

Sharing their lived experience

Wollongong LGA Social Housing Tenant Survey
Engagement Summary Report

August 2023





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Title: Engagement Summary Report

First published: August 2023

Department reference number: D23/1941729

More information

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Published by NSW Department of Planning and Environment

dpie.nsw.gov.au

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Contents

1	Executive Summary	4
1.1	Background	4
2	Stakeholder Engagement	6
2.1	Engagement Summary.....	6
2.2	Community Participation.....	6
2.3	Partner Promotion	7
3	Survey results.....	8
3.1	Demographic Overview	8
3.2	Ideal Neighbourhood – Features	9
3.3	Ideal Neighbourhood – Activities or Places	9
3.4	Ideal Neighbourhood – Cultural and Social Elements	10
3.5	Ideal Neighbourhood – Other comments.....	11
3.6	Ideal Home - Features.....	11
3.7	Current Home – Outdoor Areas	12
3.8	Current Neighbourhood – Best Part	13
3.9	Current Neighbourhood – Worst Part	13
4	Lessons Learned.....	14
4.1	Review of Engagement.....	14
4.2	Future Survey Recommendations.....	14
5	Appendix.....	15
5.1	Survey Questions.....	16

1 Executive Summary

The NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) works to actively grow and manage the supply of social housing for people in need in NSW. LAHC's mission is to deliver more homes and better homes in integrated communities, to create a sense of belonging that supports the physical, cultural, social and economic wellbeing of people. LAHC owns the largest housing portfolio in Australia, comprising around 125,000 properties. This includes more than 6,600 social housing properties in the Wollongong LGA, or 7.5 per cent of the area's housing stock.

1.1 Background

LAHC believes all stakeholders have a right to be informed and consulted about development projects that may impact them. LAHC is committed to ensuring all planning decisions are made in an open and transparent way that ensures stakeholder feedback has been considered and responded to during any decision-making processes.

Between Monday 19 June and Monday 31 July, 2023, social housing tenants across the Wollongong LGA were invited to participate in an online survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather insights into the lived experience of social housing tenants in the Wollongong area and identify areas for improvement that could help inform planning decisions for future social housing development projects.

Using a survey as the primary tool for engagement was determined the most suitable method to obtain broad tenant feedback, due to the sizeable number of social housing residents that live in the Wollongong LGA, the cost of the engagement and the ability to reach audiences online, in person, and via a representative.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU



**Our tenants are at the centre of everything we do,
which is why we want to hear from you!**

We're talking and listening to social housing residents from the Wollongong area to better understand what it's like to live in your neighbourhood.

**Help us to plan for
the future of social
housing by completing
a short survey here:**



For more information call: **1800 738 718**
or email: **CommunityEngagement@facs.nsw.gov.au**

Poster design for survey promotion

2 Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 Engagement summary

In May 2023, LAHC staff conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify stakeholders that would need to be consulted to facilitate an effective tenant engagement for social housing tenants in the Wollongong LGA.

Preliminary briefings were held with representatives from Wollongong City Council, the Aboriginal Housing Office, Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), Illawarra Housing Trust, Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Wollongong Homeless Hub and Housing Services which assisted in the development of relevant survey questions and a trauma informed engagement strategy that was considerate of local sensitivities.

2.2 Community Participation

To ensure maximum community participation, the survey was promoted through a variety of proactive engagement methodologies:

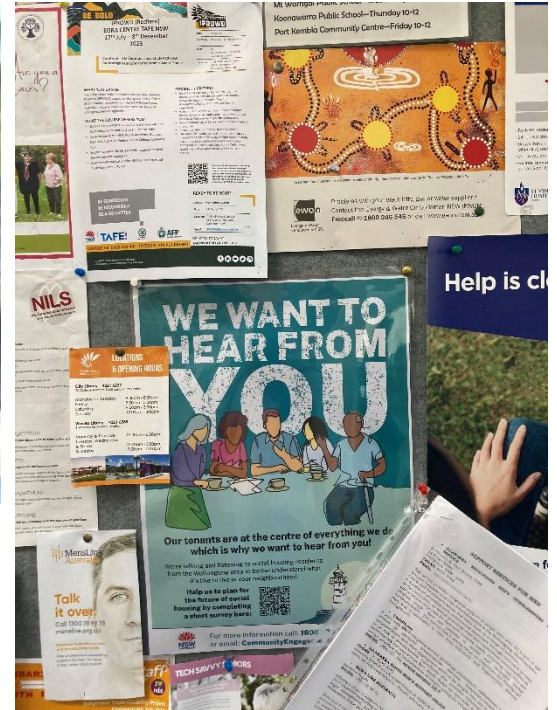
- Development of a QR code which linked directly to the survey included on all print marketing
- Distribution of a promotional postcard to around 7000 social housing properties across Wollongong
- Display of a poster and postcards at venues that were frequently visited by social housing residents including Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Mangerton Community Centre, Warilla Community Centre and the Housing Trust exhibition in Kiera
- Tenant doorknock in partnership with DCJ Housing staff to facilitate familiar face to face participation
- SMS notification promoting the survey link to tenants who opted in to receive SMS notifications
- Phone and email support to assist tenants with completing the survey



