

# Redbank Plains Community Centre:

Measuring the Social Impact – Twelve-Month Study Results



**Redbank Plains Community Centre: Measuring the Social Impact - Twelve-Month Study Results**

Developed in partnership with Multicultural Australia

November 2019

Community Research and Engagement Team, Community Engagement and Development Branch  
Community, Cultural and Economic Development Department

**Acknowledgement of Country**

Ipswich City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners as custodians of the land, winds and water we share. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, as the keepers of the traditions, cultures and stories of a proud people.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Ipswich City Council would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of:

- Multicultural Australia's Centre Development Manager Rose Dash, and volunteers at the Redbank Plains Community Centre, for their support with drafting and distributing the survey, support at the focus group and ongoing feedback
- The many people of Redbank Plains who provided their insights, knowledge and expertise via surveys and focus groups.

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## BACKGROUND

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In 2016, Ipswich City Council (council) engaged in a three-month long community assessment of the Redbank Plains community, in response to a number of social changes happening in the area. The assessment found that the community was fragmented and lacking in social connections, in part as a result of fragmented urban development, major roads splitting the community and rapid population growth. Socio-economic conditions, including the lack of local jobs, lack of transport, lack of activities for youth and a lack of specialist services were also noted. Rapid growth in high density new housing developments, including homes with affordable rents, had attracted large numbers of low to middle income families to the area, including migrant families. Tensions between new and old residents had emerged. However, opportunities for community development were also noted, given the presence of community leadership, active residents and two new primary schools.

The assessment identified a community centre as an option to facilitate informal social gatherings and place-based community building. The Redbank Plains Community Centre (the Community Centre) opened in May 2018. In line with council's Community Centre Operating Model Policy, council has partnered with Multicultural Australia who manage the daily operations of the Community Centre.

Council, in partnership with Multicultural Australia, has been conducting a multi-year social impact assessment, to track the impact of the Community Centre over time. A baseline study was conducted in June 2018, followed by an interim study after six months, in December 2018. This report documents the results of a twelve-month study, building on the data collected in the baseline study and the six-month study. The purpose is to not only track the impact of the Community Centre, but to feed into centre planning and programming, and to provide an evidence base for the establishment of future community centres.

# SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Drawing on community development literature<sup>1</sup> (see Ipswich City Council, 2018), the assessment focuses on the following key impacts and associated indicators:

Impact	Indicators
Social cohesion and social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ People from different demographics are engaging with centre activities</li> <li>▪ Self-assessments of improved cross-cultural linkages</li> <li>▪ Centre is considered culturally safe</li> <li>▪ Community is considered safe</li> <li>▪ Centre is accessible to all</li> <li>▪ Collaboration between community groups is fostered.</li> </ul>
Community capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education, employment, skills, literacy improve</li> <li>▪ Community is organising events</li> <li>▪ The Community Centre is linking with community organisations and providing facilities for organisations</li> <li>▪ Rates of volunteering and volunteering opportunities improve.</li> </ul>
Community needs: health, nutrition and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quantification of activities</li> <li>▪ Health services considered valuable</li> <li>▪ Self-assessments of health and wellbeing</li> <li>▪ Centre is considered a safe place to access health services.</li> </ul>
Community needs: local economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Centre contributes to local economy</li> <li>▪ Centre provides opportunities for businesses</li> <li>▪ Increased opportunities for employment and income.</li> </ul>
Place-based community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Centre recognised as a community hub</li> <li>▪ Community has the capacity to self-organise</li> <li>▪ Greater sense of safety</li> <li>▪ Connections with Traditional Owners</li> <li>▪ Community Centre as a 'third place'</li> <li>▪ Centre considered a safe place to organise collectively.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Background literature and rationale for these indicators are included in the baseline study results (Ipswich City Council, 2018)

## Twelve-month study methodology

The above key indicators have been integrated into the design of the overall social impact assessment. The key methods used for the twelve-month study included:

- A community survey which engaged 111 community members (see Appendix A). This survey included questions on:
  - Key demographics
  - Community strengths
  - Community challenges
  - Perceptions on safety and community cohesion
  - Experiences of the Community Centre.
- A focus group with five community members. The focus group gathered feedback on:
  - Survey findings
  - Elaboration on key findings
  - Feedback on key strengths and challenges.
- Tracking of visits to the Community Centre by Multicultural Australia.

The same suite of methods were used for the baseline and six-month study. The ongoing social impact assessment will also include:

- Ongoing surveying and focus groups at 2 years and 3 years
- Ongoing tracking of activity and attendance at the Community Centre by Multicultural Australia.

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# SURVEY RESPONDENTS

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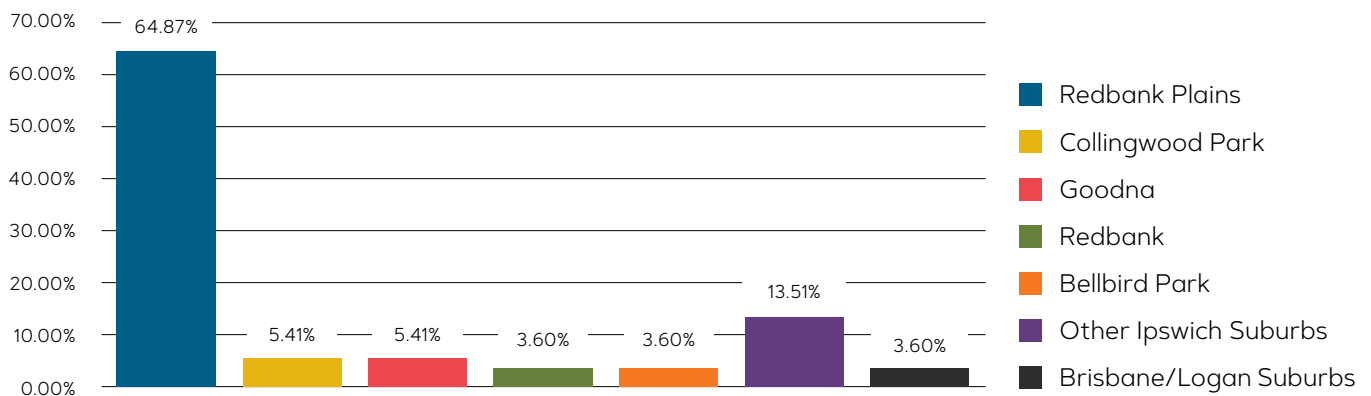
The following section outlines demographics data for survey respondents. Note that while the survey aimed to include the voices of as many Redbank Plains residents as possible, the survey respondents are not statistically representative of the Redbank Plains

community. This section includes some comparison to census data where appropriate. For privacy, numeric results for small numbers of people have not been included.

## Suburb of residence

The majority of respondents to the survey were residents of Redbank Plains, or surrounding suburbs (around 83.00%). 13.51% were from other Ipswich suburbs, while 3.60% were from Brisbane or Logan suburbs.

