

Benalla Rural City Council

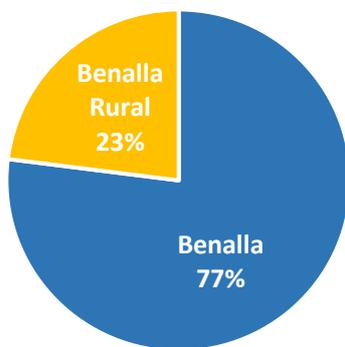
Council Plan Community Survey Results

The Community Survey was developed in online format and promoted to community via email, social media and through established networks. The online survey is *one of a suite of engagement methods* designed to invite input into Council's Plan.

A total of 286 community members filled in a survey. Results have been summarised below.

Survey Respondents

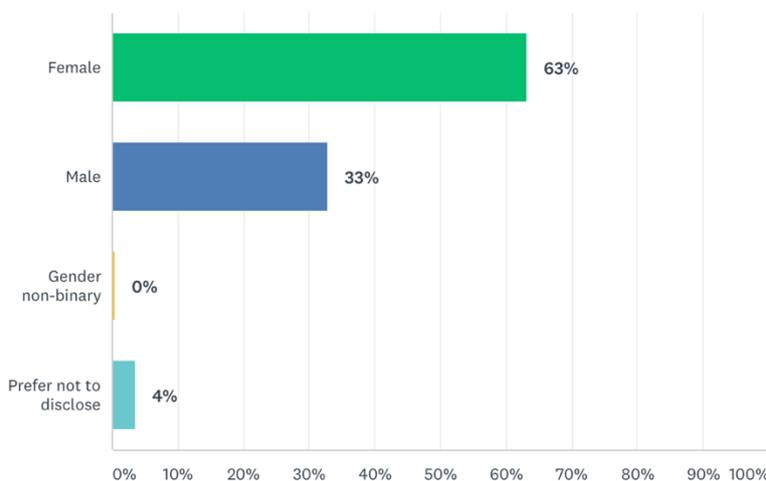
Where survey respondents lived



The majority of survey respondents (77%) lived in Benalla itself and the remaining 23% resided in outlying rural areas including: Tatong, Warrenbayne, Lurg, Molyullah, Baddaginnie, Chesney Vale, Goomalibee, Goorambat, Lima, Swanpool, Winton, Tarnook and Stewarton.

Gender

63% of survey respondents identified as female, 33% identified as male and the remaining 4% chose not to disclose their gender.



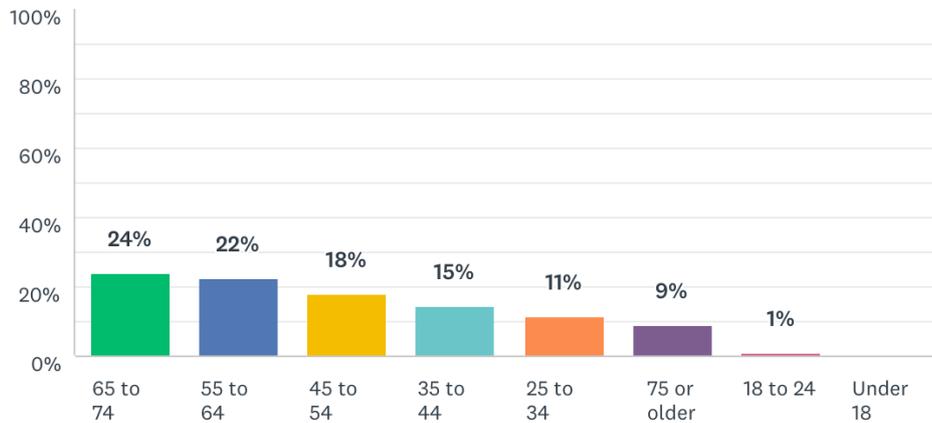
Respondents also shared:

- 13% of respondents shared that they lived in an isolated area (e.g., geographically remote, poor internet or mobile access)
- 7% were living with a disability
- 3% identified as LGBTQI+; and
- 1% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Age

What is your age?

Answered: 281 Skipped: 5

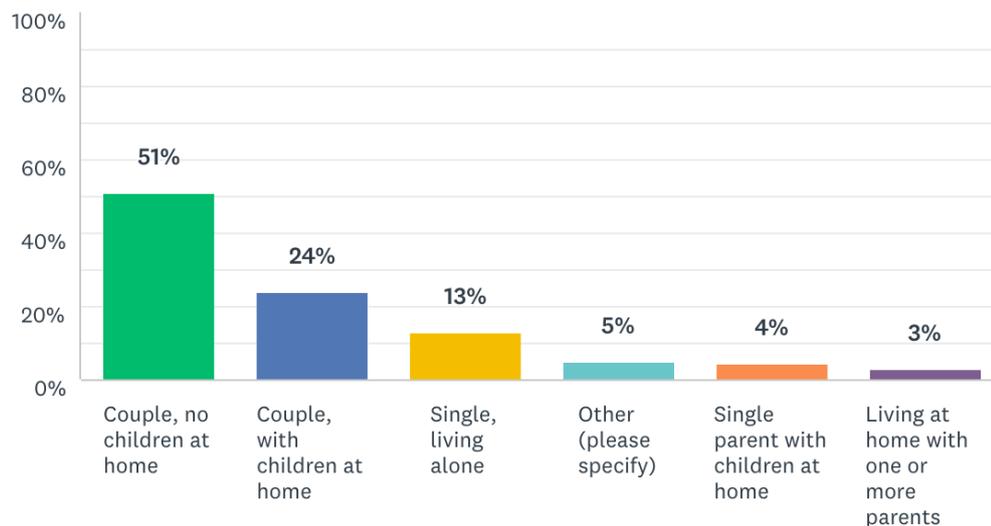


The three most represented age groups who completed a survey were: 65-74 years of age (24%), 55-64 years of age (22%) and 45-54 years of age (18%). The under 24 age group had low representation with the 18-24 age group accounting for 1% and the under 18 age group receiving no responses.

Household Type

What is your household type?

Answered: 280 Skipped: 6

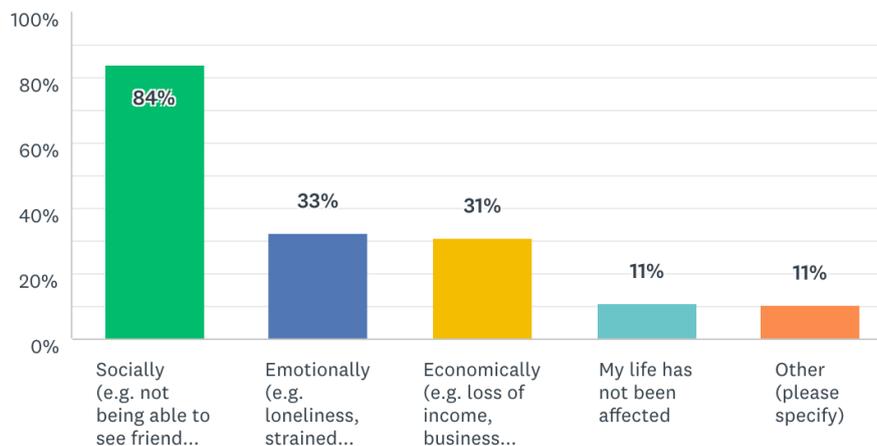


Over half of survey respondents (51%) were couples with no children at home, a lesser 24% were couples with children living at home and 13% were single person households. 4% of respondents were single parents with children living at home and 3% of respondents were living at home with parent(s). 5% indicated that they lived in households caring for elderly relatives or grandchildren, shared accommodation or couples living with adult children.

Impacts of Covid-19

COVID-19 has impacted us all in different ways. Which areas of your life have been affected? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 284 Skipped: 2



As a result of Covid-19, social (84%), emotional (33%) and economic (31%) impacts were greatest for survey respondents. 11% of respondents indicated that their lives had not been affected by Covid-19 and the remaining 11% shared other impacts such as:

- new volunteering opportunities
- volunteer management
- physical/health issues due to delayed surgery and lack of access to wellbeing services
- lack of activities for children and social connections
- travel bans
- work/life balance impacted by increased workloads
- home schooling challenges
- academic achievement challenges for students

"Much increased workload both during and after lockdowns."

"My mother died and we were only allowed 10 at the funeral and we have a large family."

"Challenged with home schooling while working fulltime from home."

"Volunteer organisations under immense pressure and stress - dealing with uncertainty and new Covid regulations but more importantly trying to keep volunteers and members engaged and happy. Lots of issues and self-implosions."

