

Nillumbik Shire Council Aged Services Survey Report

January 2019



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Introduction

For more than 30 years Victorian Local Government has been supporting older people, people with disabilities, their carers and families to live independently in their community. In 2015 the Commonwealth Government's National Aged Care Reform commenced across Victoria and this reform introduced significant changes to the funding and delivery of aged care services, including current and future changes to the way in which Council participates in the delivery of outcomes to our older residents. This included the introduction of MyAgedCare and the progressive introduction of a market driven, consumer directed care model across community based, packaged and residential aged care services.

The transition to consumer directed care (CDC) commenced in 2017 with the introduction of CDC to the Home Care Packages program and planning is actively underway for the introduction of CDC to a range of services delivered under the Commonwealth funded Home Support Program (CHSP). Council is currently funded to deliver CHSP services to people over 65 years of age under contract with the Commonwealth until 30 June 2020.

With the increased choice of service providers for residents, Council made the decision not to continue with some of the services it currently offers because these will be provided by competitive operators in the market place. This decision provides an opportunity for Council to strengthen its support for older residents by reinvesting funds that currently subsidise Commonwealth Home Support services.

Between March and April 2018, Nillumbik Shire Council surveyed older adults to find out "what you need to live and age well in Nillumbik". The feedback received has helped Council identify three major priorities to help older people to live and age well in the community:

- Accessible community transport, particularly for residents in the rural hinterland
- Addressing social isolation and loneliness
- Support navigating the Commonwealth government's "My Aged Care" service system in the short term to assist residents to access services they need

The Aged Services Survey was developed as a follow on from this consultation, to help Council better understand the communities needs in relation to these priorities.

Consultation

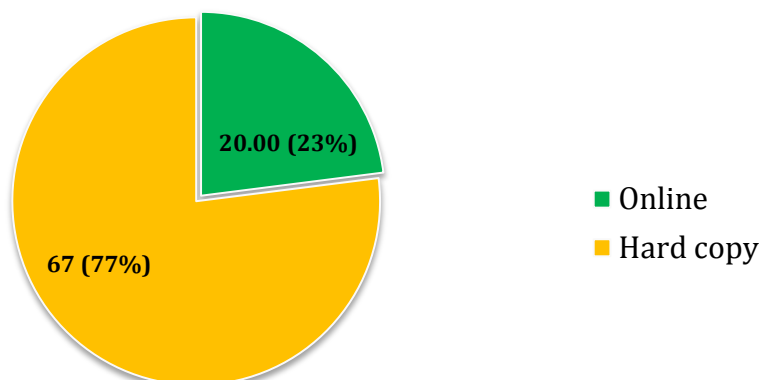
The Aged Services Survey was made available via hard copy and promoted online using Council's engagement platform 'Participate Nillumbik'. The survey period commenced on 9 October 2018 and concluded on 30 November 2019.

Hard copy surveys (see Appendix 1) were printed and distributed with support from Council's Positive Ageing Advisory Committee across the Shire including but not limited to:

- Nillumbik Men's Shed's – Eltham, Diamond Creek, Hurstbridge and St Andrews
- Hurstbridge Community Hub
- North Warrandyte Fireguard group
- Nillumbik U3A
- Eltham Rotary Festival
- Walk and Talk Group Hurstbridge
- Dunmoochin
- Allwood House, Hurstbridge
- Nillumbik Living and Learning Centre's
- Eltham Rural Group
- Probus Club, Hurstbridge
- Eltham Leisure Centre
- Nillumbik Seniors Festival Volunteer Expo
- Sow and Grow Hurstbridge
- Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries – Eltham and Diamond Valley
- Mail merge to Nillumbik Aged Services Clients (652 clients)

The survey was also available online through <https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/ageingwell>. This link was promoted using the online marketing platform MailChimp, to the Ageing Well in Nillumbik database (274 subscribers) and forwarded on through relevant Council staff member networks, as well as being promoted on Nillumbik Shire Council's Facebook page.

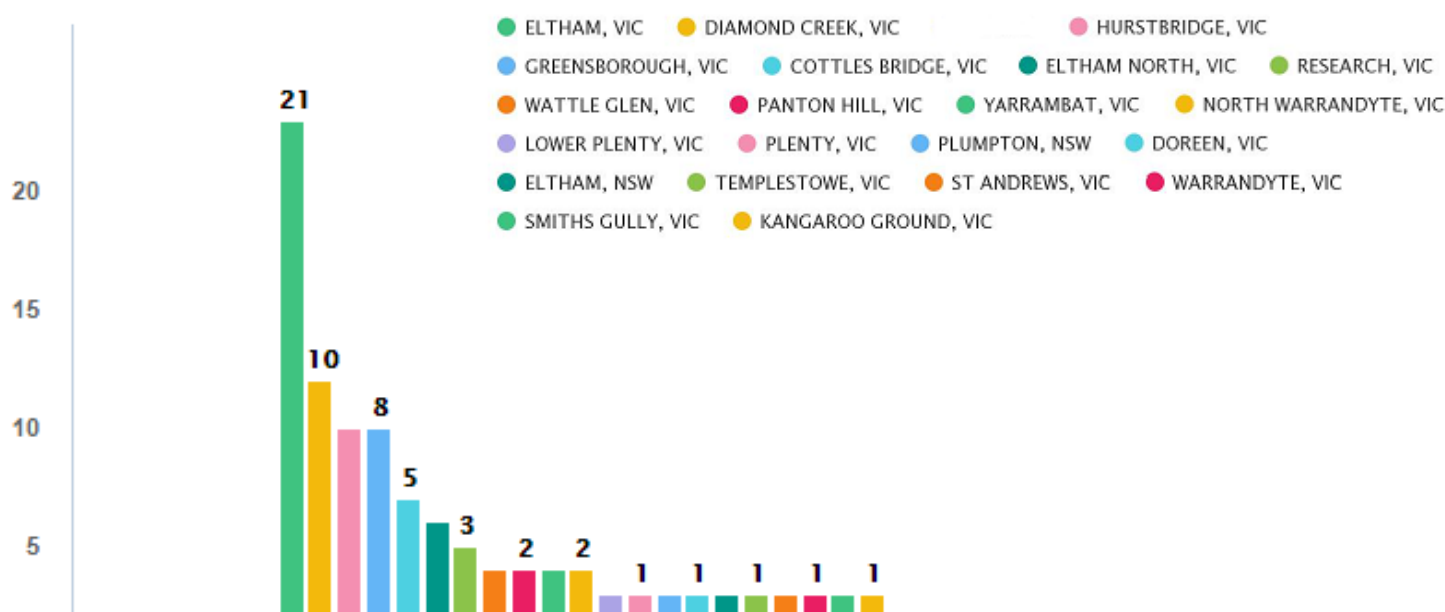
How did respondents complete the survey?



