ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

CCL 27/09/2022 – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT LOCAL SOCIAL STRATEGY

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

**CCL 27/09/2022 – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT LOCAL
SOCIAL STRATEGY**

ITEM-75   **Attachment A:**   Draft Local Social Strategy

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

Local Social Strategy 2030

newcastle.nsw.gov.au

City of
Newcastle

Welcome

Acknowledgement

City of Newcastle acknowledges that we operate on the grounds of the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land and waters, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

Table of Contents

Lord Mayor Message

City of Newcastle (CN)'s *Local Social Strategy 2030* places people at the centre of our vision for a socially just and inclusive place for all. We recognise that human health and the health of our planet are deeply interwoven. Together we must balance our social foundations – things like care for health and wellbeing, education and access to food – with ecological concerns such as a healthy climate, biodiversity and clean water. From this basis, our strategy champions evidence-based decision-making and innovative practice to inform our approach, while ensuring strong, respectful and transparent relationships with our community partners.

Newcastle is a liveable city with a remarkable natural environment, local economic opportunities, and an increasingly diverse social, cultural and creative foundation that contributes to quality of life. However, as Newcastle undergoes significant growth and change, an increasing number of community members risk being left behind, unable to realise their full potential as part of a thriving society.

Our *Local Social Strategy* seeks to respond to these challenges by removing barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encouraging community connection and participation, celebrating our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthening community health and wellbeing.

Thank you to those who contributed through the consultation stage to form this plan and the community sector organisations who we work with to make Newcastle a socially just and inclusive place for all. I look forward to championing the implementation of this plan into the future.

Councillor Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor of Newcastle

Our Newcastle

Community Strategic Plan – Newcastle 2040

Newcastle is a liveable, sustainable, inclusive global city

Newcastle 2040 is CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and is the highest level of planning we undertake at the local government level. *Newcastle 2040* is a shared community vision, developed as a guide to inform policies and actions throughout the city for the next 10+ years. For those who live, work, play and study in Newcastle, this vision sets the direction for how we want our city to grow. With direct input from a wide cross-section of the community, it represents what we value in our city and what we want to prioritise.

In 2040, Newcastle will be a liveable, sustainable and inclusive global city. We will celebrate our unique city and protect our natural assets. We will optimise opportunities and build resilience in the face of future challenges. We will champion inclusion so that everyone is valued, and we will encourage innovation and creativity. As we make our way towards 2040, we will work together to achieve our vision by building trust and collaborative relationships.

To guide us forward, we will focus on four themes that emerged from our shared planning process. These themes work together in harmony to deliver our vision for Newcastle as a place for everyone.

Our city, our people

Newcastle is a proud community that has been shaped by our heritage. It is increasingly made up of people from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, as well as people with diverse social identities and lived experiences.

We have survived earthquakes, superstorms and the closure of major industries, and we continue to grow and change.

The Awabakal and Worimi peoples are descendants of the traditional custodians of the land situated within the Newcastle local government area (LGA), including wetlands, rivers, creeks and coastal environments. Their heritage and cultural ties to Newcastle date back tens of thousands of years, and they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession. The tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples continues to enrich and inform the contemporary Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities of Newcastle and the Hunter Region.

European settlement introduced a range of activities, from farming to coal mining and industry. While the industrial sector continues to play a role in employment, a substantial and growing portion of our economy is now based around the service sector.

We are home to artists, galleries, museums, theatres, creative enterprises, education institutions, community groups, volunteer networks, social and health agencies and a community that embraces cultural expression, community connection and health and wellbeing of people. We have a diverse natural environment, from coastal headlands and beaches to wetlands, mangrove forests, steep ridges and rainforest gullies. Our suburbs are also diverse – from the heritage-lined streets of Newcastle East to the leafy homes of our middle suburbs such as Lambton and Kotara, and more recent communities at Fletcher and Minmi.

Our place in the region

Newcastle is located about 160 km north of Sydney. It is Australia's seventh-largest city and is the centre of the Greater Newcastle Region, the largest regional centre in NSW. Newcastle is the economic hub of the Hunter Region and accounts for approximately 30% of the Hunter's developed industrial space and 80% of its office space.

Newcastle is home to the University of Newcastle; the John Hunter Hospital, which is the tertiary referral hospital for Northern NSW; and several world-class research organisations, including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and Hunter Medical Research Institute. Newcastle is the cultural heart of the Hunter Region, supporting Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle Museum, and the Civic Theatre and Playhouse, and hosting a diverse calendar of cultural events.

The *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* and the *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* are the key regional development planning documents that support Newcastle. The *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan* states that:

'Metropolitan cities succeed and perform best when all tiers of government collaborate and work together with business, industry and community to deliver a shared vision for their city.'[1]

## *Our population*

Newcastle population 2021
171,307

Population by 2041
199,700

Greater Newcastle population 2021
608,700

Population by 2041
699,200

Estimated annual population growth rate **1%**

People

Age	%
0-4yrs	5.90%
5-11yrs	7.90%
12-17yrs	6.20%
18-24yrs	11.50%
25-34yrs	15.40%
35-49yrs	19.30%
50-59yrs	12.60%
60-69yrs	10.10%
70-84yrs	8.60%
85yrs & over	2.50%
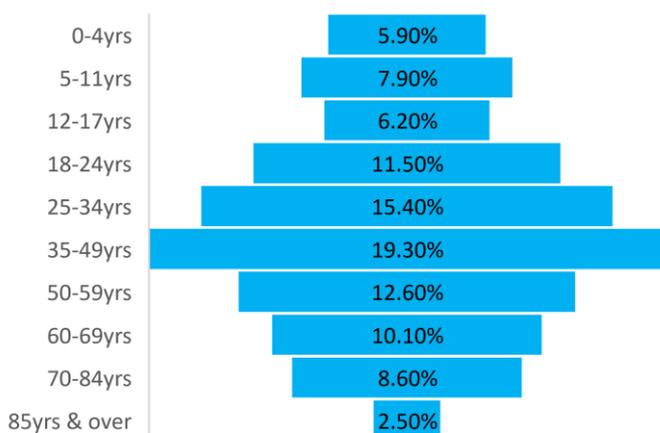
Homeless categories
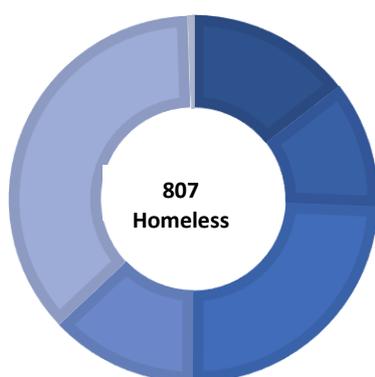
807 Homeless

- Severly' crowded dwellings
- Improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out
- Supported accomodation for the homeless
- Temporarily with other households
- Boarding houses
- Other temporary lodgings

Median age

Newcastle	37
NSW	37.9

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

Newcastle	3.5%
NSW	2.9%

Born overseas

Newcastle	13.9%
NSW	27.6%

**Speak a language other than English**

Newcastle	10%
NSW	25.1%

134 different languages spoken at home – most widely spoken included Mandarin, Macedonian, Italian, Greek, and Arabic. Languages spoken with greatest need for translation included Arabic, Mandarin, Swahili, Persian/Dari and Tibetan.

Number of people living with disability

Newcastle	5.9%
NSW	5.4%

Defined as people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a disability or long-term health condition.

Overall, 13% of households are experiencing 'housing stress' - 31% of renters and 7.3% of mortgage holders (2016).

Up to 11% of Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity. In Newcastle this equates to approximately 20,000 people.
Source: Australian Human Rights Commission, (2014) Face the Facts

How Newcastle lives and works

Live

House make up

- Couples with children
- Couples without children
- One parent families
- Group household
- Lone person
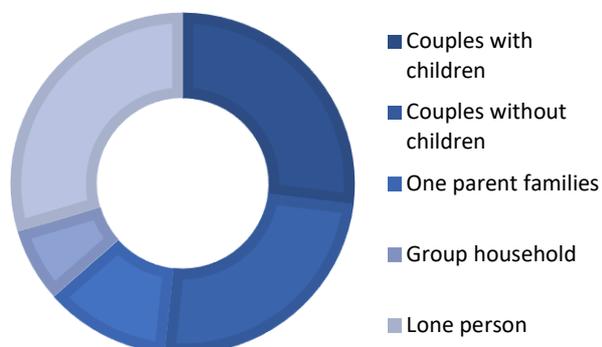
- **52** Suburbs
- **2.36** people average household size
- **80.85%** internet access at home
- **30%** of dwellings are medium or high density
- **29%** of residents fully own their home; **30.3%** have a mortgage; **34.5%** are renting
- **40.5%** recycling rate
- **9.4kg** waste & recycling generated per person per week

Work

Income by household (p/week)

- low income < $650
- lower to middle income $650 to $1,449
- middle to upper income $1,450 to $2,499
- high income earners $2,500+
- haven't stated their income
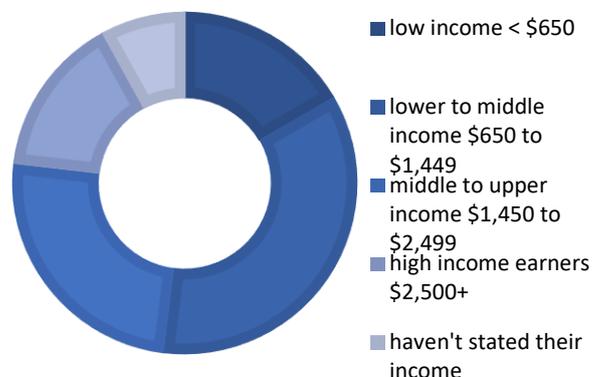
Top 3 industry sectors by employment
- Health care & social assistance – creating **20,293** jobs
- Education and training – creating **9,789** jobs
- Retail trade – creating **8,803** jobs

102,800 jobs in Newcastle
- **49%** live within LGA
- **$1,398** (p/week) average household income
- **5.3%** unemployment rate
- **73.3%** journey to work by car

36,331 businesses
- **30%** of the Hunter's developed industrial space
- **80%** of the Hunter's office space

How we travel

- car
- walk/ride
- bus
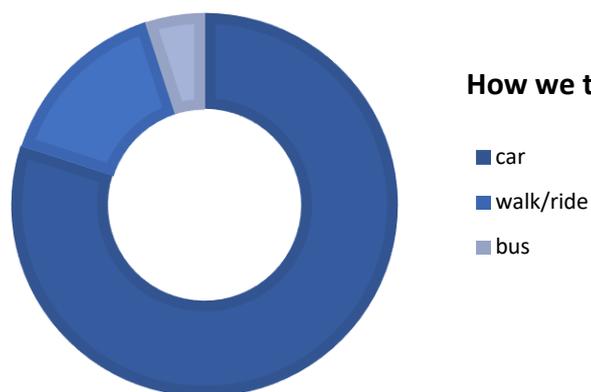
- **1 ferry** - Queens Wharf to Stockton
- **2.7km** light rail, with **6** stations
- **127** transport shelters
- **850km** of roads

Our global commitment

The SDGs underpin our work

In September 2015, 193 countries committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals provide a global roadmap for all countries to work towards a better world for current and future generations.

CN immediately declared our support and intention to deliver the SDGs and began proactively implementing action and engagement. We are committed to contributing to the achievement of the SDGs and have been working towards increasing and improving our contribution to this shared global vision.

The SDGs are significant and will take time to achieve. However, it is important to recognise the steps we are taking to progress these goals. While CN recognises the importance of all 17 SDGs, we have focused our efforts on the areas where we can have the most impact in our local communities regarding the *Local Social Strategy*. Our strategy most closely aligns with 10 of the 17 SDG's depicted in the image and outlined in detail in the table below.

SDG and targets		How it is addressed in the Local Social Strategy
	SDG1 No Poverty – End poverty in all its forms everywhere.	Every human has the right to not live in poverty. The strategy will address this priority through its research and advocacy agenda, working to understand local challenges in detail and propose possible solutions in partnership with key stakeholders.
	SDG2 Zero Hunger – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.	This strategy will collaborate with local business, government agencies and not-for-profit organisations to address local food insecurity challenges.
	SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing – Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all, at all ages.	This strategic priority will be supported by working in partnership with the health and community sector on identified local priorities, such as mental health and overall wellbeing, while promoting healthy lifestyles.
	SDG 4 Quality Education – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.	Several delivery programs will provide community members and organisations with opportunities for capacity-building, skills development and education.
	SDG 5 Gender Equality – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	The strategy's delivery programs will include targeted support of the domestic and family violence sector and projects that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination experienced by people in Newcastle.
	SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	The strategy will respond to this priority by promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in collaboration with business and social enterprise sectors, as well as internal CN partners.
	SDG10 Reduced Inequalities – Reduce inequality within and among countries.	At the heart of the strategy, and embedded across all its delivery programs, is the aim of reducing inequalities to give all community members the opportunity to thrive.
	SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	Through research, advocacy, and delivery of collaborative projects and initiatives, the strategy aims to ensure that everyone has access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing and can enjoy public spaces and accessible transport.
	SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.	The strategy addresses this priority by enabling active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life, as well as access to CN and Newcastle LGA-specific information and data.
	SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.	The structural changes needed to create a more socially just and inclusive city cannot be tackled by one organisation alone. To realise the priorities of the strategy, continued partnerships across governmental, non-governmental and private sectors are required.

Our role

Many of the social issues and concerns facing Newcastle are complex and beyond the direct control and influence of CN. This means we need to work with our community and a range of stakeholders to ensure our collective wellbeing.

State and federal governments are responsible for ensuring people have access to services such as health, education, police, housing, communications, emergency management and other social services to support and improve quality of life. However, CN works closely with the state and federal governments, as well as community-based organisations, to ensure our community development resources add value to each organisation's programs and projects at a local level.

To deliver our vision of a socially just and inclusive Newcastle, CN also works with other stakeholders, including community groups, local businesses and industry, educational institutions, and other service providers.

Depending on the activity, CN's role can include the following:

Leadership
Identifying key community issues and stakeholders to respond where appropriate

Research and strategy
Developing an evidence base to better understand, plan and advocate for the community, and developing policies and plans that respond to community needs

Connections
Identifying and connecting different contributors to encourage innovation, maximise social outcomes and support social cohesion

Advocacy
Drawing on our research and partnerships to advocate for our community to other levels of government and amplify the work of our local partners

Partnerships and grants
Partnering with organisations and communities to achieve shared goals, including through grants

Delivery
Designing and delivering programs and initiatives that align with key strategies, plans and community needs, ensuring community engagement and involvement

Capacity-building
Unlocking capacity within the community by equipping people with the skills they need to achieve social outcomes

Infrastructure
Planning and delivering places and spaces that promote social connectivity, inclusion and a sense of belonging

Our Strategy

Purpose

As Newcastle undergoes significant growth and change, an increasing number of community members are being left behind, unable to realise their full potential as part of a thriving society.

A social strategy provides a framework for CN and the community to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity; encourage community connection and participation; celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity; and strengthen community health and wellbeing. In working towards this mission, we aim to achieve the vision of a socially just and inclusive place for all.

The strategy falls under and supports CN's *Newcastle 2040* CSP, aligns with state and regional plans, and defines CN's social priorities until 2030, including its four-yearly action plans of which there will be two during the lifespan of the strategy. The *Action Plan 2022- 2026* is included in the appendix.

Who is this strategy for?

The *Local Social Strategy* is for the whole community. However, CN acknowledges that some groups in Newcastle are more likely to be excluded from social, economic and political opportunities due to discrimination and other access barriers. Therefore, this strategy focuses on enabling priority communities and groups to be involved in all aspects of life in Newcastle.

We also recognise that people's social identities, social positions and lived experiences are complex. Our priority groups often experience multiple forms of discrimination and oppression. This means we need to take an intersectional approach to promoting social justice and inclusion in Newcastle.

Through research, consultation and understanding of local needs, the following priority community groups have been identified, with details included in the *Local Social Discussion Paper* (which can be accessed via our website here).

Priority community groups include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Socio-economically disadvantaged and newly vulnerable communities
- People with disability
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities
- People of diverse genders and sexualities
- Older people
- Young people
- Women and men (areas of identified risk due to vulnerabilities they experience, such as domestic and family violence for women and mental ill-health for men)

Guiding principles that shape our strategy

Several principles shape our approach to supporting social justice, inclusion and positive social change in our city.

Social justice

Social justice is about fair and just relations between individuals and society. It means making sure that all community members are empowered to make decisions about their lives. We promote social justice in Newcastle by ensuring fair distribution of resources, equal access to services, participation in decision-making, and equal rights in all areas, as outlined in these four principles:

- **Equity:** Resources are allocated according to need with the aim of achieving more equal outcomes, particularly for those with greater needs or barriers to access.
- **Access:** People have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.
- **Participation:** People can fully participate in community life and genuinely influence decisions that affect their lives.
- **Rights:** Human rights are universal – everyone has the right to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that people are entitled to, including economic, social, cultural and political rights.

Relationships

Relationships are key to inclusive, socially just communities. A relational approach embodies values such as respect, inclusiveness, honesty, compassion, cooperation, and humility. However, it is also about the connections between people and the planet.

The Relationist Ethos is a concept within Aboriginal law, philosophy and culture. It explains that we are all in relationship with other people, but also places great importance on the relationship between the land (Country) and all living and non-living beings. It is these relationships and obligations to each other that form a template for our society[2]. For CN, forming strong, respectful and transparent relationships is essential to achieving the desired social outcomes for our communities.

Evidence and innovation

Many community issues require integrated approaches that combine social, economic, demographic, cultural and environmental considerations. When developing local responses to these issues, innovation and evidence-based decision-making are essential. Evidence-based needs assessment and prioritisation, as well as meaningful monitoring and evaluation, can help us achieve the desired outcomes for our communities. Innovation in the public sector seeks to create value and impact by responding to public interest, addressing citizens' basic needs, and enhancing efficiency of public services. Continued innovation in our public sector and communities will assist us in adapting and responding to our ever-changing community context and needs[3].

Regenerative society

To strengthen the regenerative capacity of our communities, to regrow or be renewed or restored, we have drawn inspiration from two models: 'Doughnut Economics'[4] and the Greenprints approach[5].

These models link social needs with planetary boundaries. The objective of the 'Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries' shown below is to balance our social foundations (ensuring no one falls short on essentials like healthcare, education and food) and our ecological boundaries (ensuring a healthy climate, biodiversity, clean water and sustainable use of natural resources).

Together, our strategies will help our community to thrive while using our resources wisely and not exceeding the capacity of our ecological systems.
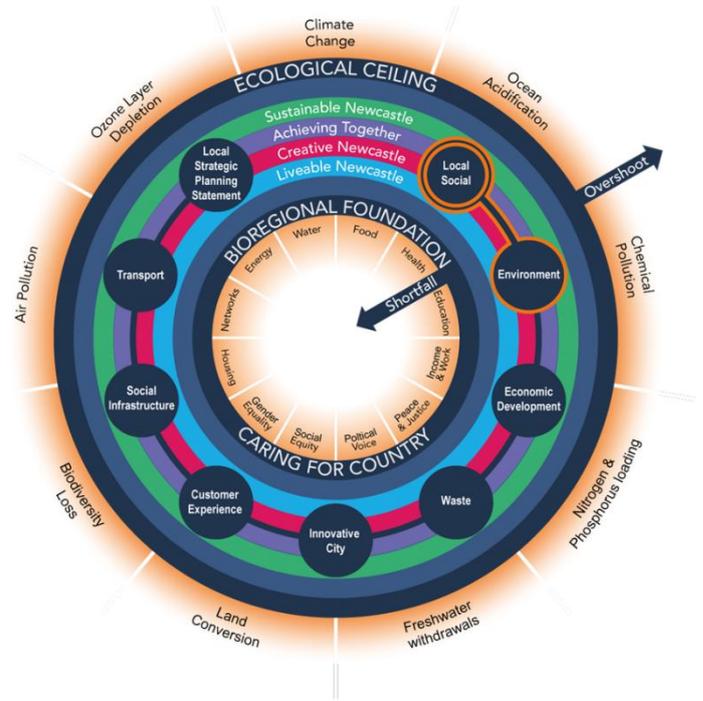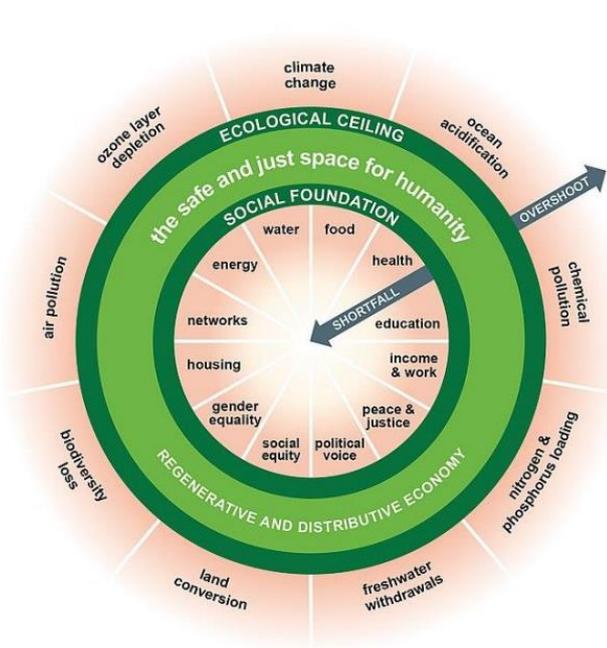
Reference: Kate Raworth, Exploring doughnut economics through the 'Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries'
https://www.kateraworth.com/

Reference: Australian EarthLaws Alliance; Michelle Maloney and James Lee 2022

Our engagement

How we engaged

To inform development of the *Local Social Strategy*, CN carried out a range of engagement activities from June to September 2021 to better understand community sentiment around social justice and inclusion. Over 2,400 people participated in the community engagement process to help us shape this strategy.

The engagement activities targeted various key groups in our community who are often less represented, vulnerable or experiencing disadvantage. These groups included people of diverse sexualities and genders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from CALD communities, people living with disability, young people (16–29 years) and older people (70+ years).

Engagement activities

286 people attended:
12 workshops and forums
5 community events

2,120 people completed surveys:
1,720 online survey exploring community participation, access to services, wellbeing, safety and social justice issues and matters.

400 short survey exploring social matters and participation in the community.

Social media campaign

To encourage broad participation, CN delivered an innovative digital campaign, titled, Your Place.

A key component of the campaign, with the message, 'This is your place, too.' was the use of digital profiling to speak directly and personally to our target groups. Target groups saw creative content specifically about them, and when linked to the microsite, saw a microsite with curated content related to them.

The campaign achieved high levels of engagement with the social media posts, and more than 20,000 visits to the Your Place website.

Delivered through:

Total video views: **183,397**	Positive comments: **467**
	Shares: **625**

Positive reactions: **2,872**	Website total visits: **20,465**
	Unique visitors: **8,013**

Background

Demographic overviews and trends

Population projections and housing
With the Newcastle LGA population projected to grow to 199,700 by 2041, an estimated 19,450 new dwellings are needed to meet demand. The western corridor of the Newcastle LGA (west from Wallsend to the M1 freeway and LGA boundary at Minmi) will have significant development, largely on greenfield sites (undeveloped bush land), with up to 4,500 new dwellings accommodating up to 10,000 people built over the next 15–20 years. Urban renewal corridors in Adamstown, Hamilton and Islington will also see increased dwelling densities. In all these locations, services and facilities will be required to respond to increased population size and densities.

Socio-economic disadvantage
As part of the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas Census (SEIFA), the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage examines community disadvantage through 17 indicators generally associated with social wellbeing. The SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation brings together indicators associated with a community's educational and occupational wellbeing.

Overall, Newcastle has a relatively positive profile on each of these indicators. In 2016, it was in the least disadvantaged 33% of LGAs in Australia, and in the upper 18% of LGAs for educational and occupational status. However, there are some very disadvantaged areas in each of these measures of community wellbeing – particularly Beresfield–Hexham SA2 (Statistical Area Level 2), which is in the most disadvantaged 8% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 2% of areas for education and occupational status; and Shortland–Jesmond SA2, which is in the most disadvantaged 9% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 38% of areas for education and occupational status.

Other relatively disadvantaged areas are the SA2s of the Stockton area, Mayfield–Warabrook, Wallsend–Elermore Vale and Waratah–North Lambton, which are all in the most disadvantaged one-third of areas in Australia. These areas of more severe disadvantage are generally associated with high concentrations of social housing; older and generally higher-density private rental housing; concentrations of older people, including those previously employed in lower-income employment; and/or younger age profiles, high rates of unemployment and low educational achievement[6].

Social challenges in Newcastle

The key areas of social need in Newcastle can be grouped into four themes: equity, inclusion, connection and health challenges. A summary of these challenges is provided below. Detailed findings are presented in the *Local Social Discussion Paper*, available via our website.

Equity challenges
Equity concerns refer to housing unaffordability and insecurity; rising living costs; and inadequate access to transport, social infrastructure and services. Housing affordability and insecure housing is by far the most significant. It is estimated that there are currently 10,700 housing-stressed households[7] in Newcastle[8] and 7,000–7,500 affordable houses required by 2041, with 139 delivered to date[9]. There is also evidence of increasing homelessness locally, which includes people sleeping in vehicles and couch surfing. Equity Economics research on the impact of the COVID-19 recession estimated that 'experiences in homelessness' across Newcastle (and Lake Macquarie SA4) would increase by 40.5%, or around 470 people, based on the report's June 2021 homelessness estimates of 1,624 people in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie[10].

Concerns regarding rising living costs in Newcastle were also reported. This includes the cost of housing and rentals, but also other living costs such as transport, food and health services, and disparity between living costs and wages. While Newcastle has relatively low levels of socio-economic disadvantage, there are significant differences within the LGA, with high levels of disadvantage experienced in some geographic areas and demographic groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted those disadvantaged groups, with an increase in vulnerable community members experiencing housing, financial and food insecurity for the first time.

Inclusion challenges

Inclusion concerns refer to inequality of opportunity, particularly within employment and training; discrimination against diverse groups; and limited opportunity to express and connect to culture. Access to meaningful employment with fair pay was a key concern for survey respondents, with the main barriers being a lack of job opportunities, job insecurity and an insecure future job market. The rapid pace of digital technology has created digital exclusion, or an environment where some people are being left behind, particularly older people, people with limited secondary education, people with low incomes, and linguistically diverse communities.

In Newcastle, a broad range of community members and stakeholders expressed concern about race-based and place-of-origin discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities, which has impacted their economic, cultural and social lives. Similar concerns were expressed around discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, which can exclude people from equal access to services, facilities and workplaces. Exclusion from economic and social life was also felt by older people and people with disability; the accessibility of the built environment was of particular concern.

Discrimination based on race, origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and ability continues to be an issue in Newcastle. While values of respect and fairness are at the heart of Australia's culture, one in 4 Australians experiences major discrimination through unfair policy, law, treatment or practices[11]. If diverse cultures, identities and experiences are not welcomed, people feel excluded, and worse, discrimination is perpetuated.

Connection challenges

Participating in and feeling connected to community life is an essential aspect of the health and wellbeing of individuals and the community. It contributes to social capital – that is, social relations that have productive benefits for the community, which is an outcome of community engagement and capacity-building processes. Elevated levels of social capital reduce inequalities in communities and contribute to social cohesion, which refers to the willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper.

A lack of social connection within communities can lead to social isolation and loneliness, which can be harmful for both mental and physical health. Close to 30% of people in Newcastle live alone[12], which is one of the primary risk factors for social isolation and loneliness[13]. In Newcastle, visiting an art gallery, museum or library and attending a community event, festival or celebration were the top activities reported by respondents to our online survey. Survey results indicate that barriers to participation in community activities include lack of time, health and wellbeing, feeling unsafe or uncomfortable (for LGBTQIA+ communities), and difficulty accessing venues or transport (for people with disability).

Access to information and news has also been identified as a barrier to connection, particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Vulnerable groups in particular have been excluded due to the reliance on digital information and channels, as limited face to face engagement.

Health challenges

Health concerns include health and wellbeing issues, mental ill-health, risk of violence, and safety in the community. In Newcastle, and across Australia, mental ill-health and declining trends in physical health are a major public health issue. Increased demand for mental health services and concerning rates of suicide among younger populations have been observed. Overweight and obesity is a major public health issue and a leading risk factor for ill health in Australia. Across the country, 67% of adults over the age of 18 years are overweight or obese, with the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network reporting 69% of the adult population as overweight or obese[14].

Global issues, such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic challenge the health and wellbeing of Australians, as well as the capacity of health and social support systems to respond. We know our climate is changing, with impacts in the form of rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, higher frequency of bushfires, rising sea levels and temperatures, and ocean acidification. There are strong relationships between the quality of the environment (air, water and food systems) and our physical and mental health and wellbeing. These relationships require attention as we continue to adapt to climate change and crisis events, and consideration of social impacts are essential. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the world in unprecedented and unpredictable ways, with significant social and economic impacts. Adapting to new ways of living and recovering from the impacts of the pandemic is a global social challenge.

Community safety is a complex issue, requiring collaborative efforts across agencies. Survey respondents generally feel safe at home, in their neighbourhood, and in the city during the day but feel less safe at night, both in their neighbourhood and in the city centre. Analysis by key groups revealed that people who identify as non-binary felt the least safe overall, followed by older respondents and people with disability. Domestic and family violence (D&FV) and drug- and alcohol-related crime were raised as two key areas of concern by community members and stakeholders.

Strategic context

City of Newcastle

The *Local Social Strategy* is comprised of actions outlined in several related CN strategic planning documents, as well as new, dedicated initiatives.   It is directly linked with CN's Social Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2030.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Local Housing Strategy

Economic Development Strategy

Environment Strategy

Library Strategy

Customer Experience Strategy

Local Social Strategy

Social Infrastructure Strategy

Community Strategic Plan – Newcastle 2040
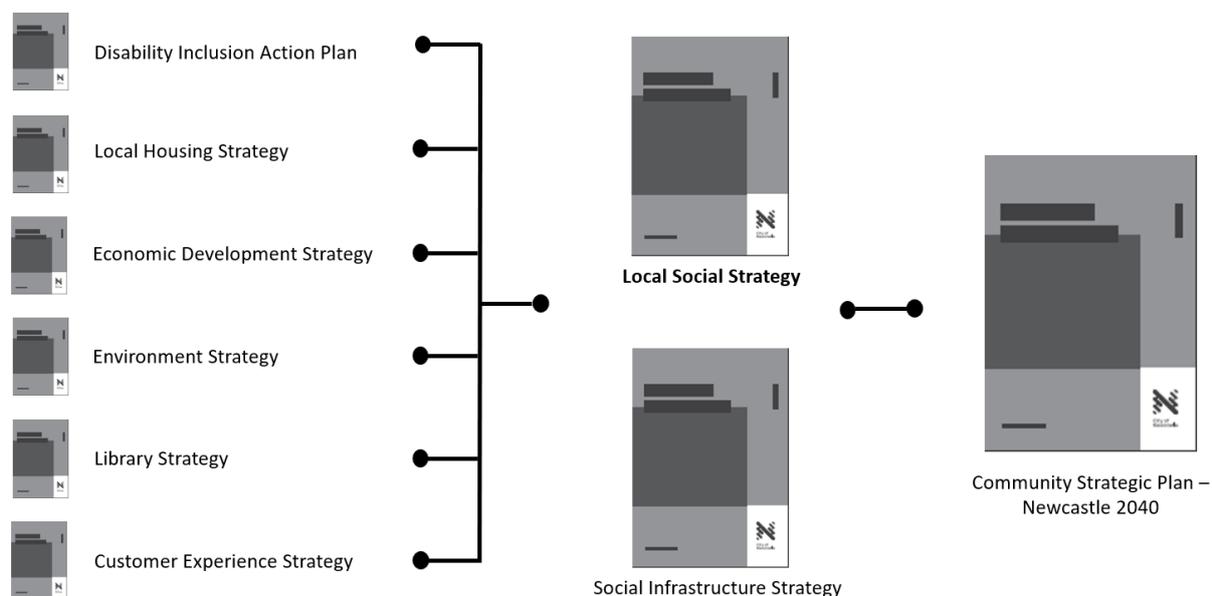
The *Local Social Strategy* contributes to all four themes of the *Newcastle 2040* CSP: Liveable, Sustainable, Creative and Achieving Together. At the heart of *Newcastle 2040* is the vision of an inclusive city – a place for everyone. To achieve this, we must remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encourage community participation, celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthen community health and wellbeing. These ambitions form the core mission of the *Local Social Strategy*.

