![Nillumbik The Green Wedge Shire logo]

Together in Nillumbik

COVID-19 Community Survey findings

Contents

Overview

Inclusion

Covid-19 key impacts:

- Less social connection
- Home-schooling
- Less child development

- Reduced feelings of connection to community (47%)
- Having to juggle home-schooling and work (38% with kids)
- More contact with neighbours (6%)

Things Council can provide:

- Opportunity to contribute
- Entertainment For kids
- Online connection

Healthy environments

Covid-19 key impacts:

- Parks and services closed
- Fear of getting sick in public
- Internet issues (resilience)

- Reduced physical activity (52%)
- Difficulty keeping connected (internet, 36%)
- Mental health issues (28%)
- Feel unsafe using services (6%)

Things Council can provide:

- Help 65+yo with internet
- Keep services open
- Promote services

Healthy behaviours

Covid-19 key impacts:

- Less exercise
- Declining mental health
- Less healthy

- Change in exercise type and location (51%)
- Reduced satisfaction with health (47%)
- Need emergency relief (4%)

Things Council can provide:

- Mental health services
- Promote programs
- Food delivery and relief

Employment & education

Covid-19 key impacts:

- Change in nature of work
- Reduced employment
- Financial hardship

- Switched to working from home (48%)
- Concerned that won't be able to afford food (38%)
- On JobKeeper/JobSeeker (25%)
- Can't afford services (10%)

Things Council can provide:

- Business support
- Skills programs
- Financial relief

Recommendation summary

The Together in Nillumbik Survey has been analysed and a suite of recommendations for consideration for Council and community have been developed.

These recommendations are based on feedback to responses provided by respondents. In future planning, these recommendations, should be coupled with evidence informed practice to ensure effectiveness and impact on community wellbeing.

Four key themes have been identified for Nillumbik to inform future pandemic planning and recovery. These have centred on the social and economic impacts during the pandemic period and include:

- Inclusion
- Healthy Environments
- Healthy Behaviours
- Employment and Education.

As the restrictions ease, it is anticipated that some identified impacts may ease, such as home schooling, whilst others will have longer term effects such as job loss and mental health. Broader research has already predicted some of these longer term concerns will take over 18 months to return to a level of regular life.

The recommendations are as follows:

Inclusion

- Provide supports for community cohesion (including opportunities to contribute to the community), and ensure these are well promoted.
- Consider a recovery grants program to encourage community members to take action.
- Target the central region (Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen) with programs to enhance community connections.
- Develop programs and assistance to support females, especially if there is another lockdown requiring children to be home-schooled. This support can include mental health services as well as programs for children.

Healthy environments

- Promote parks and services that are available to return to healthy lifestyles and socialising.
- Undertake a focussed communication campaign in the central region (Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen) to inform residents about availability of local services and how to access them.
- Develop programs to support older people to use digital technology (demand 35% 65+ year olds).
- Ensure family violence support resources are accessible to the CALD community.
- Enhance the message that social distancing and wearing a mask reduces chances of getting sick, to help reduce anxiety regarding use of public

spaces and services. This could extend to promoting cleaning processes for public spaces and services.

Healthy behaviours

- Provide the community with information about exercise opportunities. This could be coupled with the promotion of local fitness businesses and therefore also contribute to economic recovery.
- Plan for provision of in-home high-intensity exercise suggestions and advice on 'safety when exercising at home' should there be lock-downs in the future. This may also be coupled with exploring the provision of in-home exercise equipment for vulnerable members of the community.
- Encourage and promote free or low-cost exercise opportunities for those facing financial difficulties.
- Promote mental health resources available to the community (including guides on navigating the GP referral system for those who haven't had to use them before).
- Help facilitate / advocate for more affordable mental health support, particularly for females, young people, those with children, CALD, and those living in the Central region.
- The food delivery service is well received, and the most vulnerable members of the community will need continued support with food provision. Whilst demand may not be large at the moment, many feel they are at risk of food insecurity, so future decreases in JobKeeper and jobseeker may result in an increased need for this service.
- Consider social marketing to promote the long term risks of excess alcohol consumption; perhaps by offering people alternative methods to manage boredom, stress and anxiety.

Employment and Learning

- Explore financial support packages for those hardest hit by employment loss or reduction. In particular hardship grants and essential item vouchers.
- Continue to provide food support, with more comprehensive promotion of this offering.
- Closely monitor welfare offering in line with employment levels to identify risk of increased hardship.
- Make sure financial relief packages for low income earners are appropriate for CALD households.
- When designing business support programs, consider that many of those who would utilise programs have children, and therefore they will need to be structured in an appropriate way.

Please note the above recommendations have also been included under each section in the research findings.

Background

Context

Nillumbik Shire Council, in partnership with healthAbility, conducted a 'Together in Nillumbik' survey to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on community wellbeing.

The results of this survey will create an evidence base to inform the work of the COVID-19 Recovery Taskforce. The emerging trends will be integral in informing the priorities for recovery activities across the Shire.

The survey was conducted online through the Participate Nillumbik portal, and was promoted through a number of channels including social media, E-News, Nillumbik News and network meetings. It was open from 21 August through to 1 October 2020 and achieved 380 responses. Council also underwent a number of targeted focus groups with the community including the Community Network, Positive Ageing Advisory Committee and the Chinese Seniors. These are not included in this analysis.

During this period Melbourne was under stage 4 restrictions with the following directives:

- Only leave home for 4 reasons (work, essential health, care or safety).
- If you can work from home you must work from home.
- Must wear a face mask when outside of the home.
- No visitors to the home.
- No social gatherings or public gatherings.
- Curfew 9am-5pm.
- Schools and childcare closed except for families of permitted workers.
- Only 1 person per household per day can go shopping.
- Outdoor recreation must be within 5km of home and up to 2 hours.
- All sport and recreation facilities closed.
- No travel from metropolitan Melbourne to regional Victoria (or anywhere else in the Country) without permission.

Summary tables

Each section shows a summary table presenting the key findings in the following format:

% or mean

Measure / indicator
Questionnaire reference number
Question type
Notable statistically significant variations in results

Question type explanations:

Mean	Mean score out of 5 – applied for rating questions.
Unprompted	This means that respondents were asked to write in an answer, which was later grouped into themes for ease of analysis. **These figures do not show incidence**, but rather the % of people who thought to mention it.
Multiple response	Respondents were shown a list of answer options and they could choose more than one. Can represent incidence.
Single response	Respondents were shown a list of answer options and they were only able to provide a single answer. Can represent incidence.
Other specify	This was a code generated from the comments written in the "other (specify)" box. It represents the % of people who thought to add their own answer to the list. It doesn't represent the percentage of people who would have selected it if it were included in the original list (likely significantly higher).
NET	This is a generated variable to show the percentage of respondents who provided an answer that aligns with multiple answer or question variables.

Statistical significance was analysed for the following categories:

- Region (See appendix 1).
- Gender.
- Age.
- CALD (born overseas, speak a language other than English or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander).
- Vulnerable communities (those with a disability or health care card).
- Households with or without children.

Demographic coverage

2 respondents were removed from the analysis file as they were under 14 and had no guardian consent recorded.

When compared to 2016 Census population distribution, males and young people were under-represented in the data file. Weighting of age and gender to bring it in line with the Census proportions didn't result in any notable changes in findings, therefore the data wasn't weighted for this analysis.

		Count	%	2016 Census %
Gender	Male	122	33%	49%
	Female	236	65%	51%
	Non-binary	1	0%	-
	Prefer not to say / identify	5	1%	-
Age	15-34	34	9%	29%
	35-44	103	28%	16%
	45-54	83	23%	20%
	55-64	71	20%	18%
	65+	72	20%	16%
Region (see appendix 1)	South	130	40%	42%
	West	66	20%	16%
	Central	56	17%	22%
	East	74	23%	20%
Country of birth	Australia	295	80%	77%
	Outside Australia	72	20%	23%
LOE	No	311	89%	90%
	Yes	39	11%	10%
Disability, health condition or injury	No	272	75%	-
	Yes	87	24%	-
	Prefer not to say / not sure	6	2%	-
Health care card or pensioner concession	No	276	76%	-
	Yes	83	23%	-
	Prefer not to say / not sure	5	2%	-
Household	Single person household	37	10%	14%
	Couple living alone	83	22%	25%
	Couple with child / children	214	57%	47%
	One parent family with child / children, co-parenting with other parent living elsewhere	24	6%	9%
	Adults sharing house /apartment / flat	15	4%	1%
	Other	3	1%	4%

Research findings

Comparison to VicHealth data

Some of the questions in this survey were the same as, or suitably similar, to the VicHealth Covid-19 survey. In addition, there were a few questions that were modelled on the VicHealth survey, but were modified to consider local interests and as such cannot be compared (e.g. Q5 used a different rating scale).

It should be noted that the VicHealth survey was undertaken in May-June 2020, a period when the restrictions had been relaxed (allowing for gatherings of 20 people), whereas the Nillumbik survey was undertaken in October 2020 (a period of stage 4 lockdowns where people weren't allowed to socialise with people outside their household and could only travel within 5km of their home). The differences in restriction levels during the two surveys would have contributed to variations in results. Therefore, these comparisons can't illustrate 'Nillumbik compared to state-wide' but instead show '**Stage 4 lockdown compared to minimal restrictions**'.

The data is telling us that tighter restrictions are likely resulting in:

- More people working from home with greater flexibility in hours.
- More people finding it difficult to stay connected.
- Increased use of video conferencing and walking with others to stay connected.
- More sharing with neighbours.
- Less physical activity.
- A reduction in alcohol consumption at short-term harm levels. This is supported by the ASDF Research COVID-19 survey which shows that drinking more was more common at the start of the pandemic, and has been declining since.

