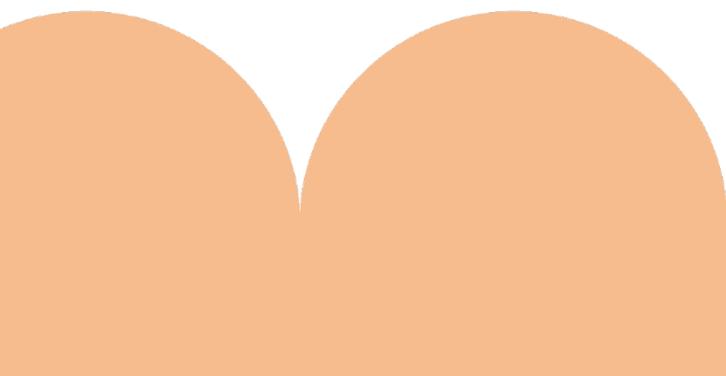


Hepburn Shire Council Hepburn Together Summary engagement report

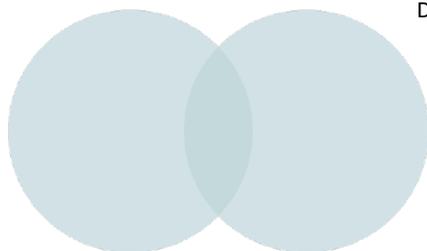
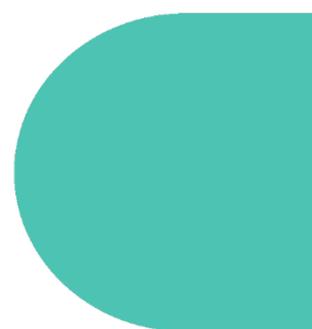
February 2021





Hepburn Together, Summary Engagement Report

Prepared for	Hepburn Shire Council
Date	9 February 2021
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Hepburn Shire Council is embarking on a major strategic planning project that will shape the vision and direction for Hepburn Shire over the next 10 years.

The project is called the Hepburn Together project and includes the development of Council's Community Engagement Policy, Council's 10-year Community Vision, The 4-year Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan), Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Community engagement policy

Projectura supported Council to engage with the community to gain an understanding of their engagement practices, expectations and preferences. The engagement consisted of:

- An online survey which was designed and available online through the Participate Hepburn website during the period from 22 January to 7 February 2021. We received 175 responses to the survey.
- 10 community pop-up events held between 29 January – 4 February 2021. Two (2) pop-up events were held at each of the following locations: Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Glenlyon and Trentham. Over the course of 10 pop ups 150 people took part to share their perspectives on Council's community engagement practices.

This Engagement Report documents the engagement approach, findings, recommendations and considerations for the design of Hepburn Shire Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Engagement participation

- A total of 325 participants took part in the Hepburn Shire's engagement activities. This is a fantastic response for the development of a Council Plan, especially in a Small Rural Council.
- The largest group of respondents to the online survey were those in the age group between 50-64 years (38.3%). The largest group of respondents at pop-ups were in the 65 – 79 year age group (43.3%). People under the age of 35 across both engagement activities had

low representation with a participation rate of 6.9% for the online survey and 7.3% for the pop-ups.

- Both the online survey and the community pop-ups attracted more female participants with a combined total of 60.3% and a combined total of 37.3% of male participants. The remaining 2.4% preferred not to say or identified as non-binary or other.

Recommendations

Following analysis of the engagement findings Projectura has developed 9 recommendations to inform the development of the Community Engagement Policy and engagement practices.

Planning

- Participation targets for individual projects should be considered to track participation.
- Include a milestone review for community engagement projects to track participation rates, effectiveness of engagement activities and whether sufficient feedback has been received.
- Publishing project timelines on the Participate Hepburn website.
- Consider increasing level of engagement around public infrastructure/services projects.

