



City of Canada Bay Social Issues Paper

City of Canada Bay Council
March 2021

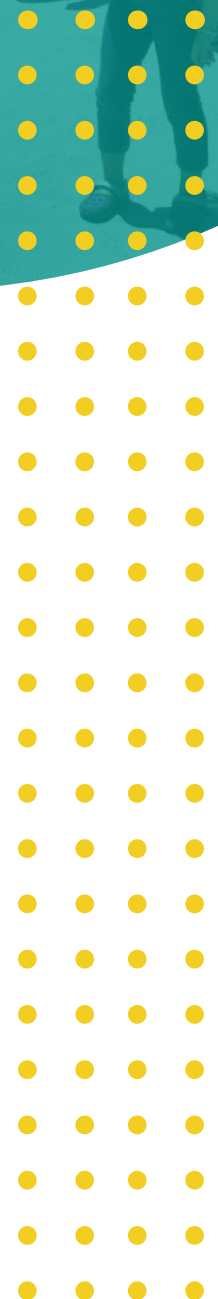


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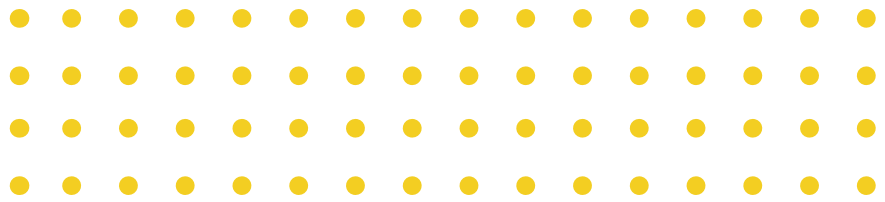


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Acknowledgement

City of Canada Bay Council and Cred Consulting would like to thank the community members, service providers and government agencies that have generously shared their concerns, aspirations and ideas regarding social issues in the City of Canada Bay to inform the development of this Social Issues Paper.

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

About the City of Canada Bay

The City of Canada Bay Local Government Area (LGA) is located on the banks of the Parramatta River, approximately 6 kilometres from the Sydney Central Business District (CBD). The Canada Bay community is characterised by a diversity of age, ethnicity, language and income groups distributed across suburbs.

In 2016, the Canada Bay population was approximately 88,000 people. Internal Council forecasting indicates that the population will continue to grow to 101,000 in 2026 and to 120,000 in 2036, an increase of 32,000 people (+37%), with growth concentrated in Rhodes (East and West), Five Dock and Canada Bay, Concord and North Strathfield/Strathfield Triangle.

This growth will also see increasing population density, and increasing cultural diversity in these high growth areas, particularly in Rhodes and North Strathfield/Strathfield and around the future metro stations.

Background and purpose

Cred Consulting was engaged by the City of Canada Bay Council (Council) to prepare a Social Issues Paper (the Paper) informed by community and stakeholder engagement and research.

The aim of the Social Issues Paper is to provide an understanding of some of the social and community issues facing the Canada Bay community and to provide an evidence-base for Council in developing their Social Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan, which will set out a path for the Canada Bay community to thrive, making the area a more socially-just, cohesive, and inclusive place to live.

For the purposes of this Paper, we have defined social issues as the challenges that impact on how we live, how we connect and how we experience our everyday life. We have taken an intersectional approach to understanding social issues in Canada Bay, recognising that different community cohorts may experience different and compounded challenges and obstacles based on age, ability, background or income level.

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the lives of Canada Bay community members, with some likely to experience continued and increased disadvantage. Research shows that the pandemic has exacerbated a range of social issues, including housing stress, domestic violence, discrimination and social isolation amongst other issues. In our analysis, we have attempted to balance some of the longer-term social issues in Canada Bay, while also recognising those that have emerged or been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

What we did

This Paper has been prepared based on findings from community and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken between November 2020 and February 2021, as well as findings from desktop research, including relevant social wellbeing research and other Council strategic documents.

In total, more than 200 people contributed their feedback and ideas to the development of the Social Issues Paper, including leaders and representatives from a broad cross-section of our community such as local groups, volunteers, school P&Cs and organisations and service providers. We also considered engagement findings from previous Council projects.

Community and stakeholder engagement activities delivered included:

- Community survey available online via Council's Collaborate platform (16 November - 7 February 2021)
- Stakeholder interviews conducted in December 2020
- Council staff workshop held online in October 2020
- Stakeholder focus groups conducted in February 2021
- Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting in November 2020.
- Intercept surveys and interviews with young people at Five Dock Skate Park, Five Dock Leisure Centre and Rhodes Waterside.

Canada Bay's social strengths

The City of Canada Bay community has many strengths that contribute to social cohesion, wellbeing and resilience. Some of the strengths identified by the community include:

Strong social networks and groups	Many people in Canada Bay are passionate about contributing to their community, with strong networks of community groups and organisations that are driven and supported by engaged volunteers of all ages.
Social diversity	Canada Bay is home to people of all ages, from many different walks of life and cultural backgrounds. This diversity is a strength that is welcomed and celebrated.
Green spaces and parks	Canada Bay has beautiful green spaces, parks and foreshore areas that support community wellbeing with opportunities for recreation and socialising.
Cultural diversity	Our increasingly culturally diverse community can bring new ideas, events and social activities to our area, as well as helping us recognise and respect different ways of being.
Our community facilities	Canada Bay's community facilities, such as libraries and community centres, provide spaces for the community to learn, share, be creative and collaborate. The Connection in Rhodes is considered a best practice multipurpose community facility.
Council support for programs	Services Council provides (e.g. bus outings for seniors and childcare centres, gymnastics/leisure programs, library programs) are highly valued by the community.
Community hearts in town centres	Local town centres in Canada Bay provide a focal point for community life and support wellbeing by providing places for people to meet and connect.
Service provider networks	Service providers operating in the Canada Bay area provide vital support and care for vulnerable people in the community, and Concord Hospital is one of the area's assets.
Relatively high incomes	Overall, Canada Bay has a relatively high household income compared to Greater Sydney (\$2,058 compared to \$1,745 per week).
Older people's wellbeing	Findings from the Index of Wellbeing for Older Australians (IOWA) indicate that seniors in some areas of Canada Bay have high wellbeing (Drummoyne-Rodd Point and Concord - Mortlake - Cabarita), however other areas (Five Dock - Abbotsford-Wareemba and Concord West - North Strathfield) have relatively low wellbeing.
Children's development	Findings from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicate that Canada Bay has a relatively low percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable compared to NSW and Australia.
Low crime	Findings from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research suggest that Canada Bay is a relatively safe place to live, with lower or similar rates of crime compared to neighbouring LGAs.

Key quotes from the community and stakeholders:

"The elderly in the community can become isolated when living in their own homes. The bus outings provided by Council for the Seniors is fantastic as it helps them combat social isolation and connect with others in the community."

"Canada Bay parks & gardens provide serene spaces for families to be together, children to play and a space to be alone & reflect."

"Canada Bay Council is doing very well and has planned lots of social and cultural activities in Rhodes - well done."

"I hear from lots of people who are missing Council's bus trips. When the trips return, this is going to be really good for the mental health of people who have been in lockdown. They could potentially look at organising some more of these."

"[During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns], it kept us going just to see local faces & all our local business owners were so grateful to see us and for the support during such hard times financially."

"We have always been emboldened by Canada Bay Council's leadership in owning, providing and planning for affordable housing - they have genuinely been a forward looking Council with exemplary partnerships across levels of Government."

Canada Bay's social issues

We have identified a number of priority social issues for Canada Bay based on community and stakeholder engagement and research. These include:

Population growth pressure on existing infrastructure	Canada Bay will have approximately 32,000 additional residents by 2036, and community members said that population growth and increasing residential density is putting pressure on existing social infrastructure such as roads, public transport, schools, open spaces, community facilities and other services.
Declining social cohesion and increasing social isolation	Community members said they are concerned about declining social cohesion and increasing social isolation in Canada Bay and the associated negative impacts on physical and mental health, in particular for older people and people living alone. People would like to see more programs, events and public spaces that encourage social connection and cohesion.
Supporting culturally diverse community members	Our community is increasingly culturally diverse which can bring issues around social cohesion and connection with neighbourhoods and services; racist or exclusionary behaviour; and specific issues such as social isolation including for some of our older CALD grandparents who have caring responsibility for their grandchildren and limited English skills.
Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours	Some people told us that discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours can be an issue for people living with disability and older people. It was also noted that there was an increase in incidence of racism against Chinese community members in Canada Bay during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Mental health and wellbeing	Mental health and wellbeing can be a challenge for residents of all ages and backgrounds, and the community said there are some barriers to accessing mental health services in the Canada Bay area, including limited availability and affordability. For example, while we have a high youth population, there is no Headspace in the LGA.
Access to public transport	While some areas of Canada Bay have good access to public transport , the community told us that other areas are poorly serviced which impacts on their ability to participate in the community and access services and can contribute to social isolation, particularly for older people in more established and low growth suburbs such as Drummoyne.
Ageing population	Canada Bay is home to an ageing population with an increasing need for aged care services and community members would like to see more programs and universally designed public domain and facilities to ensure people of all ages can actively participate in community life.
High housing and rental prices	Canada Bay has high housing and rental prices , which can put low to moderate income households under financial pressure and increase the risk of displacement.

Key quotes from the community and stakeholders:

"Informed by what families have told us, isolation can lead to depression. Grandparents looking after young children with no support in a foreign country experience mental health issues."

"Many people live alone, especially (but not just) the elderly and with electronics and working from home and the rise in single person households I see a decline in daily social connection and interaction that impacts on mental and physical wellbeing."

"I'm aware the Canada Bay council area is relatively wealthy socio-economically, poverty is still always a concern, especially for folks who are disabled (including psychosocial disability), women, recent migrants."

"The lack of affordable housing also impacts on loneliness for older people in the community, as their family may not be able to afford to live close by. We're lucky to have our kids living close. I'm a carer for my wife and I know I can always phone my kids for help."

Social issues continued...

Homelessness	There are also people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Canada Bay, and there is a need for an increase in affordable housing supply and crisis accommodation.
Inequality	While Canada Bay is generally a relatively affluent community, community members said there are also pockets of socioeconomic disadvantage and were concerned about inequality across the community .
Things to do or places to go for young people	Young people and parents said that there are few things to do or places to go for young people in Canada Bay if you don't play sport, and said there is a need for more opportunities for young people to have their say. The only public high school in the area has 14 demountables and there will be increased pressures with high population growth in suburbs nearby Concord.
Access and inclusion for people living with disability	Community members identified a wide range of opportunities to support access and inclusion for people living with disability and carers in Canada Bay , including improved accessible design of town centres, community facilities and streets, more awareness of disability and positive attitudes in the community, improved transport services and increased employment pathways.
LGBTQIA+ acceptance	Community members said that there is still work to be done in Canada Bay to encourage more positive attitudes and behaviours towards LGBTQIA+ community members , and there are no local support groups or services.
Visibility of First Nations. people, culture and heritage	Community members want to see increased recognition, visibility and celebration of First Nations. people, culture and heritage in the Canada Bay LGA.
Domestic violence	Stakeholder interviews and research indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased the incidence as well as the critical nature of domestic violence . One service provider working in the Canada Bay area told us that they have seen a particular increase in the number of older women (50+) contacting them to access support.
Low provision rate of welfare services in the LGA	Council does not deliver social welfare services directly, is not the best placed, and does not have the resources to deliver specialist social services directly. However, there is a low provision in the area, and Council can play an advocacy role .
Lack of promotion of and collaboration between existing groups	While Canada Bay is home to many community organisations, people told us there is a need for increased promotion of existing groups and opportunity for more collaboration between community groups, NGOs, and service providers to share resources and support each other.

Key quotes from the community and stakeholders:

"Programs for seniors. I would appreciate a local affordable gently exercise program and access to a Hydrotherapy program."

"I'm concerned about our young adults and high school aged children. It's been a tough year and I'm not sure there is much to engage them in this area. My son loves the skate park, but that's not for everyone. I worry for my teenage daughter and that there's not much for her, and at some point I know my son will move on from the skate park."

"Disability access is out of date in the City of Canada Bay. Many footpaths are difficult to traverse with a pram or wheelchair. Several footpaths & pram crossings are ineffective, & often absent in my area. Amenities need to be updated to reflect the current disability standards."

"Crisis support is needed in the area especially for domestic violence victims. I've heard the police are not always helpful."

"Childcare - council run with good reputation has a waitlist, it's likely that we will struggle to afford this when required in the next few months."

Digital divide	Council staff and community members indicated that the increasing shift toward online service delivery can be a challenge for people in the Canada Bay community, particularly for those who are unable to engage online or don't have access to a computer or internet at home with a need to "bridge the digital divide."
Service providers located outside of the LGA	Most service providers that operate in the Canada Bay area are located outside of the LGA , including in larger centres such as Burwood, Ashfield and Strathfield. This can be a barrier to residents in accessing services, especially for those who are transport disadvantaged.
Forecast under supply of community centre floor space	Council's Social Infrastructure Strategy identified that Canada Bay has a significant current and forecast undersupply of community centre floor space , as well as an oversupply of small ageing community centre buildings which is a barrier to services providers and community groups in running programs to support the community. Most existing facilities are venues for hire and are not fit-out with offices to provide spaces for services to operate and activate them.

Key quotes from the community and stakeholders:

"Domestic abuse and violence is an ongoing, hidden issue across all Australian communities and has a huge impact on families, particularly women and children."

Most urgent social issues facing the City of Canada Bay community (survey results):



Figure 1 - Online survey responses to the question: in your opinion what are the most urgent social issues facing the City of Canada Bay community?

Based on findings from community and stakeholder engagement and research, we have identified a number of draft priorities for Council to address the social issues that have emerged and encourage social sustainability .



Why is this important?

Research shows that areas that are more socially connected are happier and healthier. At the same time, Resilient Sydney has identified a lack of social connection as a major barrier to resilience in the face of shocks and stresses. Social isolation too has been shown to be a significant challenge for mental and physical health and wellbeing.

As the Canada Bay community grows and becomes increasingly socially diverse, it will be important to encourage connections between people of all ages, abilities, cultures, sexualities and income levels to support community cohesion and harmony.

The Canada Bay council area is fortunate to have many active community groups and organisations and public spaces that provide opportunities for social connection, with opportunity to build on these strengths to further connect our community for strength.

What did the community say?

The Canada Bay community told us they are concerned about declining social cohesion and rising social isolation in Canada Bay. They said they would like to see more spaces, programs and events in the area that bring people together and encourage social connection for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and incomes. In particular, community members said they think there is still work to be done to further connect residents in higher density and growing communities such as Rhodes and North Strathfield.

Key opportunities

- Increase visibility of local First Nations people and culture
- Affordable and inclusive programs, events, services and spaces that encourage community connections and cohesion (e.g. such as playgroups, bus trips for seniors)
- Explore initiatives that address social isolation, particularly for our ageing and diverse population
- Connect people to information about what's going on in the area (e.g. social groups, events and services, intergenerational activities)
- Raise awareness of social issues in the community (e.g. disability inclusion, domestic violence, homelessness)
- Support the community to access and use digital technology resources, including older people and people from lower socioeconomic groups
- Opportunities for social connection for people who are not fluent in English, for example culturally diverse grandparents caring for children
- Engage with volunteers and community groups
- Value the knowledge and skills of older people and sharing experience with younger people
- Encourage cross cultural interactions/activities (e.g. celebrating events/ days)



GOAL 2:

Infrastructure and services meet the needs of our growing and changing population

Why is this important?

The Canada Bay community is growing and changing and this will continue to increase pressure on existing, and drive demand for new and improved, infrastructure and social services to support the wellbeing of our community.

In Canada Bay's higher density areas, it will be particularly important that residents have adequate access to public spaces outside the home for social activities, recreation and relaxation that can support and connect people and thereby contribute to social sustainability.

Council can play a role in providing new or improving existing infrastructure and services so they can "work harder" to meet growing and changing community needs as well as advocate to or collaborate with other levels of government and organisations to ensure provision.

What did the community say?

Canada Bay community members told us they are concerned about the social impacts of population growth and increasing residential density, including increasing pressure on existing infrastructure such as roads, public transport (which compounds traffic and congestion) and public schools.

People also highlighted the need for higher density areas to provide outdoor spaces and community facilities outside the home.

Key opportunities

- Provide increased and multipurpose social infrastructure to meet the needs of growing population - and unlock or upgrade existing community facilities for use by community groups and organisations
- Advocate for better transport services and connections
- Improve pedestrian and cycling connections by improving existing infrastructure with upgrades such as shade and shelter
- Continue to plan for provision of housing supply, choice and affordability
- Increased programs and spaces for young people to connect and engage
- Advocate for additional public secondary school to meet increased demand as existing Concord High is at capacity and population is forecast to grow
- Continued improvements to attitudes and behaviours regarding the accessibility of the built environment to promote inclusion and participation for people living with disability and older people



GOAL 3:

Coordinated services and programs support our most vulnerable residents

Why is this important?

The Canada Bay community is characterised by a diversity of age, ethnicity, language and income groups distributed across suburbs. This can be a challenge to ensuring the equitable provision of a range of appropriate and accessible services that meet residents' needs no matter their age, ability, background or socioeconomic status.

In particular, vulnerable and disadvantaged community members need to be supported and where service gaps exist, Council can play an important role in advocating for and coordinating services to ensure a more inclusive and equitable city.

What did the community say?

The Canada Bay community told us that while Canada Bay is often perceived to be a relatively well-off place, there are also people in the community who are more disadvantaged than others, including people living with disability and carers, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and people experiencing domestic or family violence. Community members said there is a need to support the most vulnerable community members and ensure they have access to appropriate and adequate services.

Key opportunities

- Ensure equitable access to appropriate and inclusive services for people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities and incomes
- Build understanding of service gaps identified by community, including mental health services and youth services
- Work with local service providers to understand barriers and access to mental health services, particularly for young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds



GOAL 4:

Strong collaboration and partnerships support sustainable social outcomes

Why is this important?

There is increasing expectation of local governments to deliver services that contribute to social wellbeing, cohesion, inclusion and resilience. While Council is well-placed to understand and respond to social issues in the community and does deliver some social services such as childcare, its responsibilities, resources and capacity are limited.

In a resource-constrained environment, collaboration and partnerships across levels of government and with service providers, community organisations and neighbouring councils are vital, with opportunities to share knowledge and resources to deliver efficient and proactive responses to social issues.

A regional approach and building relationships with neighbouring councils will be particularly important for Canada Bay to reduce barriers for residents, as many service providers are located outside the Canada Bay council area and operate on a regional basis. There are also opportunities for increased collaboration and integration across Council teams.

Key opportunities

Many community engagement participants told us that they understand that responsibility for many of their concerns about social issues (such as population growth, transport, schools) lie with the State or Federal government. However, they would like to see Council continue to advocate and proactively plan for future provision of social services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing and changing Canada Bay community.

Key opportunities

- Continue to build strong relationships with service providers and community groups to share information and resources
- Collaborate with neighbouring councils to address regional social infrastructure and services gaps

Introduction



1. Introduction

1.1. Background and purpose

Cred Consulting was engaged by the City of Canada Bay Council (Council) to prepare a Social Issues Paper informed by community and stakeholder engagement and desktop research.

The aim of the Social Issues Paper is to identify key social issues and challenges affecting the Canada Bay community. It will provide an evidence-base for Council in developing their Social Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan, which will set out a path for the Canada Bay community to thrive, making the area a more socially-just, cohesive, and inclusive place to live for everyone.

This Social Issues Paper is not designed to be an in-depth study of each issue or target group, however highlights key areas of concern or need in Canada Bay, in particular for disadvantaged groups.

1.2. Approach

This Social Issues Paper has been prepared based on findings from community and stakeholder engagement, as well as findings from desktop research, including relevant social wellbeing research and other Council reports and strategic documents.

For the purposes of this Paper, we have **defined social issues** as the challenges that impact on how we live, how we connect and how we experience our everyday life. We have taken an intersectional approach to understanding social issues in Canada Bay, recognising that different community cohorts may experience different and compounded challenges and obstacles based on age, ability, background or income level.

We know that the **COVID-19 pandemic** has had a significant impact on the lives of Canada Bay community members, with some likely to experience continued and increased disadvantage. Research shows that the pandemic has exacerbated a range of social issues, including housing stress, domestic violence, discrimination and social isolation amongst other issues. In our analysis, we have attempted to balance some of the longer-term social issues in Canada Bay, while also recognising those that have emerged or been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3. Engagement overview

In total, more than 200 people participated in community and stakeholder engagement activities from November 2020 through to February 2021 including leaders and representatives from a broad cross-section of our community such as local groups, volunteers, school P&Cs and organisations and service providers.