A total of 87 responses were received between October and November 2018 to the Aged Services Survey. Of this, 67 (77%) people completed the survey via hard copy and 20 (23%) completed the survey online.

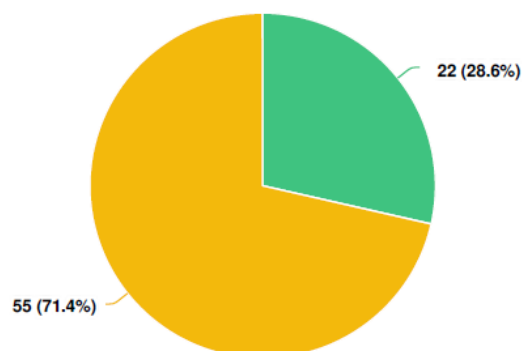
Demographic Overview of Survey Respondents

Suburb



A higher percentage of respondents, 21 (24.1%) live in the township of Eltham, 10 (11.5%) live in Diamond Creek, 8 (9.2%) from Hurstbridge and Greensborough and 5 (5.7%) from Cottes Bridge. Ten people out of the 87 skipped this question.

Gender

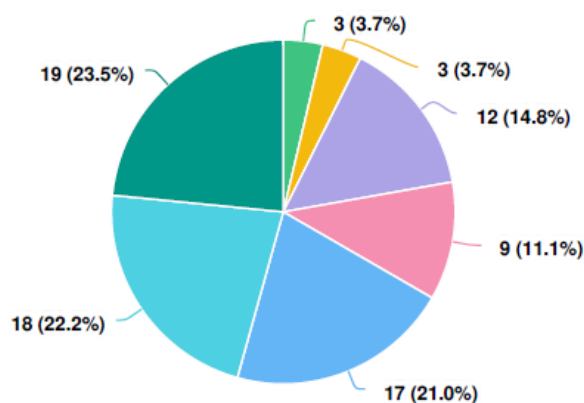


Question options

Male Female

A higher number of responses to the survey were received from women (71.4%), with 28.6% of responses coming from men.

Age



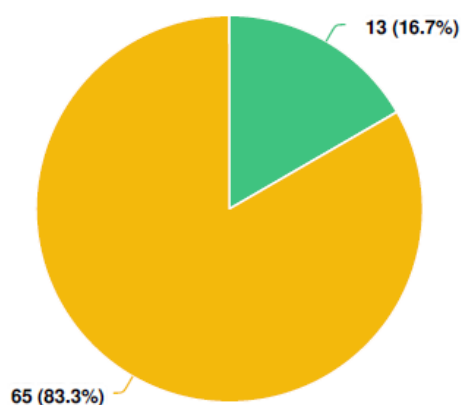
Question options

55 - 59 60 - 64 65 - 69 70 - 74 75 - 79 80 - 84 85 +

The greater number of respondents to the survey were aged 75 years and over, with the 85+ age group receiving the highest number of responses to the survey (23.5%). The age cohorts 55-59 years and 60-64 had the lowest response to the survey representing 3.7% of total respondents each.

Carers

Q23 Are you completing this survey as someone's carer?



Question options

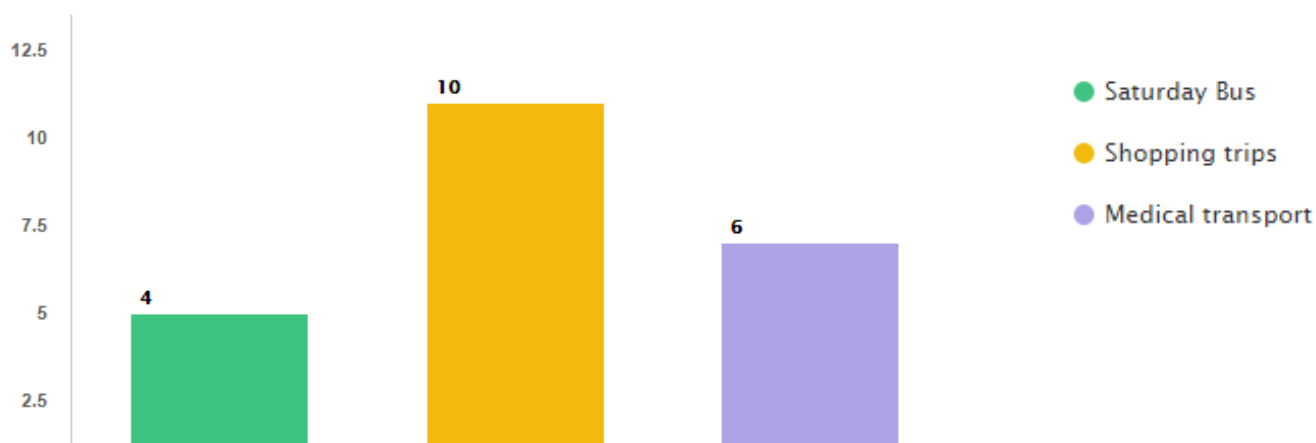
Yes No

Optional question (78 responses, 9 skipped)

A total of 13 respondents (16.7%) were carers completing the survey on behalf of an older person in Nillumbik.

