



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Community Satisfaction Survey Report 2021



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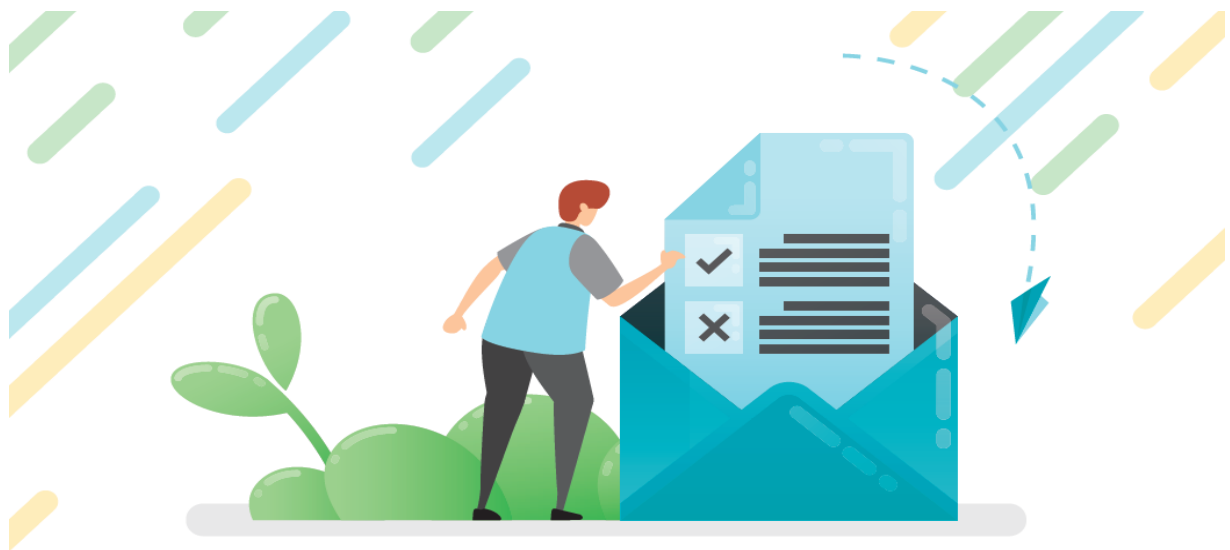
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Community satisfaction survey

Background and objectives

At Port Stephens Council we are committed to continuously improving our performance and how we deliver services to our community.

Community Satisfaction is one of our 7 key metrics and a 2020-2021 Operational Plan action. The annual Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) asks our local residents their opinion of our services and facilities. The CSS provides data for measuring progress on a number of our Community Strategic Plan Indicators and Operational Plan Effectiveness Measures.

The survey has been conducted for more than 10 years and provides community insight on:

- Council's overall performance
- Customer service
- Local infrastructure, facilities and services
- Participation in a range of activities
- Perception of local neighbourhood

Each year the data gathered from the CSS is used to develop a report which outlines the aggregated results and trends.

This is the 2021 report of the survey conducted over May and June 2021. With over 2,000 responses received, a statistically valid sample size was achieved, however, it should be noted that the sample is not representative of the Port Stephens population in terms of demographics (population or location).

The 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey was undertaken in the context of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and a significant natural disaster, with the results reflective of the community's reaction to the challenging situation Council found itself in.

During the last financial year Council faced significant pressures on our services. Due to the combination of changing public health orders, impacts to our businesses and our community, it was necessary for Council to adjust services through different periods over the past 12 months. To the community, this may have been seen as service reductions, however, they were critical given Council's financial position through the past financial year.

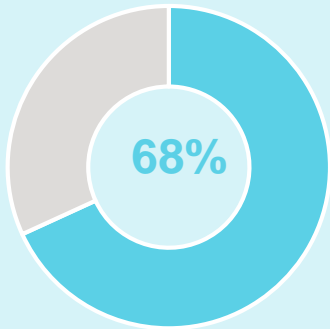
At the commencement of the last financial year, Council was predicting delivering an underlying deficit of \$4.4M. This was due to the loss of airport dividends, reduced income from ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and continuing cost increases. Through implementing a range of important measures, some of which resulted in service changes to the community, Council was able to manage its budget back to a small underlying surplus for the financial year.

It is important to note that whilst Council was able to adjust its services to maintain ongoing financial sustainability, our long term planning indicates that the impacts from COVID-19 will need to be managed carefully for a number of years to come.

The survey was conducted only weeks after a natural disaster which caused significant infrastructure damage across our local government area and region. The magnitude of this natural disaster alone is reflected in the number of open potholes drastically increasing (from 50 to over 3,000 at any one time) following the storm. With wet weather not abating, these conditions have continued to hamper Council efforts, even though over 20,000 potholes have been patched and repaired since March 2021.

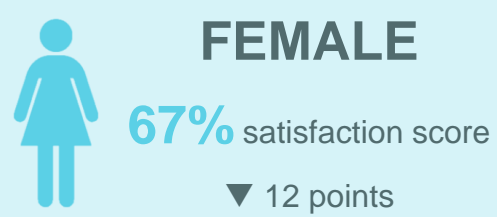
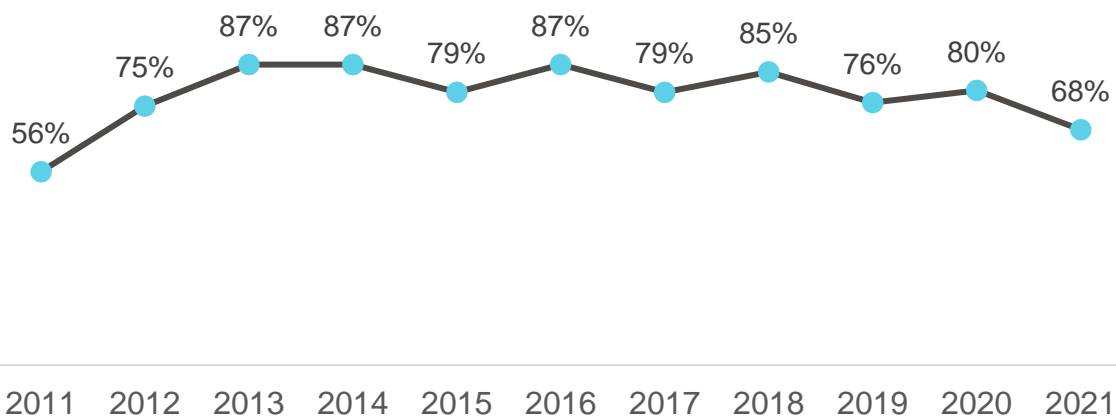
It is not surprising that the impacts of this damage and devastation, despite Council's best efforts, are echoed in the survey results, with a reduction in the overall community satisfaction score and satisfaction with services such as maintaining local roads and stormwater management systems.

Executive Summary



68% Community Satisfaction Score from 1,882 survey responses*

^According to the Likert scale, to achieve an overall satisfaction figure, respondents answered that they were: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied/Neutral



Top 3 performing areas



Garbage collection services **96%**



Access to waste depots and recycling **93%**



Children's Services **93%**

Top 3 areas for improvement



Maintaining local roads **45%**
(▼ 23 points)



Managing Stormwater drainage systems **59%** (▼ 17 points)



Roadside maintenance **68%**
(▼ 11 points)

Individual Results

The table below shows individual services/facilities by the level of overall satisfaction.

Table 1: Individual results

Facilities/Services - Satisfaction Score	2020	2021	Change to LY
Garbage collection services	95%	96%	▲
Access to waste depots and recycling	88%	93%	▲
Children's Services*	99%	93%	▼
Community halls	92%	90%	▼
Maintaining operational cemeteries	92%	90%	▼
Sports & Recreational facilities	92%	89%	▼
Libraries*#	99%	88%	▼
Managing litter from rubbish bins in parks and central business districts	89%	88%	▼
Swimming pools	90%	88%	▼
Maintaining parks and gardens	93%	88%	▼
Managing foreshores and beaches	87%	88%	▲
Playground equipment	90%	86%	▼
Ranger services (parking)	70%	81%	▲
Maintaining traffic flow (e.g. lights, roundabouts, street signs)	86%	78%	▼
Ranger services (animal management)	67%	78%	▲
Managing street trees	81%	77%	▼
Public toilet amenities (excluding those in shopping centres)	76%	72%	▼
Maintaining cycleways	80%	72%	▼
Development applications and building approvals	-	72%	-
Controlling noxious weeds on Council land	73%	71%	▼
Managing illegal dumping	67%	70%	▲
Roadside maintenance (For example, trees, litter, weeds, slashing and so on)	79%	68%	▼
Maintaining footpaths and walking tracks	73%	65%	▼
Managing stormwater drainage systems	76%	59%	▼
Maintaining local roads	68%	45%	▼

*Surveys for these services were conducted separately. # Comparison made to 2019.