Communication

- Consider starting up a bi-weekly email newsletter to keep residents up to date.
- Provide status updates at regular intervals throughout community engagement projects.
- Using email as a primary method of communication.

Continuous improvement/reporting

- For larger engagement activities, include milestone and project reviews as part of regular reporting to ordinary Council meetings.

Transparency

- Publish summary engagement reports on the Participate Hepburn website, when completed.

Consistent engagement

- Consider the re-introduction of regular listening posts for each ward

1. Introduction

Community Engagement Policy: Overview

Community engagement policy

A community Engagement Policy is a document that guides Council staff in relation to how Council will engage with the community and lets the community know what they can expect. The Policy will outline the roles of Councillors and staff when conducting engagement. It also highlights how we use community insights in our decision making, and how we inform the community of the outcomes.

All Victorian Councils are required to have a Community Engagement Policy under the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).

Engagement objective

The purpose of this engagement was to seek the communities input into the development of Council's Community Engagement Policy. Feedback was requested about:

- What areas of Councils community engagement practice is done well, and what areas need improvement?
- How can Council improve our community engagement practices?
- Input into policy areas.

Methodology summary

The community engagement period commenced on 25 January 2021 and concluded on 7 February 2021. A mix of engagement methods were used to engage 325 participants during the engagement project.

1. Online survey: The Online Survey was shared with the community on the Participate Hepburn website, Council's Facebook page, direct emails, local community social media pages and Councillor networks. It was open from 22 January to 7 February 2021 and included quantitative measurement and qualitative exploration. A total of 175 participants completed the survey. Paper copies of this document were made available at Council Libraries and Council Customer Service Centres.

2. Community engagement events: 10 community pop-up events were held between 29 January – 4 February to hear the communities voice, explore challenges and solutions.

3. Communication

In the lead up to the engagement, Hepburn Shire Council promoted the opportunity to engage through various channels and mediums, there were:

8948 letters sent to ratepayers.

1329 emails sent to ratepayers.

20 social media posts during the period 18 January to 8 February 2021 were published on the Hepburn Shire Council's Facebook Page with 16,952 views.

2. Engagement findings

Online survey

Summary

Method	Date	Style	Participation
Online survey	22 January to 7 February 2021	Quantitative measurement and qualitative exploration	175 contributors

The survey was designed and available online through the Participate Hepburn website during the period from 22 January to 7 February 2021. Seven surveys were received after the closing date and were not included in analysis, the information contained has been reviewed as part of the larger Hepburn Together project.

Questions

1. Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. We have prepared a Discussion Paper with lots of background material to help with completing this survey. Have you had an opportunity to read the Discussion Paper? (not essential)
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Location
5. Have you previously participated in Council community engagement activities (e.g. listening posts, workshops, surveys)?
6. Overall how satisfied are you with Council's community engagement activities?
7. Please provide an example of when you've been satisfied with Council's community engagement practice.
8. Please provide an example of when you've been dissatisfied with Council's community engagement practice.
9. How can Council improve its community engagement practice? (please provide up to 3 solutions)
10. Do you have any other comments about Council's community engagement practice?
11. What are your preferred engagement activities? (please choose up to 2)

12. What are your preferred engagement methods? (Please choose up to 5)
13. What are your preferred methods of finding out about community engagement opportunities? (please choose up to 5)
14. What prevents you from taking part in engagement activities?
15. After considering the information about deliberative engagement outlined in the Discussion Paper, to be representative, do you think participants for deliberative engagement activities should be recruited by....
16. What topics would you like to be consulted about? (please choose your top 3)
17. After considering the Levels of Engagement outlined in the Discussion Paper, what level of engagement would you most likely get involved with?
18. After considering the areas of engagement planning outlined in the Discussion Paper, are there any other items that Council should consider when planning community engagement?
19. What other items should Council consider when planning Community Engagement?
20. After considering the 7 areas of assessment for continuous improvement outlined in the Discussion Paper, are there any other aspects of community engagement activities we should assess for continuous improvement?
21. What other aspects of community engagement activities should Council assess for continuous improvement?
22. First Name
23. Last Name
24. Your email

Online survey responses

The following section outlines the findings from the online survey by question.