Measure	Nillumbik		VicHealth		Notes
	Q#	Result	Q#	Result	
Worked mainly from another location with standard hours	Q25	**15%**	G7	**32%**	Re-run Nillumbik figure filtered by just those who had a job pre-COVID for comparability to how VicHealth was analysed. This filter has not been applied to the full analysis data.
Worked mainly from home with standard hours	Q25	**21%**	G7	**29%**	
Worked mainly from home with flexible start and finish times	Q25	**32%**	G7	**20%**	
Short Term Harm alcohol consumption	Q13 &15	**5%**	E1	**11%**	More than 4 standard drinks a session at least weekly.
Relationships in household more strained	Q22	**26%**	C5w	**21%**	
Hard to stay connected	Q17	**60%**	C4w	**35%**	

| Measure | Nillumbik | | VicHealth | | Notes |
	Q#	Result	Q#	Result	
Videoconferencing	Q18	**84%**	C3	**41%**	
Walking with others	Q18	**41%**	C3	**19%**	
Sharing items with neighbours	Q18	**26%**	C3	**11%**	
Sharing chores with neighbours	Q18	**11%**	C3	**12%**	
Doing less physical activity	Q9	**51%**	B1	**37%**	
Women spending most time caring for school age children	Q31	**70%**	G11	**72%**	
Asked for financial help from friends or family	Q37	**6%**	G12	**12%**	
Couldn't pay utility bills on time	Q37	**4%**	G12	**11%**	
Couldn't pay the rent or mortgage on time	Q37	**7%**	G12	**7%**	

Regional variations

In most cases the results were similar across the four geographic regions. Some of the variations that have been highlighted by statistical analysis are as follows:

- Those in the central suburbs are finding the impacts of COVID-19 more challenging, driven by a reducing sense of community.
- Those in the East region are faring better, especially in terms of feeling part of the community. This may be due to those in the East having to switch to exercising in locations more local to their home (due to the 5km lockdown) and therefore interacting more with their neighbours.

Age variations

In most cases the results were similar across all ages, however there were a number of issues that results suggest vary between ages.
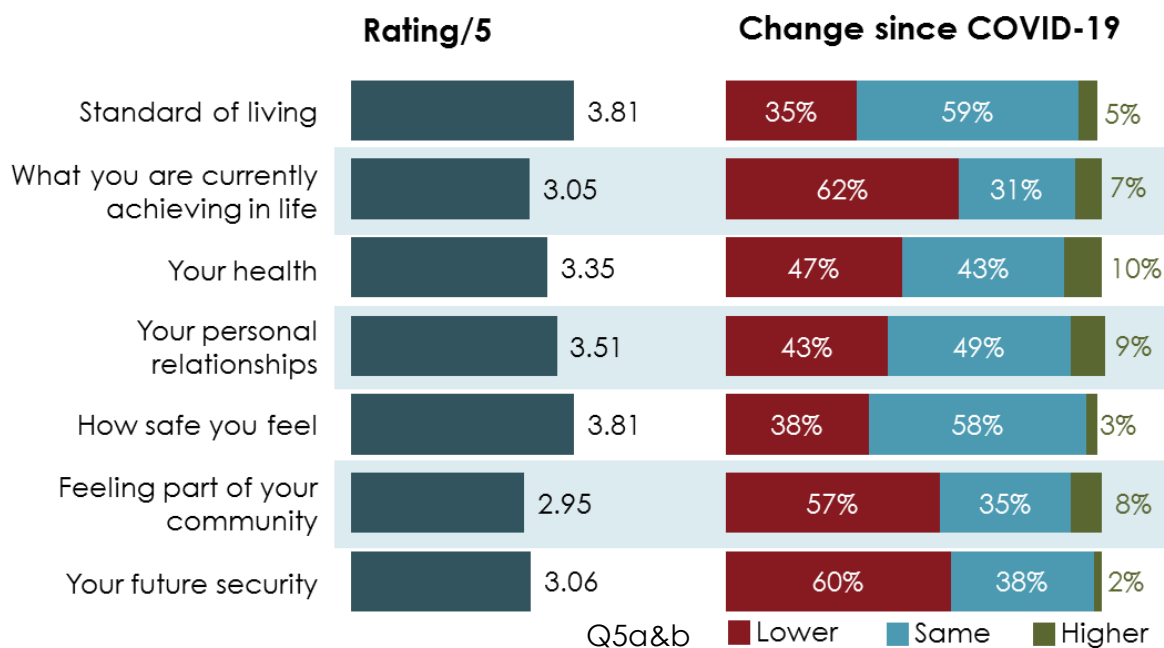
- Concern for getting sick from COVID-19 **increases with age**.
- The desire for counselling and mental health support is highest amongst **young people**, and then decreases with age. This could be because younger people show lower levels of feeling secure about their future and connection to the community, higher instances of experiencing a decreased income during COVID, and higher levels of nervousness, anxiety and difficulty getting going on things,
- Services for **young people** need to be affordable (many think they are too expensive). Service cost is generally not an issue for older adults.
- **Older adults** (65+ year olds in particular) are generally more satisfied with where they are in life, perhaps due to a stronger sense of ties to their community, lower rates of anxiety and nervousness, no changes to their quality of relationships, and a lack of issues with motivation. They also more commonly have had no changes in their satisfaction with their health since COVID-19 (perhaps due to fewer of their exercise activities being interrupted) and are more confident about their future security.
- **35-54 year olds** are particularly struggling with managing children's education from home, their health, quality of household relationships, connecting with friends and family outside their household, and not feeling like they are achieving something in life. They are also drinking more alcohol and show higher instances of being on JobKeeper.
- Families with **younger parents** have less equitable sharing of child care responsibilities. This improves a little amongst families with older parents.

Wellbeing overview

The components of wellbeing experiencing the greatest negative impact from COVID-19 are:

- What you are currently achieving in life.
- Feeling part of your community.
- Your future security.

For some, the restrictions have provided an opportunity to improve their health and personal relationships, although this experience is quite rare.

	Rating/5	Change since COVID-19
		Lower / Same / Higher
Standard of living	3.81	35% / 59% / 5%
What you are currently achieving in life	3.05	62% / 31% / 7%
Your health	3.35	47% / 43% / 10%
Your personal relationships	3.51	43% / 49% / 9%
How safe you feel	3.81	38% / 58% / 3%
Feeling part of your community	2.95	57% / 35% / 8%
Your future security	3.06	60% / 38% / 2%

Q5a&b ■ Lower ■ Same ■ Higher

The rating scale presented for the following question (Q16) (On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not at all and 5 being extremely how satisfied are you with…?) doesn't match the response codes, therefore there is no meaningful findings to be drawn from this analysis beyond that which was observed above – that being a decline in connection to the community.

	Rating/5	Change since COVID-19
		Lower / Same / Higher
I feel part of the community	3.56	46% / 47% / 7%
Neighbourhood shares values	4.08	15% / 79% / 6%
Neighbourhood is a good place to live	4.3	8% / 85% / 7%
I trust my neighbours	3.44	5% / 88% / 6%
Community works together	2.91	12% / 78% / 10%

■ Lower ■ Same ■ Higher
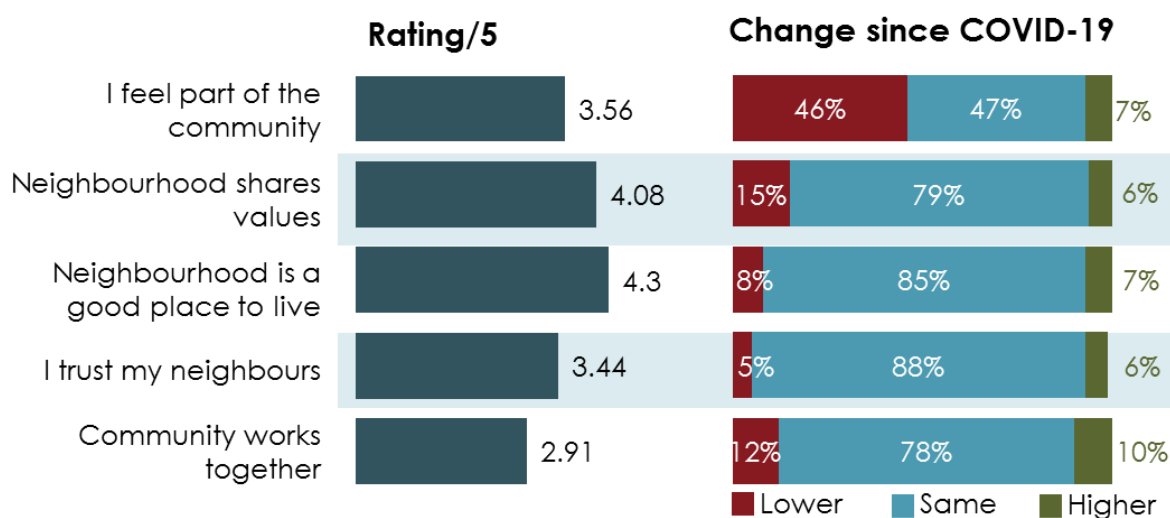
When asked to write in the positive and negative impacts of the pandemic, most were related to social connections.

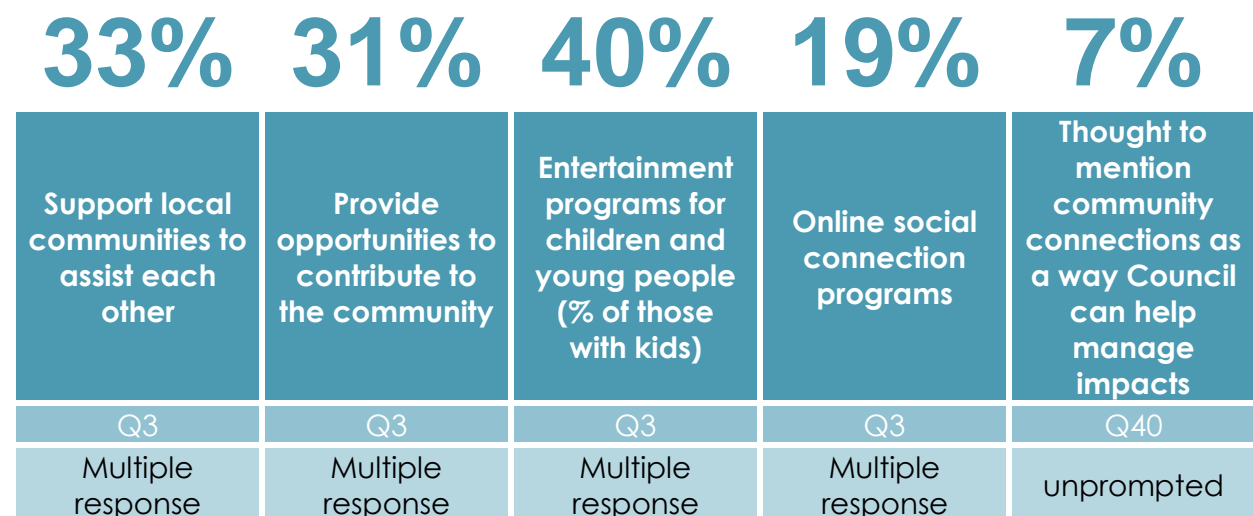| Top 4 Positive	Top 4 negative
1. More time with the kids / family (25%).	1. Can't visit friends or family (26%).
2. More time for self / hobbies / chores / study (12%).	2. Financial stress due to change in employment (15%).
3. More exercise / better fitness (8%).	3. Lack of sports / social activities (13%).
4. Slower pace (8%).	4. Loneliness / social isolation (13%).