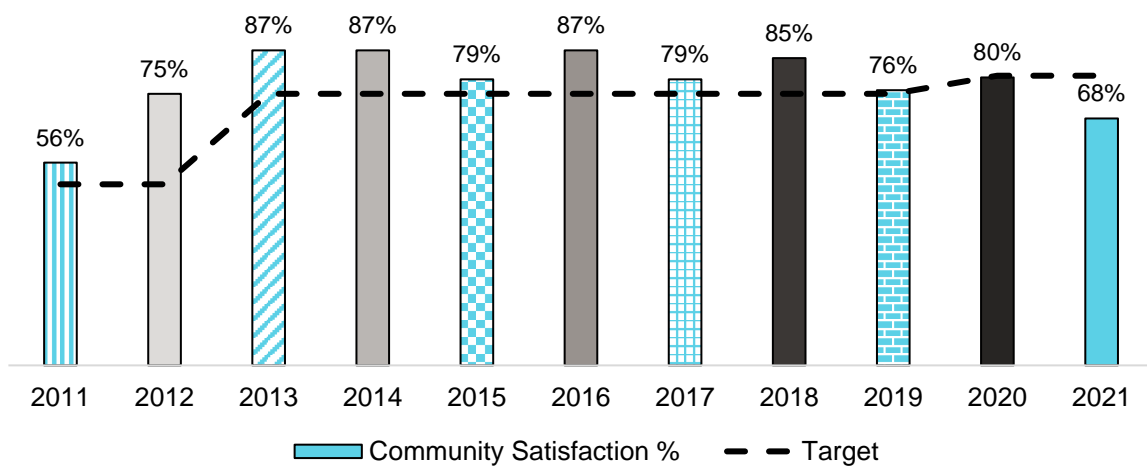
Overall Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Council's services

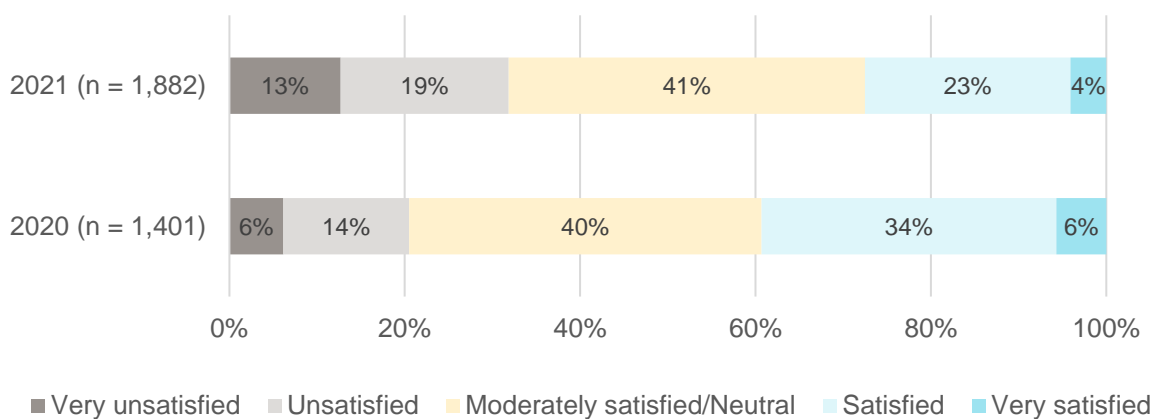
Question 25

In 2021, 1,882 respondents rated us with an overall **satisfaction score of 68%**¹. This is a decrease of 12 points from the 2020 result and below our annual target of 80%.

Graph 1: Community satisfaction score



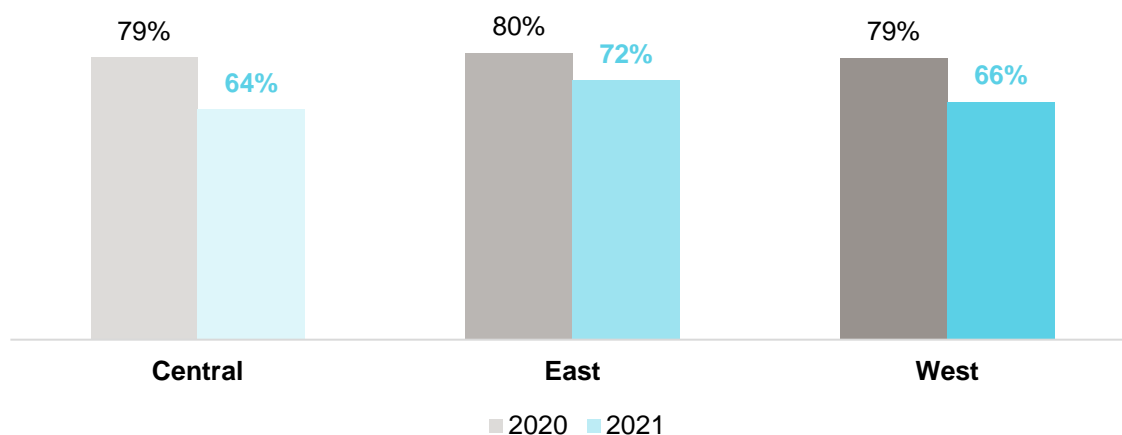
Graph 2: Community satisfaction response



¹ According to the Likert scale, to achieve an overall satisfaction figure, respondents answered that they were: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied/Neutral

In previous years, the satisfaction score across all 3 wards has hovered close to the overall satisfaction score, however, the 2021 results (shown below), shows some divergence with respondents from the East Ward indicating a slightly higher satisfaction score than the West and Central Wards.

Graph 3: Community satisfaction by ward



Respondents indicated higher than the average satisfaction score from the areas of Fingal Bay (87%), Corlette (81%), Raymond Terrace (74%), Anna Bay (73%) and Nelson Bay (70%).

Respondents from the below-listed areas indicated a decrease in the satisfaction scores as compared to the 2020 results.

Table 2: Community satisfaction score by area

Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Karuah	94%	59%	86%	37%	▼
Lemon Tree Passage	90%	79%	82%	55%	▼
Tanilba Bay	80%	71%	79%	57%	▼
Shoal Bay	74%	81%	79%	60%	▼
Salamander Bay	85%	79%	77%	66%	▼
Nelson Bay	88%	79%	80%	70%	▼
Medowie	91%	81%	76%	68%	▼
Anna Bay	81%	60%	80%	73%	▼
Raymond Terrace	82%	74%	80%	74%	▼
Soldiers Point	87%	87%	72%	69%	▼
Fingal Bay	90%	83%	89%	87%	▼
Corlette	92%	86%	83%	81%	▼

Note – Satisfaction score by area is not statistically valid and is only a representation from respondents from the area.

Community improvement ideas

Question 26



In the 2021 Community satisfaction survey, 1 in 2 respondents provided a comment about their views on council services or ideas for improvement. **1,117 comments** were received. As noted in the table below these were proportionately higher for those respondents within the very unsatisfied and unsatisfied category.

Table 3: Percentage of comments and responses by satisfaction level

	Percentage of comments	Percentage of total survey responses
Very unsatisfied	17%	13%
Unsatisfied	25%	19%
Moderately satisfied/Neutral	36%	41%
Satisfied	20%	23%
Very satisfied	2%	4%

Verbatim responses for the comments were collated and entered into analytical software. This analysis ‘counts’ the number of times a particular word or phrase appears and, based on the frequency of that word or phrase, font size is generated. The larger the font, the more frequently the word or sentiment is mentioned.

Satisfaction with elected Council

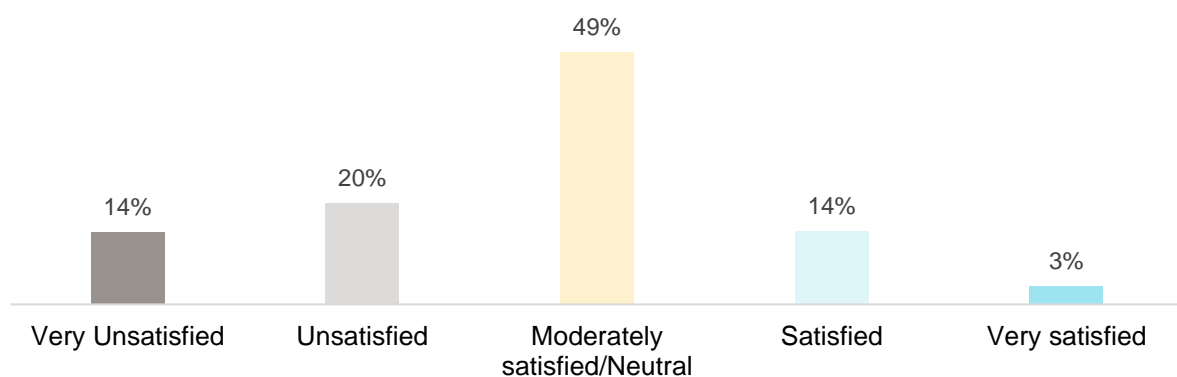
Question 27

With the Council term coming to an end in 2021, we asked our community about the satisfaction with their elected Council for delivery on its operational plans, strategies and capital works.