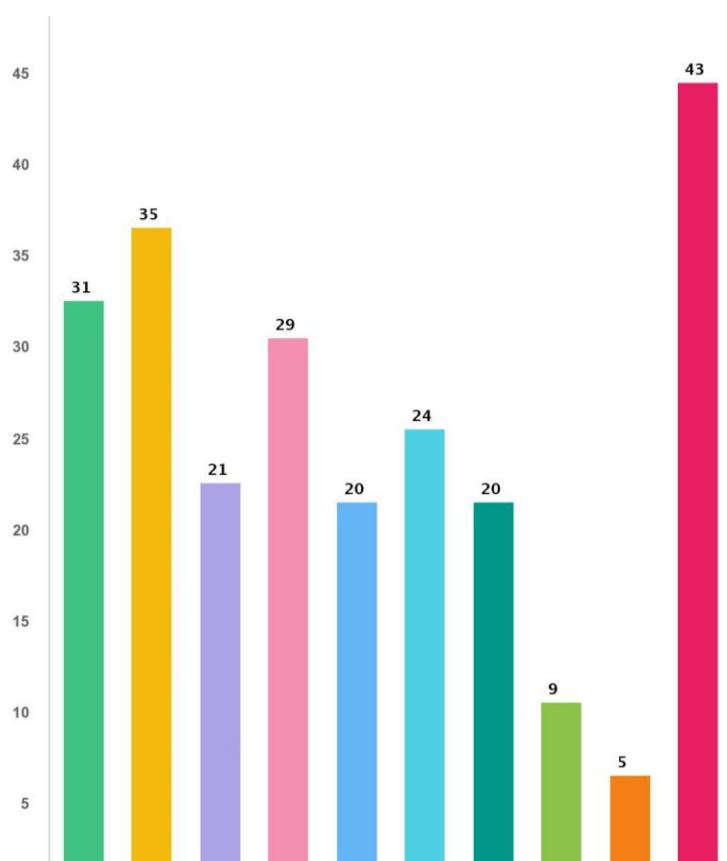
Survey Results and Key Findings

Question 1. Do you currently access any of Council's Community Transport services? (Please tick all that apply)



A total of 12 people out of the 87 responded to this question, 10 of which engage Community Transport for shopping trips, 6 for medical transport and 4 for the Saturday Bus.

Question 2. If additional community transport services were provided, where would you want these services to go? (Please tick all that apply)



Question options
(Click items to hide)

- Attend a local community group
- Grocery shopping
- Local Library
- Social outing
- Local leisure facility
- Shopping trip
- Connect with public transport
- Visit friends and family
- Other
- Appointments

A total of 67 people responded to this question. 'Appointments' was selected as the number one highest option that older people in Nillumbik would like to use Community Transport for with 43 people (18.1%) selecting this option. This was closely followed by 'Grocery Shopping' (14.8%), 'Attend a local community group' (13.1%) and 'Social outing' (12.2%).

Question 3. If you selected 'Other' please specify

"Train station / bus terminal"

"Courthouse poetry, band, theatre"

"Connect to train station at Hurstbridge"

"See films at Greensborough or Balwyn"

Question 4. Please tell us more about where you would like to go or what you would like to do if you had a community transport service to connect you.

Respondents were asked to answer this question in their own words. The responses received from older people in Nillumbik fall into five priority areas;

Social Activities

"Visit friends in Hurstbridge. Attend walking group in Diamond Creek."

"Greensborough shopping centre. Eltham shopping centre"

"Concerts"

"Shopping for groceries", "Weekly shopping"

"Shop at Doncaster now and then"

"Preston Market"

"Eltham town centre, Eltham leisure centre, Greensborough shopping centre, Eltham train station"

"Mostly to go local shops in Research and Eltham"

"...I would also like to visit my friends in neighbouring suburbs"

Social activities were identified as the highest priority, with a total of 19 respondents noting that they would like used a community transport service to connect in with a variety of social activities in the local area. 'Shopping' was a key theme here, in particular, having the opportunity to get to places like Greensborough and Doncaster Shopping Centre's and other local shops in Eltham, Research and Preston.

Train Station Connections

"The current PT bus that goes between Hurstbridge and Greensborough needs to connect with Cherrytree Road as those living that end of town with mobility issues can't walk to station area to catch bus or train"

"Community transport services would ideally link to public transport and support people to remain engaged in their community"

"In particular connection with public transport/and /or provision of adequate public transport to the St Andrews/ Panton Hill areas is critical."

"Might use it to get to station. I still drive, parking a long way from where you need to go can be a problem. I'm not disabled."

Six respondents identified a need for a community transport service to link them in with existing public transport such as a bus stop or train station.

Medical Appointments

"probably mainly dental and medical appointments and occasionally to the airport"

"I would like to go St. Vincent's because they are the ones who support me."

"Services to help attending Drs/ Specialists Appts and treatment / therapy sessions on multiple days of each week."

"To and from hospital for procedures. To and from ophthalmologist appointments"

"Medical appointments to help relieve the current burden on my son"

Respondents demonstrated a strong desire to have a community transport service that can connect them to medical and other specialist appointments, with 11 responses relating to this theme. A large percentage of respondents are not currently receiving Community Support Services from Nillumbik Shire Council (45 out of 87) which could demonstrate a need for medical transport to isolated community members who don't qualify or are not currently accessing the Community and Home Support Program (CHSP) through My Aged Care. This may be due to a lack of awareness around Medical Transport that is offered through Nillumbik Shire Council's Community Support Services team.