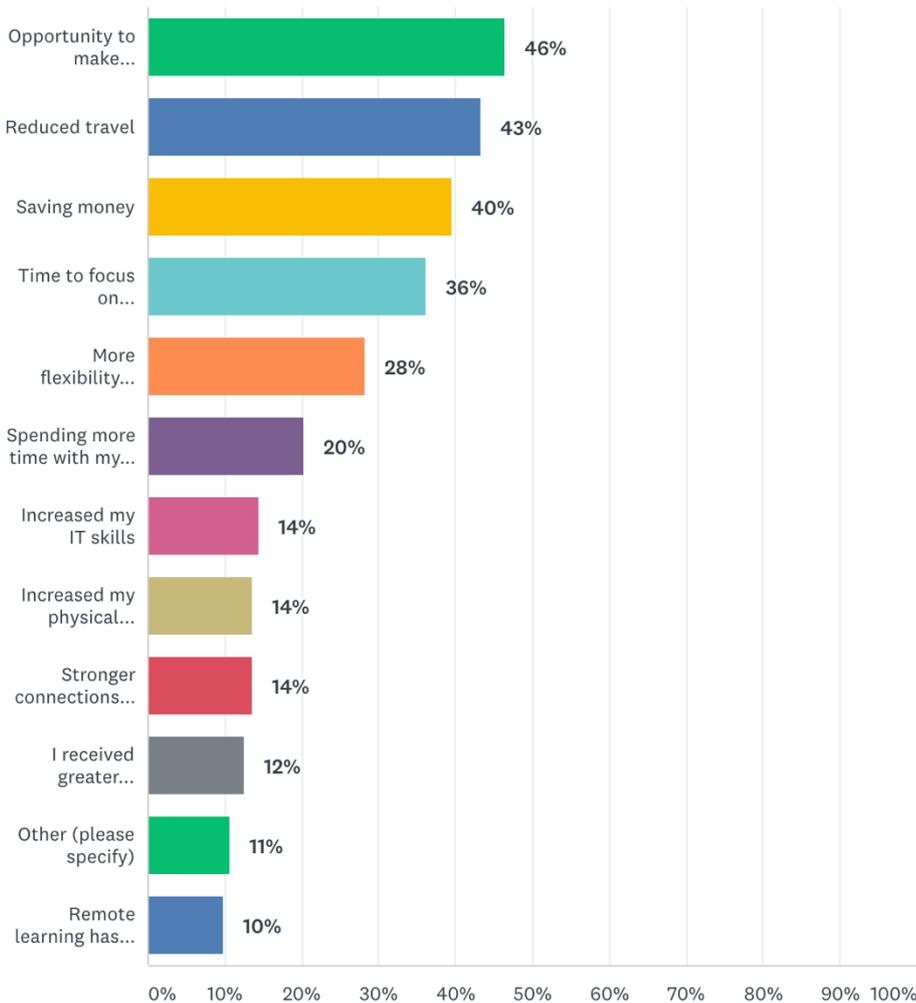
"Lockdown did provide opportunities for volunteer fire recovery work which would not have happened otherwise".

"Work industry greatly affected - tourism/events."

"As we are farmers; we had plenty of work to do."

Have you experienced any unexpected positive outcomes during the Covid-19 pandemic? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 265 Skipped: 21



The five top 'unexpected positive outcomes' during Covid were:

1. Opportunity to make improvements at home (46%)
2. Reduced travel (43%)
3. Saving money (40%)
4. Time for hobbies/interests (36%)
5. Flexible working arrangements (28%)

"More time with my partner."

"Wrote a book."

"Time to reassess work/life balance."

"Online entertainment and education usually only available in big cities."

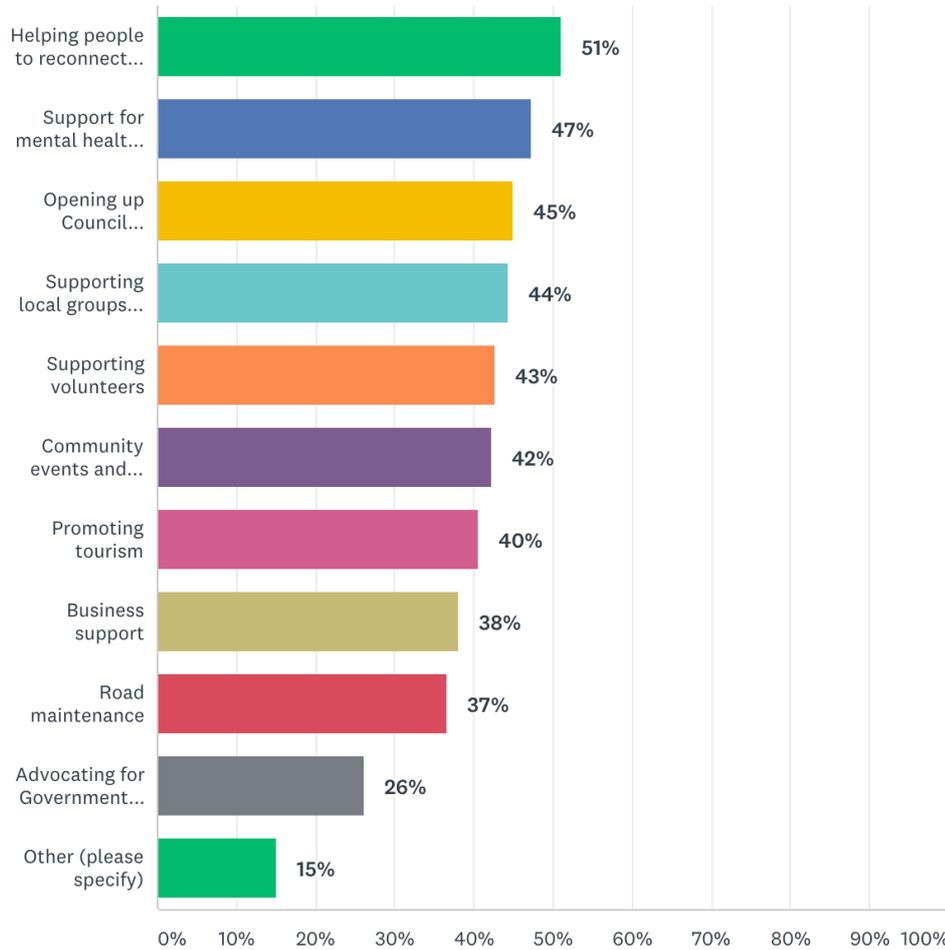
"Greater community spirit."

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Opportunity to make improvements to my home and/or garden	46%	123
Reduced travel	43%	115
Saving money	40%	105
Time to focus on hobbies/interests	36%	96
More flexibility with my working arrangements	28%	75
Spending more time with my family	20%	54
Increased my IT skills	14%	38
Increased my physical activity	14%	36
Stronger connections with my neighbours	14%	36
I received greater government financial assistance	12%	33
Other (please specify)	11%	28
Remote learning has increased my understanding of my child/ren's or grandchild/ren's education	10%	26
Total Respondents: 265		

Other positive outcomes mentioned: more time to volunteer, farm maintenance, more time for professional development, reduced carbon footprint, more access to online entertainment, and greater community spirit.

As our community adapts to life in our recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic what are the areas you would like the Council to focus on? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 284 Skipped: 2



The five greatest areas of interest for Council to focus on post Covid were:

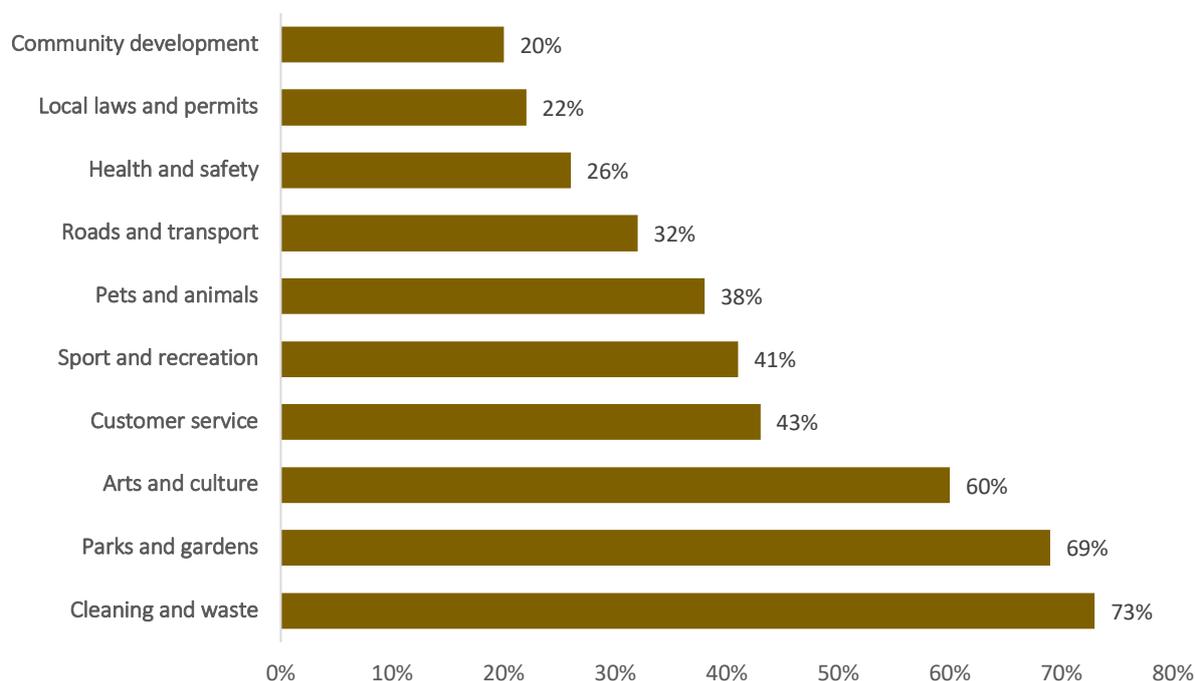
1. Helping people to reconnect to their community (51%)
2. Support and advocacy for mental health (47%)
3. Opening up Council services and programs (45%)
4. Supporting local groups and organisations to be Covid safe (44%)
5. Supporting volunteers (43%)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Helping people to reconnect to their community	51%	145
Support for mental health and advocating for more services	47%	134
Opening up Council services and programs	45%	128
Supporting local groups and organisations to operate in a COVID-safe way	44%	126
Supporting volunteers	43%	121
Community events and celebrations	42%	120
Promoting tourism	40%	115
Business support	38%	108
Road maintenance	37%	104
Advocating for Government support for people affected by the pandemic	26%	74
Other (please specify)	15%	43
Total Respondents: 284		

Other recovery areas mentioned: railway plan, more alcohol and drug services, footpaths, community hall support, small business support, pool access/management, sports club support, more in-home care, climate change focus, affordable events, employment support, mental health, affordable rates, activities for children and youth, improved communication from Council.