Overall, 1,867 survey respondents rated **66% satisfaction score with their elected council**. (According to the Likert scale, to achieve an overall satisfaction figure, respondents answered that they were: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied/Neutral.)

Almost half the respondents rate the performance of their elected Council as mid 'moderately unsatisfied/neutral'.

Graph 5: Community satisfaction with their elected council



Overall respondents in the West-ward indicated a slightly higher satisfaction score (69.52%). In contrast, respondents in Medowie, Raymond Terrace and Corlette areas indicated higher than the average satisfaction levels.

Port Stephens, Council & Community

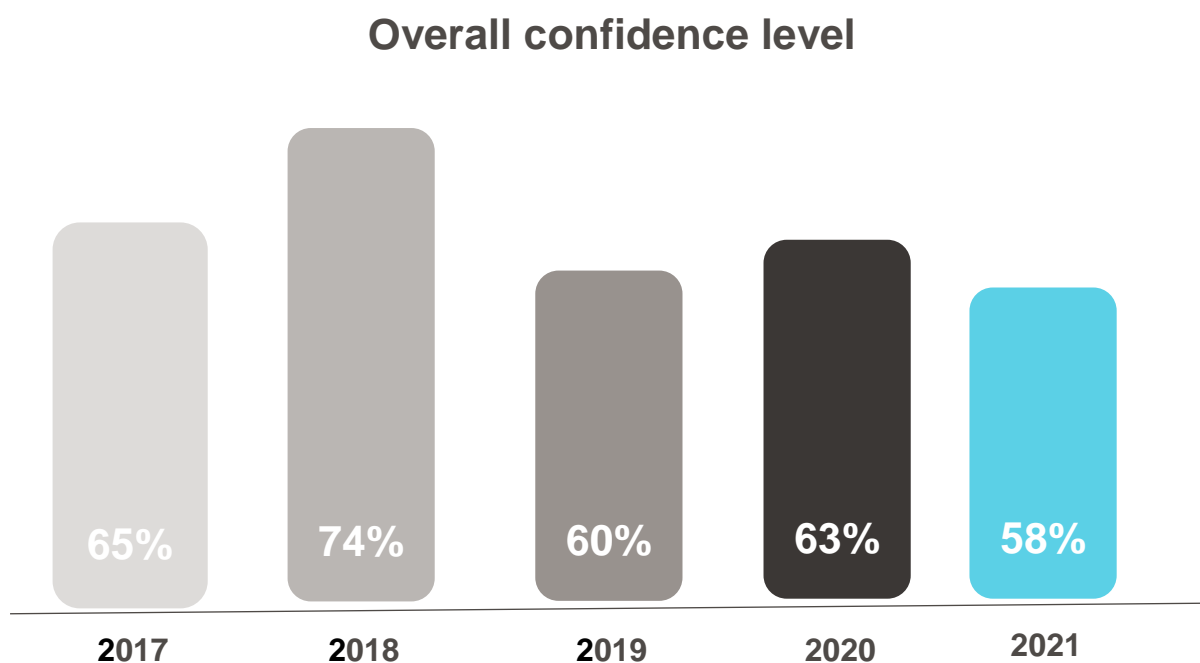
Community confidence

Question 24

Survey respondents were asked to rate their confidence levels with the management of resources (Workforce, Assets and Finances) by Council. To achieve an overall confidence level, respondents answered that they were: Very confident, Confident, Somewhat confident/Neutral and excludes 'Don't know/Unsure'.




Overall, respondents in 2021 rated an average **58% confidence level**, a decline of 5 points as compared to the last year.

Graph 6: Community confidence



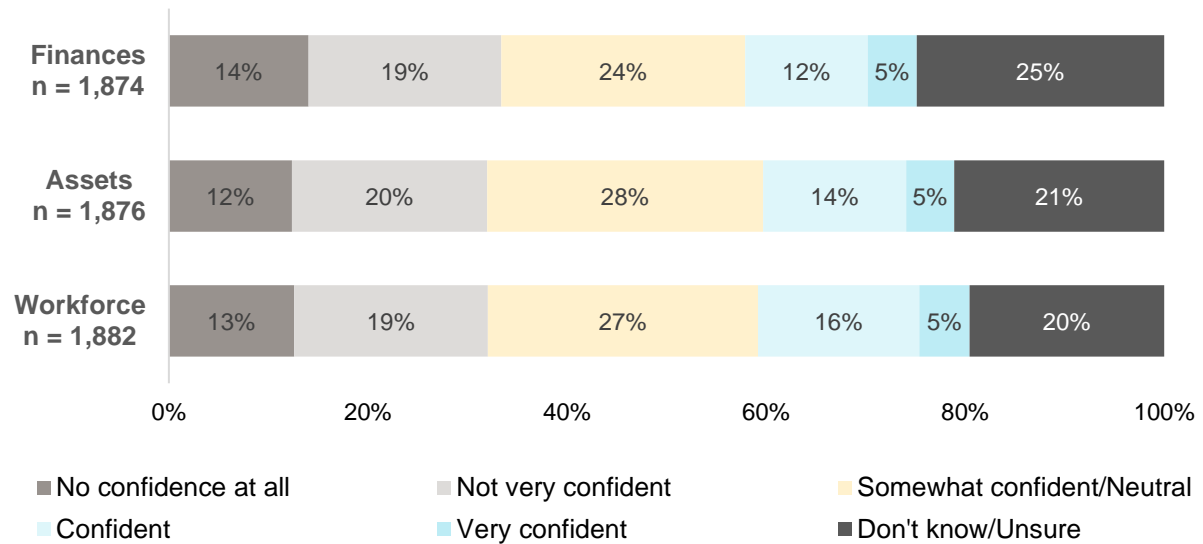
Respondents indicated higher than the average confidence levels from the areas – Fingal Bay (68%), Raymond Terrace (66%) and Corlette (65%).

Table 4: Community confidence in the management of resources

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
	Workforce	66%	75%	66%	67%	60%	▼
	Assets	66%	73%	61%	63%	59%	▼
	Finances	63%	73%	51%	58%	56%	▼

*Aggregate of Very confident, Confident and Neutral. Excludes 'Don't know/Unsure'.

Graph 7: 2021 Community confidence

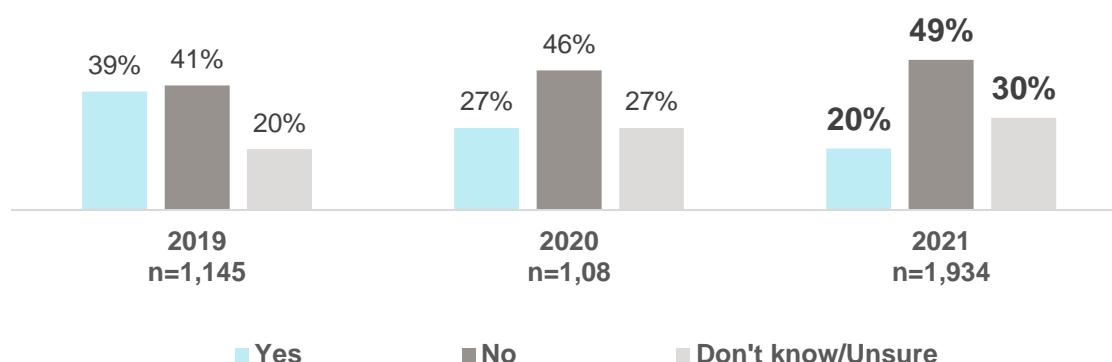


Council projects & decision making

Question 22 & 23

Data collected from 1,934 respondents show a decrease in community perception for the opportunity to provide input in Council projects and decision making.

Graph 8: Input in council projects and decision making



Survey and direct email/phone have been rated as the most popular choices of providing input in council projects and decision making. Further analysis of comments (captured as 'Other') indicates that respondents also chose to provide input by contacting their elected Councillors.

Table 5: Method to provide input in Council projects and decision making

	2019 n=446	2020 n=380	2021 n=387	Change on LY
Survey	63%	57%	62%	▲
Submission	32%	25%	22%	▼
Direct email or phone	35%	39%	33%	▼
Face to face at Council	13%	12%	13%	▲
Online mapping	3%	3%	4%	▲
Workshop	8%	10%	6%	▼
Implementation panel	2%	2%	2%	-
Port Stephens Liveability Index Survey 2020	-	-	13%	-
Drop in session (For example, at an event)	14%	14%	11%	▼
Other (please specify)	-	8%	7%	▼

Council facilities and services

Maintaining local roads, footpaths and cycle-ways

Question 14

The score for maintenance of local roads declined 23 points since last year (down from 68% in 2020).