Photos of staff during tenant engagement

2.3 Partner promotion

LAHC acknowledges the support of DCJ Housing, Wollongong Shire Council, the Illawarra Housing Trust, Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Wollongong Homelessness Hub and WIN News Illawarra. Each were instrumental in the promotion and success of the tenant survey.



Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre 1 d · 🌐

Just a few more days to have your say in the NSW Government survey for social housing tenants. Share your views before Monday 31 July by completing the tenant survey here:

oeh.au1.qualtrics.com 

Survey seeking feedback from social housing residents in the Wollongong LGA.

👍 1

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share



Evidence of partner support for the engagement



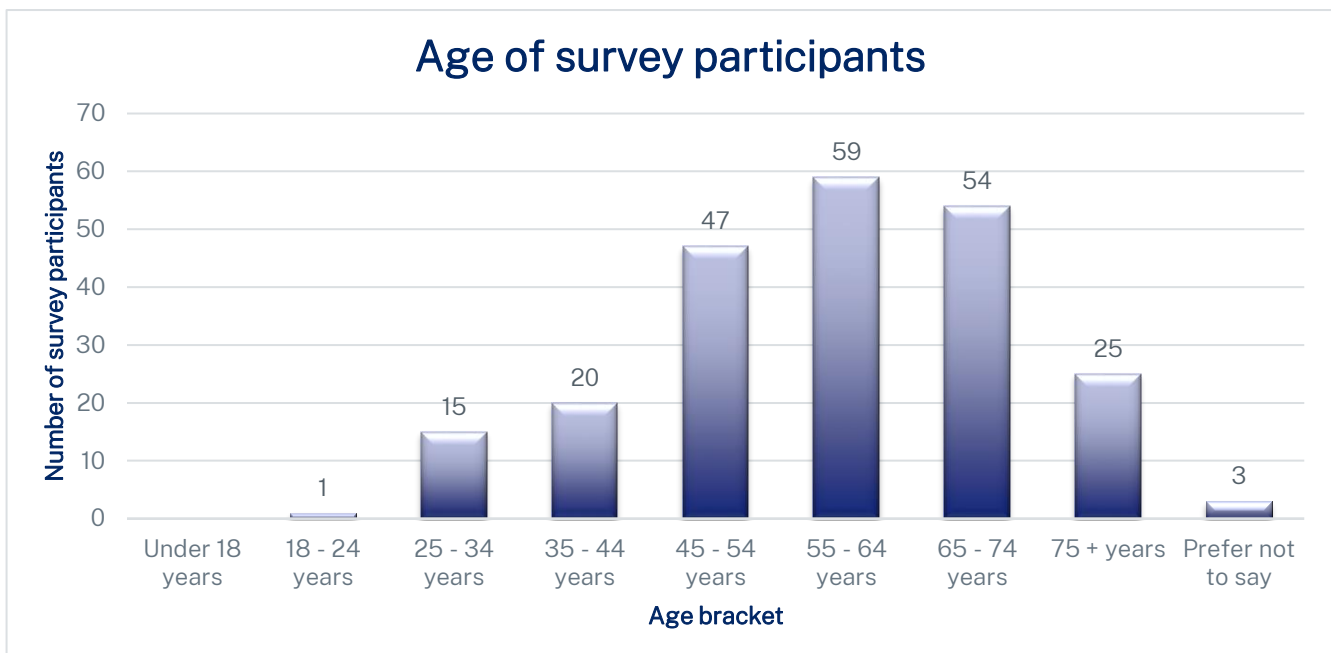
3 Survey results

3.1 Demographic Overview

A total of 228 surveys were completed over a six-week period. Of these, four surveys were completed by non-social housing tenants and their feedback has been excluded from this report.

