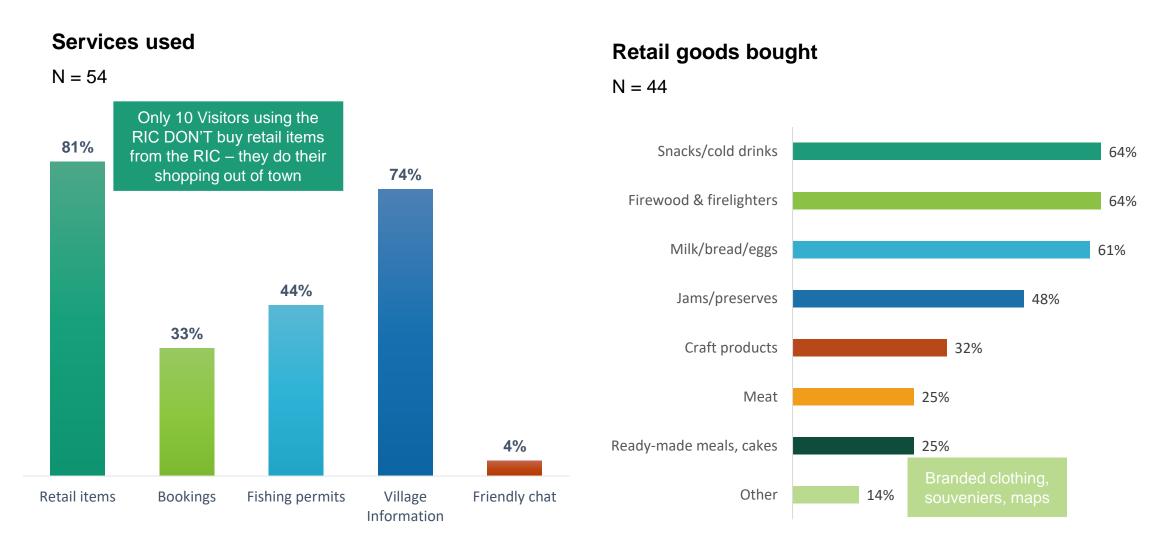
- Q6. Which of the following RIC services do you make use of?
- Q7. Do you buy any goods / retail items from the RIC?
- Q8. Which of the following goods / retail items do you get from the RIC?
- Q9. Why do you NOT buy goods / retail items from the RIC?

RESIDENTS: Almost all that use the RIC, buy goods from it



- Q30. Which of the following RIC services do you make use of?
- Q31. Do you buy any goods / retail items from the RIC?
- Q32. Which of the following goods / retail items do you get from the RIC?
- Q33. Why do you NOT buy goods / retail items from the RIC?

VISITORS: 54 (57% of respondents) that use the RIC, buy goods from it



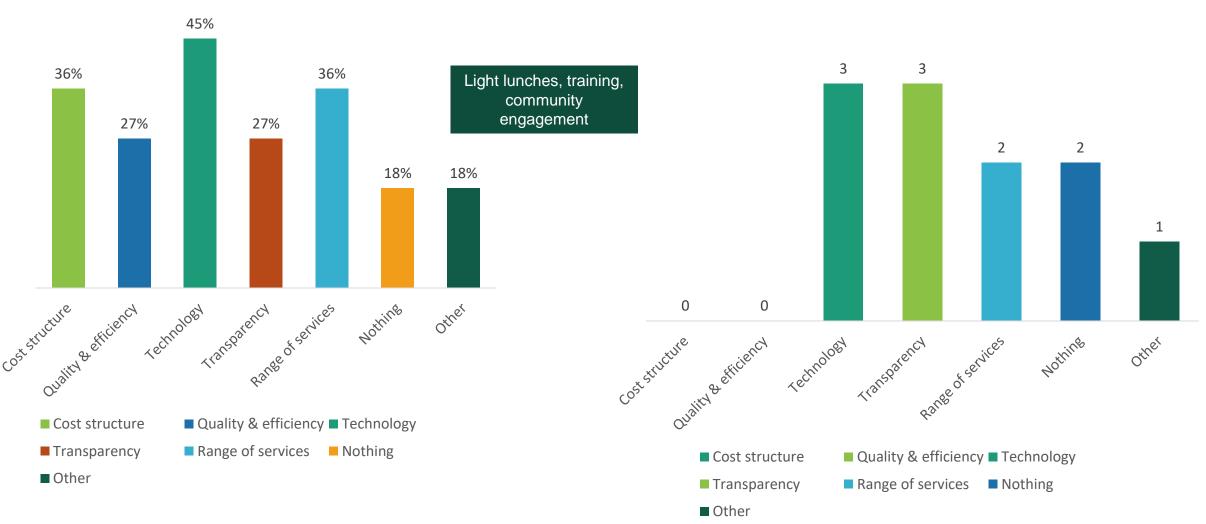
Q64. Do you make use of the RIC's services / goods in any way, before or during your visit?