Inclusion

Inclusion is closely linked to the Council Plan 'Engaged, Connected Communities' theme.

The main impacts of COVID-19 on inclusion are:

- **Lack of social connection** due to stage 4 restrictions preventing people from visiting and socialising with friends and family. For most, the sense of community connection has reduced, however some are becoming more connected to their immediate community than before, through talking to neighbours. There are also concerns that social isolation may have a negative impact on child development.
- **The need to home school children is placing pressure on parents,** with this disproportionately effecting mothers, who are more often carrying the majority of the work with home-schooling.
- There are some that are enjoying spending **more time with their family**.
- **Those with children** are struggling more during COVID in terms of financial stability and mental health.

When asked what supports Council could provide, the key recommendations relating to inclusion were:

33%	31%	40%	19%	7%
Support local communities to assist each other	Provide opportunities to contribute to the community	Entertainment programs for children and young people (% of those with kids)	Online social connection programs	Thought to mention community connections as a way Council can help manage impacts
Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q40
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	unprompted

Recommendations for recovery planning:

- Provide supports for community cohesion (including opportunities to contribute to the community), and ensure these are well promoted.
- Consider a recovery grants program to encourage community members to take action.
- Target the central region (Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen) with programs to enhance community connections.
- Develop programs and assistance to support females, especially if there is another lockdown requiring children to be home-schooled. This support can include mental health services as well as programs for children.

Community connections

A reduction in opportunities to socialise is the most significant challenge being faced by the community. This is having a negative impact on the sense of community.

73%	26%	24%	56%	47%	19%	6%
Concern - Missing family/friends	Negative impact – can't visit friends/family	Say it has been very hard to stay connected with people outside the household	Looking forward to socialising once the restrictions are eased	Would rate their satisfaction with feeling part of the community lower than before COVID-19	Want online social connection programs	Positive impact – more contact with neighbours
Q2	Q8	Q17	Q42	Q5b	Q3	Q7
Multiple response	unprompted	Single response	unprompted	Single response	Multiple response	unprompted
Higher amongst 65+ year olds and those without kids	More common amongst females			More common in Central region. Q16 is similar (46%, same measure)		

People are connecting via:

- Telephone (88%).
- Video calls (84%) (most common amongst 35-44 year olds).
- Walking with others whilst social distancing (41%).
- Sharing items with neighbours (26%).
- Sharing chores with neighbours (11%).

Things for Council to consider:

- The Central region is experiencing greater loss of sense of community than other areas of the municipality.
- Whilst the majority are missing their friends, and being unable to catch up with friends and family is the main negative impact being experienced, there is limited interest in online social connection programs.

Carer responsibilities

In most family households, females are undertaking the majority of the work helping children at home. This can provide a strain on some, and raise concerns about child development, however around a quarter like having more time with their family and kids.

38%	24%	8%	12%	24%	15%	9%	69%
Concern - Managing remote learning*	Concern - Disruption of education	Concern - Disruption of care and support services	Concern - Not being able to visit ill/dying family/friends	Positive impact – more time with kids/family	Negative impact – concerned about child development	Sending children to school, daycare or kinder during lockdown	Females say they are spending the most time helping their children at home
Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q7	Q8	Q30	Q31
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	unprompted	Unprompted	Single response	Single response
*% of those with children (21% overall)				More common amongst females, young people and those with kids			Compared to 21% males

The main things that would help support parents in caring for their children are:

- Tutoring (27%).
- Mental health support and outreach (18%).
- Virtual playgroups and story time (16%) (30% amongst people with kids aged 0-4).
- Careers support (4%) (27% amongst parents of 18+ year olds).

Carers say that main COVID-19 impacts on the person they care for are isolation and anxiety.

Of those who said they were primary carers (8%), the main supports that would assist them were:

- Social support for the person they care for (33%).
- Financial (13%).

Gender lens

In most cases the results were similar for men and women, however there were a number of issues that results suggest vary between males and females.

Males

- This sample has a higher proportion of retired people (23%) which may be impacting on their responses.
- Less commonly say they could use mental health support. This may be due to them not feeling as anxious or nervous, nor down and depressed as often.
- Are more commonly heavier drinkers.
- Are less commonly sharing the responsibility for looking after children at home.

Females

- More commonly taking on the majority of the work managing children in the household. Around half of the time their partner recognises this, however the data suggests there are likely many instances where the male parent thinks they are sharing the load, but the female parent feels they are doing most of it themselves. As such, females are more commonly facing challenges juggling looking after children (including home schooling).
- Females more commonly want entertainment options for children and programs to support children in crisis. There were similar proportions of males and females from households with children (51% males, 60% females) so it is unlikely that sample composition is having an effect on this.
- Some of the mental health challenges more commonly being experienced by females are being nervous and anxious, and difficulty getting going on things.

Target segments

In most cases the results were similar for CALD and people with a disability/health care card, however there were a number of issues that results suggest vary between these groups.

CALD is defined as those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, those born overseas, and/or those who speak a language other than English at home.

CALD

- Duality of experiences with neighbours, with some finding out their neighbours are more trustworthy, whilst a similar proportion find their neighbours less trustworthy.

Disability / health care card

- Whilst this segment is experiencing a range of challenges, COVID has provided the opportunity for some to feel more part of their community.

Households with children

- Business support needs to take into account that most of those who want this support have kids.
- Those with kids are less satisfied with life during COVID-19.
- A higher proportion of those with kids have increased alcohol consumption.
- Those with children more often want financial and community support.
- Those without children are less commonly experiencing changes impacting on their finances, so they are coping better with the situation, however they are finding missing their friends a big concern.

Healthy environments

Healthy environments is closely linked to the Council Plan 'Engaged, Connected Communities' theme.

The main impacts of COVID-19 on healthy environments are:

- **Social and exercise infrastructure being closed**. This has flow-on impacts on physical and mental health as well as social cohesion.
- **Fear of getting sick from Covid-19 when in public spaces**. This results in general increases in anxiety and people feeling unsafe when accessing services.
- **Family violence concerns**, driven by an increase in difficult relationships in households.
- **Community resilience**, in particular access and ability with regards to use of the internet to cover work, education and social interaction needs at times of lock-down.

When asked what supports Council could provide, the key recommendations relating to healthy environments were:

37%	17%	23%
65+ year olds want programs to help older people use digital technology	Thought to mention that they want parks and services to open to help them manage COVID-19 impacts	Said services being closed was a major barrier
Q3	Q40	Q4
Multiple response	unprompted	Multiple response

Recommendations for recovery planning:

- Promote parks and services that are available to return to healthy lifestyles and socialising.
- Undertake a focussed communication campaign in the central region (Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen) to inform residents about availability of local services and how to access them.
- Develop programs to support older people to use digital technology (demand 35% 65+ year olds).
- Ensure family violence support resources are accessible to the CALD community.
- Enhance the message that social distancing and wearing a mask reduces chances of getting sick, to help reduce anxiety regarding use of public spaces and services. This could extend to promoting cleaning processes for public spaces and services.

Safety

Around ta third of the community is feeling less safe during COVID times, partially due to the fear of getting sick from COVID-19.

43%	2%	6%	38%	60%	26%
Concern - Fear of contracting COVID-19	Concern - Increase in family violence	Barrier - Don't feel safe accessing services	Would rate their satisfaction with how safe they feel lower than before COVID-19	Would rate their satisfaction with their future security lower than before COVID-19	Are having more difficult / strained relationships with people in their household
Q2	Q2	Q4	Q5b	Q5b	Q22
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Single response	Single response	Single response
				More common amongst those with kids	More common amongst households with kids

Resilience (Internet)

Just over a third of the community encounters internet challenges, primarily through poor/interrupted connections (85% of those encountering internet challenges). Analysis by region suggests there are internet blackspots in every area of the municipality.

36%	**5%**	**2%**	**1%**
Have faced challenges accessing the internet	**Live in an internet blackspot**	**Can't afford to connect to the internet**	**Don't have a device to connect to the internet**
Q19	Q20	Q20	Q20
Single response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response
More common amongst those with kids			
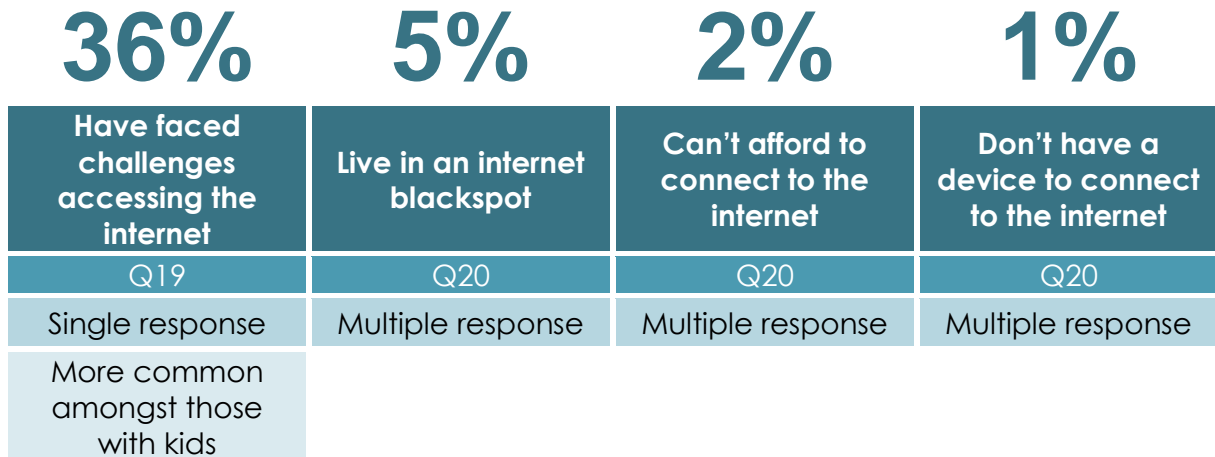
Health behaviours

Health behaviours are closely linked to the Council Plan 'Active and Creative People' theme.