While the *Local Social Strategy* contributes to all these themes, it will focus on the following priorities:

- 1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places
- 1.2 Connected and fair communities
- 1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city
- 1.4 Innovative and connected city
- 2.1 Action on climate change
- 3.1 Vibrant and creative city
- 3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation
- 3.3 Celebrating culture
- 3.4 City-sharing partnerships
- 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning
- 4.2 Trust and transparency
- 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach

Policy drivers at state and regional levels

Key NSW legislative requirements and policies actively support CN's social planning responsibilities. The *Local Government Act 1993* outlines the social justice requirements placed on councils: *'Council's long-term community strategic plans must be based on social justice principles and address social issues along with civic leadership, environmental and economic issues.'* The NSW Government's Premier's Priorities represent the government's commitment to making a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of all people of NSW; the policy priority of breaking the cycle of disadvantage is particularly relevant to the *Local Social Strategy*. The *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* also prescribes a specific legislative framework that has guided the development of CN's *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* (DIAP).

CN also acknowledges key integrations with other NSW government strategies, including the *Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy*, *NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan* and *Multicultural NSW Strategy Plan 2021 -2025: Stronger together*. Federal government policies of significance to the *Local Social Strategy* include the *Social Inclusion Agenda*, *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, *Creating Places for People: An Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities*, and the social lens of the *National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy*.

Our work is also informed by policy and planning at the regional level. The *Hunter Regional Plan 2036* and *Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036* are key regional planning documents that outline the vision, goals and actions needed to achieve greater prosperity for all people who live, work and study in the Hunter Region. Across these two plans, priority goals of relevance to the *Local Social Strategy* include supporting thriving communities and providing greater housing choice and jobs.

These plans recognise that celebrating and encouraging the diversification of communities provides a significant competitive advantage for the region on economic, cultural and social levels. Furthermore, as the region's population grows, providing diverse housing that is close to jobs and services, while ensuring enhanced environmental conditions and amenity choice, is essential for community resilience and quality of life.

Overview of strategy priorities and objectives

The *Local Social Strategy* envisions Newcastle as a socially just and inclusive place for all. Its mission is to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encourage community participation, celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity, and strengthen community health and wellbeing. This vision and mission have been developed in response to the social challenges and opportunities currently facing our communities.

To respond to these needs, four strategic priorities have been identified:
- Equitable communities
- Inclusive communities
- Connected communities
- Healthy communities

The 'Our Priorities' section below outlines each of these priorities in detail, along with their proposed objectives and links to existing or new delivery programs. The image below presents an overview of the four priorities, 16 objectives and four principles of the Local Social Strategy. At the centre of all we do are our people and our planet; we recognise the importance of learning about, and connecting with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, philosophies and practices about caring for Country. The key principles informing our strategic approach are social justice, relationships, regenerative practice, and evidence-based decision-making and innovation.
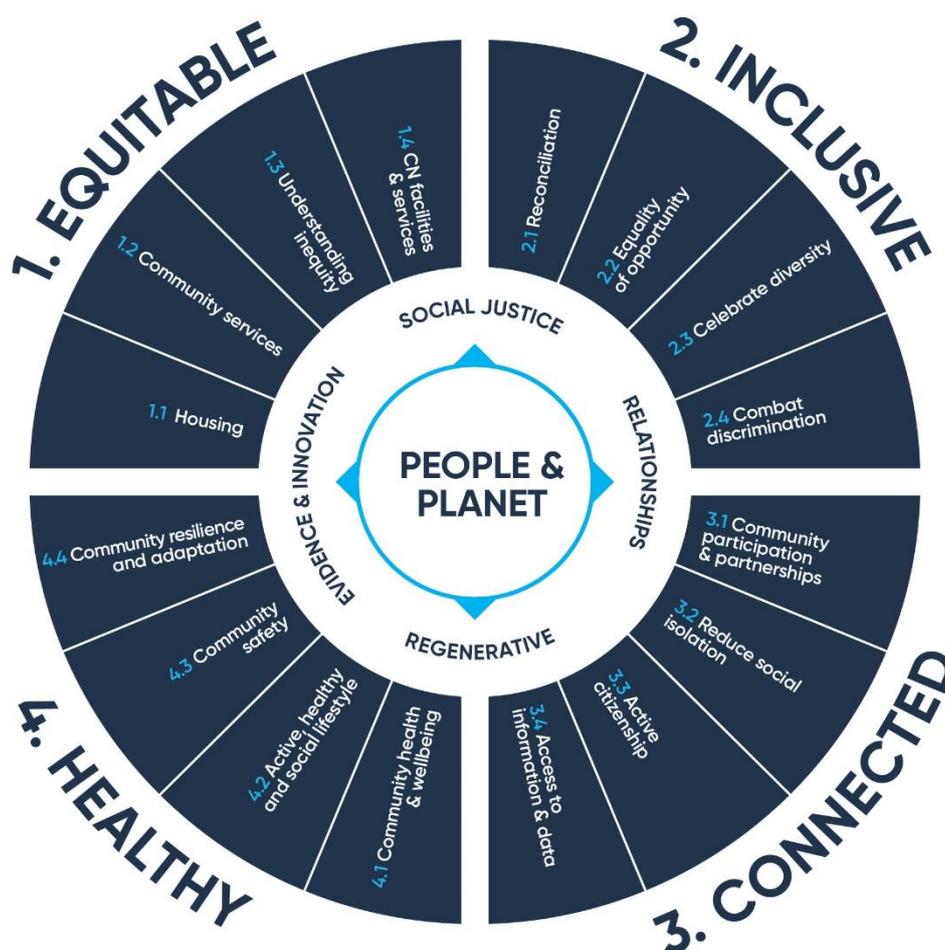
Our Priorities

Priority 1: Equitable communities

Priority		To support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, as well as services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community.
Objectives	**What do you want to achieve?**	1.1 Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members 1.2 Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services 1.3 Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses. 1.4 Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure.
Outcome	**What does success look like?**	Our residents have access to affordable housing, and homelessness has greatly decreased. Everyone can access inclusive transport, health and social services. Residents, workers and visitors are able to equitably benefit from CN community programs, grants, services and facilities. Our social research program informs policy, programs and practice for CN and local partners.
Community indicator	**How will you measure success?**	• Number of housing-stressed households in Newcastle LGA trending downwards. • Number of people sleeping rough in Newcastle LGA trending downwards. • SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage trending downwards, particularly in priority Statistical Areas Level 2. • Perceptions of affordable and diverse housing trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Perceptions of adequate and accessible public transport trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Perceptions of adequate and accessible medical, mental health and social services trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • % of people living within 800m of social infrastructure trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN GIS mapped data.
Links to CSP		1.1 Connected and fair communities 1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city

3.4 City-shaping partnerships
4.1. Inclusive and integrated planning
4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach

Links to other CN strategies/plans	Economic Development Strategy Social Infrastructure Strategy Disability Inclusion Action Plan Newcastle Transport Strategy

Case study

COVID-19 Community Resilience Package

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic. Within three months, CN responded to the crisis with its Community and Economic Resilience Package (CERP). The community resilience component of this package particularly focused on the most vulnerable and emerging at-risk members of our communities.

A Community Grants Program was established in 2020 to provide financial and in-kind support to mobilise assistance for community groups and organisations to scale and respond to community need during the pandemic. The first phase of the Program was the Rapid Response Grant program that was designed to free up early urgent funds for those in need. The second stage of funding, Boost Our City, assisted with ongoing COVID-19 related challenges and sought to directly support the health and wellbeing of the community.

CN responded to the 2021 outbreak of COVID-19 with an expanded and comprehensive CERP 2.0. In terms of community resilience, CN provided rapid response and recovery grants for projects that responded to community need and targeted gaps in support not covered by State and Federal Governments.

Activities that were funded across these two community resilience packages included mental health and wellbeing support, provision of food and essential supplies, addressing social isolation, crisis support, technology assistance to connect to support or education services and more.

$863,309 in community response grants were provided in 2020 and 2021 as part of the COVID-19 Community Resilience Packages

59 community groups and organisations were provided grants in 2020 and 2021 to support the health and wellbeing of our communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Delivery programs

Housing First

Objective 1.1

Local government's role in housing and planning has traditionally been to comply with policies and targets set by the state governments. However, with increasing unmet housing need and homelessness being experienced across many parts of Australia, councils are extending their involvement to respond to the needs of their communities.

The Housing First delivery program seeks to support an increase in supply of social, affordable, adaptable and alternative housing by investing in targeted projects and developing partnerships, research, advocacy and brokerage which have a focus on homelessness and housing stress. These efforts will be underpinned by the development of an evidence framework of information, research and data surrounding homelessness and housing stress, which will inform initiatives and be available for use by community partners.

Community-Focused Services

Objective 1.2

Available and accessible community-focused services, such as transport, health and social services, are an essential component of equitable communities. It is crucial to ensure there is a fair distribution of services based on diverse needs in terms of cost, location and appropriateness. These services are predominantly delivered by state governments and non-governmental organisations. However, as the arm of government that is closest to communities, local government has a role in advocating and planning for locally based services that meet the changing needs of the community. Without appropriate services to meet the needs of Newcastle's changing demographics, it will be increasingly challenging to promote and ensure ongoing participation of all community members, particularly those experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability.

As local government does not directly deliver transport, health and social services, collaboration with stakeholders across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors is essential. The Community-Focused Services delivery program will advocate for improved availability, affordability and access to transport, health and social services. This advocacy work will be based on an understanding of local needs, achieved through applied research on complex community service delivery issues and requirements. A key component of this delivery program will involve supporting local community sector networks to deliver joint initiatives in an equitable way. This will include facilitation of the Newcastle Interagency Network, community sector networking opportunities, and priority projects to support the delivery of effective, coordinated and innovative community services.

Understanding Equity

Objective 1.3

Inequities are at the forefront of many of the key social challenges facing Newcastle. We want to understand the causes of local inequities and the effect they have on people's chances in life, and to identify viable interventions for more equitable communities. These factors can affect people's vulnerability to different types of risks, and it is important to identify ways that such risk can be mitigated. It is equally important to understand what interventions. To better understand equity and inequity, we need to explore factors such as socio-economic status, gender and sexuality, cultural

and linguistic diversity, disability, education, age, health, family, community, environment and geography. All of these factors can affect people's vulnerability to different types of risks, and it is important to identify ways that such risk can be mitigated. It is equally important to understand what interventions might promote opportunity and reduce adversity through different life stages, and how we can promote social inclusion and cohesion between and across generations.

The Understanding Equity delivery program will research, monitor and report on inequity and social justice concerns in the Newcastle LGA through the Equity Pulse platform. It will be particularly important to understand local inequity to better inform local responses and decision-making. Interventions will include direct actions such as research projects, knowledge-sharing events and advocacy, as well as collaboration with government and non-government organisations.

City Access

Objective 1.4

Social infrastructure refers to the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support a community's quality of life and wellbeing. CN offers a variety of services and programs through its social infrastructure network, including community facilities, libraries, cultural institutions and open spaces. CN's *Social Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2030* will provide an integrated framework for the planning, funding and delivery of social infrastructure for the next 20 years. The *Local Social Strategy 2022 -2030* focuses on the activation of this social infrastructure through community programs and interventions, while ensuring the broad range of services provided to communities are applying equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in their design and approach.

All CN strategies and plans are underpinned by the *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022–2026* (DIAP) outlining how CN will enhance access and inclusion for people with disabilities, including strategies for providing access to CN buildings, facilities, services, events and activities.

Priority 2: Inclusive communities

Priority		Our vision is for Newcastle to be a place where the strength, resilience and living culture of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and our diverse, communities are respected, recognised and celebrated. Discrimination is combatted through education and commitment to change. Equality of opportunity in employment, skills development and digital inclusion is prioritised for all people. Inclusion is championed so that everyone across our communities is supported, valued and respected.
Objectives	**What do you want to achieve?**	2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle. 2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion 2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities 2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change
Outcome	**What does success look like?**	All Newcastle residents value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared local identity and the broader diversity of our communities is celebrated and embraced. Inclusive education and training opportunities are available for all which assists in reducing the digital divide and improves access to meaningful employment and fair pay. Newcastle is a place where people do not experience discrimination, and everyone is included in the social, economic and cultural life of the city.
Community indicator	**How will you measure success?**	• Annual results of the CN Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Impact Measurement report show CN is progressing against its RAP commitments. • Newcastle LGA digital inclusion index trending upwards from 69.0 score in 2021. • Perceptions of meaningful employment opportunities trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Perceptions of feeling part of local community and that Newcastle is welcoming of diversity trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.

Links to CSP	1.2 Connected and fair communities
	1.4 Innovative and connected city
	3.1 Vibrant and creative city
	3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation
	3.3 Celebrating culture
Links to other CN strategies/plans	Economic Development Strategy
	Social Infrastructure Strategy
	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
	Smart City Strategy

Case study

***Tiddas in Muloobinba* (Translation: *Sisters of Newcastle*)**

Having a strong cultural identity and connection to Country is vital to the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. *Tiddas in Muloobinba* was developed and resourced by CN in close collaboration with locally based Yolngu artists and industry professionals, the Illume Girls.

The program was launched during CN's 2021 Youth Week Program and was the first of its kind for the city. The Illume Girls provided mentorship and collaboration to young women from out-of-home care and other vulnerable settings over a three-day program, culminating in a public performance.

The success of the program has laid a foundation for supporting aspiring young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in Newcastle

The *Tiddas* program was filled to capacity with eight young women attending a three-day intensive workshop.

Over 80 people attended the public performance at the Civic Theatre Playhouse.

Delivery programs

Strength in Diversity

Objective 2.1

Local governments are involved in activities that foster multiculturalism, promote social cohesion and work towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our LGA is made up of people from different cultures, countries and backgrounds, and this diversity adds to the vibrancy of our community. CN respects and acknowledges the unique culture, societies, history and traditional lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Newcastle. Through our *Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–2024* (RAP), we actively work towards closing the gap in employment, economic participation, health and education outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. These efforts extend to all people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to ensure everyone is given the same opportunities and resources to thrive.

Through the Strength in Diversity delivery program, in partnership with the community, we will explore and guide how CN supports connection to Country and cultural expression for the Awabakal and Worimi peoples and their communities, as well as enrichment of the broader community. We will respond to the RAP's pillars of Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance by facilitating community partnerships that advance reconciliation and availability of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Another priority will be to foster awareness, tolerance and understanding of cross-cultural and lived experience through increased connections among diverse community members and the wider community. This will take the form of events, targeted initiatives and biannual programs. Through continuous improvement and learning, CN will ensure the delivery of its services, programs and information is appropriate, sensitive and inclusive of people's needs according to culture, language and lived experience.

Equal Opportunity

Objective 2.2

Local government plays a key role in the promotion of local and regional economic development, employment growth and income equality. As outlined in CN's *Economic Development Strategy*, the local economy will organically deliver for most people, but government has a role to play in intervening where the market fails and some people are left behind. Supporting equal opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion for all our residents will drive labour force growth, economic opportunities and community wellbeing. There are many government and non-government organisations involved in the delivery of employment, training and digital inclusion. As such, collaborative stakeholder efforts are essential, with local government able to support in facilitating and coordinating local opportunities.

Our Equal Opportunity delivery program will provide access to education, training and capacity-building opportunities and materials for community members, groups and organisations that contribute to positive economic and social outcomes for our communities. Improved digital literacy and inclusion will be fostered by initiatives that counter digital exclusion and facilitate community access to digital technology and equipment, education, training and lifelong learning opportunities.

CN will collaborate on workplace equity, diversity and inclusion policies and practices that are informed by community perspectives for continuous improvement. Partnerships and collaboration with the local business sector through corporate social responsibility and social enterprise initiatives will be a key component in delivering improved opportunities for our communities. The Local Social Strategy will also help inform and support CN's internal Equal Opportunity goals.

Welcoming City

Objective 2.3

Local government, in partnership with local community agencies and businesses, is well placed to understand the complexity and nuances within and between its communities. In understanding these complex realities, we can create communities where everyone can belong, access opportunities, and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life. By being a welcoming and inclusive city for all people, including newcomers, we can leverage the social and economic ideas and innovation that are fostered by diverse community members who feel supported, resourced and encouraged.

The Welcome City delivery program seeks to celebrate diversity and create a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities. Projects, events and initiatives will aim to strengthen a sense of belonging among residents and workers. These will focus particularly on new arrivals, international students and people from CALD backgrounds, but will recognise all diverse communities in Newcastle.

This delivery program supports CN development of external and internal communications that celebrates and reflects our diverse communities, so that people see themselves represented and included.

Respectful Communities

Objective 2.4

People who experience discrimination can suffer from significant stress-related mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, which in turn impact relationships, employment and overall health[15]. It is in everyone's interest to combat discrimination and support social inclusion. Through the Australian Human Rights Commission and NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, the Federal and State Governments manage Commonwealth and NSW anti-discrimination laws and compliance. However, local government also has a role to play in taking all reasonable steps to prevent unlawful harassment, discrimination, vilification and/or associated victimisation of staff, councillors and members of the public.

Under the Respectful Communities delivery program, projects and initiatives that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination experienced by people in Newcastle will seek to combat these issues and promote inclusive communities. The program will support CN and the community to address and challenge root causes of discrimination and systems of oppression through campaigns and policy related to diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and bystander action training.

Priority 3: Connected communities

Priority		To support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through active, engaged and informed participation. Facilitating access to community activities, events and gatherings can lead to better integration of isolated community members. Participation in community life can also have positive social, cultural, economic and political impacts. , Community engagement and involvement leads to informed decision making, and enables citizens to contribute meaningfully to local social issues and support their communities.
Objectives	What do you want to achieve?	3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making 3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks 3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life 3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship
Outcome	What does success look like?	The people of Newcastle are actively engaged in the civic, social and cultural life of our community. They have access to relevant, timely and trusted information which supports their involvement in informed local decision-making, while supportive social networks that address social isolation and enhance trust are strengthened.
Community indicator	How will you measure success?	• Participation in organised and personal social activities trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Participation in political or civic actions trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • % of Newcastle residents doing volunteer work trending upwards. ABS Census.
Links to CSP		1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.1 Vibrant and creative city 4.2 Trust and transparency

Links to other CN strategies/plans	Economic Development Strategy Social Infrastructure Strategy Disability Inclusion Action Plan Smart City Strategy

Case study

Inclusive Conversations Series

Due to COVID-19 lockdowns over the past two years, new ways of engaging with community groups and organisations were needed to ensure continued collaboration on local social issues. As such, a series of quality, inclusive and accessible virtual conferencing experiences for community stakeholders was delivered in the form of the Inclusive Conversations Series.

The first Inclusive Conversations session was delivered in July 2021. Titled 'Unpacking Vulnerability', the session attracted approximately 70 participants and over 40 community sector organisations. The second conference, 'Housing and Homelessness in Newcastle', was delivered in November 2021 and attracted over 100 participants and 70 organisations. Throughout both days, staff gathered valuable, evidence-based stakeholder feedback to assist in forming the response of CN and its partners to the homelessness and affordable housing crisis.

Key outcomes were:
- Presentation of international and local Housing First outcomes
- Identification of key gaps and data-driven approaches to responding to homelessness locally
- Creation of a platform for local community groups and providers to share stories, experiences and learnings and collectively design actions
- Sharing CN data and information on various policy positions in the housing affordability space.

Presenters across the two virtual forums included:
- CN Urban and Social Planning Teams – Affordable Housing Snapshot Data
- Newcastle Assertive Outreach and Access and Demand Teams – Department of Communities and Justice
- Policy Director, Shelter NSW
- Policy Manager, Homelessness NSW
- Research Manager, Y Foundations Finland
- Manager Strategic Partnerships, Compass Housing
- Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Link Housing
- Chairperson, Hunter Homeless Connect
- Hunter Community Alliance Listening Campaign
- Local Government NSW
- NSW Council of Social Services.

70 organisations actively participated in the Inclusive Conversations Series

200 participants logged in to the forum over the two days

Delivery programs

Engaged Communities

Objective 3.1

Genuine community engagement provides opportunities to further align our service delivery and operations with the needs and expectations of our community, including vulnerable groups. It also empowers citizens and builds their capacity to participate in community life.

CN's community engagement program has significantly expanded in recent years and has strategic objectives around engagement with hard to reach groups and ensuring engagement activities are accessible and inclusive.

The Engaged Communities delivery program seeks to further improve our levels of engagement with underrepresented sectors of the community to best inform decision making. Further, there are opportunities for CN to increase the level of public participation, especially in partnership projects and programs.

Social Connect

Objective 3.2

A vibrant and inclusive city is one where diverse community members feel socially connected through supportive networks and activation opportunities, while enjoying a sense of belonging and harmony. CN plays an active role in nurturing a vibrant and inclusive city at a strategic and local scale through operating cultural and civic institutions, delivering cultural programming and events, delivering a major events program, and facilitating external stakeholders to deliver events and activations. To ensure everyone can enjoy a vibrant city, an inclusive city must also be guaranteed. Some people may face barriers to participation such as cost, distance, accessibility or safety concerns.

The Social Connect delivery program aims to strengthen social connection and trust both within and between our diverse communities, while also addressing social isolation. We will deliver community-based social, cultural and creative events and activities that appeal to diverse people, and increase active participation among sectors of the community who may face barriers. Another key component of this delivery program will involve connecting people with volunteering opportunities and delivering place-based services, projects and initiatives in and around social housing precincts and urban renewal areas.

Active Citizenship

Objective 3.3

Active citizenship is about citizens actively engaging in political society. Without this participation, democracy can suffer. Citizenship is not just a legal status; it is the way you participate in your community and the duties you carry out. Traditionally, this includes things like paying taxes and voting (duties) or going to school and voicing your opinions (rights)[16]. However, active citizenship implies exercising your rights and duties in a balanced way through civic engagement in your community, and can also include volunteering, activism, and participation in social movements to

improve conditions for others or help shape the community's future[17]. As the level of government closest to the people, local government has a duty to support its communities in engaging with the civic life of the city.

The Active Citizenship delivery program will enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life. Key components of this work will include strengthening people's civic awareness and increasing civic participation through CN processes among diverse sectors of the community who do not usually engage.

CN has Strategic Advisory Committees to support civic participation. In 2020, Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee marked 20 years. CN's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee was established in 2017, following the adoption of Newcastle's first DIAP. In 2019, CN established the following Strategic Advisory Committees: Liveable Cities, Strategy and Innovation, Community & Culture, and Infrastructure.

Another key component of the Active Citizenship program will be embedding equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in CN's advisory committees to ensure improved community representation.

Local Data

Objective 3.4

Access to information plays a pivotal role in sustainable communities, as it improves people's social, economic and political integration within their communities[18]. Access to information about community activities, programs and events helps community members become engaged, leading to better social and economic integration. Information relating to local issues, priorities and planning assists communities' political integration through involvement in local decisions.

The public's right to access council information is regulated under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the GIPA Act). Councils are also required to comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information and Protection Act 1998* (PPIP Act) and the *Health Records Information Privacy Act 2002* (HRIP Act) in collecting, using and disclosing personal and health information. Local governments also proactively release information and are increasingly providing greater access to data and information. Open data, as well as the sharing of information and research, enable citizens and businesses to engage more effectively with local government, inviting cross-sector collaboration and partnerships.

Under the Local Data delivery program, we will increase open access to CN and Newcastle LGA-specific data, to help empower communities to identify, analyse and respond to local social issues. For example, digital resource centres offering local demographic and economic data, population forecasts and interactive maps. Another key component will be the management and delivery of key information resources targeted at the community sector, specific community groups and the wider community. These resources will be provided in a range of languages and formats that are widely accessible and appealing to diverse audiences.

Priority 4: Healthy communities

Priority		To promote and support active and healthy communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city. This priority also aims to address the social dimensions of climate change and crisis events. In developing programs and initiatives that support these outcomes, we work towards one of the fundamental rights of every human: the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without distinction of race, religion, political belief or economic and social condition[19].
Objectives	**What do you want to achieve?**	4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health.
		4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces
		4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety
		4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic)
Outcome	**What does success look like?**	The people of Newcastle enjoy improved health and wellbeing, with an active and social lifestyle that contributes to physical and mental health. Newcastle is a safe city, both in the public domain and within households. Communities are resilient and adaptable to climate change and crises and are supported equitably to ensure no one is left behind.
Community indicator	**How will you measure success?**	• Rate of physical activity trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Satisfaction with physical and mental health trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Perception of sporting facilities and active lifestyle opportunities meeting needs of community trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey. • Local crime offences, particularly domestic and non-domestic violence related assault, theft and fraud, trending downwards. NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research annual crime trends data. • Perception of safety in city centre and local neighbourhood trending upwards. 2022 baseline through CN Liveability & Wellbeing Survey.

Links to CSP	1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places
	1.2 Connected and fair communities
	2.1 Action on climate change
Links to other CN strategies/plans	Social Infrastructure Strategy
	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
	Environment Strategy
	After Dark Strategy

Case study

Five years supporting the health and wellbeing of older people in Newcastle

CN has played a role in supporting older people to lead active, healthy and engaged lives by connecting them to information about services and activities in the community. The Newcastle Seniors Directory (2015–2020) promoted a range of activities, including active pursuits such as sport, dancing, education and lifelong learning, music and performance, and other civic and social clubs. The directory also promoted health and wellbeing services, including access to My Aged Care, legal support and support for carers. Sometimes, just knowing where to go is the biggest hurdle.

The Seniors Directory also provided content to inspire people to live active, healthy and engaged lives. In 2020, the directory promoted cycling in the city and featured Novacare's Cycling Without Age and Newcastle Cycleways Movement, which demonstrate that there is no age limit to staying mobile and healthy. Information from the Newcastle Seniors Directory is now included on My Community Directory, an online information platform that has been localised for the Newcastle community.

Newcastle Seniors Directory produced annually since 2017

Over 5,000 print copies distributed and available on CN's website

Delivery programs

Community Health and Wellbeing

Objective 4.1

Numerous and diverse organisations, both public and private, are involved in the delivery of healthcare services with the state government responsible for delivery of clinical health services.

Through a collaborative approach with government and non-government organisations, the Community Health and Wellbeing program will deliver projects and initiatives aimed at improving health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health and identified local priority issues. The program will be further strengthened by advocacy initiatives that address entrenched social and economic disadvantage; increase the affordability and accessibility of healthy and nutritious food; and support public health education at a hyperlocal level on topics such as nutrition, obesity and mental health.

Active People

Objective 4.2

Local government is responsible for creating built environments and public places where people can live healthy, active lives and participate in their communities. When we enhance the social impact of urban development and renewal through best-practice design for all ages and abilities, we further enhance our community's enjoyment of the public domain and infrastructure. Innovative activation of public and private spaces, land and buildings can contribute to positive economic, social and cultural outcomes.

The Active People program will seek to increase access to community-based sport and recreation opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage, social isolation or exclusion. Collaboration with the planning, urban design and development sectors will increase the positive social impact of public domain enhancements, urban development and renewal, while enhancing personal amenity for people of all ages and abilities.

Safe City

Objective 4.3

NSW Police has a lead role in crime prevention and detection as well as perceptions of safety within the community. Local government works closely with NSW Police, as well as other government agencies and non-government organisations, to assist in the delivery of safer outcomes for the community. Governments at all levels, communities and businesses need to be collaborative and actively engaged to create safe communities. Key roles for local government include managing public space and building design, engaging in social planning, and developing policies that assist in achieving safer outcomes.

To support community safety and crime prevention, the Safe City program will prioritise several actions. Improvements in community safety will be directed by best practice in public domain design and collaborative initiatives with government and non-government organisations to address identified community needs. Delivery of projects that improve public safety and perceptions of safety will be facilitated by initiatives such as inclusive education campaigns and space activations, using current safety evidence and crime data to understand the Newcastle-specific situation. The

program will also support local D&FV organisations to respond to need in the community and build capacity within the sector.

Community Resilience and Adaptation

Objective 4.4

As our climate changes and we face crisis events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, our health and wellbeing are challenged – as is the ability of our health and social systems to support us. The relationships between our environment, our physical and mental health, and our social domain must be examined as we continue to adapt to climate change and crises.

Particular attention needs to be given to vulnerable communities. Adaptation must be inclusive and account for the underlying factors that contribute to vulnerability, such as issues related to geography, culture, age, gender, diversity, disability and socio-economic status. (For example, heatwaves can disproportionately impact the elderly, children, outdoor workers and those suffering from chronic disease).

Along with state and federal governments, local government has a responsibility to adopt policies and practices that prepare for the unavoidable impacts of crisis events and climate change through community resilience-building and adaptation. Supporting the community's capacity to respond to crises is another key component of this delivery program. Community resilience-building will be supported by neighbourhood-based social network and emergency-preparedness initiatives.

Appendix

Action Plan 2022 - 2026

Priorities	1. Equitable communities VISION: Support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community	2. Inclusive communities VISION: Recognise, acknowledge, value and celebrate the Awabakal and Worimi peoples' strength, resilience and living culture and that of our diverse community members. Champion inclusion across our community so that everyone is supported, valued and respected.	3. Connected communities VISION: Support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through acceptance, participation and inclusion, so that everyone feels welcome in Newcastle and enjoys a sense of belonging and place.	4. Healthy communities VISION: Promote and support active, healthy and resilient communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city.
Objectives	1.1 Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members	2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle	3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making and address local social issues	4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health
	1.2 Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services	2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion	3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks	4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces
	1.3 Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses	2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities	3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life	4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety
	1.4 Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure	2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change	3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship	4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic)

Priority 1. Equitable communities								
VISION: Support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community								
Objective	**Delivery Program**	**Action**	**Outputs**	**Timeframe**	**Responsibility**	**Partners (external)**	**CSP Priority**	**Annual measure**
1.1 Support and advocate for access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing for all community members	**Housing First**	1.1.1. Work in partnership to facilitate increased supply and access to social, affordable, adaptable and alternative housing and address issues of homelessness and rough sleeping.	*Implementation of the Homelessness, Housing Insecurity and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2022-2030 which addresses CN's approach to influencing housing stress and homelessness.	Year one	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	NSW government agencies – Department of Communities and Justice (DJC), Department of Planning and Environment (DPIE) Specialist housing services Community housing providers Housing industry Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Homelessness, Housing Insecurity and Affordable Housing Action Plan endorsed and yearly workplans completed.
	Housing First	1.1.2. Support community partners by providing data and research on homelessness and housing stress.	*Deliver two evidence-based information initiatives annually (i.e., discussion forum, information guide, research paper etc).	Year two	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	Specialist housing services Community housing providers Housing industry	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two information sharing initiatives completed.
1.2 Support the community services sector to deliver improved transport, health and social services	**Community Focused Services**	1.2.1. Collaborate and advocate for improved transport availability and access with a focus on people with disability, low-income earners and people who experience other forms of disadvantage.	*Develop transport access and advocacy plan which focuses on people who experience transport disadvantage.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	NSW government agencies - Transport for NSW Community services sector	1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city	Transport advocacy plan developed, and projects implemented yearly.