Council Services

The top ten Council services that survey respondents had accessed in the past two years were:



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Cleaning and waste (e.g. kerbside waste and recycling, landfill)	73% 208
▼ Parks and gardens (e.g. walking and bike paths, playgrounds, BBQ areas)	69% 197
▼ Arts and culture (e.g. Library, Art Gallery, events)	60% 172
▼ Customer Service (e.g. telephone enquiries, paying accounts, booking rooms)	43% 122
▼ Sport and recreation (e.g. recreation reserves, aquatic centre, skatepark)	41% 118
▼ Pets and animals (e.g. pet registrations, animal complaints)	38% 107
▼ Roads and transport (e.g. local roads and bridges, school crossing supervisors)	32% 92
▼ Health and safety (e.g. food safety, public toilets)	26% 74
▼ Local laws and permits (e.g. planning and building permits, disabled parking)	22% 63
▼ Community development (e.g. community grants, rural outreach)	20% 56
▼ Planning and building (e.g. land use planning, building inspections)	17% 49
▼ Volunteers (e.g. volunteer recruitment and support)	13% 37
▼ Environment (e.g. roadside weeds and pest control, tree planting)	12% 35
▼ Family and children (e.g. maternal and child health, immunisations, family liaison)	11% 32
▼ Business services (e.g. business advice, support and training)	6% 17
▼ Aged care and disability (e.g. meals on wheels, social support groups)	6% 16
▼ Youth services (e.g. L2P program, Live4Life, FReeZA)	3% 8
▼ Emergency management (e.g. emergency planning and assistance after an emergency)	2% 7
▼ Other (please specify) Responses	2% 6
▼ I have not accessed any of these services	1% 3
Total Respondents: 285	

Services of Importance

Respondents were asked: *Is there a service that is particularly important to you?*

Of the 120 respondents who answered this question the services of importance mentioned were:

Parks, Gardens and Playgrounds (18%)

Parks, gardens and playgrounds were the most mentioned service of those that provided feedback.

The 'Rocket Park' Children's playground and the importance of having safe equipment for a range of ages (inclusive of older children) and well thought out design was highlighted a number of times:

"The children's playground desperately needs equipment to encourage children aged 10 to 14 to enjoy. A large spider climbing frame, etc, something challenging for them, even the old monkey bars or balancing challenges. Currently it's fine for 3 to 8 yr olds but dull boring for older children."

"Rocket park playground has not been successful - not suitable playground equipment for 5-16-year olds - need climbing, slides and swings. Ropes course is not engaging for long."

"Children's park - at the rocket needs decent play equipment suitable for all ages - see the Facebook Benalla community page recently there has been a lot of discussion on the inappropriateness of the playground."

"We have young children and moved to the area 2 years ago - the lack of children's play areas/playgrounds is apparent. If the local council wants to attract tourists, better/improved playgrounds is essential."

"The park is rubbish. I know there has been a lot of controversy and complaints surrounding the current rocket park. Having 2 gates and an open part of the fence on the toddler area is ridiculous as you might as well open it all up to chase a toddler around the greater park every time we play. You also can't supervise other children when in the toddler area due to the high, 98% enclosed fence and shrubbery. The handrail for the toddler bridge is too high and many toddlers could slip through and fall."

The splash park was mentioned as a much-valued site, more shade and closer toilet facilities were mentioned as needs.

"Pleased to see that Benalla now has a Splash Park. Recreational areas are very important not only to the local community but also for visitors to the town."

"Congratulations on the splash park , very well done."

"It would be nice to have a toilet near the new water park."

A couple of respondents mentioned the need for a local dog park.

Pool/Aquatic Centre (10%)

The outdoor pool and aquatic centre were mentioned as important services by a number of respondents. Suggestions for these highly valued services were, accessible stairs for the outdoor pool, longer opening hours for the outdoor pool, more parking at the pool and improved accessibility through additional disabled parking and road access from parking places to footpaths.

“Open the outdoor pool all day in the summer, the times are very restricted.”

“More disabled parking at the pool and better road access for wheelchairs from parking to footpaths”.

“The swimming pool and fitness environment are important to me.”

“The outdoor pool , I cannot use Benalla's due to low mobility, the stairs are wobbly, and do not all match hand-rails and the last step is the gutter, it is terribly unsafe. I go to Wangaratta and am a member there, directly due to this.”

Library (9%)

The Library was mentioned by a number of respondents as a highly valued and frequently used service. The free access to materials and the meeting rooms were of particular mention.

“The library is a great place to have meetings as well as get books.”

“I value having access to free resources for my family.”

“The Library is vital to me.”

“The library - no cost borrowing, access to computers and printing/scanning, study and free Wi-Fi.”

Roads and Drainage (8%)

Roads were an important service highlighted by town and especially outlying rural residents who filled in a survey. Regular road maintenance and improvements for both sealed and unsealed roads was a priority need. Also highlighted was control of roadside weeds, addressing drainage issues and a strengthened focus on road planning.

“Having driven many miles in tractors this harvest season, the appalling state of rural roads is even more apparent to me.”

The poor state of unsealed roads within the Benalla Rural City. Potholes, ruts, large loose stones and no weed control: high driver safety risk and high fire risk.

“I would like to see Council have clearer plans around their roads.”

“Maintaining rural roads and access tracks. Slashing roadsides and around rural villages.”

“Storm Water Drainage is an issue in most parts of Devenish.”

“Put in place a plans for both storm water and footpaths (which Streets and when) - spread the works out over a number of years (one or two streets per year) , budget for the cost and implement the plan (not expecting everything to be done all at once- but at least plan and commit to a plan (and don't then rob that budget for pet projects - get the job done).”

Footpaths (7%)

Footpaths were mentioned as important for a number of survey respondents. Of particular mention was the need for: footpath maintenance for uneven paths and pruning of trees regularly that overhang footpaths. Planning for the addition of new footpaths where there currently aren't any was also put forward.

"Many streets have only one footpath on one side of the Street - if you live on the street side with no footpath then dis regarding the safety issue, you are forever stepping through mud (in winter) and dirt (during other seasons) when accessing your property."

"Footpaths are uneven such as in Benalla between Nunn and Carrier streets."

Waste Management (7%)

Waste management was mentioned as a used and important service to a number of respondents. Of particular mention was the high cost of rubbish bins and the need for hard waste collection. The tip was also commented on, suggesting the need for cheaper or free tip access and longer tip opening hours.

"I would love to see council introduce a kerbside rubbish collect. Not everyone has the means of taking unwanted larger items to the top."

"The tip needs to be open longer hours, especially at the weekends, to allow working people better access."

"The tip needs to be cheaper or even FREE to stop all the illegal dumping along roads the rail line and bush areas."

The Arts (7%)

The 'Arts' was mentioned by a number of respondents as an important service. The Art Gallery, arts activities, festivals/events and BPACC were highly valued. Arts were highlighted as a way of enhancing community connections and providing stronger economic outcomes.

"Arts and Events add to the liveability and desirability of Benalla. More outdoor festivals/concerts/performances, create a sculpture walk, and things like Wodonga's weekly/monthly "Fridays on My Mind" events."

I would like to see more events at the art gallery/library. We need to embrace these two fantastic resources & encourage the community to realise how fortunate we are to have these facilities in Benalla.

"Art teaches empathy towards others and makes a more humane society."

"Arts and Tourism, specifically the Benalla Art Gallery re-development."

Sporting Reserves (6%)

The importance of sporting reserves and ongoing support for them was mentioned by a number of respondents. Exploring a larger shared sports/recreation facility was also suggested.

"Support for community reserves, in particular the Friendlies Oval and surrounds."

"Benalla needs to have a modern sporting focal point where many sporting groups can get together as a community; it would improve mental and physical health issues, promote community spirit, and make Benalla a potential future locus for bigger sporting events which would attract economic gain for small businesses in the area."

Walking and Bike Paths (5%)

Walking and bike paths were mentioned as important services for a number of residents. The Lake Benalla walking track was highlighted as a vital space. Suggestions for more walking and bicycle paths was made by residents who completed a survey.