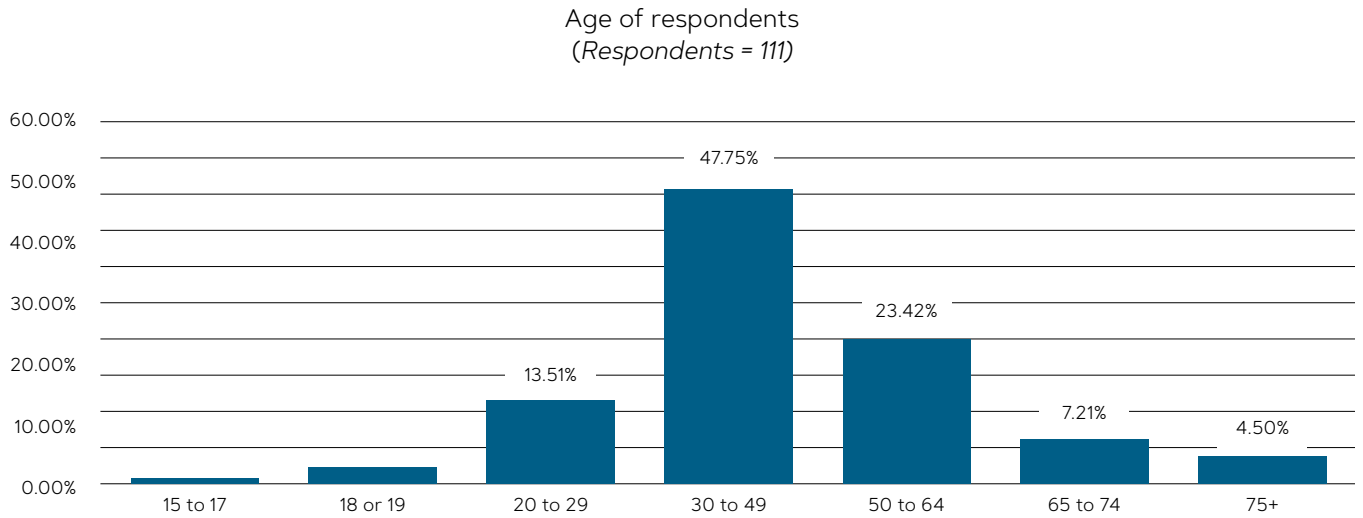
Suburb of respondents  
(Respondents = 111)





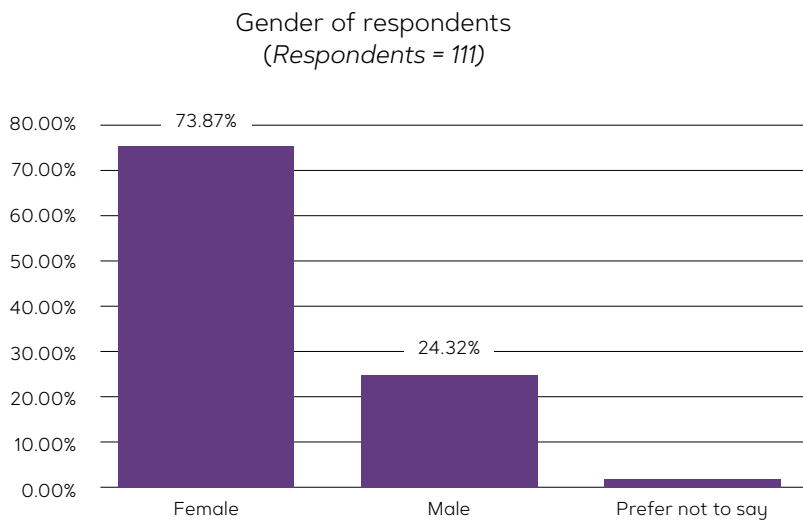
## Age

A large proportion of respondents (47.75%) were aged between 30 to 49 years of age.



## Gender

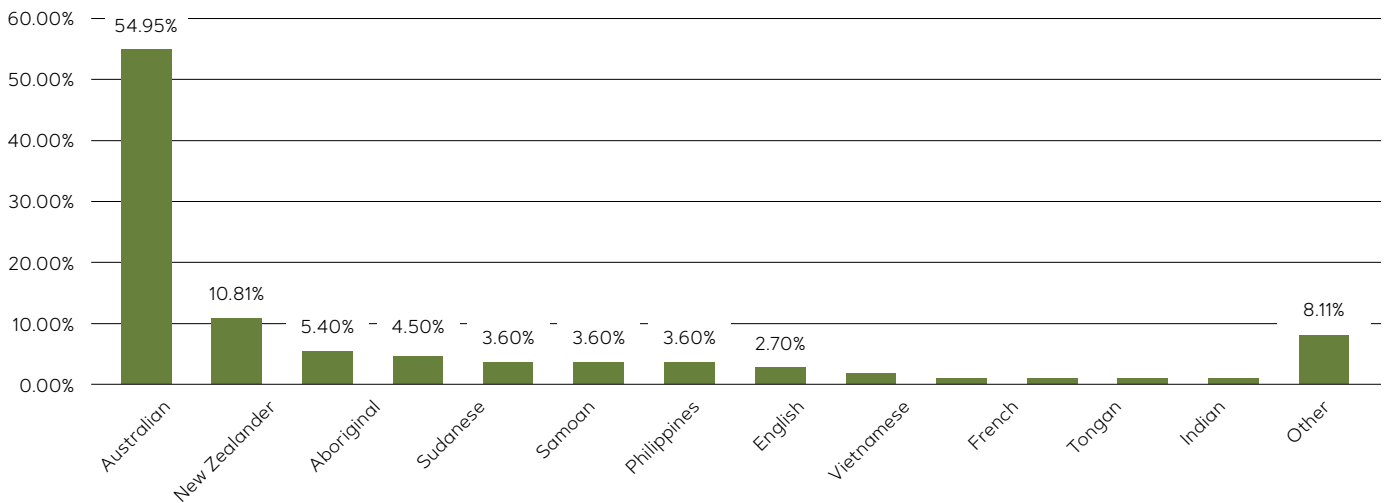
The majority of survey respondents (73.87%) were women.



## Cultural background

Redbank Plains is a diverse and multicultural neighbourhood. Drawing on 2016 ABS census data, 30.50% of Redbank Plains residents are born overseas, in comparison to 20.10% of the broader Ipswich community, and 21.60% of the broader Queensland population. 4.20% of the Redbank Plains community identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (id.profile, 2019). Other than English, the top languages spoken at home are Samoan (6.70%), Dinka (1.90%), Vietnamese (1.20%), Swahili (1.20%) and Hindi (0.80%) (ABS, 2016). Survey respondents similarly reflect this diversity, with 45.05% of respondents identifying with a cultural background other than Australian.