Of the 224 responses received from social housing tenants:

- **30 out of the 64 suburbs in Wollongong were represented** in the tenant feedback survey
- 37.9% came from **Bellambi (56)** and **Gwynneville (29)**
- 13.3% (30 people) **identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**
- 57.1% (128 people) **identified as having a disability**
- 82.6% (185 people) **were aged over 45**
- 61.6% (138 people) **were aged over 55**
- 11.1% (25 people) **spoke a language at home other than English:**
 - Alternate languages included: Austrian, Dutch, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Māori, Portuguese, Puka Puka, Samoan, Serbian, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese, Yugoslavian. **Two participants identified as users of Auslan (sign language).**
 - The largest grouping of survey respondents included Spanish speakers (5) closely followed by Puka Puka (4).



3.2 Ideal Neighbourhood – Features

Responses indicated that the ideal neighbourhood features that were most important to survey participants included:

79%

Safety enhancements

e.g. effective lighting, high visibility, traffic calming devices

76%

Public transport

74%

Community facilities and services

e.g. community centre, library, medical or support services

- 53% - Paths that provide easy connections to places of interest e.g. for walking, jogging or cycling
- 51% - Parks and other public open space areas
- 46% - Range of housing types, sizes and number of bedrooms e.g. houses, apartments, townhouses, villas
- 37% - Landscaping and street trees/native gardens
- 25% - Other (Key themes that emerged from this feedback included a desire for more police presence, a quiet neighbourhood and accessible activities for people with special needs)

Participant data will help shape future social housing development by ensuring all projects include considerations towards personal safety, access to public transport and community support/facilities.

3.3 Ideal Neighbourhood – Activities or Places

Responses indicated that the ideal activities or places that were most important to survey participants included:

85%

Local shops for daily needs

e.g. grocery store, café,

72%

Support services

e.g. health services, employment agencies

58%

Community facilities with indoor meeting areas

e.g. community centre, library, cooperative office spaces

- 56% - Outdoor gathering spaces e.g. picnic areas, dog parks, places with seating
- 52% - Educational institutions e.g. preschools, schools, adult education
- 40% - Children’s playground areas with play equipment
- 35% - Places to learn new skills e.g. employment agencies, community gardens, workshops
- 28% - Sporting areas e.g. gymnasiums, playing fields, playing courts
- 6% - Other (Key themes that emerged from this feedback included a desire for more police outreach, a skate park, a community garden / botanical gardens and a ‘Street of the year’ awards program)

Participant data will help shape future social housing development by ensuring future development projects are close to local amenities and incorporate public space and infrastructure.

3.4 Ideal Neighbourhood – Cultural and Social Elements

Responses indicated that the ideal cultural and social elements that were most important to survey participants included:



- 52% - Connected community - friendly, opportunities for shared activities
- 38% - Connection to Country and recognition of local history and heritage
- 34% - Diverse community - multicultural, multi-generational, and other household types
- 31% - Locally owned and operated businesses
- 25% - Public art and creative spaces e.g. sculptures, murals, performance areas
- 24% - Access to shared community assets e.g. bikes, car, tools, books
- 9% - Other (Key themes that emerged from this feedback included the provision of accessible housing for women over the age of 50, more respect and activities for the elderly, a free bus service for the community and an increase in police presence)

Participant data will help shape future social housing development by ensuring passive surveillance, increased lighting and different types of housing are incorporated into future design proposals.