Health and Wellbeing

"Swimming pool for water therapy, preferably Greensborough"

"To Watermark in Greensborough to use hydrotherapy pool and spa for pain relief. To join senior water exercise groups"

"If I was able I would like community transport to take me to fitness and water exercise classes. I would also like transport to take me to coffee/lunch outings"

Five respondents made mention about wanting a community transport service to access services for their general health and wellbeing. In particular, 'hydrotherapy' and 'water exercise classes' at Watermark in Greensborough were a common theme.

Link to Community Groups

"Would allow me to go to my Probus Group in Hurstbridge"

"Probus club meetings"

"Book club, probus"

"Have at least some transport to my U3A meetings in Eltham so my family doesn't have to drive so much"

A total of four responses were given by respondents who said they would like transport to link them in with existing community groups such as Probus and Nillumbik U3A.

Question 5. What important factors should Council consider to ensure our Community Transport services are accessible for you?

"Times and frequency of availability"

"Connecting with existing public transport"

"Available easily for hospital and other medical appointments"

"Mobility issues"

"More information. Not familiar with availability"

"Access along secondary roads. On call mini bus services."

"They need to have adequate space for multiple powered and non powered wheelchairs and mobility devices. Given the rural / rugged nature of many properties that people in this area live, appropriate access points or "to door" services for the elderly and/or disabled is critical."

"2 or 3 small shuttle buses that roamed several areas where we could just phone or send a text from a mobile and they would stop at a time they estimate they would be outside the address given would be a good idea and a great help."

"Limit the amount of walking required to access the Community Transport. Where would it run from? Bushfire, evacuation."

"Short notice if needed. Prominent number to ring - no waiting"

"Times of operation. I need transport in mornings usually as I am needed at home weekday afternoons."

"Flexibility of days to go shopping e.g more than one choice. Include short trips for doctors appointments etc."

"I live in Cottles bridge and there are more elderly here that are very dependent on their family for any transport, any help would be great"

"Would it be financially viable to provide a door to door service to isolated houses?"

"Bus stop inside our village - St Thomas"

"Be very clear about what is available via mail, email, public/local newsletters"

Key factors identified by older people in Nillumbik included:

- Times of operation
- Frequency of operation
- Door to door service
- Accessible information about availability of service
- Choice (offering a variety of times and days)

Question 6. Are there any programs, initiatives or ideas you know of that might help reduce social isolation and loneliness for older people? If YES, please provide details.

"a volunteer programme so isolated or lonely people can get visits from volunteers if they want to have someone come to their home?"

"u3A - classes in a range of areas."

"Omni Diamond Creek and Eltham, (Older men new ideas) Mens shed Eltham for gardening and wood working and social participation."

"Nillumbik community living and learning centres"

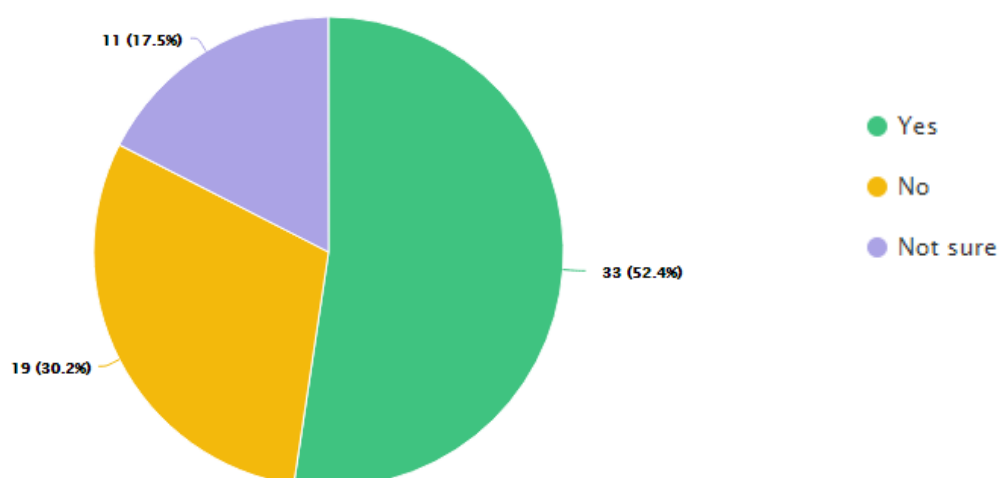
"U3A and Nillumbik Neighbours provide good and regular social interaction"

"I am involved in U3A, I sing in the choir, I go to church and I go to exercise class. These could be promoted more."

"Strong people stay young - run by HealthAbility - I have been attending for 8 years and enjoy physical exercise, friendship and fun"

Respondents highlighted a number of existing community groups aimed at older adults as effective programs that aim to reduce social isolation and loneliness, such as U3A, OMNI, Nillumbik Living and Learning and HealthAbility's 'Strong People Stay Young' class. Another respondent highlighted that a volunteer program so isolated older adults can get visits from volunteers on a regular basis would be beneficial.

Question 7. Would you be interested in participating in any programs or initiatives of this type if they were offered in Nillumbik?



More than half of respondents (52.4%) said they would be interested in programs or initiatives that aim to reduce social isolation and loneliness, and 17.5% responded that they were 'unsure'.

Question 8. Which programs or initiatives would you be most likely to participate in and why?

"I am electrically hypersensitive as is 3-5% of the population. I would like to play carpet bowls , table tennis and board games. I would also like a walking partner."