Question 1. Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey. We have prepared a Discussion Paper with lots of background material to help with completing this survey. Have you had an opportunity to read the Discussion Paper? (not essential)

59.8% of respondents had read the discussion paper and 40.2% of respondents had not read the discussion paper.

Question 2: Age

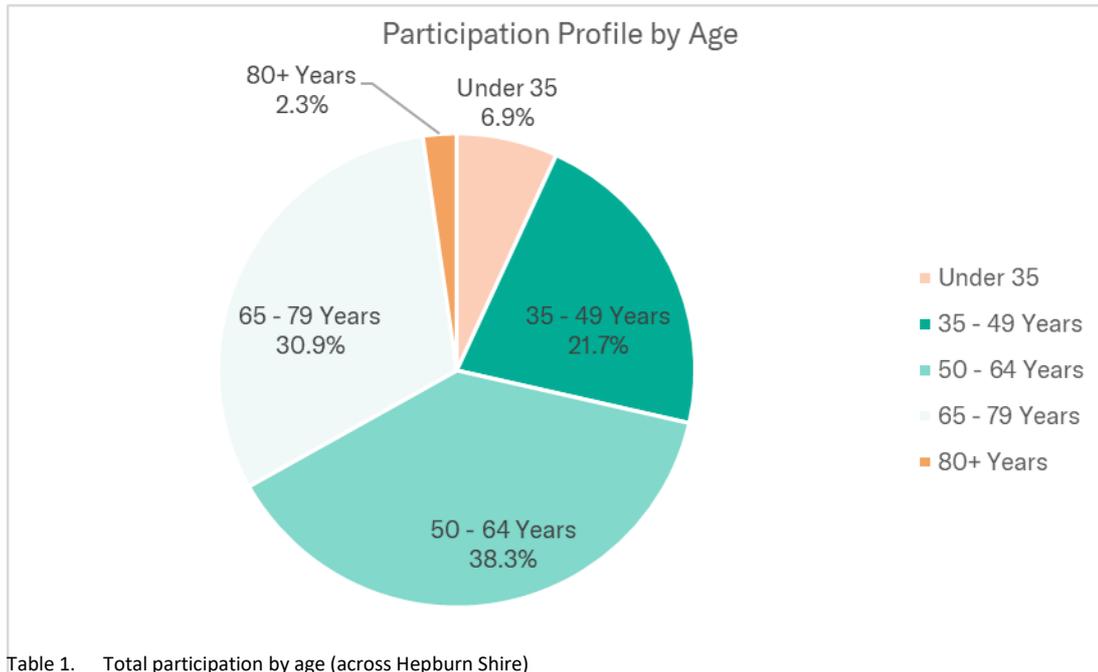


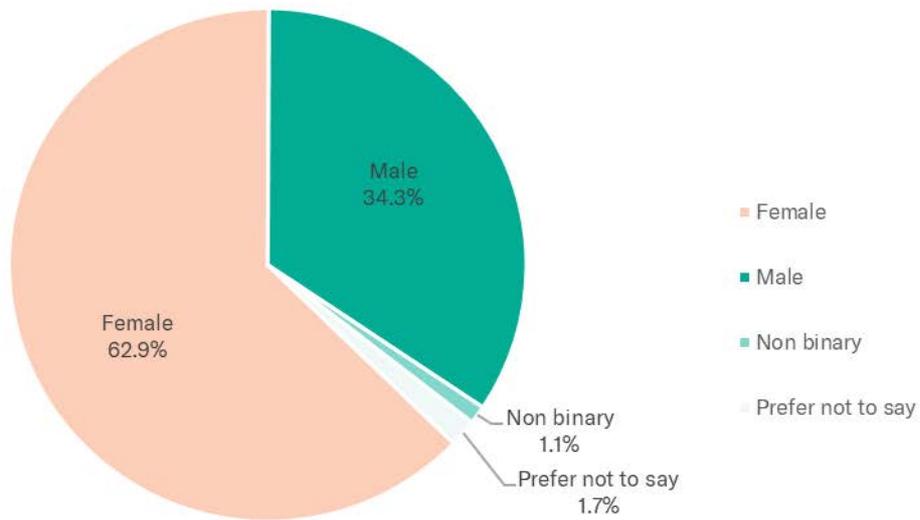
Table 1. Total participation by age (across Hepburn Shire)