Engagement activities conducted specifically for this project included:

- Promotional postcard sent to all households in the City
- Community online survey (110 responses)
- Youth surveys (25 responses)
- 17 interviews with local community groups and service providers
- 3 stakeholder focus groups with community groups and service providers (10 participants)
- Council staff workshop (30 participants), and
- Meeting with Council's Access Advisory Committee.

This paper has also been informed by a review of findings from community and stakeholder engagement conducted by Council on previous projects.

1.4. Report structure

Part A of this Social Issues Paper outlines general social issues facing the Canada Bay community, with reference to specific community cohorts who may be more vulnerable to those issues.

Part B summarises key social issues relating to specific community cohorts in the Canada Bay community, including:

- Older people
- Children and families
- Young people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- First Nations peoples
- People living with disability
- LGBTQIA+ communities.

Part C provides a summary of outcomes from community and stakeholder engagement activities.

1.5. About the City of Canada Bay

The City of Canada Bay Local Government Area (LGA) is located on the banks of the Parramatta River, approximately 6 kilometres from the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) and is bound by the neighbouring LGAs of the Inner West, Burwood, Strathfield and Parramatta.

Between 2011 and 2016, the Canada Bay population grew by more than 12,000 people. Internal Council forecasting indicates that the population will continue to grow from 88,000 in 2016 to 120,000 in 2036, an increase of 32,000 people (+37%), with growth concentrated in Rhodes, Five Dock and Canada Bay, Concord and North Strathfield/Strathfield Triangle.

While the infographic over page provides insights into the Canada Bay demographic profile across the whole LGA, the community is characterised by a diversity of age, ethnicity, language and income groups distributed across suburbs. For example, the suburbs of Strathfield Triangle, North Strathfield and Rhodes differ to the rest of LGA, being younger, more culturally and linguistically diverse and having lower median incomes compared to other areas.

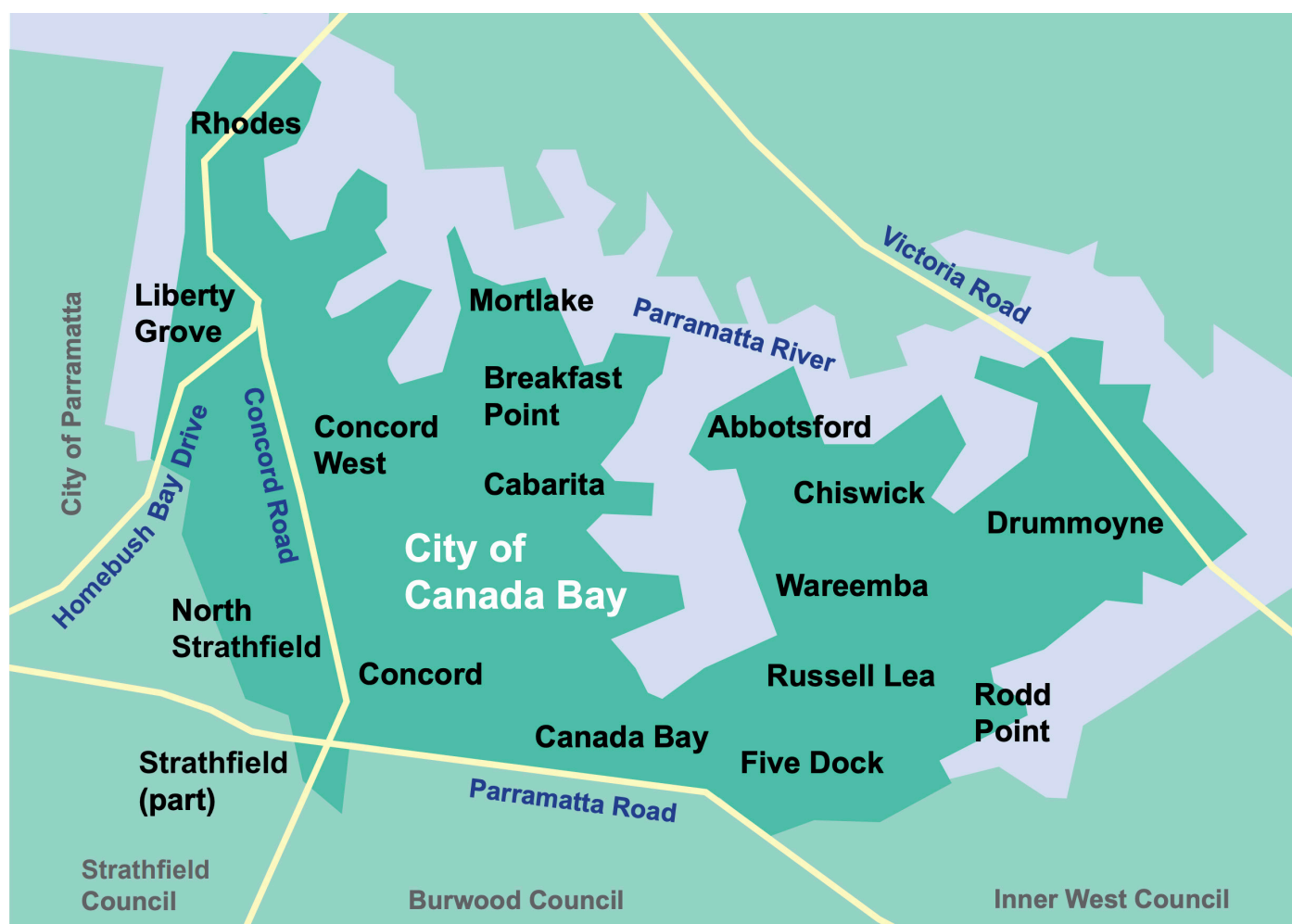


Figure 2 - Map of suburbs within the City of Canada Bay council area

The following provides insights into the Canada Bay demographic profile, if the community consisted of 100 people or households.

If Canada Bay was 100 people...

1 

people are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

36

is the median age

20 

people are aged under 18 years

9 

people are aged 18 to 24 years

20 

people are aged over 60 years

40 

people were born overseas

41

people speak a language other than English at home

Mandarin (10)
Italian (7)
Korean (4)

would speak these languages

4 

people in need assistance due to disability

17 

people volunteer

8 

people are studying at University

38 

people have a university degree

If Canada Bay was 100 households...

21 

lone person households

6 

group households

31 

couples with children households

26 

couples without children households

8 

one parent households

41 

households live in high density dwellings



\$2,058

median weekly household income

14 low-income households earning <\$650 a week

35 high-income households earning >\$2,500 a week

32 

households are renting privately, while 3 are renting social housing

29 

households owned outright

17 

households don't own a motor vehicle

2 

people cycle to work

6 

people walk to work

1.6. Policy context

Council has traditionally prepared a range of plans to ensure the wellbeing of the community. These plans include:

- Child and Family Needs Strategy
- Positive Ageing Strategy
- Community Harmony Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan.

This Social Issues Paper will provide the evidence-base to guide the development of a Social Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (the Plan), which is proposed to update, consolidate, simplify these plans as a single document.

The aim is for the Plan to provide a coordinated approach to thinking about and understanding the issues, as well as setting the directions and actions to achieve a positive social outcome over time.

1.7. The roles of Council

Local government, in partnership with other government agencies and the private and community sectors, plays a crucial role in addressing local social issues and planning for social sustainability. The main ways in which Council can do this is through:

- Leading and advocating
- Listening, planning and regulating
- Building relationships, partnerships and capacity, and
- Delivering infrastructure, services and grants.

It is important to note that many of the social issues facing the Canada Bay community are difficult to tackle and cannot be addressed by Council alone, including housing affordability, access to transport and education, many of which fall largely under the responsibility of the State Government.

As Council does not currently deliver direct welfare services to the community other than childcare services, it is also important to acknowledge the crucial importance of community service providers in supporting the wellbeing of our community (e.g. housing and homelessness services, childcare protection services, disability services, employment services, family and community groups, etc.)

Addressing the social issues outlined in this Paper requires shared responsibility and funding across levels of government, as well as strong collaboration with neighbouring council areas, community service providers, private sector, not for profits and community groups and organisations.

The Social Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan will be an important communication and advocacy tool to outline a commitment on social issues to levels of government, community service providers as well as the public.

Part A

Key social issues in the City of Canada Bay



2. Key social issues in Canada Bay

The following key social issues facing the City of Canada Bay community were identified through community and stakeholder engagement and desktop research. We have taken an intersectional approach to understanding social issues in Canada Bay, recognising that different community cohorts may experience different and compounded challenges and obstacles based on age, gender, ability, background or income level. Part B provides an overview of social issues by community cohort.



Social impacts of population growth

The City of Canada Bay is one of Sydney's fastest growing areas. This is due to population growth, urban renewal initiatives, infrastructure projects and the flow on effect from similar growth in neighbouring areas.

44% of community survey respondents said that population growth and increasing residential density is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay. Respondents said they are concerned about the impacts of growth and density on social cohesion and local character, as well as increasing pressure on existing infrastructure such as roads, public transport, parking, public schools, open spaces, community facilities and other essential services.

While many participants told us that they understand that responsibility for many of their concerns lie with the State or Federal government, some noted they would like to see Council continue to advocate and proactively plan for future provision of services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing and changing Canada Bay community.

Community members also said that, with a growing number of people living in high rise apartments, including in areas such as Rhodes and North Strathfield, there is increasing need for access to quality public spaces outside the home to work, study, socialise, relax and exercise to support wellbeing and foster community connections, including outdoor spaces that function as "backyards" for people living in apartments.

"I think everyone is worried about the population growth in the area." - Survey respondent

"Services have not kept pace with growth. The State Government has not provided "good" planning for schools, transport and hospitals." - Survey respondent



Declining social cohesion

Research shows that areas that are more socially connected are happier, healthier and more resilient in the face of shocks and stresses (Resilient Sydney Strategy). One of the City of Canada Bay's greatest assets is its many community groups and organisations, which provide opportunities for social connection and interaction driven by the hard work and commitment of volunteers.

However, despite this strength, 40% of community survey respondents told us they think declining social cohesion and increasing social isolation is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay. Many respondents expressed concern about declining social cohesion, in particular in light of a growing and changing population and busy modern lifestyles as people have less time to get involved in their local communities.

As Canada Bay becomes increasingly socially diverse, community members said they would like to see more opportunities for social connections between people of all ages, abilities, cultures, sexualities and income levels to support community cohesion and harmony. Some noted that they would like to see more public spaces, events and activities in the Canada Bay area that can bring people together, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

They also think there are opportunities for increased promotion and collaboration to support the existing social activities and initiatives of Canada Bay's community groups and organisations.

"The significant increase in population density coupled with social isolation of highly mobile and stressed lifestyles is creating a massive disconnect with community and lack of empathy amongst "neighbours." - Survey respondent



Figure 3 - Community members told us that Council programs such as Senior's morning teas and bus trips help to connect seniors to the community and reduce social isolation and loneliness (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)



Social isolation and loneliness

Social isolation and loneliness are on the rise in communities across Sydney and the globe and research shows that this can be very harmful to both mental and physical health (AIHW).

Increasing social isolation in the Canada Bay community is a significant social issue as indicated by the community and service providers, particularly for vulnerable people such as older people, people who are not fluent in English, those with limited support networks and those who don't feel welcome or included to participate.

Of particular relevance to areas with an ageing population such as Canada Bay, research shows that older adults are at increased risk for loneliness and social isolation because they are more likely to face factors such as living alone, the loss of family or friends, chronic illness, and hearing loss (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017).

Some noted that COVID19 has exacerbated social isolation across the community, including vulnerable people who may have been scared to leave the house (including people living with disability) or people who have been working from home.

"Loneliness is the biggest social issue we have noticed since moving to the Canada Bay area. We were surprised by the number of old people that visit our cafe by themselves every day - and through conversations have found that they are often socially isolated due to the death of a partner." - Stakeholder interview

"Social isolation is a large and growing issue in the area. Isolation is driven by a number of causes such as the increasing number of older, less mobile residents, and the new challenges of creating community in high density developments with lots of people who live alone." - CSP focus group participant



Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing can be a challenge for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. 40% of community survey respondents said mental health and wellbeing is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay.

Many community members identified mental health as a significant social challenge for residents of all ages that has been exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic as people may have been more isolated. In particular, community members identified mental health as a priority area for young people, older people and people living with disability and carers in the community. 16% of survey respondents said they had experienced barriers to accessing mental health services

Service providers identified that there are some barriers to accessing support, including stigma, affordability and limited number of available services in the LGA. They also pointed to the importance of access to low-cost community programs to reduce social isolation, increase social connection and grow resilience within the community.

"Grandparents looking after young children with no support in a foreign country experience mental health issues." - Survey respondent

"Young people are becoming increasingly isolated from each other and use devices to occupy their time, rather than engaging with other young people out-doors, challenging themselves and building resilience. This impacts their mental health and ability to meet life's challenges." - Survey respondent

"Isolation and mental health are massive issues around the country right now. There are not enough services that are affordable and accessible, and they don't target the people who need them." - Survey respondent



Cost of housing and socio-economic inequity

30% of community survey respondents said housing affordability is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay. While overall the Canada Bay council area has a relatively low percentage of households experiencing housing stress (9.7%), some areas had higher than average housing stress, and these areas also have a higher average (more than 43%) renting: Strathfield (Triangle) (24%); Rhodes (West) (23%); Rhodes (22%), and North Strathfield (12.4%).

Community members of all ages expressed concern about the rising cost of living and housing in the Canada Bay LGA. In particular, young people were worried about not being able to stay living in their community when they grow up, and service providers indicated this is also a stressor on older people at risk of displacement. Access to affordable and diverse local housing options is a priority for the Canada Bay community, including for key workers such as at Concord Hospital.

People are concerned that the high cost of housing is leading to inequality, with 19% of respondents indicating socio-economic inequality across the community is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay. Community members told us that, while Canada Bay is home to a relatively affluent population, there are also pockets of socioeconomic disadvantage, including lower-income households, people experiencing housing stress or homelessness and people living in social housing. Stakeholders indicated that the increasing cost of living and housing is a significant issue in Canada Bay that puts vulnerable people at risk of displacement. People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds of all ages require affordable opportunities to participate in community life, including equitable access to housing, public transport, (health) services, activities and programs.

"Affordability of living in the Canada Bay Area is very difficult as a full-time working single mum. My rent for living close to work as a teacher is 49% of my income and I have no way of saving a deposit to purchase a home." - Survey respondent

"Housing is expensive - we own our house but my adult children have no hope of buying in the area." - Survey respondent

"Pockets of poverty, financial stressors from covid, rising home prices - all place stress on families. We have many asset rich residents and we have struggling families in social housing or kids who can't afford to buy in the area." - Survey respondent



Homelessness

The 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing estimated the number of people who were homeless or marginally housed in Canada Bay at 262 persons. Moreover, ABS Census data indicates that homelessness is increasing across Australia. However, rough sleepers represent only a relatively small proportion of those experiencing homelessness, with anecdotal information from Council staff suggesting that couchsurfing and overcrowding are prevalent in the Canada Bay community, as well as people sleeping in their vehicle.

Interviews with service providers and peak bodies indicated that some people in the Canada Bay community are at higher risk of homelessness, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; older women aged over 55 and children and young people living with a single parent or fleeing family and domestic violence. Service providers also indicated there is a need to further investigate issues of overcrowded dwellings in higher density areas such as Rhodes based on anecdotal evidence.

The Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020 warns that an imminent surge in homelessness may occur as a result of JobKeeper payments and JobSeeker Coronavirus Supplements being scaled back and bans on evictions lifted. It identifies as major causes of homelessness a lack of affordable rental housing for low income households, and a lack of social housing.

"As Canada Bay is perceived to be an affluent community, people are often surprised that there may be issues such as homelessness in the area - however it is hidden and obscured, particularly in the higher socioeconomic suburbs." - Stakeholder interview

"As a new person to this beautiful area, I was very surprised to see a homeless person on the street in Five Dock last week. This is so devastating, as it was a woman about my age." - Survey respondent



Figure 4 - Community members said they would like more opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity in Canada Bay, such as festivals or events, and more opportunities for intercultural connection (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)



Ageing population

Older people living in Canada Bay are a diverse group of people, including people with different incomes, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Over the next twenty years to 2036, the population of old people aged over 60 years in Canada Bay is forecast to increase by over 54% which will increase demand for access to transport, services and facilities catering for an ageing population.

Many community members and stakeholders spoke about social issues facing older people in the Canada Bay community, with specific issues detailed at Part B. These included social isolation and loneliness, access to transport, housing affordability and cost of living as a challenge to ageing in place, barriers to accessing services and accessibility of the built environment.

Service providers in particular spoke about how older people from culturally diverse backgrounds may be at risk of social isolation, including due to language barriers. For example, service providers indicated there is a growing population of older people from China living in Canada Bay, many of whom have caretaking roles for grandchildren however have limited support networks and knowledge of services.

"If people can't stay living in their community they also lose their social networks. Suitable housing options are needed for older people as their needs change. Aged care and housing for older people is needed and the high cost of entry needs to be addressed."
- CSP focus group participant

"The elderly in the community can become isolated when living in their own homes. The bus outings provided by Council for the Seniors is fantastic as it helps them combat social isolation and connect with others in the community." - Social issues survey respondent



Increasing cultural diversity

Canada Bay is increasingly home to a culturally diverse population, many of whom are living in Canada Bay's higher density suburbs, such as Rhodes and North Strathfield. This diversity is a strength for the area that brings vibrancy, new perspectives and skills to the area.

However, there are also challenges to ensuring people who may not be fluent in English or are newly arrived to Australia are connected to, and able to access, services that meet their needs. This includes services that are culturally competent, inclusive, appropriate and available in community languages.

There may also be issues such as racism that need to be addressed, for example with some community members indicating that residents from Chinese cultural backgrounds experienced increased incidence of racism during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There are a lot of retired working-class people of colour who live around here and they have traditionally been disconnected because they are too poor to get involved. Now during COVID they are even more socially isolated." - Stakeholder interview

"People from CALD backgrounds don't really look for information locally - they look for information in language paper. Council can build stronger relationships with local in language media." - Stakeholder interview

"The Australian service environment is complicated - and CALD people find it difficult to navigate the system. There is a lack of consistency in programs over time which people find confusing." - Stakeholder interview



Figure 5 - Libraries, community centres, leisure centres and other community facilities are places where Canada Bay residents can meet, learn and participate in community programs. (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)



Transport and issues getting around

29% of community survey respondents said access to transport / getting around is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay.

While some areas of Canada Bay have good public transport access, others do not, which can be a significant challenge in accessing services and participating in community life, particularly for older people, young people, people living with disability and other transport disadvantaged groups, which in turn impacts on their wellbeing. For example, community members told us that limited bus services to the hospital are an ongoing and significant issue for older community members in accessing health services, with a need for continued advocacy by Council. One service provider indicated that it can be difficult to match volunteers with those in need in areas with limited public transport connections.

“As an older person I would like council to be aware of the isolation some people can experience if they don’t have family or access to flexible transport.” - Social issues survey respondent

“Poor public transport connections across the area make it particularly important to retain local services. For example, it’s hard to access the library in Five Dock or Concord from Drummoyne unless you drive.” - CSP focus group participant

“Increasing urban density means more crowded public transport. Combined with the high price of housing it is making what was once a lovely area harder to access and live in.” - Social issues survey respondent



Limited and ageing social infrastructure

Libraries, community centres, leisure centres and other community facilities have significant social benefits and are places where Canada Bay residents can meet, participate in community programs, learn, attend community events, and create social capital. This is particularly important for people living in higher density areas in Canada Bay such as Rhodes and North Strathfield who need to access “third spaces” outside of their apartments.

However, Council’s Social Infrastructure Strategy has identified that the Canada Bay council area has a significant current and forecast undersupply of community centre floor space, as well as an oversupply of small ageing community centre buildings, and identifies a need for more multipurpose and staffed facilities across the area to support the community. Some service providers noted that they would like to see more hireable affordable venues where they can organise community programs across the LGA, such as play groups.

“We are part of Abbotsford scouts due to the small hall size the group are unable to take new members.” - Social issues survey respondent

“We now have a community centre in Concord but there are no staff employed to develop programs and activities for all ages. That would help promote the sense of community we are losing.” - Social issues survey respondent



Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours

15% of community survey respondents said discriminatory attitudes and behaviours is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay.

Community members told us that they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in Canada Bay, including based on race, sexuality and disability. In particular, Chinese community members told us that they and their friends and family had experienced increased incidence of racism during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members of the LGBTQIA+ community also told us that they think there is still work to be done to make the Canada Bay community more welcoming and inclusive, and identified that there is a gap in support groups for LGBTQIA+ people including young people.