The score for roadside maintenance also decreased to 68% in 2021, down by 11 points as compared to last year.

Maintenance of footpaths and walking tracks, and maintenance of cycleways both declined by 8 points as compared to last year (65% and 72% score respectively in 2021).

Respondents selecting 'Don't know/use' for cycleways has almost doubled in the 2021 survey to 26%

The satisfaction score for 'maintaining traffic flow' also declined by 8 points in 2021 (78%).



**Aggregate of Slightly well, Moderately well/Neutral, Very well and Extremely well. Excludes 'Don't know/Don't use'. 2021 n = 1,957*

Table 6: Satisfaction scores for maintenance of local roads, footpaths and cycleways

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Maintaining local roads	38%	52%	64%	59%	76%	67%	75%	71%	68%	45%	▼
Roadside maintenance	59%	59%	61%	81%	84%	80%	84%	81%	79%	68%	▼
Maintaining footpaths & walking tracks	46%	54%	55%	73%	79%	76%	77%	77%	73%	65%	▼
Maintaining cycleways	54%	59%	54%	72%	77%	82%	84%	83%	80%	72%	▼
Maintaining traffic flow	70%	77%	78%	84%	88%	77%	82%	88%	86%	78%	▼

Managing our local government area (LGA)

Question 15

A total of 1,957 survey respondents rated satisfaction for 'managing illegal dumping' at 70%, 4 points higher than last year.

There has been a slight decrease in the scores for managing street trees and

controlling noxious weeds on Council land (77%, down by 3 points and 71%, down by 2 points respectively).



27% of respondents selected 'Don't know/Not sure' for 'Controlling noxious weeds on council land.'

The score for 'managing stormwater drainage systems' also had a significant decline of 17 points since last year (59% in 2021, down by 17 points from 76% in 2020).

**Aggregate of Slightly well, Moderately well/Neutral, Very well and Extremely well. Excludes 'Don't know/Don't use'. 2021 n = 1,957*

Table 7: Satisfaction scores for managing our local government area

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Managing street trees	57%	58%	60%	76%	80%	83%	84%	84%	81%	77%	▼
Managing storm water drainage systems	46%	54%	59%	68%	71%	78%	80%	79%	76%	59%	▼
Managing illegal dumping			47%	60%	61%	54%	79%	76%	67%	70%	▲
Controlling noxious weeds on Council land	38%	46%	49%	64%	68%	82%	81%	77%	73%	71%	▼

Maintaining our open spaces

Question 16

Respondents rated, maintaining parks and gardens and operational cemeteries with lower satisfaction scores as compared to the previous year (down by 5 points and 3 points respectively).



Maintaining the historical trend, more than half of the respondents selected 'Don't know/don't use' for 'Managing operational cemeteries.'

'Managing litter from rubbish bins in parks and central business districts' decreased by 1 point in 2021 to 88%.

'Maintaining of beaches and foreshores' increased by 1 point in 2021 to 88%.

**Aggregate of Slightly well, Moderately well/Neutral, Very well and Extremely well. Excludes 'Don't know/Don't use'. 2021 n = 1,957*

Table 8: Satisfaction scores for maintenance of our open spaces

Maintaining/ Managing	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Parks and gardens	71%	73%	78%	84%	90%	90%	92%	91%	93%	88%	▼
Operational cemeteries							94%	95%	92%	90%	▼
Beaches and foreshores	61%	68%	65%	75%	84%	88%	84%	87%	87%	88%	▲
Litter from rubbish bins in parks and CBD's	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	92%	89%	88%	▼

Facility maintenance

Question 17

Satisfaction scores for public toilet amenities (excluding those in the shopping centres) and for playground equipment has decreased by 4 points each (to 72% and 86% respectively). A total of 28% of the respondents chose 'Don't know/don't use' Playground equipment.



54% of total respondents indicated 'Don't know/use' Council community halls. Satisfaction with Council community halls decreased by 2 points to 90% compared to last year.

Satisfaction with sport and recreational facilities declined by 3 points to 89% compared to last year, with 35% of respondents selecting 'Don't know/use'.

Satisfaction with swimming pools also declined by 2 points to 88%, with 45% of respondents answering 'Don't know/use'.

**Aggregate of Moderately satisfied/Neutral, Satisfied and Very satisfied. Excludes 'Don't know/Don't use'. 2021 n = 1,957.*

Table 9: Satisfaction scores for maintenance of infrastructure and facilities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Public toilet amenities	75%	82%	83%	74%	84%	74%	76%	76%	76%	72%	▼
Playground equipment	84%	88%	88%	82%	91%	84%	88%	85%	90%	86%	▼
Community halls	89%	91%	92%	87%	91%	93%	91%	90%	92%	90%	▼
Sport and recreational facilities	91%	94%	92%	83%	93%	90%	90%	91%	92%	89%	▼
Swimming pools	90%	91%	94%	87%	93%	87%	90%	91%	90%	88%	▼

Delivery of services

Question 18

In the 2021 survey, the satisfaction score for Ranger Services (animal management and parking) increased by 11 points as compared to last year.

The satisfaction score for garbage collection services (96%) increased by 1 point as compared to last year. The satisfaction score for access to waste transfer stations has also increased by 5 points since 2020.

A new attribute was introduced in the 2021 Community Satisfaction survey to measure satisfaction levels with processing development applications and building approvals. 56% of the total respondents answered 'Don't use/know' the service. Those that used the service rated it at 72% satisfaction.

**Aggregate of Slightly well, Moderately well/Neutral, Very well and Extremely well. Excludes 'Don't know/Don't use'. 2021 n = 1,957*

Table 10: Community satisfaction with service delivery

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change on LY
Ranger services - animal management	66%	60%	64%	63%	63%	71%	77%	74%	67%	78%	▲
Ranger services - parking	56%	62%	60%	62%	60%	74%	74%	71%	70%	81%	▲
Garbage collection services	92%	93%	94%	86%	94%	94%	95%	95%	95%	96%	▲
Access to waste transfer stations	74%	77%	82%	72%	82%	77%	87%	88%	88%	93%	▲
Development applications and building approvals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72%	-

In the 2021 survey, the rating scale to measure satisfaction for the above-listed attributes was changed to make it similar to the other questions and included 'Not at all well, Slightly well, Moderately well, Well and Very well'.

Perception and accessibility

New developments and appearance of neighbourhoods

Question 1

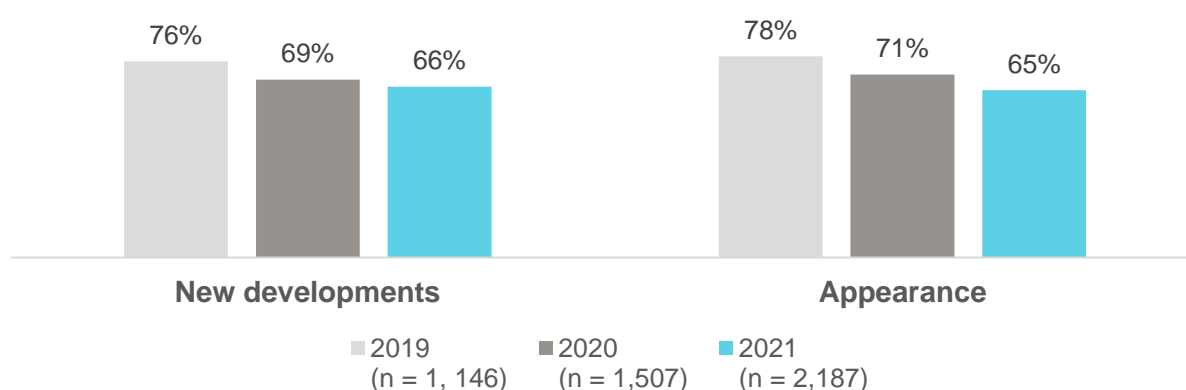


Table 11: Community satisfaction with new developments and appearance of neighbourhoods

Aggregate Satisfaction*	2019 n = 1, 146	2020 n = 1,507	2021 n = 2,187
New Developments (including residential, commercial and industrial)	76%	69%	66%
Appearance (clean, maintained, character)	78%	71%	65%

*Aggregate Satisfaction includes responses of – Very satisfied, Satisfied and Neutral.

Graph 9: Community satisfaction score for new developments and appearance of neighbourhoods



Respondents from Raymond Terrace, Corlette and Lemon Tree Passage indicated higher satisfaction scores with new developments as compared to the overall score. Respondents from Medowie and Nelson Bay area indicated higher satisfaction scores with the appearance of their neighbourhoods as compared to the overall score.