3.5 Ideal Neighbourhood – Other comments

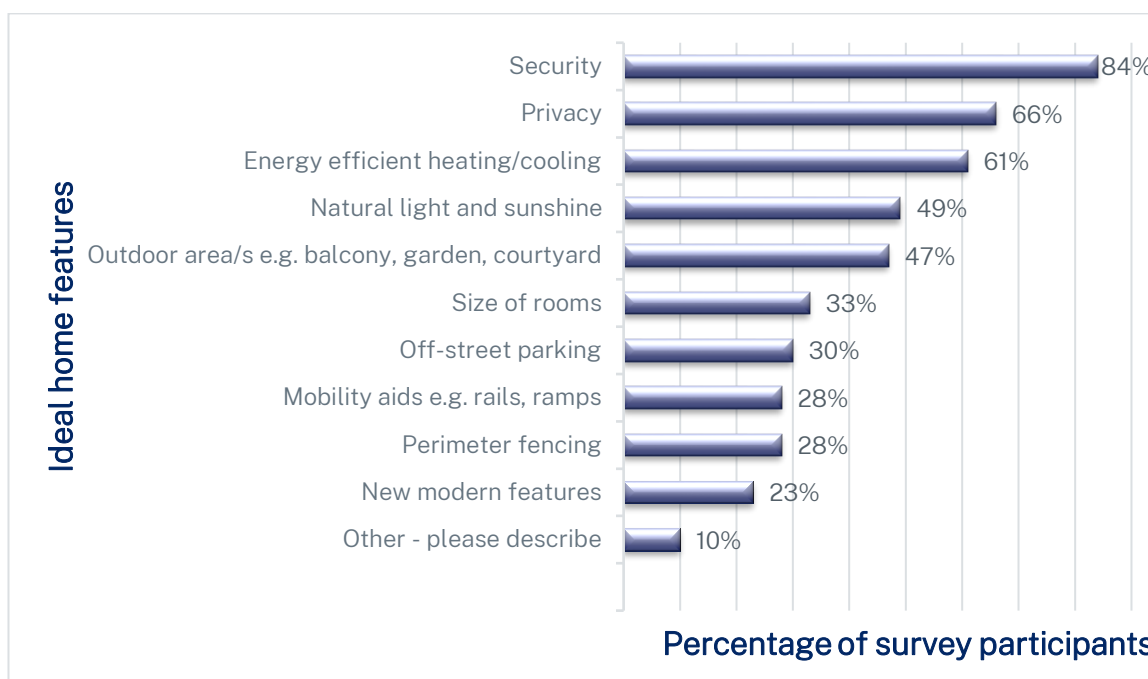
Responses were wide and varied to this open question. Key themes that emerged from the feedback included:

- more outdoor areas
- feeling safer
- decrease of drugs and crime
- respect from neighbours
- stronger sense of community
- better transport and walkways



3.6 Ideal Home – Features

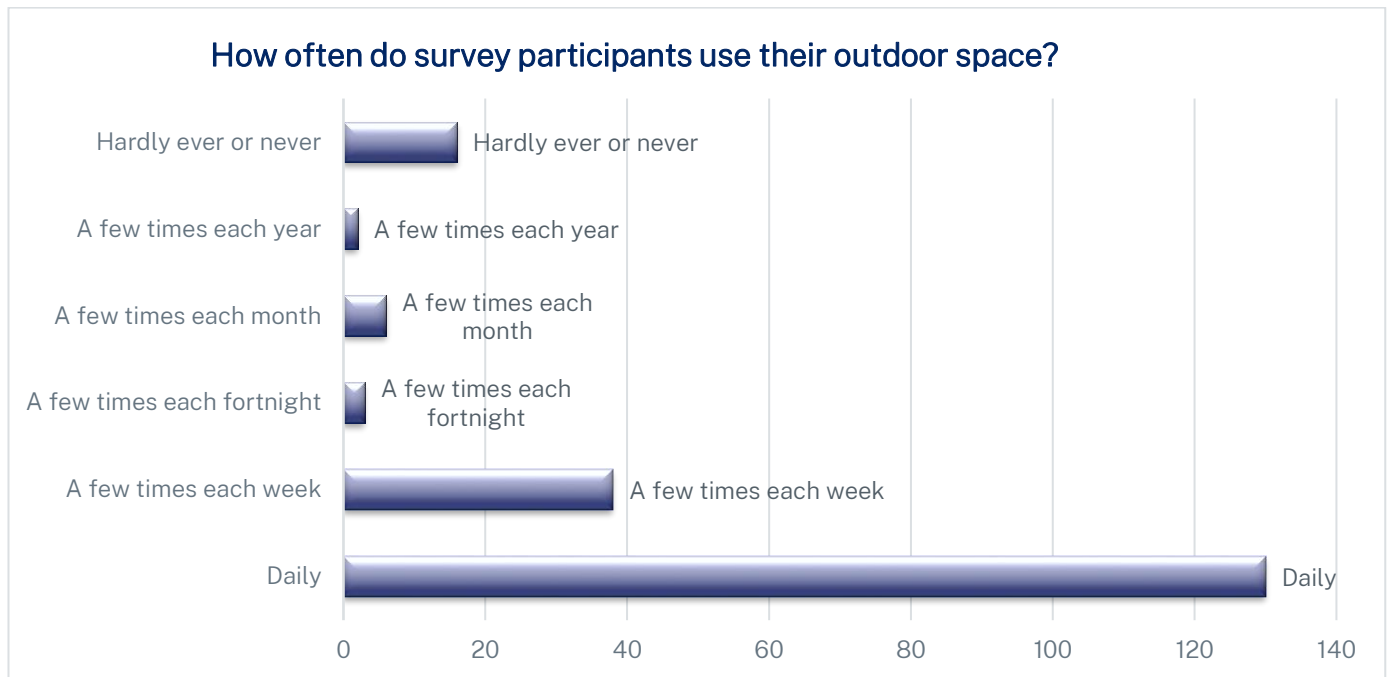
Responses indicated that the ideal home features that were most important to survey participants included:



Of the 10% (22 people) that selected ‘other’, participants raised the desire for a bigger kitchen and laundry, increased storage, dedicated seniors housing, genuine action against difficult neighbours, well maintained properties and having only one energy source - either gas or electricity.

3.7 Current Home – Outdoor Areas

87% (195 people) have an outdoor area in their current home. The majority of these frequently use their outdoor area; 58% (130 people) daily and 16.9% (38 people) a few times each week. The following graph details how often participants with an outdoor area use their outdoor space.



41.5% (81 people) said that it is hard to maintain their outdoor area/s citing the following reasons:

- Older age
- Physical disability or mobility issues
- Terrain of backyard e.g. steep or uneven
- Unsafe due to neighbours
- Rubbish regularly thrown into yard from neighbours
- Rubbish left from previous tenant
- Water run off issues
- Dogs of neighbours accessing the yard
- Not owning a lawn mower or garden tools
- Fences need repairs or replacing
- Excessive debris from trees

Of the people aged over 55 who have an outdoor area, 42% (50 people) stated that they find it hard to maintain due to their age, having a disability or due to the terrain of the outdoor area.



3.8 Current Neighbourhood – Best Part

- 17.4% (39 people) said the **best thing** about their neighbourhood is the **location and being close to local amenities**
- 14.3% (32 people) said the **best thing** about their neighbourhood are **their neighbours**
- 7.6% (17 people) said the **best thing** about their neighbourhood is **easy access to the beach**



3.9 Current Neighbourhood – Worst Part

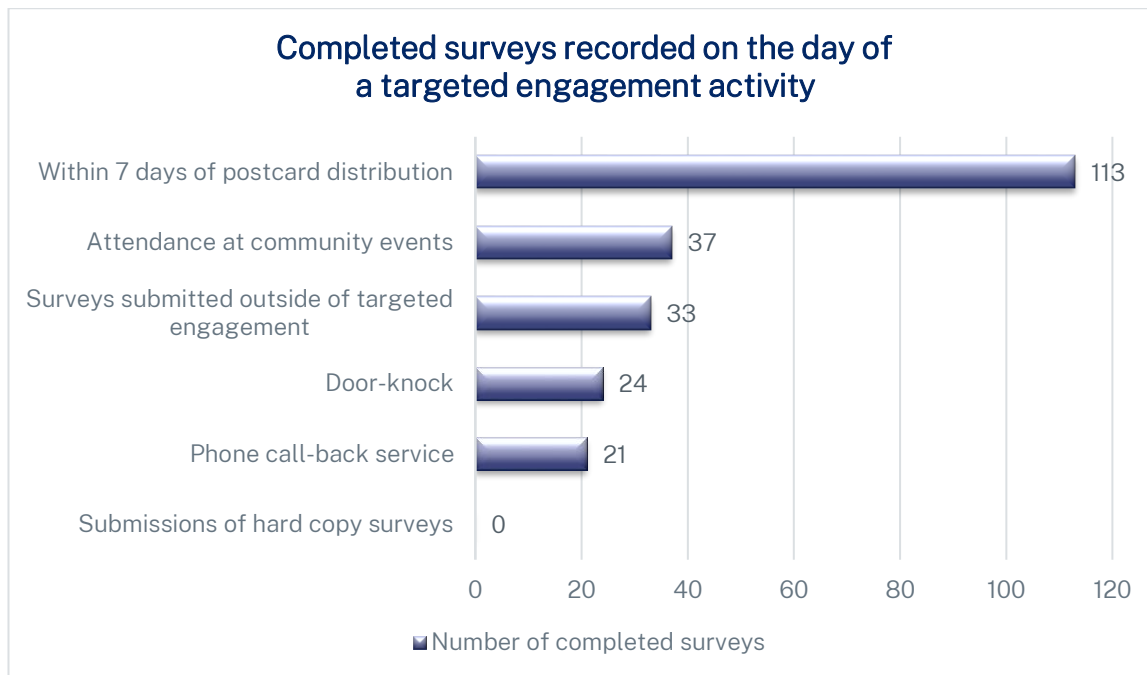
- 19.2% (43 people) said the **worst thing** about their neighbourhood is the **criminal activity and not feeling safe**
- 17.4% (39 people) said the **worst thing** about their neighbourhood are **their neighbours and excessive noise**
- 11.2% (25 people) said the **worst thing** about their neighbourhood is the **high visibility and associate effects of drugs and alcohol**