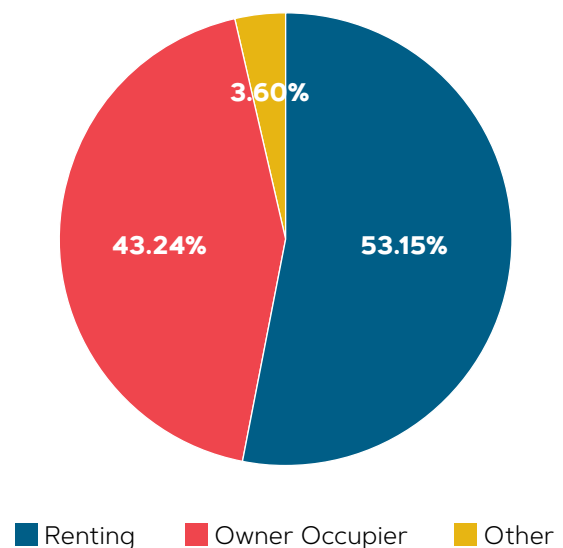
Cultural background of respondents  
(Respondents = 111, note that some respondents selected more than one option)



## Housing

The majority of respondents (53.15%) responded that they rent the homes they live in. This is reflective of the Redbank Plains community more broadly, with 2016 ABS census data saying that 51.70% of Redbank Plains residents are renting (id.profile, 2019).

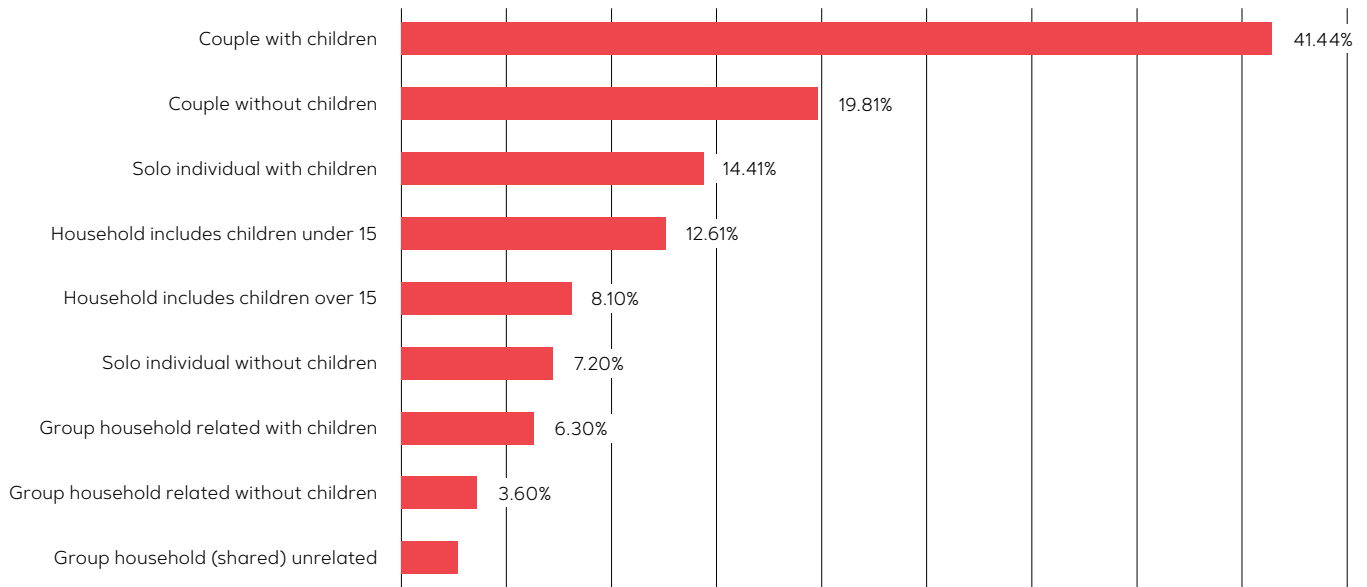
Housing status of respondents  
(Respondents = 111)



## Household

The majority of respondents (62.15%) are from households with children (including couples with children, solo individuals with children and group households with children). According to 2016 ABS census data, 56.10% of Redbank Plains households are home to children (id.profile, 2019).

Household composition of respondents  
(Respondents = 111)



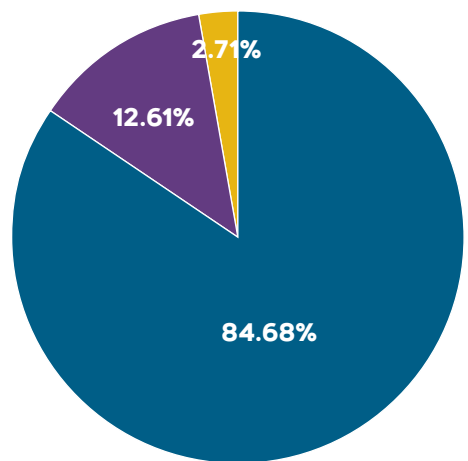
## Disability

12.61% of survey respondents indicated that they identify as having a disability.

In the 2016 census, there were 11,044 people in the Ipswich LGA (or 5.70% of the city's population) that reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. There were also 17,162 carers (11.60%) providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2016.

According to 2016 ABS census data, 4.40% of the Redbank Plains community need help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. Around 7.80% of people in Redbank Plains also provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability (this includes recipients of Carer Allowance or Carer Payment) (ABS, 2016).

Disability status of respondents  
Respondents = 111

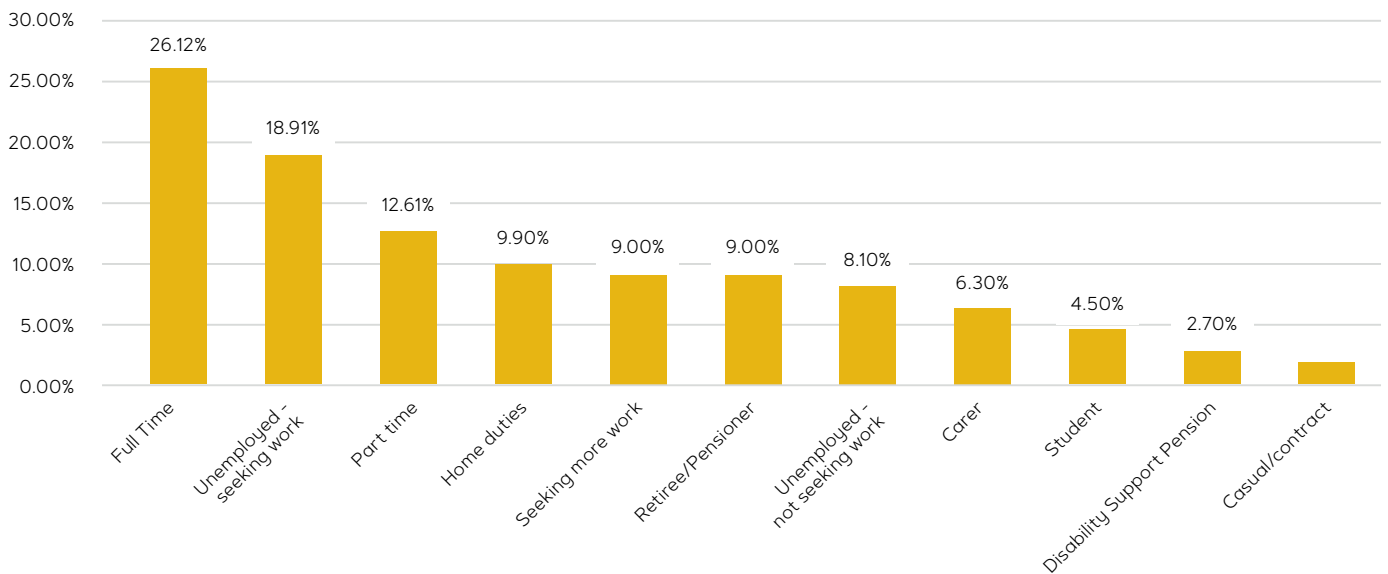


■ No ■ Yes ■ Prefer not to say

## Employment

Around 26.12% of respondents indicated that they were engaged in full-time work. However, 27.91% of respondents indicated that they were 'seeking further work' (including people who may have some level of employment). March 2019 quarter data reported unemployment in Redbank Plains to be at 9.20%, in comparison to the broader Ipswich LGA rate of 6.80% (Dept. of Jobs and Small Business, 2019).

