

## Resilient and Safe Framework

Council has a key role in improving the health and wellbeing of people within the Banyule municipality. In the context of resilience and safety, this means planning for access to essential resources community need to meet their basic needs as well as safe, accessible and affordable public health and primary care services, responsive emergency health services and a diverse range of preventative health programs and initiatives.

## What we have heard

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### Liveability Survey

The 2023 Liveability survey found that residents rate their physical health 7.3/10 and 62% say it is likely to stay the same over the next year. Residents rate their current mental health 7.5/10 and 70% say it is likely to stay the same over the next year. Residents rated their current social wellbeing and average of 7.4 out of 10 and when asked about the future, 19% forecast that their social wellbeing will get better and 7% believe it will get worse.

### Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

The Household Survey asked a question relating to change in local living due to COVID-19, with more than 61% of respondents indicating it had changed the way they live in at least one way, some of which might be viewed as positive impacts, and some negative<sup>(7)</sup>. The two most common changes were that people have less social interaction (33.6%) and use parks and local reserves more (31.3%). A significant proportion of people also reported spending more time online (27.1%), while a quarter of residents indicated they are working from home more (24.5%).

### Experiences of discrimination, abuse and social exclusion

The Household Survey asked about experiences of discrimination, abuse or social exclusion during COVID-19, including on the basis of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion and disability. Just over 9% of people reported they had experienced at least one form of discrimination, abuse or exclusion, including 14.8% of people with disability, 11% of multilingual people and 9.9% of women<sup>(7)</sup>.

People living in Banyule were most likely to report discrimination, abuse or exclusion on the basis of ethnicity (2.6%, age (2.5%), gender (1.9%) and disability (1.5%).

### Social isolation

The Household survey asked questions relating to social isolation, including frequency and type of contact with family and friends. The overwhelming majority of people (94.7%) indicated they had been in contact with a family member or friend who lived outside their household in the past week<sup>(7)</sup>. The most common ways of contacting them was in person (91%), phone calls (88.6%), and text messages (85.2%), with more than half reporting they use social media to keep in contact.

The proportion of people contacting family and friends using a videoconferencing service such as zoom or skype increased by more than 25% between 2017 and 2022, reflecting a significant shift in the way people socialise and stay connected following the impact of COVID-19<sup>(7)</sup>.

## Older adults consultations

**Respect and Social inclusion.** Older adults say ageism is an issue in the Banyule community. Older adults state they are living longer and are experiencing greater levels of physical health than ever before, yet their potential to contribute to community is not fully recognised or valued. Older adults invite the community to tap into their knowledge and wisdom, to connect them with opportunities to engage, particularly with young people, and to provide more opportunities to contribute to decision making. To recognise and respect their contributions, older adults want their achievements showcased. For some, disconnection from community is leading to social isolation, especially after COVID-19. Older adults ask Council to address these growing levels of social isolation in older adults by addressing barriers to inclusion, including digital literacy, affordability, accessibility, language and access to communication.

**Community support and health services.** Older adults want to live independently and stay healthy and active, they seek improved access to well resourced, quality aged care services including home support services, gardening and property maintenance. They need support when caring for and supporting their loved ones, to manage cost of living pressures and to access holistic healthcare services that are affordable and timely. If they need to transition into age care facilities, they want to make sure these are local, high quality and well-resourced to respond to their needs. Older adults ask Council to take an active role in advocating for regulatory change.

## Food security/insecurity

The Household Survey a single question relating to levels of food security. While the majority of people (79%) indicated they always had enough food to eat and the kinds of food they wanted, 13.5% reported having enough food to eat, but not always the kind of food they wanted to be eating, and 0.7% of people reporting they sometimes do not have enough food to eat<sup>(7)</sup>.

While the number of people who reported experiencing a form of food insecurity were small, the following demographics were more likely to report not being able to access the food they want:

- Two-parent families with a child under 4 years
- One-parent families with a child aged 5-12 years
- Young people living alone
- People living in group households

The Urban Food Strategy consultation 2023 found that 1 in 5 people reported some level of food security in a twelve-month period (2021-22), 75% of people reported growing their own food at home, and 25% of people reported that healthy food options are too expensive.

BANSIC reported a 213% increase in demand for emergency relief in a three-year period from December 2019

## Financial hardship

The Household Survey assessed the extent of financial hardship by asking about the need to access services in the previous 12 months. Nearly 8% of people had accessed at least one type of service or support due to financial hardship, the most common being bill deferment (4.2%) and rate reduction (3.3%). A number of people also required emergency relief and food relief, which was significantly more common in the west precinct.

## Leading health and wellbeing strategies

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- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
  - Urban Food Strategy