The main impacts of COVID-19 on health behaviours are:

- **Reduced ability to undertake physical exercise** – due to exercise venues being closed and 5km travel limits, during the lockdown many switched to walking instead of more high-intensity exercise activities. This can impact on obesity rates and a range of health risks which rely on high intensity exercise to mitigate (such as cardiovascular health). Physical exercise is also recognised as contributing to improved mental wellbeing[1].
- **Declining mental health** – This stems primarily from isolation and anxiety (linked to fear of getting ill and financial challenges).
- **Ability to afford food** – Many community members are concerned about this happening in the future, however relatively few stated a need for emergency food relief at the time of the survey.
- **Increased alcohol consumption** – Almost half have increased their alcohol consumption. This can have a wide range of both short-term and long-term impacts on health, including reduced mental health, personal injury, and increase in risk of cancer, cardiovascular and brain related diseases[2].

When asked what supports Council could provide, the key recommendations relating to health behaviours were:

27%	25%	9%	4%	10%
Information on local services and programs	Counselling and mental health support	Access to services (outreach or online health services)	Emergency relief (food, clothing, school resources)	Thought to mention food delivery as a way Council can help manage impacts
Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q40
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	unprompted

The greatest barrier to accessing services is not knowing what is available.

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[1] https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/~/media/programsandprojects/physicalactivity/attachments/physical_act_fact.ashx

[2] https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol/about-alcohol/what-are-the-effects-of-alcohol

Recommendations for recovery planning:

- Provide the community with information about exercise opportunities. This could be coupled with the promotion of local fitness businesses and therefore also contribute to economic recovery.
- Plan for provision of in-home high-intensity exercise suggestions and advice on 'safety when exercising at home' should there be lock-downs in the future. This may also be coupled with exploring the provision of in-home exercise equipment for vulnerable members of the community.
- Encourage and promote free or low-cost exercise opportunities for those facing financial difficulties.
- Promote mental health resources available to the community (including guides on navigating the GP referral system for those who haven't had to use them before).
- Help facilitate / advocate for more affordable mental health support, particularly for females, young people, those with children, CALD, and those living in the Central region.
- The food delivery service is well received, and the most vulnerable members of the community will need continued support with food provision. Whilst demand may not be large at the moment, many feel they are at risk of food insecurity, so future decreases in JobKeeper and jobseeker may result in an increased need for this service.
- Consider social marketing to promote the long term risks of excess alcohol consumption; perhaps by offering people alternative methods to manage boredom, stress and anxiety.

Physical health

The stage 4 restrictions have resulted in around half the population decreasing their exercise and having lower levels of satisfaction with their health. For many their exercise habits have changed away from more cardio-vascular opportunities to walking.

47%	52%	6%	3%	8%	7%	51%	69%
Would rate their satisfaction with their health lower than before COVID-19	Doing a lot less exercise	Concern - Managing health conditions	Concern - Exercise	Positive impact –More exercise / better health	Negative impact –less exercise / fitness	Are exercising in a different location	Said their main form of physical activity is walking
Q5b	Q9	Q2	Q2	Q7	Q8	Q12	Q10
Single response	Single response	Multiple response	Other specify	unprompted	unprompted	Single response	unprompted
						More common in the East region	Not clear if pre or during COVID-19

The main places where people would normally exercise, but aren't during COVID-19 5km restrictions were:

- Gym (26%)
- Different outdoor locations (21%)
- Courts and fields (organised sport) (10%)
- Pool (8%)
- Yoga / Pilates (8%)

Those in the East were more often having to make changes to their exercise location, whereas in the Central region fewer were exercising in different locations.

	South region	West region	Central region	East region
The most popular exercise locations with a 5km radius of their home are:	• Local roads (26%) • Diamond Creek (21%) • Aqueduct (20%)	• Local roads (32%) • Plenty River Gorge (25%) • Diamond Creek (17%)	• Diamond Creek (57%) • Local road (18%) • Aqueduct (20%)	• Local roads (29%) • Bushland, river, parks and trails (16%) • Hurstbridge (15%)
Different to where usually exercise	**47%**	**52%**	**36%**	**63%**

Mental health

Over a quarter of the community are experiencing high amounts of psychological distress and are wanting support. Key segments requiring assistance are residents in the Central region, females, young people and those with kids.

3.32	28%	12%	14%	25%	3%
Coping	**Rated one or more of the mental health feelings as 'a lot of the time'**	**Negative impact – Mental health**	**Concern -Feeling lonely**	**Want mental health support**	**Positive impact – mental health / time to ones-self**
Q1	Q6 NET	Q8	Q2	Q3	Q7
Mean /5 (1 = not at all, 5 = extremely well)	Single responses	unprompted	Multiple response	Multiple response	unprompted
Older people and those without kids are coping better	More common amongst those in the Central region, females, younger people and those with kids	More common amongst females, CALD and those with kids		More commonly wanted by females, younger people and those without kids	

The most common mental health issue being experienced a lot of the time is feeling nervous and anxious (17%).

Food

There is widespread concern about having enough money to buy food, however few of these were at the point where they required emergency relief at the time of surveying.

38%	**23%**	**4%**
Concern – Not being able to buy food	**Worried about having enough money to buy food**	**Want emergency relief (including food)**
Q2	Q37	Q3
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response
		Higher amongst those with children and those with a disability or health care card

Alcohol

Almost half the population have increased their alcohol consumption during COVID-19.

27%	**27%**	**43%**
Drinking more than 3 days a week in the last month	**Are drinking 3 or more standard drinks a day that they consume alcohol**	**Are drinking more than before COVID-19**
Q13	Q15	Q14
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response
	More common amongst males	More common amongst those with kids

Employment and learning

Employment and learning is closely linked to the Council Plan 'A Prosperous Economy' theme.

The main impacts of COVID-19 on employment and learning are:

- **Change in the nature of work.** In particular, almost half of the workforce has switched to working from home. This has flow-on impacts for household relationships (both positive and negative) as well as positively impact on financial position (saving money from commuting). Although some prefer working from home, many miss the social interaction and escape of working on-location.
- **Loss of employment or reduced employment.** Whilst many are on JobKeeper and/or JobSeeker, there is some anxiety about the future, particularly with planned reduction in benefits which don't align to the reality of work opportunities and could leave people struggling financially.
- **Financial vulnerability.** Loss of work, or a reduction in workload is having a severe negative impact on some members of the community. There is also a fear that this will worsen as Covid-19 continues. This leads to a reduction in the standard of living and not being able to afford much needed mental health and leisure services.

When asked what supports Council could provide, the key recommendations relating to employment and learning were:

16%	15%	12%	14%	10%
Want support for businesses	Want financial relief packages for low income earners	Want employment and vocational skills programs	Thought to mention rate relief as something that would help people manage the impacts of COVID-19	Said services being too expensive was a barrier to use
Q3	Q3	Q3	Q40	Q4
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	unprompted	Multiple response

Recommendations for recovery planning:

- Explore financial support packages for those hardest hit by employment loss or reduction. In particular hardship grants and essential item vouchers.
- Continue to provide food support, with more comprehensive promotion of this offering.
- Closely monitor welfare offering in line with employment levels to identify risk of increased hardship.
- Make sure financial relief packages for low income earners are appropriate for CALD households.
- When designing business support programs, consider that many of those who would utilise programs have children, and therefore they will need to be structured in an appropriate way.

Employment

Almost a third (31%) selected an employment related item as one of their top 3 concerns. Most of the changes to work have been location-based, with almost half switching to working from home (which for some is a positive thing). Around a quarter of the community are on JobKeeper or jobseeker.

15%	9%	8%	8%	48%	11%	25%	16%	12%	5%
Concern - Risk of unemploy-ment	Concern - Working from home	Concern - Losing my business	Were employed before COVID-19 and are no longer working	Have been working from home	Worked on-location during COVID-19	Have received JobKeeper or Jobseeker	Want business support	Want employ-ment and skills programs	Positive impact – working from home
Q2	Q2	Q2	Q23-24	Q25	Q25	Q26	Q3	Q3	Q7
Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Single response	Single response	Single response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response	Unpromp-ted
Net 31% - Highest amongst 15-34 year olds then decreasing with age.			Higher amongst those with a disability / health care card				More common amongst those in the West region and 45-64 year olds.	More common amongst 35-54 year olds.	

Financial vulnerability

Whilst a few said their financial situation had improved since COVID-19 (through saving money), over two in five have experienced a decrease in income. This has a flow-on effect on standard of living, financial hardship and ability to afford services. A notable segment of the community would benefit from financial support.