"Concerts, movies, sporting events, transport, U3A"

"Music, poetry, book group"

"Playing cards or bridge for fun with no pressure to win"

"I would participate in programs where I would be taken out to coffee/lunch and to local attractions on a regular basis"

"Exercise programs via HealthAbility"

"Neighbourhood house programs"

"Exercise classes, shopping trips, shows"

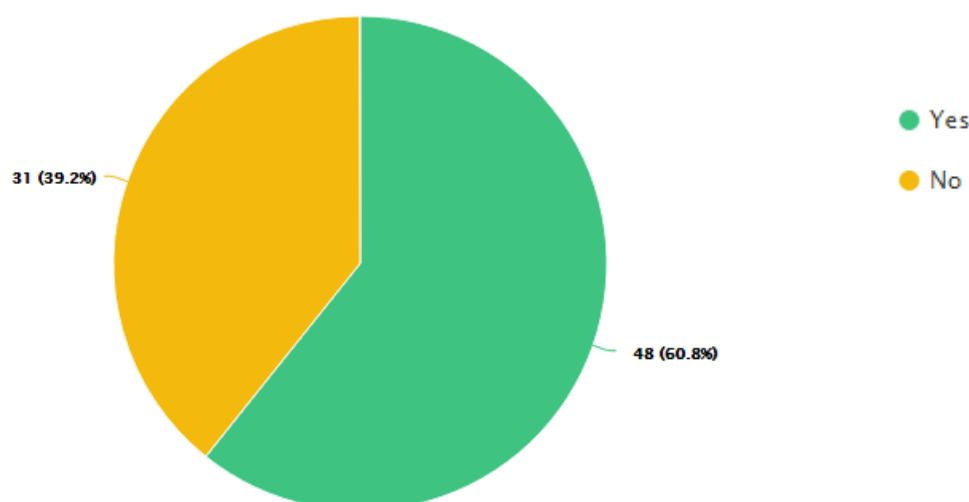
"Doing art crafts at senior citizens"

"Exploring new friendships with similar aged people from my ethnic cohort"

A whole range of programs and activities were provided by respondents, demonstrating the Nillumbik community is diverse and want to see a range of initiatives to meet varying needs and interests. Some of the keys themes emerging from responses included:

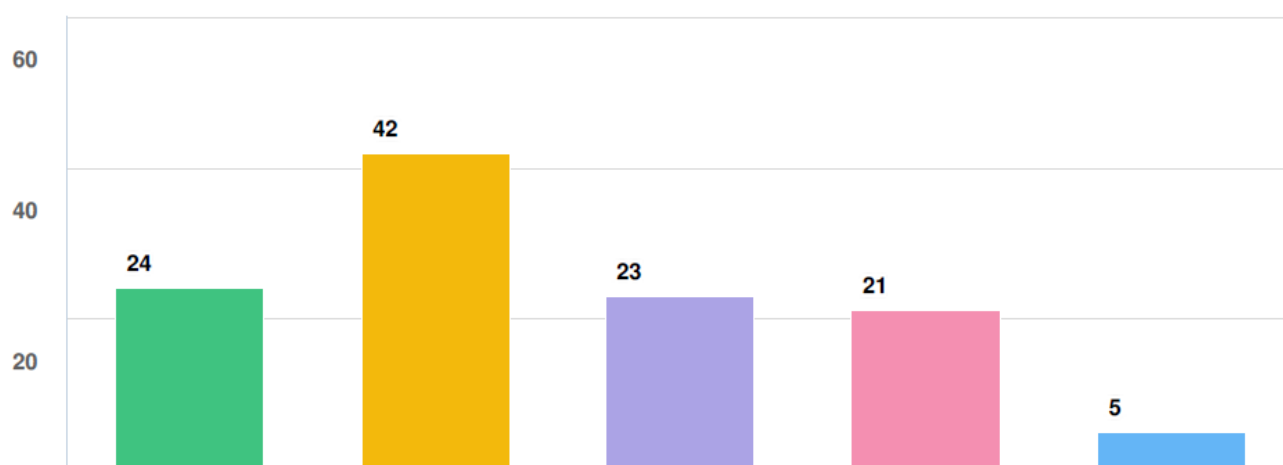
- Exercise classes and other physical activities such as carpet bowls, walking groups and table tennis
- Arts & Culture (crafts, poetry, music/concerts)
- Cards, Board games, Bridge
- Social trips such as movies, shopping, local attractions and lunch/coffee outings

Question 9. Are you aware of the Commonwealth My Aged Care system? This system is accessed via the internet or telephone for older people wanting information about services.



Out of the 79 people who responded to this question, 48 (60.8%) said that they **were** aware of the My Aged Care system and 31 respondents were not aware.

Question 10. How can Council support you to understand, accept and benefit from the new My Aged Care system? (Please tick all that apply)



Question options

● Training workshops
 ● Information / fact sheets / video
 ● One-on-one support
 ● I don't need any support
 ● Other

Information, fact sheets and/or video was identified as the best way for Council to support them with understanding and using the new My Aged Care system, with 42 people selecting this option. This was followed by Training Workshops and One-on-one Support, with 24 and 23 respondents selecting this option respectively. 21 out of the 73 respondents to this question said that they don't need any support and 5 selected the option 'Other'.

Question 11. If selected 'Other' from Question 10, Please specify:

The five respondents who selected this option noted the following other ways that Council could support them with the My Aged Care system:

"Connection to other support groups where our success collectives can expand and benefit all aged Australian communities."

"Assistance with technology"

"Keep the above community services"

"My family deal with all of this"

Question 12. Do you have any further comments on how Council could support you with the 'My Aged Care' system?

"The My Aged Care system while beneficial requires more support for the elderly. Many of those we speak to say that they are directed through the system but still don't understand it. Much of this may be that the aged care landscape is complex and overwhelming for most people to navigate"

"I have registered with My Aged Care system however have had no contact or information since then"

"I need awareness of the program."