"Myself and my partner and our friends and families have experienced racist behaviours in Concord and North Strathfield. In other areas this may be experienced as a one-off thing, but it has been recurring since I moved back to the area. There seems to be a fertile ground for racism in the community. Covid has exacerbated anti-Chinese sentiment and gave people an excuse to be more racist." - Stakeholder interview

"The insular community mindset of the area sees many minority groups looked 'down upon' - this has been my experience when walking around public areas in various suburbs within the community." - Social issues survey respondent



Limited access to services within the LGA

Service providers and Council staff indicated that the limited presence of service providers located within the Canada Bay council area is a challenge to social wellbeing. With the majority of service providers located outside the area in Burwood and Ashfield, community members currently have to travel to neighbouring council areas to access most types of services. Compounded by limited transport access from some suburbs, this is a significant barrier to accessing services for residents.

Moreover, Council staff noted that Council has significantly reduced its role in direct delivery of social services and has limited resources and capacity to deliver programs that support and bring the community together.



Domestic and family violence

Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) statistics indicate that City of Canada Bay has relatively low rates of reported domestic assault compared to NSW, however, service providers interviewed indicated, and research shows, that domestic violence continues to be underreported, including in relatively affluent communities such as Canada Bay where it is likely to be hidden.

Stakeholder interviews and research suggest that the COVID19 pandemic has increased incidence as well as the critical nature of domestic violence. One service provider working in the Canada Bay area indicated that they have seen a particular increase in the number of older women (50+) attempting to contact them to access support.

Stakeholders identified that some people in the Canada Bay community are particularly vulnerable, including women who have no income or women who may have migrated to Australia but do not have a visa or support network. Stakeholders identified that there is a gap in crisis and transitional accommodation for victims of domestic and family violence in the Canada Bay area and would like to see Council advocate for increased affordable, emergency, social and supported housing.

"I live and work in the area and the families I talk to many who are affected by domestic violence." - Social issues survey respondent

"Domestic abuse and violence is an ongoing, hidden issue across all Australian communities and has a huge impact on families, particularly women and children." - Social issues survey respondent

"Victims of domestic violence need access to emergency transitional housing, and COVID19 has seen increased reporting." Stakeholder interview



Bridging the digital divide

Community and stakeholders indicated that the increasing shift toward online service delivery (e.g. Centrelink) can be a challenge for people in the Canada Bay community, particularly for those who are unable to engage in online environments or don't have access to a computer or internet at home. Council library staff noted that they see this in every cohort, from children trying to do their homework through to older people and people from lower socioeconomic groups. Community members said they would like to see Council continue to play a role in providing access to digital literacy training and resources.



Figure 6 - Community members said they would like more community programs that are inclusive of people living with disability, and not just separated activities, to bring people of all abilities together (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)



Disability access and inclusion

The Canada Bay council area is home to people of all abilities. In 2016, 4.2% of the population, or 3,675 people, reported needing assistance with core activities in their day-to-day lives, relatively low compared with 4.9% for Greater Sydney. However some suburbs have a higher proportion of people living with disability and these also have older populations.

12% of community survey respondents said disability access and inclusion is one of the most urgent social issues for Canada Bay. Community members addressed a wide range of priorities for people living with disability and carers, with detailed findings provided within Part B of this report. They include:

- Community members told us that there are still many areas and facilities within Canada Bay that require upgrades to become more accessible and inclusive for people living with disability. In particular, they told us that local shops and businesses, particularly those located in older buildings, can be hard to access for people living with disability.
- Community members and stakeholders told us that it can be very difficult for people living with disability to get around within the Canada Bay LGA, including lack of accessible disability parking; limited public transport network coverage and service; and need for accessible footpaths in town centres and neighbourhoods.
- Community members told us that there are still some barriers to people living with disability participating in community life in the Canada Bay LGA, including due to an ongoing lack of understanding within the community about disability which can be a challenge when visiting public spaces, shops and restaurants.

- Service providers indicated that there are many young people in their mid-twenties with disability who live with their parents and aren't engaged in school or work in the Canada Bay LGA, and said Council can play a role in connecting people to training and employment opportunities, such as partnerships with and education of local businesses.

"There are many unseen carers who just keep on going until their health is affected." - Social issues survey respondents

"Disability access is out of date in the City of Canada Bay. Many footpaths are difficult to traverse with a pram or wheelchair. Several footpaths & pram crossings are ineffective, & often absent in my area. Amenities need to be updated to reflect the current disability standards." - Social issues survey respondents

"I live with and care for my father. He had a stroke 8 years ago. He's 88 now and not very mobile. He needs my help to walk. It can be very difficult to get him to the doctor, dentist and barber, due to lack of street parking and disabled spots." - Social issues survey respondent

"There is still a lack of understanding in the community and local businesses about disability, for example people don't understand that when people with intellectual disability are loud or noisy they are not trying to scare people or be rude – it is just their sense of expression." - Stakeholder interview



Figure 7 - Young people and parents told us they would like to see more diverse activities and spaces for young people, beyond sporting clubs (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)



Access to education

Community survey respondents told us that the existing public secondary school within Canada Bay is at capacity and in need of upgraded facilities. Findings from the My School website indicate that Concord High School has seen a significant increase in its student population, from 929 in 2014, to 1,229 in 2019, anecdotal evidence suggests that the school has over half a dozen demountables on site to support the student population. There will also be increased pressures with high population growth in suburbs nearby Concord.

Parents with young children attending early education and care commented that affordability is one of the barriers to accessing appropriate childcare, as well as waitlists for Council's high quality services, however noted there are plenty of services available in the area.

"I have one child with high functioning ASD and she is unable to attend school at the moment due to the overcrowding that is occurring at the school, the staff are struggling to cater for her high sensory needs and this is causing dangerous levels of anxiety in her." - Survey respondent

"I hear from some of my friends at other close by schools about the facilities at their schools but our school can only fit half of the students in the hall and our theatre is too small to practice in and doesn't even have seats. Why do other schools get facilities we don't?" - Survey respondent

"I wish schools in our area were open to the community. I have children and while the facilities at some schools are pretty run down I'm not sure why we can't at least use basket ball courts and school outdoor areas on weekends." - Survey respondent



Spaces and services for young people

Across engagement activities, young people, parents and service providers told us there is not much to do and not many youth-friendly places to go for young people in the Canada Bay area.

Many commented that there are plenty of play spaces for younger children, but when they get to their teens there are not many options, with many spending more and more time using technology and less time outside. This can in turn lead to mental health issues and, at times, perceived antisocial behaviour. Parents commented in particular that many young people have had a tough year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will need continued support to bounce back.

Young people told us they want more youth activities and places to hang out beyond sports and the skate park. Some suggested opening up school grounds on the weekend for shared use with the community and use of sporting fields and courts.

Some also told us that there are limited opportunities for young people to have their say in Canada Bay, with one young survey respondent commenting: "No one ever asks me what people my age would like," while others suggested implementing a youth council or other engagement approaches.

"There's not much to do, I like to go to the skate park but that's all there really is, I'd like to do something on weekends with my friends but I don't know what. Something at school but something fun with my friends." - Survey respondent

"I'm going to high school next year and there's heaps for little kids in the area but I don't see anything for people at high school. No one ever asks me what people my age would like." - Survey respondent

3. Social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

The following provides a summary of social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as relevant to the City of Canada Bay based on desktop research and community and stakeholder feedback at March 2021.

The COVID19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the lives of Canada Bay community members, with some likely to experience continued and increased disadvantage when government supports such as Jobseeker and Jobkeeper conclude (March 2021 at the time of writing).

Community members told us that while COVID19 has brought out the best in the Canada Bay community, it has also exacerbated a range of complex social issues, including unemployment, housing stress, family stress, domestic and family violence, homelessness, addictions, discrimination, social isolation, and will continue to place increased pressure on local parks, facilities and communities as people continue to spend more time at home.

Service providers interviewed for this project indicated that while the pandemic has impacted on many people in the community, some community cohorts have been particularly vulnerable, including older people, temporary migrants and international students, children and young people, as well as those with preexisting health conditions or disability.

Other research reports have found that:

- A national survey of people living with disability reported increased expenses and reduced access to support, including NDIS supports, and healthcare (People living with disability and COVID-19, People living with disability Australia 2020)
- A survey of children and young people reported an increased divide between children and young people with access to computers and the Internet and those who don't (Reflections on COVID-19, South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People 2020)
- According to UNICEF Australia, COVID-19 impacted young people's day-to-day life, social connectedness, stress and anxiety, and level of hope, with 47% more children experiencing anxiety as a result of COVID-19 ("Living in Limbo": how COVID-19 is impacting young people in Australia, Unicef Australia 2020)
- Research found that during the COVID-19 crisis in Western Australia, families on low incomes reported feeling depressed or anxious at twice the rates of the general community (The Impact of COVID-19 on Families in Hardship in Western Australia, Centre for Social Impact)
- Global experts have predicted that we need to brace for an oncoming "secondary epidemic" of adverse psychological impacts, including burnout, increased suicide rates and stress-related absenteeism, as a result of the COVID-19 lockdowns (COVID-19 and Mental Health, Centre for Social Impact Response)

- Findings from a national Families in Australia Survey found that almost half of respondents reported they or their partner had lost employment, reduced hours or wages and that young adults were disproportionately impacted by the economic downturn, being almost four times more likely to ask for help from government or NGOs (Life during COVID-19, Australian Institute of Family Studies)
- A survey from Relationships Australia found that nearly half of respondents experienced a negative change in their relationship with their partner, and those who reported feeling very lonely were more likely to experience negative relationship changes throughout COVID-19 (COVID-19 and its Effects on Relationships, Relationships Australia)
- Research from the Australia Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) found that several risk factors for child abuse and neglect increased during COVID-19, including financial hardship, housing stress, and poor mental health (Child protection in the time of COVID-19, AIHW).

The News South Wales Council of Social Service (NCOSS) recently commissioned a report entitled "A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW: The Impacts of the COVID19 recession," which forecasts significant increase in social issues across NSW including:

- The number of 20-24 year olds experiencing high or very high mental distress will increase by up to 16.8 per cent.
- Higher unemployment will lead to rates of domestic violence increasing by up to 5.5 per cent in some regions.
- Over 9,000 more people in NSW will be homeless – a rise of 24.0 per cent in the homeless population.
- Some regions will experience a 40.5% increase in homelessness.
- The number of families experiencing housing stress will increase by over 88,000 or 24.3%
- There will be 27,447 more children at risk of neglect, a 24.5 per cent rise due to increased unemployment
- Mean NAPLAN scores in Year 9 maths will fall by 23.6 points (3.5 per cent) in 2021 compared to 2019 results.

"The seniors in the community have increasingly felt depressed being stuck at home. The Council provided a call team to contact those seniors who were really in need of being in contact with someone. Great work!"

"I know Council cannot do everything, but there is hope for a vaccine in the near future and I would like to see Council looking forward and planning social engagements, reconnection with community events, etc."

"[COVID-19] has increased appreciation of local community facilities such as libraries and open spaces."

"[I have felt the impacts of COVID-19] financially for my family due to job loss and decrease in working hours."

"I feel more isolated and that there isn't anything I can do. It's not safe to go out - if I get sick who will care for my elderly mother?"

"I live alone and have been working from home since March. I am also immune compromised and have to be careful. I have found many walking areas lack shade and are crowded. I would be great to have more access to walking groups and shady places to walk."

"I'm principal carer for elderly parents; with Covid it is quite risky for them to go about their usual social activities or do their own groceries, pharmacy, doctor, clinic, social activity, etc, visits. They miss the social get together that was organised by the local library for elderly Greek people."

"There are a lot of retired working-class people of colour who live around here and they have traditionally been disconnected because they are too poor to get involved. Now during COVID they are even more socially isolated."

"It's important to consider that the pandemic has impacted differently on people depending on their housing, the experience of lockdown is very different in a house vs an apartment. There is a need for development and design of high density to support social sustainability outcomes."



Part B

Key social issues
by community
cohort



4. Older people

Older people in Canada Bay are facing social issues including social isolation and loneliness, risk of displacement due to high cost of housing and living, poor accessibility and transport coverage in some areas as a barrier to participating in community life and challenges to accessing services online.

4.1. Social profile

The proportion of older people, those aged 60 years and over, has been steadily increasing over the last century for both men and women, and this trend is expected to continue (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

An estimated 17,189 people who are 60 years and over reside in the City of Canada Bay. Overall, the council area has a slightly higher proportion of residents in this age group (19.5%) than the SSROC (18.4%) and Greater Sydney (19%).

However, many suburbs within Canada Bay have significantly higher proportions of older people than the council area average, with highest proportions in Cabarita, Abbotsford-Wareemba and Rhodes (East).

Older people living in Canada Bay are a diverse group of people, including people with different incomes, abilities and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Cultural diversity characteristics include an established older Italian population as well as a growing population of older people from China and South Korea.

Over the next twenty years to 2036, the population of old people aged over 60 years in Canada Bay is forecast to increase by over 54% (+9,534 people). This increased demand presents a challenge in ensuring older people have access to transport, services and facilities catering for an ageing population.

Council's Positive Ageing Strategy (2010) is a plan for older people aged 55 years+ in the area to remain healthy, active and supported.

4.2. Strengths

Key strengths for older people in Canada Bay include:

- Relatively affluent community of older people with high rates of home ownership
- High engagement in volunteering and community organisations, with many willing to share their skills, knowledge and time.

4.3. Challenges

Key challenges for older people in Canada Bay as identified through community engagement and research include:

- Forecast significant ageing population will place increased demand on health care and services sector
- Older people living alone or with limited social support networks are at risk of social isolation and loneliness, with associated mental and physical health impacts
- Poor public transport access in some areas within the Council area is a barrier for older people to getting around and accessing services and programs
- Despite relatively affluent community, there are older people with lower socioeconomic status who may experience housing stress due to high cost of living and housing
- Older people from CALD backgrounds who are not fluent in English are likely to have fewer social connections in the local area and face language barriers
- Increasing online service delivery may be a barrier for older people with limited online access or proficiency.

4.4. Priority social issues for older people

The following social issues for older people in the City of Canada Bay community have been identified through stakeholder and community consultation and desktop research.

Cost of living and housing

The cost of living and housing is increasing across Greater Sydney and some older people in the Canada Bay community may be at risk of displacement or experiencing housing stress. Community members indicated that while Canada Bay is perceived to be an affluent community, older people in Canada Bay with lower incomes, poor health or disability, those who are isolated and renters may be particularly vulnerable to affordability pressures.

Stakeholders identified that opportunities for people to age in place, including the provision of affordable, adaptable and specialist housing, are important to ensure that no one in Canada Bay has to leave their community as they age. For older people who are vulnerable, service providers said there may be a need for Council to connect them to health and community services to support them to stay living in their home for as long as possible.

Social isolation and loneliness

Community members indicated that social isolation is a challenge for some older people in the Canada Bay community, particularly for those living alone, experiencing poor health, disability or limited mobility and those with limited social networks. Social isolation is a significant health and wellbeing challenge, including due to associated mental and physical health impacts.

In particular, community members said that the COVID19 pandemic may have contributed to social isolation and loneliness for some as they may have been separated from their support networks or been fearful of leaving the house. Service providers indicated that there are still many older people isolating themselves.

Stakeholders said that Council can play a role in providing and facilitating programs and supporting services that provide social connections for older people, including people from culturally diverse and lower income communities. Research shows that having paid work and caring for others are important safeguards against loneliness. Engaging in volunteer work and maintaining active memberships of sporting or community organisations are also associated with reduced social isolation (Flood 2005).

"The elderly in the community can become isolated when living in their own homes. The bus outings provided by Council for the Seniors is fantastic as it helps them combat social isolation and connect with others in the community." - Social issues survey respondent

"If people can't stay living in their community they also lose their social networks. Suitable housing options are needed for older people as their needs change. Aged care and housing for older people is needed and the high cost of entry needs to be addressed."

- Community Strategic Plan focus group participant

Transport as a barrier to accessing services

Older people in Canada Bay may experience barriers to accessing the services and programs they need to support a healthy and socially connected life. In particular, while the Canada Bay Council area has high car ownership, getting around is difficult for those without a car or who cease to drive as they get older. Public transport is limited to some areas in the LGA, including those with a large population of older people. For those who do drive, survey respondents indicated that there is a lack of accessible parking in proximity to services. Council currently supports community transport by funding the Bay Rider bus service.

"As an older person I would like council to be aware of the isolation some people can experience if they don't have family or access to flexible transport." - Social issues survey respondent

Bridging the 'digital divide'

Community members and Council library staff expressed concern that older people may be getting 'left behind' due to increasing service delivery online, while many older people may not have access or ability to navigate online environments. There is a need for Council to continue to provide training, programs and resources for older people to help bridge what is often referred to as the 'digital divide'.

Supporting healthy ageing

An ageing population in Canada Bay will result in an increase in the number of chronic health conditions and disability experienced by older people, placing greater demand on the health care and services sector.

Stakeholders also indicated that as older people remain healthy and active for longer, there are opportunities for Council to support 'active ageing' and connect older people to activities and programs that support health and wellbeing and reflect a diversity of interests and abilities.



Figure 8 - Community members told us social groups and programs for older people hosted by Council are as much about the activity as they are about the social connections that people make (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)

Accessible built environment

Accessibility of the built environment is important in supporting older people to remain living at home and to continue to participate in their communities, however community members have identified that some neighbourhoods, town centres, streets and community facilities are not accessible for older people with limited mobility, disability or dementia. One community members identified opportunities for Council to play a leadership role in planning for dementia-friendly communities, including accessible built-environment that could serve as an exemplar to other communities.

"I live with and care for my father. He had a stroke 8 years ago. He's 88 now and not very mobile. He needs my help to walk. It can be very difficult to get him to the doctor, dentist and barber, due to lack of street parking and disabled spots." - Social issues survey respondent

Culturally and linguistically diverse older people

Older people living in Canada Bay are a diverse group of people, including older people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Cultural diversity characteristics include an established older Italian population as well as a growing population of older people from China and South Korea, some of whom may have caretaking roles for grandchildren and limited social connections and limited familiarity with the services landscape (with issues discussed in chapter on Families and Children).

"Seniors with caring responsibilities for their grandchildren who don't speak English are very vulnerable and can be isolated." - Stakeholder focus group participant

4.5. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing older people in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Advocate for affordable, adaptable and social housing to support people of all ages to stay living in their community
- Work with service providers to connect vulnerable older community members to NDIS and home care packages to support them to stay living in their community
- Facilitate programs that support social connections and health and wellbeing for older residents to help address social isolation
- Continue to provide community transport and social bus trips for older people to support them to access services and participate in community life
- Review provision of accessible parking in proximity to key services, such as health centres and services, to support older people to access these.

5. Children and families

Children and families in Canada Bay are facing social issues including social isolation for children and parents, affordability of childcare and would like to see improvements to play spaces and information about available services and facilities.

5.1. Social profile

There are 12,014 children aged 0 – 11 living in our city who account for 13.6% of our total population, a lower proportion compared to Greater Sydney (15.2%).

While the Canada Bay area has traditionally been a family household area, increasing density means that in 2016 we now have a lower proportion of households with children (39.6%) compared to Greater Sydney (45.8%).

Suburbs with the highest proportion of couple families with children include Concord West (45.8%), Concord (43.2%), Liberty Grove (43.1%) and Russell Lea - Rodd Point (40.8%), while areas such as Strathfield Triangle (16.3%) and Rhodes (West) (19.9%) have much lower proportions.

The City of Canada Bay is committed to being a child and family friendly City that provides high quality child and family services, facilities and programs that aim to compliment and reflect the diversity of the community. Council is also committed to the safety of child and young people, as reflected in Council's Child and Young Person Protection Policy (2020).

Findings from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicate that Canada Bay has a relatively low percentage of children whom are developmentally vulnerable compared to NSW and Australia, across all indicators.