“Lake Benalla walking track and surrounds - crucial during Covid lockdown for exercise and safe socialisation.”

“I especially would like to see Council do more to embrace walking & cycling & to start to make it more of a priority.”

“Bike transport. Benalla is the perfect town to promote bike travel - flat, small, safe. Let's create far more bike paths for safe travel around town, particularly north-south.”

Senior Citizens (3%)

The Senior Citizens Centre was mentioned as a valued space for community groups. The impact of the centre being closed due to Covid was highlighted. More generally, services for seniors were mentioned as being important.

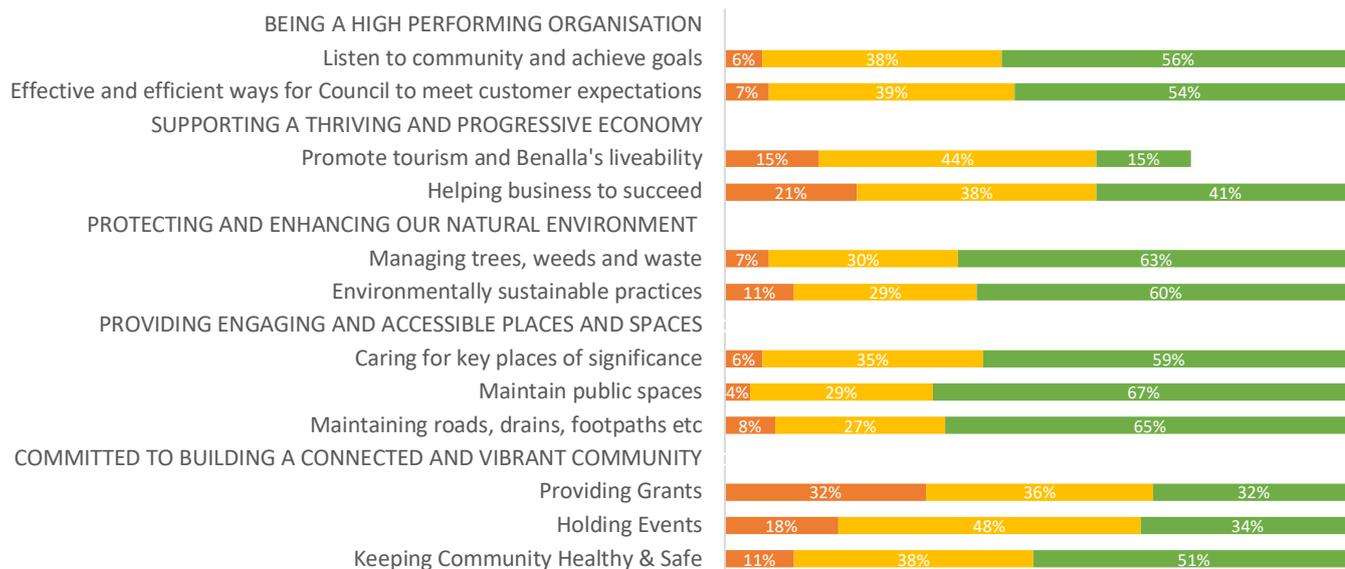
“We have not been able to access our room at the Benalla Senior 's complex since March 2020.”

Council Plan Priorities

Respondents were asked to rate the value they give to each current Council Plan priority area personally and for their family and community and were also asked to rate BRCC progress for each current priority area thus far.

What value would you give these personally for you and your family?

Low Value Medium Value High Value

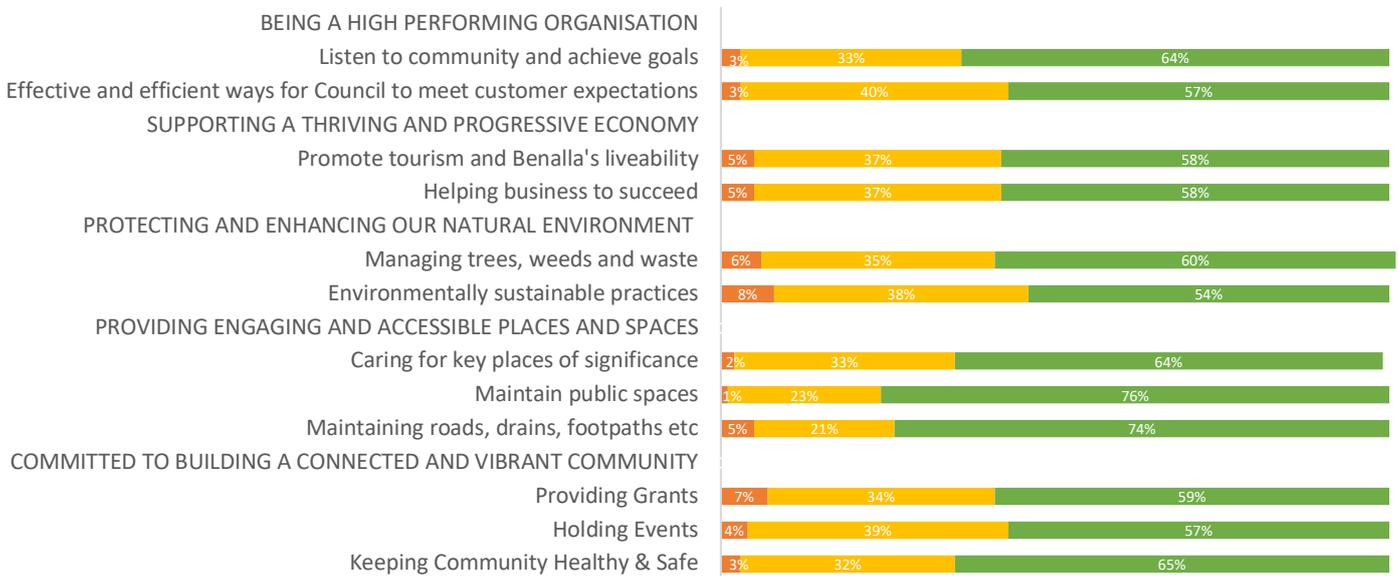


Top three personally (& family) valued (combined medium & high categories):

1. Maintain Public Spaces (96%)
2. Caring for key places of significance (94%)
3. Listen to Community and Achieve Goals (94%)

What value would you give these more broadly for the wider community?

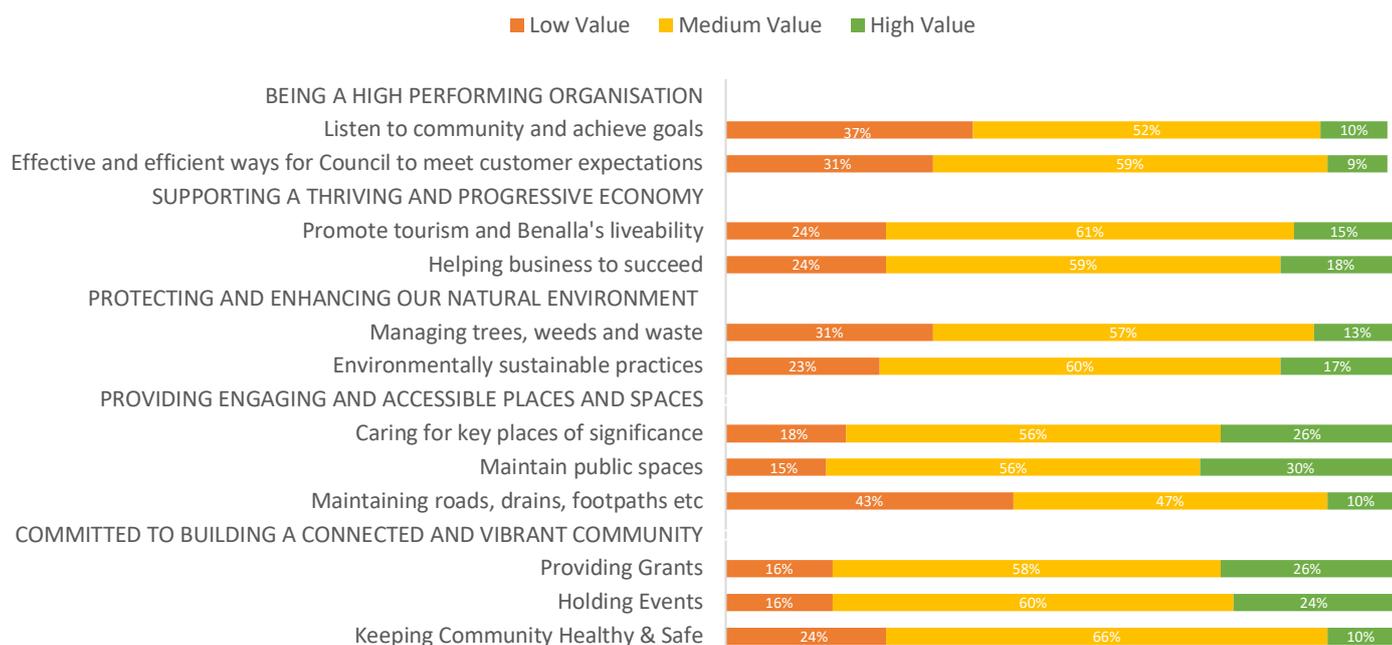
Low Value Medium Value High Value



Top three valued for the wider community (combined medium & high categories):

1. Maintain Public Spaces (99%)
2. Keeping community Healthy and Safe (97%)
3. Caring for Key Places of Significance (97%)
4. Listen to Community and Achieve Goals (97%)
5. Effective and Efficient Ways for Council to Meet Customer Expectations (97%)

How would you rate BRCC progress on this topic?



