

Social Inclusion and Connection

Resilient and Safe Framework

Council can play a fundamental role in supporting individuals and communities to access a broad range of opportunities to participate in social and cultural programs, activities and events that build social connections and friendships, and increase people's social support networks. We can support a local culture where diversity is accepted, encouraged and celebrated, and all people feel welcome in the community. We can provide targeted opportunities for social inclusion and connection also promote social cohesion and a sense of belonging within the local community more broadly.

What we have heard

Liveability Survey 2023

45% of residents selected 'A diverse range of shopping, leisure and dining experiences' as an important attribute when considering what makes somewhere a good place to live, making it the 4th most important liveability aspect for City of Banyule residents overall. Residents rated their experience of 'A diverse range of shopping, leisure and dining experiences' in their local area 6.3 out of 10, on average, making it the 11th most positively experienced attribute of 16.

36% of residents selected 'A strong sense of community' as an important attribute when considering what makes somewhere a good place to live, making it the 6th most important liveability aspect for City of Banyule residents overall. Residents rated their experience of 'A strong sense of community' in their local area 6.5 out of 10, on average, making it the 8th most positively experienced attribute of 16.

27% of residents selected 'Social cohesion (e.g. acceptance of multiculturalism, religious groups living in harmony, etc)' as an important attribute when considering what makes somewhere a good place to live, making it the 9th most important liveability aspect for City of Banyule residents overall. Residents rated their experience of 'Social cohesion (e.g. acceptance of multiculturalism, religious groups living in harmony, etc)' in their local area 6.7 out of 10, on average, making it the 7th most positively experienced attribute of 16.

12% of residents selected 'Cultural facilities such as museums, galleries, festivals' as an important attribute when considering what makes somewhere a good place to live, making it the 13th most important liveability aspect for City of Banyule residents overall. Residents rated their experience of 'Cultural facilities such as museums, galleries, festivals' in their local area 5.1 out of 10, on average, making it the 15th most positively experienced attribute of 16.

Participation in leisure, arts, and cultural activities

More than 96% of respondents to the Household Survey reported participating in at least one of the 41 predetermined leisure, arts and cultural activities, and on average people participated in eleven activities⁽⁷⁾. Some of the most common activities were those undertaken at home, including watching television at home (72%), and listening to music at home (57%).

The most common activities undertaken outside the home included visiting local parks (52%), dining out (20%), socialising/coffee with friends (50%). Other common activities included using computers/internet (50.7%) and shopping (48.5%).

In terms of cultural events, 42.7% reported going to the cinema, 18.3% reported going to a gallery or exhibition, 16.3% reported going to a live music event. In relation to services provided by Council, 24.2% went to the library, 26% visited playgrounds, and 4.7% visited a neighbourhood house.

Participation in sport and recreation activities

Participation in sport and recreation decreased between 2017 and 2022, with 70% of people indicating they typically participated in at least one of the 15 predetermined sport and recreational activities⁽⁷⁾. Children aged 5-12 years had the highest levels of participation (92.5%), followed by adolescents (85%). There was also strong participation by young adults (76.6%) adults (78.3%) and middle-aged adults (76.1%). However, participation declines quite sharply for older adults (56.9%) and senior citizens (41.9%).

Men were more likely to participate in sport and recreation activities than women (73.2% compared to 66.9%), and English-speaking residents (69.2%) were less likely to participate than multilingual residents (72.7%).

Participation in community groups

Less than half (42.4%) of respondents to the 2022 Household Survey reported being involved in at least one community group, which was a 4% decline on the 2017 survey and the lowest level of participation in nearly 15 years⁽⁷⁾. People aged 20-59 years were the least likely to be involved in community groups, while senior citizens (60%) and children (48.8%) were the most likely to be involved. People living in the west precinct were significantly less likely (33.2%) to be involved in community groups than the Banyule average.

The two most common community groups that people participate in are sports clubs (16%) and religious groups or places of worship (10.7%), although sports club participation declined by more than 6% between 2017 and 2022, with a notable decline in people participating in volunteer/welfare groups and arts/cultural groups over the same period⁽⁷⁾.