Sense of welcome

Question 2

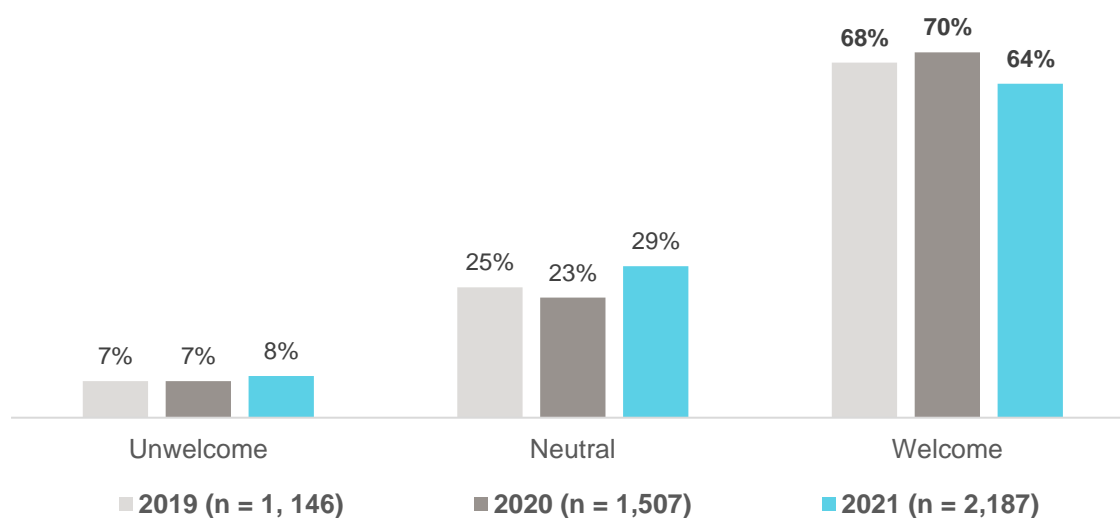
The overall percentage of respondents feeling welcome in the neighbourhood decreased by 6 points, to 64% in 2021.

Table 12: Community's sense of welcome in neighbourhoods

Aggregate*	2019	2020	2021
	n = 1, 146	n = 1,507	n = 2,187
Unwelcome	7%	7%	8%
Neutral	25%	23%	29%
Welcome	68%	70%	64%

Aggregate Unwelcome includes responses of Very unwelcome and Unwelcome. Aggregate Welcome includes responses of Very welcome and Welcome.

Graph 10: Community's sense of welcome in neighbourhoods



Respondents in Medowie, Nelson Bay, Corlette, Lemon Tree Passage and Fingal Bay area indicated feeling more welcome as compared to the overall result.

Feeling safe in Port Stephens

Question 3

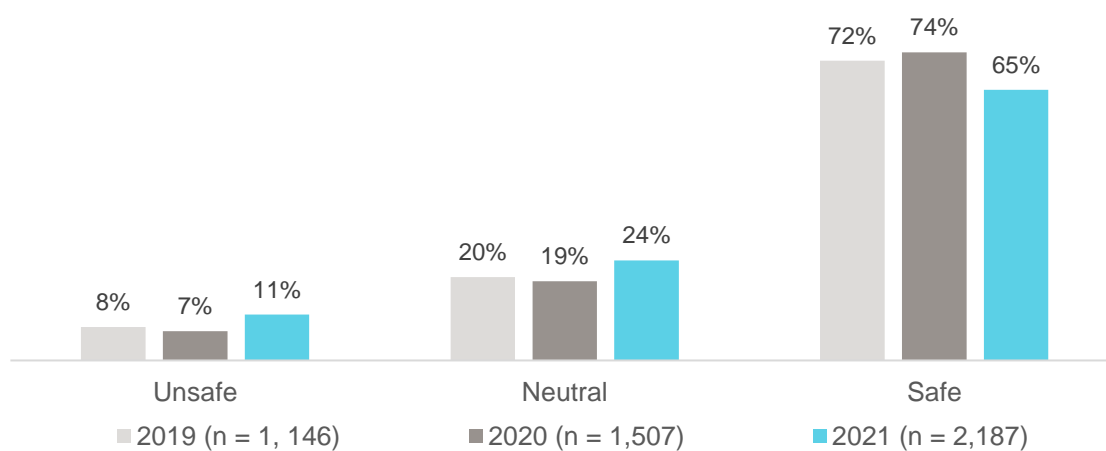
The overall percentage of respondents feeling safe in the LGA has decreased by 9 points, to 65% in 2021.

Table 13: Community perception of safety

Aggregate*	2019 n = 1, 146	2020 n = 1,507	2021 n = 2,187
Unsafe	8%	7%	11%
Neutral	20%	19%	24%
Safe	72%	74%	65%

Aggregate Unsafe includes responses of Very unsafe and Unsafe. Aggregate Safe includes responses of Very safe and Safe.

Graph 11: Community perception of safety



Respondents from Salamander Bay, Anna Bay, Fingal Bay and Soldiers Point indicated feeling safer in the LGA as compared to respondents from other areas of the LGA.

Accessibility of facilities and places

Question 4

Overall, respondents have indicated an increase in accessibility of facilities in the Port Stephens area.

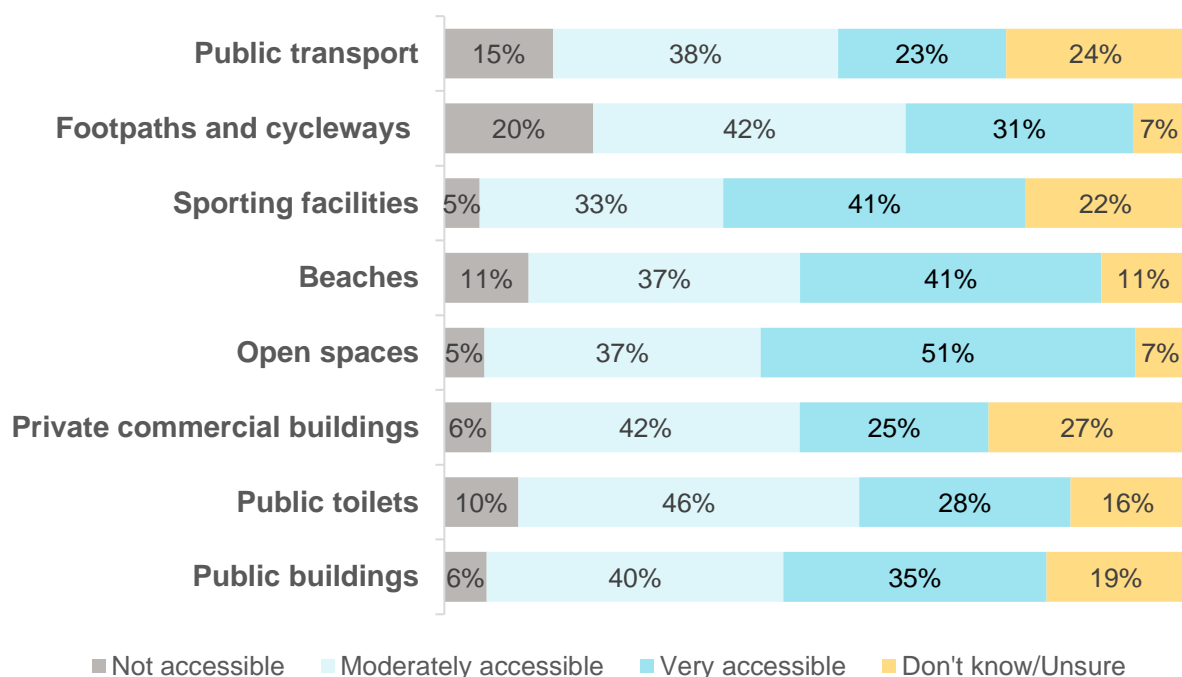
Our 'open spaces' were rated as the most accessible (88%) by survey respondents followed by beaches (77%) and public buildings (76%).

Table 14: Accessibility of facilities

Aggregate accessibility*	2019 (n=1,146)	2020 (n=1,507)	2021 (n = 2,187)	Change on LY
Public buildings	66%	71%	76%	▲
Public toilets	67%	68%	75%	▲
Private commercial buildings	53%	51%	67%	▲
Open spaces	79%	86%	88%	▲
Beaches	70%	74%	77%	▲
Sporting facilities	64%	69%	74%	▲
Footpaths and Cycleways	-	-	73%	-
Public transport	54%	55%	61%	▲

*Aggregate accessibility includes responses of – Moderately accessible and Very accessible.

Graph 12: 2021 Accessibility of facilities



Participation in activities and events

Participation in community/cultural activities or events

Question 5

Overall, 77% of the respondents indicated participation in some community/cultural activities or events. The impacts of COVID-19 could be a contributing factor in the decline of numbers participating. Several events and activities were also cancelled due to the public health order restrictions.