Top three progress ratings (combined medium and high categories):

1. Maintaining Public Spaces (86%)
2. Providing Grants (84%)
3. Holding Events (84%)

The lowest three progress ratings (combined medium and high categories):

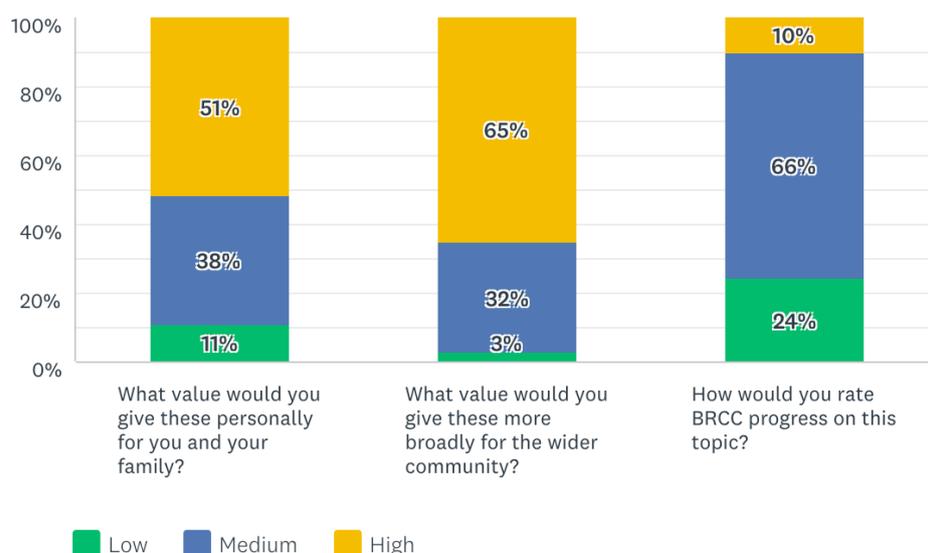
1. Maintaining Roads, Drains and Footpaths (57%)
2. Listen to Community and Achieve Goals (62%)
3. Effective and Efficient ways for Council to Meet Customer Expectations (68%)

The key individual theme/priority areas from the current Council Plan are individually presented in the subsequent section, including a summary of open-ended comments from respondents.

Committed to building a connected and vibrant community.

1. We do this by providing support to our community including older people and people with disabilities, children, families, youth and our rural communities. We work together with others to keep the community healthy and safe, celebrate diversity and support our volunteers.

Answered: 281 Skipped: 5



Survey respondents gave a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (97%) compared to their own family/personal value (89%). 76% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 24% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Being uncertain of progress of Council
- Access for people with disabilities requiring greater attention, including safe footpaths
- Challenges of Covid and the loss of face-to-face contact for 'vulnerable' community members
- Ensuring an equitable focus on rural localities and understanding limited people resources
- The declining population in some outlying areas-focus required to strengthen social connections and build community
- The need to be more proactive with planning – focus on longer term planning
- Positive impact of child and youth projects in the Benalla Rural City
- Volunteering challenges such as not valuing and supporting limited number of volunteers
- Considering the effects of heat when planning services e.g., Tip opening hours
- Community services not core to Council-should be delivered elsewhere
- Good experience with community services; and
- Challenges of accessing at home services for the elderly e.g., physio

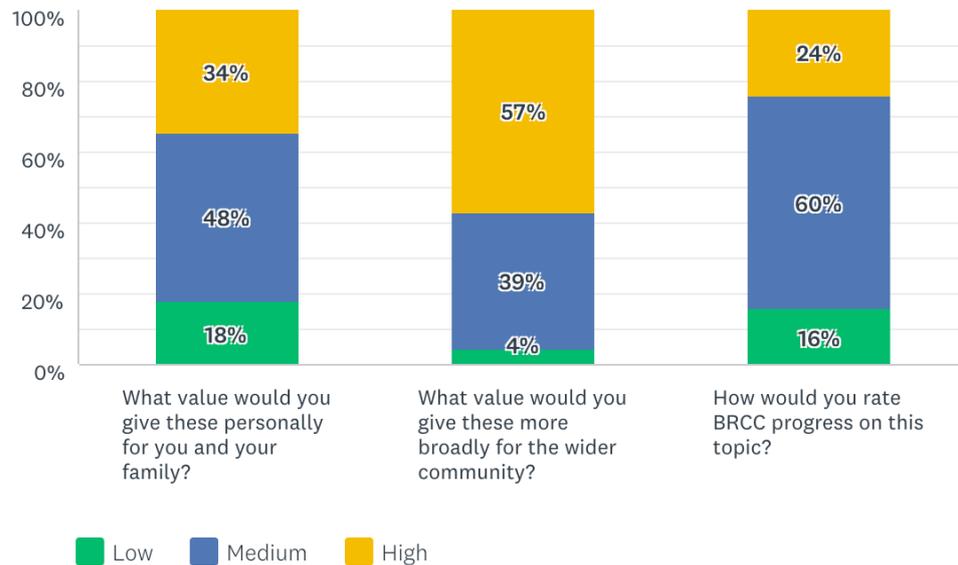
"I think that BRCC does a good job in this area, but we can always do more."

"We have to get much smarter and proactive."

"Some rural communities are dying, losing the sense of community and connection - multiple reasons (loss of country sport, generational farming families selling, people moving from the city to small lots). We need to find a way to rebuild these small rural townships and the sense of community - council could assist with supporting this."

2. **We hold events** such as the Benalla Festival, Australia Day celebrations and Seniors’ Festival and support a range of community events.

Answered: 282 Skipped: 4



Survey respondents gave a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (96%) compared to their own family/personal value (82%). 84% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 16% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Uncertainty of Council progress
- Importance of events for the Benalla Rural City
- The need to be more inclusive when offering events
- The need to build bigger events to attract tourism
- Ensuring that events are fresh and not same year in year out
- Offering new events
- Considering the impact of Australia day celebrations
- A desire for greater support for the arts such as Wall to Wall; and
- More family and child friendly events

“Festivals could use revitalising to increase inclusivity and participation, this would also benefit local businesses greatly.”

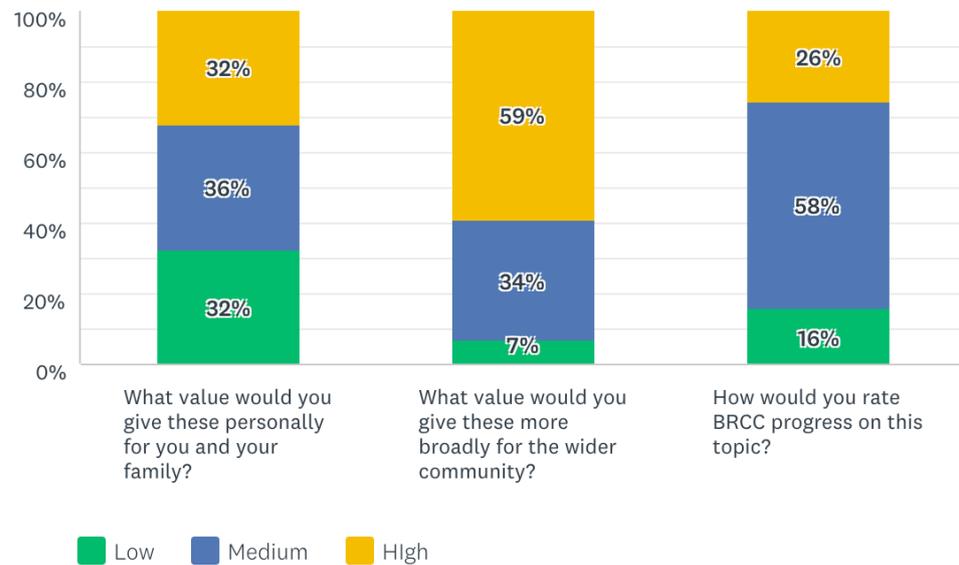
“Need to look at the changing demographics of Benalla; inclusion isn’t just for some groups but the broader community as a whole.”

“More inclusive events such as NAIDOC, and consideration of the impact that celebrating Australia Day has on our Aboriginal Peoples.

“Need events to attract tourists.”

3. We provide grants to community groups and organisations for projects and events.

Answered: 279 Skipped: 7



Survey respondents gave a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (93%) compared to their own family/personal value (68%). 84% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 16% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- The vital importance of community grants and the difference they have made for communities
- The ease of applying
- Increasing funding available
- The need to better promote grants
- Some community groups lack the confidence or support to fill in grant applications
- Uncertainty about grants
- More grants to attract visitors, build economy

"I often hear grants are available, but they are very difficult to access/find information on."