5.2. Strengths

Key strengths for children and families in Canada Bay include:

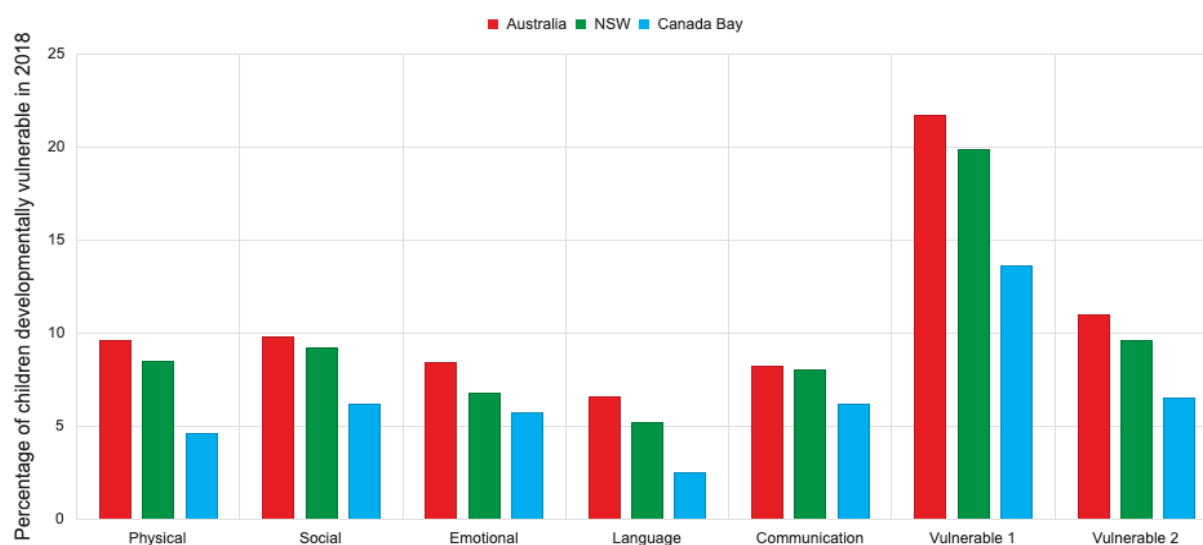
- Good range of open spaces and play spaces, including inclusive play at Livvi's Place
- Good range of early education and care facilities and primary schools
- Good range of children's services
- Good range of programs, activities and things to do for children and families including school holiday programs

5.3. Challenges

Key challenges for children and families in Canada Bay include:

- Social isolation and need for programs and activities to support community connections for children and families
- Financial pressures due to high cost of living, housing, schooling and the impacts of COVID19
- Grandparents from culturally diverse backgrounds fulfilling primary care giving responsibilities with limited awareness of services and limited English may be experiencing social isolation
- Supporting children to reach developmental milestones including preparing for school.

Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable in 2018



Source: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) (2018)

5.4. Priority social issues for children and families

The following social issues for children and families in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through consultation to inform this Social Issues Paper.

Access to services

Overall, people who responded to Council's Child and Family Needs Strategy survey indicated that there is a good range and quality of services and facilities for children in the Canada Bay area. Findings from Council's Social Infrastructure Strategy also indicate that the area has a good provision of early education and child care places. However, some community members raised concern about the high cost of childcare in the area and would like to see improved information and distribution of information about children's services and facilities available. Engagement with the Sydney local Health District to inform the Community Strategic Plan indicated that early childhood health services will be a high priority for the area into the future, many of which use Council-owned facilities.

Places to play

Places to play are important for childhood health, wellbeing and development, and child-friendly spaces outside the home are particularly important for children living in high density areas. Community members told us that there is a good range of play spaces in the Canada Bay LGA. Common improvements that people would like to see in local playgrounds in the Canada Bay LGA, including fencing, increased shade and a bigger variety of play equipment that caters for both younger and older children (identified through the Child and Family Needs Strategy consultation).

Social isolation for children and parents

Service providers noted that social isolation for children and parents increased during the COVID19 pandemic as playgroups, community centres and other programs were not available, with mental health impacts for parents managing working at home with childcare during lockdown. Service providers and community members indicated they would like to see more activities and programs, including on weekends, to build community networks and support parents.

"Access to free or low-cost recreation activities for single parent families is critical for the mental health and wellbeing of children and parents." - CSP focus group with Sydney Local Health District

"Teaching children at home was a big challenge for families, in particular the mothers who are expected to cook, clean and look after children and husbands." - Stakeholder interview

"People don't explain a lot of things to children — because they think that if they don't tell them it doesn't exist. But children sense it. They make up stories and usually they blame themselves. ."

- Stakeholder interview

Challenges for culturally diverse families and children

There are many families from culturally diverse backgrounds living in Canada Bay, including many children who start school with no or limited English and require extra support due to language difficulties. Migrant families may have fewer friends, family and social networks that they can turn to for support, and particularly so during COVID19 which saw international borders close and exacerbated social isolation.

Service providers indicated that it is very common for grandparents from overseas to move to Australia either temporarily or permanently to provide support with child caring responsibilities. However, grandparents may have limited English, limited familiarity with the services environment and are having to manage the demands of ageing alongside childcare. Service providers noted it is also common for children and parents to be separated while parents work or go overseas can creates issues with anxiety, separation, social issues for children.

Service providers noted that some migrant groups may have different attitudes towards parenting, including a stronger focus on academic achievement from a young age and less awareness of the importance of play and socialisation for childhood development, which means they may be academically advanced but struggle socially and emotionally when they enter school. Service providers also indicated that smacking children may be normalised amongst some cultural backgrounds, which may lead to accumulative trauma and have significant wellbeing implications.

"There are a high number of CALD 65+ that are the primary carers for the children. They have the responsibility for their grandchildren and are the primary carers. They are not well connected to services and are recent arrivals." - Stakeholder interview



Figure 9 - Parents told us they are looking forward to having more opportunities to socialise with other families and think Council can play a role in providing spaces, programs and events (Source: URBIS)

Impacts of COVID19 on children and families

Service providers consulted via the Child and Family Interagency and parenting practitioners network indicated a number of impacts from the COVID19 pandemic including:

- Increased presentation of mothers with depression with a need for more postnatal outreach (including in Rhodes)
- New parents of babies struggling with postnatal issues such as breastfeeding due to limited services
- Increased social isolation of parents due to families interstate, overseas and no play groups
- Vulnerable families under stress, in need of food and financial support, including parents who may have lost employment living week to week
- Vulnerable families without internet or computer access at home struggling to support children with online school work
- People on temporary visas unsure of their entitlements to services and government relief support
- Vulnerable migrant families struggling with home schooling
- Poor transport access as a barrier to accessing medical appointments or Centrelink appointments.

“Some of our vulnerable families are reporting challenges supporting their older children as they do not have adequate devices to enable remote learning for school work.” - Local service provider

5.5. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing children and families in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Increased and affordable social programs and activities to support social connection for parents, children and grandparents from diverse backgrounds
- Work with services to understand and address service needs for culturally and linguistically diverse grandparents in caring roles
- Work with services to continue to raise awareness in the community about the importance of play for childhood development
- Continue to provide range of play spaces for a range of ages and abilities
- Increased postnatal outreach programs.

6. Young people and students

Young people and students in Canada Bay are facing social issues including mental health issues, limited things to do, youth-friendly spaces and local youth services, high cost of housing and living, and overcrowding at public secondary schools.

6.1. Social profile

An estimated 12,565 people who are aged 12 to 24 years reside in the City of Canada Bay. Overall, the council area of Canada Bay has a slightly lower proportion of residents in this age group (14.3%) than the SSROC (16.2%) and Greater Sydney (16.5%).

However, some suburbs within Canada Bay have significantly higher proportions of young people than the council area average, with highest proportions in Strathfield (Triangle) (23.6%) and Rhodes (West) (20.4%).

Young people across the 12 to 25 year age group have a spectrum of interests and priorities across life stages from primary school to young adulthood. They have changing needs and aspirations, and experience different levels of access to resources and services.

6.2. Strengths

Key strengths for young people and students in Canada Bay include:

- Participate in community life as students, workers, volunteers and members of sporting, social and cultural groups.
- Strong digital literacy and knowledge economy skills
- Good public transport access in some areas such as Rhodes and Strathfield.

6.3. Challenges

Key challenges for young people and students in Canada Bay as expressed by stakeholders and community include:

- Increasing cost of living and housing in the Canada Bay LGA, with some concerned about having to leave their community as they get older
- Limited things to do and places to go for young people within the Canada Bay LGA, and particularly for those who don't play sport or visit the skate park
- Increasing presentation of young people struggling with mental health issues
- Young people may experience a range of stresses (e.g. pressure to achieve academically, social conformity, family violence, bullying etc)
- Reduced employment and education pathways due to impacts of COVID19
- Overcrowding at Concord High School, with desire for improved infrastructure and facilities and increased funding for local public high schools
- Perceived widening gap between high school students who attend public school versus those who attend private school
- Use and abuse of alcohol and drugs, including rise of vaping
- Perceived anti-social behaviour with limited spaces for young people to meet in the evening and at night
- Increase in youth homelessness, including couch surfing
- Limited youth activities and services located within the LGA

6.4. Priority social issues for young people and students

The following social issues for young people in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through consultation to inform this Social Issues Paper.

The impacts of COVID19

Young people and students have been significantly impacted by the Covid19 pandemic, with many transitioning to online education from home and missing out on social interactions with friends and changes to and uncertainty around other plans and usual activities.

Kids Helpline and the Australian Human Rights Commission have co-authored a report on the impacts of COVID-19 on children and young people who contact Kids Helpline and found that some of the top issues raised by young people were mental health concerns resulting from COVID-19; social isolation; education impacts; impacts on family life and changes to plans and usual activities.

"I'm concerned about our young adults and high school aged children. It's been a tough year and I'm not sure there is much to engage them in this area." - Community survey respondent

Mental health and resilience

Community members told us and research shows that mental health is a priority social issue for young people, which has been exacerbated by the impacts of COVID19. Stakeholders indicated that Council can play a role by supporting youth services, local schools and providing more youth activities and things to do. Research from Beyond Blue shows that:

- Young people are less likely than any other age group to seek professional help.
- One in seven young people aged 4 to 17 years experience a mental health condition in any given year.
- Suicide continues to be the leading cause of death for young Australians.

"Young people are becoming increasingly isolated from each other outside of a school environment and use games and devices to occupy their time, rather than engaging with other young people out-doors, challenging themselves and building resilience. This impacts their mental health and ability to meet life's challenges." - Community survey respondent

"There is a significant lack of activity and support services for young people in the Canada Bay LGA."

- Stakeholder interview

Cost of living and housing

Through engagement with young people to inform the Canada Bay Community Strategic Plan, young people indicated that one of their top priorities for the future was housing affordability, with some expressing concern that they will have to leave the area when they get older as they cannot afford to live here. Service providers indicated that couchsurfing and overcrowding are examples of hidden homelessness that young people in the Canada Bay council area experience.

Barriers to accessing services

Service providers and community members indicated that there is a gap in youth services in the Canada Bay LGA, with young people currently having to go to Burwood or Ashfield, which is an barrier to getting support. Some young people may also face additional barriers to accessing service, such as transport, stigma or not knowing who to turn to.

Limited youth spaces and activities

Young people, parents and service providers told us that there is not much to do for young people in the Canada Bay LGA, with very few youth activities and not many youth-friendly spaces available. Some noted that while there are opportunities for those who are involved in sporting activities, there is not much for those who aren't sporty. A number of stakeholders suggested that it would be good to see more social activities and informal and free hang-out places for young people.

"I'm going to high school next year and there's heaps for little kids in the area but I don't see anything for people at high school. No one ever asks me what people my age would like." - Community survey respondent

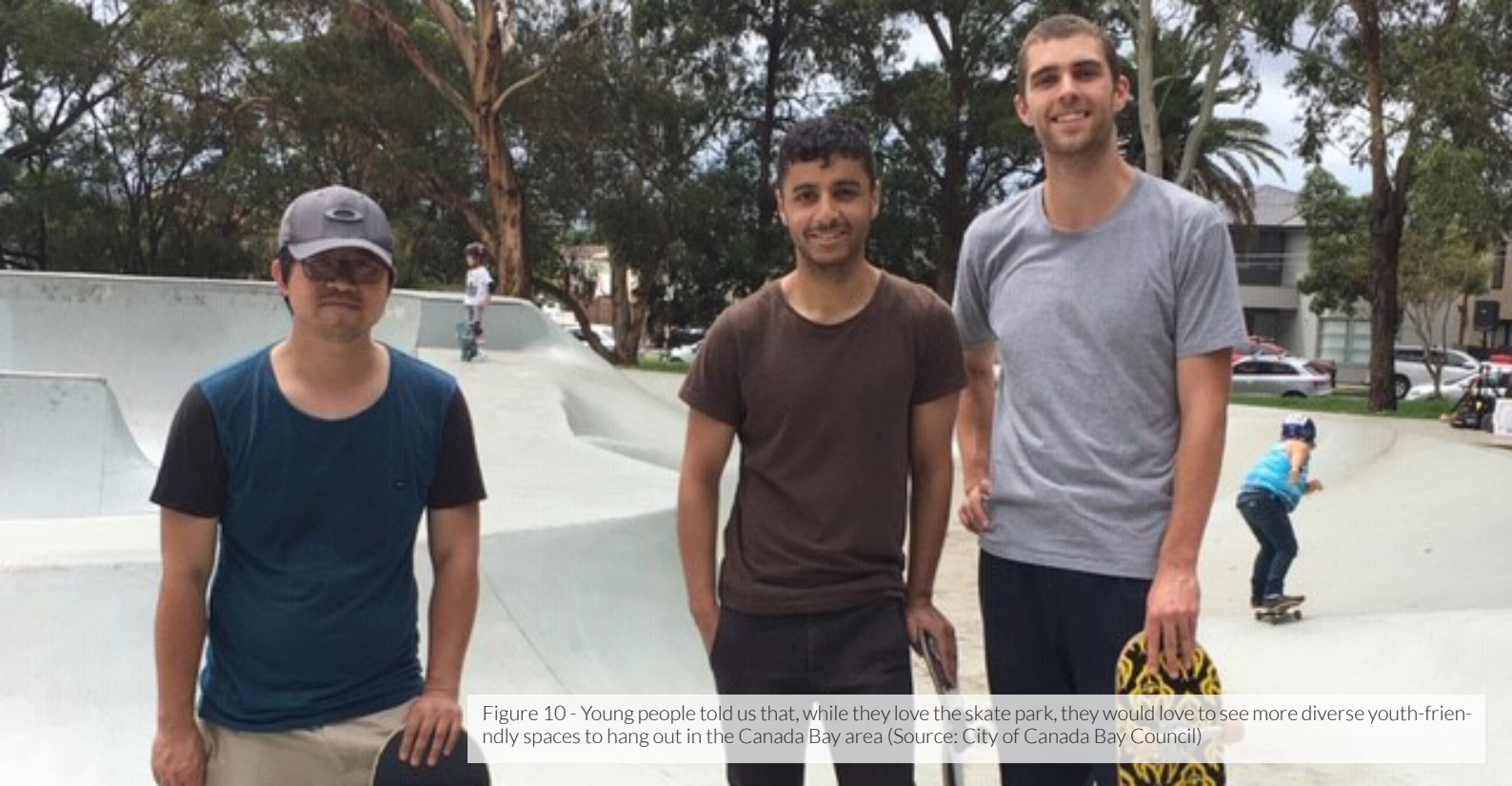


Figure 10 - Young people told us that, while they love the skate park, they would love to see more diverse youth-friendly spaces to hang out in the Canada Bay area (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)

Access to quality schooling

Community members told us that there is a need for more funding for public schools in the Canada Bay LGA, including upgrades to facilities and increased student capacity, with some indicating that there is a widening gap between public and private school facilities. Community members would like to see public school grounds upgraded and opened up to the community to provide additional access to green space for recreation. Some also identified that there is a gap in public secondary schools in the area with some having to leave the area, with concerns this will be exacerbated with forecast population growth.

"I hear from some of my friends at other close by schools about the facilities at their schools but our school can only fit half of the students in the hall and our theatre is too small to practice in and doesn't even have seats. Why do other schools get facilities we don't?" - Community survey respondent

Support for international students

Stakeholders indicated that international students faced significant challenges due to the pandemic, including loss of casual employment, more limited support networks as these usually consist of people they meet face to face at university, and concern for family members in their home country.

Other social issues

Other emerging social issues facing young people in the City of Canada Bay may include:

- Drug and alcohol use and abuse, with a rise in vaping leading schools to take educational and disciplinary action
- Sense of increasing economic inequality with limited interactions between public and private school students
- Limited opportunities for civic participation in local government decision-making
- With strong focus on academic achievement, there is a lack of education around life-skills
- Need for healthy and safe use of electronic devices
- Concern expressed through the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy about teenagers and anti-social behaviour. Opportunities / places for young people to meet will reduce damage to playgrounds etc after hours.

"There's not much to do, I like to go to the skate park but that's all there really is, I'd like to do something on weekends with my friends but I don't know what."

- Survey respondent

Findings from the Mission Australia Youth Survey

For the first time, equity and discrimination is the top national issue for young people, increasing by more than 60% since last year. 40% of young people are concerned about equity and discrimination, followed by COVID-19 (39%) and mental health (31%).

Personal issues young people were most concerned about over the past year in 2020 were coping with stress (43%), followed by mental health (34%) and body image (33%).

Young people indicated they were either extremely or very concerned about school or study problems, while other young people were either extremely or very concerned about physical health. The proportion of females concerned about these issues (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

6.5. Opportunities

Community and stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing young people and students in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Provide more social youth programs and activities and safe, informal places where young people can hang out
- Advocate to State government for increased funding for local public schools, and to open up shared use of school grounds on weekends
- Work with schools to address rise of vaping amongst young people
- Reinststate a Council Youth Council to provide a platform for young people to have a say in decision-making
- Increase support for youth services operating in the area, potentially coordinated through a youth officer on Council staff.

The Kids Helpline and the Australian Human Rights Commission report highlights some key areas for government action to alleviate some of the negative impacts of the pandemic, particularly on children and young people. These include:

- investing in child and youth-focused mental health services and support
- promoting clear, accurate and child-friendly information and resources
- supporting schools and other educational institutions to deliver quality online learning and maintain help and connection for vulnerable students
- extending economic support to all families and young people that need it, and making skills development and youth employment a key focus of recovery
- prioritising services for vulnerable children and young people
- involving children and young people in responses to COVID-19 and recovery plans.

7. Culturally diverse communities

Culturally diverse communities in Canada Bay are facing social issues including discriminatory attitudes and behaviours and language and cultural barriers as a challenge to accessing services and participating in the community.

7.1. Social profile

The Canada Bay community continues to be increasing culturally and linguistically diverse, encompassing older migrant populations from Italy alongside newer migrant populations from China and Korea.

In 2016, 40.5% of the population was born overseas, of which 38.2% were born in non-English speaking countries and 24.7% were new arrivals to Australia between 2011 and 2016.

From 2011 to 2016, the number of people born in China doubled and there was a significant increase in people from South Korea and India moving into the area.

In 2016, 40.8% of the population spoke a language other than English, high compared to 35.8% in Greater Sydney. Chinese languages, Korean and Italian are the most prevalent languages spoken in the LGA.

Proportions of residents speaking a language other than English at home varied across the Canada Bay council area, ranging from a low of 21.1% in Drummoyne to a high of 79.2% in Strathfield (Triangle), followed by Rhodes (West) (78.7%) and Rhodes (76.3%). Some suburbs have high numbers of residents identifying as not fluent in English, with 16.8% of Strathfield Triangle residents and 15.4% of Rhodes residents not fluent in English.

7.2. Strengths

Key strengths for people from culturally diverse backgrounds in Canada Bay include:

- People from culturally diverse backgrounds bring many social, cultural and economic benefits to the Canada Bay community.
- Diversity is a source of strength for our communities with opportunities to share cultural knowledge, tradition and skills.
- People from culturally diverse backgrounds have strong social networks and volunteer their time for the community.

7.3. Challenges

Key challenges for people from culturally diverse backgrounds in Canada Bay include:

- People who are not fluent in English may experience language barriers to participating in the community and accessing services and information
- People from culturally diverse backgrounds, and particularly those who are newly arrived, may have fewer social connections within the broader community and be less familiar with the services landscape in Australia
- During the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, people who were born overseas may have been separated from and concerned for their friends and families in their country of birth
- People from culturally diverse backgrounds may face discriminatory attitudes or behaviours due to race, culture or religious background.
- There may be a need for more culturally appropriate and accessible services, including cultural competency training for Council staff members
- People seeking asylum, international students and migrants on temporary visas were excluded from Jobkeeper and Jobseeker payments during the COVID19 pandemic as a result of which a section of the CaLD community was without any financial support.

7.4. Priority social issues for people from culturally diverse backgrounds

The following social issues for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through consultation to inform this Social Issues Paper.

Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours

Some community members and stakeholders told us that they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory attitudes or behaviours towards people from culturally diverse backgrounds based on race, culture or religious background in the Canada Bay LGA. For example, some community members told us that the COVID19 pandemic exacerbated anti-Chinese sentiment in the community with friends and family being the victim of racist remarks locally.