20%	43%	35%	23%	4%	15%	10%	15%	30%
Concern - Financial instability	Said their income is less during COVID-19 than before COVID-19	Say their standard of living has decreased	Specified encounter-ing financial hardship during COVID-19	Positive impact – saving money	Negative impact – financial stress	Barrier – Services too expensive	Want financial relief packages for low income earners	Specified a financial support that would help them
Q2	Q39	Q5b	Q37	Q7	Q8	Q4	Q3	Q38
Multiple response	Single response	Single response	Multiple response	Unprompted		Multiple response	Multiple response	Multiple response
More common amongst CALD	CALD more commonly say a lot less	More common amongst CALD	More common amongst those with a disability / healthcare card and those with children		More common amongst younger people and those with kids	Higher amongst 15-34 year olds and those with a disability or health care card	More commonly wanted by CALD and those with a disability/ healthcare card	

The main financial hardships were (selected from list in Q37):

- Couldn't pay utilities (9%).
- Worried about having enough money for food (9%).
- Asked for financial help from friends or family (9%).
- Withdrew from superannuation (7%).
- Unable to pay rent or mortgage on time (7%).

The most popular financial support potential offerings were (selected from list in Q38):
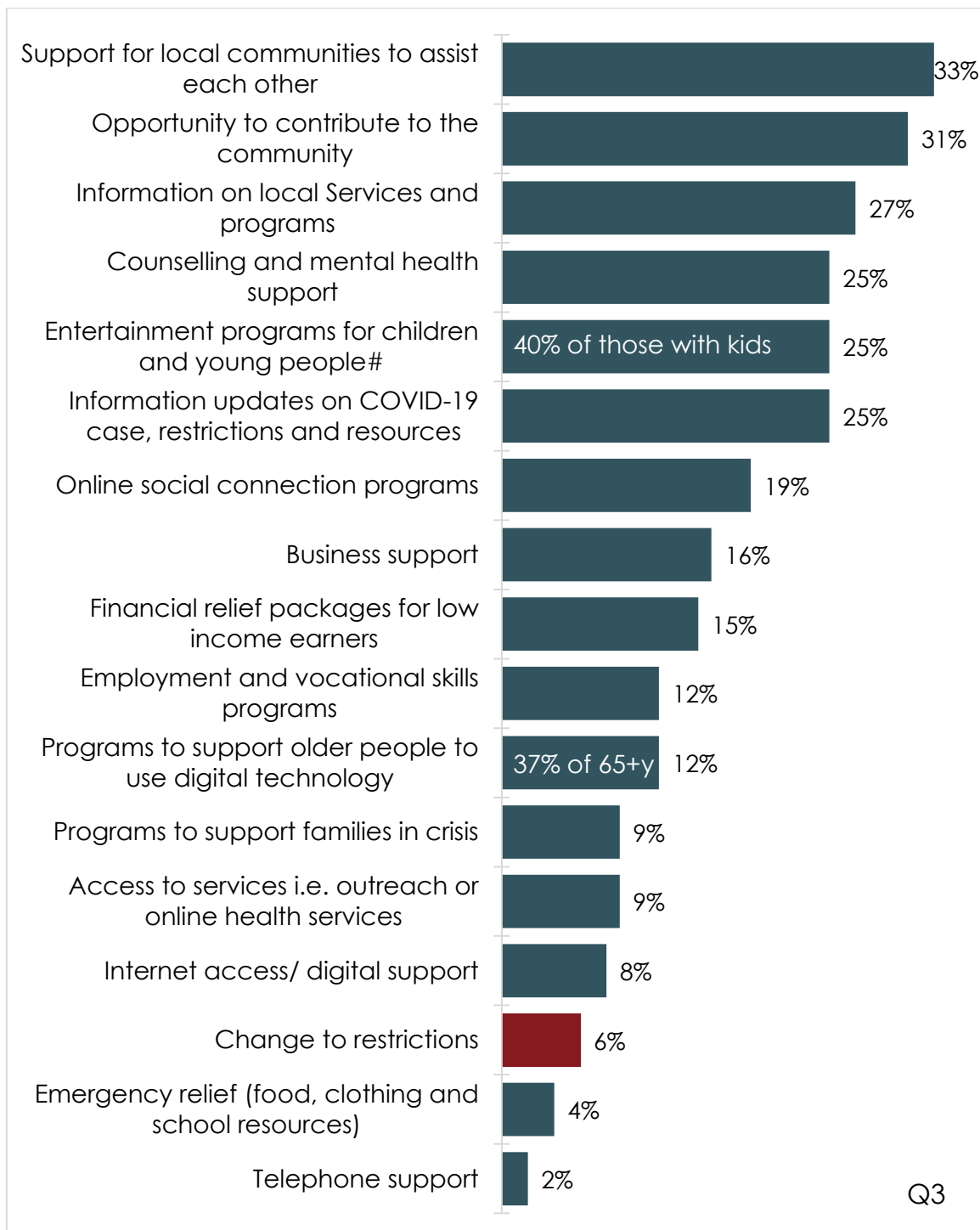
- One-off financial hardship grants (16%).
- Essential item vouchers (11%).
- Support to connect to State and Federal Government financial relief (9%).
- Delivery of food packages (5%).

What Council can do

In the charts below, the red bars show codes generated in the analysis process, based on comments written in text boxes. They do not represent incidence (percentages may have been higher if all respondents had seen the option).

To help support wellbeing

The community wants Council to provide supports for community cohesion, with opportunities to contribute and information on what is available.

Category	Percentage
Support for local communities to assist each other	33%
Opportunity to contribute to the community	31%
Information on local Services and programs	27%
Counselling and mental health support	25%
Entertainment programs for children and young people# (40% of those with kids)	25%
Information updates on COVID-19 case, restrictions and resources	25%
Online social connection programs	19%
Business support	16%
Financial relief packages for low income earners	15%
Employment and vocational skills programs	12%
Programs to support older people to use digital technology (37% of 65+y)	12%
Programs to support families in crisis	9%
Access to services i.e. outreach or online health services	9%
Internet access/ digital support	8%
Change to restrictions	6%
Emergency relief (food, clothing and school resources)	4%
Telephone support	2%

Q3

To help people manage the impacts of COVID-19

In addition to fee and rate relief for those who are struggling financially, the community wants Council to open parks and services and promote what is available. The most common specific service mentioned was food delivery (including praising the current service).
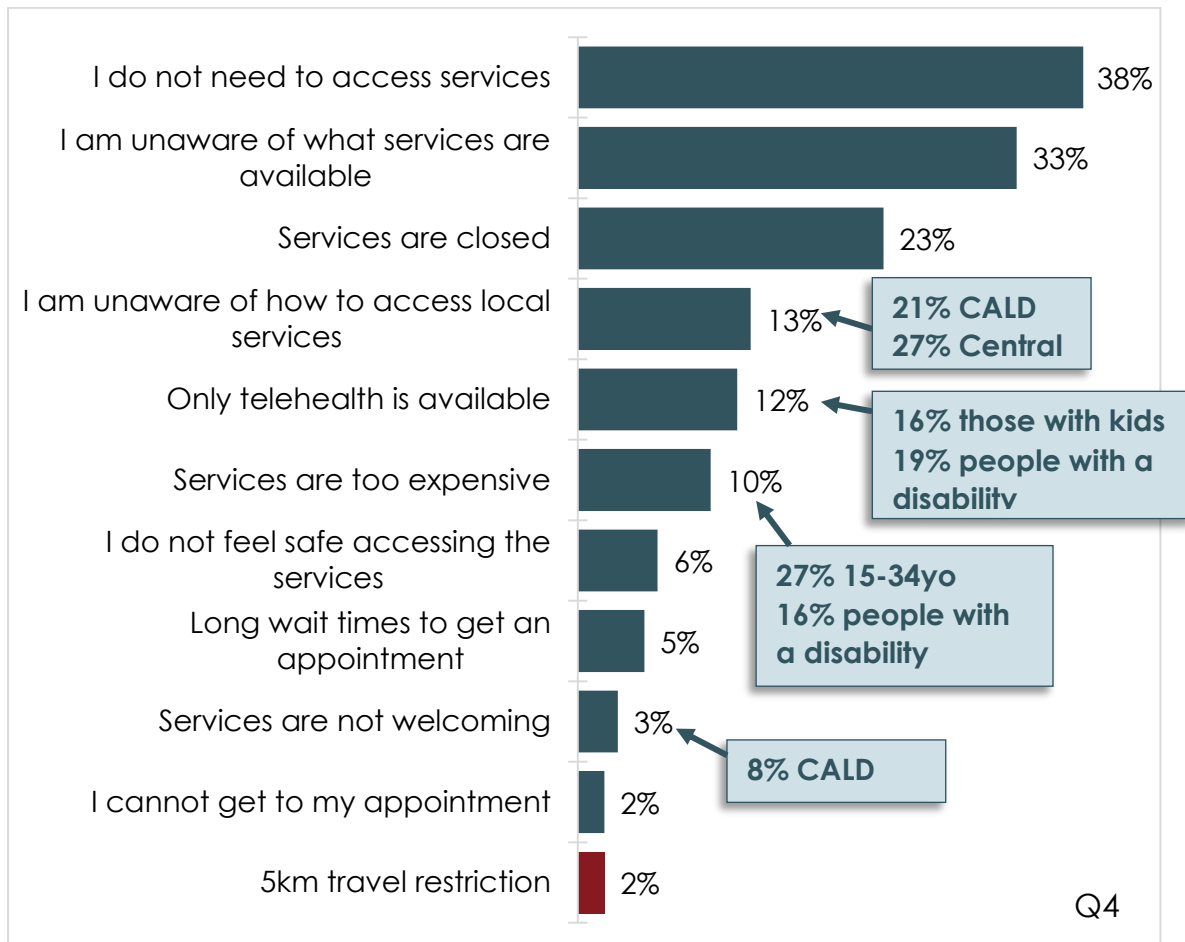
Category	Percentage
Parks / services	17%
Rate / fee relief	14%
Promote what is available / comms	12%
Food relief / delivery	10%
Children	9%
Financial assistance / advocacy	8%
Community connections	7%
Change restrictions	7%
Garden / house maintenance / cleaning	6%
Rubbish	5%
Mental health services	5%
House-checks (welfare)	5%
Exercise info / activities	5%