4 Lessons Learned

4.1 Review of Engagement

The graph below details the number of surveys that were completed in alignment with a targeted engagement activity and the number of surveys that were submitted organically.



4.2 Future survey recommendations

The Wollongong LGA Tenant Survey was a pilot initiative with few comparative survey examples to determine a benchmark result.

At the conclusion of the survey, staff and stakeholder partners were asked to provide feedback on what worked for the engagement, and where improvements could be implemented for the future.

Some of the suggested considerations include:

- Collect participant preferred contact method during the survey
- Limit questions that require a ranked response with multiple options
- Increase signage at gathering points during engagement
- Reduce number of hard copy survey print outs
- Clarification of the difference between an 'ideal' neighbourhood and 'current' neighbourhood as many participants said they like where they live
- Incorporate next steps detail in survey promotion (*how the data will be used etc.*)

5 Appendix

5.1 Tenant Survey

Help shape the future of social housing

Social housing residents are at the centre of everything we do. We have developed this survey to help us understand what is important to you as a social housing resident living in the Wollongong area, about the neighbourhood you live in, and what you would like to be different.

Your feedback will help shape the future of social housing for people in the Wollongong area. You can share your thoughts by completing this survey, or you can call us on 1800 738 718 and we will take your responses over the phone.

It will take around 10 minutes to complete this survey, depending on how much detail you would like to provide in your answers. Mandatory questions are indicated with an asterisk (*). This survey will close on **Monday 31 July 2023 at 11.59pm (AEST)**.

Privacy Collection Notice

This survey does not collect any personal or identifying information about you. This survey is anonymous the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) will not collect any identifying information about you.

More information about privacy

The above privacy collection notice applies to the information you are providing in completing this survey.

If you would like to know more about how the department meets its obligations in collecting, storing, using and sharing personal information, you can read our complete [Privacy Policy](#) or [Privacy Management Plan](#).

You may also contact the department on 02 9860 1440, at privacy@dpie.nsw.gov.au or at 4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street Parramatta.

Q1 * Do you live in social housing in the Wollongong area?

Yes

No

Q2 * Which suburb do you live in?

Austinmer

Avon

Avondale

Balgownie

Bellambi

Berkeley

Brownsville

Bulli

Cataract

Cleveland

Clifton

Coalcliff

Coledale

Coniston

Cordeaux / Cordeaux Heights

Corrimal / East Corrimal

Cringila

Dapto

- Darkes Forest
- Dombarton
- Fairy Meadow
- Farmborough Heights
- Fernhill
- Figtree
- Gwynneville
- Haywards Bay
- Helensburgh
- Horsley
- Huntley
- Kanahooka
- Keiraville
- Kembla Grange
- Kembla Heights
- Koonawarra
- Lake Heights
- Lilyvale
- Maddens Plains
- Mangerton
- Marshall Mount
- Mount Keira

- Mount Ousley
- Mount Pleasant
- Mount St Thomas
- North Wollongong
- Otford
- Penrose
- Port Kembla
- Primbee
- Russell Vale
- Scarborough
- Spring Hill
- Stanwell Park
- Stanwell Tops
- Tarrawanna
- Thirroul
- Towradgi
- Unanderra
- Warrawong
- West Wollongong
- Windang
- Wollongong
- Wombarra

Wongawilli

Woonona

Yallah

Your ideal neighbourhood

Q3 * Please pick up to 5 of the following features to show what is most important to you to have in your ideal neighbourhood:

Number your highest priority feature '1', then your second-highest priority feature '2'. Continue to number up to 5 features that are important to you.