Age Group	Participation (%)
Under 35	6.9
35 - 49 Years	21.7
50 - 64 Years	38.3
65 - 79 Years	30.9
80+ Years	2.3

Question 3: Gender

Participation Profile by Gender

62.9% (110 Respondents) were female, 34.3% (60 Respondents) were male.

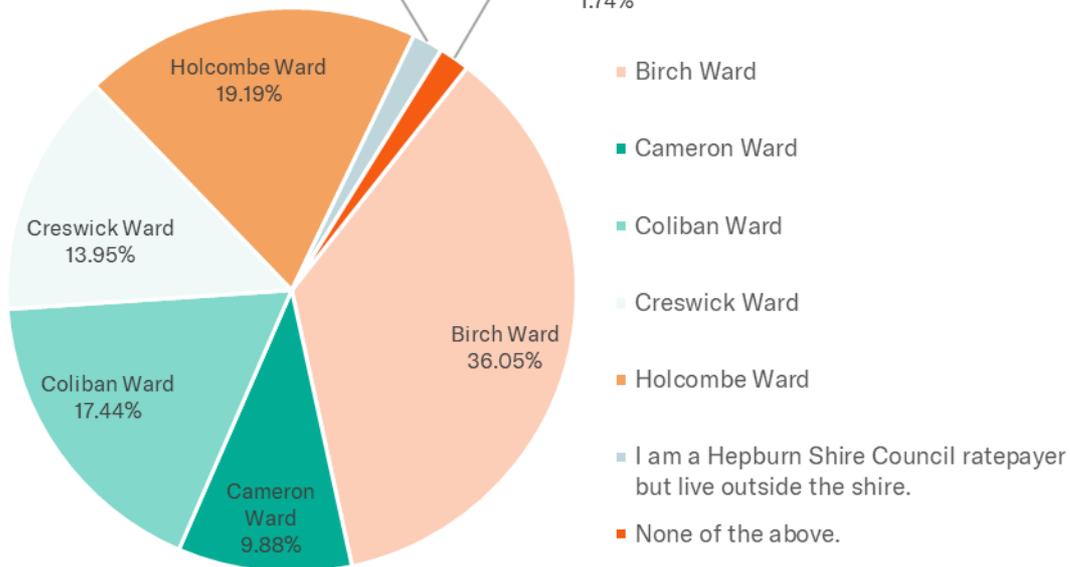


Question 4: Location

Participation Profile by Ward

I am a Hepburn Shire Council ratepayer but live outside the shire. 1.74%

None of the above. 1.74%

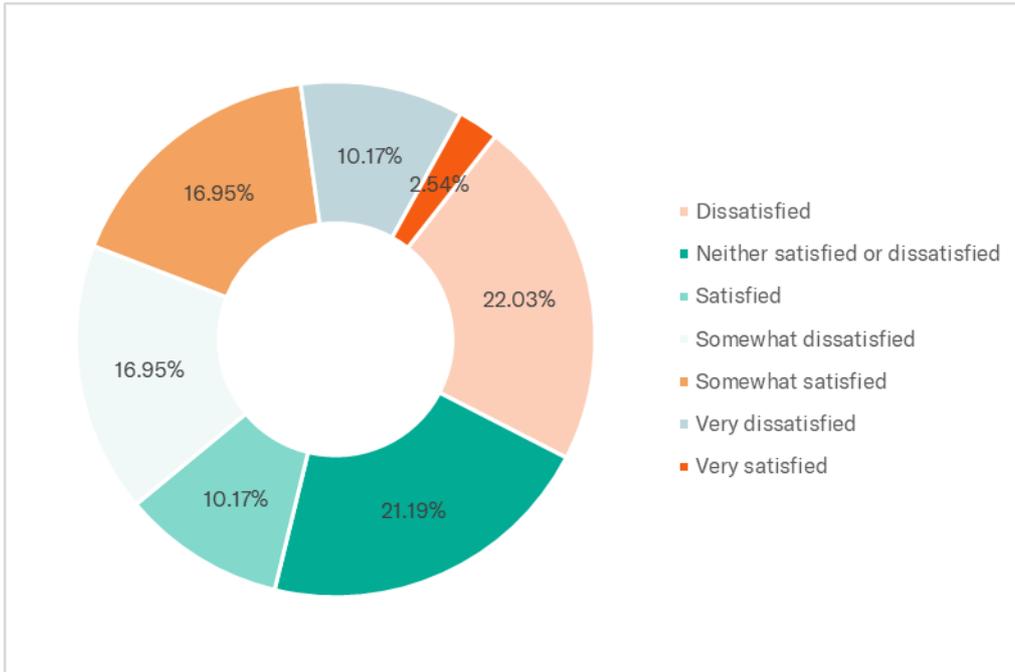


Majority of online survey participants were located in Birch Ward (36.1%), 19.2% located in Holcombe followed by 17.4% from Coliban Ward.

Question 5: Have you previously participated in Council community engagement activities (e.g. listening posts, workshops, surveys)?

Over 55% (96) of respondents confirmed they had previously participated in Council community engagement activities.

Question 6: Overall how satisfied are you with Council's community engagement activities?



29.7% are satisfied with Council's Community Engagement, 49.15% report to be dissatisfied and 21.19% are neither satisfied or dissatisfied.

Analysis of qualitative online survey responses

This table provides an overview of qualitative data collected from respondents who completed the online survey. The questions seek to understand and explore the communities previous experience with community engagement and seek their feedback on the development of the Community Engagement Policy. Their responses have been analysed and an overview of the findings is provided below.

Table 2. Benchmarking previous engagement practices