n=147, Q40
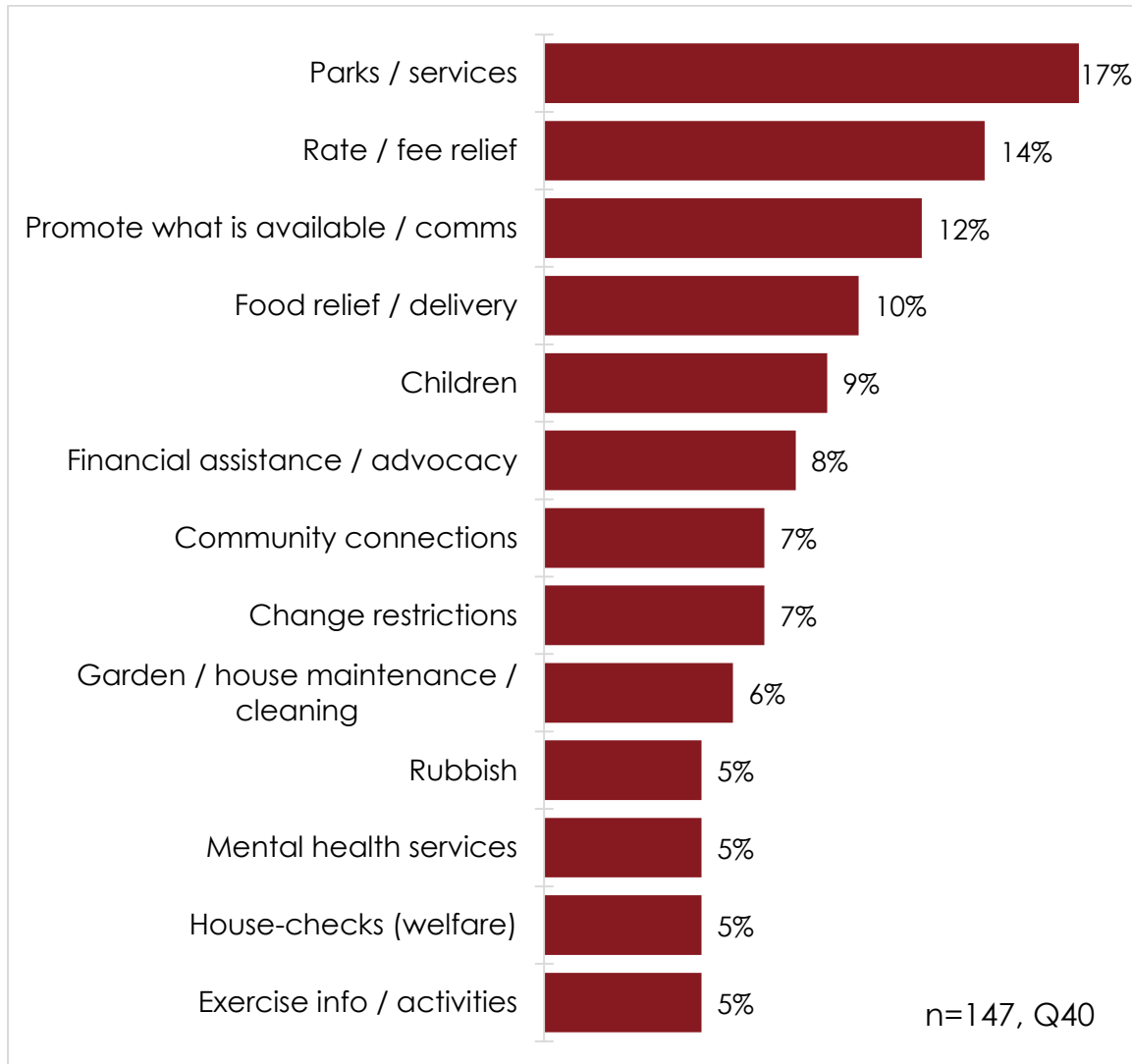
To address barriers to accessing services

Raising awareness of current services is key to helping the community access those services. In particular, letting people know when the services are open again (if they were closed during COVID-19) and advocating for services to stay open during lockdowns.

Barrier	%
I do not need to access services	38%
I am unaware of what services are available	33%
Services are closed	23%
I am unaware of how to access local services	13%
Only telehealth is available	12%
Services are too expensive	10%
I do not feel safe accessing the services	6%
Long wait times to get an appointment	5%
Services are not welcoming	3%
I cannot get to my appointment	2%
5km travel restriction	2%

21% CALD
27% Central
(I am unaware of how to access local services — 13%)

16% those with kids
19% people with a disability
(Only telehealth is available — 12%)

27% 15-34yo
16% people with a disability
(Services are too expensive — 10%)

8% CALD
(Services are not welcoming — 3%)

Q4

Appendices

1. Note on Localities

Given the respondents locality was collected as a postcode, not all township profiles could be covered by this survey.

Postcode	% in Nillumbik	Nillumbik locality	Matching township	Valid	Sample
3088	19%	Greensborough	Greensborough	Yes	n=37
3089	100%	Diamond Creek	Diamond Creek	Yes	n=49
3090	100%	Plenty	Plenty	Yes	n=10
3091	100%	Yarrambat	Yarrambat	Yes	n=8
3095	100%	Eltham	Eltham	No	n=130
		Eltham North	Eltham North		
		Research	Research		
3096	100%	Wattle Glen	Wattle Glen	Yes	n=7
3097	100%	Kangaroo Ground	Kangaroo Ground		n=10
		Watsons Creek	Rural East		
		Bend of Islands	Rural East		
3099	100%	Hurstbridge	Hurstbridge	No	n=41
		Nutfield	Rural North West		
		Strathewen	Rural East		
		Cottles Bridge	Rural North West		
		Arthurs Creek	Rural North West		
3113	100%	North Warrandyte	North Warrandyte	Yes	n=9
3754	100%	Doreen	Doreen	Yes	n=11
3755	8%	Yan Yean	Rural East	No	n=0
3759	100%	Panton Hill	Panton Hill	Yes	n=6
3760	100%	Smiths Gully	Rural East	No	n=1
3761	100%	St Andrews	St Andrews	Yes	n=5
3775	9%	Christmas Hills	Rural North West	No	n=2

Given these discrepancies in categories, and small sample sizes for some postcodes, the data has been distributed into four regions for analysis:

Region	N=	Scope	
South	n=130	Eltham	3095
		Eltham North	
		Research	
West	n=66	Greensborough	3088
		Plenty	3090
		Yarrambat	3091
		Doreen	3754
Central	n=56	Diamond Creek	3089
		Wattle Glen	3096
East	n=74	St Andrews	3761
		Panton Hill	3759
		Smiths Gully	3760
		Christmas Hills	3775
		Kangaroo Ground	3097
		Watsons Creek	
		Bend of Islands	
		North Warrandyte	3113
		Hurstbridge	3099
		Nutfield	
		Strathewen	
		Cottles Bridge	
		Arthurs Creek	

2. Supporting data for segment Insights

The following data has been used to support the segment insights.

Regional variations

South	• Mean of 3.59 out of 5 for people in their neighbourhood sharing the same values (3.18 West). • Mean of 4.45 out of 5 for their neighbourhood being a good place to live (4.46 West). • Mean of 3.69 out of 5 for people work to get things done for this community (3.23 West).
West	• 24% of those who are employed worked on-location (8% South, 6% East).
Central	• 26% unaware of how to access local services (10% South and 8% East). • 72% rated feeling part of your community lower since COVID-19 (47% East). • 30% said they are nervous or anxious most of the time (7% East). • 16% said they feel hopeless or worthless a lot of the time (3% East). • 65% said their rating of feeling part of the community was lower during COVID-19 (43% South and 41% East). • 72% say it has been hard / very hard to stay connected with family and friends outside the household (59% West). • 29% said they couldn't pay an electricity, gas or telephone bill on time (4% South).
East	• 63% started exercising in locations other than their normal locations (likely due to the 5km radius directive from the health department) (36% central). • Mean of 3.24 out of 5 for feeling part of the community (2.63 West, 2.69 Central). • Mean of 4.46 out of 5 for their neighbourhood being a good place to live (4.02 West). • Mean of 3.83 out of 5 for people work to get things done for this community (3.23 West).

Gender lens

Males	Females
49% say one of their main concerns is self, family or friend contracting COVID (38% females).	25% say one of their main concerns is managing remote learning for children at home (13% males).
32% said they are not getting down or depressed (18%).	37% want support for local communities to assist each other (23% males)
39% of those who drink (29% all males) will have 3-6 standard drinks when drinking (19% females who drink, 14% all females).	31% want counselling and mental health support (12% males).
43% report no change in the quality of their relationships with people in their household (24% females).	29% want entertainment programs for children and young people (14% males).
36% of those in households with children say their partner is spending the most time helping the children.	11% want programs to support families in crisis (4% males)
	67% are nervous or anxious al lot/some of the time (46% males).
	19% say they are unable to get themselves going a lot of the time (9% males).
	42% of those who drink (32% of all females) will have only 1 standard drink when drinking (24% males who drink, 18% all males).
	46% were staying connected by going for walks with others (29% males).
	69% of those in households with children are taking on most of the responsibility for helping the children (21% males).
	38% want financial support for essential items (20% males).