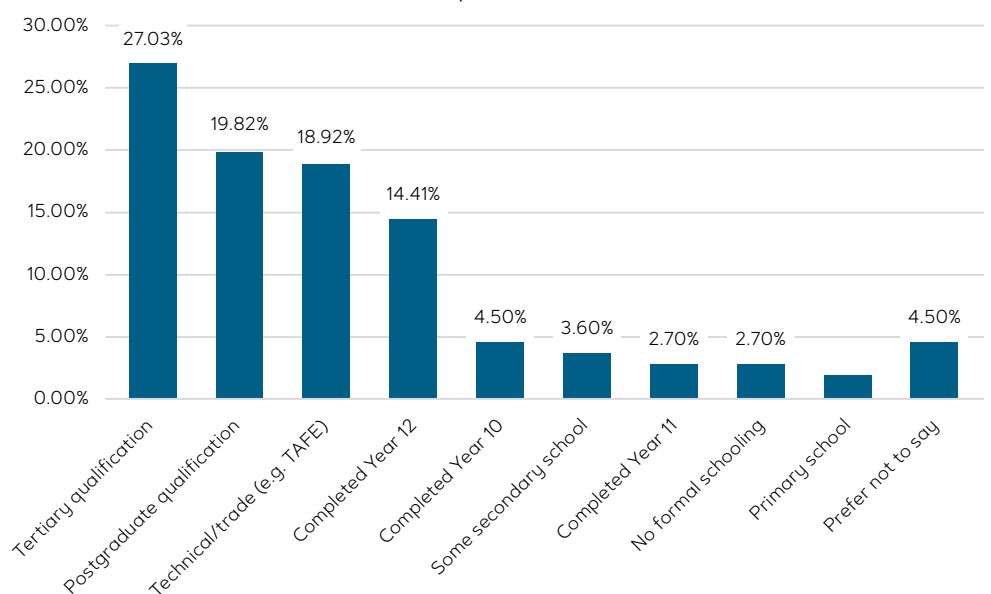
Employment status of respondents  
(Respondents = 111)



## Education

The majority of survey respondents had either a tertiary qualification (27.03%), a postgraduate qualification (19.82%) or a technical/trade qualification (18.92%).

Education status of respondents  
(Respondents = 111)



# TWELVE-MONTH SURVEY RESULTS

The following section outlines community feedback on key indicators regarding social cohesion, community capacity, community needs and place-based community development.

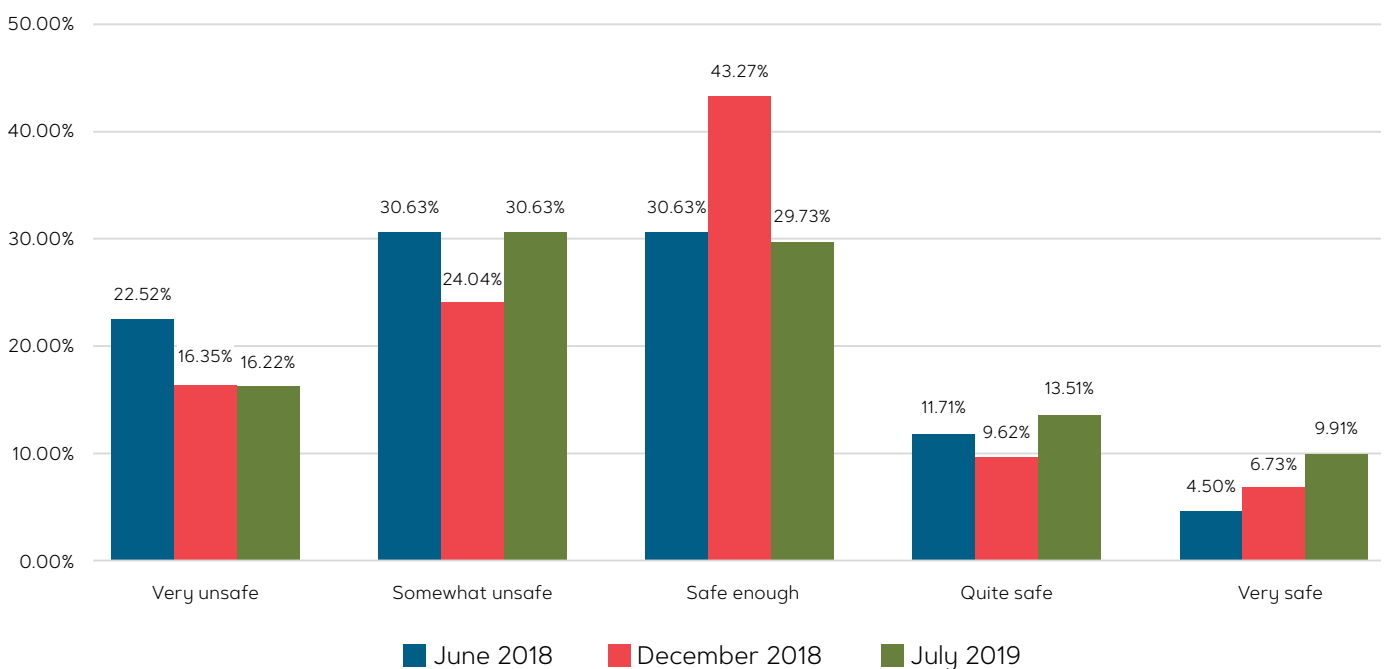
It should be noted that while respondents to the six-month survey were fairly evenly split between those people who had visited the Community Centre, and those who had not, this round of research engaged a larger proportion of people who had visited the

Community Centre (around 75.00%). As such, results are likely to be somewhat skewed. Where relevant, results have been disaggregated for those who have visited the Community Centre, and those who have not, for comparison between these groups. Broadly, those who had visited the Community Centre reported higher levels of engagement, cohesion, community connections, and more positive attitudes towards diversity, as also reflected in the six-month survey.

## Perceptions of safety

As a measure of community cohesion, survey respondents were asked “how safe do you feel walking alone in Redbank Plains?”. While there has been some fluctuation in responses, only a minority of respondents across the three surveys indicated that they feel “quite safe” or “very safe”. For the twelve-month survey, 46.85% of respondents indicated that they felt “very unsafe” or “somewhat unsafe”. The nationwide Scanlon Foundation report found that 66.00% of people felt ‘very safe’ or ‘safe’ walking alone at night in their local area (Scanlon Foundation, 2019).