"The insular community mindset of the area sees many minority groups looked 'down upon' - this has been my experience when walking around public areas in various suburbs within the community." - Community survey respondent

Language and communication barriers

While the majority of the Canada Bay population speaks English well or very well, some suburbs have a very high proportion of residents who are not fluent in English, including Strathfield Triangle (16.8%) and Rhodes (15.4%). This may be a barrier to accessing services and information, and to participating in the community. Some community members noted that culturally diverse community members are more likely to access information in community language sources, rather than English newspapers or sources. There is a need for services that meet the needs of diverse community members, including those with limited English fluency. Some community members told us they think there is opportunity for Council staff to increase their capacity in communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds.

"People from CALD backgrounds don't really look for information locally - they look for information in language paper. Council can build stronger relationships with local in language media." - Stakeholder interview

Challenges to community connections

Some community members indicated that there is not much interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds in the community, including newer migrants and more established communities. People told us that they would like to see more social connection between people from diverse backgrounds with opportunities for more events and activities that bring people together to increase social capital.

"I would like to see more community and cultural events—why don't we celebrate Diwali in Canada Bay?"

- Stakeholder interview

Support for older people from CALD backgrounds

Service providers and community members indicated that there are older people from culturally diverse backgrounds living in Canada Bay who may not be socially connected locally and may also experience socioeconomic disadvantage that forms an additional barrier to participating in the community.

Service providers indicated that it is common for Chinese grandparents to migrate permanently or temporarily to Australia to take on caring responsibilities for grandchildren, who may experience significant social isolation and language barriers, be unfamiliar with local services and require access to social groups to connect and culturally appropriate services and information.

"There are a lot of retired working-class people of colour who live around here and they have traditionally been disconnected because they are too poor to get involved. Now during COVID they are even more socially isolated." - Stakeholder interview

Accessing services

People from culturally diverse backgrounds, and particularly those who are newly arrived, may be less familiar with the services landscape in Australia or experience language or other barriers to accessing services

Service providers told us that some cultures may have different attitudes about social issues such as mental health or disability that can be a barrier to accessing services. For example, one child care provider told us that parents of children with disability may feel shame or guilt.

"The Australian service environment is complicated - and CALD people find it difficult to navigate the system. There is a lack of consistency in programs over time which people find confusing." - Stakeholder interview

Impacts of COVID19 pandemic

Service providers told us that people from culturally diverse backgrounds have experienced significant fear and uncertainty in not being able to see their family members



Figure 11 - Community members told us they value existing cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year and want to see more opportunities for intercultural celebration and connection (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)

overseas. For example, one service provider told us that they regularly hear stories of people who cannot visit their sick or dying relatives overseas which impacts on their mental health and in turn impacts on their children.

People also discussed the impacts on international students, people seeking asylum and temporary migrants, as these groups may have lost their employment yet were not able to access government benefits. One service provider spoke about interacting with an international student who was skipping meals to make ends meet after loss of part-time employment.

"Recent increasing cases of racial abuses towards Asian communities due to COVID was chosen to be ignored by the main stream media, instead, there are biased coverage on Australia-china relationships everyday and promotes hates and angry that encourages those discriminated behaviors towards Asian residents." - Community survey respondent

7.5. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing people from culturally diverse backgrounds in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Provide social groups and programs for people from culturally diverse backgrounds including older people to help build social connections and capital
- Continue to provide access to services and information that meet the needs of culturally diverse residents, including those who are not fluent in English
- Organise events and programs that bring people together to celebrate and share culture
- Investigate mechanisms for Council to take a leadership role in condemning racism in Canada Bay, in particular in relation to increased incidence of racism against Chinese residents during the COVID-19 pandemic
- In partnership with student organisations explore opportunities to support and connect international students living in Canada Bay that may be vulnerable at times of crisis.

8. People living with disability

People living with disability and carers in Canada Bay are facing social issues including poor accessibility, barriers to participating in the community such as transport, attitudes and behaviours, limited employment and education pathways amongst other issues.

8.1. Social profile

The Canada Bay council area is home to people of all abilities. In 2016, 4.2% of the population, or 3,675 people, reported needing assistance with core activities in their day-to-day lives, compared with 4.9% for Greater Sydney.

As is expected, disability increases with age and the highest rates of disability were in the older age groups: 85 and over and 80 to 84. Some suburbs within Canada Bay had very high rates of disability and this corresponds to areas with older populations:

- Rhodes (East) (9.6%) (this likely reflects people completing the Census while in hospital)
- Concord (5.9%)
- Five Dock – Canada Bay (5.6%)
- Abbotsford – Wareemba (5.5%), and
- Chiswick (5.5%).

In considering this data it is also important to acknowledge that this does not reflect all people in the community who identify as a person with disability, their carers, visitors or people suffering temporary illness or injury.

The Canada Bay Disability Inclusion Action Plan outlines Council's commitment to working with the community to celebrate and respond to the diversity of all people in our community and create and maintain an environment that is inclusive and accessible.

At the National level, it is noted that there is a focus on how to improve laws, policies, structures and practices to ensure a more inclusive and just society. The Disability Royal Commission was established in April 2019 and will deliver a final report to the Australian Government, including results of its investigations into promoting a more inclusive society that supports people with disability to be independent and live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

8.2. Strengths

Key strengths for people living with disability in Canada Bay include:

- An active and passionate Access and Inclusion Committee
- Proximity to specialised health services at Concord Hospital
- Friendly and supportive community of people living with disability and carers
- People living with disability contribute to community in many ways including as workers, students, volunteers and valued friends and family members
- People living with disability in Canada Bay have a range of talents and skills to share
- Increasing awareness of the importance of, and adoption of, inclusive practices, including but not limited to accessible built environment standards
- Abundance of accessible open and public spaces .

8.3. Challenges

Key challenges for people living with disability in Canada Bay include:

- Need for improved accessibility of footpaths, streets, town centres and neighbourhoods
- Barriers to accessing information and challenges to engaging online
- People living with disability may face discriminatory attitudes or behaviours
- Challenges to navigate NDIS to get services and support
- Need for increased awareness of disability to encourage positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Challenges to getting around by public transport, including due to limited network coverage and services, traffic and road congestion
- High cost of living can be a challenge to ageing in place for people living with disability
- Barriers to accessing employment and training
- Increased social isolation for people living with disability and carers due to the COVID19 pandemic
- Barriers to accessing services, including complex services environment that can be difficult to navigate.

8.4. Priority social issues for people living with disability

The following social issues for people living with disability in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through consultation and desktop research to inform this Social Issues Paper.

Participating in the community

Community members told us that there are still some barriers to people living with disability participating in community life in the Canada Bay LGA, including due to an ongoing lack of understanding within the community about disability which can be a challenge when visiting public spaces, shops and restaurants. Some told us they would like to see more community programs/activities that are inclusive of people living with disability, and not just separated activities, to bring people of all abilities together. One community member indicated that there is a gap in activities for adults with intellectual disabilities in the Canada Bay area.

"There is still a lack of understanding in the community and local businesses about disability, for example people don't understand that when people with intellectual disability are loud or noisy they are not trying to scare people or be rude – it is just their sense of expression." - Stakeholder interview

"It would be great if local library book clubs selected books that are available in accessible formats such as braille so people who are vision impaired can participate." - Stakeholder interview

Getting around

Community members and stakeholders told us that it can be very difficult for people living with disability to get around within the Canada Bay LGA. For those traveling by car, challenges include road congestion and lack of accessible or disability parking in proximity to health care providers, community facilities and other essential services.

For people traveling by public transport, challenges include limited network coverage and service to some areas within the LGA. Canada Bay Council and the Access and Inclusion Committee have long advocated for improved bus routes however this is an ongoing need. Community members indicated that access and wayfinding to bus stops and train stations can also be challenging, particularly where there is construction works occurring. There is a need and opportunity and a need to plan for disability access while the new Metro stations are completed.

For those traveling by foot or wheelchair, community members told us some town centres and neighbourhoods require significant upgrades to footpaths, road crossings and other public spaces to be more accessible for prams, wheelchairs and those who are vision impaired or unsteady on their feet. Some also noted that shared footpaths can be a challenge for people living with disability as cyclists may speed.

"I live with and care for my father. He had a stroke 8 years ago. He's 88 now and not very mobile. He needs my help to walk. It can be very difficult to get him to the doctor, dentist and barber, due to lack of street parking and disabled spots."

- Community survey respondent

Accessible public spaces and facilities

Community members, service providers and members of the Access and Inclusion Committee told us that there are still many areas, places and facilities within Canada Bay that require upgrades to become more accessible and inclusive for people living with disability. In particular, they told us that local shops and businesses, particularly those located in older buildings, can be hard to access for people living with disability.

"Disability access is out of date in the City of Canada Bay. Many footpaths are difficult to traverse with a pram or wheelchair. Several footpaths & pram crossings are ineffective, & often absent in my area. Amenities need to be updated to reflect the current disability standards." - Community survey respondent

Access to employment and education

Accessing employment can be challenging for people living with disability. Service providers indicated that there are many young people in their mid-twenties with disability who live with their parents and aren't engaged in school or work in the Canada Bay LGA. This has an impact on their health and wellbeing, as they want to contribute and be independent. Stakeholders said Council can play a role in connecting people to training and employment opportunities, such as partnerships with and education of local businesses.

"For young people with psychosocial disability there are not many employment opportunities in the area. It would be great if Council could partner with the large companies at Rhodes to provide traineeship opportunities. This could make a big difference in their lives." - Stakeholder interview



Figure 12 - Community members told us they would like to see more social programs and activities for people living with disability, including children and young people (Source: City of Canada Bay Council)

Stigma

A number of service providers indicated that people from culturally diverse backgrounds in the Canada Bay council area may have different beliefs or stigma about disability. This may lead them to experience shame or guilt about disability in their family, which in turn can be a barrier to accessing services. For example, some parents may have difficulty accepting their child has a disability, or think that disability will go away and have the expectation that a service provider can 'fix' it.

"In some cultures, there is stigma and shame around special needs, and in particular women and mothers are made to feel guilty about the disability of children. Feeling embarrassed or feeling shame means you don't want to go see services because it means accepting that your child has a disability." - Stakeholder interview

Barriers to accessing services

While community members agreed there is generally good access to disability services in the Canada Bay LGA, some told us that there may be barriers for some. People told us that navigating the complex services landscape can be a struggle, and in particular for those who live independently and for migrants who may be less familiar with what is available or speak limited English. People told us it is not always easy to know who to contact and it can take a long time to get support. Many people rely on their carer or a support coordinator to help them navigate the system.

Service providers also indicated that there is an increasing shift towards service provision online which can be challenging for people living with disability when it comes to filling out online forms or participating in online workshops.

"Online work and engagement is the new normal and works well for most, but does not work for many people with psychosocial disability or mental illness." - Stakeholder interview

Mental health and social isolation

Community members told us that the COVID19 pandemic has had a significant mental health toll on people living with disability and on carers, as many were socially isolated and confined to their home and could not participate in usual social activities. Service providers emphasised that providing opportunities for social interaction for people living with disability will be imperative going forward to support a sense of belonging and connection.

In particular, service providers told us that families from culturally diverse communities are likely to keep care for family members with disability within the family, which can be a significant challenge for carers than can compound their social isolation.

It is also important to understand that social connections and participation improve the general wellbeing of people living with disabilities which leads to improved mental health.

"Families are desperate for human connection at the moment. Families and children with developmental concerns or disabilities are finding it very hard because are not able to access services at the moment as many are still not face to face. Children with developmental issues are desperate for human connection and this has impact on mental health." - Stakeholder interview

Communicating with Council

People living with disability may have different access needs or priorities when it comes to communicating with and accessing information via Council. Community members told us that they need a range of opportunities to engage, including face-to-face opportunities for those who may not be able to engage online. Ensuring Council's publications and social media reflect diverse community members with disability can support a sense of belonging. It is important that local information is available in printed formats, and not just online.

Some indicated that it can be challenging to know who to speak with at Council about access and inclusion issues, and that customer service staff are not always responsive. People told us they would like to see increased training of Council staff to encourage positive communication.

Housing

Community members indicated that the high cost of living and housing within Canada Bay can be a challenge to people living with disability to living in the area. Peak bodies indicated that there is a need for a diverse mix of affordable and adaptable housing options for people of all abilities. One service provider indicated that there is a need for more research into whether there are young people living in aged care centres in Canada Bay as this emerged as an issue from the royal commission, with the Federal government implementing strategies to reduce this. A research report by the Summer Foundation for the Disability Royal Commission entitled 'Young people in residential Aged Care (2017-2018)' does not provide LGA level data however indicates approximately 119 people living with disability aged under 65 years and 3 aged under 45 years living in permanent residential aged care within the Inner West region, suggesting this may not be a significant issue for Canada Bay.

Cross-Council planning for access and inclusion

Access and Inclusion Committee members told us that they would like to see Council continue to advocate for disability inclusion issues and allocate resources to ensuring the Canada Bay community is accessible, welcoming and inclusive for everyone. In particular, they told us there is opportunity for inclusion and access planning to be more integrated across different Council teams to raise awareness and share responsibility. They would like to see Council teams adopt specific KPIs against which progress can be measured over time.

Culturally appropriate service provision

Service providers indicated that it can be difficult for migrants from diverse cultural backgrounds to navigate the complex and fragmented disability services environment, and that cultural attitudes about disability such as stigma may be a barrier to getting support. Service providers told us that it can also be challenging to access services and information that is culturally appropriate. This could include services available in community languages for people who are not fluent in English, and services that have cultural competency.

"People living with disability from CALD backgrounds are very marginalised at the moment. Through NDIS they have not been able to access services and they are often not culturally appropriate." - Council staff member

"[The COVID 19 pandemic had a significant mental health impact on people with disability, as they do not always understand why they can't go outside]"

- Stakeholder interview

8.5. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing people living with disability in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Engage with people living with disability to understand and plan for COVID 19 recovery, including support for programs and events that support social connection
- Continue to provide disability awareness training for Council staff, in particular those in customer-facing roles
- Continue to review provision of disability and accessible parking, particularly in proximity to health services
- Continue to advocate to the State government for accessible public transport services
- Raise awareness within the local community and local businesses about different types and expressions of disability
- Ensure Council's publications reflect a diverse range of people living with disability in everyday life activities
- Ensure information is provided in a range of accessible formats
- Review library services and programs to ensure they provide equal access and opportunity for people living with disability
- Work with service providers to understand and address barriers to accessing services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Investigate partnerships with local businesses to support access to local employment for people living with disability.

9. LGBTQIA+ Communities

LGBTQIA+ (LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Genderqueer, Queer, Intersex, Agender, Asexual) community members in Canada Bay are facing social issues including discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, limited support networks and services and told us they would like to see the area be more welcoming, inclusive and safe for everyone.

9.2. Social profile

The 2016 Census counted just under 46,800 same-sex couples living together in Australia. This represents a 39% increase since the 2011 Census, which counted 33,700 same-sex couples.

Greater Sydney is home to 12,882 same-sex couples (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018d). A pilot survey from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicated that 257 per 100,000 people identified as sex or gender other than male or female.

In 2016, same-sex couples accounted for 1% of all couples in NSW. The suburbs in Canada Bay with the highest proportion of same-sex couples include:

- Wareemba - 2.5%
- Chiswick - 2.3%
- Canada Bay - 1.8%, and
- Five Dock - 1.6%.

9.3. Strengths

Key strengths for LGBTQIA+ communities in Canada Bay include a number of businesses and residents that are championing and raising awareness of inclusion for everyone in the community.

9.4. Challenges

Key challenges for LGBTQIA+ communities in Canada Bay include:

- Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours based on gender and or sexuality
- Feeling unwelcome or unsafe in public spaces
- Lack of services and support groups in the LGA, including for young people
- Limited visibility within the Canada Bay community.

9.1. Priority social issues for LGBTQIA+ communities

The following social issues for LGBTQIA+ communities in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through consultation to inform this Social Issues Paper.

Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours

Community members told us that they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory attitudes or behaviours towards LGBTQIA+ communities in the Canada Bay LGA. For example, one stakeholder told us they received anti-queer flyers in their mailbox after hanging up a rainbow flag, whilst another received derogatory remarks in a local supermarket.

Feeling welcome and safe in public places

Community members expressed they do not feel welcome and comfortable to express their identity within the Canada Bay LGA, in particular in public spaces such as when walking down streets. They contrasted this with the Inner West Council area, where there is a perceived stronger sense of welcoming and belonging for LGBTQIA+ people.

"We don't feel welcome or comfortable as a queer couple walking down the street in this area- we feel quite vulnerable. However, we do put rainbow flags up during Pride because we don't want young people in the area to feel like they are the only ones here." - Stakeholder interview

Celebrating and reflecting diversity

Community members told us they would like to see Council take a stronger leadership role in supporting LGBTQIA+ communities, including through providing opportunities to celebrate Pride, supporting local businesses to hang rainbow flags and ensuring Council publications reflect non-hetero normative families and people from diverse backgrounds.

Support for young people

Community members told us there is a gap in support groups for young people who are LGBTQIA+ in Canada Bay, with young people having to travel outside of the area which may be a barrier to accessing support. There are opportunities for Council to run or facilitate local support groups.

Health and wellbeing

Research shows that LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Genderqueer, Queer, Intersex, Agender, Asexual) communities face unique barriers to their wellbeing, including:

- discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender expression
- poor access to appropriate health care services and high medical costs for some health services
- social exclusion and intersections with other social determinants of health, including employment status, housing security and socio-economic status which lessen wellbeing.

(Victorian Department of Health & Human Services, 2014, 2019) Research from the National LGBTI Health Alliance 2020 shows that:

- Compared to the general population, LGBTI people are more likely to attempt suicide in their lifetime and have thoughts of suicide
- LGBT people are more likely to experience and be diagnosed with a mental health disorder, specifically:
 - Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are twice as likely to have symptoms that the criteria for a mental health disorder in the past 12 months
 - LGBT people are twice as likely to be diagnosed and treated for mental health disorders
- LGBTI people are more likely to experience and be diagnosed with depression, anxiety and experience higher levels of psychological distress
- The mental health and wellbeing of gay men and lesbian women differs, specifically lesbian women are more likely to be diagnosed and treated for mental disorder or anxiety, and are more likely to engage in self-harm and attempt suicide than gay men while gay men are more likely to have thoughts about suicide, but are less likely to attempt suicide than lesbian women.
- LGBTI young people that identify with a racial or ethnic, are more likely to having experienced a conflict between their cultural background and their sexuality or gender identity
- LGBTQIA+ students often seek to avoid a hostile learning environment by skipping classes or missing days of school, and experiences of harassment and assault can negatively affect participation in school activities and connectedness to school
- Basic issues like restroom access have a profound effect on transgender youth well-being.

9.5. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing LGBTQIA+ communities in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Opportunity for the Acon Welcome Here program to be rolled out in the City of Canada Bay
- Outward support from Canada Bay Council for LGBTQIA+ communities (such as raising rainbow flag or publically stating support during Mardi Gras)
- Facilitate LGBTQIA+ support group for young people
- Resources can help counter the negative effects of hostile school climates and serve as important tools in changing attitudes about LGBTQIA+ people.

10. First Nations peoples

Community engagement participants told us they would like to see more support and visibility of First Nations culture and people in Canada Bay.

10.1. Social profile

Prior to European settlement, the area now known as the City of Canada Bay was occupied by the Wangal clan whose name was derived from the word for their country, wanne meaning 'west'. The Wangal were a clan of the Darug (sometimes spelt Dharug) tribe or language group. They called themselves the Eora, meaning 'the people'. They were living in the Sydney area for at least 10,000 years (Source: Canada Bay Council website).

In 2016, 0.5% of the City of Canada Bay's population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (411 people), lower compared to 1.5% in Greater Sydney and 2.9% in NSW. This represents a significant increase of 125 people or 44% since 2011.

10.2. Strengths and challenges

First Nations peoples' continue to show great resilience and generosity of spirit towards other peoples with whom they now share their land and waters. There are a number of public spaces in Canada Bay that recognise the Wangal people, including the the Wangal Bushland Reserve (Mortlake) and Wangal Place (Five Dock). In 2011, Council signed a Principles of Cooperation statement with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. Council is currently in the process of developing an Aboriginal heritage study. Council also runs programs during NAIDOC week.

However, community members identified that there is still a significant lack of visibility and celebration of First Nations peoples, culture and heritage in the Canada Bay area, and told us they would like to see more opportunities to learn from and share First Nations culture.

"First Nations people are unrecognised in our community." -
Community survey respondent



Figure 13 - Community members told us they would like to see First Nations people, culture and heritage be more visible and celebrated in the Canada Bay area (Source: City of Canada Bay Council, smoking ceremony at Ferosa Street Square)

10.3. Social issues for First Nations peoples

The following social issues for First Nations peoples in the City of Canada Bay community were identified through desktop research and consultation to inform this Social Issues Paper.