	Community Focused Services	1.2.2. Identify and deliver initiatives that provide support to the Newcastle Community Sector Networks through research and programs.	*Deliver annually a community services applied research project based on identified need *Deliver annually up to four Newcastle Interagency Network meetings and up to two community sector networking and information events. *Develop and implement a Community Sector Network Support framework, which provides clarity on CNs support and participation in sector networks. *Undertake a comprehensive review of Newcastle Interagency Model in consultation with the community services sector. (Year three)	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community services sector	4.1. Inclusive and integrated planning	One community services applied research project completed. Four network meetings completed and two community sector events delivered. Community sector support charter developed. Review of Newcastle Interagency Model completed.
	Community Focused Services	1.2.3. Work in partnership to deliver improved community services in the Western Corridor of Newcastle.	*Develop a Four-year roadmap for community services in the Western Corridor	Year one	Strategy & Engagement	NSW government agencies - DCJ Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Western corridor roadmap developed and shared with relevant agencies.
1.3 Understand the reality of inequity in Newcastle to develop effective local responses	Understanding Equity	1.3.1. Research, monitor and report on inequity and social justice concerns in the Newcastle LGA to inform effective responses, both through direct action and collaboration.	*Develop CN Equity Pulse framework, with bi-annual monitoring and reporting targets embedded in the form of research and data outputs.	Year one and annually	Strategy & Engagement	University sector NSW government agencies Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	CN Equity framework developed.
	Understanding Equity	1.3.2. Deliver knowledge sharing events on localised inequity and social justice issues.	*Identify priority social justice topics and partners to deliver two knowledge sharing events annually e.g., forum, panel discussion, master class, expert presentation, think tank.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community services sector NSW government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Two knowledge sharing events delivered. and participant satisfaction survey at end of every event administered to track progress.

1.4 Provide equitable access to CN community programs, grants, services and social infrastructure	City Access	1.4.1 Increase localised Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) awareness within the organisation to achieve greater community impact in the social justice space in Newcastle.	*Support delivery of CN's internal ED&I program by providing two education sessions outlining recent localised evidence on need and propose local response options.	Year two and annually	People and Culture Strategy and Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	Two CN internal social justice planning sessions held.
	City Access	1.4.2. Incorporate ED&I principles in CN Customer Experience (CX)	*Include ED&I in CX principles framework and considerations where relevant. *Staff considers equity and diversity for their areas of business in the planning and design phase of new processes. *People from diverse backgrounds have confidence in dealing with CN.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Number of CX process designs completed.
	City Access	1.4.3. Continue to deliver grants aimed at social inclusion as part of the Community Grant Funding Program.	*Grant funding to support social inclusion including Rapid Response Grants where appropriate distributed annually.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups and organisations	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Social Inclusion Grants administered and distributed annually.
	City Access	1.4.4. Undertake an Intergenerational Places and Spaces Plan which analyses and documents actions for better access, inclusion and programming across identified social infrastructure within the LGA	*Places and Spaces Action Plan developed	Year three	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups and organisations	1.1. Enriched neighbourhoods and places 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Places and Spaces Action Plan developed and adopted.

Priority 2. Inclusive communities
VISION: Recognise, acknowledge, value and celebrate the Awabakal and Worimi peoples' strength, resilience and living culture and that of our diverse community members. Champion inclusion across our community so that everyone is supported, valued and respected.

Objective	Delivery Program	Action	Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility	Partners (external)	CSP Priority	Measure
2.1 Foster reconciliation, inclusion and connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse communities in Newcastle.	**Strength in Diversity**	2.1.1. Commence a program in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to explore and guide how CN supports authentic, self-determined connection to country and cultural expression for the Awabakal and Worimi people, their communities and enrichment of the broader community. Guraki Committee to be a key stakeholder.	*Coordinate development of Connection to Country and Culture program and framework with yearly workplans while maintaining and building connections and relationships with the Guraki Committee. *Support the Aboriginal Employment Strategy from a community development perspective.	Ongoing	Strategy & Engagement (lead) People and Culture (support)	Awabakal and Worimi elders and community Broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Guraki Committee University of Newcastle State government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Connection to Country and Culture program and framework developed and yearly workplans delivered.
	Strength in Diversity	2.1.2. Respond to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021 - 2024 pillars by facilitating community partnerships which advance reconciliation and opportunities available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	*Participate in RAP Working Group processes and deliver two projects, initiatives and/or events annually that contribute to reconciliation efforts.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) People & Culture (support)	Awabakal and Worimi elders and community Broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Guraki Committee University of Newcastle State government agencies	1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture 4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach	Two RAP related initiatives delivered annually
	Strength in Diversity	2.1.3. Understand and share the stories, voices and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse community members by fostering trust and empowering community leaders and representatives.	*Deliver two dedicated storytelling projects annually.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement City Wide Services	Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four storytelling projects delivered.

2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity in employment, training and digital inclusion	Equal Opportunity	2.2.1. Provide access to education, training and capacity-building opportunities and materials for community members, groups and organisations that exist for social connection, community wellbeing and voluntary purposes.	*Continue to deliver the NewConnects learning modules program in 2022/23 *Develop annually two digital information packs that provide trusted, factual and useful information on identified priority local social issues.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Education sector Community organisations Community services sector	3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	New Connects learning modules program delivered. Digital information packs distributed
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.2. Develop a digital inclusion road map for Newcastle with a focus on older people, people with limited education and income and English as a second language.	*Coordinate development of a digital inclusion road map with projects identified annually in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Education sector Community organisations Community services sector	1.4 Innovative and connected city 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Digital Inclusion Roadmap developed and projects delivered annually.
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.3. Collaborate on workplace equity, diversity and inclusion policies and practices that are informed by community perspectives for continuous improvement.	*Support CN's internal Diversity & Inclusion program by conducting annual 'ED&I Community Perspectives' briefings *Participate in annual workforce planning processes to provide ED&I considerations.	Annually	People & Culture Strategy & Engagement		3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Community Perspectives briefing delivered.
	Equal Opportunity	2.2.4 Increase localised ED&I awareness CN to achieve greater community impact in the social justice space in Newcastle.	*Support CN's internal Diversity and Inclusion Program with localised data to support training.	Year two and annually	Strategy & Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning	Localised data in CN diversity and inclusion materials.

	Equal Opportunity	2.2.5. Support business sector for equity, diversity and inclusion outcomes and progress, including through corporate responsibility agendas and social enterprise initiatives.	*Annual collaborative workplans which contribute to the ED&I outcomes of the Economic Development Strategy. *Provide ED&I localised information to business sector to inform their corporate social responsibility agendas. *Form a working relationship with Business Improvement Association's on ED&I matters	Year one and annually	Strategy & Engagement	Local business sector	3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four projects completed annually.
2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities	Welcoming City	2.3.1. Support initiatives that strengthen sense of belonging and welcome among residents and workers.	*Investigate accreditation process to attain Excelling or Mentoring level within the Welcoming Cities Standard	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups Community services sector NSW government agencies - DCJ Multicultural NSW	3.1 Vibrant and creative city 1.2 Connected and fair communities	CN achieved Welcoming Cities Standard level of Excelling.
	Welcoming City	2.3.2. Embed ED&I principles in CN's external and internal communications	*Update CN's corporate style guide to include ED&I principles outlined in this Strategy *Link processes such as photography and videography briefs to Corporate Style Guide and ED&I principles.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support) People & Culture (support)		1.2 Connected and fair communities 3.3. Celebrating culture	CN materials reflecting the diversity of our communities so that people see themselves represented and included.
2.4 Combat discrimination and promote inclusive communities through respect, education and commitment to change	Respectful Communities	2.4.1. Deliver or support projects and initiatives that address stigma, prejudice and discrimination and foster cross-cultural and lived experience awareness, acceptance and understanding.	*Deliver or support two projects or campaigns annually that combat discrimination or foster awareness, tolerance and understanding.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Community service sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two projects or initiatives delivered.

Priority 3. Connected communities VISION: Support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through acceptance, participation and inclusion, so that everyone feels welcome in Newcastle and enjoys a sense of belonging and place.								
Objective	**Delivery Program**	**Action**	**Outputs**	**Timeframe**	**Responsibility**	**Partners (external)**	**CSP Priority**	**Measure**
3.1 Facilitate innovative, community-focused participation, collaboration and partnerships to support social cohesion and inclusive decision-making and address local social issues	**Engaged Communities**	3.1.1. Undertake genuine engagement with communities' groups and community sector in the development and delivery of social, cultural and creative projects and initiatives that address identified local social issues	*Effective engagement and increased participation	Year three	Strategy & Engagement	Community groups Community services sector	4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Increased participation in decision making reported in Annual Report
	Engaged Communities	3.1.2. Support community engagement and consultation models by breaking down barriers for under-represented sectors of the community	* Increased participation by underrepresented groups on projects which relate to planning and design of public places and spaces.	Year one	Strategy & Engagement		4.2. Trust and transparency 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Increased engagement by underrepresented groups reported in annual report and engagement reports
3.2 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities to reduce social isolation, enhance trust and build supportive social networks.	**Social Connect**	3.2.1. Support community programs which increase trust, connection and reduce social isolation.	*Develop a two-year Social Connect program with two projects or initiatives that increase trust, connection and reduce social isolation within and between all communities in Newcastle. *Evaluate CN's NewConnects program to support community access to spaces for meetings, recreation and activations.	Year two	Strategy & Engagement		1.2 Connected and fair communities	Social Connect program designed and two community programs delivered. NewConnects review completed
	Social Connect	3.2.2. Continue to support social, cultural and creative events and activities in the public domain that appeal to diverse community members.	*Provide annual reporting to CN venues and cultural institutions of localised priorities and needs.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement		3.1 Vibrant and creative city	Annual information session completed.

	Social Connect	3.2.3. Review the tools and resources available to support volunteer opportunities in the local community.	*Support community groups to attract volunteers by building capacity through training, educational resources and collaboration with the Hunter Volunteer Foundation, while leveraging the My Community Directory platform and NewConnects program.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Community groups	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Resources reviewed.
	Social Connect	3.2.4. Investigate and support place-based services, projects and initiatives in and around community centres.	*Develop two joint projects, initiatives and events which partner with community organisations to identify priority needs and projects in particular locations; or support activation of managed neighbourhood centres with yearly activity plan in partnership with community organisations e.g., Hamilton South, Maryland and Jesmond.	Year two	Strategy and Engagement	Community groups Community services sector	1.1. Enriched neighbourhood and places	Two projects annually.
3.3 Enable active citizenship through community representation, civic awareness and public participation in civic life.	**Active Citizenship**	3.3.1. Provide increased opportunity for diverse community members to participate in CN community advisory committees to strengthen people's civic awareness and increase civic participation	*Create targeted awareness material to contextualise equity, diversity and inclusion for each CN Strategic Advisory Committee and co-present with a nominated community representative (year one) *Develop a Civic Engagement awareness program which identifies community barriers to participation in civic life and initiatives to increase active citizenship on an annual basis. Program to extend reach of information on CN website (get involved) and target young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disability and people of CALD LGBTIQA + backgrounds. (Year two) *Pilot an initiative that supports grass roots community leaders to inspire and advocate for their community (e.g., two-day leadership development opportunity) (Year two)	Year one and Year two	Strategy & Engagement Governance		4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Awareness material made accessible and deployed. Pilot leadership program facilitated.

3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and active citizenship.	**Local Data**	3.4.1. Increase open access to CN and Newcastle LGA specific data.	*Provide free access to community demographic digital platform on annual basis and provide Census 2021 learning workshops to community and community sector. *Review CN Open Data policies and procedures to identify opportunities for increased sharing of relevant data with communities to enable localised responses to social issues.	Annually and Year two	Strategy & Engagement Information Technology		4.2 Trust and transparency 4.2 Collaborative and innovative approach	CN Open Data policies and procedures reviewed to support deeper understanding of local social issues and demographic digital platform made available to community year on year.
	Local Data	3.4.2. Manage and deliver key community information resources targeted at community sector and community groups and in a range of languages and formats widely accessible and appealing to diverse audiences.	*Distribution of regular newsletters, accurate and timely website content, management and promotion of My Community directory *Development and distribution of tools through awareness of NewConnects learning modules. *Development up to two needs-based information toolkits annually, that support an identified diverse community group in Newcastle in accessing a trusted, factual and relevant resource (i.e., develop a database of LGBTIQA+ friendly businesses and spaces).	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	Community organisations Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities 4.2 Trust and transparency 4.2 Collaborative and innovative approach	Six community newsletters distributed Up to eight community information toolkits developed.

Priority 4. Healthy communities VISION: Promote and support active, healthy and resilient communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city								
Objective	**Delivery Program**	**Action**	**Outputs**	**Timeframe**	**Responsibility**	**Partners (external)**	**CSP Priority**	**Measure**
4.1 Contribute to improvements in community health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health.	**Community Health and Wellbeing**	4.1.1. Collaborate with partners in the health and community sector to deliver projects and initiatives aimed at improving community health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health and identified local priority issues.	*Deliver one Community Health & Wellbeing identified project annually	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies Health sector Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Four Community Health & Wellbeing projects delivered.
	Community Health and Wellbeing	4.1.2. Collaborate with local businesses, government agencies and not-for-profit organisations to address food insecurity.	*Food security projects delivered in partnership with CN internal and external stakeholders.	Year two and Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	State government agencies Community groups Community services sector Local business sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Two projects that respond to food insecurity challenges delivered.
4.2 Encourage an active, healthy and social lifestyle supported by local facilities, services and spaces.	**Active People**	4.2.1. Increase access to community-based sport and recreation opportunities for people experiencing disadvantaged, social isolation or exclusion.	*Inform CN strategies and plans, by providing a needs-based assessment on barriers and opportunities for diverse community groups to engage in community-based sport and recreation.	Year two and Year four	Strategy & Engagement (lead) City Wide Services (support)	Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	Development of two needs-based assessments of community sports and recreation assets

	Active People	4.2.2. Enable public participation, belonging and safety in the community through consultative processes with the community to influence public domain design.	*Consideration and incorporation of community design ideas where possible in public domain design processes. *Follow process for community group feedback and involvement on public domain projects. *Undertake community consultation on identified Local Centre public domain projects.	Ongoing	Strategy & Engagement Infrastructure & Property City Wide Services	State government agencies – NSW Police, DCJ Community groups Community services sector Local business sector	1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places	Community engagement on Local Centre Projects.
4.3 Contribute to improvements in community safety, including domestic and family violence and perceptions of safety	**Safe City**	4.3.1. Deliver Safe City projects that improve public safety and perceptions of safety with the Newcastle LGA.	*One Safe City project identified and delivered, in partnership, annually.	Annually	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies – NSW Police, DCJ Community groups Community services sector	1.1. Enriched neighbourhood and places 1.2 Connected and fair communities	Safe City project delivered.
4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic).	**Community Resilience and Adaptation**	4.4.1. Deliver targeted initiatives to support communities' adaptation to climate change impacts, including support for residents identified as vulnerable to heat stress or other climate impacts.	*Deliver two Climate Adaptation projects, with a focus on vulnerable communities, based on risks and priorities identified in draft Environment Strategy and Climate Risk and Resilience Action Plan.	Year two and Year four	Strategy & Engagement	State government agencies Environmental agencies Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Action on climate-change	Two Climate Adaptation projects with ED&I focus delivered as part of CN's Environment Strategy.
	Community Resilience and Adaptation	4.4.2. Deliver targeted initiatives to enhance communities' capacity to recover and thrive in the face of shocks and emergencies (i.e., COVID-19 pandemic) through supporting community capacity building, neighbourhood based social networks and emergency preparedness.	*Deliver one Community Resilience project based on emergency preparedness and community strengthening best practices.	Year three	Strategy & Engagement (lead) Governance (support)	State government agencies Emergency response services Community groups Community services sector	1.2 Connected and fair communities	One Community Resilience project delivered.

References

[1] NSW DPE (2018), Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036, NSW Department of Planning and Environment, accessed 14 January 2022, https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Plans-and-policies/greater-newcastle-metropolitanplan-2018.pdf.

[2] Graham, M. (2021), The Relationist Ethos concept is particularly associated with the work of Adjunct Associate Professor Mary Graham, Kombu-merri and Waka Waka person: https://www.greenprints.org.au/knowledge-base/relationist-ethos/.

[3] OECD/Eurostat (2018), Oslo Manual 2018: Guidelines for Collecting, Reporting and Using Data on Innovation, 4th Edition, The Measurement of Scientific, Technological and Innovation Activities, OECD Publishing, Paris/ Eurostat, Luxembourg, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264304604-en.

[4] Kate Raworth, Doughnut of social and planetary boundarie: https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/

[5] Greenprints: https://www.greenprints.org.au/

[6] Judith Stubbs & Associates (2021), 'City of Newcastle Affordable Housing Discussion Paper', unpublished.

[7] If a household is paying more than 30% of their gross household income on housing costs, they are considered 'housing-stressed'.

[8] Judith Stubbs & Associates (2021), 'City of Newcastle Affordable Housing Discussion Paper', unpublished.

[9] City of Newcastle (2020), City of Newcastle Local Housing Strategy. City of Newcastle, Newcastle NSW, accessed 17 January 2022: https://newcastle.nsw.gov.au/getmedia/ed227c55-746e-4224-aa6c-b2e8391ab88a/Local-Housing-Strategy-Updated-2021

[10] Equity Economics (November 2020), 'A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW: Impacts of Covid 19 Recession Report', accessed at the following weblink: https://www.ncoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A-WAVE-OF-DISADVANTAGE_-COVID-19_Final.pdf.

[11] Inclusive Australia 2021, 'Measuring Social Inclusion – The Inclusive Australia Social Inclusion Index'. Monash University and Behaviour Works Australia, accessed 19 January 2022, https://inclusive-australia.s3.amazonaws.com/files/Inclusive-Australia-2020-21-Social-Inclusion-Index-min.pdf.

[12] Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016, 'City of Newcastle Household Size',.idcommunity webpages. City of Newcastle, Newcastle NSW, accessed 20 January 2022, Household size | City of Newcastle | Community profile (id.com.au).

[13] Relationships Australia 2018, 'Is Australia experiencing an epidemic of loneliness? Findings from 16 waves of the Household Income and Labour Dynamics of Australia Survey'. Canberra: Relationships Australia. Accessed 20 January 2022,

[14] Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (2020), Overweight and obesity: an interactive insight

[15] American Psychological Association 2016, 'Stress in America: The impact of discrimination', Stress in American Survey, accessed 20 January 2022: https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2015/impact-of-discrimination.pdf.

[16] Dalton, Russell J. (2008): Citizenship Norms and the Expansion of Political Participation. In *Political Studies* 56 (1), pp. 76–98. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00718.x

[17] Heggart, Keith; Arvanitakis, James; Matthews, Ingrid (2019): Civics and citizenship education: What have we learned and what does it mean for the future of Australian democracy? In *Education, Citizenship and Social* 14 (2), pp. 101–117. DOI: 10.1177/1746197918763459.

[18] UNESCO 2020, 'Access to Information in Times of Crisis', accessed 20 January 2022: https://en.unesco.org/themes/access-information.

[19] World Health Organization (WHO) 2006, 'Constitution of the World Health Organization', accessed 13 January 2022, https://www.who.int/governance/eb/who_constitution_en.pdf.

City of
Newcastle

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

**CCL 27/09/2022 – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT LOCAL
SOCIAL STRATEGY**

ITEM-75   **Attachment B:**   Local Social Discussion Paper

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

Local Social Discussion Paper
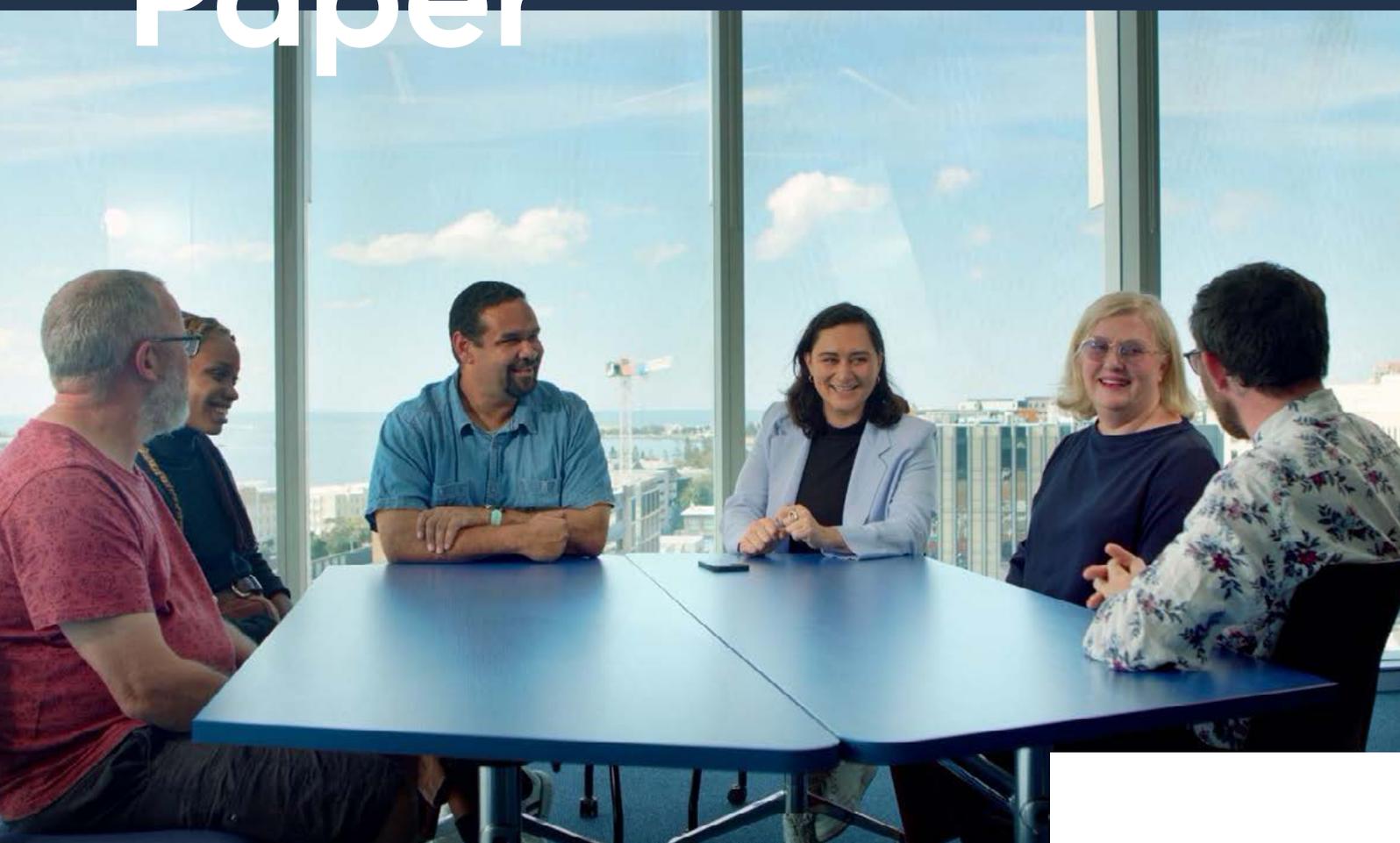
December 2021

newcastle.nsw.gov.au
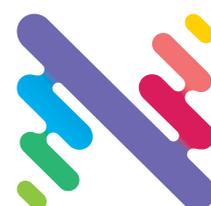
City of
Newcastle

Welcome

Acknowledgment

City of Newcastle acknowledges that we operate on the grounds of the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.

Smoking ceremony held at the new City Administration Centre building at 12 Stewart Avenue. The ceremony also included; Wakakulang Dance Troupe, Aboriginal catering and a special guest talk by local artist Saretta Fielding.

Contents

For information contact
Community, Strategy and Innovation
Simone Soeters
Phone: 02 4974 2000

Introduction

1.1 The Local Social Strategy

Newcastle is a liveable city with a remarkable natural environment, local economic opportunities, and an increasingly diverse social, cultural and creative foundation that contributes to quality of life. However, as Newcastle undergoes significant growth and change, an increasing number of community members are being left behind, unable to realise their full potential as part of a thriving society.

Based on engagement, key areas of social concern for the people of Newcastle can be grouped into 4 themes:

1. **Equity** concerns refer to rising living costs; housing unaffordability and insecurity; and inadequate access to transport, social infrastructure and services.

2. **Inclusion** concerns refer to inequality of opportunity, particularly within employment and training; discrimination against diverse groups; and limited opportunity to express and connect to culture.

3. **Connection** concerns refer to increasing social isolation and disconnection, as well as limited opportunity for participating in and influencing local decisions.

4. **Health** concerns refer to health and wellbeing issues, mental ill-health, risk of violence, and safety in the community.

These concerns and challenges are further exacerbated by the climate emergency, considered humanity's single biggest threat, and the COVID-19 pandemic, both of which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our communities.

To respond to these social challenges, City of Newcastle (CN) is renewing our 10-year social strategy, the Local Social Strategy. This will set out our aspirations for a socially just and inclusive city – a place for everyone. The strategy falls under and supports CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP)[1], aligns with state and regional plans, and defines CN's social priorities for the next 10 years, including outlining our 4-yearly action plans. This Discussion Paper outlines why Newcastle needs a social strategy, what its key social needs are, and how CN might respond to these needs.

1.2 Why do we need a social strategy?

A social strategy provides a framework for CN and the community to remove barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity; encourage community connection and participation; celebrate our rich social and cultural diversity; and strengthen community health and wellbeing. In working towards this mission, we aim to achieve the vision of a socially just and inclusive place for all.

The Local Social Strategy is for the whole community. However, CN acknowledges that some groups in Newcastle are more likely to be excluded from social, economic and political opportunities due to discrimination and other access barriers. Therefore, this strategy will identify priority communities and groups to be involved in all aspects of Newcastle life.

The Local Social Strategy will help CN meet the social justice requirements placed on councils by the *Local Government Act 1993*, which states: '*Council's long-term community strategic plans must be based on social justice principles and address social issues along with civic leadership, environmental and economic issues*'.

CN has a leadership role to play in achieving our shared vision of a socially just and inclusive Newcastle, but we can't do it alone. We need to work with local communities as equal partners, drawing on their many strengths and assets and supporting them to shape their own futures. We also need to collaborate with dedicated services and organisations across Newcastle to ensure we respond to community needs and aspirations while delivering effective, coordinated actions and initiatives for social justice and inclusion.

1.3 Guiding principles that shape our strategy

Several principles shape our approach to supporting social justice, inclusion and positive social change in our city.

Social justice

Social justice is about fair and just relations between individuals and society. It means making sure that all community members are empowered to make decisions about their lives. We promote social justice in Newcastle by ensuring fair distribution of resources, equal access to services, participation in decision-making and equal rights in all areas, as outlined in these 4 principles:

Equity: Resources are allocated according to need with the aim of achieving more equal outcomes, particularly for those with greater needs or barriers to access.

Access: People have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation: People can fully participate in community life and genuinely influence decisions that affect their lives.

Rights: Human rights are universal – everyone has the right to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that people are entitled to, including economic, social, cultural and political rights[2].

Relationships

Relationships are key to inclusive, socially just communities. A relational approach is a way of interacting or communicating that embodies values such as respect, inclusiveness, honesty, compassion, cooperation and humility. However, it is also about the connections between people and the planet. The **Relationist Ethos** is a concept within Aboriginal law, philosophy and culture. It explains that we are all in relationship with other people, but also places great importance on the relationship between the land (Country) and all living and non-living beings. It is these relationships and obligations to each other that form a template for our society[3].

For CN, forming strong, respectful and transparent relationships is essential to achieving the desired social outcomes for our communities.

Evidence and innovation

Many community issues require integrated approaches that combine social, economic, demographic, cultural and environmental considerations. When considering local responses to these issues, **evidence-based decision-making** and **innovative practice** are essential principles. Evidence-based needs assessment and prioritisation, as well as meaningful monitoring and evaluation, can help us achieve the desired outcomes for our communities. Innovation in the public sector seeks to create value and impact by responding to public interest, addressing citizens' basic needs, and enhancing efficiency of public services. Continued innovation in our public sector and communities will assist us in adapting and responding to our ever-changing community context and needs[4].

---

[1] City of Newcastle Community Strategic Plan 2030: https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/getmedia/c642bf2e-74df-4eaa-8931-526df94598dc/3119-CSP-Strategy-FINAL-WEB.aspx

[2] NSW OLG (Office of Local Government) 2021

[3] Graham, M. (2021), The Relationist Ethos concept is particularly associated with the work of Adjunct Associate Professor Mary Graham, Kombu-merri and Waka Waka person: https://www.greenprints.org.au/knowledge-base/relationist-ethos/

[4] OECD/Eurostat (2018)

Regenerative society

Regenerative means 'able to or tending to regenerate' – to regrow or be renewed or restored, especially after being damaged or lost. Regeneration recognises that human and planetary health are deeply interwoven, and actively seeks to enable the flourishing of human and non-human life. To strengthen the regenerative capacity of our communities, we have drawn inspiration from two models: (1) 'Doughnut Economics', which refers to a concept linking social needs and planetary boundaries[5] and (2) the Greenprints approach[6].

Doughnut Economics refers to the visual and conceptual framework created by economist Kate Raworth, when she drew the needs of human societies, inside the circular "Planetary Boundaries" diagram, created by Earth System scientists[7]. In her work, she states that humanity's 21st-century challenge is to meet the needs of all within the means of the planet. In Doughnut Economics, a society and economy is considered prosperous when all 12 social foundations are met, without overshooting any of the nine ecological ceilings. You can see the framework in Figure 1, below.
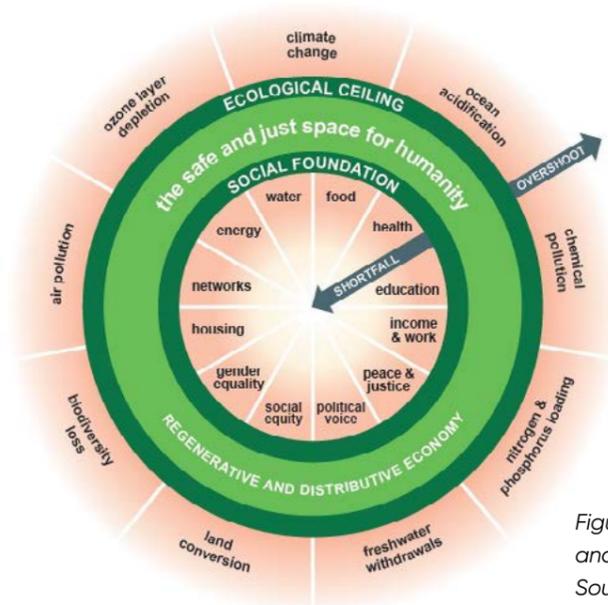
Figure 1. Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries
Source: Kate Raworth (2017)

The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries has been designed to show the following principles:

1. That no one falls short of life's essentials, ranging from food and housing to healthcare and political voice – the **social foundation**

2. That we do not overshoot our pressure on Earth's life-supporting systems, such as a stable climate, sufficient fresh water or fertile soils – **the ecological ceiling**

3. That we find a **safe and just space for humanity** to exist within the green zone of the Doughnut.

Figure 2 presents the Local Social Lens, in which the Doughnut is downscaled to a city or place[8]. Building on the social foundation of the Doughnut, the Local Social Lens proposes 4 priorities and 16 dimensions that are needed for people to thrive. This lens has inspired the framework and name of CN's Local Social Strategy.