There has been a slight increase in participation at sporting or recreation events and Library events.

Table 15: Participation in community/cultural activities or events

	2019 n = 1,181	2020 n = 1,482	2021 n = 2,105	Change on LY
Volunteer group (For example, Service Club, Environment Group and so on)	13%	34%	27%	▼
Community events (For example, Australia Day celebrations, NAIDOC week, Community markets and so on)	22%	41%	35%	▼
Workshop or Education program	7%	14%	8%	▼
Sports or Recreation (Example, sporting club)	19%	35%	38%	▲
Cinemas	44%	60%	38%	▼
Festival or Cultural event (For example, Port Stephens Surf Festival and so on)	30%	39%	14%	▼
Lifestyle event (For example, Sail Port Stephens)	23%	28%	11%	▼
Theatre performances	5%	9%	3%	▼
Live music performances	22%	27%	10%	▼
Music concerts (For example, opera, classical and so on)	3%	6%	3%	▼
Dance performances	4%	6%	2%	▼
Library events	5%	6%	10%	▲
Art galleries	16%	20%	11%	▼
Museums	7%	10%	7%	▼
Did not attend	not comparable		21%	-
Don't know	not comparable		2%	-
Other (please specify)	2%	5%	6%	▲

Respondents provided multiple responses, the total of all categories exceeds 100%.

Usage of facilities for recreation and/or leisure

Question 6

Overall, there has been a decline in the usage of recreation and/or leisure facilities as compared to 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health restrictions, several facilities were either closed for some periods or operated with reduced capacity.

Table 16: Usage of facilities

Aggregate usage*	2019 n=1,159	2020 n=1,482	2021 n=2,105	Change from LY
Community Halls	41%	45%	42%	▼
Sporting Facilities (oval, court or field)	56%	62%	61%	▼
Swimming Pools	51%	50%	46%	▼
Parks reserves or playgrounds (including bmx, skate etc.)	75%	84%	72%	▼
Gym	29%	34%	29%	▼
Cycleways	55%	58%	52%	▼

*Aggregate usage includes responses of – Multiple times per week, Weekly, Monthly and Rarely.

Participation with volunteer groups

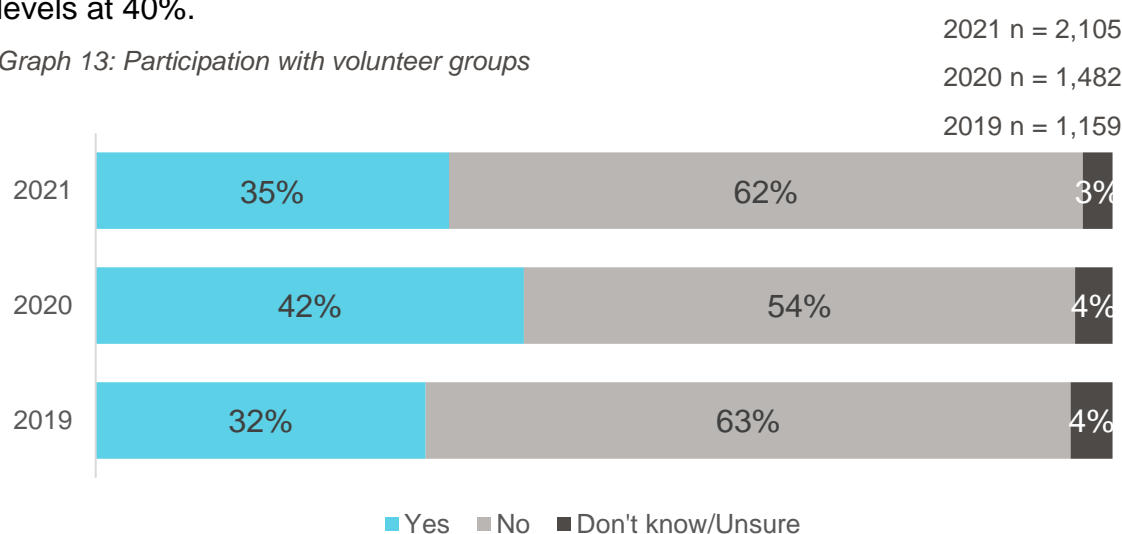
Question 7

Overall participation with Volunteer groups has declined as compared to last year.

In 2021, 35% of respondents indicated participating in volunteer groups. This is 7 points lower than the last year. The decline in the participation with volunteer groups may be attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The respondents from the age group 66 years and over indicated higher participation levels at 40%.

Graph 13: Participation with volunteer groups



Participation in Council programs

Environmental education programs

Question 8

Participation in some of the environmental education programs has decreased in 2021. The participation in Cultural heritage awareness programs has decreased by 12 points to 9% and the Invasive species workshops and field days participation levels declined by 17 points to 3%.

Participation levels in Land care activities and bushland regeneration (11%), as well as the Nature watch activities (20%), has increased by 6 points and 10 points respectively.

Overall, Environmental Days, Waste and Sustainability activities and the Nature Watch activities have been more popular and with higher participation levels as compared to other programs and activities.

The decline in participation with the environmental education programs may be attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 17: Participation in Environmental education programs

Participation in environmental education programs	2019 n = 1,188	2020 n = 1,463	2021 n = 2,043	Change from LY
Environmental days (For example, National Tree Day, Clean up Australia day and so on)	10%	13%	15%	▲
Land care activities and bush-land regeneration	3%	5%	11%	▲
Cultural heritage awareness (For example, Indigenous connection to land, traditional management practices, guided walks and so on)	19%	21%	9%	▼
Invasive species workshop and field days	14%	20%	3%	▼
Waste and sustainability activities (For example, beach clean-ups, marine plastic education and so on)	17%	20%	15%	▼
School holiday activities with an environmental focus (For example, summer coastal activities and so on)	7%	9%	6%	▼
Marine Discovery Series (For example, whale tales)	6%	6%	5%	▼
Nature watch activities (For example, spotlighting, surveying and koala sightings and so on)	8%	10%	20%	▲

Problem Waste' drop off

Question 9

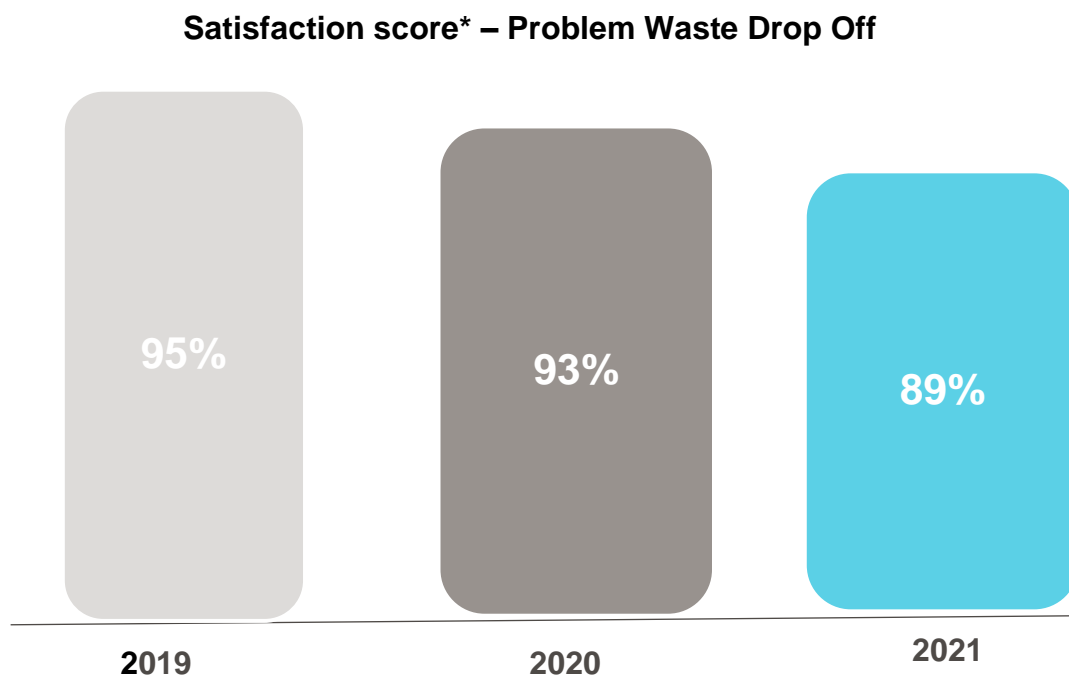
Council holds free drop off events for 'Problem Waste' including mattresses, tyres, E-waste and chemicals. In 2021, 85% of respondents indicated that they were aware of this service with 47% attending the Problem Waste Drop off event.

There has been a slight decrease in awareness, however, the number of people attending increased by 4 points compared to last year.