Lack of visibility and recognition

Community members expressed a desire for increased visibility of Indigenous culture and heritage within the local community. In particular, one stakeholder would like to see street names and public spaces be renamed to reference Aboriginal connection to country.

"Besides a few things named after the 'Wangal' clan, there is no sense in the area of its history prior to white settlement." - Community survey respondent

Overcoming inequality

Community members said and research shows that First Nations peoples experience inequality across social, economic, health and wellbeing domains. At the National, State and local government levels there is a focus on 'closing the gap' to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.

Reconciliation informed by partnerships

Stakeholders said that they would like to see Council develop a Reconciliation Action Plan in consultation and collaboration with First Nations people, and recognised a need for meaningful consultation mechanisms to ensure First Nations people have a say in decision-making that affects them.

Health and wellbeing

In addition the following social issues for First Nations peoples that should be considered through the Social Sustainability Strategy have been identified through desktop research:

- Research from Beyond Blue indicates that specific risk factors may have a high impact on the social emotional wellbeing and rates of depression among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including widespread grief and loss, impacts of the Stolen Generations and removal of children, discrimination based on race or culture, separation from culture, identity issues, economic and social exclusion, and chronic life stresses.
- Findings from the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network Needs Assessment (2019) indicate that:
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples have poorer health and reduced access to healthcare services, with higher rates of chronic conditions, higher numbers of avoidable hospitalisations and reduced life

"An event that we could hold is gathering in public facilities to teach the younger generation all the traditions passed down. We could also hold workshops to educate people about the Indigenous Culture and including more verbal acknowledgement in assemblies"

- Youth submission

expectancy.

- Risk factors such as overweight and obesity, lack of physical activity, smoking and sexual health are disproportionately higher among Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mothers have higher rates of smoking during pregnancy and low birth weight babies and lower rates of access to antenatal care visits prior to 14 weeks of pregnancy.
- There are significantly higher rates of infant and child mortality and child hospitalisations in the Aboriginal population of NSW. Aboriginal children consistently score poorly across domains of childhood development.
- Findings from the Federal Department of Health indicate that Indigenous Australians have poorer access to health services than non-Indigenous Australians, for a range of reasons including barriers such as cost and a lack of accessible or culturally appropriate health services.
- Findings from the Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2020 indicate that the top three issues of personal concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were coping with stress, mental health and body image. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were more likely to report unfair treatment in the past year due to their race/cultural background compared with non-Indigenous respondents.

10.4. Opportunities

Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address social issues facing First Nations people in the City of Canada Bay, including:

- Increase visibility and sharing of First Nations culture and heritage in the Canada Bay LGA, for example by renaming streets or places with names relevant to Aboriginal people or culture
- Council could develop a Reconciliation Action Plan and adopt the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Part C

Findings from community engagement



1 1. Overview of community engagement

1 1.1. Approach to engagement

This Engagement Outcomes Report has been prepared based on findings from community and stakeholder engagement from November 2020 through to February 2021. The community engagement achieved depth of discussion with representatives from across the community to allow exploration of the social issues.

Project promotion

Opportunities to participate in community engagement activities were promoted via a postcard which was translated into Chinese, Korean and Italian and distributed to all households within the LGA, a poster distributed to local community facilities and via Council's social media channels.

Stakeholders, including local service providers, community groups and government agencies, were invited to participate and provide feedback via email invitation.

Review of findings from previous projects

We reviewed findings from community and stakeholder engagement conducted by Council on previous projects, including to inform the Children and Families Strategy, the Positive Ageing Strategy, the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy and the Community Strategic Plan.

Overview of engagement activities

Community and stakeholder engagement activities delivered included:

- Community survey available online via Council's Collaborate platform (16 November - 7 February 2021) (110 responses) (Translated into Chinese, Italian and Korean)
- Stakeholder interviews conducted in December 2020 (17 interviews)
- Council staff workshop held online in October 2020 (30 participants)
- Stakeholder focus groups conducted in February 2021 (11 participants across 4 focus groups)
- Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting in November 2020 (8 participants)
- Intercept surveys with young people at Five Dock Skate Park, Five Dock Leisure Centre and Rhodes (March 2021).

Together, findings from these engagement activities have informed the development of the Social Issues Paper, alongside findings from previous engagement conducted by Council and other organisations, desktop research and demographic analysis.

12. Community survey findings

This chapter provides an overview of findings from the online community survey.

12.1. About the online survey

The online survey was available between 16 November 2020 and 7 February 2021.

The online survey was promoted to the community via postcards to all households within the LGA, via posters in local community centres and via Council’s social media channels.

12.2. Respondent profile

In total, 110 survey responses were received.

Overall, the respondent profile was older, with fewer responses from people aged under 24 years and most responses in the 35-44 years age category. As a result of this older age profile we conducted additional intercept surveys with young people at local parks and public spaces (see findings in chapter 4).

In addition:

- 68% were female, 30% were male and 1% were non-binary
- 26% were born overseas
- 10% are people living with disability and 7% are a carer of a person with disability
- 14% are a parent or carer of children aged under 15 years
- 2% identified as being LGBTQIA+
- 13% speak a language other than English at home, including Mandarin, Arabic, Greek, Hindi and Korean
- 40% are currently volunteers in their community.

Table 1 - Survey respondent age profile		
Age group	%	#
5-12 years	1.8	2
13-17 years	3.6	4
18-24 years	0	0
25-34 years	6.4	7
34-44 years	23.6	26
45-54 years	21.8	24
55-64 years	18.2	20
65-74 years	19	21
75-84 years	5.5	6
85+	0	0
Total	100	110

12.3. Most urgent social issues

Survey respondents were provided with a list of social issues and asked to select the issues they think are most urgent for the City of Canada Bay community today.

As shown in the table below, the top three social issues that respondents selected as being most urgent for the City of Canada Bay were: Population growth and increasing residential density (43%); Mental health and wellbeing (40%); and Declining social cohesion and social isolation (40%).

Respondents were asked to comment on why they selected those social issues. The following pages provide a summary of their comments.

Figure 14 - What are the top three most urgent social issues or challenges facing the City of Canada Bay community today? (110 responses)

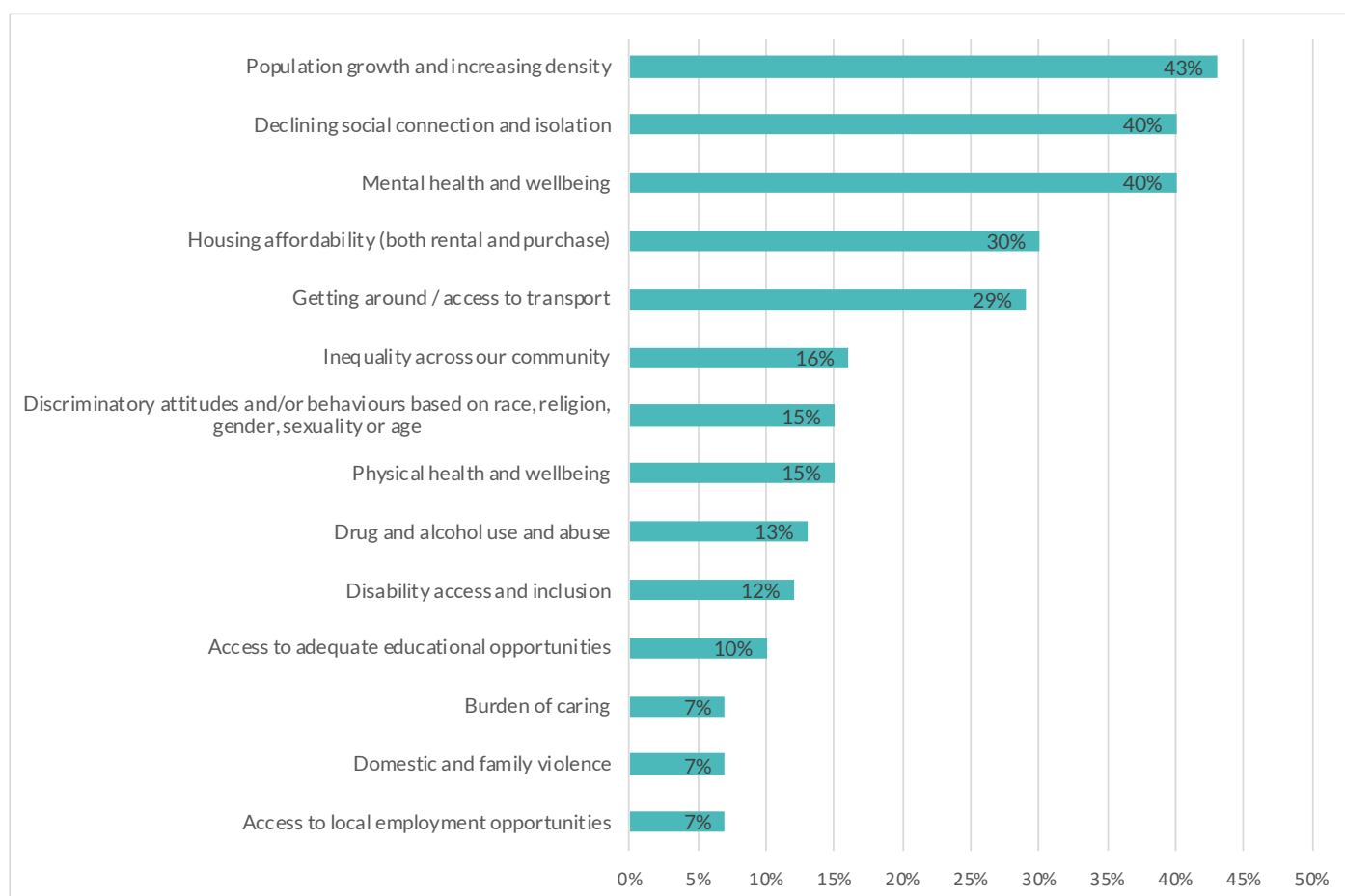


Table 2 - Most urgent social issues for the City of Canada Bay community

Issue	Reasons for selecting this issue	Select verbatim comments
Population growth and increasing residential density (selected by 43% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-rise development is contributing to loss of local character • Perceived overdevelopment is putting increasing pressure on existing infrastructure and services (e.g. local schools, public transport, roads etc) • Increasing congestion and traffic on roads • Perceived loss of green and open spaces to development • Perceived isolation and loss of privacy for residents in high rise buildings • Perceived lack of social cohesion in high rise areas • Impacts on the environment of development • Perceived overcrowding in Rhodes • Perceived lack of affordable housing provided through development • Need for increased access to spaces outside the home in higher density areas (e.g. parks, community centres). 	<p><i>"Significant increase in population density coupled with social isolation of highly mobile and stressed lifestyles creating a massive disconnect with community and lack of empathy amongst "neighbours".</i></p> <p><i>"The density of development around Rhodes is not in character with the rest of the area and there is not a mix of affordable housing as part of that. As a result there is lack of cohesion developing in the different areas of the Council."</i></p> <p><i>"Increasing density impacts a range of environmental and social factors on this list, including physical and mental wellbeing, which in turn impacts on domestic violence and alcohol and drug abuse."</i></p> <p><i>"Housing density is increasing and there is a lot less green space near us."</i></p> <p><i>"Too many high rises, not enough roads and public transport to support increasing population."</i></p> <p><i>"Services have not kept pace with growth. The State Government has not provided "good" planning for schools, transport and hospitals."</i></p>
Mental health and wellbeing (selected by 40% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health is a significant issue that reaches across community cohorts, in particular for young people, older people and seniors with limited or no English • Lack of available and appropriate mental health services in the local area • Suicide rates are increasing, including amongst local young people • Mental health issues have been exacerbated by the COVID19 pandemic • Social isolation is on the rise and contributes to poor mental health outcomes. 	<p><i>"Young people are becoming increasingly isolated from each other outside of a school environment and use games and devices to occupy their time, rather than engaging with other young people out-doors, challenging themselves and building resilience. This impacts their mental health and ability to meet life's challenges."</i></p> <p><i>"Isolation and mental health are massive issues around the country right now. There are not enough services that are affordable and accessible, and they don't target the people who need them."</i></p> <p><i>"Informed by what families have told us, isolation can lead to depression. Grandparents looking after young children with no support in a foreign country experience mental health issues."</i></p> <p><i>"Many people live alone, especially (but not just) the elderly and with electronics and working from home and the rise in single person households I see a decline in daily social connection and interaction that impacts on mental and physical wellbeing."</i></p>

Table 2 - Most urgent social issues for the City of Canada Bay community

Issue	Reasons for selecting this issue	Select verbatim comments
Declining social connection and isolation (selected by 40% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declining social cohesion is impacting on wellbeing, with some indicating this is due people being time-poor because of 'busy modern lifestyles' Social isolation is a growing challenge for many people in the community, and older people in particular Social isolation has been exacerbated by the COVID19 pandemic, including for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people who have been self-isolating due to old age or pre-existing health condition new parents who have not been able to access play groups during the pandemic Poor public transport access contributes to social isolation for people who don't own a car Some commented that they perceive higher density residential areas such as Rhodes to be less socially connected Some noted that declining social connection in turn exacerbates other social issues such as drug and alcohol use and abuse and domestic violence. 	<p><i>"As an older person I would like council to be aware of the isolation some people can experience if they don't have family or access to flexible transport."</i></p> <p><i>"The elderly in the community can become isolated when living in their own homes. The bus outings provided by Council for the Seniors is fantastic as it helps them combat social isolation and connect with others in the community."</i></p> <p><i>"Social isolation is a big contributor for issues with mental health and putting in place strategies to improve social connection will help strengthen mental health and wellbeing for all people across our community, including youth and children."</i></p> <p><i>"I believe that modern lifestyles, both parents working full time with children in care, reduces the opportunity to mix with neighbors & the local community. Families seem busy & preoccupied."</i></p> <p><i>"Continuing high density buildings are reducing access to communal spaces. This promotes isolation rather than connectivity as people try to secure some privacy. Large open areas promote social interaction."</i></p>
Housing affordability (selected by 30% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of housing has increased significantly over the years Young people concerned that they will not be able to purchase in the area Lower-income people at risk of displacement due to high cost of housing Homelessness identified as an issue, with young people and older women at increased risk 	<p><i>"As a new person to this beautiful area, I was very surprised to see a homeless person on the street in Five Dock last week. This is so devastating, as it was a woman about my age."</i></p> <p><i>"The density of development around Rhodes is not in character with the rest of the area and there is not a mix of affordable housing as part of that. As a result there is lack of cohesion developing in the different areas of the Council."</i></p> <p><i>"Housing is expensive - we own our house but my adult children have no hope of buying in the area."</i></p> <p><i>"[Housing] prices are bordering on absurd - forcing many to be displaced."</i></p> <p><i>"Low income people have no opportunity to purchase in our city."</i></p>

Table 2 - Most urgent social issues for the City of Canada Bay community

Issue	Reasons for selecting this issue	Select verbatim comments
Getting around / Access to transport (selected by 29% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus services and frequency have been reduced which is a barrier to getting around for some • Transport-disadvantage can also lead to social isolation • Lack of public transport is a barrier to people accessing essential services, including for vulnerable community members and older people • Population growth is putting pressure on roads and leading to traffic, congestion and limited parking availability, especially in higher density areas • Public transport was very crowded prior to the pandemic and working from home 	<p><i>"I can only speak of my own experience and therefore have noticed with the building of new apartments etc there is less and less street parking."</i></p> <p><i>"If you travel on A4 every morning you would know how urgent the transport and road upgrades are required for the residents of Rhodes. Putting more high rise apartments in the next a few years will definitely kill the will of anyone wants to come to Rhodes for shopping or travel around this area."</i></p> <p><i>"Increasing urban density means more crowded public transport. Combined with the high price of housing it is making what was once a lovely area harder to access and live in."</i></p> <p><i>"We try to use public transport as much as possible in summer this is an issue with the ferries often being full."</i></p> <p><i>"Public transport is declining under the current state government. They have cut services and frequency so I now have 2 buses an hour when I go to care for my mother rather than the 6 I had 2 years ago. There are less bus stops which means I have to drive mum to Concord rather than walk the longer distance to the new bus stop as she cannot manage the uphill walk."</i></p> <p><i>"Recent public transport changes have left many isolated."</i></p> <p><i>"Used to get bus directly to Concord Hospital but now have to rely on friends and family to take. Parking is not available adequately at Concord Hospital and costs too much."</i></p> <p><i>"Also bus routes have been cancelled and rearranged in a way to force residents to walk further and cross busy roads without sufficient walkways and also insufficient shade/cover at bus stops (will undoubtedly lead to safety and health issues in future)."</i></p>
Inequality across the community (selected by 16% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of income inequality in Canada Bay and a sense of divide between the "haves" and the "have nots" • While the community is relatively affluent, there are vulnerable people living in the community who are often less visible 	<p><i>"I'm aware Canada Bay is relatively wealthy socio-economically, poverty is still always a concern, especially for folks who are disabled (including psychosocial disability), women, recent migrants."</i></p> <p><i>"Pockets of poverty, financial stressors from covid, rising home prices - all place stress on families. We have many asset rich well educated residents and we have struggling families in social housing or kids who can't afford to buy in the area."</i></p> <p><i>"The community is wonderfully diverse in terms of language groups and socio-economic status, but this does lead to inequalities."</i></p> <p><i>"At one end we have millionaires owning the water front, to social housing.. The gap is too big."</i></p>

Table 2 - Most urgent social issues for the City of Canada Bay community

Issue	Reasons for selecting this issue	Select verbatim comments
Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours (selected by 15% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased incidence of racism towards Asian and Chinese communities during the COVID-19 pandemic Discrimination against people living with disability, including due to lack of community understanding and also expressed in lack of accessible environment and services Discrimination against older people Discrimination and lack of welcoming for people who are LGBTQIA+ 	<p>"Discrimination in all areas still exists. This impacts some of the other topics - e.g. access for those with disability and social isolation or access to public transportation."</p> <p>"Ageist -People are being disrespectful of elderly long term residents in the area and I have been appalled at hearing 'yes but when your parents die you'll sell the house'; I see this immoral attitude as a result of housing unaffordability, together with the rising inequality within the area of different levels of affluence."</p> <p>"I have experienced racism settling into Sydney."</p> <p>"Recent increasing cases of racial abuses towards Asian communities due to COVID was chosen to be ignored by the main stream media, instead, there are biased coverage on Australia- china relationships everyday and promotes hates and angry that encourages those discriminated behaviors towards Asian residents."</p> <p>"The insular community mindset of the area sees many minority groups looked "down upon" - this has been my experience when walking around public areas in various suburbs within the community."</p>
Physical health and wellbeing (selected by 15% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers to accessing medical services during the COVID-19 pandemic Need for more affordable exercise opportunities, including for older people 	<p>"As a health professional I am always concerned with the physical health and well-being of the community."</p> <p>"Lack of opportunities for affordable healthy exercise."</p> <p>"Timely access to medical appointments at local medical practices."</p>
Drug and alcohol use and abuse (selected by 13% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rise of vaping at local schools Perception that lack of things to do for young people in the Canada Bay leads to drug and alcohol use and abuse 	<p>"I'm at high school and a lot of the kids vape, but I know it's dangerous."</p> <p>"I've watched youth grow in this area, with nothing to do beyond age 10 or so, and then recognise the same local kids with gas canisters or bongs a few years later."</p>
Disability inclusion and access (selected by 12% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for improved accessibility of the built environment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets, footpaths and road crossings Toilets Disability parking Lack of lighting Shops and other commercial buildings without disability access Desire for more activities and programs for people living with disability of all ages 	<p>"Disability access is out of date in the City of Canada Bay. Many footpaths are difficult to traverse with a pram or wheelchair. Several footpaths & pram crossings are ineffective, & often absent in my area. Amenities need to be updated to reflect the current disability standards."</p> <p>"I live with and care for my father. He had a stroke 8 years ago. He's 88 now and not very mobile. He needs my help to walk. It can be very difficult to get him to the doctor, dentist and barber, due to lack of street parking and disabled spots."</p> <p>"I am partially blind and I have trouble getting around at night, not enough lighting and I run into things."</p> <p>"I have trouble getting around, there are steps into a lot of old and new shops now. I cant even get into the radiologist in Five Dock because of the steps. I am not in a wheelchair I am in a scooter."</p> <p>"Nothing to offer adults with intellectual disabilities. Would like to see more inclusion."</p> <p>"Walking around the neighbourhood is very difficult for the disabled."</p>

Table 2 - Most urgent social issues for the City of Canada Bay community

Issue	Reasons for selecting this issue	Select verbatim comments
Access to education (selected by 10% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Concord High School, overcrowding of students and need for upgrades to facilities Need for schools to better accommodate students with high-functioning disability Opportunities for increased sharing of school grounds by public outside of school hours Desire for more funding of public schools 	<p>"Overcrowded schools, no end in sight."</p> <p>"We will be attending Concord High School next year and we're amazed to learn the school can accommodate 900 students however it has more than 1,300 and growing. And that's from the current catchment area. Why do our governments think it's ok to squeeze these kids in and boy, 14 demountables with no sign of them being replaced yet."</p> <p>"I have 2 children at Concord High school, Im a strong advocate for public education and believe it should cater for all children in the community, I have one child with high functioning ASD and she is unable to attend school at the moment due to the overcrowding that is occurring at the school, the staff are struggling to cater for her high sensory needs and this is causing dangerous levels of anxiety in her."</p> <p>"We have such amazing future leaders at our public schools, start giving them the funding to help those kids shine."</p> <p>"I hear from some of my friends at other close by schools about the facilities at their schools but our school can only fit half of the students in the hall and our theatrette is too small to practice in and doesn't even have seats. Why do other schools get facilities we don't?"</p>
Access to employment (selected by 7% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic and poor public transport as a barrier to accessing employment centres 	<p>"Without local employment, any location becomes a commuter town without passive presence during the day (which has its own issues for community security and awareness of others)."</p>
Domestic and family violence (selected by 7% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic violence is an issue affecting people in the Canada Bay community Perception that increasing social isolation and declining social cohesion contributes to risk of domestic violence 	<p>"I live and work in the area and the families I talk to many are affected by domestic violence."</p> <p>"Domestic abuse and violence is an ongoing, hidden issue across all Australian communities and has a huge impact on families, particularly women and children."</p> <p>"I moved here with my husband and we have 2 young children, he wont let me work and make friends."</p> <p>"We have zero schools, housing market is out of control and this ever increasing density, isolation and an increase in renters seems to be causing an increase in domestic violence."</p>
Burden of care (selected by 7% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts on the health of carers 	<p>"Because I am involved in the caring role for elderly coming from CALD background."</p> <p>"I only work part time, have a lot of family responsibilities and don't have money to access services and better care."</p> <p>"There are many unseen carers who just keep on going until their health is affected."</p>

In addition to the issues discussed in the table above and the options provided in the survey list, survey respondents raised a number of other social issues that they think are urgent for the City of Canada Bay community.