Q65. Which of the following RIC services do you make use of?

Q66. Do you buy any goods / retail items from the RIC?

Q67. Which of the following goods / retail items do you get from the RIC? Q68. Why do you NOT buy goods / retail items from the RIC?

BUSINESS OWNERS: that use the RIC, mostly believe that technology used needs to improve, but technology and transparency improvements are most important N=11



Q10. Services/ goods to change or improve

Q11. Detailed comments (detail is available and along the themes highlighted)

Q12. Which ONE is MOST in need of change or improvement

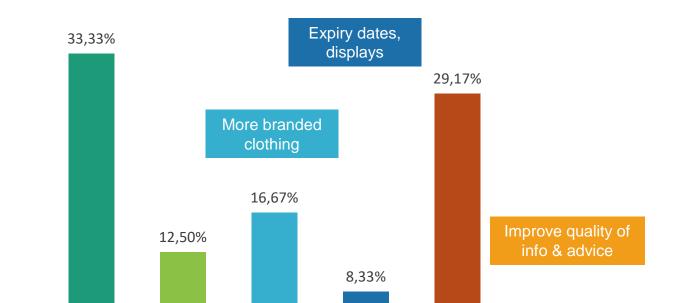
RESIDENTS: that use the RIC would like to see an expanded range of goods and services

4,17%

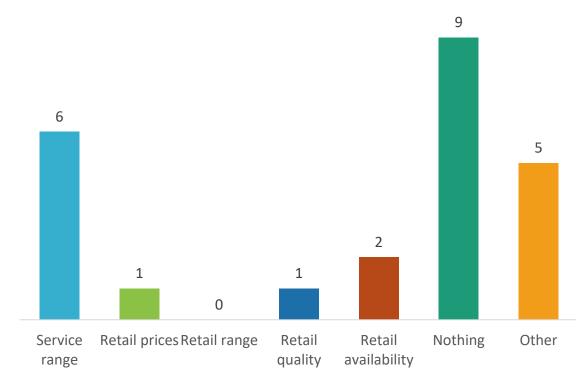
Other

N = 24

Provide list of suppliers in the area



Clearer focus on tourism, marketing and communication and quality information geared for tourists are the key areas highlighted for improvement



Q34. Which aspects of the services / goods from the RIC do you feel need to change or improve?

Service range Retail prices Retail range Retail quality

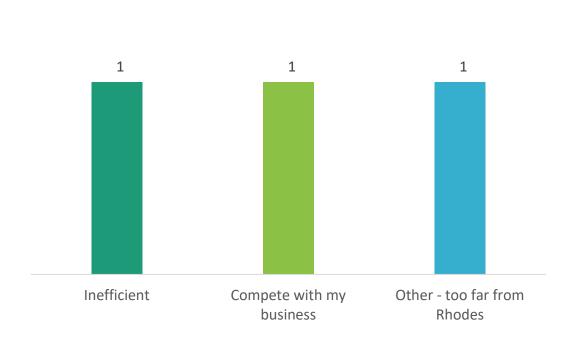
Q35. Please explain in detail how you feel the RIC could change or improve, referencing the aspects you selected above.