Question	Responses (out of 175)	Key themes
7. Please provide an example of when you've been satisfied with Council's community engagement practice.	57	Top 3 Themes identified: 1. Engagement activities (pop ups/listening posts/surveys) 40.4% 2. Council interaction (inclusive of Council staff and Councillor meetings) 22.8% 3. Public infrastructure/service projects (halls, skate parks, streets, libraries, waste) 22.8%
8. Please provide an example of when you've been dissatisfied with Council's community engagement practice.	80	Top 3 Themes identified: 1. Public infrastructure and/or service projects (building projects, streetscapes, Council amenities and services) 26.3% 2. Local laws consultation 17.5% 3. Did not feel heard 15.0%
9. How can Council improve its community engagement practice? (please provide up to 3 solutions)	135	Top 3 Themes identified: 1. Design of Engagement (framing, purpose, timing, influence, plan) 32.6% 2. Communication Approach (tone, frequency, listening, plain english) 28.9% 3. Communication Method (variety, not just online, use community groups) 20.7%
10. Do you have any other comments about Council's community engagement practice?	77	Top 3 themes identified: 1. Positive (Improvements by Council, communication, general feel) 24.6%

Question	Responses (out of 175)	Key themes
		2. Transparency (closing the loop/council decision making) 15.6% 3. Process (engagement activity, approach, planning, communication) 13.0% Other areas of feedback included listening and hearing all voices, embracing local expertise and Council interactions.