"We're keen on the arts and appreciate council support for these. I think Council does more than many councils in this area with similar budgets."

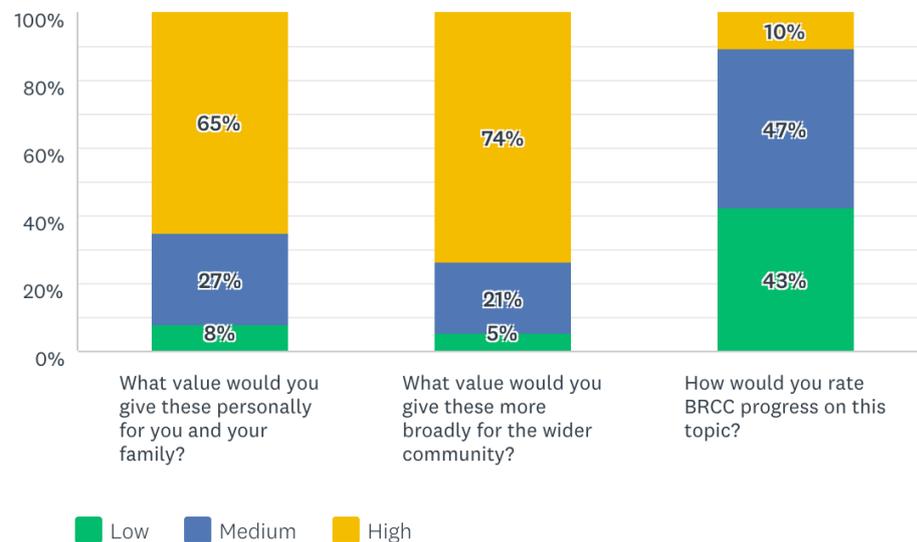
"More funds for community events."

"Some work should be done on encouraging applications that grow our capacity to attract visitors or meet other council goals such as being vibrant and connected."

Providing engaging and accessible places and spaces.

1. We do this by maintaining roads, drains, kerbs and channels as well as footpaths and bike/walking paths.

Answered: 282 Skipped: 4



Survey respondents placed similar value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (95%) and for their own family/personal value (92%). Just 57% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 43% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- The need for improved footpath planning and maintenance
- Drain blockages are common across the Benalla Rural City when it rains
- The need for more walking/ cycling paths in the Benalla Rural City
- Walking track around Benalla Lake highly valued
- Long delays before maintenance issues are addressed e.g., roads/footpaths
- Roads need more attention and funding
- Unsealed roads aren't graded enough
- Public toilets lack signage and cleanliness

"Unless multiple requests are made for maintenance, nothing gets done."

"Many roads and footpaths are very poorly maintained."

"Great work by the lake but need more footpaths throughout town & a good path on the Sydney road to link town to the bike track by the creek."

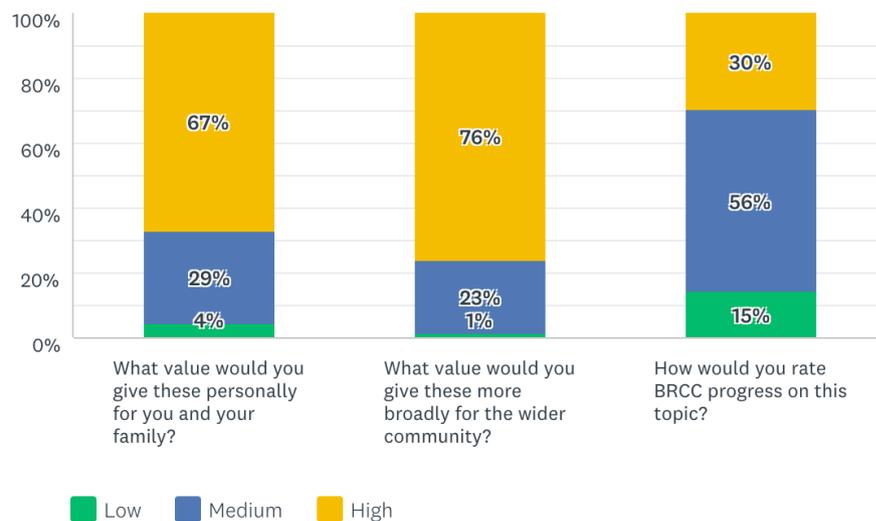
"Both rural villages & town occupants want better upkeep of drains, footpaths, lighting & roads. This has been an ongoing concern for years."

"Benalla gutters flood at the slightest sign of rain!"

"The Lake walk is an essential component of my health and exercise program, including my mental health (being in a beautiful natural environment, right next to the lake)."

2. **We also maintain public spaces** such as parks, streetscapes, recreation reserves and community facilities.

Answered: 283 Skipped: 3



Survey respondents placed a slightly higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (99%) than for their own family/personal value (96%). 86% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 15% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- The need for an enclosed dog park
- Public toilet needed nearby water park and upgrade at Goorambat Recreation Reserve
- Benalla Lake and Botanical Gardens highly valued
- Invest in public spaces throughout the Rural City not just in centre of Benalla
- Make all playgrounds great
- Set up community neighbourhood gardens
- Pedestrian crossing on Bridge St needed
- Ensure Rural Rec Reserves are well kept and fit for play
- More connected neighbourhoods using cycle/walking paths
- More playground equipment for older kids

“The lake foreshore and Gardens are maintained to an acceptable standard, but sadly this is not true of much of the rest of the municipality.”

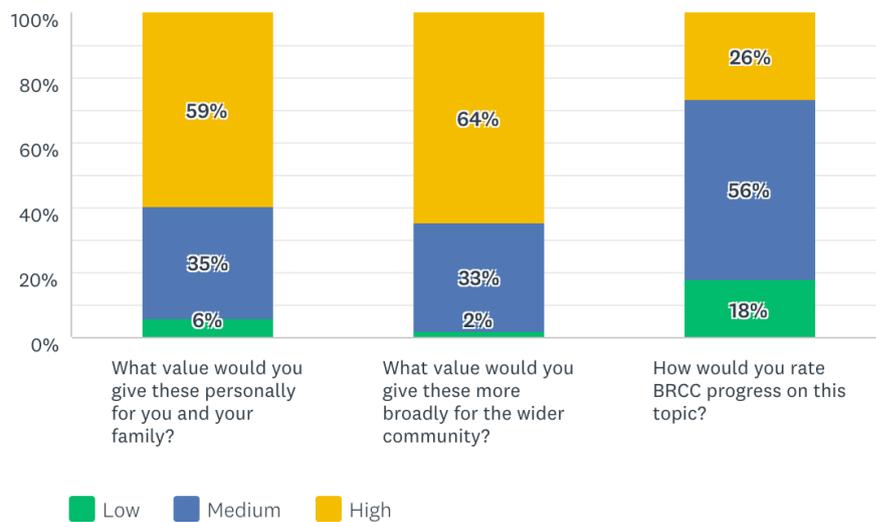
“I think Benalla Council could be more innovative in the use and upgrade of our public spaces. I would like to see the council prioritise a more connected neighbourhood for cyclists, pedestrians, train and bus travellers, and encourage less reliance on the use of cars with an infrastructure that supports sustainable ways of moving around.”

“The gardens and streetscape always look good”.

“There are areas of Benalla with no community area handy - in fact, not without a very long walk!”.

3. We have a focus on accessibility and caring for key places of significance such as the Lake Benalla precinct and on appropriate land use development.

Answered: 281 Skipped: 5



Survey respondents gave a slightly higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (97%) compared to their own family/personal value (94%). 82% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 18% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Beautifying railway station
- Lake Benalla: highly valued, lake itself is under-utilised, pollution is high, accessibility and lighting could be improved, maintaining weeds should have a greater focus, boost recreational use of lake, repair walking track
- Coster street development is a recent example of poor land use development, subdivisions lack imagination, more green space needed
- Botanical Gardens are highly valued
- Splash Park is highly valued
- Improved accessibility for outdoor pool is needed
- Have the fountain running all the time
- More way finding signage for visitors
- More disabled parking near splash park
- More heritage listed funding for places and trees

“Be nice to get rid of the blue green algae from the lake once and for all. It’s a wonderful asset to the town but could be even better if you could actually swim in it!”

“Land use development could be much better e.g., Coster St debacle. New developments need to be more energy efficient and environmentally sensitive.”