Nothing

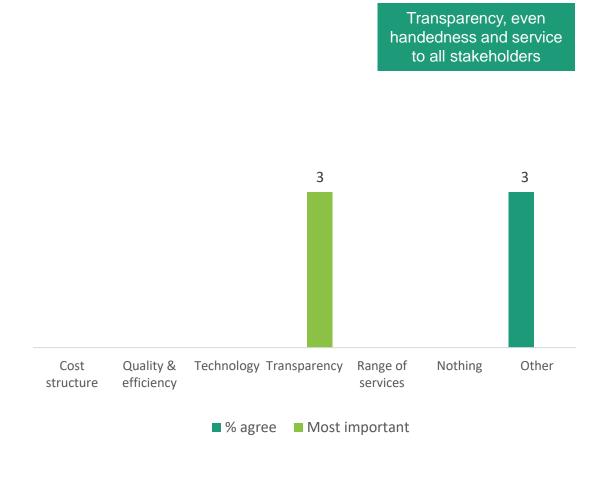
Q36. And, of these aspects, which ONE do you feel is MOST in need of change or improvement?

BUSINESS OWNERS: that DON'T use the RIC, quote transparency and fairness as main reasons for not using the RIC

N = 3



Because it is not an Info Office, but "belongs" to Walkerbouts Inn They don't do anything for us Only for Rhodes and people close to Rhodes who will benefit



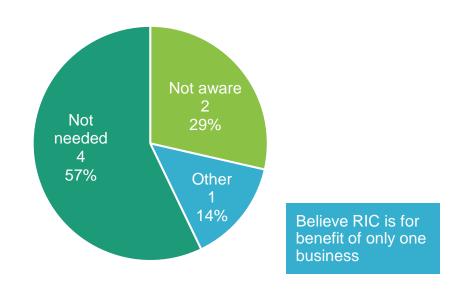
Q13. Why do you NOT use the RIC's services

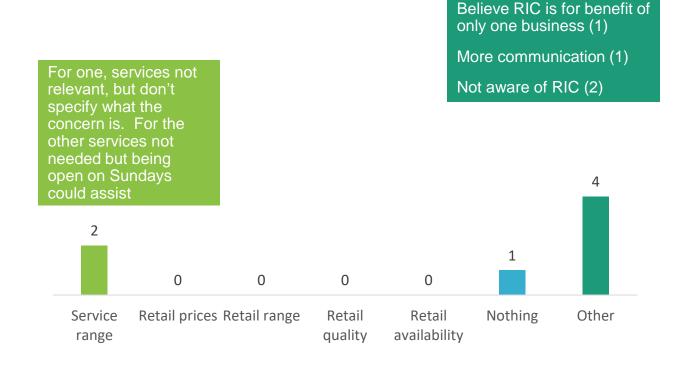
Q14. Which applies to you in terms of why you DON'T use the RIC's services / goods

Q15. What Services/ goods to change or improve before you'd use the RIC Q16. Detailed comments (detail is available and along the themes highlighted) Q17. Which ONE is MOST in need of change or improvement

RESIDENTS: Who do not use the RIC, mainly do so as they don't need the services and they are unlikely to use the services N=7

Of those who do not use the services, it is mainly because they are not needed or not aware of the services For one person, nothing will result in them using the services, for 2, awareness is an issue and for one other, the RIC is viewed as only benefitting one business