Volunteering

Just over a quarter (27.7%) of respondents to the 2022 Household Survey reported that at least one person in the household had undertaken unpaid voluntary work in the past 12 months, which was a significant decline on volunteering rates in 2017 (38.7%). The most common settings in which people volunteer are sports/recreation, and schools/education. Two-parent families with a child between 5 and 18 years were more likely to volunteer than the Banyule average, while single person households and young couples were less likely than average⁽⁷⁾.

Sense of community

The Household Survey assesses people's sense of community based on their level of agreement to eleven statements about community relationships and sense of belonging. Overall, the results of the 2022 survey indicate that most people enjoy living in the local area, believe the community is friendly and inclusive, that they feel part of the community and that they can connect with other people locally⁽⁷⁾.

That said, there was a significant proportion of people who indicated there was a lack of sense of community or belonging in some aspects. The areas of most concern, based on the level of disagreement were:

- Often stop and chat with local people (12.8% disagreed)
- Opportunities to connect with others (12.3%)
- Could turn to the neighbours for help in times of need (12.1% disagreed)
- Interact with diverse people (11.7% disagreed)
- Feeling part of the community (9.5% disagreed)

The 2023 Urban Food Strategy consultation results indicate that residents believe that food connects people, it brings people together and Gardening, and growing fresh produce, is an important factor for people looking after their mental wellbeing (Sustain: The Australian Food Network, Pandemic Gardening Survey).

Perceptions of neighbourhood

The Household Survey asks residents about the aspects of the neighbourhood they like or dislike, based on a predetermined set of responses. People were more likely than average to report the following as aspects of the neighbourhood they like and dislike:

Likes	Dislikes
Distance to shops (77%)	Traffic issues (32.7%)
Trees/natural vegetation (75.3%)	Car parking (25.3%)
Distance to parks/gardens (74.3%)	Distance to family or friends (17.5%)
Safety of the area/streets (65.6%)	Distance to place of work (16.1%)
Access to public transport (63.9%)	
Community 'feel' of the area (61.7%)	

Perceptions of safety improved slightly between 2017 and 2022, with the number of people who like the safety in the area increasing by 4.2% (up to 65.6%), and the number of people who dislike it decreasing by 5% (down to 8.8%).

One of the predetermined responses to the question about likes and dislikes in the local area was cultural diversity. People were far more likely to report this is an aspect of the neighbourhood they like than they were to dislike it, with 42.5% of people indicating this as a positive aspect. However, 6.3% of respondents indicated that cultural diversity was an aspect they disliked about the neighbourhood, with people living in the north precinct significantly more likely to report this than the rest of Banyule⁽⁷⁾.

The 2023 Public Toilet Plan consultation found that the state of public toilets (in need of needed repair, upgrade or replacement) contribute to perceptions of a place feeling unsafe and may contribute to people avoiding the local activity centres they are situated in.

Community facilities and programs

Community service organisations and volunteer groups believe that Council has a responsibility to support socially isolated groups in the community, with a focus on People with disability; People from Diverse Language and Cultural Groups; Carers; and Older adults.

Council needs to consider ways to make community facilities hire fees and charges more affordable for residents living on income support and people experiencing social isolation.

In improve access, Universal Design principles need to be incorporated in community infrastructure planning and upgrades.

Opportunity for sporting clubs using Council land and facilities to be uplift inclusion practices.

Council should consider adding services and programs that support seniors.

Older adults consultation

Social participation. Older adults want to remain connected to community and active, they would like to see more local and affordable social connection opportunities that are engaging and bring people like minded people together. They ask for more support for Senior's clubs and opportunities to participate in sports and recreation activities that promote physical health and social connection.

Leading social inclusion and connection strategies

- Community Infrastructure Plan
- Inclusive Banyule Plan
- Child and Youth Framework
- Older Adults Framework (in development)
- Recreation Plan