These issues include:

- Lack of things for young people to do and youth-friendly spaces to go in the area (15 comments), with select comments including:
 - *"I'm concerned about our young adults and high school aged children. It's been a tough year and I'm not sure there is much to engage them in this area. My son loves the skate park, but that's not for everyone. I worry for my teenage daughter and that there's not much for her, and at some point I know my son will move on from the skate park."*
 - *"There's nothing for young people, our future leaders to do in this area."*
 - *"There's not much to do, I like to go to the skate park but that's all there really is, I'd like to do something on weekends with my friends but I don't know what. Something at school but something fun with my friends."*
 - *"I'm going to high school next year and there's heaps for little kids in the area but I don't see anything for people at high school. No one ever asks me what people my age would like."*
 - *"Youth today are online more often and around physically out doing less. They need more opportunities to get active and engage with others."*
- Homelessness (4 comments)
- Impacts of climate change (3 comments), and
- Gender equality and the burden of care for women (2 comments).

12.4. Accessing services

Overall, many respondents indicated they have no problems accessing local community services in City of Canada Bay (35%; 38 respondents). Of those who experienced barriers, respondents indicated they experienced barriers to accessing the following community services in Canada Bay including:

- Transport (public/ community) (17%)
- Mental health services/counselling (15%)
- Community centre (14%), and
- Libraries (12%).

Respondents were asked if there were other barriers to accessing services in City of Canada Bay. Many comments indicated respondents would like to see:

- Council facilities to facilitate programs for families with young children
- More safe space for babies, toddlers and children to play
- Gymnastics and gym spaces
- A library in Rhodes
- Nursing homes for visitations, and
- Parking near shops.

Table 3 - Have you experienced any barriers accessing any of the following community services in City of Canada Bay in the past 12 months?

Barriers to accessing services	%	#
I've had no problems accessing local community services	35	38
Transport (public/community)	17	19
Mental health services/counselling	15	17
Community Centres	14	15
Libraries	12	13
Education	10	11
Information about services and programs	10	11
Health and wellbeing programs	9	10
Specialist medical services	7	8
Personal care and support (i.e. shopping, meals on wheels etc)	6	7
Doctors and pharmacies	5	6
Hospitals	5	5
Centrelink	4	4
Dentists	4	4
Crisis support	4	4
Employment Services	3	3
Childcare	2	2
Disability Services	2	2
Medicare	2	2
Housing and settlement services	1	1
Legal services	0	0
Financial Planning/Advice	0	0
Other	15	16

12.5. Barriers to accessing services

Respondents who indicated that they experienced barriers to accessing services commented that barriers include:

- Service / facility closed during the COVID19 pandemic (13 comments)
- Difficulties accessing public transport, including bus stops removed and services cancelled (10 comments)
- Barriers to accessing medical services (8 comments), including:
 - Cost of dentist
 - Couldn't find local doctor under bulk billing on the day
 - Long waiting times and cost of specialist medical services
 - No children's medical services at Concord Hospital.
- No art facilities available in the local area (6 comments)
- Lack of accessible parking in proximity to shops and services (4 comments)
- Limited access to mental health services, including for young people other than school counsellor (3 comments)
- Schools are at capacity and no access to schools in Rhodes (2 comments)
- Cost of hire of facilities too expensive
- Police did not help in family violence situation
- Community facilities in need of upgrade
- Experienced discrimination based on weight
- Need for increased space at Abbotsford Scouts
- More support for carers of children with disability
- Slow response to progress of development applications
- Telehealth makes it difficult to get good medical advice or examinations
- Cost and waiting lists for Council-run childcare
- The gender pay gap and inequality at work puts women at a higher risk of physical and mental illness
- Need for upgrades to Concord High School theatrette for use by whole community.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

The privatisation of buses is trending towards a reduction in services.

I have a Home Care provider and recently she was unable to provide the planned visit due to lack of parking in near- by streets. Subsequent discussion with the Coordinator of the service confirmed this is a common problem.

There's not really an arts scene in the Canada Bay Area. There's nowhere to perform or practice performing and I look at the theatrette at my school and wonder why it just sits there unrenovated, I mean it has got to be 40 years old.

I have experienced problems obtaining GP appointments. On one occasion I was informed there was a two day waiting list for a Tele- health phone appointment, and a phone appointment was necessary prior to a face to face appointment.

Health and wellbeing programs are not well documented or publicised.

Childcare - council run with good reputation has a waitlist, it's likely that we will struggle to afford this when required in the next few months.

COVID-19 caused the temporary closure of Table-Tennis, Harry's Shed and Active Seniors Activities.

12.6. Service gaps

Respondents indicated there are a number of service gaps in Canada Bay including:

- Spaces for arts, including for presentation and creation (8 comments)
- Transport:
 - Need for improved public transport (4 comments)
 - Improved parking in the Majors Bay Road area and generally (2 comments)
 - Increased traffic and congestion is a challenge
- Support for domestic and family violence victims (3 comments)
- Upgrades to local public schools (e.g. Concord High School theatre) and sharing school facilities (3 comments)
- Support for local businesses
- More things to do and spaces for young people (non-sports and other than the skate park) (4 comments)
- Local Medicare and Centrelink centres
- Accessibility
 - Improved and accessible road crossings
 - Improved accessibility of medical services in Five Dock (e.g. no steps)
- More spaces for community to gather and meet new people (3 comments)
- Increased health and wellbeing programs (e.g. walking groups)
- Increased support for older people to learn how to use technology
- More support for young people with mental health issues and learning challenges
- Increased local service provision as most services are out of area
- Increased programs on local heritage conservation
- Improved street lighting along the riverside
- Increased spaces that care for children on the Autism Spectrum
- Greater diversity of local businesses
- Increased spaces for community groups (e.g. Abbotsford Scout Group)
- Increased supported accommodation for young adults with a disability
- Increased family support services with a focus on prevention.
- Increased community activities including:
 - More community groups
 - Employ staff member at Concord community centre to develop programs and activities for all ages to promote sense of community

- Intergenerational activities
- Programs for seniors (e.g. affordable gentle exercise classes, hydrotherapy program) (2 comments)
- Programs for young people encouraging active healthy lifestyles
- Community-led groups and engagement

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

Council of Canada bay is doing very well and has planned lots of social and cultural activities in Rhodes - well done. However the traffic and transportation issues are badly affecting the quality of residents life.

Things for teenagers please, just talk to us we have lots of ideas!

I don't quite know how to describe this... but what about a mums and dads "place". We have a nearly 3 yr old who will likely be an only child (we came to party a bit late...) I would love somewhere I can go to meet other families, kids our daughters' age, etc. It doesn't have to be anything formal... maybe a sponsored series of events like at the Concord Bowling Club or other facility.

Crisis support is needed in the area especially for domestic violence victims. I've heard the police are not always helpful.

I'm an arts lover but there's nowhere in the area where you can see local artists exhibit or see a play. I don't think there's an arts scene locally but it would be nice to have one.

I wish schools in our area were open to the community. I have children and while the facilities at some schools are pretty run down I'm not sure why we can't at least use basket ball courts and school outdoor areas on weekends.

We now have a community centre in concord but there are no staff employed to develop programs and activities for all ages. That would help promote the sense of community we are losing.

Programs for seniors. I would appreciate a local affordable gently exercise program and access to a Hydrotherapy program.

12.7. Participating in community life

Respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the following statement: “I am able to fully participate in community activities within the City of Canada Bay.”

Overall, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, while 28% somewhat agreed and 17% were unsure.

Respondents who indicated that they experienced barriers to participating in community life commented that barriers include:

- Lack of time, including due to caring responsibilities for children (3 comments)
- Activities not available at the right time, including for people who work during the day time
- Difficult to access Auslan interpreters for certain activities for persons who are deaf
- Challenges to participation for people who are hard of hearing
- Community groups perceived to be unwelcoming
- Abbotsford Scouts cannot accept new members due to small hall size.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

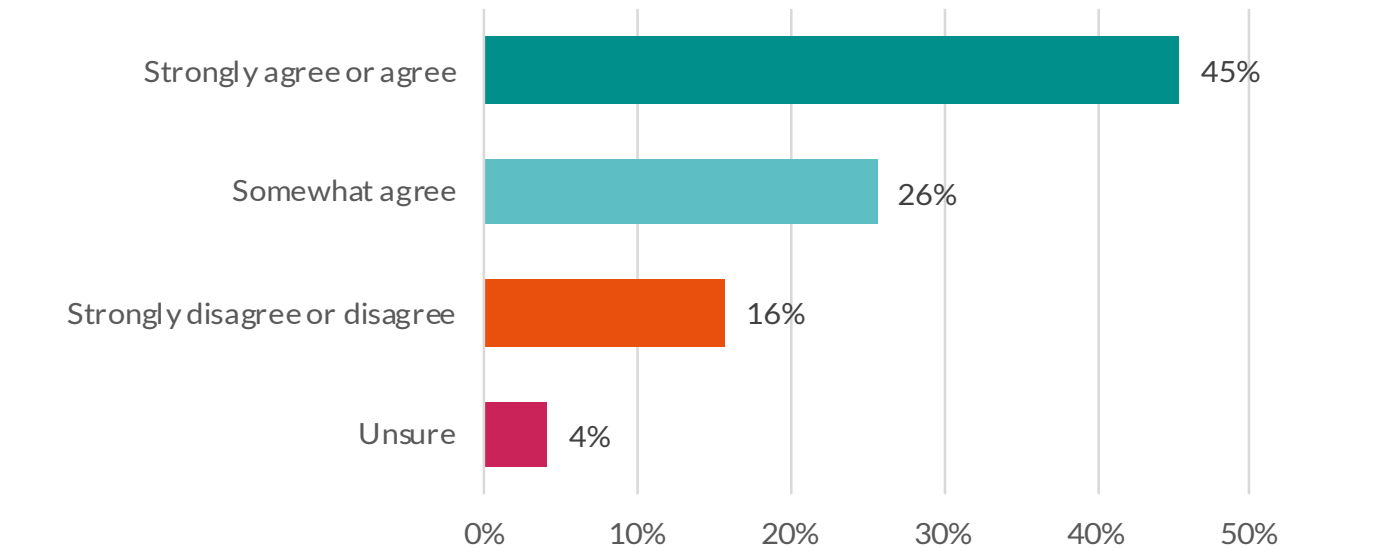
I am deaf so require Auslan interpeters which can be hard to get for certain activities. I have NDIS funds that I can use but sometimes being the only deaf person in a group of hearing people is still isolating even with interpreters.

I'm hard of hearing - with covid and the requirement to wear a mask or meet online I'm unable to access many social and community opportunities. If there were more inclusive volunteer opportunities I'd be keen - especially community gardening or connections with older people etc.

Several years ago I tried to get help in technology use from the local seniors computer group but found they were quite unhelpful and cliquey. Canada bay group seems to exist only for those who are already in it.

We are part of Abbotsford scouts due to the small hall size the group are unable to take new members

Figure 15 - Level of agreement with the following statement: “I am able to fully participate in community life and activities within the City of Canada Bay.”



12.9. Discriminatory attitudes and behaviours

50% of respondents indicated that they had seen or experienced any discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours towards yourself or other people in the City of Canada Bay.

This was most commonly discrimination based on:

- Age (16%)
 - Lack of respect for older people in the community
 - Limited engagement with and support for young people in the community
- Race (15%)
 - Increased discrimination towards people from Asian backgrounds during COVID19 pandemic
- Religion (11%)
- Sexuality (9%)
- Income (7%).

Respondents also noted discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours based on (dis)ability, weight and gender inequality.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

As you age you become progressively invisible.

At times there is discriminatory attitudes towards people living with disability or mental health challenges. I see these experiences in cafes, using public transport and local shopping centres.

Lack of respect for our senior citizens. Lack of compassion for the less fortunate and lack of understanding and patience with other races.

Our south east origin security guard of the area was bashed by a caucasian male at the station when he was walking to work in the early morning.

I have friends at other schools and sometimes they make me feel bad because I don't go to a private school but I like my school and my friends.

12.8. Social impacts of COVID19

Respondents were asked to comment on whether the COVID19 pandemic increased any social issues for them, with common themes including:

- Increased social isolation due to activities being cancelled and self-isolating
- Increased mental health issues and anxiety
- Increased domestic and family violence
- Impact on local businesses
- Disruptions to school year and pressures of homeschooling on families
- Challenges to accessing services online, especially for older people.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

I have not yet returned to volunteering as a member of Drummoyne Probus Club, the lack of face to face meetings has increased social isolation for many members, especially those who are older.

I'm principal carer for elderly parents. They miss the social get together that was organised by the local library for elderly Greek people.

When seniors were unable to meet weekly as they are used to, it was difficult for them. The face to face interaction is of vital importance for their well-being.

I know Council cannot do everything, but there is hope for a vaccine in the near future and I would like to see Council looking forward and planning social engagements, reconnection with community events, etc.

I appreciated the Bay Connect bus trips, although the trip fees are starting to become unaffordable. Obviously the suspension of the program is understandable due to the restrictions. However, I look forward to the trip recommencement in February and hope the fee is not progressively increased.

12.10. Social impacts by community cohort

Respondents were asked whether they wanted to provide feedback on social issues for specific community cohorts. As shown in the table below, respondents selected the social issues they think are most urgent for each cohort and commented why they chose those issues.

Table 13 - Social issues identified by community cohort		
Older people (27 responses)	1	Social isolation or loneliness 67%
	2	Getting around/accessing transport 60%
	3	Access to support and/or care 59%
	4	Accessing services and support online 48%
	5	Burden of caring 44%
	Other comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need support for older people in navigating new technology (2 comments) • Challenges to participating online, creating a digital divide (2) • Social isolation (2) • Concerns of elderly in aged care facilities 	
Children and families (22 responses)	1	Social isolation 41%
	2	Mental health and wellbeing 41%
	3	Housing affordability 36%
	4	Physical health and wellbeing 36%
	5	Domestic and family violence 27%
	Other comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns of Covid-19 exacerbating social issues (4 comments), including increase in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – social isolation – pressure of parents to care for their children at home – mental health issues for young people – domestic violence • Need for connected and frequent public transport routes (2 comments) • Need for family support, particularly for new parents, parents with children transitioning in different life stages (primary through to employment) • More affordable housing for key workers (e.g. teachers, social workers) • Desire for more social activities in the area for the community to engage in • Access to safe space to play and explore • Reduce antisocial behaviour in car parks • Regulate car hooning, particularly near Majors Bay Road • More social activities • Need to address unaffordable living in Sydney and the mental health impacts it causes, such as burden of debt and working • Financial pressures affecting poorer families and impacting access to technology and services • Concerns of anxiety leading to drug and alcohol use • Concerns of vaping in schools • Increased use of social media causing teenagers anxiety and low self esteem. • Expressed need for additional schools and community childcare centres in Rhodes • Increase in childcare, particularly as more parents are working from home and need support • Increased access to programs in the community for Autistic children and teenagers • Increased fencing around playgrounds that are near main roads 	

Young people and students (25 responses)	1	Mental health and wellbeing 76%
	2	Lack of things to do 68%
	3	Drug and alcohol use and abuse 60%
	4	Feeling safe in public places 36%
	5	Getting around/transport 20%
	<p>Other comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of things to do and places to go for young people (9 comments) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns teens are turning to gaming and social media because of this (3) Leads to boredom Concerns about drug and alcohol use (4) Need for increased funding for public schools (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Particularly to support more counselling services at schools Managing school and family stress/breakdowns (2) Concerns for increase in suicide and suicide attempts (2) Improved sense of safety in public spaces, particularly at night for girls (2) Opportunity to access school facilities (2) Mental health and wellbeing issues and stress for young people resulting in suicide attempts Need for a variety of activities to engage young people, outside of sports Affordable activities and programs for young people Need for more spatial capacity at Sea Scouts hall to accommodate increasing demand Concerned many children and young people are spending too much time on electronic devices rather than being outdoors and getting exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cyberbullying is a growing problem Concerns of obesity Desire for mentoring and development programs that teach young people social skills More youth programs or places young people can go Spaces for young people to perform music 	
People from culturally diverse backgrounds (11 responses)	1	Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours based on cultural background 91%
	2	Language barriers 73%
	3	Housing affordability 55%
	4	Social isolation 46%
	5	Domestic and family violence 37%
	<p>Other comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and cultural differences engender discrimination which impacts opportunities and access to services. Fewer socialising opportunities due to the pandemic 	

First Nations peoples (4 responses)	1	Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours 75%
	2	Housing affordability 50%
	3	Access to local employment opportunities 50%
	4	Domestic and family violence 50%
	5	Other 50%
	Other comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recognition of First Nations peoples (2 comments) There is no sense of Aboriginal history prior to white settlement in the area Concerns access to health care, discriminatory attitudes and domestic and family violence affect First Nations peoples One respondent would like to see principles outlined in the “Uluru Statement from the Heart” to be adopted by Council Community members identified that there is still a significant lack of visibility and celebration of First Nations peoples, culture and heritage in the Canada Bay area Community members told us they would like to see more opportunities to learn from and share First Nations culture. 	
LGBTQIA+ communities (2 responses)	1	Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours based on sexuality 100%
	2	Feeling welcome/comfortable in the community 100%
	3	Mental health and wellbeing 100%
	No other comments	
Men (4 responses)	1	Mental health and wellbeing 50%
	2	Access to health care 25%
	3	Access to local employment opportunities 25%
	4	Drug and alcohol use and abuse 25%
	5	Domestic and family violence 25%
	Other comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid has impacted men particularly trying to support families, and educating children at home 	
Women (5 responses)	1	Social isolation 80%
	2	Domestic and family violence 40%
	3	Inequality across our community 20%
	4	Mental health and wellbeing 20%
	5	Discriminatory attitudes and/or behaviours based on gender 20%
	Other comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender equality Perception of gender norms and stereotypes need to change Covid has increased gender wage gap again Covid has isolated and placed physical, mental and financial stress on many families, often with no support network 	

12.11. Disability inclusion access

The community survey included a number of specific questions about disability, with findings shown below.

Positive attitudes and behaviours

Respondents were asked if they think that the City of Canada Bay community has positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with a disability.

Of the 14 respondents that answered, 36% indicated 'yes' and 'no' respectively, followed by 29% who were unsure.