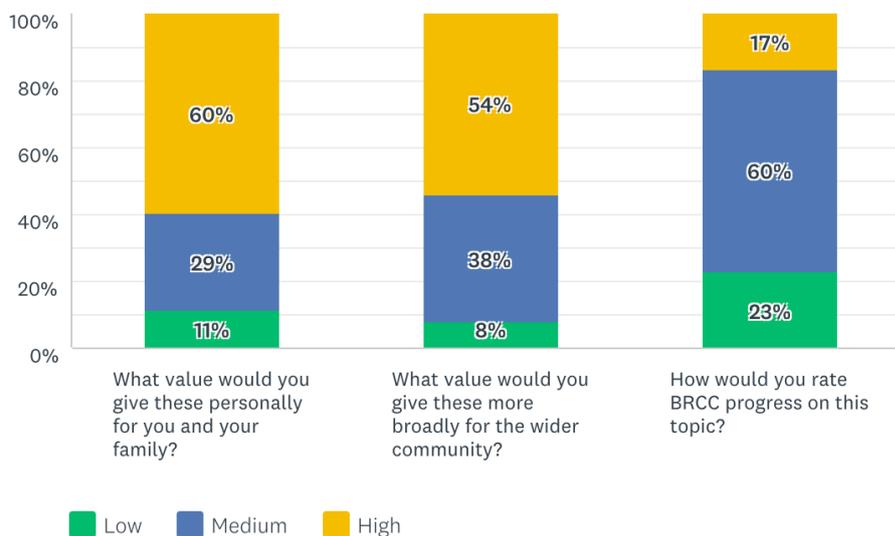
“The lake walking track is in disrepair. Add some functionality to it with marked distances, better signage. Get the fountain going again.”

“Large senior population so this is important. Need easy access stairs for outdoor pool for starters.”

Protecting and enhancing our natural environment (sustainable environment)

1. We support our community to implement environmentally sustainable practices. We have invested in renewable energy such as solar panels on our buildings and we support others to do the same.

Answered: 282 Skipped: 4



Survey respondents gave a slightly higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (92%) compared to their own family/personal value (89%). 77% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 23% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Source power locally from Indigo Power
- Solar panels on houses are a start, need a whole of community approach
- Increase shade in carparks
- More support for solar communities
- Solar panels on all Council buildings
- Better waste management- accessible and affordable Tip and programs to reduce waste
- More green spaces
- Stronger focus on renewables
- Need a strong long-term commitment to climate change
- Install electric vehicle charging bays

“We need to plan this further than just the next 4 years. We can try & become known as a sustainable city. North facing housing developments Encouraging the use of double glazing. Trees, trees & trees. Green spaces for ALL new developments.”

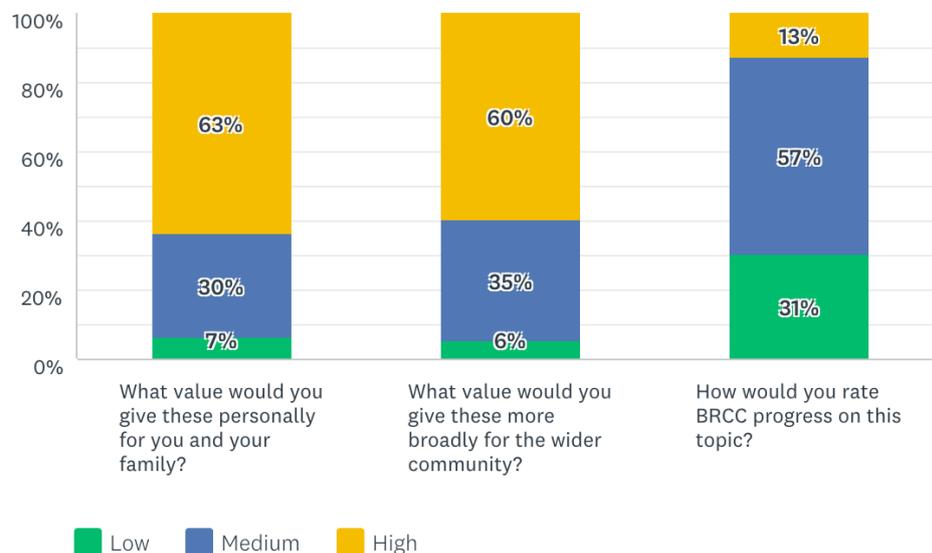
“Is it true that all of the recycling and general waste are treated the same? If so, we need to consider ways to reduce waste and encourage recycling.”

“The council needs to commit to action other areas of the Climate change plan including allowing access to public spaces to garden, decrease red tape e.g. nature strip gardening (especially for the new estates).”

“A bit of shade in the car parks would be nice. If not trees (vanishing now) how about solar-panel-shelters?”

2. We consider new ways to protect and enhance the natural environment including managing weeds and trees and collecting and processing waste.

Answered: 282 Skipped: 4



Survey respondents placed similar value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (95%) and for their own family/personal value (93%). 69% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 31% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Weed control: roadside weed management needs greater focus, weeds in public spaces
- Need green waste options for rural residents
- Hard waste days
- Tip: recycle/tip shop, affordable tip fees to discourage dumping, transfer station to better manage waste, composting of green waste and free compost for residents
- Green bins are highly valued

“Landfill tickets in rates notice need to come back and more free green waste days at landfill are required.”

“The green bins are a fabulous addition to waste collection.”

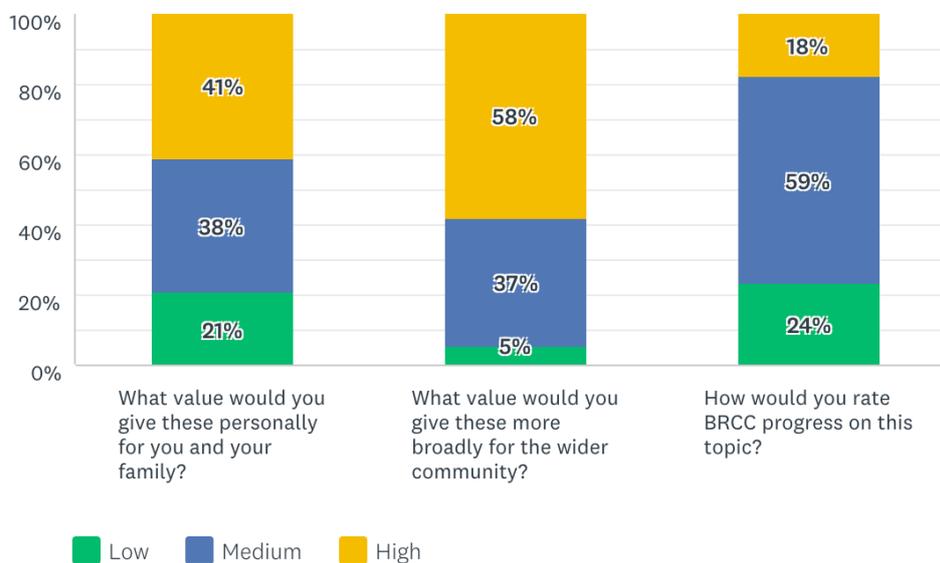
“I would also like to see more salvaging and less items ending up in landfill. A Resource Recovery Centre, similar to the one in Reservoir, or something similar would be a great idea.”

“Roadside weeds are an increasing eyesore, and it would appear little is being done to eradicate them.”

Supporting a thriving and progressive economy

1. We do this by helping local business to succeed through networks and training programs. We encourage new businesses and industries to set up in Benalla Rural City.

Answered: 281 Skipped: 5



Survey respondents placed a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (95%) than for their own family/personal value (79%). 77% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 24% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Expand/increase support for Benalla Business Network
- More support for small business
- Benalla has attracted new industry, need more of this
- Consider future employment areas
- Unsure of progress in this area
- Empty shops in town

"The Benalla Business Network needs more assistance and encouragement from Council."

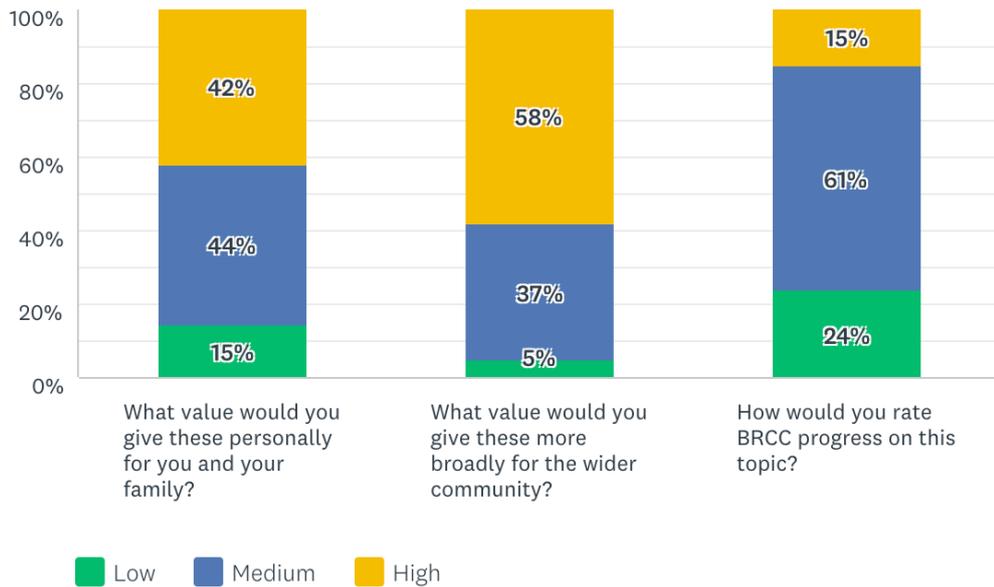
"New industry to Benalla provides more employment opportunities."

"I think Council does this well for new businesses & industries, but for existing businesses or industries, there seems to be a lack of modernising & catching up with the rest of the world."