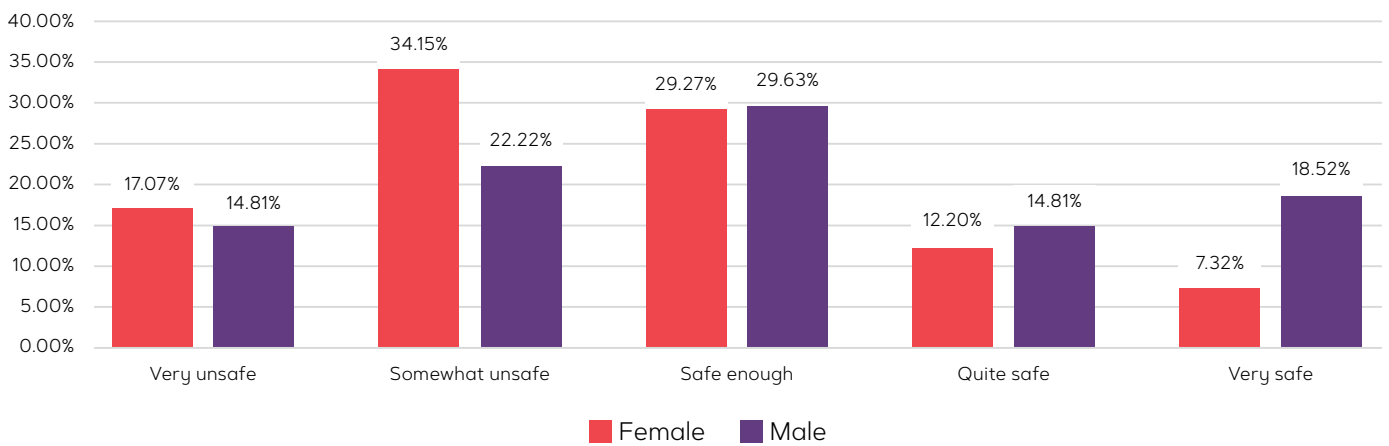
How safe do you feel walking alone in Redbank Plains?  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 111, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 111)



Focus group participants re-iterated safety concerns in Redbank Plains. One participant said that *"hearing about crime on facebook adds to our stress"*. The group felt that there was not enough street lighting, or CCTV. The group also re-iterated concerns captured in previous rounds of research regarding the links between safety and the upkeep of the neighbourhood. The group felt that Council could more regularly tidy up little parks, and cut grass in parks and medium strips more regularly, for better visibility.

Analysis of safety perceptions data also reflected the gendered nature of safety, with 19.52% of female respondents indicating that they feel "quite safe" or "very safe", compared to 33.33% of male respondents. One focus group participant noted that *"As a woman, and with a disability, when it is quiet, I don't feel quite safe - I'll wait for my husband to walk the dog"*.

Perceptions of safety by gender  
 (Respondents = 109, including only respondents who identify as male or female)



## Engagement in community meetings

Community capacity describes the skills, knowledge and strengths of a community, which help communities to solve collective problems (Lohar et al., 2013). In this social impact assessment, capacity is measured via:

- education, employment, skills, literacy
- community capacity to organise events
- the Community Centre linking with community organisations and providing facilities for organisations
- rates of volunteering and volunteering opportunities.

As a measure of both community capacity and community cohesion, respondents were asked if they had taken part in community meetings in the past twelve months. There has been a steady increase in the number of respondents indicating that they have taken part in community meetings, which in part could be attributed to activity at the Community Centre. One respondent noted that a strength of the Community Centre is *“Bringing community together and education and info for community”*.

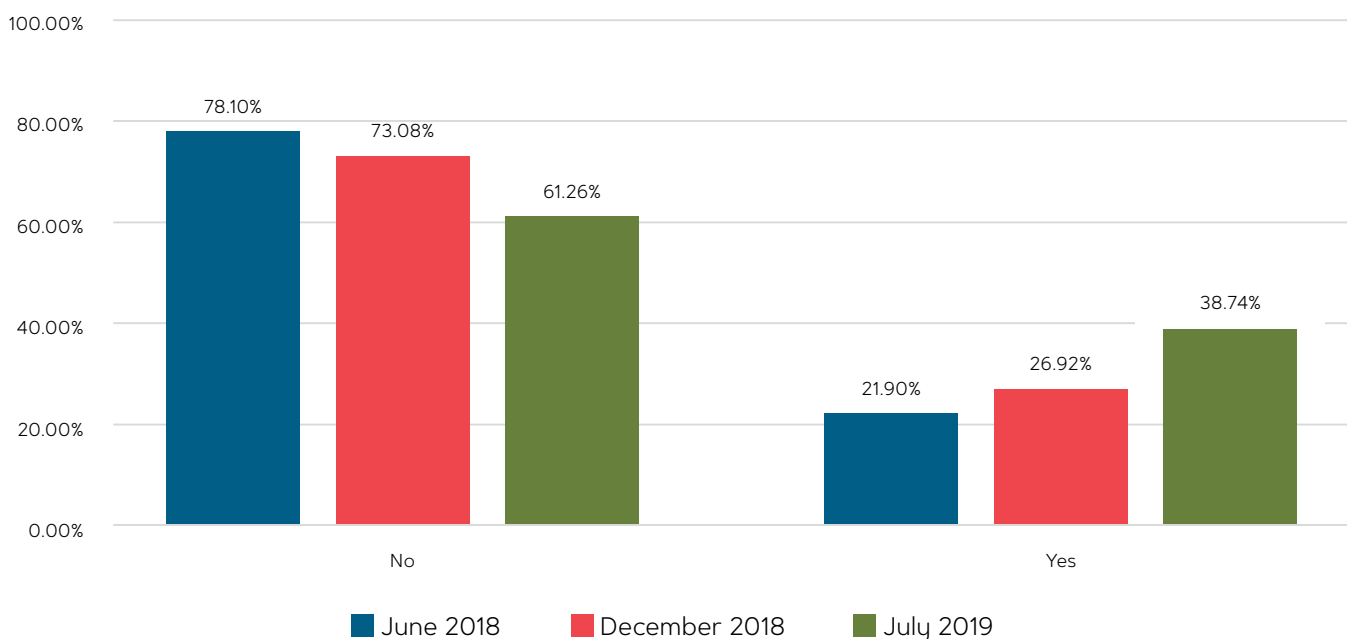
Many respondents indicated that they have taken part in community meetings hosted at the Community Centre, including:

- *“Community meetings that are held at RPCC such as Aged Care, Nutrition, Safety”*
- *“Senior Space and the regular weekly community meetings plus info sessions that are held”*
- aged care information sessions (2)
- photography group (2)
- Redbank Plains Neighbourhood Watch meeting (3)
- seniors groups (4).

Other meetings in the broader community included:

- ‘Community Champions’ meetings
- ‘Save Bellbird Park’ meetings
- Acholi Community Neighbourhood events
- church meetings
- council meetings
- MDA events
- Park Clean-Up
- school holiday events
- school meetings
- Sudanese community events
- youth events.