Table 18: Problem Waste drop off days

2019 (n=1,188)	2020 (n=1,463)	2021 (n=2,043)	Change on LY
Awareness about Problem Waste drop off event			
88%	89%	85%	▼
Attendance at the Problem Waste drop off event			
43%	43%	47%	▲

Graph 14: Community satisfaction score* - problem waste drop off days



* Satisfaction of respondents who attended the Problem Waste Drop off Day.

Usage of Council facilities

Usage of community halls or centres

Question 10

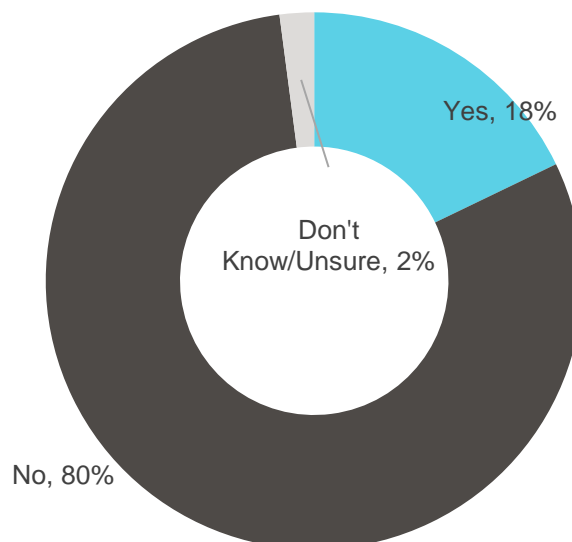
We have several community halls/centres in our local government area (for example, Anna Bay Hall, Birubi Hall, Bobs Farm Public Hall, Hinton School of Arts, Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Hall and so on).

A decline in the usage of our community halls/centres (18% usage, down by 18 points) can be seen as compared to the last year. This may be attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 19: Usage of community halls or centres

	2019 n=1,188	2020 n=1,463	2021 n=2,028	Change on LY
Usage of community halls	36%	36%	18%	▼

Graph 15: 2021 Usage of community halls or centres



Our library services

Question 11, 12 & 13

Port Stephens Council operates 4 library branches that offer a wide range of resources, programs and events for our community.

The 2021 community satisfaction survey included 3 questions to measure usage of our library services from community members.

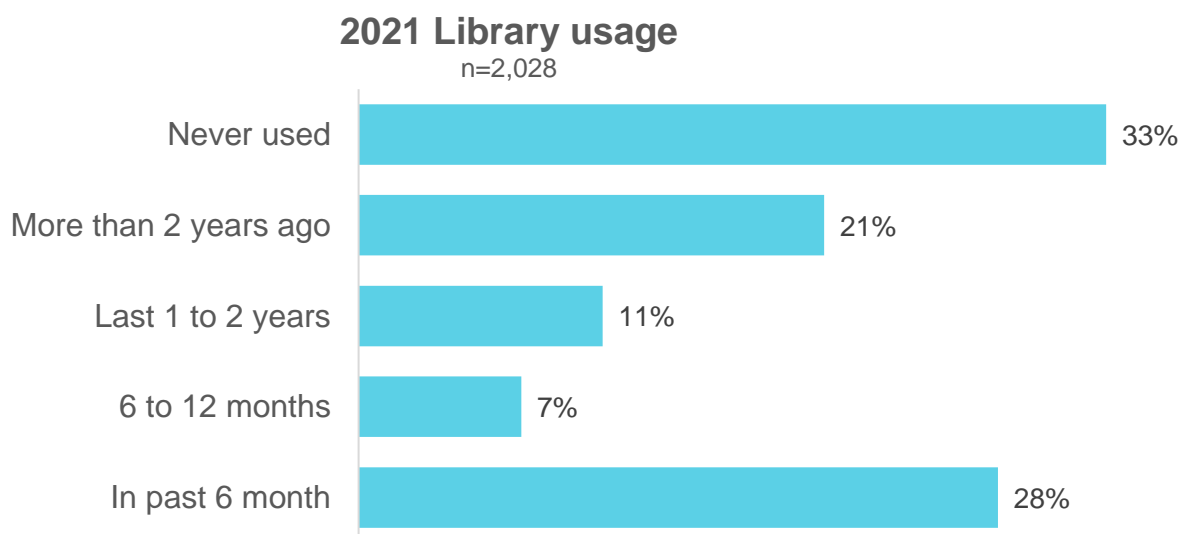
More than 35% of the respondents used the library service within the last 12 months.



One-third of the respondents (33% of 2,028) indicated never using the library or any of its services.

Female respondents have indicated a higher level of usage in the past 2 years (73%) as compared to male respondents (60%).

Graph 16: 2021 Library usage



Further analysis indicates the main reason for respondents not using or stopping the use of library services is not being interested in programs or activities offered by the library. Other reasons include – COVID-19 pandemic, other personal commitments/priorities and not having access to the library.

Advertising the range and availability of library programs/activities and increasing access to the library were identified as opportunities for improvement by respondents.

Our annual Library user satisfaction survey also measures usage, however, it is targeted to library users.

Communication with Council

Receiving information from Council

Question 19 & 20

The preferred form of communication from Council remains email (56%) or mail (34%).

The greatest change since 2020 has been an 11 point increase in preference for mail (34%, up from 23%) and 7 point increase in preference for social media (31%, up from 24%).



Table 20: Communication methods

	2020 n = 1,409	2021 n = 1,937	Change from LY
Mail (post)	23%	34%	▲
Media	23%	26%	▲
SMS (text message)	-	8%	-
Council's Website	22%	24%	▲
Social Media	24%	31%	▲
Email	59%	56%	▼
Face-to-face engagement	6%	8%	▲
Other	9%	4%	▼

Respondents provided multiple answers

Overall, our community's interest in knowing more about council projects, news and events as well as opportunities to provide feedback has increased since last year.

Table 21: Communication with council

	2020 n = 1,409	2021 n = 1,871	Change on LY
Current and upcoming projects	44%	76%	▲
Council news and events	14%	51%	▲
Community news and events	19%	59%	▲
Opportunities to have your say	23%	57%	▲

Contact with council

Question 21

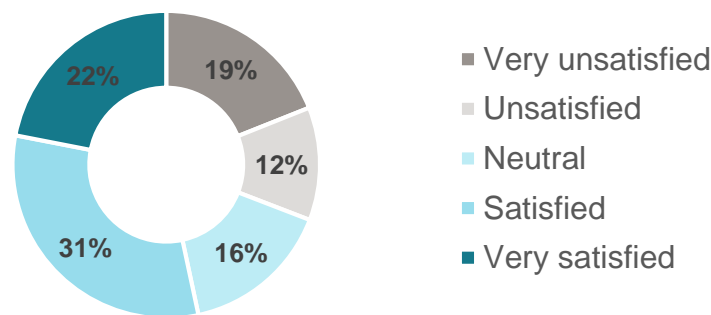
More than 7 in ten respondents (73%) have had contact with Council staff via various channels including in-person, writing or email, by telephone, text message or social media. This is 4 points higher than last year.

Graph 17: Contact with council



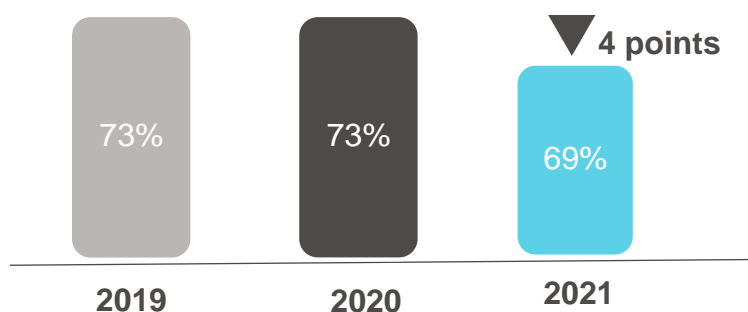
More than half of respondents rated they were satisfied or very satisfied regarding their contact with Council.

Graph 18: 2021 Satisfaction with council contact



Overall satisfaction of those who contacted Council, has declined in 2021 as compared to last year (down by 4 points).

Graph 19: Satisfaction score* - contact with Council



* According to the Likert scale, to achieve an overall satisfaction figure, respondents answered that they were: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied/Neutral. Excludes 'Did not contact Council'.

Appendices

Appendix A: About the survey, statistics and detailed demographics

About the survey

The survey was conducted from 24 May 2021 to 18 June 2021. A link to the survey was emailed to residents and printed copies were made available on request. The CSS was promoted via media releases, Council’s website and social media.

Statistics

Based on the local government area (LGA) population of 74,506 (2020 Estimated Residential Population, REMPLAN July 2021) to determine statistical validity with 95% confidence and 3% relative standard error, 1,053 survey responses were required. The total survey response was **2,187**.

This report also represents statistically valid survey results for male and female populations with 95% confidence and 5% relative standard error.