Table 3. Consideration for planning and continuous improvement in community engagement

Question	Responses (out of 175)	Key themes
19. What other items should Council consider when planning Community Engagement?	25	Top 3 Themes identified (factors outside those already considered): 1. Process Improvement (updates, close the loop, report actions) 20.0% 2. Community Cohesion (Collaboration, respecting difference of opinions, hearing from all people) 20.0% 3. Hearing all voices (Age representation, long terms residents and new residents) 16.0% Percentages based on responses received that related to factors not already identified in the discussion paper.
21. What other aspects of community engagement activities should Council assess for continuous improvement?	22	Top 3 Themes identified: 1. Process Improvement (updates, close the loop, report actions) 27.3% 2. Delivery on Priorities (achieving outcomes, increased performance with Council) 18.2% 3. Design of Engagement (framing, purpose, timing, influence, plan) 9.1% Percentages based on responses received that related to factors not already identified in the discussion paper.

2. Engagement findings

Community Engagement Pop-ups

Summary

Method	Date	Style	Participation
Engagement Pop-ups	29 January – 4 February 2021	Qualitative exploration	150 people

10 community pop-up events were held between 29 January – 4 February to hear the communities voice and explore challenges and solutions. Two (2) pop-up events were held at each of the following locations: Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Glenlyon and Trentham. The five (5) pop-ups held between 29 – 31 January were supported by Projectura consultants and were available for three (3) hours. The remaining pop-ups led by council staff were available for two (2) hours.

Over the course of 10 pop ups 150 people took part to share their perspectives on Council’s community engagement practices.

Questions

The activity stations that participants were led through during the engagement pop-ups covered similar questions to those of the online survey. The questions were:

1. Age.
2. Gender.
3. Location.
4. What is your satisfaction level of Council’s Community Engagement?
5. What are your Ideas/Solutions for improving Council’s Community Engagement?
6. What are your preferred engagement activities? (5 Options)
7. What are your preferred communication methods? (5 Options)

Analysis of Community Pop-ups

The tables below provides an overview of quantitative and qualitative data collected from participants who took part in the community pop-ups. Projectura analysed each question and have provided a summary of findings below.

Participation Profile

Table 4. Participation by age group for pop ups (across Hepburn Shire)

Age Group	Shire total (sum)	Shire total (%)
Under 20 Years	5	3.3
20 - 34 Years	6	4.0
35 - 49 Years	24	16.0
50 - 64 Years	42	28.0
65 - 79 Years	65	43.3
80+ Years	8	5.3
Grand Total	150	100.0

Table 5. Total participation by gender for pop ups (across Hepburn Shire)

Gender	Shire total (sum)	Shire total (%)
Female	86	57.3
Intersex	0	0.0
Male	61	40.7
Non binary	0	0.0
Other	1	0.7
Prefer not to say	2	1.3
Grand Total	150	100.0

Table 6. Ward participation for pop ups (across Hepburn Shire)

Ward	Ward total (sum)	Ward total (%)
Birch Ward	33	22.0
Cameron Ward	14	9.3
Coliban Ward	25	16.7
Creswick Ward	40	26.7
Holcombe Ward	32	21.3
Ratepayer - but live outside of Shire	6	4.0
Grand Total	150	100.0

Table 7. Level of satisfaction indicated at pop ups (across Hepburn Shire)

Level of Satisfaction	Shire total (sum)	Shire total (%)
1 - Very Satisfied	13	8.6
2 - Satisfied	31	20.4
3 - Somewhat Satisfied	44	28.9
4 - Somewhat Dissatisfied	26	17.1
5 - Dissatisfied	19	12.5
6 - Very Dissatisfied	18	11.8
7 - Not Sure	1	0.7
Grand Total	152	100.0