Age variations

		Young 15-34	Middle-aged 35-44	45-54	Older adults 55-64	65+
Concerns	Missing family and friends	88%	64%	67%	72%	87%
	Me or my family/friend contracting COVID-19	12%	33%	41%	61%	55%
	Missing key life events such as weddings, funerals and birthdays	38%	13%	19%	32%	45%
	Disruption of education	21%	32%	33%	11%	8%
	Managing remote learning for children at home	15%	39%	28%	6%	4%
Support	Counselling and mental health support	36%	30%	27%	25%	6%
	Entertainment programs for children and young people	33%	48%	18%	2%	8%
	Business support	15%	25%	16%	13%	2%
	Programs to support older people to use digital technology	9%	6%	1%	8%	35%
	Services too expensive	27%	10%	10%	9%	3%
Relationships	Satisfaction with personal relationships (mean/5)	3.41	3.2	3.56	3.6	3.89
	Satisfaction with personal relationships lower than pre-COVID	5%	52%	46%	36%	31%
	No change to quality of relationships with people in since the COVID-19 restrictions started	26%	19%	30%	32%	46%
	More strained/difficult quality of relationships with people in since the COVID-19 restrictions started	35%	39%	24%	16%	15%
	Equally sharing helping children at home during COVID (% of households with children and couple parents)	17%	18%	36%	27%	NA
Health	Satisfaction with health the same during COVID as before	38%	26%	41%	53%	67%
	Exercising somewhere different during COVID	65%	56%	52%	45%	39%

		Young	Middle-aged		Older adults	
		15-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Community connections	Satisfaction with feeling part of your community (mean/5)	2.56	2.68	3.07	3.25	3.20
	I feel part of the community (mean/5)	2.47	2.63	2.93	3.19	3.28
	I trust my neighbours (mean/5)	3.55	4.02	3.91	4.23	4.39
	People work to get things done for this community (mean/5)	3.33	3.31	3.61	3.83	3.79
	My neighbours are helping each other get through the COVID-19 restrictions (mean/5)	2.9	3.19	3.16	3.7	3.68
	Since COVID it has been very easy+easy to stay connected with friends and family outside the household	21%	15%	7%	19%	25%
Mental health	Satisfaction with what achieving in life (mean/5)	2.84	2.85	3.15	3.11	3.37
	Your future security (mean/5)	2.59	2.76	3.11	2.39	3.48
	Nervous or anxious a lot of the time	24%	25%	21%	8%	4%
	Hopeless or worthless a lot of the time	9%	15%	7%	6%	1%
	Unable to get yourself going a little or not at all	27%	40%	40%	45%	61%
Alcohol	Drinking less alcohol in the last month than before COVID-19	39%	14%	6%	4%	12%
	Drinking more alcohol in the last month than before COVID-19	22%	54%	52%	34%	31%
Employment	Working from home during COVID (% of those employed)	59%	62%	63%	38%	20%
	Working at a location away from home (% of those employed)	12%	13%	21%	25%	1%
	Received JobKeeper (% of those employed)	18%	24%	28%	14%	4%
	Received JobSeeker (% of those employed)	9%	1%	6%	15%	0%
	Income decreased during COVID	61%	45%	45%	41%	29%

Target segments

CALD	Disability / Health Care Card
27% said they are concerned about financial instability (17% not CALD)	52% said they are concerned about themselves or their family contracting COVID (39% not vulnerable)
5% said they are concerned about an increase in family violence at home (0% not CALD)	15% said they are concerned about managing chronic health conditions (1% not vulnerable)
22% want Financial relief packages for low income earners (12% not CALD)	23% want financial relief packages for low income earners (10% not vulnerable)
20% unaware of how to access local services (11% not CALD)	18% want programs to support older people to use digital technology (8% not vulnerable)
Lower mean standard of living (3.42, 3.96 not CALD)	7% want Emergency relief (food, clothing and school resources) (2% not vulnerable)
46% report a decrease in their standard of living (31% not CALD)	18% unaware of how to access local services (10% not vulnerable)
Lower mean personal relationships (3.3, 3.59 not CALD)	18% say telehealth only is a barrier (8% not vulnerable)
10% report an increase in the level of trust for their neighbours (5% not CALD) and 10% report a lower level of trust (4% not CALD). Not CALD mostly report no change (92%, 79% CALD)	16% say services are too expensive (7% not vulnerable)
	15% say they feel down or depressed a lot of the time (7% not vulnerable)
	12% said their rating of feeling part of the community has increased (4% not vulnerable)
	26% say their neighbours are helping each other get through COVID more (17% not vulnerable)
	17% receiving JobKeeper/jobseeker (2% not vulnerable)

Households with children

Children	No children
42% disruption of education is a main concern (5% no kids)	3.63 mean out of 5 coping (3.01 with kids)
39% managing remote learning for children at home (3% no kids)	80% missing friends is a main concern (65% with kids)
30% want counselling and mental health support (20% no kids)	55% getting COVID-19 is a main concern (31% with kids)
40% want entertainment programs for children and young people (8% no kids)	39% missing key life events (15% with kids)
23% want business support (8% no kids)	39% want an opportunity to contribute to the community (25% with kids)
24% feel anxious or nervous a lot of the time (9% no kids)	33% want information on local services and programs (22% with kids)
36% are under psychological distress (19% no kids)	45% don't need to access services (32% with kids)
20% named financial stress as a negative impact (10% no kids)	3.22 mean out of 5 satisfaction with what they are achieving in life (2.92 with kids)
17% named mental health as a negative impact (7% no kids)	3.58 mean out of 5 satisfaction with health (3.38 no kids)
50% say their alcohol consumption has increased (35% no kids)	3.15 mean out of 5 satisfaction with feeling part of your community (2.78 with kids)
34% having more strained relationships with people in their household (18% no kids)	3.34 mean out of 5 satisfaction with future security (2.82 with kids)
34% worked flexible hours form home (18% no kids)	54% say their alcohol consumption hasn't changed (37% with kids)
24% want one-off financial hardship grants (9% no kids)	79% don't need any financial supports (60% with kids)
17% want essential item vouchers (4% no kids)	60% has had no change in income (46% with kids)
22% named want parks services as something council and community organisations could provide (9% no kids)	18% looking forward to travelling / going on holiday once VOCID-19 is over (10% with kids)

3. Questionnaire

Labels in dark red show codes / variables created during the analysis process.

Q1. On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is not at all to 5 extremely well) how are you currently coping with the COVID-19 restrictions?

Q2. What are your three main concerns during COVID-19?
>   Me or my family/friend contracting COVID-19
>   Missing family and friends
>   Risk of losing my job or unemployment
>   Increased family violence at home
>   Not being able to buy food or essential items
>   I am on a temporary visa and uncertain about my future.
>   Not being able to visit dying or seriously ill family/friends
>   Missing key life events such as weddings, funerals and birthdays
>   Disruption of education
>   Disruption of care and support services
>   Losing my business
>   Managing remote learning for children at home
>   Working from home
>   Increased caring roles
>   Financial instability
>   Feeling lonely
>   Managing chronic health conditions
>   Other (specify) comments coded into:
>> Exercise
>> Local community
>> Mental health
>> Restrictions
>> Recreation

Q3. What assistance, services or programs could help support your wellbeing at this time?
>   Counselling and mental health support
>   Emergency relief (food, clothing and school resources)
>   Information on local Services and programs
>   Entertainment programs for children and young people
>   Employment and vocational skills programs
>   Online social connection programs
>   Programs to support older people to use digital technology
>   Information updates on COVID-19 case, restrictions and resources
>   Support for local communities to assist each other
>   Programs to support families in crisis (family violence, relationship breakdowns etc.)
>   Business support
>   Financial relief packages for low income earners
>   Internet access/ digital support
>   Access to services i.e. outreach or online health services
>   Telephone support

Opportunity to contribute to the community
Other (specify) comments coded into:
Change to restrictions

Q4. Are there any barriers stopping you from accessing services you need during COVID-19?
I am unaware of what services are available
I am unaware of how to access local services
Services are closed
I cannot get to my appointment
Long wait times to get an appointment
Services are too expensive
I do not feel safe accessing the services
Services are not welcoming
Only telehealth is available
I do not need to access services
Other (specify) comments coded into:
5km travel restrictions

Q5a. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not at all and 5 being extremely) how satisfied are you with…?
Your standard of living
What you are currently achieving in life
Your health
Your personal relationships
How safe you feel
Feeling part of your community
Your future security

Q5b. Is this rating higher, lower or the same as before COVID-19? [Answer options Higher, Lower, Same]
Your standard of living
What you are currently achieving in life
Your health
Your personal relationships
How safe you feel
Feeling part of your community
Your future security

Q6. *In the last month how often did you feel…? [Answer options: A lot more now, A little more now, About the same, A little less now, A lot less now]*
Nervous or anxious
Hopeless or worthless
Unable to get yourself going
Down or depressed
Distressed to the point of seeking support

New variable was generated for analysis. NET of all people who rated one or more of Q6 as "A lot more now". Shows proportion experiencing mental health distress.

Q7. Have you experienced any positive changes in your life as a result of COVID-19? [Open ended] comments coded into:

 More time (including for chores , hobbies, study etc.)
 Helping others
 Community cohesion / more contact with neighbours
 More contact with friends / extended family
 More time with kids / family
 Saving Money
 New hobbies / skills
 Less driving / traffic / commuting
 Good for environment
 More exercise / better fitness
 Working from home
 Slower pace
 Mental health/ self time
 Exploring local area
 Jobseeker / JobKeeper
 None/NA
 Other

Q8. Have you experienced any negative changes in your life as a result of COVID-19? [Open ended] comments coded into:

 Loneliness / social Isolation
 Boredom
 Cannot visit friends/ family
 Mental Health
 Worsened relationships
 Concerned about child development / education
 Concerned about health of others
 Financial stress / Lost job / business / income
 Difficulty shopping
 Lack of sports / social activities
 Unable to attend health appointments / in person
 Unhappy with government (state & federal) / lockdown rules
 Unhappy with people not following rules
 Worried about economy / businesses
 Unable to travel / cancelled holiday plans
 More to juggle (home schooling, carer work etc.)
 Less exercise / fitness
 Unable to attend wedding / funeral
 Just answered "yes"
 Unable to care for others
 Increased alcohol consumption
 Loss of relative to COVID-19
 None / N/A
 Other

Q9. Overall, do you feel you are doing more, less or about the same level of physical activity during COVID -19 restrictions, compared to before COVID-19?

> A lot more now
> A little more now
> About the same
> A little less now
> A lot less now

Q10. What is your main form of physical activity? [Open ended] comments coded into:

! Answers suggest that some people mentioned a pre-COVID physical activity. Need to clarify in future if you mean 'usual' or 'present'.

> Walking
> Running / jogging
> Exercise at home
> Gardening
> Bike riding
> Gym
> House work / maintenance
> Yoga / Pilates
> Dog walking
> Swimming
> Organised sport
> Work
> Horse riding
> Other

Q11. Within your 5km radius what reserve, space or location do you use if exercising outside? [Open ended] comments coded into:

> Local roads
> Diamond Creek (DC)
> Bushland / parks / trails / river
> Aqueduct / Research
> Can't / none
> Plenty river/gorge
> Oval
> Lower Eltham Park
> On property
> Hurstbridge
> Bike track
> Eltham (Various locations)
> Anthony Beale
> Warrandyte
> Bunjil
> Other
> Not enough information

Q12. Is this different to where you would normally exercise?