"The council should prioritise using local businesses on ALL tenders. If there is a local business that can perform the requirements of the tender it makes no sense hiring companies from out of town to do this work. Keep the towns wealth in the town wherever possible."

- We promote tourism and the many quality products and services produced in the local area by broadly marketing Benalla Rural City's liveability.

Answered: 282 Skipped: 4



Survey respondents placed a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (95%) than for their own family/personal value (86%). 76% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 24% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Tourism: need to be strengthened, better promoted and diversified, the tourism centre needs a revamp
- Install electric vehicle charging
- Tourism: promote Winton Wetlands, Winton Raceway, Street Art, Silo Art, Costume Museum and the Migrant Camp Museum
- Promote Benalla to a diverse age range
- A more diverse shopping experience and shops open on weekends
- Liveability: more promotion of Benalla Rural City, try creative promotion campaigns, promote Winton Wetlands, Winton Raceway, Street Art, Silo

"We need tourism that doesn't rely on the Ned Kelly story. We have a rich cultural history, it's time to embrace more of it."

"Tourism is the life blood of a town, it creates jobs and vitality, more needs to be done."

"Better footpaths, roads, lake amenities and recreation would improve the image of Benalla liveability."

"Benalla Council promotes tourism to only as select age group, there is hardly any high promoting for teenagers and younger. Yes, there are activities but need to be better promoted."

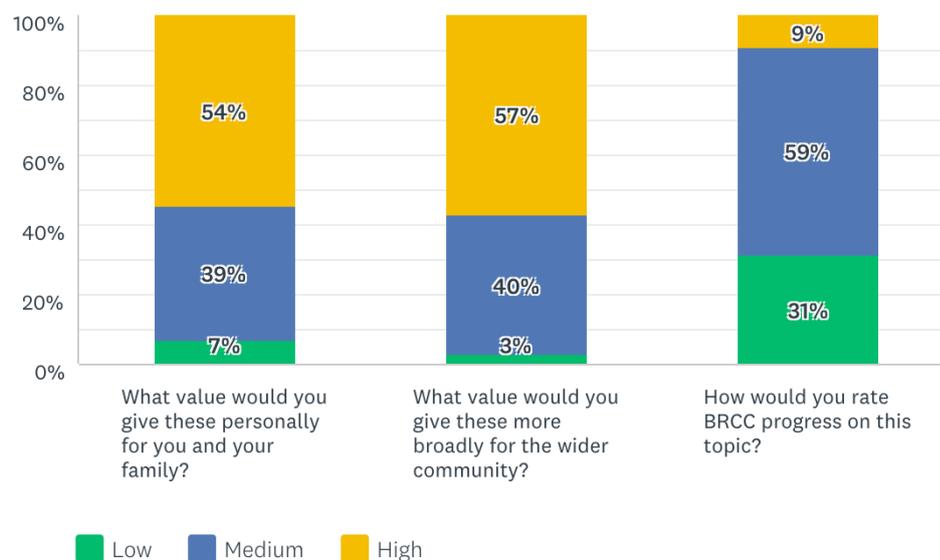
"I came to Benalla through my profession, but it was the location and the facilities at the time that closed the deal."

"We close at midday on Saturday! Need to implement previously commissioned tourist plan."

Being a high performing organisation

1. We do this by ensuring what we do for our community is underpinned by sound planning, being financially responsible and meeting our legislative responsibilities. We review our services and our processes to find more effective and efficient ways of meeting our customers' expectations.

Answered: 280 Skipped: 6



Survey respondents placed a higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (97%) than for their own family/personal value (93%). 68% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 31% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Strengthen transparent decision making
- High rates for services received
- Continue to review and measure and improve performance
- Timely communication and response to queries is important
- Small rate base to draw on so expectations need to match this
- Planning processes are not smooth and discourage development
- Ensure staff are high performing through accountability and review
- Prioritise community consultation for new projects

"We are getting better but by most measures we have a very long way to go."

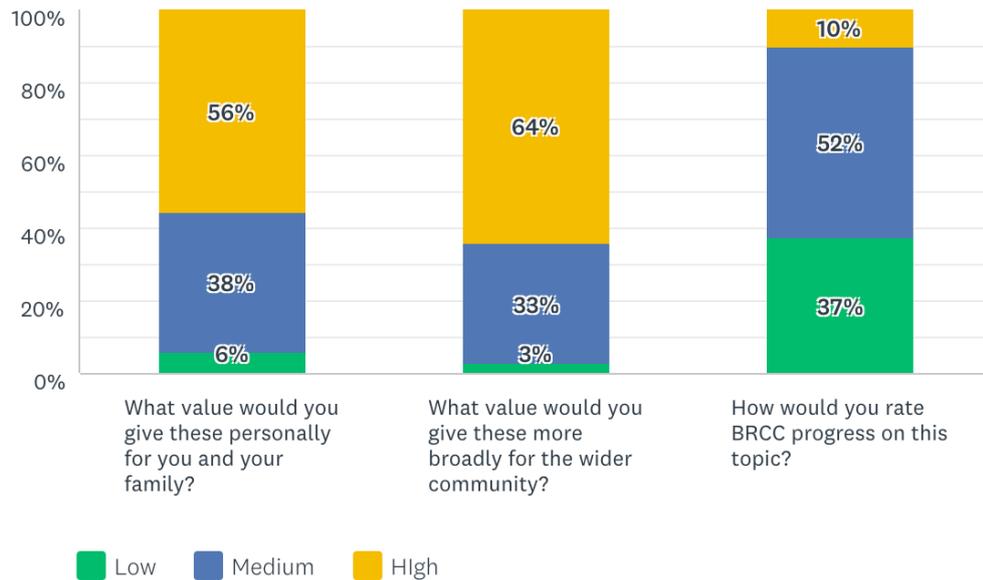
"There is a lot of reports of unanswered inquiries, undue fee imposition and relegating responsibility to other sectors and agencies. Council need to embrace the local citizens need more earnestly."

"Everyone complains the rates are too high for services received."

"Keep re-evaluating efficiencies and effectiveness, and whether you have the right person in the job. Encourage employees to offer solutions and innovative ideas to normal processes."

- We make sure we listen to our community and respond to changing needs, working in partnership with our community to achieve the goals captured through our community engagement activities and long-term Community Plan.

Answered: 280 Skipped: 6



Survey respondents gave a slightly higher value (combined high and medium) for this area for the wider community (97%) compared to their own family/personal value (94%). 62% of respondents rated BRCC progress as medium and high and the remaining 37% rated progress as low.

Respondents who provided comments shared a range of thoughts such as:

- Advocate for and support projects that are important to the community
- Improve consultation and listen more to community
- Demonstrate Council has heard community
- Promote what has been done
- Communicate with community on new projects
- Engage with a wide and diverse range of community members
- Transparency with the community is essential
- Unsure of progress in this area

“The perception in the community is that council does not do this well.”

“I would like to see greater communication from the council with respect to project proposals.”

“Not all members of the community have felt listened to in the past. Council have a responsibility to ensure this is not the case going forward.”

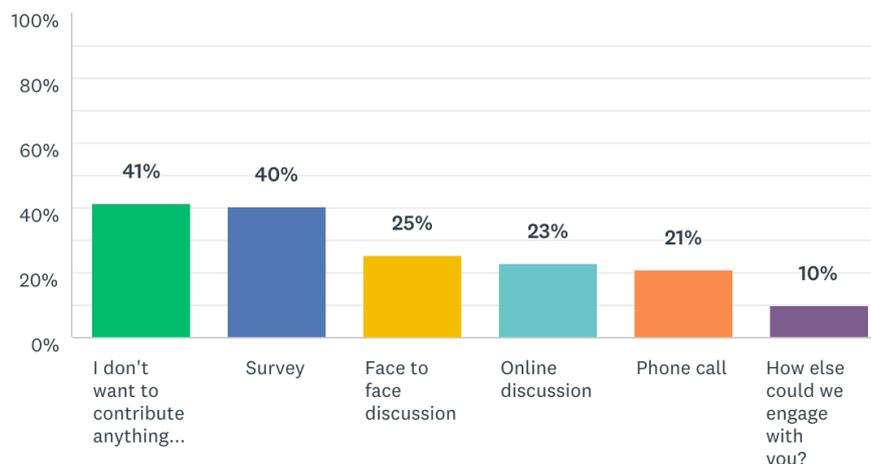
“I haven't seen this in action during the pandemic. most services were closed. Not very agile.”

“There are so many opportunities for council to change its traditional mode of delivery and embrace a more contemporary community focused model.”

How would you like to contribute?

213 respondents shared how they would like to contribute to Council Planning:

Answered: 213 Skipped: 73



44% of total survey respondents indicated that they would like to contribute further; of those survey (40%), face to face (25%), online (23%) and phone discussions (21%) were preferred. Other ways to contribute shared were: Council meetings, community meetings, workshops, feedback on Draft Plan, and email.

How did you hear about this survey?

The majority of respondents heard about the survey through a direct email from BRCC (53%), 23% heard on Facebook, 11% through word of mouth, 3% via Councils website and 1% through Council news. Others heard through: Councillors, friends, Waminda, Benalla Health, workplaces and sporting/community groups.

Answered: 271 Skipped: 15