Areas for improvement by theme

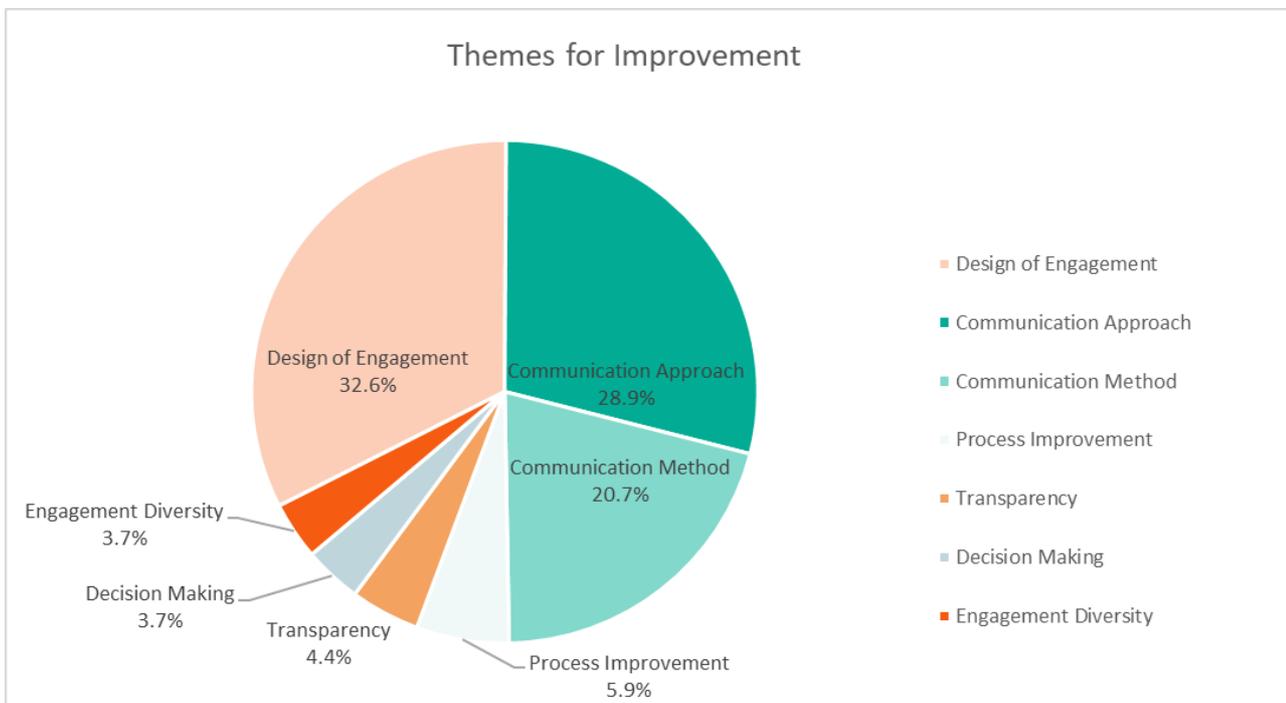


Table 8. Areas of Improvement by theme

Areas of Improvement Themes	%
Design of Engagement (framing, purpose, timing, influence, plan)	32.6
Communication Approach (tone, frequency, listening, plain english)	28.9
Communication Method (variety, not just online, use community groups)	20.7
Process Improvement (updates, close the loop, report actions)	5.9
Transparency (provide and publish transparent results of community consultation)	4.4
Decision Making (consideration of residents opinions before decisions are made, decisions are adequately explained)	3.7
Engagement Diversity (Youth and elderly representation, spectrum of voices/perspectives)	3.7
Grand Total	100.0

Table 9. Preferred Engagement Activities indicated at pop ups (Top 5 by percentage)

Engagement Activities	Shire Total	Shire Total (%)
Information Sessions	71	9.3
Online Survey	61	8.0
Meetings	53	7.0
Briefings	42	5.5
Website	41	5.4

NB: Each person was provided with the choice of 5 preferred options.