- _____ Public transport
- _____ Parks and other public open space areas
- _____ Community facilities and services e.g. community centre, library, medical and support services
- _____ Safety enhancements e.g. effective lighting, high visibility, traffic calming devices
- _____ Paths that provide easy connections to places of interest e.g. for walking, jogging or cycling
- _____ Landscaping and street trees/native gardens
- _____ Range of housing types, sizes and number of bedrooms e.g. houses, apartments, townhouses, villas
- _____ Other - please describe

Q4 * Please pick up to 5 of the following activities or places that you would like to have in your ideal neighbourhood.

Number your highest priority activity or place '1', then your second-highest priority activity or place '2'. Continue to number up to 5 activities or places that are important to have near your home.

- _____ Educational institutions e.g. preschools, schools, adult education
- _____ Outdoor gathering spaces e.g. picnic areas, dog parks, places with seating
- _____ Community facilities with indoor meeting areas e.g. community centre, library, cooperative office spaces
- _____ Children's playground areas with play equipment
- _____ Sporting areas e.g. gymnasiums, playing fields, playing courts
- _____ Local shops for daily needs e.g. grocery store, cafe, pharmacy, post office, bank
- _____ Support services e.g. health services, employment agencies
- _____ Places to learn new skills e.g. employment agencies, community gardens, workshops
- _____ Other - please describe

Q5 * Please pick up to 5 of the following cultural and social elements to show what is most important to you in your ideal neighbourhood.

Number your highest priority element '1', then your second-highest priority element '2'. Continue to number up to 5 elements that are important to you in your ideal neighbourhood.

- _____ Connection to Country and recognition of local history and heritage
- _____ Care for the natural environment
- _____ Diverse community - multicultural, multi-generational and other household types
- _____ Public art and creative spaces e.g. sculptures, murals, performance areas
- _____ Connected community - friendly, opportunities for shared activities
- _____ Feeling safe at all times during the day and night
- _____ Access to shared community assets e.g. bikes, car, tools, books
- _____ Range of housing options to cater for individual needs e.g. bigger homes for families, accessible homes for elderly or disabled people
- _____ Locally owned and operated businesses
- _____ Other - please describe

Q6 Please share any other comments about what you would like in your ideal neighbourhood:

Your ideal home

Q7 * Please pick up to 5 of the following features to show what is most important to you to have in your ideal home. *Number your highest priority feature '1', then your second-highest priority feature '2'. Continue to number up to 5 features that are important to you.*

- _____ Security
- _____ Natural light and sunshine
- _____ Privacy
- _____ Size of rooms
- _____ Outdoor area/s e.g. balcony, garden, courtyard
- _____ Mobility aids e.g. rails, ramps
- _____ Energy efficient heating/cooling
- _____ New modern features
- _____ Off-street parking
- _____ Perimeter fencing
- _____ Other - please describe

Your current home

Q8 * Do you have an outdoor area in your current home?

Yes

No

Q9 * How often do you use the outdoor area/s in your home?

Daily

A few times each week

A few times each fortnight

A few times each month

A few times each year

Hardly ever or never

Q10 * Do you find it hard to look after the outdoor area/s in your current home?

Yes - please explain why or how it is hard to maintain the outdoor area/s

No

Q11 * What is the best part about living in your neighbourhood?

Q12 * What is the worst part about living in your neighbourhood?

We appreciate your time in responding to this survey.

Responses to the following 4 questions help us understand how effective our communication and engagement activities are in reaching our diverse community and stakeholders. This enables us to communicate more clearly and improve opportunities for everybody to have their say. There is a '*Prefer not to say*' answer option for each of these questions, which you may choose if you would rather not answer it.

Q13 * What age bracket do you fit into?

- Under 18 years
- 18 - 24 years
- 25 - 34 years
- 35 - 44 years
- 45 - 54 years
- 55 - 64 years
- 65 - 74 years
- 75 + years
- Prefer not to say

Q14 * Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Neither
- Prefer not to say

Q15 * Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Yes - please tell us which language/s you speak at home other than English

No

Prefer not to say

Q16 * Do you identify as a person with a disability?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

To finish this survey and have your responses recorded, please press the submit button below.

Thank you for completing this survey.