---

[5] https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/

[6] Greenprints: https://www.greenprints.org.au/

[7] Stockholm Resilience Centre https://www.stockholmresilience.org/download/18.8615c78125078c8d3380002197/ES-2009-3180.pdf

[8] City Portraits Methodology (2020), DEAP (2020), Creating-City-Portraits-Methodology.pdf
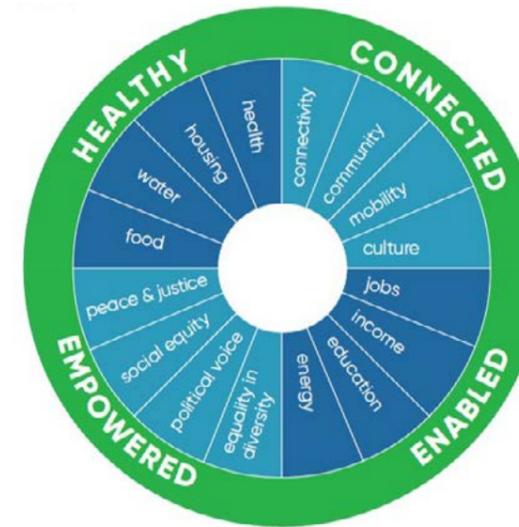
Figure 2. Local Social Lens
Source: Thriving Cities Initiative (2020)
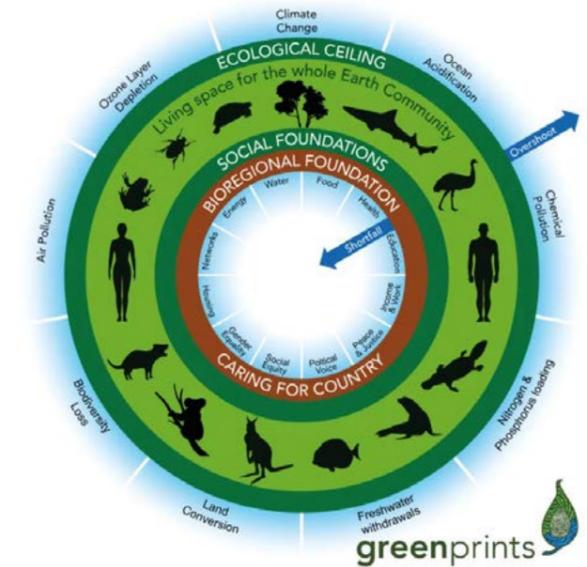
Figure 3. Greenprints Doughnut
Source: Michelle Maloney (2021)

But how can we achieve a regenerative society and 'live within the Doughnut'? This is where our second model is helpful. The Doughnut helps to frame the goal (for human societies to thrive within planetary boundaries), and the Greenprints approach outlines a process we can use to help us reach our goal.

Greenprints is an Australian-designed system, which provides a step by step approach for communities to achieve equitable societies and regenerative economies, within our ecological boundaries. Greenprints demystifies and connects the many concepts, models and methods that can be used to help us create sustainable and socially just communities.

In addition to the Greenprints steps[9], Greenprints has its own version of the Doughnut, shown in Figure 3. This version refers to the ecological ceiling and social foundation, but has also added "the things that sustain us physically and spiritually": our connection to place, including our bioregional foundation and the practice of Caring for Country.

Discussion question

Are there other principles that should be considered to shape the Local Social Strategy and its approach?

https://www.menti.com/c79wsvxtdh

---

[9] Greenprints Doughnut: https://blog.earthlaws.org.au/2021/10/doughnut-economics-and-the-greenprints-approach/?fbclid=IwAR3HpOf2yla_qOLBbMDgPplQQyy2OqgwEDmowPAqsVVgKJMrPVvjAGSB34I

1.4 Discussion questions for consideration

Throughout this paper, we will invite the reader to consider several discussion questions. We will seek your feedback on these questions during virtual workshops or via a short survey link. The survey link is included next to each discussion question throughout the Discussion Paper. The discussion questions will be indicated with the following image:

Discussion question

Image: Rising from the Embers, Land and Cultural Festival, Wollotuka Institute, University of Newcastle, May 2021

2. Understanding our communities

Newcastle is Australia's seventh-largest city. It is increasingly made up of people from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, as well as people with diverse social identities and lived experiences. The population of Newcastle is expected to grow and change in the coming 20 years, and with this growth will come many social, economic and environmental changes. This period will also include uncertainty about the recovery from and long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the increasing impact of climate change.

2.1 Demographic overviews and trends

2.1.1 Population and projections

In 2021, the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) had an estimated population of 171,307, this is projected to grow to 202,049 by 2041. Reasonably balanced population growth is projected across all age groups, but the largest growth by far will be amongst those aged 70–85 years. The current median age sits at 37 years[10].

An estimated 19,450 new dwellings are needed by 2041 to meet population growth-related demand. The western corridor of the Newcastle LGA, west from Wallsend to the M1 freeway and LGA boundary at Minmi, will have significant greenfield development – largely on greenfield (undeveloped bush land, with up to 4,500 new dwellings accommodating up to 10,000 people built over the next 15–20 years. Urban renewal corridors in Adamstown, Hamilton and Islington will also see increased dwelling densities. In all these locations, services and facilities will be required to respond to increased population size and densities.

2.1.2 Socio-economic disadvantage

As part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas Census (SEIFA), the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage provides a weighted index of community disadvantage on 17 indicators generally associated with social wellbeing. The SEIFA Index of Education and Occupation brings together a range of indicators associated with a community's educational and occupational wellbeing. Overall, Newcastle has a relatively positive profile on each of these indicators. It was in the least disadvantaged 33% of LGAs in Australia, and in the upper 18% of LGAs for educational and occupational status in 2016. However, there are some very disadvantaged areas in each of these measures of community wellbeing – particularly Beresfield–Hexham SA2 (Statistical Area Level 2), which is in the most disadvantaged 8% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 2% of areas for education and occupational status; and Shortland–Jesmond SA2, which is in the most disadvantaged 9% of SA2s in Australia and the lowest 38% of areas for education and occupational status.

Other relatively disadvantaged areas were the Stockton area and the SA2s of Mayfield–Warabrook, Wallsend–Elermore Vale and Waratah–North Lambton, which were all in the most disadvantaged one-third of areas in Australia. Figure 4 below maps this SEIFA disadvantage across the LGA.
These areas of more severe disadvantage are generally associated with high concentrations of social housing; older and generally higher-density private rental housing; concentrations of older people, including those previously employed in lower income employment; and/or younger age profiles, high rates of unemployment and low educational achievement[11].

---

[10] id. Consulting (2018), City of Newcastle Population and Household Forecasts 2016 to 2041
[11] Judith Stubbs and Associates, 2021

Figure 4. SEIFA Disadvantage for City of Newcastle by SA1

Legend

Newcastle LGA

SEIFA Disadvantage by SA1 2016 (Percentile for NSW)

1 - 20
21 - 39
40 - 59
60 - 79
80 - 100
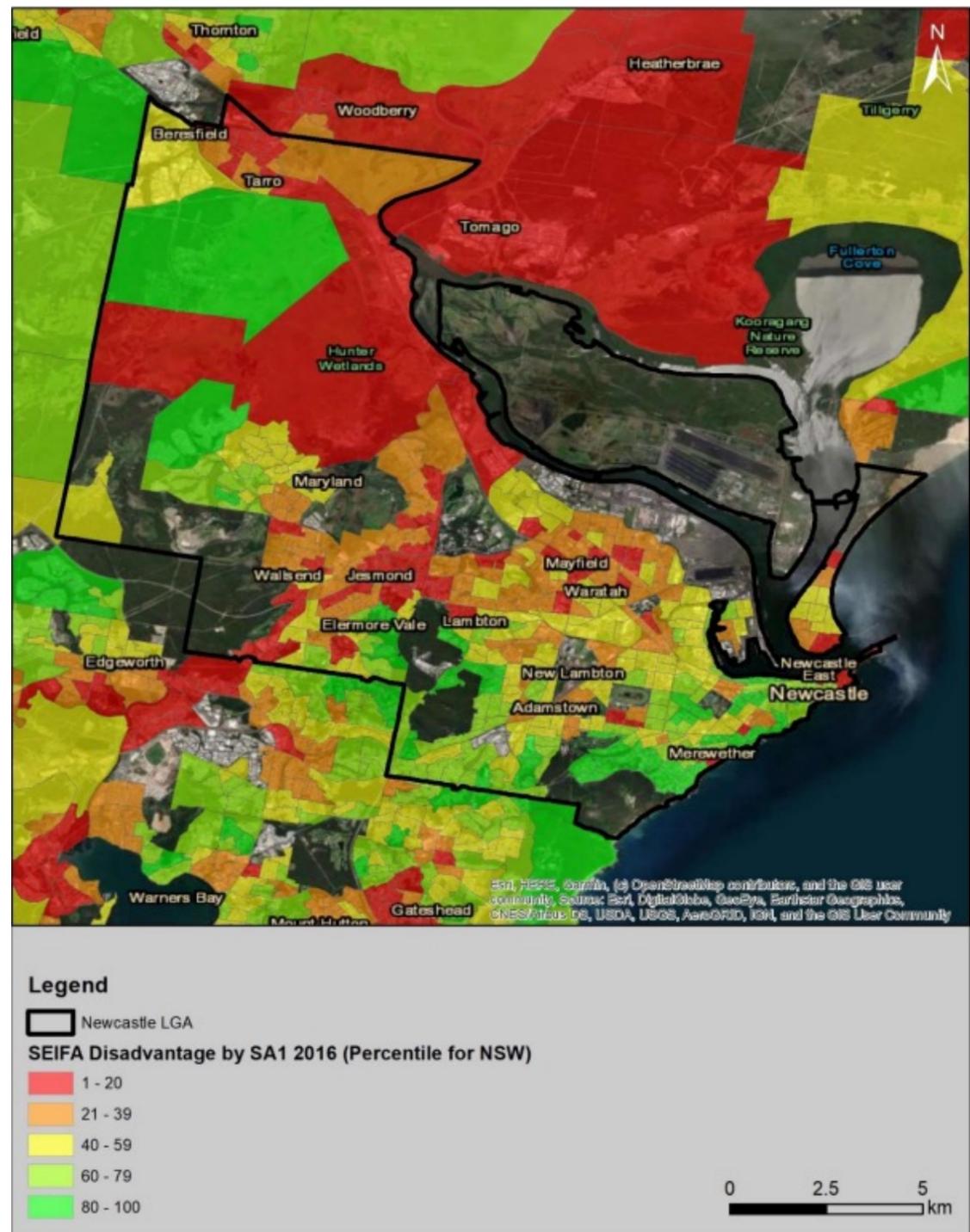
Source: Judith Stubbs & Associates 2021, based on data from ABS 2016 Census

2.1.3   Employment and education

In terms of the LGA's educational profile, Year 12 completion rates were considerably higher than the rest of NSW, and a much higher proportion of people had degree or higher post-secondary qualifications. However, as noted above, there were several areas where post-secondary qualifications were much lower than average, as reflected in the SEIFA Education and Occupation measure.

In line with its younger age profile and increased employment opportunities related to its role as a major urban centre, Newcastle had a higher-than-average labour force participation rate, and a positive increase in both the size of the labour force and participation rate over the decade to 2016. However, unemployment was higher than the rest of NSW in 2016 (7.4% compared to 6.6%). There were particularly high rates of unemployment in the SA2s of Shortland–Jesmond (15.9%) and Beresfield–Hexham (11.3%), which, as noted, are particularly disadvantaged areas[12].

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen in the rapid increase in unemployment from March 2020, with unemployment at 8.09% in March 2021. There has been evidence of a downward trend, with unemployment at 6.81% in June 2021, but this is still higher than pre-pandemic rates and above the NSW average. Some geographic areas in the LGA are experiencing higher rates of unemployment, and younger people have been particularly affected.

Figure 5. Unemployment in Newcastle from June 2019 to June 2021
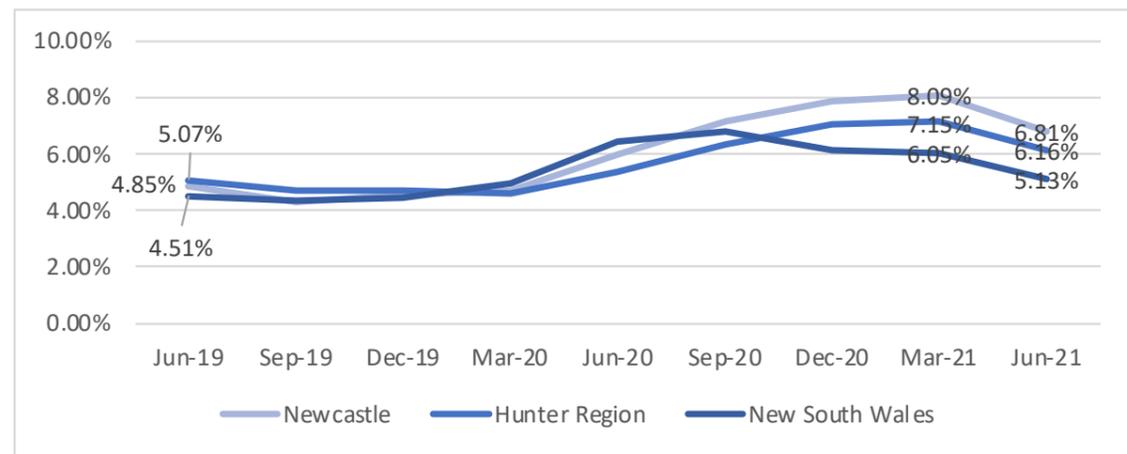
Source: REMPLAN, City of Newcastle Economy Profile

12 Judith Stubbs and Associates, 2021

2.2   Our priority communities and groups

CN acknowledges that some groups in Newcastle are more likely to be excluded from social, economic and political opportunities due to discrimination and other access barriers. Therefore, this strategy includes a focus on enabling priority communities and groups to be involved in all aspects of life in Newcastle.

We also recognise that people's social identities, social positions and lived experiences are complex. Our priority groups often experience multiple forms of discrimination and oppression (such as racism, sexism, ableism and homophobia). This means we need to take an intersectional approach to promoting social justice and inclusion in Newcastle.

The following communities have been identified as priority groups in our LGA[13]:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

In 2016, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 3.5% of Newcastle LGA's total population, with the NSW average sitting at 2.5%. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been identified as a priority group for CN as they continue to experience significant socio-economic disadvantage when compared to the general population of Newcastle. In 2016, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Newcastle was 15% (7% for general population); 11% had a degree or higher (25% for general population); and the average weekly income was 31% less than the general population.

More information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.

Socio-economically disadvantaged and newly vulnerable communities

The SEIFA Disadvantage measure presented in Figure 4 shows that the Newcastle LGA scores relatively well. However, there are some very disadvantaged geographic areas, particularly in the western suburbs of the LGA. In 2016, the 'lowest' and 'medium lowest'[14] household income quartiles made up 54% of all households with income in Newcastle. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is also an emergence of 'newly vulnerable' community members who are experiencing housing, food and income insecurity for the first times in their lives. A study by Good Shepherd and Roy Morgan estimates that about 25% of Australians aged 14 and above, and 40% of working Australians, have seen negative employment impacts from COVID-19, in turn affecting their household finances[15]. Considering this, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and newly vulnerable communities are priority groups for CN.

More information about people experiencing homelessness and insecure housing in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.

People with disability

In 2016, 5.9% of the Newcastle LGA population was estimated to be living with disability, as reported by the census. However, in 2018, 17% of the NSW population had a 'reported disability', which suggests that the number of people with disability in Newcastle may be higher. A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions; almost 90% of disabilities are not visible. People with disability are a priority group for CN as they experience significant socio-economic disadvantage compared to the general population. In Newcastle in 2016, the unemployment rate for people with disability was 17.7% (7% for general population); 6.1% had a degree or higher (25% for general population); and the average weekly income was 39% less than the general population.

More information about people with lived experience of disability in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities

In 2016, 14% of Newcastle residents were born overseas and 10% spoke a language other than English at home. Across the LGA, 134 different languages were spoken in homes. The most widely spoken languages were Mandarin, Macedonian, Italian, Greek and Arabic. However, the languages spoken with the greatest need for translation included Arabic, Swahili, Persian/Dari and Tibetan. CALD communities have been identified as a priority group as they experience socio-economic disadvantage. In Newcastle in 2016, of those CALD people who speak English 'not well' or 'not at all', 70% were not in the labour force and 11% had a degree or higher (25% for general population). Newcastle is a well-known humanitarian resettlement region, welcoming on average 320 - 350 people a year in the Newcastle region. Recently, 74 Afghani families have been resettled in Newcastle, and will require support to ensure they are welcomed and integrated into our city.

More information about Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.

LGBTIQA+ communities

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) people and communities are a diverse and often underrepresented population within Australia. Unfortunately, there is a lack of detailed population-level data for LGBTIQA+ communities across Australia, which makes it difficult to appropriately respond to the needs of these communities. It is estimated that up to 11% of Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity. In Newcastle, this equates to 20,000 people. LGBTIQA+ communities are a priority group for CN due to the mental health, social isolation and community safety disadvantages they experience. LGBTIQA+ people are 3 times more likely to have considered suicide in the last 12 months[16] and 44% of LGBTIQA+ people usually hide their gender or sexuality in public.

More information about people of diverse genders and sexualities in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.

---

[13] Information for 'Our priority communities and groups' has been sourced from Fallding (2021), 'A demographic profile of diverse communities within the City of Newcastle' and the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census, unless specified otherwise.

[14] 'Lowest' quartile of household income is $0 to $750/week and 'medium lowest' quartile of household income is $751 to $1,481/week

[15] Good Shepherd and Roy Morgan (2021), 'New Vulnerable Research': https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-10/apo-nid314651.pdf

[16] Hill, A. O., Bourne, A., McNair, R., Carman, M. & Lyons, A. (2020). Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia. ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 122. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

Older people

In 2019, it was estimated that people aged 60 years and over made up 21% of the Newcastle LGA population. Older people are a priority group for CN as our community is ageing – there will be a 36% increase in people over the age of 60 years in the Newcastle LGA by 2041. To ensure older people are provided with the same opportunities as younger people to remain physically, intellectually and socially active, age-friendly infrastructure, services and support will need to be planned for and provided.

> **More information about people of diverse genders and sexualities in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.**

Young people and children

Babies and pre-schoolers (1–5 years), children at school (5–17 years) and young people (15–24 years) currently make up 43% of the Newcastle population, and numbers are predicted to increase until 2041. Children and young people are priority groups for CN as supporting our youngest community members from an early age provides them with the best opportunity to live healthy, productive and enjoyable lives. Children are prioritised by CN in terms of lifelong learning, and young people are supported in terms of employment, training and civic engagement, particularly considering that youth unemployment approached 20% in September 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

> **More information about people of diverse genders and sexualities in Newcastle can be found under our Community Profile on our website.**

Women and men- areas of identified risk

People who identify as women and men are considered priority groups for CN due to specific vulnerabilities they experience. The COVID-19 pandemic has particularly affected women due to the adverse impact on industries in which women predominantly work, the casualised nature of much of the paid work women undertake[17], and housing insecurity faced by older women. Women are also at a greater risk of domestic and family violence (D&FV); in the year to June 2021 in Newcastle, 75% of domestic assault victims identified as women[18]. Addressing toxic masculinity and the mental health of people who identify as men is a priority for our community. Men are 3–4 times more likely to take their own life than women[19], and a recent study found that young Australian men's belief in rigid masculine stereotypes has a stronger impact than other factors (including their education levels, where they live or their cultural heritage) on whether they will use violence, sexually harass women or experience mental ill-health themselves[20].

> ### Discussion question
>
> **Are any priority community groups missing? If yes, please outline which groups and why.**
>
> https://www.menti.com/d4bv6jo3tu

---

17 Dawson, E. (2020, September 4). Anti-poverty Week podcast recording. (D. Cox, Interviewer)
18 BOCSAR (2021). NSW Crime Tool: http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/
19 https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/fef61104-dbe5-4f91-bdb2-fc50f7c55177/Suicide-self-harm-monitoring-Data.pdf.aspx?inline=true
20 https://jss.org.au/what-we-do/the-mens-project/unpacking-the-man-box/

2.3 Our role

Many of the social issues and concerns facing Newcastle are complex and beyond the direct control and influence of CN, meaning we need to work with our community and a range of stakeholders to ensure our collective wellbeing. Depending on the activity being undertaken, CN's role is to deliver, partner and/or advocate.

Deliver — CN delivers a wide range of programs and services including waste collection, libraries, childcare, maintenance of local roads and public spaces, recreation facilities and programs, community support, special events and regulatory functions.

Partner — There are areas in which CN has partial or shared responsibility or influence. CN builds strategic partnerships with federal and state government agencies, the private sector, the community sector and a range of other stakeholders whose work will contribute to delivering our long-term priorities.

Advocate — A wide range of issues important to the community sits outside CN's control. CN gives a voice to the needs and aspirations of the community by advocating for changes in policy and action at relevant levels of government and industry.

The priority social needs of Newcastle communities will be outlined in the following section of this Discussion Paper. For each issue identified, CN's role in delivering, partnering or advocating will be noted.

Image: Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre Services Expo, May 2021

3. Social challenges in Newcastle

CN has developed a social needs assessment for Newcastle, with the findings grouped into 4 themes: equity, inclusion, connection and health. This assessment is based on the following evidence:

Consultation with community and key community stakeholders – 286 people

Secondary research, literature and evidence from Australia and globally

Online (1,720 respondents) and face-to-face (400 respondents) social surveys

Local social, demographic, economic and environmental trends within Newcastle[21]

Primary research within a single Newcastle community services sector network using Social Network Analysis – 36 participants

Global social, demographic, economic and environmental trends likely to impact Newcastle in the future

Use of PowerBI dashboard developed by CN Corporate Planning team to analysis and visualize over 2,200 data points from the online and face-to-face social surveys

As part of the community engagement for the Local Social Strategy, the CN project team spoke to 286 people at 17 events and workshops. Priority community groups were targeted, with workshops and events designed to ensure the inclusion of the following groups:

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, including refugees

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

People from low socio-economic backgrounds

Disability community

LGBTIQA+ communities

Older people

Youth

Community feedback was captured via 2 surveys between June and September 2021. The online survey explored community participation, access to services, wellbeing, safety, and perceptions around social matters and social justice issues. The face-to-face survey explored social matters and participation in the community. In total, 2,120 people provided their views (online survey = 1,720 and face-to-face survey = 400). A representative sample of diverse groups responded to the survey, including LGBTIQA+ communities, younger people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. A full report on the community engagement, including surveys, can be accessed here.

17 events and workshops

286 people spoken to at events & workshops

2,120 people surveyed
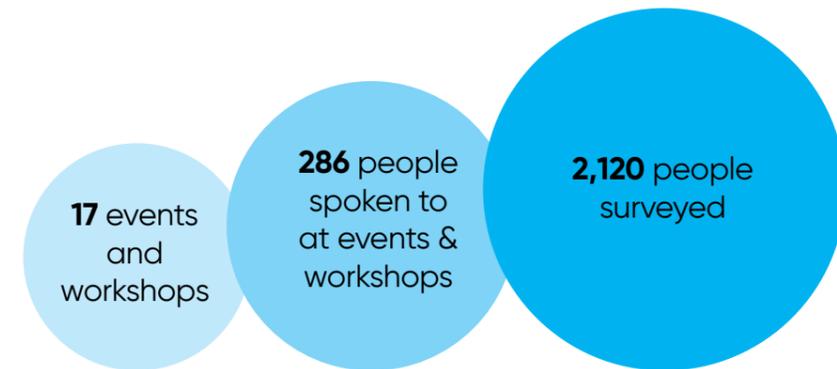
3.1 Equity challenges

3.1.1 Housing affordability and insecure housing

Housing affordability and insecure housing is by far the greatest social issue concerning the people of Newcastle. Of the 2,120 respondents from the Local Social community surveys, 53% reported that affordable and inclusive housing is the biggest social issue in Newcastle, with 51% of online survey respondents (1,720 people) saying it is difficult or very difficult to access affordable housing. While housing was an issue for all respondents, those aged 70+ years generally found it easy or very easy to find housing, while younger people, LGBTIQA+ communities, people with disability and CALD communities had the most difficulty accessing affordable housing.

> *'Lack of regulation of the housing market has resulted in rental prices and purchase prices skyrocketing. I'm 33 with a decent full-time job but owning a home is not a reality.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

For Newcastle, stable and affordable housing plays a critical role in the health and wellbeing of families and individuals. Housing is considered to be 'affordable' when households pay less than 30% of their gross household income on housing costs (renting or purchase). 'Social housing' is secure and affordable rental housing for people on low incomes with housing needs. It includes public and community housing. While the provision of social and affordable housing has traditionally been the domain of the state government, local government can play a role in policy, advocacy, land use, and planning controls and guidelines, as well as property and levy programs to aid the delivery of affordable housing. However, everything we do must be done in partnership, as it is impossible for local governments to solely respond to the complexity of the housing challenge.

Current social and affordable housing needs in Newcastle:

10,700 housing-stressed households[22]

4,780 social housing properties (public and community) understood to be fully occupied → a waitlist of **1,179** approved households on the NSW Social Housing Register

7,000–7,500 affordable houses required by 2041 → **139** delivered to date[23]

In regional NSW, Newcastle (and Lake Macquarie SA4) has the highest level of projected unmet social housing need until 2036, and the second highest existing unmet need.

Further to the social housing demand, there is evidence of increasing homelessness locally. Equity Economics research on the impact of the COVID-19 recession estimated that 'experiences in homelessness' across Newcastle (and Lake Macquarie SA4) would increase by 40.5%, or around 470 people, based on the report's June 2021 homelessness estimates of 1,624 people in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie[24]. Additionally, people 'at risk of homelessness' in the area were estimated at just over 6,000 in June 2021. The report notes that this reflects the combination of larger populations of at-risk individuals and local increases in unemployment.

Rising wait times of approved NSW Social Housing applicants in Newcastle are another challenge[25]. Of the 1,179 general and 96 priority approved applications for the Newcastle area as of June 30, 2020, wait times are between 5 years (for any form of social housing) and more than 10 years (for larger or specific-need properties).

CN role: Partner Advocate
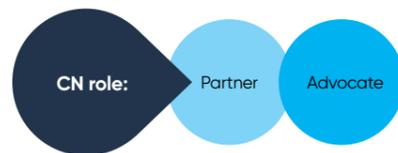
3.1.2   Rising living costs

Concerns regarding rising living costs in Newcastle were reported by survey respondents. This included the cost of housing and rentals, but also referred to other living costs such as transport, food and health services, and the linkage with inadequate wages. From the online survey, most respondents were satisfied with their standard of living (66%); however, non-binary respondents had the lowest level of satisfaction (37%), followed by people with disability (42%) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (43%). When asked about satisfaction with future security (financial, housing, employment), only 42% of respondents were satisfied.

> *'As the world grows more expensive, our wages stagnate. Nothing is affordable. Not rent, sport or tertiary education. All of which are in high demand, implicating a cut in costs. Where is it?'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

While Newcastle has relatively low levels of socio-economic disadvantage, there are significant differences across the LGA (as outlined in section 3.1.2), showing that high levels of disadvantage are experienced in some geographic areas and demographic groups.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted those disadvantaged groups, with newly vulnerable community members experiencing housing, financial and food insecurity for the first time. According to the Foodbank Hunger Report (2021), more than 1 in 6 adults in Australia can be categorised as 'severely food insecure', meaning they experience multiple disruptions to their eating patterns and often have to reduce their food intake. Concerningly, 1 in 3 of these people are experiencing this vulnerability for the first time due to COVID-19[26].

CN role: Partner Advocate
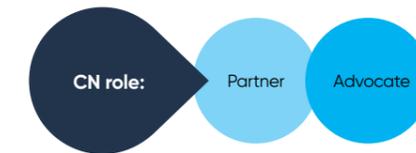
3.1.3   Access to social infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities[27]. This includes 'hard infrastructure' such as facilities or physical structures (e.g. community centres, libraries, hospitals, schools, parks, sports fields etc.), where 'soft infrastructure' such as social, cultural and recreational services, programs and activities are often delivered.

From the online survey, 77% of respondents reported easy access to libraries, and this was consistent across community groups. However, only 38% reported easy access to community centres and spaces, with non-binary people (17%) and people with disability (19%) finding access most difficult. According to community members, priorities to increase the shared use and enjoyment of community facilities, services, public open spaces and recreation facilities include: equitable access to and inclusion in those facilities; affordable and well-maintained spaces; and flexible, multi-purpose spaces that cater to a range of users and interest groups.

> *'[There is] disparity in the quality of public facilities available between poorer and wealthier parts of the city.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

Access to health, aged care and social support services was of concern to survey respondents. An increase in demand for these services over the past 5 years has been linked to increasing disadvantage (including unemployment); an ageing population and increasing social isolation; and improved communications and promotion of services[28]. In terms of healthcare, 59% of online survey respondents found it easy to access services; however, this was harder for non-binary people (38%) and people with disability (46%).

Some barriers to access include the geographic distribution of services, with more services located in the city centre rather than the western suburbs, and a perceived lack of connected, accessible and affordable transport that further exacerbates the issue. For LGBTIQA+, CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, a primary barrier was a perceived lack of culturally appropriate, safe and inclusive social services, including dedicated spaces for these community groups. Limited directional signage indicating key landmarks and facilities (e.g. libraries, toilets) was seen as another challenge to accessing social infrastructure.

> *'More safe places for queer people. A safe space for young queer adults to go. Newcastle doesn't even have a gay/queer bar anymore.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

CN role: Deliver Partner Advocate

---

[22]   JSA (2021). If a household is paying more than 30% of their gross household income on housing costs, they are considered to be 'housing-stressed households'.

[23]   City of Newcastle (2020), City of Newcastle Local Housing Strategy

[24]   Equity Economics (November 2020), 'A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW: Impacts of Covid 19 Recession Report', accessed at the following weblink: https://www.ncoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A-WAVE-OF-DISADVANTAGE_-COVID-19_Final.pdf

[25]   NSW Government Communities and Justice (2018), 'Waiting Times for Social Housing', accessed at the following weblink: https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/waiting-times

[26]   Foodbank Hunger Report (2021): https://reports.foodbank.org.au/

[27]   Infrastructure Australia (Australian Infrastructure Audit, Aug 2019)

[28]   CN (2021), Newcastle Social Infrastructure Strategy, Needs Assessment Report

3.2 Inclusion challenges

3.2.1 Inequality of opportunity

Across both Local Social surveys (2,120 respondents), access to meaningful and fairly paid employment was the third greatest social concern (11%). Concerns were related to job opportunities, job security and the future job market. People with disability, non-binary people and LGBTIQA+ communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, younger people, and CALD communities were particularly concerned about, and impacted by, access to meaningful and fairly paid employment.