Respondents ideas to encourage positive community attitudes and behaviours include:

- Legislated enforcement of the Disability Discrimination Act
- Introducing affirmative employment policy for employment and social inclusion at Council
- Continue to develop and implement Access Improvement Plans, and engaging people living with disability in determining priorities
- Increase awareness and social understanding (2 comments)
 - Meeting and including people living with disability in regular groups and activities
 - Promotion of people living with disability in daily activities, not just 'inspirational' stories
 - Opportunity for events to celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities
- Making public spaces such as shops and libraries accessible through wide entries and exits, lift access and within close proximity
- Parking within close proximity to shops
- Improvements to the steep drop outside the library for safety, and
- Council to be more responsive to complaints.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

"Meeting people living with disability. Having them in regular groups and activities. Showing examples of people living with disability having regular lives. An event around International Day of People with Disabilities."

"Continue to develop and implement Access Improvement Plans - engaging PWD in determining priorities."

"Making the shops more accessible allows more people to get out and participate in everyday activities, we are included on some level but it's an after thought."

"Need to use the ramp at all times when using the library, as there is no lift on the outside of the building. Also there is a steep drop outside the library need the bus stop. There are no barriers for safety."

Liveability for people living with disability

Of 14 respondents, 36% think that the City of Canada Bay is a liveable place for people living with disability, while 36% think that it is not.

Respondents ideas to create a more liveable place for people living with disability in Canada Bay include:

- Ensuring public places and spaces are accessible and safe (4 comments) including access to ramps and lifts, road crossings, mobility vehicle parks and accessible toilets
- Improvements to footpath surface and leveling (3), particularly near tree roots that damage paths
- Opportunity for programs that involve individual or group visits/outings for people living with disability for a range of ages
- Changing attitudes towards people living with disability
- Ensure access to buildings code is observed
- More disabled parking
- Involve people living with disability in the development of access improvement plans
- Group homes to create independence for people living with disability.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

"My daughter is mentally alert but has physical limitations. A visit from someone of a similar age and interests would be great for her. She falls through the gap for many programmes for people her age."

"I can do what I need to do but Five Dock and Drummoyne are changing, you can't even get into Liquorland now as there are steps, the old shop had no steps. The footpaths are very bad around Five Dock, there is no way to get to Five Dock park without taking my scooter on the road up Barnstaple Rd. There is no accessible toilet in the park so when I walk my dog I have to come home just to go to the toilet, other people don't have to do that."

"Develop access improvement plans with people with disabilities at the table."

"Group homes to create independence for people living with disability"

Employment opportunities for people living with disability

Respondents were asked if they think there are good employment opportunities for people living with disability in the City of Canada Bay.

Of the 14 respondents that answered, 50% said 'no' and 50% were 'unsure'.

Respondents ideas to create more employment opportunities in the City of Canada Bay include:

- Council could offer incentives and education to support employers to provide workplace opportunities
- Local programs which can assist with training, transitioning to employment & funding
- Traineeships where business' take the time to train people with disabilities.
- Opportunity for Council to employ more people living with disability
- Promotions that focus on ability
- Giving people living with disability more time to learn
- Job sharing; employing people living with disability by partnering with a buddy for support.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

"Local programs which can assist with training, transitioning to employment and funding."

"Job sharing, employing people with disabilities by partnering with a buddy."

"Sheltered workshops (ADEs) are against the UNCRPD, mainstream employers need to provide opportunities. Council could offer incentives and education."

"Give people with a disability more time to learn."

"Traineeships where business' take the time to train people with disabilities."

"Council could employ more people with a disability."

People living with disability accessing information and sharing their ideas, opinions and concerns with Council

Respondents were asked if they think it is easy for people living with disability to access information and to share their ideas, opinions and concerns with Council.

Of the 14 respondents that answered, the majority think it is not easy (50%), followed by respondents who were unsure (36%).

Respondents ideas to make it easier to communicate with Council and access information, including on Council's website were:

- Need to develop outreach communications (2 comments)
 - Particularly for people living with disability living independently
 - Creating specific resources to meet different needs
- Opportunity for accessible functions on Council's website (3 comments), including
 - A chat function, especially as phone calls for people who are deaf are difficult
 - Auslan videos
 - Easy Read version of the website, with videos and subtitles
- Promotion of the Disability Committee and engage people living with disability to be involved.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

"We have trouble accessing good information, it would be great if Council did an Easy Read version, videos with subtitles. I have trouble accessing information on devices, I feel we are getting left behind with good communication, I rely on my brother to help me."

"Very socially excluded folks won't access your information - you need to develop outreach to them, e.g people in boarding houses - it's clear these folks are marginalised and proprietors usually unethical."

"A chat function on the website would be good so I don't have to make a phone call via the NRS as I am deaf. Auslan videos on the website."

"Reaching out to local groups- e.g. The Ella Centre in person, creating specific resources to meet different needs."

13. Stakeholder focus groups

13.2. About the online focus groups

Three online focus groups were held in February 2021 with representations from local service providers and community groups operating in the Canada Bay area.

During the focus groups, Cred presented findings from the community survey and asked stakeholders for feedback on social issues, challenges and opportunities they would like to see come out of the Social Sustainability Strategy.

In total, 14 people participated across all focus groups.

13.1. Social issues

Stakeholders were presented with the preliminary findings from the community survey. While most agreed that the social issues identified through the survey were indeed some of the most urgent, many also commented that these are issues that are impacting similar communities in Sydney (such as mental health, social isolation and increasing residential density).

Some stakeholders noted that social issues in Canada Bay are interrelated and need to be thought about in a holistic manner (e.g. disability compounds issues getting around and affordability; domestic and family violence is a common cause of homelessness).

Stakeholders also acknowledged that Council does not have the resources nor the responsibility to address all social issues in the Canada Bay area, however can play an important role in advocating to other levels of government and coordinating local services.

Social isolation and cohesion

- Social isolation for seniors, particularly those of culturally diverse backgrounds and for young families

Homelessness

- There is a lack of affordable housing in the Canada Bay area and as a result there are many people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- One of the main causes of homelessness is domestic and family violence, which is very prevalent in some areas of Canada Bay.
- Homelessness is apparent in the community. This is not something that Council can solve.

Cost of housing and living

- Housing affordability is major issue, 10 year waiting period for certain housing areas
- Need to look at how to solve affordable housing in Inner West – don't want young people to be unable to live in these places
- Young families tend to move away when their children become adolescent and they have to start paying school fees, which creates a divide in the community
- Need for more affordable and social housing for older people in the community. Need to ensure affordable housing ends up in the hands of people in need.

Young people

- There are not many opportunities for young people in the Canada Bay area, including limited access to employment pathways, things to do, youth-friendly spaces
- There are few opportunities for young people to have their say in decision-making
- Concern from parents regarding psychological impact of COVID on young people and how an increase in non-sport focused activities in the area would help foster connections and additional (non school) areas of positive focus.
- Top issues for young people at school is the access to electronic devices. We have plenty of open space that they enjoy but not all young people enjoy these areas. The main issues is around mental health and anxieties and the funding for support services.
- Would like to see more focus on activities other than sports such as arts and cultural activities.
- Council needs to have more awareness of struggles facing young people and through cultural and social events can hopefully bring young people and community as a whole together.
- Would be nice to have student council representatives in Canada Bay area to come to council with the issues they are facing.

Culturally and linguistically diverse

- Language barriers present challenges in certain situations and facilities (this comment was not further clarified)
- Agreed that the community has become significantly more culturally diverse and there is still racism in the community

Discrimination

- Seniors sometimes participate in CASS discussions and have also revealed their experiences with racial discrimination
- Racism has been an issue at local schools in the area during the COVID-19 pandemic

Transport and getting around

- Very inaccessible transport in Five Dock/Concord area
- Changes to bus routes and reduced services has impacted on some parts of the community, including older people and people living with disability.
- The traffic density and limited parking availability is a growing issue, particularly with construction work

Mental health

- (2 stakeholders recommended) Would recommend monitoring the COVID impact on mental health on young people, will only get worse from now. Need to keep an eye on long waitlists and access to services. Thinks this is the most important thing to keep an eye on

Employment

- People are still experiencing employment impacts, will also see lower income people struggle

Development

- Poor development impacts on accessibility, including people parking across driveways or on footpaths, particular around duplexes

Disability

- Disability access is also very limited in Five Dock.
- Concord has the worst footpaths, need to be fixed. For older people good footpaths are important for safety, get rid of street trees that are affecting footpaths.
- High percentage of adults in special needs families have depression and a limited voice.

Access to education

- Overcrowding at schools is a major issue. Comes from the continuously growing population and will only go up more. The government should consider building another school and updating already existing school buildings/services.

Other issues

- Need to raise awareness of the social issues that exist in the area to increase engagement in the community
- Alcohol and drug use is a serious issue in the area particularly in Mortlake area
- Council needs to consider more amenities especially in parks (toilets especially).
- Need to have more activities and be able to access as much as the foreshore as possible, such as paths that connect areas to one another. Great thing to have as much green space as we do.

13.3. Opportunities

Stakeholders were asked what outcomes, opportunities or ideas they had to address social issues and support social sustainability in Canada Bay.

Social connection

- More opportunities to connect isolated seniors in Rhodes area, such as social spaces for seniors to come together and interact
- Need to promote existing groups and programs better to raise awareness of what's already on offer
- Opportunity for Council to further connect community groups and organisations to encourage shared initiatives and events that help create social connection

Community facilities and spaces

- Very difficult for organisations to find spaces to use and cost of places are an issue
- Should capitalize on missing social spaces, make it easy for organisations to use these spaces, council could be more proactive on looking to utilize on what is already in the space before building new spaces

Funding

- Would like to see increased funding rather than relying on not-for-profit organisations

Mental health

- Need to look at group interventions for young people battling mental health issues also need support from primary health care providers

Raise awareness

- There are strong values of anti-development, possibly council can educate the community on positive effects of development for the community

Affordability

- Council could target access to facilities for people already on low income – such as linking them to more supportive programs and incentives for further inclusion

Young people

- Anything council can do to increase non sport activities for

young people would be so beneficial. eg barista courses – possibly something for Livvi's café

Events

- Community events would be great to see ie. Movie under the stars at Five Dock Park, doesn't have to be a big event
- Schools in the area to put on school-based events, possibly altogether to create one massive event, council needs to make the idea of events possible
- Housing affordability: young families tend to move away from the church when needing to move to larger houses, creates a divide within the Church
- Five Dock family group on Facebook is quite successful and a way to connect the community and should be tapped into by the council to promote community events
- Council can only do so much, up to the individuals and programs to make things happen however it is important for council to support these groups and individuals.

Engagement and information

- Opportunity for more community forums focussed on social issues to further engage and connect the community
- Recognise that existing facilities such as libraries and leisure centres play an important role in connecting the community to information about their local area.

Engagement and information

- Volunteering can be a great tool to better one's mental health. Can connect to volunteers through social media and word of mouth.
- Opportunity to support community groups to bring in professional and inspirational speakers.

14. Stakeholder interviews

14.1. About the stakeholder interviews

17 Stakeholder interviews were conducted with local service providers, community groups and peak bodies in December 2020 through to February 2021.

As part of the interviews, we asked stakeholders:

- What is your connection to the City of Canada Bay area/ community?
- In your experience, what are the most important social and community issues for people living in Canada Bay? Can you tell us why?
- Has the COVID-19 pandemic increased any challenges or problems for families and children in the Canada Bay community? How?
- Do you have any ideas for how Council can improve social inclusion and participation?

Findings from the stakeholder interviews are shown in the table overpage.

14.2. Social issues by community cohort

Table 14 - Social issues identified by community cohort during stakeholder interviews

Cohort	Social issues	Opportunities
Children and families	<p>The impacts of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching children at home was a big challenge for families. Older children were neglected as younger children required increased attention. Exacerbated challenges for our members with many experiencing cabin fever during lockdown and finding that balancing 24hr parenting with work was challenging. <p>Culturally diverse families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social isolation of CALD parents has been exacerbated by COVID as they cannot attend any programs or events and may experience language barriers Dealing with pressures of negotiating a new country and culture while also being a good parent Limited awareness amongst some CALD parents of the services environment and childhood development Need to raise awareness of the role of play in development (social, emotional, educational) May be a lack of support systems in their environment (e.g. family might be overseas) <p>Grandparents from culturally diverse backgrounds in caring roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a high number of CALD 65+ that are the primary carers for the children. They are often not well connected to services and are often recent arrivals. Grandparents in caring roles may think it is okay to smack children however this leads to accumulative trauma amongst young children and has wellbeing implications. Many children are left with grandparents for long periods of time while their parents work or go overseas which creates issues with anxiety and separation. Many grandparents don't feel comfortable getting involved in the community and going to playgroups, which decreases children's opportunity to socialise. During the pandemic, grandparents didn't want to leave the house because they were so afraid. They have experienced significant isolation, looking after children, parents working long hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and design for family and child friendly spaces, in particular in new high density areas Collaborate with local services to fill gap in services for children aged 12 to 18 months (particularly in Rhodes) Provide community gatherings and events for families and children Continue to provide information and educational programs for parents to learn about childhood development and nutrition Support and provide play groups to support social development of children and connect parents to each other and to the community and services - this will help to build support networks Ensure that Council childcare fees are available at a reduced rate, especially for vulnerable families experiencing domestic violence Provide opportunities for children and families to have intercultural connections and experiences to support community harmony Council can play a role in providing activities and programs in the local area where people are – potentially in parks. The aim should be to provide opportunities for people to see each other, have a little talk and get to know each other. It is difficult to make connections for new Australians and this can help them to feel part of the community and belong. Council has a role in acknowledging what the issues are and partnering with services to address them. Provide social groups for grandparents in caring roles Opportunity to co-locate child and family services and organisations in Rhodes to enable families in the region to have better access to services particular to children.

Cohort	Social issues	Opportunities
Young people and students	<p>Service gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant lack of activity and support services for young people within Canada Bay • Perceived lack of public high schools in the LGA • Increase in youth homelessness, however limited local services. • Need for a youth centre where people can hang out and do activities. • There are many sporting activities around but may be a gap generally in terms of informal social activities and places for young people to hang out. "There is nowhere for young people to go." <p>Mental health and stress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure to achieve good grades, career etc • Pressure for social conformity (e.g. fitting in with friends and norms etc) • Overscheduled lives and helicopter parenting running from activity-to-activity causes stress <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People – vapes, drugs, access to alcohol, nothing to do, no travelling. Offer if we can more stuff to do for youth. Look after them, otherwise more negative results next 5 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate barriers to accessing mental health services for young people and work with local schools and services to bolster youth mental health initiatives • Increased engagement with young people to understand what they need • Opportunities / places for young people to hang out after school hours. Currently there is nowhere for young people (teenagers) to go to 'hang out' in Concord or Rhodes
Older people	<p>Health and wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and wellbeing is a priority for the community – Canada Bay is a lifestyle area. "Older people" are generally still quite healthy and active. • There's a shift in the importance of health and wellbeing for all ages to maintain strength and balance. What other opportunities for programs can we offer older people? <p>The impacts of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID has reminded our older people that they might be vulnerable. There are two ends of a spectrum. Some people want to hug and kiss you and others are still nervous to come out. There are still many older people isolating themselves. <p>Using new technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technology – it isn't sustainable for a large proportion of older people. Old fashioned drop ins from the front fence have been really popular. <p>Ageing in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for opportunities to age in place in what is perceived to be an affluent community, however, which has pockets of disadvantage including lower socioeconomic seniors. • Increasing gentrification means that people of all ages are at risk of displacement. "No one should have to leave their community". • Canada Bay is an older population and it can be a challenge for people who are retiring to stay living in the area given the high cost of housing/living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering Canada Bay's ageing population, it would be great to see Council be a forward-thinking leader in designing for people with dementia in the built environment. These principles are not well-understood but are suited to Canada Bay's demographics. • Provide affordable social, health and wellbeing programs for older people • Continue to organise senior's bus trips and ensure affordability • Ensure access to adaptable and specialist housing • Investigate opportunities to connect older people to home care packages and NDIS (this can be a struggle for seniors who are isolated and vulnerable)

Cohort	Social issues	Opportunities
People living with disability	<p>Impacts of COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families and children with developmental concerns or disabilities are finding it very hard because teleconference doesn't work for them. They are not able to access services at the moment as many are still not face to face. Children with developmental issues are desperate for human connection and this has impact on mental health. Many people have been working from home, and online engagement is the new normal but does not work for many people with psychosocial disability or mental illness. Increasing social isolation and exclusion <p>Attitudes and behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of understanding in the community and local businesses about disability, for example people don't understand that when people with intellectual disability are loud or noisy they are not trying to scare people or be rude – it is just their sense of expression. <p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For young people with psychosocial disability there are not many employment opportunities in the area. Suggestion that Council could partner with the large companies at Rhodes to provide traineeship opportunities. <p>Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific challenges in Canada Bay include footpaths and major roads that form barriers (such as at Rhodes near the train station and shopping centre where there is no traffic light (on Walker street) – a bridge would benefit both pedestrians and drivers). The Bay Run is such a big feature of the area – promote disability inclusion around there – facilities for sensory impairments or wheelchair friendly routes. <p>CALD Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In many cultures there is the perception that disability will go away and the expectation that a service provider can 'fix' it. There is stigma and shame around special needs, and in particular women and mothers are made to feel guilty about the disability of children. Feeling embarrassed or feeling shame means you don't want to go see services because it means accepting that your child has a disability. The Australian service environment is complicated – and CALD people find it difficult to navigate the system. There is a lack of consistency in programs over time which people find confusing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dementia and autism friendly community – Council could play a role in promoting the services to their residents. Things like dementia friendly communities – sharing videos. Would like to see low-sensory areas or zones – opportunity for Council to profile their stance on inclusion. Would like to see more opportunities for people living with disability to be included in social activities and integrated It would be good to find out whether there are young people living in aged care centres in Canada Bay as this emerged from the royal commission. The federal government is implementing strategies to reduce this.

Cohort	Social issues	Opportunities
<p>Culturally diverse communities</p>	<p>The impacts of COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant fear and uncertainty for people in not being able to see families overseas. <p>Social connection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Especially for people from different cultural backgrounds, you go to where your culture is represented (e.g. Japanese people mostly go to Chatswood) so many people aren't locally connected if there is nothing locally that represents them. People from CALD backgrounds don't look for information locally - they look for information in language local paper. There are a lot of retired working-class people of colour who live around here and they have traditionally been disconnected because they are too poor to get involved. <p>Racism and discrimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Myself and my partner and our friends and families have experienced racist behaviours in Concord and North Strathfield. In other areas this may be experienced as a one-off thing, but it has been recurring since I moved back to the area. There seems to be a fertile ground for racism in the community." There is strong awareness amongst Council customer service staff of how to communicate with more established Italian community but not so much with newer non-euro communities. "If we can have entry point events like celebratory events is a good way to have hard conversations. Mardi Gras is a good time – Drag queen telling a story. International Day Against Racism. Not just Harmony Day. They are signals to people on the receiving end of racism and vilification. This will help them step up too." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see more community cultural events– suggest we celebrate Diwali and Mardi Gras in Canada Bay. The focus on families and representation is very important – not just heteronormative families in Councils communications materials. Differently abled etc. People of Colour. It gives a signal to people that they are part of the community. We use Council facilities and engage with staff and it is clear that while they may receive training it has not been internalised or conscientized. There is strong awareness amongst staff of how to communicate with more established Italian community but not so much with newer non-euro communities. Council can build stronger relationships with local in language media.

Cohort	Social issues	Opportunities
LGBTQIA+ communities	<p>Discrimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “We recently had gay friends who were shopping at the ALDI and had anti-gay remarks.” “We don’t feel welcome or comfortable as a queer couple walking down the street in this area– we feel quite vulnerable. However, we do put rainbow flags up during Pride because we don’t want young people in the area to feel like they are the only ones here. We received anti-queer flyers in our mailbox and reported this to the relevant agencies (Anti-Discrimination Board) so that they would have a record of this.” <p>Welcoming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A lot of our queer friends choose to live in the Inner West because they know the Council is very outwardly supportive of them. The Inner West Council is doing an incredible job. It would be great to see the Acon Welcome Here program rolled out in Canada Bay.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus on families and representation is very important – not just heteronormative families in Councils communications materials. Differently abled etc. People of Colour. It gives a signal to people that they are part of the community.
First Nations communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant lack of visibility of First Nations people, culture and heritage in the Canada Bay LGA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would love to see street names reference Aboriginal names – even if it was the Hen and Chicken bay.
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were a lot of fathers with anxiety issues during COVID19. They were very anxious about losing their job. 	
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are more likely to become unemployed due to COVID19 as they are more likely to work casually or part time. We may see an increase in people retiring early. May also impact on homelessness. 	