> Yes
> No

Q12a. [IF YES] Where would you normally exercise? [OPEN ENDED] comments coded into:

 Gym
 Different locations (walk / ride / park / river)
 Courts / fields / ovals / clubs
 Named a park
 Yoga / Pilates studio
 Pool
 Diamond Creek trail
 Leisure centre
 Bike paths
 Near work
 Eltham lower park
 River
 Other

Q13. In the last month how often have you had an alcoholic drink of any kind?

 Every day
 4-6 days a week
 1-3 days a week
 2-3 days a month
 Once a month
 Less often
 Never

Q14. Is this level of consumption higher or lower or the same as before COVID-19?

 Higher
 Same
 Lower

Q15. On a day that you have an alcoholic drink, how many standard drinks do you usually have?

 1 standard drink
 2 standard drinks
 3-4 standard drinks
 5-6 standard drinks
 7 or more

Q16a. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being not at all and 5 being extremely) how satisfied are you with…? ! This rating scale is not appropriate for the statements.

 I feel part of the community
 People in my neighbourhood share the same values
 My neighbourhood is a good place to live
 I trust my neighbours
 People work to get things done for this community
 My neighbours are helping each other get through the COVID-19 restrictions

Q16b. Is this rating higher, lower or the same as before COVID-19? [Answer options: Higher, Same, Lower]

> I feel part of the community
> People in my neighbourhood share the same values
> My neighbourhood is a good place to live
> I trust my neighbours
> People work to get things done for this community
> My neighbours are helping each other get through the COVID-19 restrictions
> ! Higher / lower rating for this item is not valid / doesn't make sense.

Q17. Since the COVID-19 restrictions started, how easy has it been to stay connected with family and friends outside your household?

> Very easy
> Easy
> Neither easy nor hard
> Hard
> Very hard
> Not sure

Q18. Excluding work or education did you connect with others in the following ways?

! In future this will need a 'none of these' option. 8 respondents provided no answer, but we don't know if that is because it was none, or because they missed the question.

> Telephone (voice only)
> Video calls e.g. FaceTime, Zoom, Houseparty
> Walking with one other while social distancing
> Sharing items with neighbours such as food, toys, books etc.
> Sharing chores with neighbours e.g. bringing in bins, grocery shopping, mow lawns

Q19. Are you facing challenges accessing the internet?

! this scale is not clear. Combined 'Yes' and 'Sometimes' for reported measure.

> Yes
> No
> Sometimes

Q20. What are the challenges you face when trying to access the internet?

> Poor or interrupted internet connection
> I live in an internet blackspot
> I don't have a device to connect to the internet (e.g. computer)
> I cannot afford to connect to the internet
> I do not want to connect to the internet
> Other

Q21. Which of these best describes your household?
        Single person household
        Couple living alone
        Couple with child / children
        One parent family with child / children, co-parenting with other parent living elsewhere
        One parent family with child / children
        Adults sharing house /apartment / flat
        Other

Q22. How has the quality of your relationships with people in your household changed since the COVID-19 restrictions started?
        A lot closer/stronger
        A little closer/stronger
        No change
        A little more difficult/strained
        A lot more difficult/strained
        Not applicable – single person household
        Not sure
        Prefer not to say

Q23. Which of these best describes your main activity before COVID-19? Were you…?
        Self employed
        Employed for wages, salary or payment in kind
        Engaged in home duties
        A student
        Retired
        Unable to work
        Volunteer
        Other

Q24. Which of these best describes your main activity during COVID-19? Are you…?
        Self employed
        Employed for wages, salary or payment in kind
        Engaged in home duties
        A student
        Retired
        Unable to work
        Volunteer
        On JobSeeker
        On JobKeeper
        Other

New variable was generated for analysis to show how employment had changed from Q23 to Q24:
        No longer working
        On JobKeeper/Seeker
        Work mode changed
        Unchanged

Q25. Since the COVID-19 restrictions started, have you…?
Worked mainly from home with standard hours
Worked mainly from home with flexible hours
Worked mainly from another location with standard hour (I.e. office, retail outlet, work site)
Work mainly from another location with flexible start and finish times
Prefer not to say
Unsure
None of the above

Q26. Since COVID-19 restrictions started…? [MULTIPLE RESPONSE]
None of these
Received, or have been notified that you will receive job keeper
Received, or have been notified that you will receive job seeker
Received, or have been notified that you will receive government rent assistance
Prefer not to say
Other
Not sure

Q27. Do you have any children aged 18 or younger living in your house (full-time or part-time)?
Yes
No

Q28. How many children are living in your house?
1
2
3
4 or more

Q29. What are their ages? [OPEN ENDED] comments coded into:
! Ask as a multiple response question in future to save time coding.
Aged 0-4
Aged 5-11
Aged 12-17
Aged 18+

Q30. Have you sent your children to school, daycare or kindergarten in the past week?
Yes - most of the time
Yes - some of the time
I have discontinued my child/children going to childcare or kindergarten
No - I have kept them home
It is more complicated than that. [SPECIFY]

Q31. Who is spending the most time helping your child/ren at home during COVID-19?

    I am

    My partner or other parent

    Shared equally between my partner / the other parent and myself

    Other person outside of the household

    Other

Q32. What would support you to better care for them at this time?

! Collected as single response, should have been multiple

    Tutoring

    Virtual play groups and story time

    Careers related support for young people (resume writing, interview etc.)

    Parenting programs

    Mental health support and outreach

    Behavioural support

    Other

Q33. Are you the primary carer of an older adult and /or person with a disability?

    Yes

    No

Q34. How has COVID-19 impacted your role as a carer? [Open ended]

Q35. How has COVID-19 affected the person that you care for? [Open ended]

Q36. What support would further assist you in your role as a carer?

! Collected as single response, should have been multiple

    Information of services

    Financial supports

    Mental health support

    Peer support e.g. carer support group

    Social support for the person you care for

    Transport

    Other

Q37. Since COVID-19 do any of the following apply to you?

! Needs a 'none of these' option. Not sure if the blank responses were those who hadn't experienced any or missed/skipped the question? Blanks treated as "none of these" one in the data file.

    Could not pay electricity, gas or telephone bill on time

    Unable to pay rent or mortgage on time

    Worried about eviction/or repossession of your home

    Asked for financial help from friends or family

    Accessed support from community services/ organisations

    Attended a food relief agency, food bank or food pantry (or similar) to access food relief

    Worried about having enough money to buy food

    Skipped a meal in order to feed your household

    Withdrew from superannuation

    Other

    None of these

Q38. What financial supports would assist you during this period?
! Needs a 'none of these' option. Not sure if the blank responses were those who hadn't experienced any or missed/skipped the question? Blanks treated as "None of these" in the data file.

>   Essential item vouchers (e.g. supermarket supplies, fuel, utility bill support etc.)
>   Delivery of food packages/ ready-made meals
>   Support to connect to Federal and State Government financial relief
>   One-off financial hardship grants
>   Business support
>   Other
>   None of these

Q39. Is your income more, less or the same now – during COVID-19 restrictions, compared to before COVID-19?

>   A lot more now
>   A little more now
>   About the same
>   A little less now
>   A lot less now

Q40. What other services do you think Council or other community organisations could provide to help people manage the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in Nillumbik? [Open ended] comments coded into:

>   Parks / services
>   Rate / fee relief
>   Promote what is available / comms
>   Food relief / delivery
>   Children
>   Financial assistance / advocacy
>   Community connections
>   Change restrictions
>   Garden / house maintenance / cleaning
>   Rubbish
>   Mental health services
>   House-checks (welfare)
>   Exercise info / activities
>   Specific shops
>   Volunteering
>   Single people socialising apps
>   Encourage shop local
>   Arts and culture
>   Other

Q41. What other comments do you have about the COVID-19 pandemic and how it is impacting your life and/or the community that you would like to share with us? [Open ended] comments coded into:

> None
> Personal negative
> Community negative
> Community positive
> Request for council / services/ activities
> Government negative
> Personal positive
> General negative
> Concern about future
> We are in this together
> Government positive
> General positive
> Other

Q42. What are you most looking forward to once COVID-19 restrictions are eased? [Open ended] comments coded into:

> Socialising / friends
> See family
> Freedom (travel, visit)
> Travel / Holiday
> Eat out
> Exercising / sport
> Recreation
> Back to work
> Kids back to school / childcare
> Using services / shops
> Back to normal
> Church
> Other

Q43. Gender

! Prefer not to identify could be confused with prefer not to say. The correct term is 'Prefer to self-describe'

> Male
> Female
> Prefer not to identify
> Non-binary
> Prefer not to say

Q44. Age

! Need guardian consent to interview people under the age of 14. 2 respondents removed from analysis due to being under the age of 14.

Under 9
10-14
15-19
20-24
25-29
30-34
35-39
40-44
45-49
50-54
55-59
60-64
65-69
70-74
75-79
80-84
85 and over

Q45. Postcode

! Not possible to align this with townships. In future ask them to select a locality from a drop-down list of all suburbs / towns.

Q46. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Yes, Aboriginal
Yes, Torres Strait Islander
Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
No
Not sure
I'd prefer not to say

Q47. Were you born in Australia?

! Needs a prefer not to say option

Yes
No (Specify) Where were you born?

Q48. Do you speak a language other than English at home ?

! Needs a prefer not to say option

Yes
No

Q49. Do you have a disability, health condition or injury that has lasted, or is likely to last, 6 months or more ?

Yes
No
Not sure
Prefer not to say

Q50. Other than a Medicare card, are you the holder of a health care card or a pensioner concession card?

      Yes

      No

      Not sure

      Prefer not to say

Q51. How did you find out about this survey?

      Social media (e.g. Facebook)

      Local Paper

      Plenty FM

      Nillumbik News

      healthAbility

      Other

! Ask for tenure (owner or renter) as this can have an impact on challenges faced.