> *'Casualisation of the workforce – I work, but not enough hours. My children work casually and can't get a home loan.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

> *'Access to diverse, high value work opportunities. Living in Newcastle is still a sacrifice career-wise when compared to metro cities.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

While access to learning and education opportunities was perceived as easy for most online survey respondents (51%), non-binary people, people with disability and CALD communities found it slightly harder (33%, 40% and 43% respectively).

Another key aspect of equal opportunity, and a key challenge facing Australians, is digital inclusion, with digital transformation being experienced in many aspects of economic and social life. In 2021, the Newcastle LGA scored 69.0 in the Australian Digital Inclusion Index[29], below the national average of 71 and the City of Sydney score of 83. However, key groups in our community are being left behind digitally, with some scoring up to 20 points lower than the Newcastle average. These groups are shown in[30] .
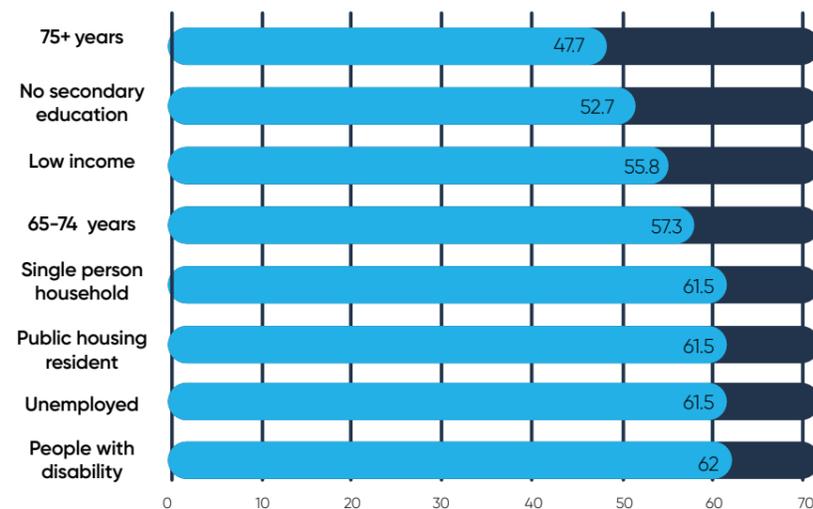
Source: Australian Digital Inclusion Index

3.2.2 Discrimination

Discrimination based on race, origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and ability was identified as an issue within the communities of Newcastle. Discrimination was seen as both overt (e.g. physical and verbal abuse) and hidden (e.g. discriminatory workplace policies). While values of respect and fairness are at the heart of Australia's culture, one in 4 Australians experience major discrimination through unfair policy, law, treatment or practices[31].

In Newcastle, a broad range of community members and stakeholders expressed concern about race-based and place-of-origin discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities impacting their economic, cultural and social life. Discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation was seen to exclude these communities from equal access to services, facilities and workplaces. Exclusion from economic and social life was also felt by older people and people with disability, with the accessibility of the built environment of particular concern.

> *'Diversity – Newcastle does not have a very diverse population, and this often manifests with exclusionary behaviour, if not outright discrimination.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

> *'Access to change tables/hoists in disability toilets. Without these basic amenities these people won't go to events or Newcastle at all.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

3.2.3 Limited opportunity to express and connect to culture

A broad range of community members and stakeholders expressed concern about the limited opportunity to express and connect to the diverse cultures that exist in Newcastle. This referred to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, multicultural communities' cultures, and artistic, intellectual and creative expression. If diverse cultures, identities and experiences are not welcomed, it can lead to people feeling excluded and experiencing a limited sense of belonging. Initiatives that embrace diversity through reconciliation activities, celebrate the richness of our diverse cultures and lived experiences, and strive to inform and educate our communities were welcomed.

> *'More cultural events. We need an Awabakal and Worimi cultural centre where there are activities, tours, and information. Not just for tourism but for our mob too.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

> *'Moving past monoculture. We need to welcome all nationalities to create a vibrant, diverse population full of cultural richness if we want to become truly cosmopolitan.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*
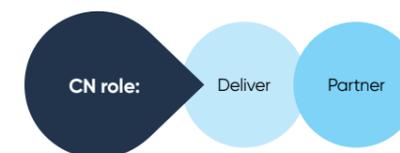
3.3   Connection challenges

### 3.3.1   Community participation

Participation in community life is an essential aspect of individual wellbeing and social connection, leading to greater social cohesion. In Newcastle, visiting an art gallery, museum or library (61%) and attending a community event, festival or celebration (56%) were the top activities reported by respondents to the online survey.

Figure 7. Community participation – Online survey, total sample = 1,720
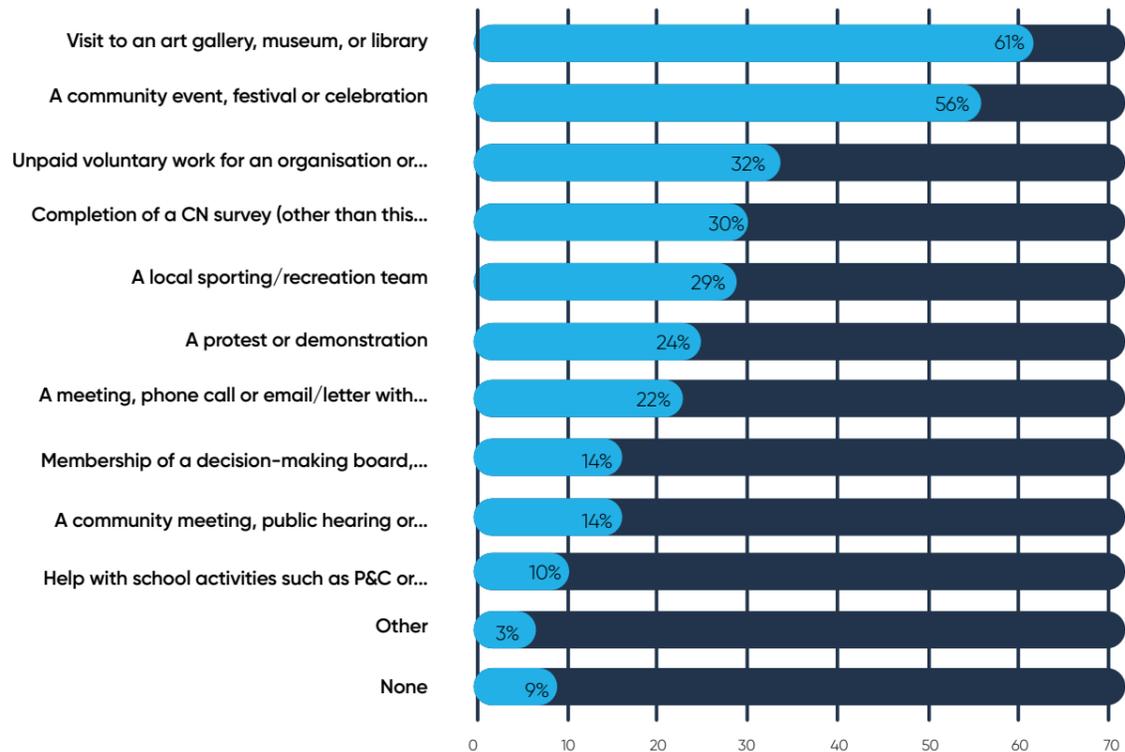
Respondents who identified as a non-binary or as part of the LGBTIQA+ community were more likely than other groups to have attended a community event, festival or celebration, or to have taken part in a protest or demonstration, but were less likely to be part of a local sporting team. Respondents with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage were, on average, slightly less likely to participate in the community activities included in the survey.

In terms of barriers to community participation, lack of time due to other commitments was the most common barrier cited, both overall and by most key groups. Respondents who identified as non-binary and those in the LGBTIQA+ community tended to report more barriers than other key groups, particularly feeling unsafe or uncomfortable attending community activities (44% and 28% respectively, vs 15% overall). People with disability also reported more barriers, though these were related to concerns for health and wellbeing (52% vs 22% overall), difficulty accessing venues (26% vs 10%), and transport issues (21% vs 8%). Barriers to participation in community activities reduce with age, with younger respondents citing more barriers than older respondents.

> *'Events that are inclusive. Accepting all individuals from all environments, e.g. celebrating all cultures, affordability of events, accessibility of events through adequate transport.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

> *'Lack of community activities and inclusive space for LGBTIQA+ and non-binary people. Understanding about non-binary pronouns and how to address gender diverse people and other appropriate services.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

3.3.2   Access to information and influence in local decisions

For some community groups, gaps in access to information and news have been identified throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response, with vulnerable groups particularly excluded due to the reliance on electronic and virtual access to information. Access to information plays a pivotal role in sustainable communities as it improves people's social, economic and political integration within their communities[32].

Access to information assists community members in knowing what community activities, workshops and events are available, leading to better social and economic integration. At present, 27% of online survey respondents reported difficulty in finding information about available activities and programs as a key barrier to participation. Information related to local planning and issues assists communities' political integration through involvement in local decisions. At present, community members and stakeholders reported limited participation in local decision-making and civic engagement, with only 14% of online survey respondents taking part in local decision-making boards or committees, community meetings, public hearings or discussions.

> *'Creating an inclusive, safe and connected community. Connected to decision-makers who will listen to us... We're all in this together, let's listen to everybody.'*
>
> *(Survey respondent)*

3.3.3   Social isolation and loneliness

Social isolation and loneliness can be harmful to both mental and physical health. With 29% of people living alone in Newcastle[33], social isolation is fast becoming a major challenge to ensuring connection to and inclusion in the wider community. A range of community members and stakeholders highlighted this as a key issue in Newcastle.

Risk factors for social isolation and loneliness include living alone, not being in a relationship, being unemployed, receiving income support, and lack of satisfaction with one's financial situation[34].Social isolation varies across age groups, with loneliness tending to be more common in young adults, males, those living alone, and those with children, either singly or in a couple[35]. Studies investigating the relationship between age and loneliness often have contradictory findings, with some finding higher levels of loneliness among older people while others find lower levels; this may be linked to relationship status[36]. Many people reported experiences of social isolation and loneliness during COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Although most regions of Australia reported improvements as lockdown measures began to ease, COVID-19 has highlighted how vulnerable our communities can be in the face of such shocks.

---

[32] UNESCO (2020), "Access to Information in Times of Crisis": https://en.unesco.org/themes/access-information

[33] .idcommunity, ABS (2016): https://profile.id.com.au/newcastle/household-size

[34] Flood (2005); Lauder et al. (2004); Relationships Australia (2011); Baker (2012)

[35] Baker (2012)

[36] Relationships Australia (2018)

'Social isolation in all its forms continues to impact on the wellbeing of our communities and people. This includes welcoming diversity [in all its people] – we are past just acceptance...'

(Survey respondent)

CN role: Deliver | Partner | Advocate
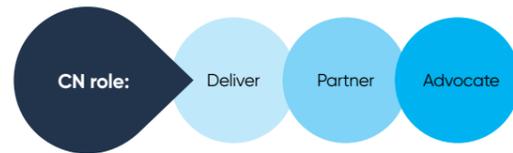
3.4 Health challenges

3.4.1 Health and wellbeing

In Newcastle, and across Australia, mental ill-health and declining trends in physical health are a major public health issue. Increased demand for mental health services and concerning rates of suicide amongst younger populations have been observed. In 2019–2020, 11.2% of the Australian population received Medicare-subsidised mental health services (an increase of 6% since 2009–2010); in Newcastle, this was close to 19% of the population. In Australia, the leading cause of death for people aged 15–44 was suicide, which is reflected in the Newcastle context as well.

A trend towards less active and less healthy lifestyles has led to health and wellbeing issues. Overweight and obesity is a major public health issue and a leading risk factor for ill health in Australia. Across the country, 67% of adults over the age of 18 years are overweight or obese, with the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network reporting 69% of the adult population as overweight or obese[37].

Respondents to Local Social online and short surveys reported mental health and physical health as the second (19% of respondents) and fourth (6% of respondents) key areas of social concern. This was greater amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD respondents, who reported mental and physical health as the top areas of concern. Common issues included timely access, limited availability of services (particularly specialist mental health services), and cost.

'Access to mental health services. Psychologists are too expensive therefore not accessed when required.'

(Survey respondent)

CN role: Partner | Advocate

3.4.2 Social dimensions of climate change and crisis events

Climate change and crisis events such as COVID-19 challenge the health and wellbeing of Australians and the capacity of health and social support systems to respond. We know our climate is changing, with impacts in the form of rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns and higher frequency of bushfires, as well as rising sea levels and temperatures and ocean acidification. There are strong relationships between the quality of the environment (air, water and food systems) and physical and mental health and wellbeing. These relationships need attention as we continue to adapt to climate change and crisis events, and consideration of the social domain is essential.

Particular attention should be given to vulnerable communities. Adaptation must be inclusive and account for the underlying factors that contribute to vulnerability, such as issues related to geography, culture, age, gender, diversity, disability and socio-economic status. For example, heatwaves can disproportionately impact the elderly, children, outdoor workers, and those suffering from chronic disease. Around Australia, many local governments, including Newcastle, have heatwave plans in place that clarify responsibilities and outline measures for enhancing long-term community resilience[38]. As part of the recent community engagement for the Newcastle 2040 CSP, over 5,000 pieces of feedback were collected, with environment a high priority, specifically stronger action on climate change. (21% of respondents), highlighting the need to act.

CN role: Partner | Advocate
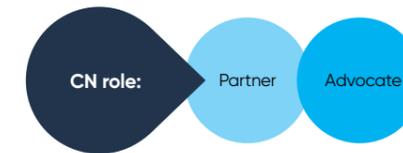
3.4.3 Community safety

Community safety is a complex issue, and no single agency is able to tackle it alone. CN collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders to implement strategies for improving safety in our city and community. This section presents community perceptions of safety, a summary of crime data in Newcastle, and key community safety concerns.

Community members who responded to the online survey were asked about their safety perceptions and to rate how safe they felt in a variety of locations, using a 5-point scale from 'totally safe' to 'not at all safe'. Results are presented in .

Figure 8. Safety perceptions – Online survey, total sample = 1,720
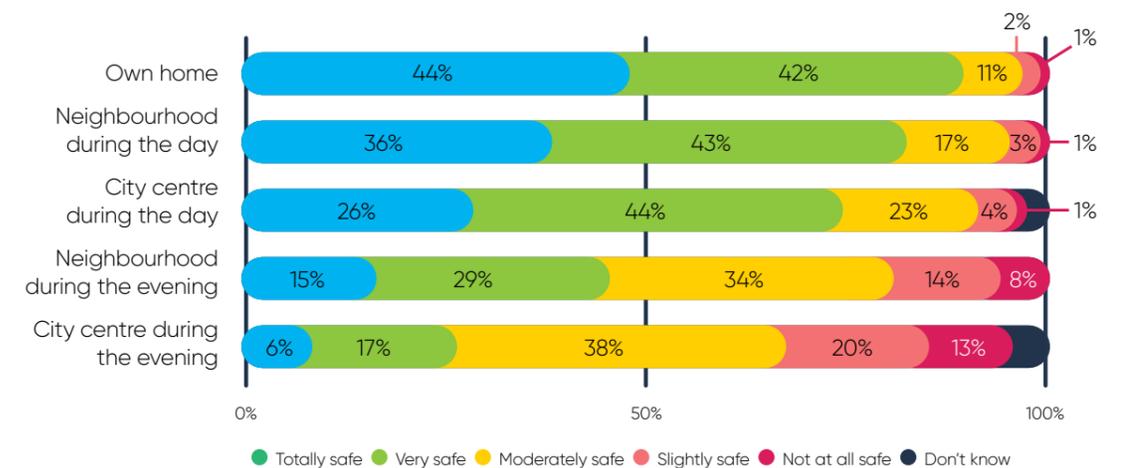
Location	Totally safe	Very safe	Moderately safe	Slightly safe	Not at all safe	Don't know
Own home	44%	42%	11%		2%	1%
Neighbourhood during the day	36%	43%	17%	3%		1%
City centre during the day	26%	44%	23%	4%		1%
Neighbourhood during the evening	15%	29%	34%	14%	8%	
City centre during the evening	6%	17%	38%	20%	13%	

Overall, most respondents felt safe at home (86% totally or very safe), in their neighbourhood during the day (79%), and in the city centre during the day (70%). People felt less safe at night, both in their own neighbourhood (44%) and in the city centre (23%). Analysis by key groups reveals people who identified as non-binary feel the least safe overall, particularly in the city centre during the day (49% totally or very safe vs 70% all respondents), and in their own neighbourhoods during the day (65% vs 79%). Older respondents (70+ years) felt less safe in the city centre than other groups, both at night and during the day, and people with disability also had weaker safety perceptions overall than most other groups.'

[37] Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (2020), Overweight and obesity: an interactive insight

[38] Australian Government (2021), National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, 2021–2025

'Safety and security in the city at all times of day and night – more diverse use of space at night to provide passive surveillance and security.'

(Survey respondent)

'Toxic masculinity and the violence it brings. Making much of the city unsafe for women and LGBTQI people. It dominates most spaces in Newcastle, creating an unsafe monoculture.'

(Survey respondent)

A summary of crime data and trends in the Newcastle LGA is presented in below. Most crime categories in the Newcastle LGA are trending downwards or are stable over the 5-year period between July 2016 to June 2021, with the exception of breaching bail conditions, which has increased. However, it is important to note that for 9 of the 14 crime categories reported, Newcastle ranks in the top 20 out of 120 LGAs in NSW in terms of the rate of offending. Furthermore, there are 5 crime categories in which Newcastle experienced a higher rate of offending than that of the NSW average in 2021.

Figure 9. Newcastle LGA local crime categories and trends in 2021

No.	Offence type	Number of incidents	Our ranking out of 120 LGAs	Rate of offense compared to NSW (per 100,000 population)[39]	2-year trend	5-year trend
1	Malicious damage to property	1,956	21	1.8	Stable	-4.4%
2	Steal from motor vehicle	1,439	7	2.4	Stable	-10.2%
3	Fraud	1,417	4	1.5	-8.8%	Stable
4	Breach bail conditions	1,378	25	1.3	Stable	+4%
5	Non-domestic violence-related assault	1,166	12	1.8	Stable	Stable
6	Break and enter dwelling	858	17	2.2	Stable	Stable
7	Steal from retail store	769	8	1.8	Stable	Stable
8	Domestic violence-related assault	674	64	1.0	Stable	Stable
9	Motor vehicle theft	520	10	2.2	Stable	Stable
10	Alcohol-related assault	418	17	2.3	Stable	-5.6%
11	Sexual assault	256	29	1.6	Stable	Stable
12	Steal from person	80	12	1.9	Stable	-17.7%
13	Alcohol-related offensive conduct	60	35	1.7	Stable	-10.6%
14	Robbery without a weapon	50	3	2.1	Stable	Stable

Source: NSW BOCSAR (Bureau of Crimes Statistics and Research)

3.4.3   Community safety

Two key areas of concern were raised by community members and stakeholders throughout the engagement: domestic and family violence (D&FV) and drug- and alcohol-related crime. Several D&FV issues were identified, including a lack of availability of services such as crisis and support accommodation; a lack of safety for victims in public spaces; and the increase in vulnerability of women in becoming homeless due to leaving abusive home environments. In the Newcastle LGA, there are roughly 13 reported domestic violence incidents reported per week, 674 incidents over 2020 - 2021. These issues were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as a significant proportion of women experienced first-time and escalating violence, which many women attributed to factors associated with the pandemic[40].

Drug- and alcohol-related issues occurring in public spaces were identified as another concern by community members and stakeholders. Alcohol was considered a contributor to other challenges including assaults, robberies, people consuming alcohol in public spaces (both during the day and at night), and alcohol addiction. Concerns were also raised regarding the presence of drugs within the community, including people supplying drugs in public spaces, the prevalence of addiction, and the impact of drug addiction on both mental health outcomes and crime rates.

CN role: Partner   Advocate

Discussion question

Have we included the priority social issues and concerns affecting our communities in Newcastle? What is missing?

https://www.menti.com/k7ngzaj889

---

[39] The ratio to NSW rate statistics is a comparison of an NSW regional rate per 100,000 population to the NSW rate per 100,000 population. A ratio of one indicates parity with the NSW rate. Ratios indicating double the NSW rate (or more) before rounding are highlighted in red.

[40] Boxall, H., & Morgan, A. (2021). Intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic: A survey of women in Australia (Research report, 03/2021). ANROWS.: https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-10/apo-nid314517.pdf

4. How to make the Local Social Strategy a reality

4.1 What makes our communities feel supported and included?

In both community surveys, respondents were asked what helps them to feel supported and included in their community in an open-ended question. Results are summarised in the word cloud of below.

Figure 10. Feeling supported and included in the community – short survey and online survey, total respondents = 2,120

The most common word to emerge in responses was community (703 mentions). This was most often expressed as community groups (105), community events and activities (115), and local community (18). The next most common word was neighbours (431). This was most often articulated as good or great neighbours (270). This was followed by access (313), which was expressed as access to health and social services (57) and easy access to facilities and services in general (25). People came through with 260 mentions, which related mainly to nice or friendly people (19) and new people (8). Events also came through strongly (253), with several mentions of community events (100).

4.2 The role of CN in the social domain and its partners

While CN will take a lead role in the implementation of the Local Social Strategy, responsibility for achieving our long-term goals rests with all levels of government, community organisations, businesses and individuals. CN has various roles including to deliver, partner and/or advocate as outlined in section 2.3 of this Discussion Paper. Our objective is to build a more socially just and inclusive Newcastle by working with the community and empowering it to take collective action on identified and priority social issues. Importantly, monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks will be embedded into the Local Social Strategy to track progress towards these goals. Figure 11 provides an overview of CN's roles in the social domain.

Figure 11. CN's roles in the social domain

4.3 Emerging priorities and objectives for the Local Social Strategy

In response to the social needs identified through the strategy development to date, the diagram below presents a draft overview of the priorities, objectives and principles of the Local Social Strategy.

At the centre of all we do are our people and our planet. Key principles of social justice, relationships and regenerative practice, as well as evidence-based decision-making and innovative practice, inform the strategic approach (outlined in section 2.3). The 4 proposed priorities are equitable, inclusive, connected and healthy communities, with 4 objectives under each priority.

Please note: These priorities, objectives and principles are intended for further discussion as part of the community engagement process and are not yet finalised. Furthermore, this Discussion Paper does not propose the detailed strategies, actions and projects that will respond to the priorities and objectives. These will be outlined in the Action Plan of the Local Social Strategy document once we have received community feedback on this Discussion Paper.

Priority 1: Equitable communities

VISION: Support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing, services, programs and facilities to improve quality of life and the strength of our community.

To achieve this vision, 4 draft objectives (which require further development through community engagement) have been articulated:

1.1 Advocate and support access to affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing

1.2 Support access to essential services such as transport, health and social services

1.3 Work towards the equitable distribution of resources such as income, digital access and social infrastructure

1.4 Provide access to community programs that respond to identified needs in our communities.

Priority 2: Inclusive communities

VISION: Recognise, acknowledge and celebrate the Awabakal and Worimi peoples' strength, resilience and living culture. Champion inclusion across our community so that everyone is supported, valued and respected.

To achieve this vision, 4 draft objectives (which require further development through community engagement) have been articulated:

2.1 Support connection and expression of culture, particularly in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) communities and CALD communities

2.2 Work towards equality of opportunity, including employment, training and digital inclusion

2.3 Celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging and welcome in our communities

2.4 Combat discrimination through respect, education and commitment to change.

Priority 3: Connected communities

VISION: Support diverse communities to build strong social and cultural connections through tolerance, participation and inclusion, so that everyone feels welcome in Newcastle and enjoys a sense of belonging and place.

To achieve this vision, 4 draft objectives (which require further development through community engagement) have been articulated:

3.1 Facilitate creative, innovative community-led and informed participation

3.2 Encourage and support social connection

3.3 Enable political voice through local democracy and active citizenship

3.4 Facilitate access to information for community participation and civic engagement.

Priority 4: Healthy communities

VISION: Promote and support active and healthy communities that have strong physical, mental and spiritual health and feel safe and secure in the city.

To achieve this vision, 4 draft objectives (which require further development through community engagement) have been articulated:

4.1 Support the health and wellbeing of our communities

4.2 Enable an active lifestyle

4.3 Contribute to community safety

4.4 Facilitate community resilience and adaptation in the face of climate change and crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).

Discussion question

Are the draft Local Social Strategy priorities and objectives, which seek to respond to the key social needs in Newcastle, moving in the right direction? Why or why not, and what is missing (noting that Action Planning will occur in the next phase of strategy development)?

https://www.menti.com/tm31rvhih6

Image: Rising from the Embers, Land and Cultural Festival, Wollotuka Institute, University of Newcastle, May 2021

4.4   Finalisation of the Local Social Strategy

Discussion Paper with social needs assessment available
(end of November 2021)

Draft strategy ready for Council review
(February 2021)

Draft strategy placed on public exhibition
(end of March 2022)

Public exhibition workshops & community feedback on draft strategy
(April–May 2022)

Final strategy adoption by Council
(end of June 2022)

Annex

A. Definitions and key terminology

Diversity: Diversity in its broadest sense refers to the many ways in which people all differ, such as culture language, ethnicity, faith and beliefs, gender, age, ability, sexuality, gender identity, class, socio-economic status, income, education level, occupation, caring responsibility and where we live. These attributes help define who we are, our own experience and how the world sees us. They make up the various facets of an individual's identity.

Human rights: Derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as adopted by United Nations in 1948. It is about recognising the inherent dignity of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Human rights are universal, to be enjoyed by all people, no matter who they are or where they live.

Intersectionality: Refers to a way of seeing people's experiences as shaped by (but not limited to) their individual characteristics such as age, race, socio-economic background, religion, sex, gender, sexuality and more. This overlap or combination of characteristics makes up a person's unique identity. Intersectionality recognises that people's lives and experiences are shaped and influenced by this diversity of characteristics and experiences – resulting in power and privilege for some people and discrimination and oppression for others. While some people may have added layers of power and privilege due to characteristics such as gender and race, others experience compounding layers of discrimination.

Social capital: Social relations that have productive benefits for the community. It is an outcome of community engagement and community capacity building processes. Elevated levels of social capital assists in the creation of social cohesion and reduce inequalities in communities.

Social cohesion: A socially cohesive community is one where people from all backgrounds are welcome, valued and have a sense of belonging. Cohesive communities are also safe, resilient and share a sense of solidarity.

Social inclusion: Social inclusion is a universal human aspiration. It means being included in the life of the community around you, with full access to the opportunities and resources available, having a sense of belonging and feeling respected and valued for who you are. It has positive flow-on effects on individual and community health and wellbeing. Human rights are fundamental to overcoming discrimination and promoting inclusion.

Image: 'Count Us In' Festival, March 2021

B. References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2016 Census, Profile .id: https://profile.id.com.au/newcastle

Australian Government (2021), National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, 2021–2025

Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW): https://www.aihw.gov.au/

Baker, D. (2012). All the lonely people: loneliness in Australia, 2001–2009. Canberra: The Australia Institute.

Boxall, H., & Morgan, A. (2021). Intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic: A survey of women in Australia (Research report, 03/2021). ANROWS.: https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-10/apo-nid314517.pdf

Campbell, D., Pyett, P., & McCarthy, L. (2007). Community development interventions to improve Aboriginal health: Building an evidence base. Health Sociology Review, 16, 304-314.

City of Newcastle (CN) (2021), PowerBI dashboard developed by Majah Brooks from CN Corporate Planning team

Dawson, E. (2020, September 4). Anti-poverty Week podcast recording. (D. Cox, Interviewer)

Equity Economics (November 2020), 'A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW: Impacts of Covid 19 Recession Report', accessed at the following weblink: https://www.ncoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/A-WAVE-OF-DISADVANTAGE_-COVID-19_Final.pdf

Fallding, J. (2021), A demographic profile of diverse communities within the City of Newcastle, unpublished.

Foodbank Hunger Report (2021): https://reports.foodbank.org.au/

Flood, M. (2005). Mapping loneliness in Australia. Canberra: The Australia Institute.

Good Shepherd and Roy Morgan (2021), 'New Vulnerable Research': https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-10/apo-nid314651.pdf

Hill, A. O., Bourne, A., McNair, R., Carman, M. & Lyons, A. (2020). Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia. ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 122. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

Ife, J. (2016). Community development in an uncertain world: Vision, analysis and practice (2nd ed.). Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Judith Stubbs & Associates (2021), City of Newcastle Affordable Housing Discussion Paper, unpublished.

Kenny, S. (2007). Developing Communities for the Future (3rd ed.). South Melbourne: Thompson

Lauder, W., Sharkey, S. & Mummery, K. (2004). A community survey of loneliness. Journal of Advanced Nursing 46:88–94.

NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR). NSW Crime Tool: http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/.
NSW OLG (Office of Local Government) 2021 Integrated Planning & Reporting Handbook for Local Councils in NSW: IPR Handbook 2021 (nsw.gov.au) AND (2013) Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual for local government in NSW: Division of Local Government - IP&R Manual March 2013 (nsw.gov.au)

OECD/Eurostat (2018), Oslo Manual 2018: Guidelines for Collecting, Reporting and Using Data on Innovation, 4th Edition, The Measurement of Scientific, Technological and Innovation Activities, OECD Publishing, Paris/Eurostat, Luxembourg, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264304604-en

Relationships Australia (2018). Is Australia experiencing an epidemic of loneliness? Findings from 16 waves of the Household Income and Labour Dynamics of Australia Survey. Canberra: Relationships Australia.

Stockholm Resilience Centre
https://www.stockholmresilience.orgdownload/18.8615c78125078c8d3380002197/ES-2009-3180.pdf

The Men's Project & Flood, M (2020), Unpacking the Man Box: What is the impact of the Man Box attitudes on young Australian men's behaviours and wellbeing? Jesuit Social Services: Melbourne: https://jss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/JSS200712_UMB_Report_Digital.pdf

UNESCO (2020), "Access to Information in Times of Crisis": https://en.unesco.org/themes/access-information

Wallerstein, N. (2006). What is the evidence on effectiveness of empowerment to improve health? Copenhagen: World Health Organization.

Figure 5. Unemployment in Newcastle from June 2019 to June 2021

newcastle.nsw.gov.au

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

ATTACHMENTS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

CCL 27/09/2022 – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT LOCAL SOCIAL STRATEGY

ITEM-75   **Attachment C:**   Local Social Engagement Report

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

INTENTIONAL BLANK PAGE

DISTRIBUTED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

This is your place, too.

Local Social Strategy
Community engagement report

Prepared by: Major Events and Corporate Affairs, City of Newcastle

Prepared for: Community, Strategy and Innovation, City of Newcastle

November 2021

Enquiries: 02 4974 2000 or engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Executive summary

To help inform development of the City of Newcastle (CN) Local Social Strategy, CN carried out a range of engagement activities from June to September 2021 to better understand community sentiment around social justice principles (equity, access participation and rights) and inclusion.

The engagement activities targeted various key groups in our community who are often less represented, disadvantaged or vulnerable. These groups included people of diverse sexualities and genders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people living with disability (PLWD), young people (16 – 29 years) and older people (70+ years).

To drive participation in engagement activities, social media marketing was used to direct people to a curated microsite, with a call to action to complete an online survey. The campaign, Your Place, targeted identified key groups using paid digital profiling to deliver bespoke creative content *about* them *to* them. The over-arching message that tied creative together was the tagline; "This is your place, too."