Table 10. Preferred Engagement Activities by Ward (Top 5 by ranking)

Engagement Activities	Clunes	Creswick	Daylesford	Glenlyon	Trentham
Briefings			4	4	
Facebook	2	5			5
Festival	4				
Focus Group			5		4
Forum				5	
Information Sessions	5	2	2	1	1
Meetings		3	1	2	
Online Survey		1	3		2
Other: Talk to Councillor		4		3	
Website	3				3
Workshops	1				

NB: Each person was provided with the choice of 5 preferred options.

Table 11. Preferred Communication Method indicated at pop ups – across Shire (Top 5 by percentage)

Communication Method	Shire Total	Shire Total (%)
Email	89	19.0
Newsletters	44	9.4
Newspaper	42	9.0
Facebook	38	8.1
Public Notices	33	7.1

Table 12. Preferred Communication Methods by Ward indicated at pop ups (Top 5 by ranking)

Communication Method	Clunes	Creswick	Daylesford	Glenlyon	Trentham
Email	5	1	1	1	1
Facebook	4	3	4		
Fact Sheets	1		3		5
Letter				4	
Media Release		4			
Newsletters	2	2	5	2	3
Newspaper			2	3	
Other: Community Newsletters				5	
Other: Talk to Your Councillor (Direct from Councillors)					2
Public Notices	3	5			4

3. Consolidated findings

Consolidated findings

Projectura has reviewed the findings from both the online survey and community pop ups. This section of the report compares participation by ward, age and gender and improvements identified by the community.

Table 13. Participation by ward across engagement activities

Ward	Pop up participation (%)	Survey participation (%)	% of Shire population
Creswick	26.7	14.0	33
Birch	22.0	36.1	22
Cameron	9.3	9.9	12
Coliban	16.7	17.4	12
Holcombe	21.3	19.2	12

Participation rates indicate that Creswick ward participants favour in person engagement to online engagement. Overall, Birch ward participation was at or above their overall percentage of Shire population. Cameron ward was underrepresented in the engagement, which was a result of poor weather for a community pop up. Coliban and Holcombe wards had representation above their percentage of Shire population.

Age Participation

The majority of online survey respondents were aged between 50-64 years (38.3%). The majority of participants in pop-ups were aged between 65 – 79 year of age (43.3%). The large participant representation by the over 55 years age groups has highlighted a low rate of participation for young people. Those under the age of 35 were found to have the lowest rate of participation with 6.9% for the online survey and 7.3% for the pop-ups.

Gender participation

Both the online survey and the community pop-ups attracted more female participation (60.3% of all respondents) than other genders. Male participation was 37.3% with the remaining 2.4% represented by those persons who identify as other, non-binary or preferred not to say.

Improvements

Pop up top 5		Survey top 5	
Design of Engagement	23.3%	Design of Engagement	32.6%
Process Improvement	20.7%	Communication Approach	28.9%
Communication Method	17.3%	Communication Method	20.7%
Communication Approach	16.7%	Process Improvement	5.9%
Decision Making	10.0%	Transparency	4.4%

There was general consensus across the online survey and pop ups about areas for improvement. Both groups identified the design of engagement, communication method and approach and process improvements as important areas to focus on.

Recommendations

In analysing the results of these engagement activities Projectura has identified a number of recommendations including:

Planning

- Participation targets for individual projects should be considered to track participation.
- Include a milestone review for community engagement projects to track participation rates, effectiveness of engagement activities and whether sufficient feedback has been received.
- Publishing project timelines on the Participate Hepburn website.
- Consider increasing level of engagement around public infrastructure/services projects.

Communication

- Consider starting up a bi-weekly email newsletter to keep residents up to date.
- Provide status updates at regular intervals throughout community engagement projects.
- Using email as a primary method of communication.

Continuous improvement/reporting

- For larger engagement activities, include milestone and project reviews as part of regular reporting to ordinary Council meetings.

Transparency

- Publish summary engagement reports on the Participate Hepburn website., when completed.

Consistent engagement

- Consider the re-introduction of regular listening posts for each ward.



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