"At this time I am not aware what it is about. Need information to progress through it. How complicated or involved is it?"

"Explain any new 'cost saving' incentives that are available. Simplified newsletters explaining what the new changes are in relation to personal needs eg how it 'personally' affects me with the services council provides to me on a regular basis."

"I suspect that these are manly older people that are too proud to ask for help. Education and support needs to reach these people"

"My understanding of 'My Aged Care' is very vague, I would appreciate a workshop"

"If I needed help I would appreciate one-on-one support"

"Perhaps a diagram to show how my aged care links with council facilities and local health providers"

"More frequent communication and personal contact"

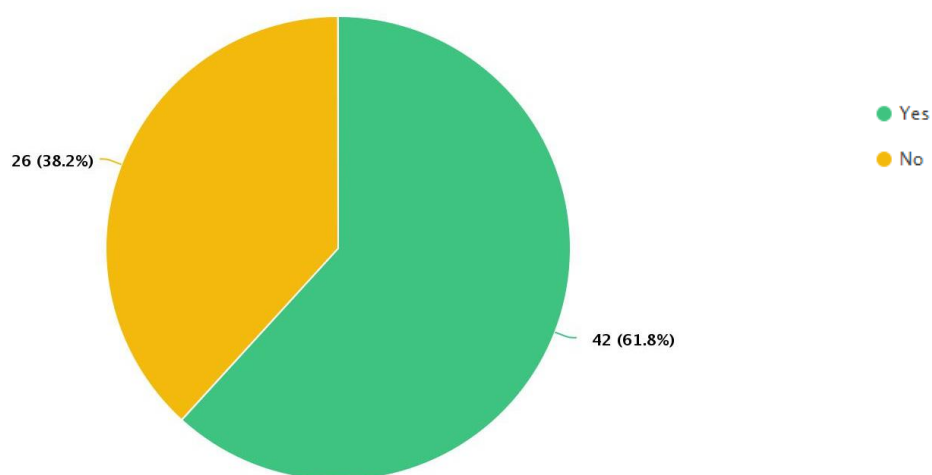
The key themes that were identified by the respondents comments included:

- Awareness / Promotion / Newsletters
- Education and Support
- Workshops
- One-on-one support
- Diagrams / info sheets

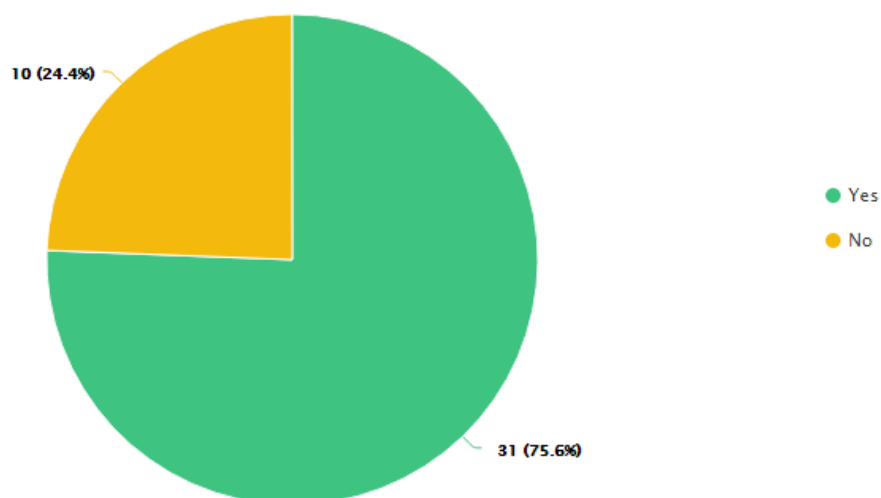
Commonwealth Home Support Program Client Feedback

This next set of questions was specifically aimed at current Nillumbik Shire Council clients of the Commonwealth Home Support Program or Home and Community Care Program for Younger People.

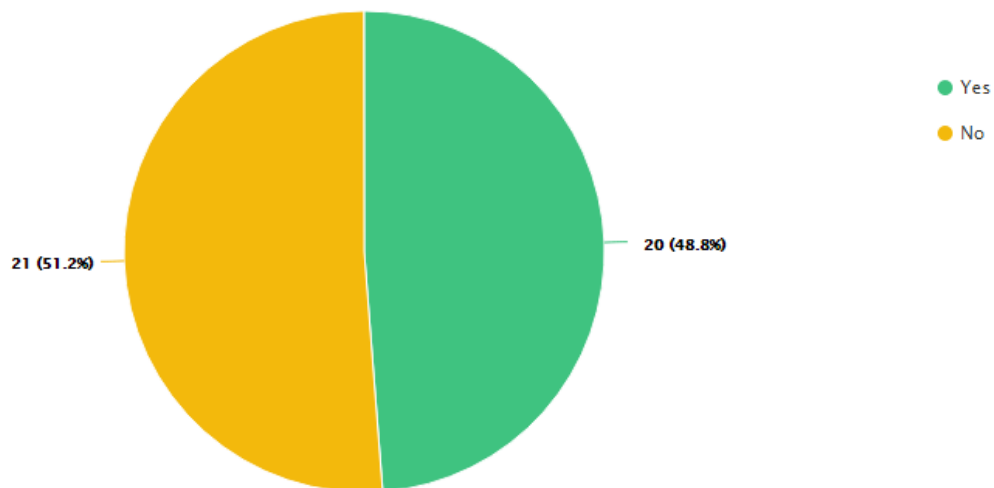
Question 1. Do you currently receive any Council support services?