In addition, the CN project team attended 17 events and workshops, where we spoke to 286 people about community participation and barriers, wellbeing, social justice issues and other social matters.

Community feedback was captured via two surveys that were open during the engagement period from Friday 11 June to Thursday 30 September 2021. The first was an online survey that explored community participation, access to services, wellbeing, safety and perceptions around social justice issues and social matters. The second was a short survey available at events and other in-person engagement activities and explored social matters and participation in the community.

In total, 2,120 people provided their views in a survey (online survey n= 1,720 and short survey n= 400). A good response was received from all key groups, particularly the LGBTQIA+ community, younger people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Overall, most respondents had participated in at least one community activity, with visits to an art gallery, museum, or library, and attending a community event or festival, the most popular activities. The biggest barrier to community participation is lack of time due to other commitments. Most respondents were satisfied with their standard of living, life as a whole and overall wellbeing. The area with the lowest level of satisfaction was feeling part of the community. In terms of access to services and opportunities, most respondents rated accessing affordable housing as difficult. Most people feel safe at home and out-and-about during the day. Homelessness emerged as the most important social justice issue, and relatedly, affordable housing emerged as the top social matter overall.

The following pages present a summary of findings for each key group. Notably, the results indicate that people identifying as non-binary are feeling particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community. Mental health and future security are also areas of real concern for younger people.

The insights gained from these engagement activities will be used to help inform development of the City of Newcastle Local Social Strategy, which will be placed on public exhibition in 2022 for further community feedback.

Key groups summary

People of diverse sexualities and genders

Community participation
More likely than other groups to attend a community event, festival, or celebration, or take part in a protest, but less likely to be part of a local sporting team.

Barriers to participation
Tend to report more barriers than other key groups, particularly about feeling unsafe or uncomfortable attending community activities.

Satisfaction with wellbeing
People who identify as non-binary have the lowest levels of satisfaction with their standard of living, mental health, future security, and feeling part of your community. Similar pattern of results for LGBTQIA+, though to a lesser degree.

Access to services and opportunities
Difficulty accessing basic services, particularly meaningful employment, healthcare, and education.

Safety perceptions
People who identified as non-binary feel the least safe overall, particularly in the City Centre and in their own neighbourhoods during the day.

Social justice issues
Homelessness
Australia's First Peoples rights
LGBTQIA+ rights

Other social matters
Affordable housing
Mental health
Employment

People living with disability (PLWD)

Community participation
Less likely than other key groups to visit an art gallery, museum, or library, or be part of a sporting team, but more likely to do volunteer work.

Barriers to participation
Main barriers are own health and wellbeing and difficulty finding information about activities

Satisfaction with wellbeing
Lower levels of satisfaction, particularly regarding overall wellbeing and physical health.

Access to services and opportunities
Difficulty accessing community opportunities including sports / recreational events and community centres and spaces.

Safety perceptions
Weaker safety perceptions overall than most other groups.

Social justice issues
Homelessness
Disability rights
Care for the aged

Other social matters
Affordable housing
Mental health
Employment

Key groups summary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Community participation
Slightly less likely to participate in the community activities.

Barriers to participation
Slightly more likely than other groups to report costs as a barrier to community participation.

Satisfaction with wellbeing
Less satisfied than other groups with overall standard of living.

Access to services and opportunities
Slightly more satisfied than other key groups with access to affordable housing.

Safety perceptions
Feel safer in the City Centre at night than other key groups.

Social justice issues
Australia's First Peoples rights
Women's rights
Homelessness

Other social matters
Mental health
Affordable housing
Employment

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
(CALD)

Community participation
No notable differences to the total sample.

Barriers to participation
Slightly more likely than other key groups to have difficulty finding information about activities.

Satisfaction with wellbeing
Slightly less satisfied with future security, but more satisfied with physical health.

Access to services and opportunities
Some difficultly accessing meaningful employment compared to other groups.

Safety perceptions
Feel slightly less safe at home than some other groups.

Social justice issues
Homelessness
Care for the aged
Women's rights

Other social matters
Mental health
Affordable housing
Physical health

Key groups summary

Younger People
16 – 29 years

Community participation
Less likely to do volunteer work, but more likely to take part in a protest or demonstration.

Barriers to participation
Tend to report more barriers than other groups, particularly lack of time.

Satisfaction with wellbeing
Low levels of satisfaction about future security and mental health.

Access to services and opportunities
Good access to education.

Safety perceptions
Generally, feel safe during the day, average safety perceptions at night.

Social justice issues
Homelessness
Australia's First Peoples rights
Women's rights

Older People
70+ years

Community participation
Less likely to attend a community event or festival or be part of a sporting team, but more likely to do volunteer work.

Barriers to participation
Fewer barriers than other groups. Main barrier is own health and wellbeing.

Satisfaction with wellbeing
Highest levels of satisfaction and wellbeing across all key groups.

Access to services and opportunities
Highest ratings of all groups for ease of accessing housing. Some difficulty with directional and accessible signs.

Safety perceptions
Don't feel safe in the City Centre at night.

Social justice issues
Care for the aged
Homelessness
Disability rights

Contents

Introduction

Central to CN's vision to be a be a smart, liveable, and sustainable global city is our strategic focus on facilitating a thriving community where diversity is embraced, everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute and belong.

CN's aim is for a city that is socially just and resilient, where everyone regardless of age, background, sexuality, abilities, or gender can experience a great quality of life. To help achieve this, CN is developing the Local Social Strategy (the Strategy), aligned with the Social Justice Principles of equity, participation, access, and rights. The Strategy will feed into yearly and four-yearly Action Plans for CN, which will inform activities, programs, and work plans.

To inform development of the Strategy, CN sought meaningful and collaborative engagement across the Local Government Area (LGA) along with culturally appropriate and informed engagement with various population groups who are often less represented or who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. These groups included people of diverse sexualities and genders including people who identify as non-binary gender[1] and members of the LGBTQIA+ community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (ATSI), people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people living with disability (PLWD), young people (16 – 29 years) and older people (70+ years).

The intention of the engagement was to:

- Develop strategic directions and actions for the Strategy based on evidence and 'lived experience'
- Understand the level of community awareness around what CN is already doing and asking what CN could be doing to improve social justice, inclusion, and wellness in our city
- Partner with external social experts who have close connections to target population groups to build relationships and connections
- Facilitate conversations around what a socially just city could look like, and CN's role in achieving specific actions.

---

[1] *Non-binary or genderqueer is an umbrella term for gender identities that are neither male nor female – identities that are outside the gender binary. A non-binary or genderqueer person is someone who does not identity as exclusively a man or a woman. Someone who is non-binary might feel like a mix of genders, or like they have no gender at all. For the purposes of this report, we will refer to people who have a gender identity that is neither male nor female as 'non-binary gender' or 'non-binary'*

Social and digital campaign

"How do we make sure that a Strategy that is largely about addressing the inclusion of a diverse cross-section of our community is the result of a process that has included a diverse cross-section of our community?"

This question was the foundation for developing a digital campaign combining social media marketing and web as the core driver for participation in the Local Social online survey. To achieve this, the campaign was built on the principle that representation of audience is essential for their trust, engagement, and involvement, and that by speaking directly to a diverse range of community groups in a way that demonstrably recognised and understood them, we could better secure their awareness of, and ultimately involvement in, the Strategy.

The campaign, 'Your Place', targeted seven identified key demographic groups by using paid digital profiling to deliver bespoke creative content *about* them *to* them. This content was centred around seven short videos that each told the story of a local community member. The videos positioned the individual as a representative of their group, exploring their connection to Newcastle and their perceptions of community in a way that was consistently framed by their belonging and identification to the group they represent. These seven representational stories were:

- Neil, a local ex-steel worker who is now living with a disability after suffering a stroke and who finds connection to community enabled by the mobility and accessibility of his city and the helpfulness of neighbours.
- Jasmine, a young member of the LGBTQIA+ community who is actively trying to help foster community through creating safe LGBTQIA+ spaces and events.
- Regina, a young member of Newcastle's African community who has spent most of her life as a Novocastrian and who finds connection to community through live performance.
- Suellen, a senior citizen who moved to Newcastle after retiring and has found connection to community through joining a local drama club with other senior citizens.
- Brad, who lives in a community housing project and finds community in the shared identity fostered by his neighbours and through a social group they have started for residents.
- Azim, an Afghani refugee who is studying at University of Newcastle and who finds community through his work teaching English at a local Afghan community centre.
- Gary, a local Aboriginal man who finds community through his connection to the shared history of his people as Newcastle's Indigenous inhabitants.

The over-arching message that tied all videos and creative together was the tagline; "This is your place, too." This was created to speak to, and establish, a connection of values, intent and understanding between CN and these key groups: that we recognised and believed that Newcastle was a diverse place that every culture and group belonged too, regardless of differences, and that we wanted to help make sure modern Newcastle celebrated and included them. This was important in creating a foundation of trust that would establish and maintain audience engagement, recognising that many of these

audiences sometimes feel under-represented and excluded by societal and governmental institutions.

By targeting this content to the groups each video was about (e.g., showing the video about Jasmine to local LGBTQIA+ social media users by creating ad delivery parameters targeting users who were members of LGBTQIA+ online groups), audience-identification was created in order to secure the initial secondary conversion of clicking away from the social video ad and proceeding to a microsite where this representation through creative would be continued (for example, if the user came to the site from the social video about Jasmine, the main banner imagery would be a hero shot of Jasmine). Here, the messaging would be broadened beyond these themes of identification and community in the video content to learning about the Local Social Strategy and how their participation could help CN address issues connected to these initial themes. This pointed to the primary conversion that would take place on the microsite: participating in the Local Social survey (which they could do on the microsite simply by clicking "Start Survey"). It also featured a list of upcoming face-to-face consultations if the user preferred to participate this way instead.

To balance these target groups with broader mainstream community representation, survey results were monitored as the campaign progressed and a selection of promotions with general messaging were placed on CN social media platforms as needed (these drove users to a microsite with a group image banner that weighted all subjects equally). Combined, this maintained participation in the online survey that demographically mirrored Newcastle as a whole.

Example of user journey Profile 1: Person living with a disability
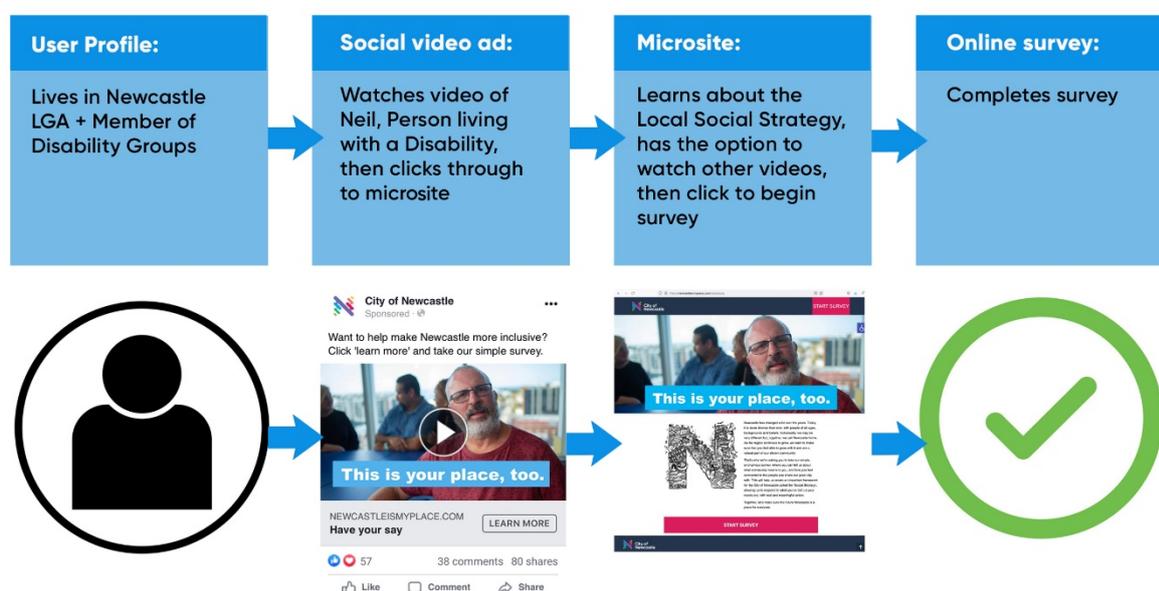
Results

The seven videos were delivered through 26 different ad placements across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Vimeo. The videos were viewed in total 183,397 times. They were shared 625 times, garnered 2,872 positive reactions and 467 comments. Most of the comments were overwhelmingly enthusiastic, not only cheering and supporting the subjects of the videos, but the Strategy itself.

10

The microsite these videos drove users to had 8,013 total unique visitors and 20,465 visits in total (meaning some people visited the site more than once). 72% of those unique visitors came from the 'Your Place' digital campaign.

In total, 1,720 online surveys were completed. Examples of the campaign are included in Appendix I.

Engagement activities

As part of the community engagement, the CN project team spoke to 286 people at 17 events and workshops. Of these engagement activities, 10 were workshops, five were community events, one was a community forum, and one was a community sector interagency meeting. A full list of these community engagement activities can be found in Appendix IV of this document.

The Local Social Strategy is for the whole community. However, CN acknowledges that some groups in Newcastle are more likely to be excluded from social, economic, and political opportunities due to discrimination and other access barriers. Therefore, during the community engagement period we partnered with, and consulted, community organisations, groups, and representative entities to co-design some of the workshops, inform our engagement approach and assist in shaping the Strategy. Those groups included Acon, trans queer brains trust (tqbt), Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH), Dhiira, Hamilton South Solutions Working Group, Hope Street - Baptist Care, Hunter Ageing Alliance (HCA), Hunter Multicultural Communities, Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre, Newcastle Pride, University of Newcastle Student Association (UNSA) and UP&UP.

In collaborating with these organisations and groups, we were able to facilitate the inclusion of the following priority community groups in the Strategy development:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities
- Disability community
- LGBTIQA+ communities
- Older people
- People with low socio-economic status
- Younger people

CN has established a number of advisory committees to provide advice and inform decision-making on specific areas in line with the established committee charters. As part of the community engagement process, the project team facilitated workshops with several of these committees to seek their input into the development of the Strategy. The following advisory committees were consulted:

- Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Community and Culture Advisory Committee
- Guraki Committee
- Liveable Cities Advisory Committee
- Newcastle Youth Council

Feedback from people attending these events and workshops was captured via a short survey, both face-to-face and virtual using Mentimeter and the synthesis of workshop notes, which is outlined in the following section.

Over 286 people attended our workshops and engagement events.

Survey methodology

Survey tools and data collection

Two surveys were available throughout the engagement period from Friday 11 June to 30 September 2021.

The first survey was an online survey and consisted of a mix of open and closed questions, plus demographics. The survey explored community participation, access to services, wellbeing, safety and perceptions around social justice issues and social matters. A copy of this survey is available in <u>Appendix II</u>. In total 1,720 people completed the online survey.

The second was a short survey available at events and other in-person engagement activities and consisted of four open-ended questions and basic demographics. This survey explored social matters and participation in the community. A copy of this survey is available in <u>Appendix III</u>. A total of n= 400 people completed the short survey.

Respondent profile

Online survey

The online survey attracted a good response with 1,720 completions from people across the Newcastle community (**figure 1**).

Compared to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census data, the age profile of respondents skewed slightly younger than the Newcastle LGA overall and females were overrepresented 64%.

The proportion of respondents who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torre Strait Islander (ATSI) was in line with ABS 2016 Census data for the Newcastle LGA, and the proportion of respondents from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds was slightly underrepresented.

At a national level, about 18% of the Australian population are people living with disability (PLWD) (ABS, 2015). This group was slightly underrepresented in survey respondents at 11%.

While it is difficult to obtain a reliable figure on the size of LGBTQIA+ group in our community, CN estimates this figure at around 11%. Overall, 18% of survey respondents identified as being part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

As such, while the respondent profile is not entirely representative of the Newcastle community, the sample sizes obtained for key groups of interest is large enough to allow robust analysis.

Short survey

The short survey attracted 400 responses from people across the Newcastle community (**figure 2**) at a variety of events and other engagement activities as outlined in the <u>Engagement activities</u> section of this report.

Compared to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census data, the age profile of respondents to the short survey skewed much younger than the Newcastle LGA overall and females were overrepresented at 70%.

The proportion of respondents who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torre Strait Islander (ATSI) was well above with ABS 2016 Census data for the Newcastle LGA, driven by

participation at the Wollotuka festival, and the proportion of respondents from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds was slightly underrepresented.

At a national level, about 18% of the Australian population are people living with disability (PLWD) (ABS, 2015). This group was slightly underrepresented in respondents to the short survey at 11%.

The short survey did not ask respondents questions about their sexuality.

Figure 1: Online survey

Benchmark ■ **Online survey**

Age
	Benchmark	Online survey
16-24 years	17%	15%
25-34 years	18%	22%
35-44 years	16%	20%
45-54 years	15%	13%
55-64 years	14%	14%
65-74 years	10%	12%
75+ years	9%	3%
Prefer not to say		1%

Gender
	Benchmark	Online survey
Woman	51%	64%
Man	49%	31%
Non-binary		4%
Prefer not to say		1%

Key groups
	Benchmark	Online survey
LGBTQIA+	11%	18%
ATSI	4%	4%
CALD	12%	7%
PLWD	18%	11%

Ward pie chart (Online survey):
- Not stated, 47%
- Ward 1, 16%
- Ward 2, 13%
- Ward 3, 11%
- Ward 4, 6%
- Outside of Newcastle LGA, 7%

Figure 1: Respondent profile – Online survey n= 1,720

Figure 2: Short survey

Benchmark ■ **Short survey**

Age
	Benchmark	Short survey
16-24 years	17%	50%
25-34 years	18%	13%
35-44 years	16%	10%
45-54 years	15%	12%
55-64 years	14%	7%
65-74 years	10%	5%
75+ years	9%	1%
Prefer not to say		2%

Gender
	Benchmark	Short survey
Woman	51%	70%
Man	49%	27%
Non-binary		1%
Prefer not to say		2%

Key groups
	Benchmark	Short survey
LGBTQIA+		0
ATSI	12%	16%
CALD	12%	16%
PLWD	18%	11%

Ward pie chart (Short survey):
- Outside of Newcastle LGA, 54%
- Ward 1, 15%
- Ward 2, 10%
- Ward 3, 14%
- Ward 4, 8%

Figure 2: Respondent profile – Short survey n= 400

Data handling

Data handling and analysis was carried out by the CN's Community Engagement team. All responses are de-identified to ensure the anonymity of respondents. Data has not been weighted and cannot be considered representative of the Newcastle LGA.

Responses to open-ended questions have not been coded/categorised. Word frequency counts have been used to highlight key themes in open-ended responses. All de-identified verbatim responses to the surveys have been made available to the project team to help inform development of the Strategy.

Reading the report

All online survey findings are reported at both the overall level, and by key groups including those who identified as non-binary, LGBTQIA+, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, CALD, people living with disability (PLWD), and by the 16-29 year and 70+ year age groups.

To help highlight key results, in the Key Findings section of the report, green shading indicates +5% above the total sample and red shading indicates -5% below the total sample. Where appropriate, the top three response options for key groups are presented in tables in bold font.

Key findings

Community participation

After completing demographic questions, the first question in the online survey asked respondents to indicate which community activities they have participated in over the past 12 months. The overall results are presented in **figure 3**.

Visit to an art gallery, museum, or library	61%
A community event, festival or celebration	56%
Unpaid voluntary work for an organisation or group	32%
Completion of a CN survey (other than this survey)	30%
A local sporting / recreation team	29%
A protest or demonstration	24%
A meeting, phone call or email/letter with any local politician	22%
Membership of a decision-making board, club or committee	14%
A community meeting, public hearing or discussion	14%
Help with school activities such as P&C or canteen	10%
Other	3%
None	9%

Figure 3: Community participation – Online survey, total sample n= 1,720

Visiting an art gallery, museum, or library was the top activity overall, and was also the top activity reported by all key groups (**table 1**).

Respondents who identified as a non-binary or as part of the LGBTQIA+ community were more likely than other groups to have attended a community event, festival, or celebration, or have taken part in a protest or demonstration, but were less likely to be part of a local sporting team.

Respondents with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage were, on average, slightly less likely to participate in the community activities included in the survey.

Table 1: Community participation by key groups – Online survey

	Total	Gender			Sexuality		ATSI		CALD		Disability		Age			
		Woman	Man	Non-binary	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+ OR Prefer not to say	ATSI	Not ATSI	CALD	Not CALD	PLWD	Not PLWD OR Prefer not to say	16-29	30-49	50-69	70+
n=	1720	1103	534	78	308	1396	70	1640	112	1685	193	1512	408	686	451	149
Visit to an art gallery, museum, or library	61%	65%	51%	64%	67%	59%	54%	61%	62%	61%	54%	62%	61%	65%	57%	56%
A community event, festival or celebration	56%	59%	48%	63%	64%	54%	43%	56%	56%	56%	51%	57%	59%	63%	48%	38%
Unpaid voluntary work for an organisation or group	32%	33%	31%	28%	29%	33%	26%	33%	29%	32%	40%	31%	24%	30%	39%	41%
Completion of a CN survey (other than this survey)	30%	29%	36%	22%	23%	32%	19%	31%	28%	30%	30%	30%	25%	27%	37%	40%
A local sporting / recreation team	29%	30%	32%	10%	19%	32%	33%	29%	29%	30%	18%	31%	32%	36%	22%	17%
A protest or demonstration	24%	25%	20%	42%	44%	19%	26%	24%	20%	24%	25%	24%	36%	22%	19%	13%
A meeting, phone call or email/letter with any local politician	22%	23%	21%	22%	21%	23%	13%	23%	20%	22%	31%	21%	13%	20%	31%	32%
Membership of a decision-making board, club or committee	14%	14%	17%	14%	12%	15%	10%	15%	9%	15%	15%	14%	8%	15%	17%	21%
A community meeting, public hearing or discussion	14%	14%	15%	21%	16%	14%	13%	15%	14%	15%	16%	14%	11%	11%	20%	20%
Help with school activities such as P&C or canteen	10%	11%	8%	6%	6%	11%	13%	10%	14%	10%	6%	11%	8%	16%	4%	6%
Other	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	5%	7%
None	9%	8%	11%	10%	7%	9%	17%	8%	8%	9%	11%	8%	9%	7%	10%	10%
Did not answer	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%

In an open-ended question in the short survey, respondents were asked how they participate in their community. The results are summarised in the word cloud at **figure 4**.

Figure 4: Community participation - Word Cloud - Short survey, n= 400

Playing sport received the highest number of mentions (n= 124), followed by talking to neighbours (n= 115). Volunteering (n= 97), events (n= 55) and social media (n= 44) were also mentioned as key ways of connecting with community.

Barriers to participation

Respondents in the online survey were also asked to indicate barriers to their participation in community activities in the past 12 months. Results are presented in **figure 5**.
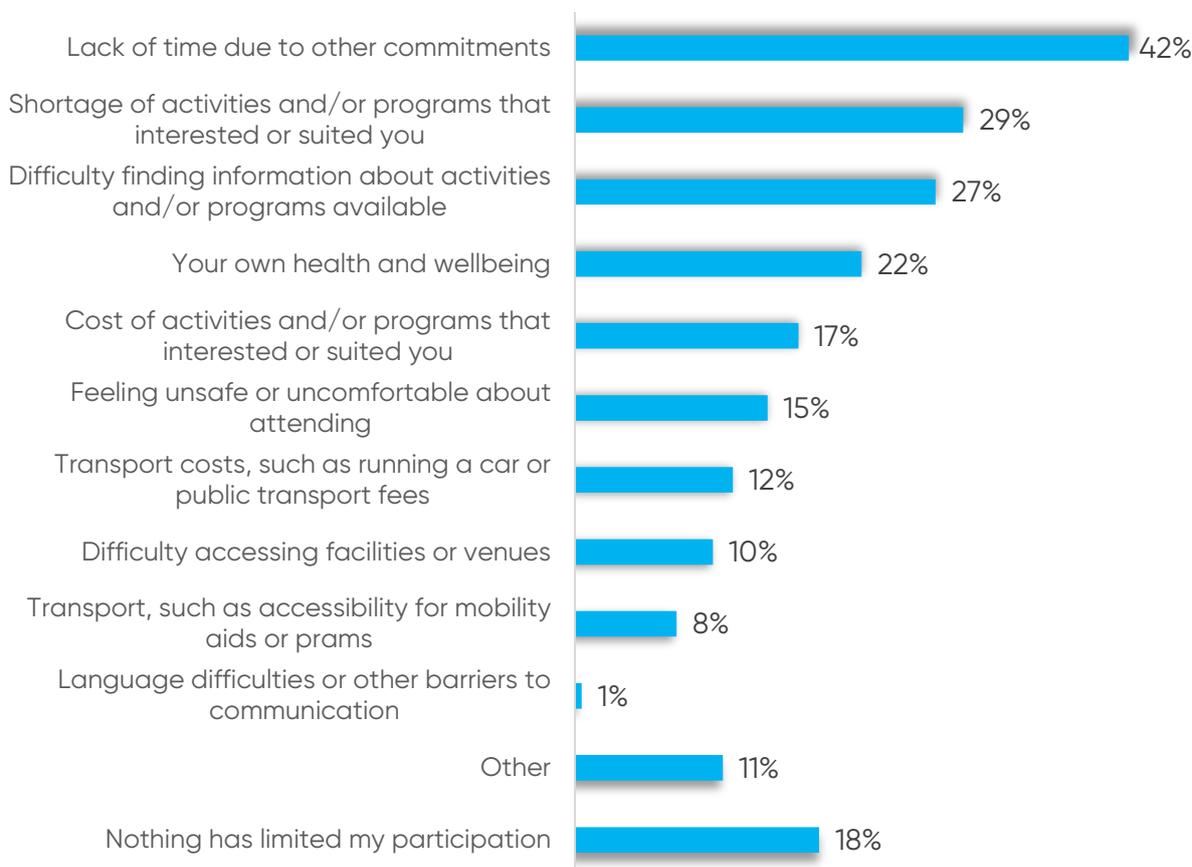
Figure 5: Barriers to participation – Online survey, total sample n= 1,720

Lack of time due to other commitments was the most common barrier cited, both overall and by most key groups **(table 2)**.

Respondents who identified as being a non-binary and those in the LGBTQIA+ community tended to report more barriers than other key groups, particularly feeling unsafe or uncomfortable attending community activities (44% and 28% respectively, vs 15% overall).

Similarly, people living with disability also reported more barriers, though these were related to concerns for own health and wellbeing (52% vs 22% overall), difficulty accessing venues (26% vs 10%) and transport issues (21% vs 8%).

Barriers to participation in community activities dissipated with age, with younger respondents citing more barriers than older respondents.

Table 2: Barriers to participation by key groups – Online survey

	Total	Gender			Sexuality		ATSI		CALD		Disability		Age			
		Woman	Man	Non-binary	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+ OR Prefer not to say	ATSI	Not ATSI	CALD	Not CALD	PLWD	Not PLWD OR Prefer not to say	16-29	30-49	50-69	70+
n=	1720	1103	534	78	308	1396	70	1640	112	1685	193	1512	408	686	451	149
Lack of time due to other commitments	42%	44%	38%	44%	51%	40%	44%	42%	41%	42%	30%	44%	50%	52%	31%	13%
Shortage of activities and/or programs that interested or suited you	29%	30%	26%	46%	47%	26%	39%	29%	29%	30%	32%	29%	39%	30%	23%	17%
Difficulty finding information about activities and/or programs availab	27%	28%	23%	44%	41%	24%	20%	28%	33%	27%	34%	26%	33%	29%	24%	15%
Your own health and wellbeing	22%	23%	17%	38%	31%	20%	23%	22%	27%	22%	52%	18%	21%	22%	19%	28%
Cost of activities and/or programs that interested or suited you	17%	18%	13%	26%	26%	15%	26%	17%	21%	17%	26%	16%	26%	15%	13%	10%
Feeling unsafe or uncomfortable about attending	15%	15%	10%	44%	28%	12%	16%	14%	15%	15%	27%	13%	18%	16%	11%	9%
Transport costs, such as running a car or public transport fees	12%	12%	10%	28%	19%	10%	20%	12%	12%	12%	21%	11%	22%	9%	8%	7%
Difficulty accessing facilities or venues	10%	11%	10%	12%	10%	10%	7%	11%	9%	11%	26%	8%	11%	9%	10%	14%
Transport, such as accessibility for mobility aids or prams	8%	9%	5%	14%	10%	7%	6%	8%	10%	8%	21%	6%	9%	7%	7%	7%
Language difficulties or other barriers to communication	1%	0%	1%	4%	1%	1%	3%	0%	4%	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Nothing has limited my participation	18%	17%	23%	6%	10%	20%	13%	19%	17%	19%	9%	19%	13%	13%	26%	38%
Other, please describe:	11%	11%	13%	9%	10%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%	15%	11%	7%	12%	13%	9%
Did not answer	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%

Satisfaction with wellbeing

Respondents in the online survey were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with their life and various aspects of their wellbeing using a five-point scale from extremely satisfied to not satisfied at all. Results are presented in **figure 6**.

	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Don't know
Your standard of living	20%	46%	24%	8%	2%	
Your life as a whole	14%	43%	32%	8%	2%	
Your overall wellbeing	10%	40%	34%	11%	4%	
Your mental health	12%	34%	32%	13%	8%	
Your future security	12%	30%	28%	15%	12%	
Your physical health	9%	31%	38%	14%	8%	
Feeling part of your community	7%	26%	39%	17%	9%	
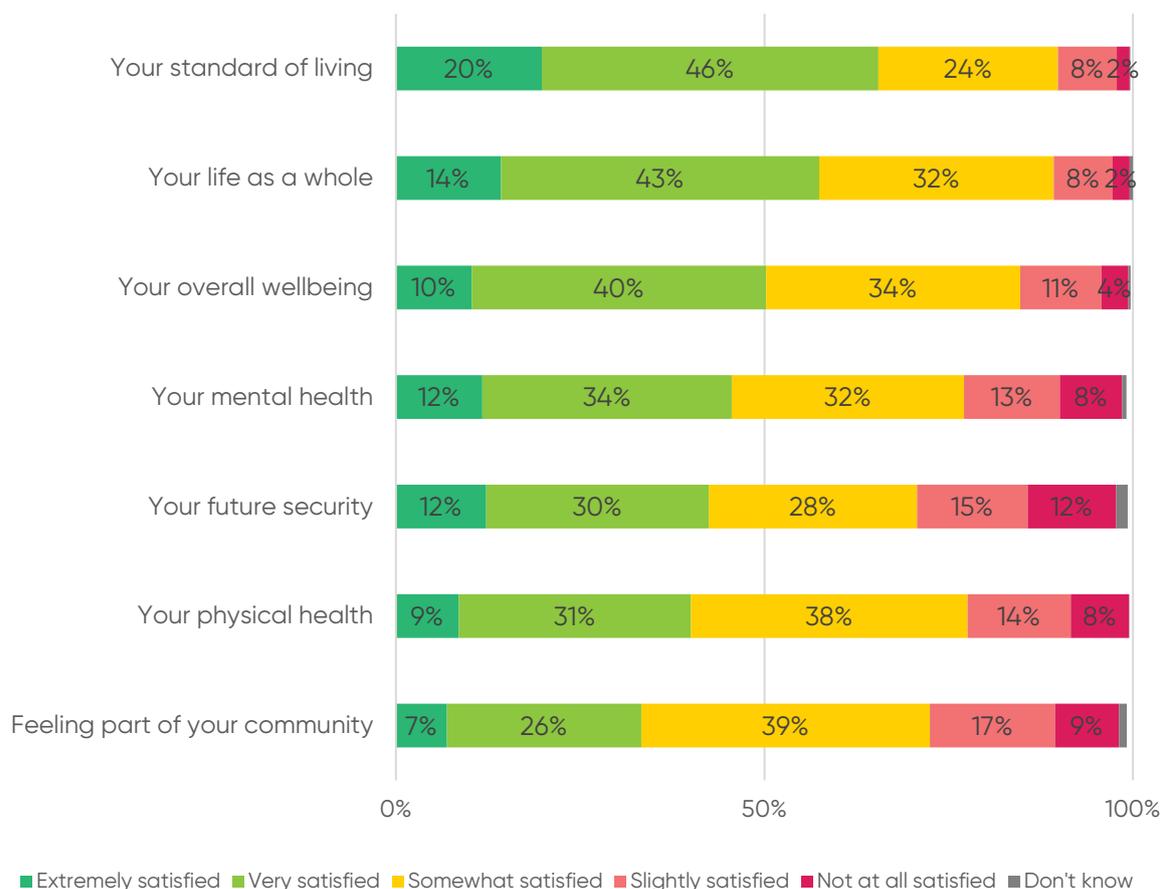
Figure 6: Satisfaction with life and wellbeing – Online survey, total sample n= 1,720

On balance, most respondents were extremely or very satisfied with their standard of living (66%), life as a whole (57%) and overall wellbeing (50%). The area with the lowest level of satisfaction was feeling part of the community (33% extremely or very satisfied), followed by physical health (40%).