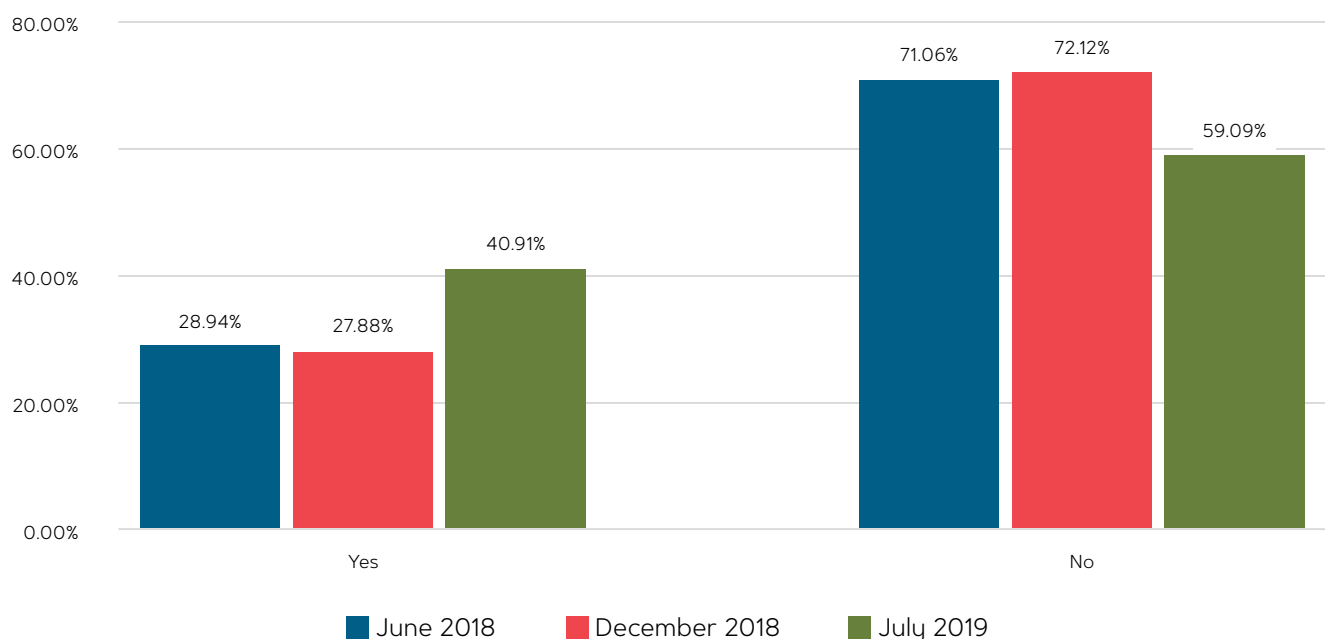
Have you taken part in any community meetings in the past 12 months?  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 113, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 111)



## Volunteering

As a further measure of community capacity, respondents were asked if they had volunteered or assisted with any community groups in the past 12 months. Reflective of the large proportion of respondents who have visited the Community Centre, 40.91% of respondents indicated that they had recently volunteered in the community.

Have you volunteered in the community or assisted with community groups in the past 12 months?  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 113, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 110)



For many, this included volunteering opportunities at the Community Centre. One respondent said, "Volunteers are given opportunities to operate some admin tasks in preparation for obtaining a full or part time paid jobs...".

Volunteering at the Community Centre included:

- community BBQ at the Community Centre
- general volunteering at the Community Centre (5)
- helping at Mums and Bubs sessions
- helping at Project Nourish (3)
- helping at regular morning teas
- helping at RPCC 1st Birthday Celebrations
- helping at Aged Care information sessions
- helping at Antenatal Care sessions
- helping with a driving program at the Community Centre
- offering JP services
- volunteering at the Seniors Space/Young at Heart.

Other volunteering included:

- church groups (2)
- ComLink
- community cleanups
- community fundraisers
- driving a bus
- Historical Village photography group
- Pink Divas Breast Cancer Support Group
- Redbank Plains Community Christmas Carols
- school P&C and helping at local schools (3)
- sports groups
- volunteering with Community Champions
- volunteering with Footprints in the Park
- volunteering with LiveCity Care (3)
- volunteering with St Vincent de Paul
- volunteering with The Movement.



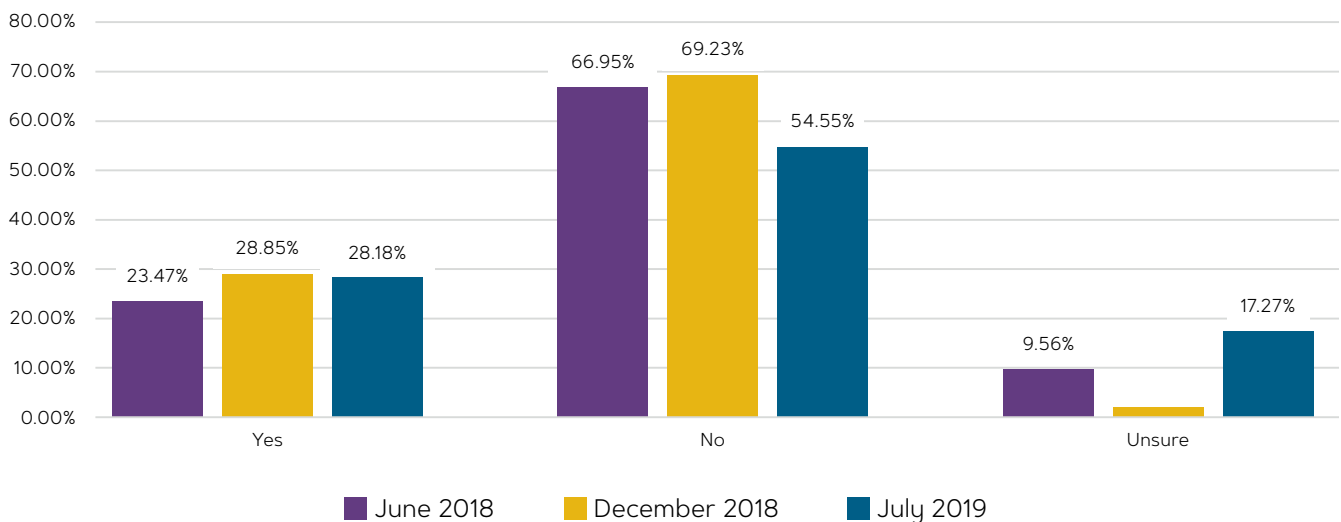
## Connections between cultural groups

Community cohesion can be defined as a process of co-operation and shared responsibilities, based on mutual respect, values, aspirations and identity (Moreland City Council, 2018). In this social impact assessment, community cohesion is measured via:

- people from different demographics are engaging with Community Centre activities
- improved cross-cultural linkages
- the Community Centre is considered culturally safe
- the broader community is considered safe
- the Community Centre is accessible to all.