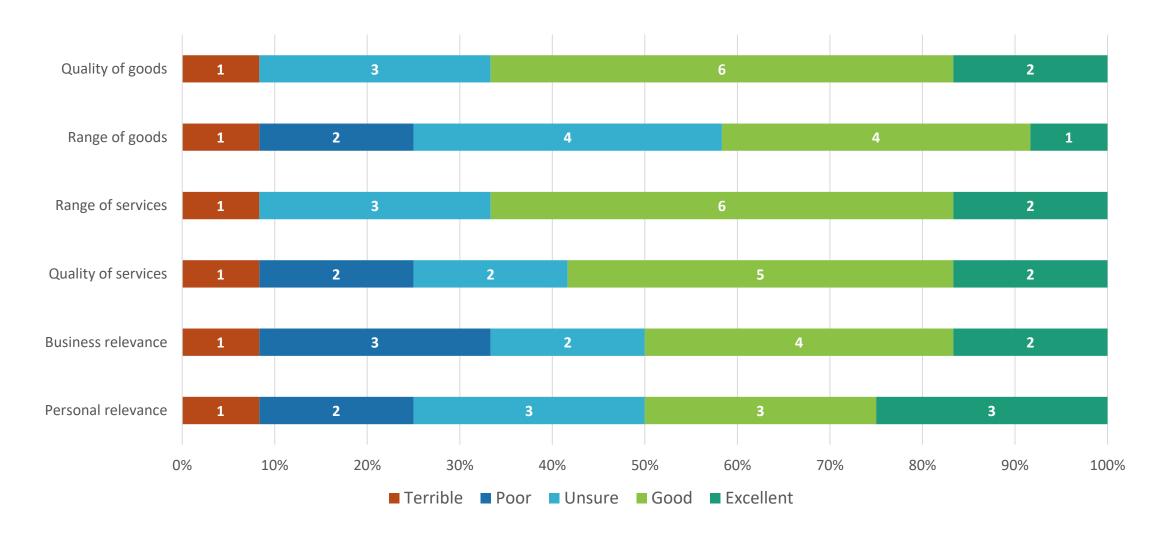
Q37. Why do you NOT use the RIC's services / goods?

Q38. Which aspects of the services / goods from the RIC do you feel need to change or improve, for you to consider using them in the future?

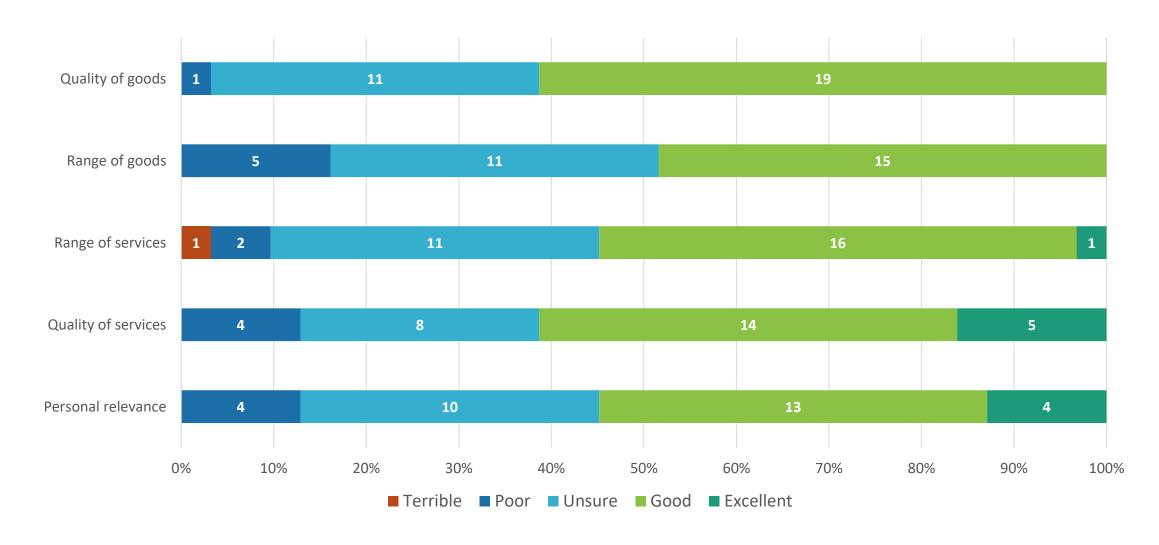
Q39. Please explain in detail how you feel the RIC could change or improve, referencing the aspects you selected above

Q40. And, of these aspects, which ONE do you feel is MOST in need of change or improvement, for you to consider using them in the future

BUSINESS OWNERS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive



RESIDENTS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive N = 31



VISITORS: Overall rating of RIC is mostly positive N = 53