Analysis by key group reveals some concerning insights, as summarised in **figure 7** and **table 3**. Respondents who identified as a non-binary have the lowest levels of satisfaction with their standard of living (37% extremely or very satisfied vs 65% overall). This group also showed low levels of satisfaction, compared to the total sample, on satisfaction with mental health (18% satisfied vs 46% overall), future security (19% vs 42%), and feeling part of your community (17% vs 33%). A similar pattern of results was observed for LGBTQIA+ respondents, though of a lesser magnitude.

Likewise, people living with disability also showed lower levels of satisfaction compared to others, particularly for overall wellbeing (19% vs 50% overall) and physical health (12% vs 40% overall).

The most satisfied group overall were those aged 70+ years, where about three-quarters of respondents are satisfied with their standard of living (77%) and life as a whole (74%).

Figure 7 – % satisfied with life and wellbeing by key groups vs total sample – Online survey (chart data):

	Non-binary gender	LGBTQIA+	ATSI	CALD	PLWD	16-29yrs	70+ years
Your standard of living	-28%	-12%	23%	-7%	-23%	-3%	12%
Your life as a whole	-22%	-10%	-13%	-2%	-24%	-6%	16%
Your overall wellbeing	-22%	-14%	-12%	-1%	32%	-6%	12%
Your mental health	-28%	19%	-8%	1%	-22%	-13%	28%
Your future security	-23%	-15%	-11%	-9%	-17%	-17%	23%
Your physical health	-21%	-13%	-9%	7%	-28%	5%	2%
Feeling part of your community	-17%	-8%	-5%	-4%	-13%	-4%	17%
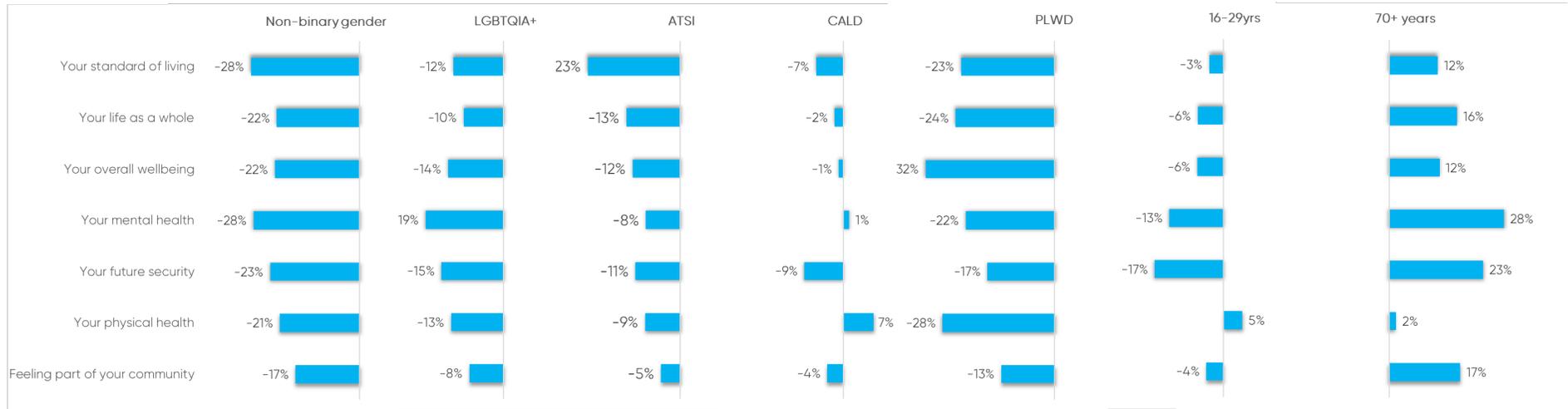
Figure 7: % satisfied with life and wellbeing by key groups vs total sample – Online survey

Table 3: % satisfied with life and wellbeing by group – Online survey

% extremely or very satisfied	Total	Gender			Sexuality		ATSI		CALD		PLWD		Age			
		Woman	Man	Non-binary	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+ OR Prefer not to say	ATSI	Not ATSI	CALD	Not CALD	PLWD	Not PLWD OR Prefer not to say	16-29	30-49	50-69	70+
n=	1720	1103	534	78	308	1396	70	1640	112	1685	193	1512	408	686	451	149
Your standard of living	65%	69%	64%	37%	53%	68%	43%	67%	59%	66%	42%	69%	62%	64%	68%	77%
Your life as a whole	57%	60%	56%	36%	48%	60%	44%	58%	55%	58%	33%	61%	51%	56%	60%	74%
Your overall wellbeing	50%	51%	51%	28%	37%	54%	39%	51%	49%	50%	19%	54%	44%	51%	51%	62%
Your mental health	46%	46%	49%	18%	27%	50%	37%	46%	47%	46%	24%	48%	32%	42%	54%	73%
Your future security	42%	44%	43%	19%	27%	46%	31%	43%	33%	43%	26%	45%	26%	42%	52%	65%
Your physical health	40%	40%	44%	19%	27%	43%	31%	41%	47%	40%	12%	44%	45%	37%	40%	42%
Feeling part of your community	33%	34%	35%	17%	25%	35%	29%	34%	29%	34%	20%	35%	29%	29%	39%	50%

Access to services and opportunities

Respondents in the online survey were asked to rate the level of difficulty they experience in accessing services and opportunities in the community using a five-point scale from very easy through to very difficult. Results are presented in **figure 8**, which excludes those who said they did not access a given service or opportunity.
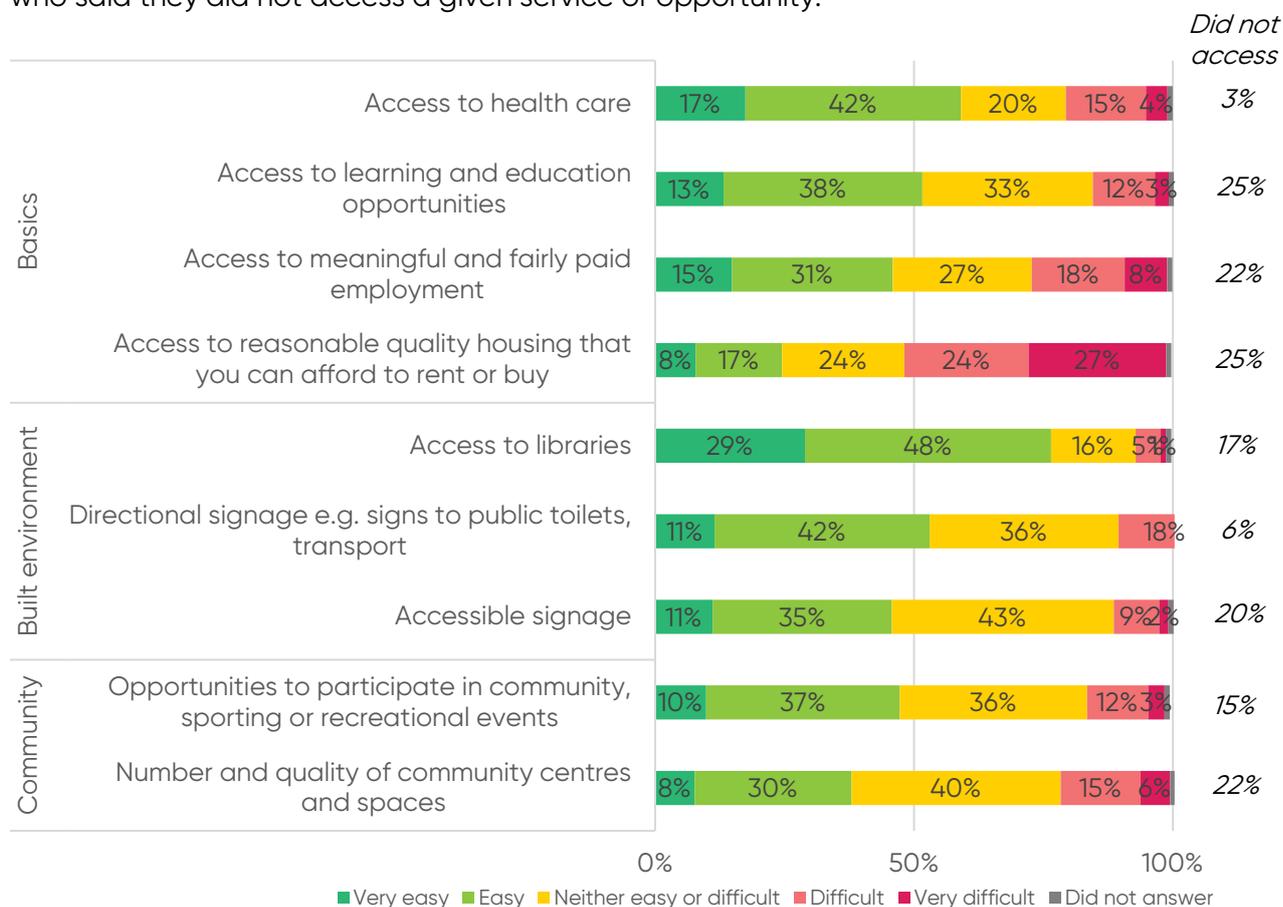
Figure 8: Ease of accessing services and opportunities– Online survey, total sample n= 1,720

Overall, most respondents reported easy access to libraries (77% rated very easy or easy), and education (51%). Housing was the most difficult to access, with 51% of respondents reporting that it is difficult or very difficult to access affordable housing.

Analysis of access to basic services including healthcare, education, employment, and housing reveals some interesting findings (**figure 9**).

By age, respondents aged 70+ years generally found accessing these services quite easy, and they were the only group where most respondents (53%) said accessing affordable housing was easy or very easy. At the other end of the age spectrum, a good proportion of younger people (aged 16-29 years) reported easy access to healthcare, education, and employment, however access to affordable housing was more difficult with less than one-in-five (17%) rating this as easy or very easy.

People who identified as non-binary experienced the most difficulty accessing basic services, particularly accessing meaningful employment (11% rated access as easy or very easy, compared to 46% overall), healthcare (38% vs 59%) and education (33% vs 51%). A similar pattern of results was observed for PLWD, though to a lesser magnitude.

Easy access to affordable housing is an issue for all key groups included in the analysis.
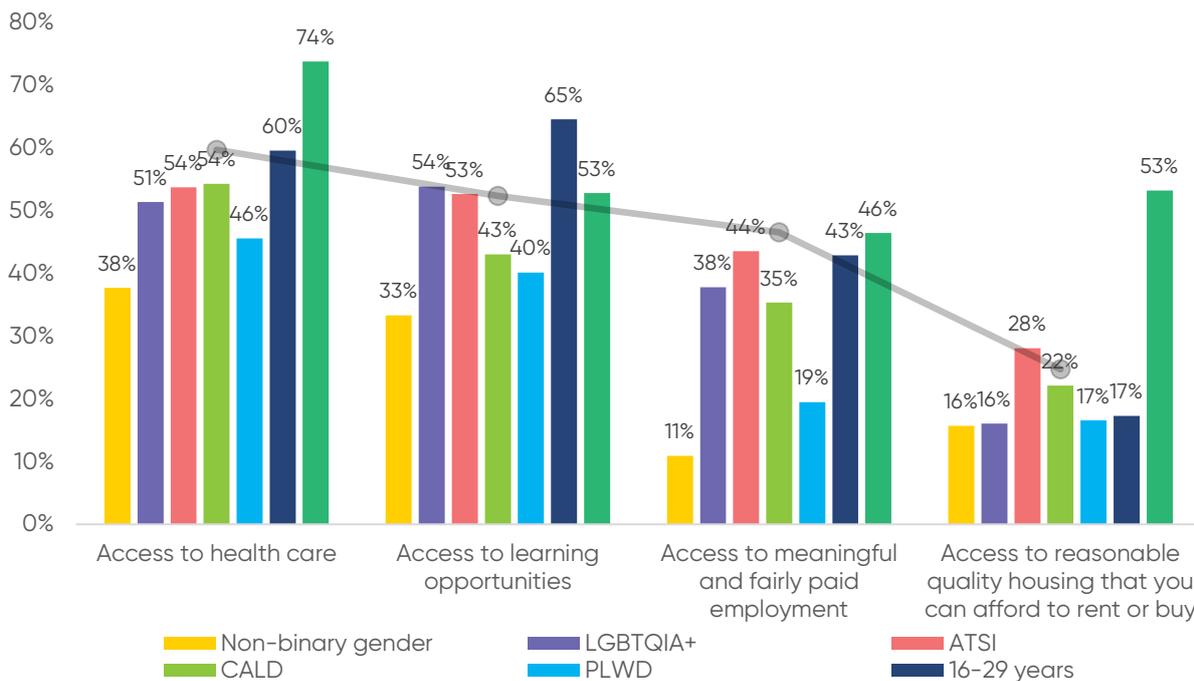
Figure 9: Access to basic services by key groups - % easy or very easy – Online survey

Across all key groups, most respondents reported easy access to libraries (i.e., greater than 60%). Satisfaction with directional and accessible signage was lower in comparison, particularly for PLWD and respondents aged 70+ years.
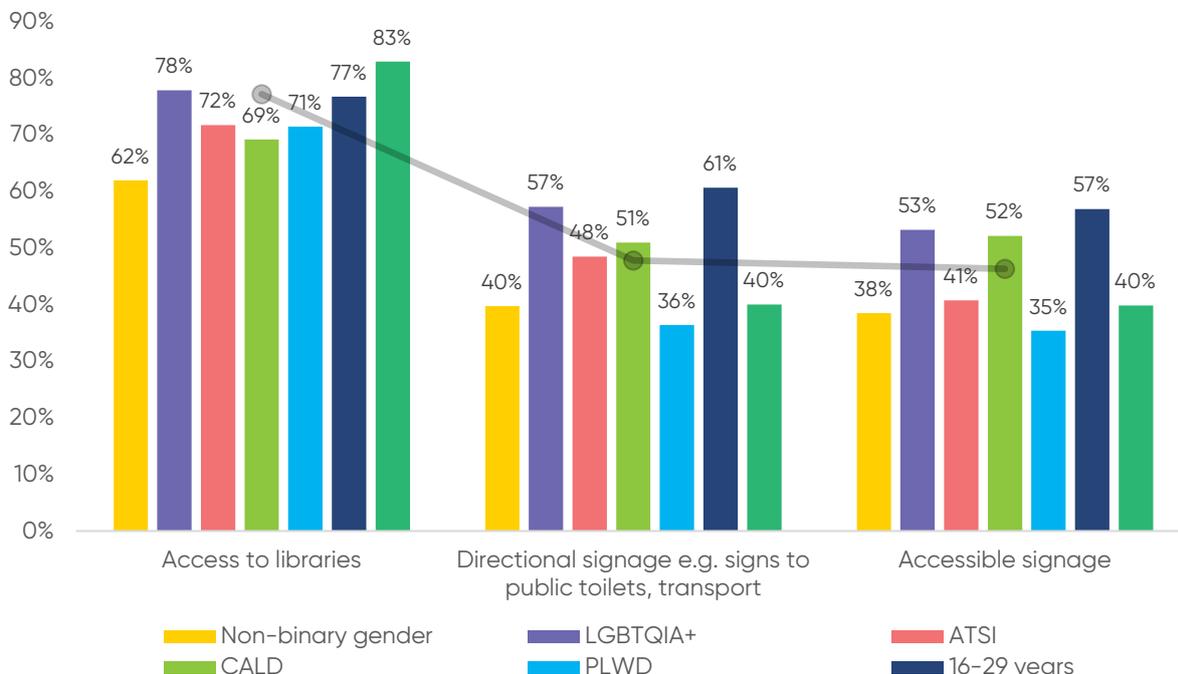
Figure 10: Access – built infrastructure by key groups - % easy or very easy – Online survey

In terms of access to community, sport and recreational events, and community spaces, people identifying as non-binary and people living with disability found it less easy to access these things than other groups.
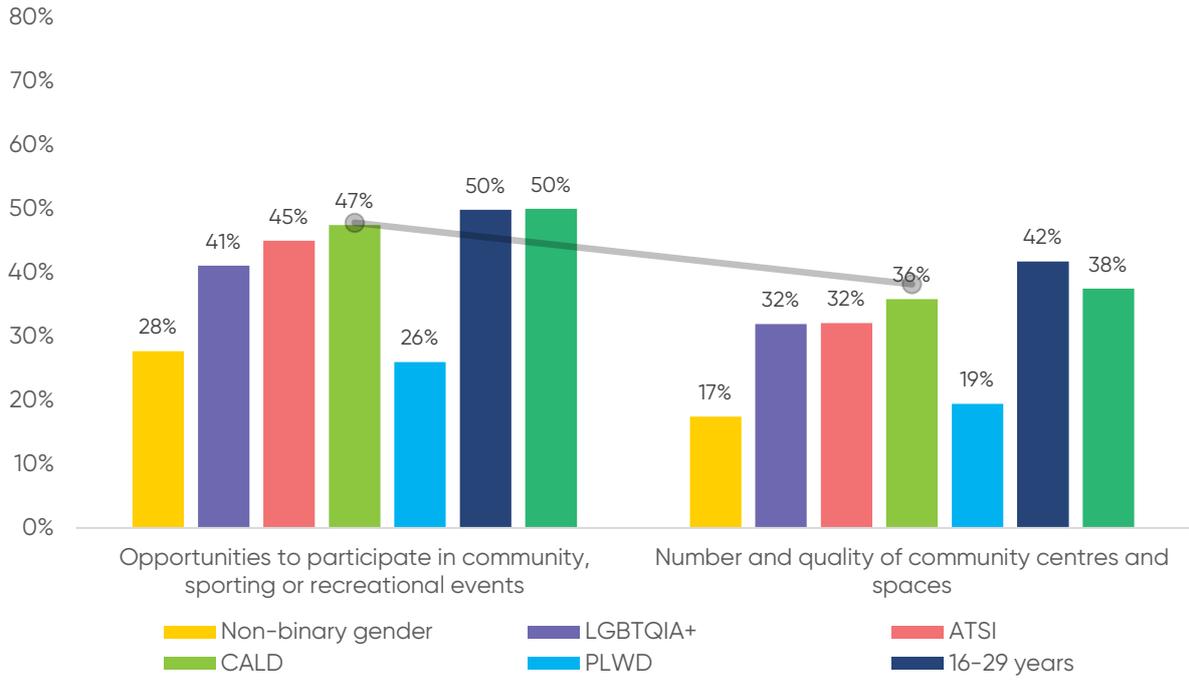
Figure 11: Access – community by key groups – % easy or very easy – Online survey

Safety perceptions

Respondents were asked to rate how safe they felt in a variety of locations using a five-point scale from totally safe to not at all safe. Results are presented in **figure 12**.
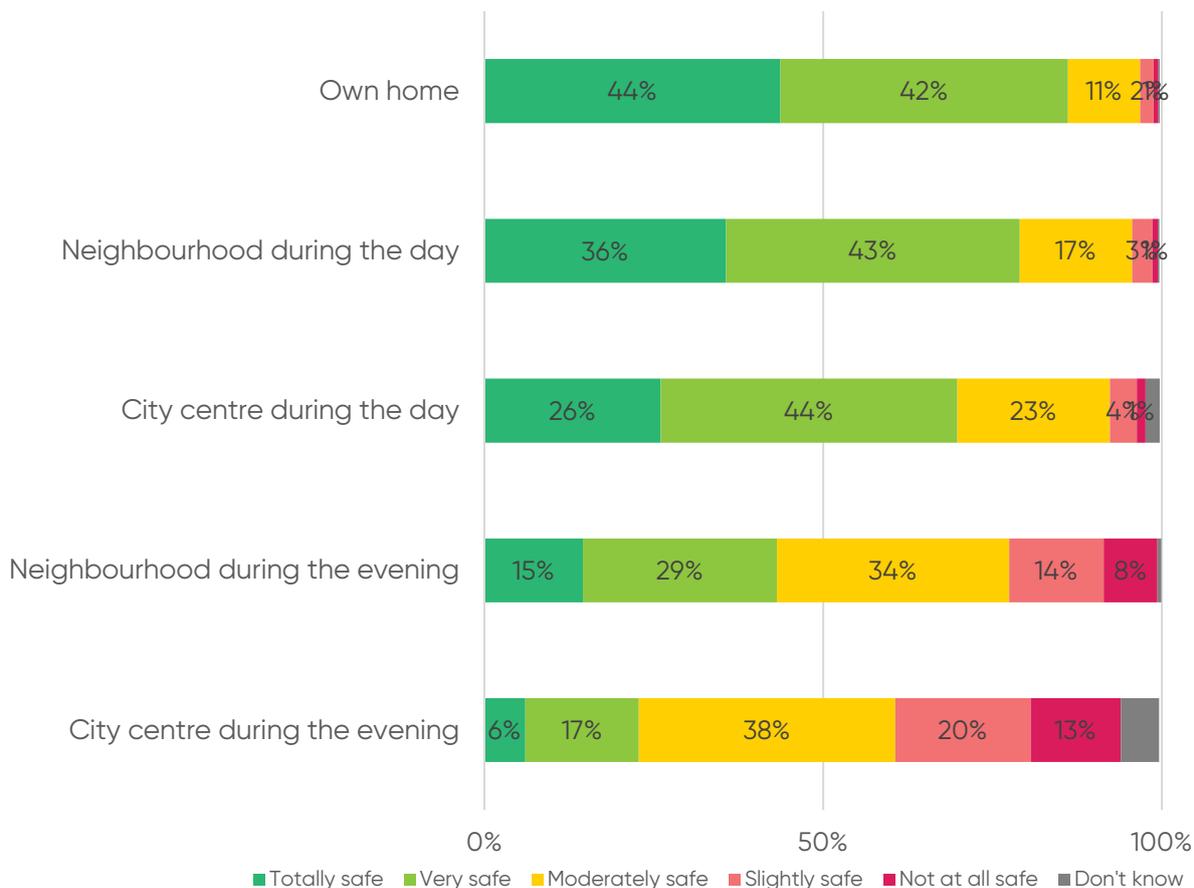
Figure 12: Safety perceptions – Online survey, total sample n= 1,720

Overall, most respondents felt safe at home (86% totally or very safe), in their neighbourhood during the day (79%) and in the city centre during the day (70%). People felt less safe at night, both in their own neighbourhood (44%) and in the city centre (23%).

Analysis by key groups (**figure 13**) reveals people who identified as non-binary feel the least safe overall, particularly in the city centre during the day (49% totally or very safe vs 70% overall) and in their own neighbourhoods during the day (65% vs 79%).

Older respondents (age 70+ years) felt less safe in the city centre than other groups, both at night and during the day, and people living with disability also had weaker safety perceptions overall than most other groups.
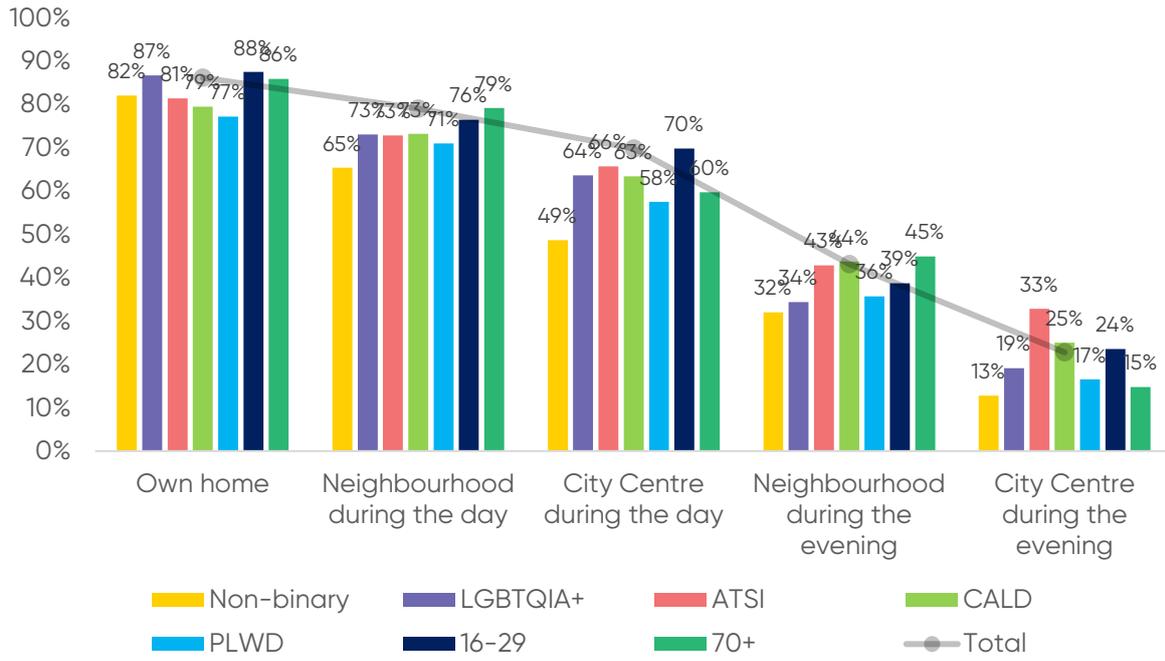
Figure 13: Safety perceptions by key groups - % feel totally or very safe – Online survey

Feeling included and supported

In both surveys, respondents were asked what helps them to feel supported and included in their community in an open-ended question. Results are summarised in the word cloud at **figure 14** below.

Figure 14: Feeling supported and included in the community – Short survey and Online survey, n= 2,120

The most common word to emerge in responses was community (n= 703). This was most often expressed as community groups (n= 105), community events and activities (n= 115), and local community (n = 18).

The next most common word was neighbours (n= 431). This was most often articulated as good or great neighbours (n= 270). This was followed by access (n= 313) and was expressed as access to health and medical services (n= 57) and easy access to facilities and services in general (n= 25).

Social justice issues

Towards the end of the online survey, respondents were asked to rank eight social justice issues in order of importance. Results, summarised in **figure 15,** show the proportion of people ranking each issue as most important (in pink), and the proportion of people ranking each issue in their top three (in purple).

	% ranked as #1 issue	% ranked in top 3
Homelessness and insecure housing	30%	60%
Care for the aged / older people	17%	47%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – Australia's First Peoples rights	16%	42%
Women's rights	11%	40%
Disability rights	7%	36%
Workplace equality	8%	28%
Asylum Seeker and Refugee rights	4%	21%
LGBTQIA+ rights	5%	18%
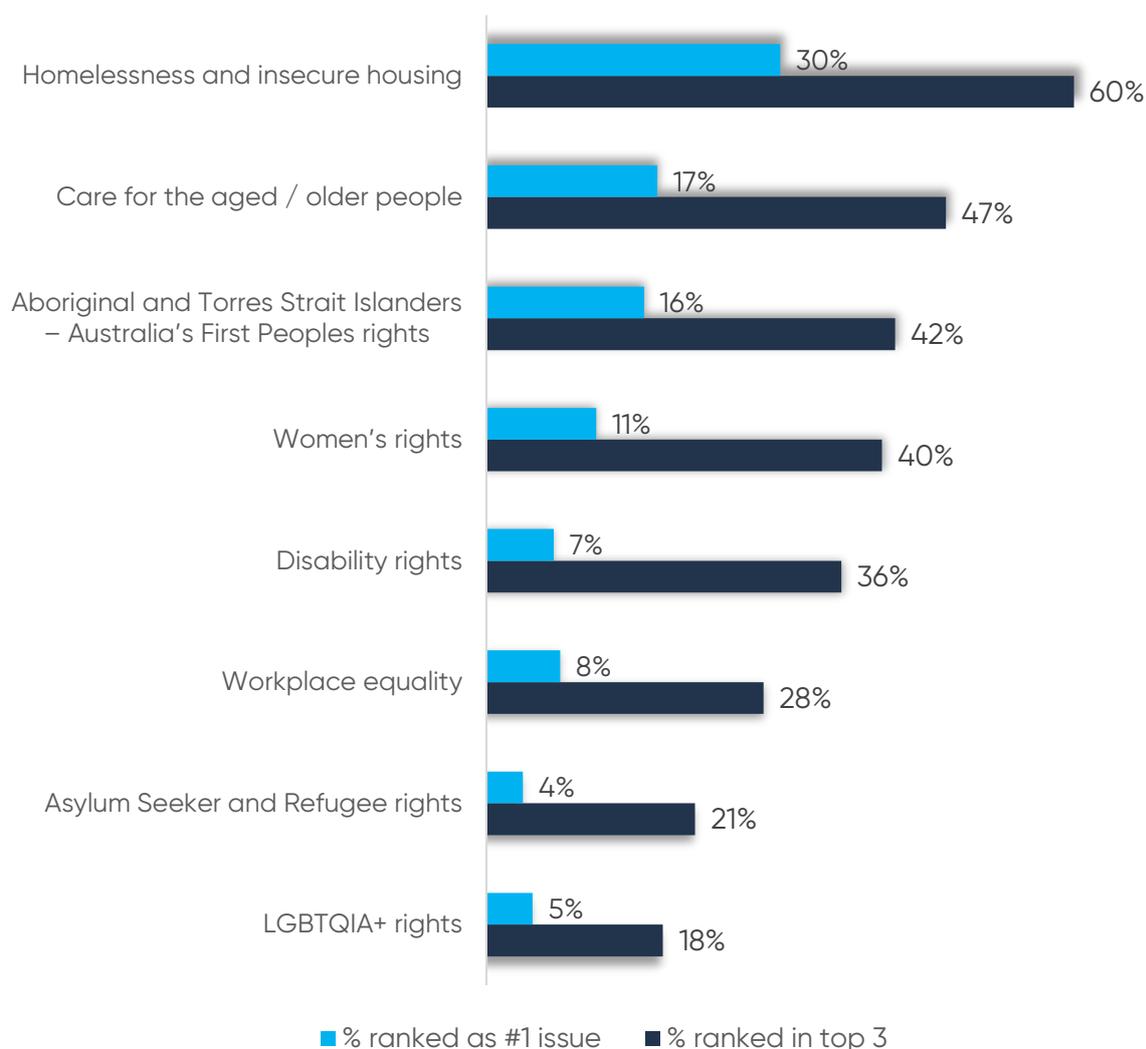
Figure 15: Social justice issues - % ranking in top 3 – Online survey, total sample, n= 1,720

Overall, homelessness and insecure housing emerged as the top issue for 30% of respondents, with 60% ranking this in their top three issues. This was followed by caring for the elderly (17% top issue, with 47% ranking this in their top three) and Australia's first peoples rights (16% top issue and 42% in top three).