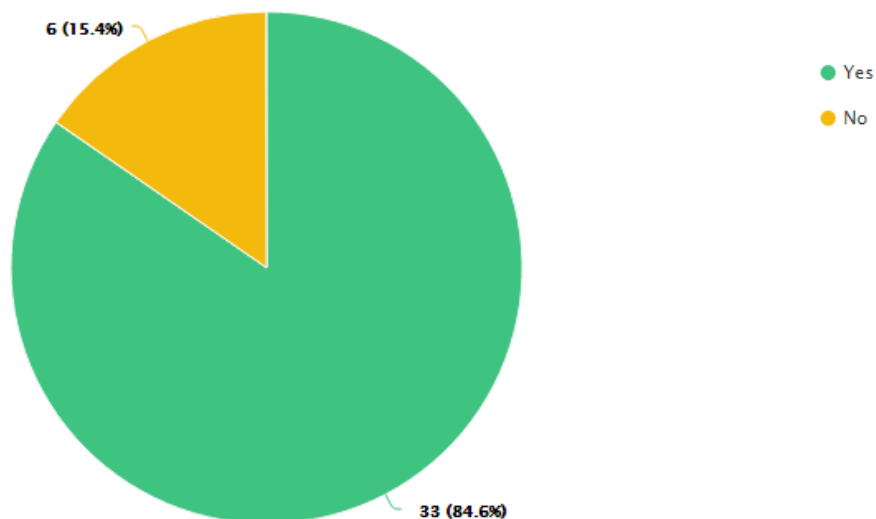
Question 2. If you have a concern or complaint, are you aware that you can contact a Community Support Services officer at Nillumbik Shire Council?



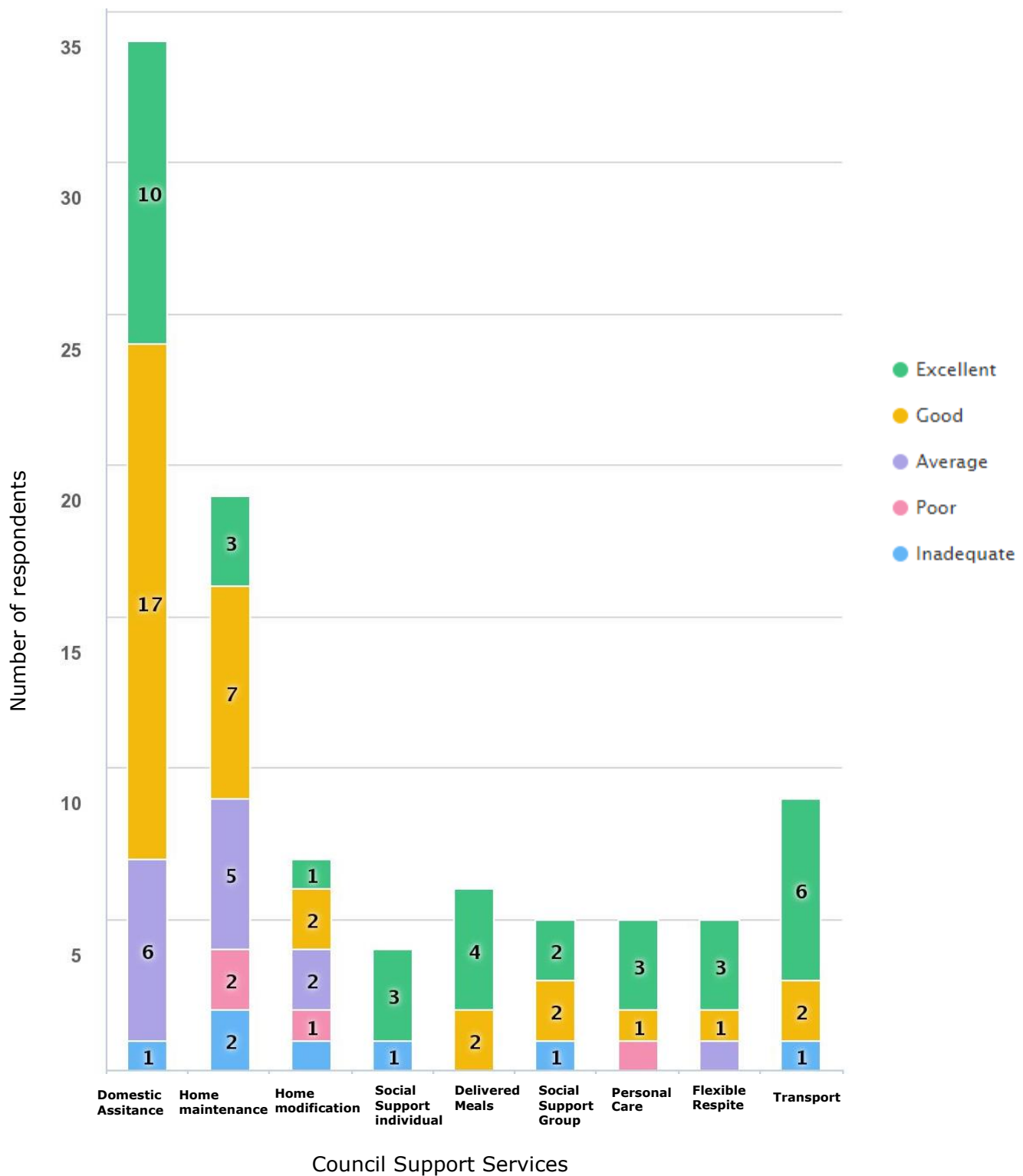
Question 3. If you facing financial hardship, are you aware that you can contact a Community Support Services officer at Nillumbik Shire Council to discuss your service fees or a payment plan?



Question 4. Do you believe the information you receive about your service(s) is in an accessible format?



Question 5. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the service(s) you receive.



Questions 6. Any additional comments or feedback.