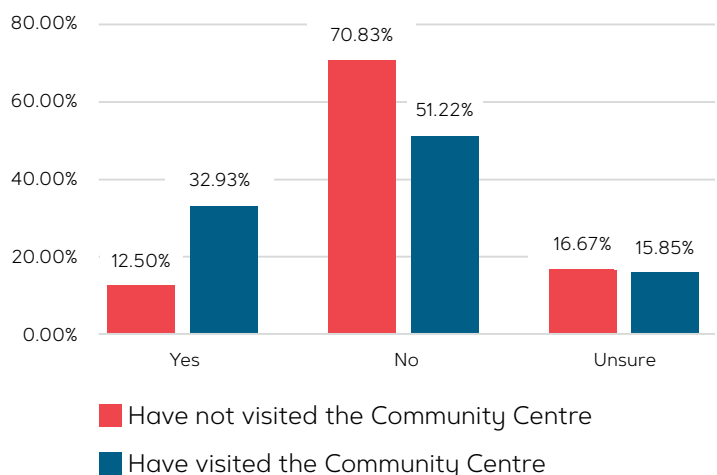
As a measure of community cohesion respondents were asked, "Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in Redbank Plains?". The proportion of respondents indicating 'yes' across the three surveys has remained relatively steady, however, for the most recent survey, there has been an increase in the proportion of people indicating 'unsure'.

Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in Redbank Plains?  
(Jun' 18 = 115, Dec' 18 = 104, Jul' 19 = 110)



Notably, however, those respondents who have visited the Community Centre are more likely to indicate that they have connections to cultural groups and communities other than their own. 32.93% of people who have visited the Community Centre have connections to cultural groups other than their own, in comparison to 12.50% of people who have not visited the Community Centre.

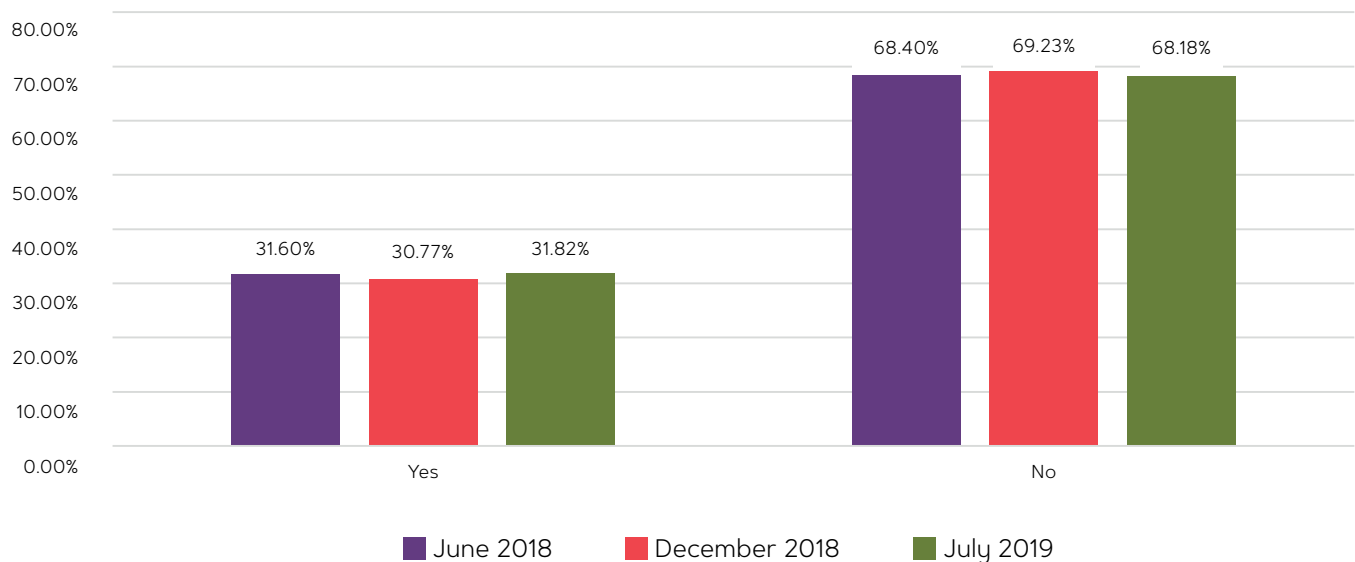
Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in Redbank Plains?  
(Have visited RPCC = 24, Have not visited RPCC = 82)



## Involvement in community groups

As a further measure of community cohesion respondents were asked “are you a member of any community groups?”. Responses have remained steady over the three rounds of research. 31.82% of respondents indicated that they were a member of one or more community groups.

Are you a member of any community groups?  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 110)



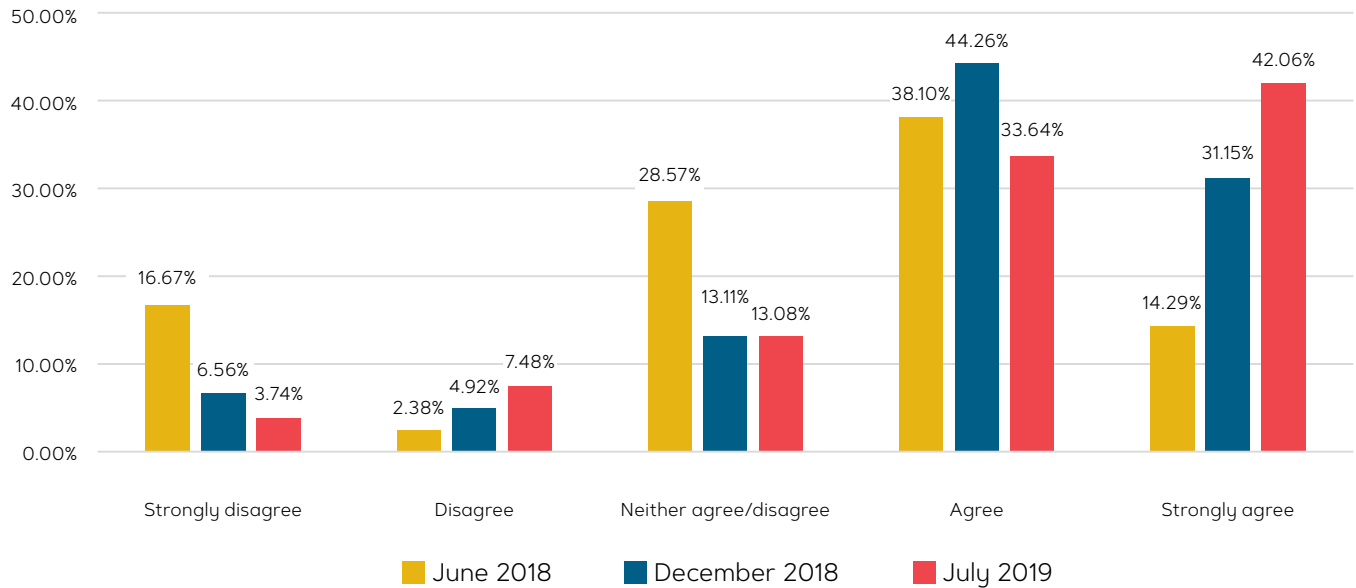
Groups that respondents were involved with included:

- Neighbourhood Watch
- Parent groups
- Church groups
- Cultural groups
- Fitness groups
- Online/facebook groups
- Seniors groups