Homelessness was the top issue among LGBTQIA+, CALD, people living with disability, and 16–29-year-olds (**figure 15**). Care for the aged was the most important issue for respondents aged 70+ years and featured strongly for CALD and people living with disability. Australia's first people's rights was the top issue among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents, and ranked in second or third place among non-binary, LGBTQIA+, and 16-29 year old respondents.
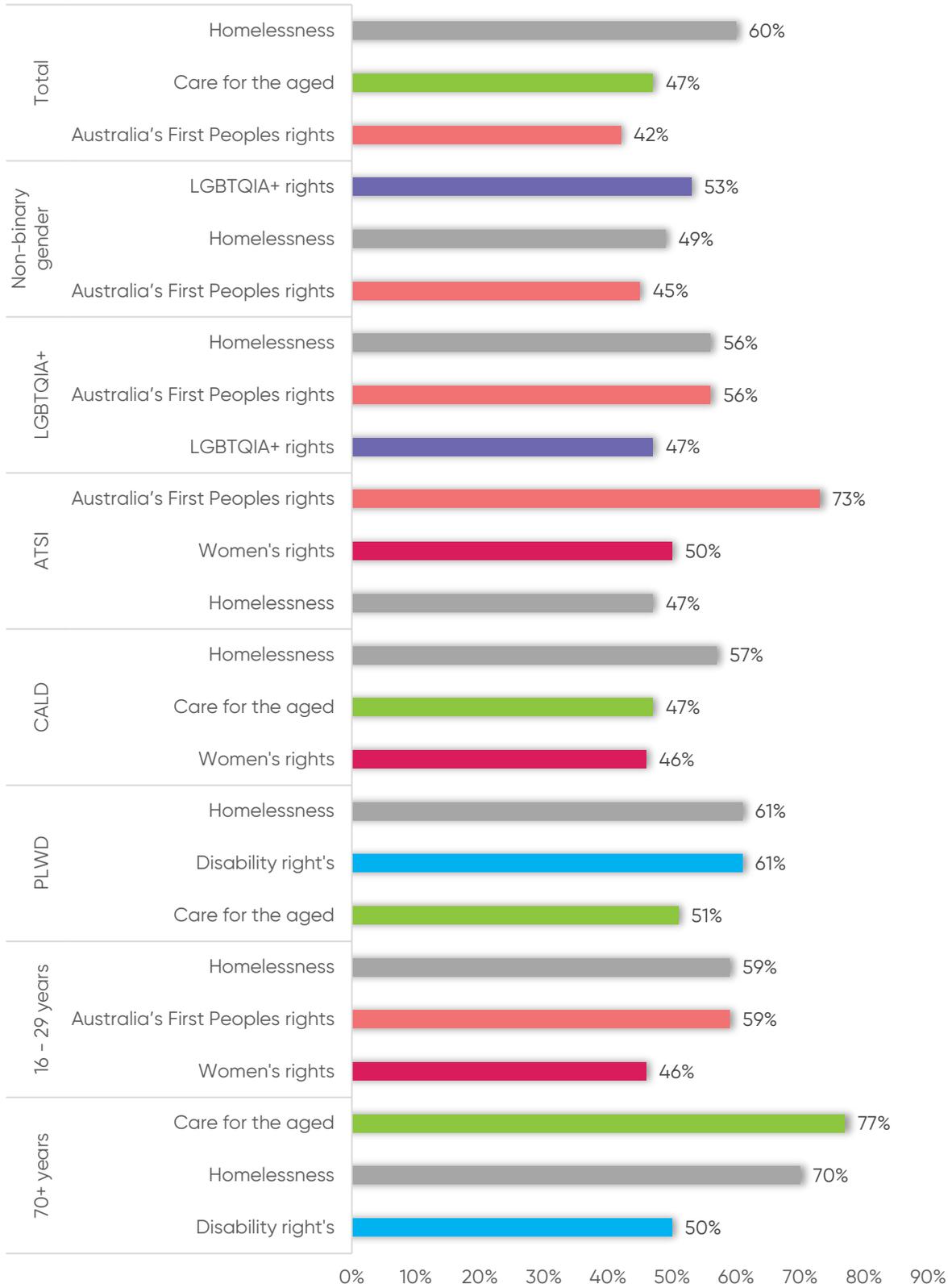
Figure 16: Top 3 social justice issues by key groups – summary (% ranked in top three) – Online survey

Table 4: Top 3 social justice issues by key groups – Online survey

		Total	Gender			Sexuality		ATSI		CALD		PLWD		Age			
			Woman	Man	Non-binary	LGBTQIA+	Not LGBTQIA+ OR Prefer not to say	ATSI	Not ATSI	CALD	Not CALD	PLWD	Not PLWD OR Prefer not to say	16-29	30-49	50-69	70+
	n=	1720	1103	534	78	308	1396	70	1640	112	1685	193	1512	408	686	451	149
Homelessness and insecure housing	Rank 1	30%	32%	27%	24%	28%	31%	16%	30%	29%	30%	31%	30%	31%	27%	34%	32%
	Rank 2	17%	18%	16%	10%	16%	18%	16%	17%	17%	17%	16%	17%	15%	16%	20%	22%
	Rank 3	13%	13%	13%	14%	13%	13%	16%	13%	12%	13%	15%	12%	13%	11%	13%	16%
	Top three	*60%*	*63%*	*56%*	*49%*	*56%*	*61%*	*47%*	*60%*	*57%*	*60%*	*61%*	*60%*	*59%*	*55%*	*66%*	*70%*
Care for the aged / older people	Rank 1	17%	15%	24%	8%	5%	20%	10%	18%	19%	18%	14%	18%	4%	13%	28%	41%
	Rank 2	17%	17%	17%	9%	7%	19%	9%	17%	14%	17%	22%	16%	8%	16%	25%	21%
	Rank 3	13%	15%	10%	8%	10%	13%	16%	13%	13%	13%	16%	12%	7%	13%	17%	14%
	Top three	*47%*	*46%*	*51%*	*24%*	*22%*	*52%*	*34%*	*47%*	*46%*	*47%*	*51%*	*46%*	*20%*	*42%*	*70%*	*77%*
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – Australia's First Peoples rights	Rank 1	16%	17%	14%	22%	22%	15%	47%	15%	13%	16%	13%	17%	23%	18%	9%	7%
	Rank 2	14%	15%	13%	18%	22%	13%	17%	14%	9%	14%	11%	15%	23%	13%	9%	9%
	Rank 3	11%	11%	12%	5%	12%	11%	9%	11%	10%	11%	6%	12%	13%	12%	10%	8%
	Top three	*42%*	*43%*	*39%*	*45%*	*56%*	*39%*	*73%*	*40%*	*31%*	*42%*	*30%*	*43%*	*59%*	*44%*	*28%*	*25%*
Women's rights	Rank 1	11%	14%	6%	9%	9%	12%	7%	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	14%	13%	7%	7%
	Rank 2	14%	15%	11%	10%	15%	13%	21%	13%	16%	13%	11%	14%	14%	15%	13%	7%
	Rank 3	16%	16%	14%	21%	17%	15%	21%	15%	20%	16%	12%	16%	17%	16%	14%	14%
	Top three	*40%*	*45%*	*32%*	*40%*	*41%*	*40%*	*50%*	*40%*	*46%*	*40%*	*35%*	*41%*	*46%*	*45%*	*34%*	*29%*
Disability rights	Rank 1	7%	6%	8%	6%	5%	7%	6%	7%	4%	7%	18%	5%	5%	7%	8%	6%
	Rank 2	12%	11%	14%	15%	10%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%	20%	11%	8%	12%	13%	21%
	Rank 3	17%	17%	18%	17%	15%	17%	14%	17%	14%	17%	23%	16%	13%	14%	23%	23%
	Top three	*36%*	*34%*	*40%*	*38%*	*30%*	*38%*	*33%*	*36%*	*30%*	*36%*	*61%*	*33%*	*26%*	*33%*	*44%*	*50%*
Workplace equality	Rank 1	8%	8%	7%	5%	5%	8%	3%	8%	13%	7%	7%	8%	7%	10%	6%	2%
	Rank 2	10%	9%	12%	12%	8%	11%	11%	10%	17%	10%	7%	10%	10%	10%	9%	11%
	Rank 3	11%	10%	13%	5%	6%	12%	3%	11%	13%	11%	10%	11%	7%	12%	10%	14%
	Top three	*28%*	*27%*	*33%*	*22%*	*20%*	*30%*	*17%*	*29%*	*43%*	*28%*	*24%*	*29%*	*25%*	*32%*	*26%*	*27%*
Asylum Seeker and Refugee rights	Rank 1	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	4%	3%	1%
	Rank 2	8%	8%	7%	13%	10%	8%	3%	8%	8%	8%	6%	8%	11%	8%	6%	5%
	Rank 3	9%	10%	8%	10%	12%	9%	7%	10%	6%	9%	5%	10%	12%	11%	6%	7%
	Top three	*21%*	*22%*	*19%*	*26%*	*27%*	*20%*	*14%*	*22%*	*20%*	*21%*	*13%*	*22%*	*28%*	*23%*	*15%*	*14%*
LGBTQIA+ rights	Rank 1	5%	3%	6%	22%	20%	1%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%	8%	5%	2%	1%
	Rank 2	5%	4%	6%	12%	12%	4%	7%	5%	4%	5%	6%	5%	9%	6%	2%	0%
	Rank 3	8%	8%	8%	19%	15%	7%	11%	8%	9%	8%	11%	8%	15%	8%	4%	1%
	Top three	*18%*	*15%*	*19%*	*53%*	*47%*	*12%*	*23%*	*18%*	*16%*	*18%*	*22%*	*18%*	*32%*	*20%*	*8%*	*2%*

Social matters

In an open-ended question at the end of the online survey, respondents were asked to nominate what they thought were Newcastle's three biggest social matters. This question was also asked in the short survey of people who attended a variety of events and other activities as part of the broader Local Social engagement program. The combined results are summarised in **figure 17**.

Theme	Percentage
Affordable and inclusive housing	24%
Mental health	18%
Meaningful and fairly paid employment	11%
Physical health	6%
Parking and transport options	6%
Social isolation / loneliness	6%
Embracing diversity	5%
Homelessness	5%
Social justice	5%
Access to quality education	5%
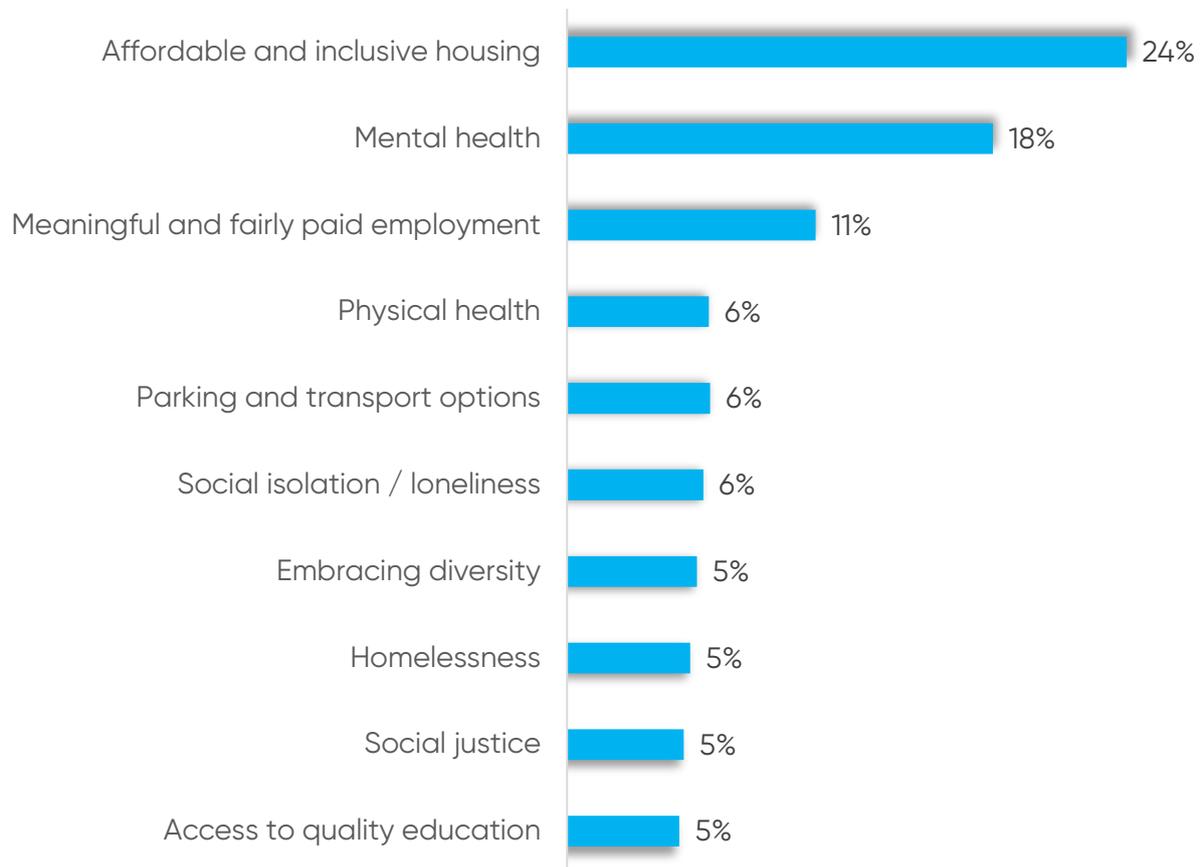
Figure 17: Themes in open ended comments – Short survey and Online survey, n= 2,120

As we've seen in other areas of the survey findings, affordable and inclusive housing was top of mind for survey respondents and attendees at events and other engagement activities. This was followed by mental health and meaningful employment, all of which are discussed in the following pages.

Table 5: Themes in open ended comments by key groups – Short survey and Online survey

	Total	Non-binary gender or LGBTQIA+	ATSI	CALD	PLWD
n=	2120	308	279	97	236
Affordable and inclusive housing	24%	26%	17%	19%	23%
Mental health	19%	18%	23%	22%	20%
Meaningful and fairly paid employment	11%	9%	15%	13%	10%
Physical health	6%	4%	11%	15%	8%
Parking and transport options	6%	5%	3%	3%	6%
Social isolation / loneliness	6%	2%	7%	7%	6%
Embracing diversity	6%	8%	2%	3%	6%
Homelessness	5%	7%	2%	2%	5%
Social justice	5%	6%	2%	5%	4%
Access to quality education	5%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Night-time safety	4%	7%	2%	1%	3%
Financial wellbeing	3%	0%	10%	5%	2%
Sexual/Gender diversity	1%	6%	1%	0%	2%

Affordable housing

About one-quarter (24%) of all comments left by respondents were about affordable housing. This was either the first or second most commented on theme among all key groups, suggesting that the affordability crisis is being felt throughout our community. This was expressed in terms of lack housing supply, affordability concerns, with some offering creative solutions:

"Lack of regulation of the housing market has resulted in rental prices and purchase prices skyrocketing. I'm 33 with a decent full-time job but owning a home is not a reality"

"A few middle-aged women I know have problems finding housing. It must be worse for students and the under-employed"

"Be innovative with social and older people housing. E.g., explore the models where a number of people can build small houses on shared space."

"Severe lack of AFFORDABLE housing."

Mental health

Mental health was the next most commented on theme and accounted for 19% of comments overall. This was slightly higher amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD respondents, where mental health was the number one theme mentioned at 23% and 22% respectively. Access to mental health services was cited as the most common issue:

"Access to mental health services. Psychologists are too expensive therefore not accessed when required."

"Increased mental health services for young people."

"Accessible acute mental health outside of hospitals"

Meaningful and fairly paid employment

The third most commented on issue was about meaningful employment. This was expressed in several ways including job opportunities, job security, and the future job market:

"Creation of job opportunities, especially for young people."

"Job insecurity – contracts are not as good as permanency."

"What will happen once the coal inevitably leaves town. Critical to have a social plan for this!"

Physical health

Physical health was the next most commented on theme overall and accounted for 6% of comments. This was higher amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD respondents, where physical health was mentioned at 11% and 15% respectively. The comments mainly related to timely access to medical services and cost:

"Lack of bulk billing and difficulty getting appointments with doctors."

"Waiting times for health care services."

Next steps

To finalise the CN Local Social Strategy, several key steps are required:

- December 2021: Discussion Paper with social needs assessment based on community engagement, research, and consultation available. This will outline the priority social needs in Newcastle and how the Local Social Strategy might respond to this. Several discussion questions will be raised throughout the document which we will seek community feedback on.
- November/December 2021: Internal and external workshops with key stakeholders to define the actions plans for the Local Social Strategy.
- February 2022: Draft Strategy ready for Council review.
- April 2022: Once endorsed by the Council, the draft Strategy will be placed on public exhibition.
- April – May 2022: Public exhibition workshops and community feedback on draft Strategy sought.
- June 2022: Final Strategy presented to Council and endorsed.

Discussion Paper (December 2021) → Draft Strategy ready (February 2022) → Draft Strategy placed on public exhibition (from April 2022) → Public exhibition (April – May 2022) → Final Strategy adoption by Council (mid–2022)
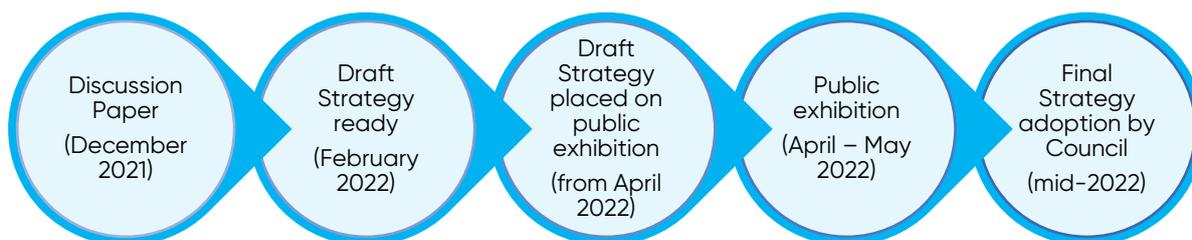
Appendix I – Campaign collateral

Your Place digital campaign – social videos ads

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Want to help us make Newcastle more inclusive? Fill out our simple anonymous survey. Click Learn More.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE

👍❤️   17 comments 23 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Want to help make sure Newcastle is a place for everyone? Click 'learn more' and take our simple and anonymous survey.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
This is your place, too.   LEARN MORE

👍❤️177   28 comments 83 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Help us make sure Newcastle is a place everyone can be proud of by taking our short anonymous survey. Click below.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE

👍❤️ 60   46 comments 19 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Does community and connection matter to you? Fill out our simple survey and help us make sure Newcastle is a place for everyone.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE
Newcastle has changed a lot ov...

👍 288   19 comments 15 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Help us make sure Newcastle is a place for everyone. Click 'learn more' and fill out or simple survey.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE

👍❤️ 123   16 comments 22 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↗ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Want to help make Newcastle more inclusive? Click 'learn more' and take our simple survey.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE

👍❤️ 57   38 comments 80 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↗ Share

City of Newcastle
Sponsored · 🌐

Help us make sure Newcastle is a community for everyone. Click 'learn more' and fill out or simple survey.

This is your place, too.

NEWCASTLEISMYPLACE.COM
Have your say   LEARN MORE

👍❤️ 80   7 comments 5 shares

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↗ Share

Your Place digital campaign – microsite examples (general non-targeted and targeted to African communities)

Local Social event banner

"It's what's inside … that's Newcastle"
Artists Tunz1 & Olas One

This is your place, too.

Join the conversation and help us shape an important new framework for the City of Newcastle, the Local Social Strategy.

The strategy is about treating all people with respect, addressing the barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encouraging community participation, and strengthening community wellbeing.

| Neil | Suellen | Brad | Regina | Garry | Jasmine | Azim |
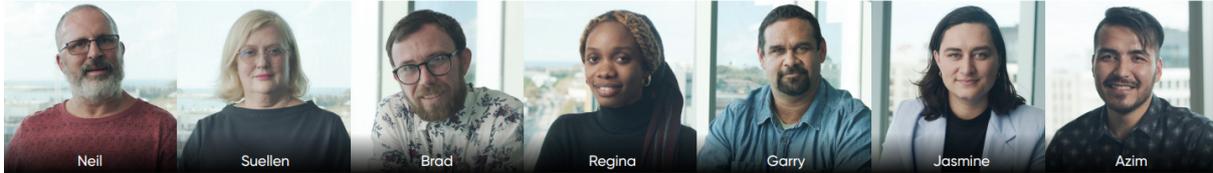
newcastleismyplace.com

City of Newcastle

Local Social artwork used on tote bags

"It's what's inside … that's Newcastle" Artists **Tunz1 & Olas One**

41

Appendix II – Online survey

City of Newcastle - Local Social Survey – This is your place too

Please take our 7-minute anonymous survey to share your experiences and thoughts around social inclusion and community wellbeing.

The results of this survey will help us develop an important framework called the Local Social Strategy. It's about treating all people with respect, addressing the barriers to inclusion and equal opportunity, encouraging community participation and strengthening community wellbeing.

Help us understand what matters to you.

Please tell us about yourself…

Question 1:   Which suburb do you live in? (please circle)

I don't live in the Newcastle local government area	Mayfield
Adamstown	Mayfield East
Adamstown Heights	Mayfield West
Bar Beach	Merewether
Beresfield	Merewether Heights
Birmingham Gardens	Minmi
Blackhill/ Lenaghan	New Lambton
Broadmeadow	New Lambton Heights
Callaghan	Newcastle (CBD)
Carrington	Newcastle East
Cooks Hill	Newcastle West
Elermore Vale	North Lambton
Fletcher	Rankin Park
Georgetown	Sandgate
Hamilton	Shortland
Hamilton East	Stockton
Hamilton North	Tarro
Hamilton South	The Hill
Hexham	The Junction
Islington	Tighes Hill
Jesmond	Wallsend
Kooragang	Warabrook
Kotara	Waratah
Lambton	Waratah West
Maryland	Wickham
Maryville	

Question 2: What is your age? (please circle)

16-19	50-54
20-24	55-59
25-29	60-64
30-34	65-69
35-39	70-74
40-44	Prefer not to answer
45-49	

Question 3: Which of these describe your relationship to Newcastle? (Tick all that apply)

☐Resident

☐Worker

☐Student

☐Visitor

☐Property owner

☐Business owner

☐Other   _____

Question 4: What best describes your current gender identity? (please tick)

☐Woman

☐Man

☐Non-binary

☐Genderqueer

☐Different identity

☐Unsure

☐Prefer not to say

Question 5: Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ancestry? (Please tick)

☐No

☐Yes, Aboriginal

☐Yes, Torres Strait Islander

☐Yes, both

Question 6: With my family, or the people I live with, I speak... (please tick all that apply)

☐English

☐Mandarin

☐Arabic

☐Macedonian

☐Italian

☐Greek

☐Cantonese

☐Spanish

☐Vietnamese

☐Korean

☐Other _____

Question 7: Are you part of the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual plus) communities? (please tick)

☐Yes

☐No

☐Prefer not to say

Question 7a: If YES, how do you identify? (please tick all that apply)

☐Lesbian

☐Gay

☐Bisexual

☐Transgender or gender diverse (including non-binary)

☐Intersex, or person with an intersex condition

☐Queer

☐Asexual

☐Something else

Question 8: Do you identify as a person living with disability? (please tick)

☐Yes

☐No

☐Prefer not to say

Participating in your community and individual wellbeing

Question 9: In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following community activities? (please tick all that apply)

☐A community meeting, public hearing, or discussion

☐A meeting, phone call or email/letter with any local politician (e.g. Councillor)

☐Unpaid voluntary work for an organisation or group

☐Help with school activities such as P&C or canteen

☐Membership of a decision-making board or committee, such as a corporate board, school council, local council committee, sports club committee or church committee

☐A protest or demonstration

☐A community event, festival or celebration

☐A local sporting / recreation team

☐Visit to an art gallery, museum, or library

☐Completion of a City of Newcastle survey (other than this one)

☐Other – please describe:

_____

Question 10: In the past 12 months, did any of the following limit your participation in community activities? (please tick all that apply)

☐ Nothing limited my participation

☐ Difficulty finding information about activities and/or programs available

☐ Cost of activities and/or programs that interested or suited you

☐ Shortage of activities and/or programs that interested or suited you

☐ Language difficulties or other barriers to communication

☐ Difficulty accessing facilities or venues

☐ Transport, such as accessibility for mobility aids or prams

☐ Transport costs, such as running a car or public transport fees

☐ Lack of time due to other commitments

☐ Feeling unsafe or uncomfortable about attending

☐ Your own health and wellbeing

☐ Other – please describe:

Question 11: How satisfied are you with the following? (please tick)

	Extremely satisfied	*Very satisfied*	*Somewhat satisfied*	*Slightly satisfied*	*Not at all satisfied*	*Unsure*
Your life as a whole	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your standard of living	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your physical health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your mental health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling part of your community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Your future security (financial, employment, housing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 12: How easy or hard did you find it to access these in the <u>past 12 months</u>? (please tick)

	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very Difficult	Did not access
Access to learning and education opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to meaningful and fairly paid employment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to reasonable quality housing that you can afford to rent or buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Number and quality of community centres and spaces	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to libraries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to health care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accessible signage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Directional signage e.g. signs to public toilets, transport	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Opportunities to participate in community, sporting, or recreational events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 12a: Please comment if you have any other thoughts about services and opportunities you would like to access:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question 13: How safe do you feel in each of the following locations? (please tick all that apply)

	Not safe at all	Slightly Safe	Moderately safe	Very safe	Totally safe	Don't know
In your own home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In your neighbourhood during the day	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In your neighbourhood in the evening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In the city centre during the day	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In the city centre during the evening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Question 13a: Please comment if you have any other thoughts about safety in Newcastle

_____
_____
_____
_____

We'd like to think Newcastle is an inclusive and welcoming place.

Question 14: What helps you to feel supported and included in your community? For example; good neighbours, community groups, accessible medical services, local directional signage, access to information, seeing photos of all kinds of people and backgrounds (please comment)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question 15: Please rank in order of importance to you the following social justice matters in Newcastle?

Rank	
	Women's rights
	LGBTQIA+ rights
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders – Australia's First Peoples rights
	Asylum Seeker and Refugee rights
	Disability rights
	Care for the aged/older people
	Workplace equality
	Homelessness and insecure housing

Question 16: What do you feel are Newcastle's three biggest social matters? For example; access to work, housing or education; acceptance of difference; isolation/loneliness; health (physical and/or mental); creating a socially just city etc (please comment)

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for completing this survey. Please send the completed survey to; engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au

As a reward for participating, you can earn Lean in Newy points. To get your points in Lean in Newy, use the code yourplace1

Lean in Newy is available to download for free from the App Store, Google Play or by visiting the webpage https://www.leaninnewy.com.au/

Please provide your email if you would like to be further involved in the Strategy engagement or receive a copy of the survey results. Please note, emails will be stored separately so that responses remain de-identified.

Email: _____

Appendix III – Short survey

This is your place, too.

Local Social Strategy questionnaire

1

What helps you to feel supported and included in your community? Why or why not?

2

What do you feel are Newcastle's three biggest social matters? e.g. access to work, housing or education; acceptance; isolation/loneliness; health (physical and/or mental); creating a socially just city.

1.

2.

3.

3

Can you name any social matters that concern you personally? e.g. access to work, housing or education; acceptance; isolation/loneliness; health (physical and/or mental); creating a socially just city.

4

How do you participate in your community? e.g. talking to neighbours, playing sport, community gardening, volunteering, protesting, chatting on Facebook pages.

5

About you

Age:

Gender:

Suburb:

Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? yes ☐ no ☐

Do you speak a language other than English at home? yes ☐ no ☐

Do you identify as a person living-with a disability? yes ☐ no ☐

newcastleismyplace.com

Artwork title **"It's what's inside ... that's Newcastle"**. Artists **Tunz1 & Olas One**

City of Newcastle

Appendix IV – Community engagement workshops & events

	Engagement Activity	Target cohort	Location	Date and time	Partners
1	Guraki Committee workshop	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities	Fort Scratchley	Mon 17th May 8:30am - 9am	CN Advisory Committee
2	Multicultural Services Expo event	Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities and community sector	The Station, Newcastle East	Wed 26 May 10am -2pm	Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre and CALD community sector
3	Rising from the Embers – Land and Cultural Festival event	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; wider community	University of Newcastle, Callaghan campus	Fri 28 May and Sat 29 May, 10am – 2pm	Wollotuka Institute
4	Rising from the Embers – Land and Cultural Festival event	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; wider community	University of Newcastle, Callaghan campus	Sat 29 May, 10am – 2pm	Wollotuka Institute
5	Your Place digital storytelling video campaign launch event	Diverse community groups, featuring the seven local stories	48 Watt St, Newcastle East	Mon 7 June, 5.30pm – 7.30pm	CN engagement
6	Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee workshop	People with disability	City of Newcastle, 12 Stewart Avenue	Wed 16 June 5.30 – 6pm	CN Advisory Committee
7	Unity in Diversity Festival, Refugee week event	Migrant, refugees & whole of community	Foreshore Park	Sat 19 June, 11am-3pm	STARTTS and CALD community sector
8	Guraki Committee workshop	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities	Virtual	Mon 26th July 8:30am - 9am	CN Advisory Committee
9	Inclusive Conversations forum	Whole community	Virtual	Thurs 29th July, 12 – 12.30pm	CN engagement
10	Liveable Cities Advisory Committee workshop	Whole of community	City of Newcastle, 12 Stewart Avenue	August 3rd 6pm-6:30pm	CN Advisory Committee
11	Community and Culture Advisory Committee workshop	Whole of community	City of Newcastle, 12 Stewart Avenue	August 3rd 5.30pm-6pm	CN Advisory Committee
12	Newcastle Youth Council workshop	Young people	City of Newcastle, 12 Stewart Avenue.	August 4th 6pm-6.30pm	CN Advisory Committee

13	Hunter Ageing Alliance joint workshop	Older people	Fort Scratchley	Thurs 5 Aug, 9:15am – 1pm	Hunter Ageing Alliance (HCA)
14	Newcastle & Lake Mac Combined Interagency meeting	Community sector	Online	Thurs 5 Aug, 10am – 10.30am	CN & Lake Mac engagement
15	Workshop with people of diverse genders & sexualities	LGBTQIA+ communities	Virtual	Wed 8 Sept, 6.30pm – 8.30pm	TQBT (Trans Queer Brains Trust), ACON, and Newcastle Pride
16	Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH) workshop	People with disability, their carers and sector workers	Virtual	Wed 8th Sept, 10am – 12pm	CDAH
17	Workshop with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities	Virtual	Fri 1st October, 10am – 12pm	Dhiira