Respondents were asked here if they had any additional comments of feedback to add about their client services they currently receive through Nillumbik Shire Council. The following feedback was provided:

"Need quicker response to home maintenance requests eg change light globes, window cleaning, roof guttering cleaning, fixing faulty doors/equipment."

"The staff of PAG are very kind, caring, loving and do the best they can for me."

"I appreciate the help Council gives/offers to us. Nothing is ever perfect but we are fortunate compared to many others."

"At present I am still able to drive my car but can foresee a time in the future where I will need to access transport to all the places I can now get to."

"Why do people who live in Hurstbridge have to go shopping bus first to Kangaroo Ground to pick up one person. Road is very rough."

"Very happy with domestic assistance and transport - drivers are very helpful"

"The problem for me as been that there was a long delay before services provided (eg not until one month after operation). Services need to be flexible and more required early and less to none as reliable, eg after serious operation 1-2 services per week to fortnightly then monthly then terminate (for those living alone as I do)"

"I thought I had to deal directly with Mecwacare for complaints"

Council sub-contracts its Community Home Support Program (CHSP) direct care services to MECWACare, a community not-for-profit organisation that aims to provide excellence in care and maximise the quality of life for clients. Overall, Council clients receiving CHSP services through MECWACare and other community support services through Council were satisfied with their services (69 out of 87 respondents expressed that their service was 'Excellent' or 'Good') and believe that the information they receive is in an accessible format (84.6%). Interestingly, just over half (51.2%) of respondents said that they **weren't** aware that if they were facing a financial hardship, they can contact a Community Support Services officer at Nillumbik Shire Council to discuss your service fees or a payment plan. Lack of awareness and understanding was a key theme that was expressed throughout all survey responses and highlights a need for more readily accessible information on a range of community support services.

APPENDIX 1: Aged Care Services Survey

Ageing Well in Nillumbik



AGED SERVICES COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SURVEY

You may be aware that the Commonwealth Government has introduced major changes to aged and disability services over the past two years across Australia. The changes include new ways to provide consumers with increased choice in service providers and the services they receive.

Council has identified, through research and community consultation, three major priorities to help you live and age well in the community:

- Accessible community transport, particularly for residents in the rural hinterland
- Addressing social isolation and loneliness
- Support navigating the new Commonwealth government's My Aged Care service system in the short term to assist residents to access services they need

By completing this brief survey, you will help us better understand your needs in relation to these priorities.

SECTION 1

Community Transport

1. Do you currently access any of Council's Community Transport services?

Saturday Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Shopping trips	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Medical transport	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

2. If additional community transport services were provided, where would you want these services to go? (please tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Attend a local community group	<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery shopping
<input type="checkbox"/> Local Library	<input type="checkbox"/> Social outing
<input type="checkbox"/> Local leisure facility	<input type="checkbox"/> Shopping trip
<input type="checkbox"/> Appointments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____	

3. Please tell us more about where you would like to go or what you would like to do if you had a community transport service to connect you

4. What important factors should Council consider to ensure our Community Transport services are accessible for you?

Ageing Well in Nillumbik



Social isolation and loneliness

5. Are there any programs, initiatives or ideas you know of that might help reduce social isolation and loneliness for older people? If YES, please provide details.

6. Would you be interested in participating in any programs or initiatives of this type if they were offered in Nillumbik?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Which programs or initiatives would you be most likely to participate in and why?

Aged Care Service System

7. Are you aware of the Commonwealth 'My Aged Care' system? This system is accessed via the internet or telephone for older people wanting information about services.

☐ YES ☐ NO

8. What can Council support you to understand, accept and benefit from the new My Aged Care system? (please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Training workshops
☐ Information / fact sheets / video
☐ One-on-one support
☐ I don't need any support
☐ Other (please specify) _____

9. Do you have any further comments on how Council could support you with the 'My Aged Care' system?

Ageing Well in Nillumbik



SECTION 2:

Your feedback is greatly appreciated and will assist to inform Council about how to plan for future services and how we provide information.

To help us better plan our services, please provide us with a few details about yourself.

Suburb / Township: _____ Postcode: _____

Gender: ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐ OTHER

Age: ☐ Under 55 ☐ 55 – 59 ☐ 60- 64 ☐ 65 – 69
☐ 70 – 74 ☐ 75 – 79 ☐ 80 – 84 ☐ 85 +

Are you completing this survey as someone's carer? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you would like to receive further information in relation to Community Transport, My Aged Care and other upcoming events or activities for Positive Ageing, please provide your preferred contact details below.

If you do not wish to be contacted please leave this section blank.

Name:		
E-mail:		Phone:
Address:		
Preferred contact:	<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Letter

Ageing Well in Nillumbik



SECTION 3:

Please complete this section only if you are currently a Council client of the Commonwealth Home Support Program or Home and Community Care Program for Younger People.

1. Do you currently receive any Council support services?
☐ YES ☐ NO
2. If you have a concern or complaint, are you aware that you can contact a Community Support Services officer at Nillumbik Shire Council?
☐ YES ☐ NO
3. If you are facing financial hardship, are you aware that you can contact a Community Support Services officer at Nillumbik Shire Council to discuss your service fees or a payment plan.
☐ YES ☐ NO
4. Do you believe the information you receive about your service(s) is in an accessible format?
☐ YES ☐ NO
5. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the service(s) you receive. (Tick as appropriate)

Service	Do not use	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Inadequate
Domestic Assistance						
Home Maintenance						
Home Modification						
Social Support Individual						
Delivered Meals						
Social Support Group						
Personal Care						
Flexible Respite						
Transport						

6. Any additional comments or feedback.

Thank you for completing our survey.

Please now post this form using the enclosed reply paid envelope before 30 November 2018.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of our Community Support Services team on (03) 9433 3138 and one of our staff members will be able to assist you with your enquiry.