Not all respondents answered all the questions. Percentage results shown in Table 1 and the report are aggregates of responses received and exclude ‘Don’t know’, ‘Not sure’ and ‘Don’t use’ responses.

According to the Likert scale, to achieve an overall satisfaction figure, respondents answered that they were: Very satisfied, Satisfied and Moderately satisfied/Neutral.

Table 1 includes results from the Library User Satisfaction Survey 2021 and the Children’s Services Survey 2021.

This report presents outcomes from the 2021 survey and where a direct comparison can be made, also shows results from 2012 to 2020.

Demographics

The sample size of 2,187 respondents is statistically valid, however is not a representation of Port Stephens population in terms of demographics.

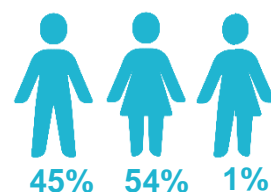
74,506 Total Population

Median age **45**
(2020 ERP - REMPLAN)



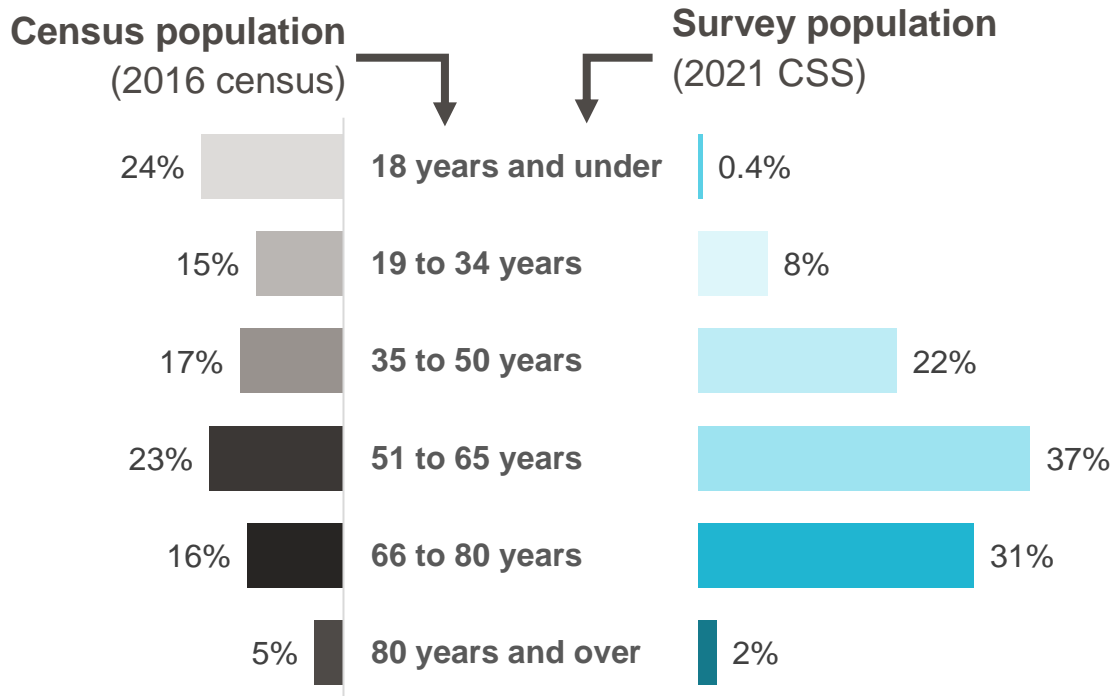
2,187 Survey Population

Median age group **51-60 years***



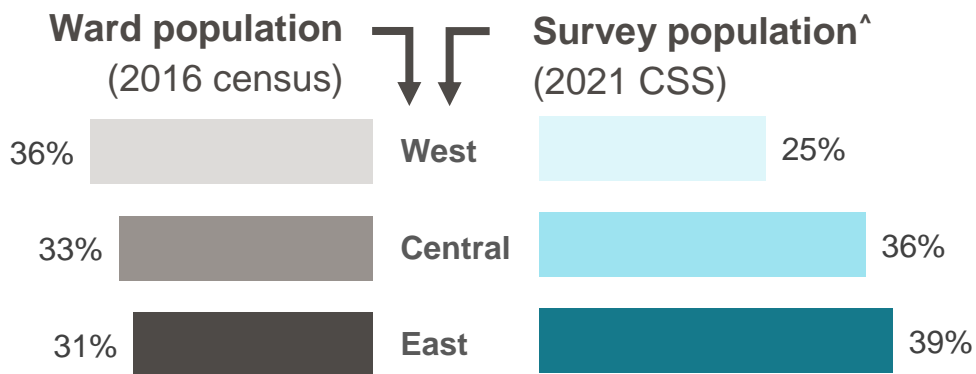
* of those that answered the question

Population by age groups



* of those that answered the age and gender question

Population by ward



^ of those that answered the question related to where they live.

Appendix B: List of questions in CSS 2021

1. How satisfied are you with the following in your neighbourhood?
 - New developments (including residential, commercial and industrial)
 - Appearance (clean, maintained, character)
2. How welcome do you feel in your community/neighbourhood?
3. Overall, how safe do you feel in the Port Stephens area?
4. How satisfied are you with the following in your neighbourhood?
 - Public buildings (For example, libraries, council administration building, community halls and so on)
 - Public toilets
 - Beaches
 - Private commercial buildings
 - Open spaces (For example, parks, playgrounds, foreshore and so on)
 - Sporting facilities
 - Footpaths and cycleways
 - Public transport
5. In the past 12 months have you attended a community/cultural activity or event?
6. In the past 12 months, have you used one or more of the following facilities for recreation and/or leisure?
 - Community Halls (For example, fitness activities and so on)
 - Sporting facilities (including ovals, courts and fields)
 - Swimming Pools
 - Parks, reserves or playgrounds (For example, BMX, skate parks and so on)
 - Gym
 - Cycleways
7. In the past 12 months, have you participated with a volunteer group? (For example, service club, environment group and so on)
8. In the past 12 months, have you participated in one or more of the following environmental education programs?
 - Environmental days (For example, National Tree Day, Clean up Australia Day and so on)
 - Land care activities and bush-land regeneration
 - Cultural heritage awareness (For example, Indigenous connection to land, traditional management practices, guided walks and so on)
 - Invasive species workshop and field days

- Waste and sustainability activities (For example, beach clean-ups, marine plastic education and so on)
 - School holiday activities with an environmental focus (For example, summer coastal activities and so on)
 - Marine Discovery Series (For example, whale tales and so on)
 - Nature watch activities (For example, spotlighting, surveying and koala sighting and so on)
9. In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of Council's free 'Problem Waste' drop off days and if yes were you satisfied with the service?
10. In the past 12 months, have you used any of the Council halls or centres?
11. When was the last time you visited the library or used any of the services provided (including the website and online services)?
12. When was the last time you visited the library or used any of the services provided (including the website and online services)?
13. What would make you more likely to use the library service in the future?
14. How well is Council maintaining local roads/footpaths/cycleways?
- Maintaining local roads
 - Roadside maintenance (For example. Trees, litter, weeds slashing and so on)
 - Maintaining footpaths and walking tracks
 - Maintaining cycleways
 - Maintaining traffic flow (For example, traffic lights, roundabouts, street signs and so on)
15. How well is Council managing our local government area?
- Managing street trees
 - Managing stormwater drainage system
 - Managing illegal dumping
 - Controlling noxious weeds on Council land
16. How well is Council maintaining our open spaces?
- Maintaining parks and gardens
 - Maintaining operational cemeteries
 - Managing litter from rubbish bins in parks and central business district
 - Maintaining beaches and foreshores
17. How satisfied are you with these facilities?
- Public toilet amenities (excluding those in the shopping centres)
 - Playground equipment
 - Community halls

- Sports and recreational facilities (including ovals and club rooms)
- Swimming pools

18. How well does Council deliver these facilities?

- Ranger services – animal management
- Ranger services – parking
- Access to waste transfer stations
- Development applications and building approvals

19. How do you prefer to receive information about Council and what is happening in Port Stephens?

20. What information would you like to see more of from Council?

21. In the past 12 months have you contacted Council staff for any reason (in person, writing or email, by telephone, text message or social media)? If yes, how satisfied are you with our response including time, manner and answering your enquiry?

22. In the past 12 months, do you feel you have had an opportunity to provide input in Council projects and decision-making?

23. What method did you use to provide input in Council decision-making?

24. Overall, how satisfied are you that Council is managing its resources (workforce, assets and finances) well?

25. For the past 12 months, overall, how satisfied are you with Council's services?

26. What would most improve our service? Please share your ideas for improvement or feedback.

27. To assist in informing this report, overall, how satisfied are you that the elected Council has delivered on its operational plans, strategies and capital works program(s)?

28. What area/suburb of Port Stephens do you live in?

29. Please indicate your age and gender.



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