## Valuing diversity

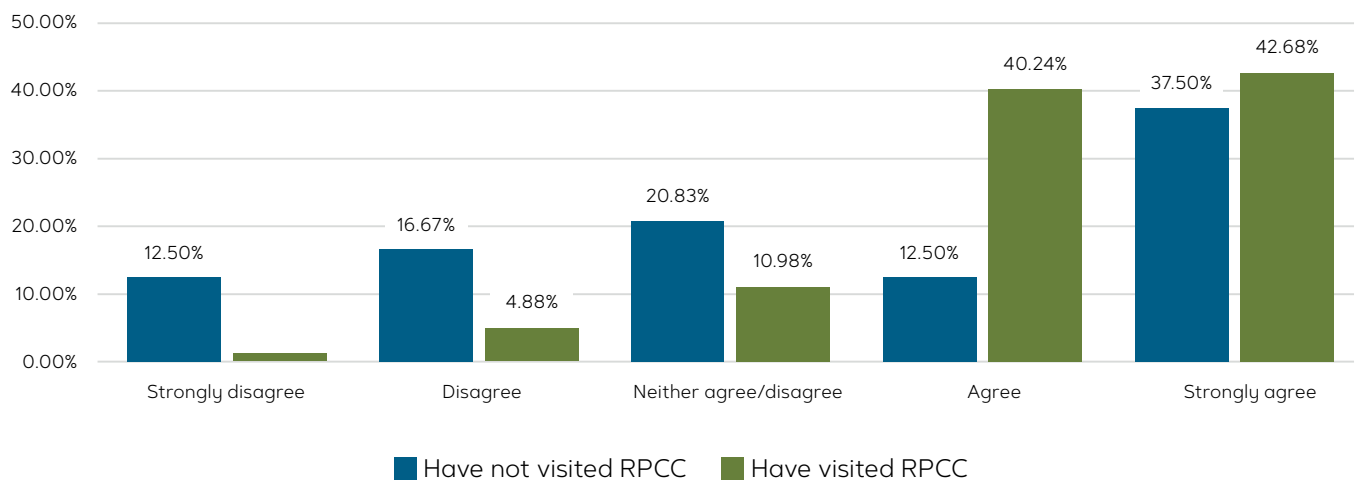
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, "It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures". Most respondents (75.70%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the value of diversity. However, 11.22% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed

It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures.  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 107)



Those respondents who had visited the Community Centre were more likely to feel positive about diversity – 82.92% of people who had visited the Community Centre felt positively about diversity, compared to 50.00% of people who had not visited.

It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures.  
(Have visited RPCC = 24, Have not visited RPCC = 82)

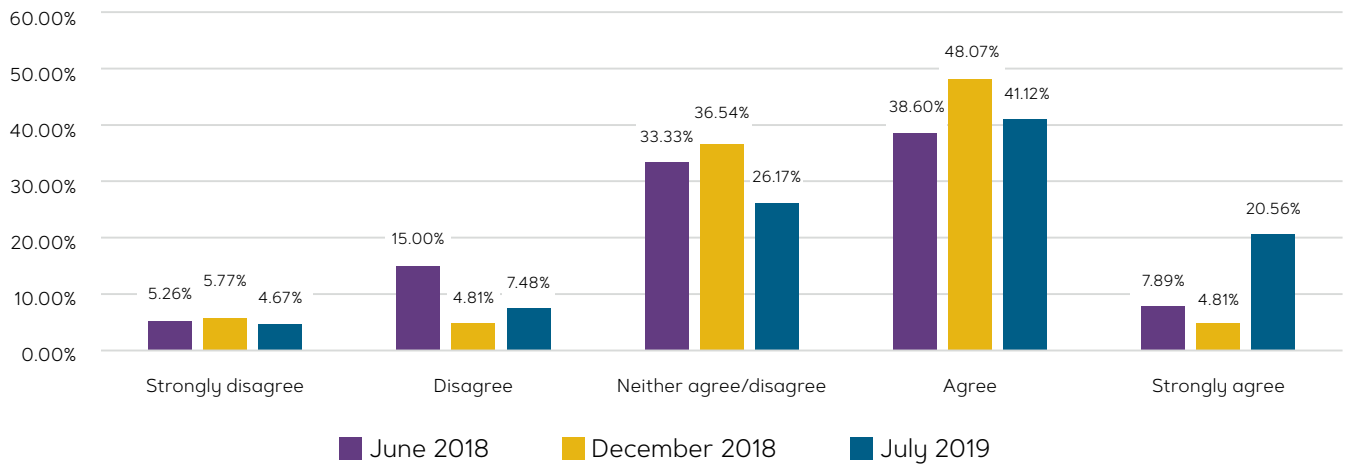


Nationwide, the Scanlon Foundation report finds that 85.00% of people agree that 'multiculturalism has been good for Australia', while 53.00% of people feel that levels of migration are 'about right' or 'too low' (Scanlon Foundation, 2019). Notably, attitudes towards migration are closely linked to employment levels, suggesting that a core factor in community cohesion is economic wellbeing.

## Sense of welcome

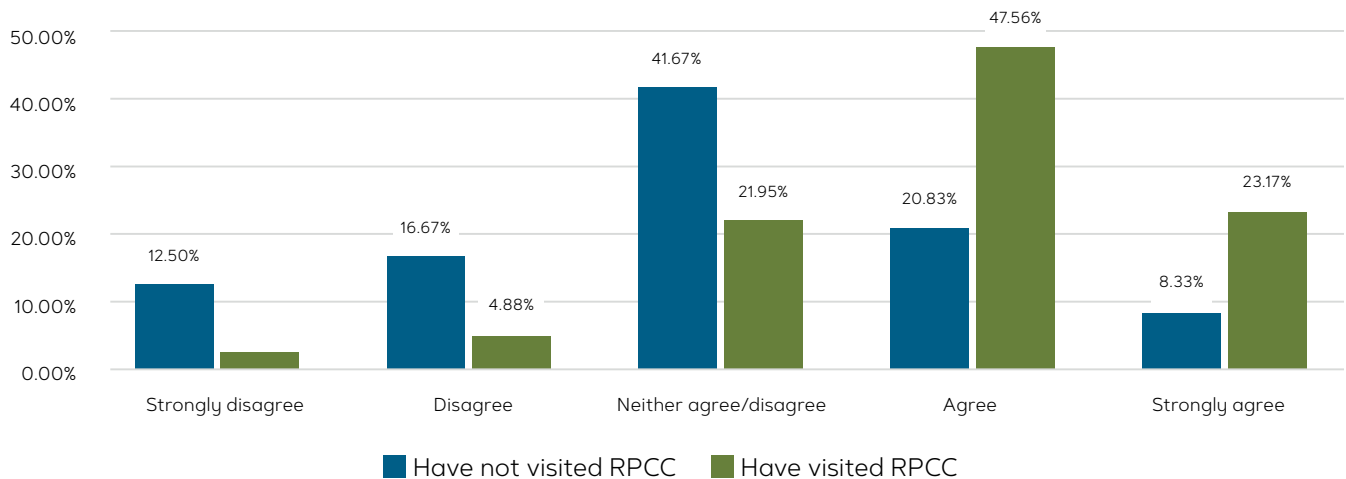
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, "I feel welcome in my community". Nearly 62.00% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcome in their community.

I feel welcome in my community.  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 107)



Those respondents who have visited the Community Centre were also more likely to feel welcome in their community.

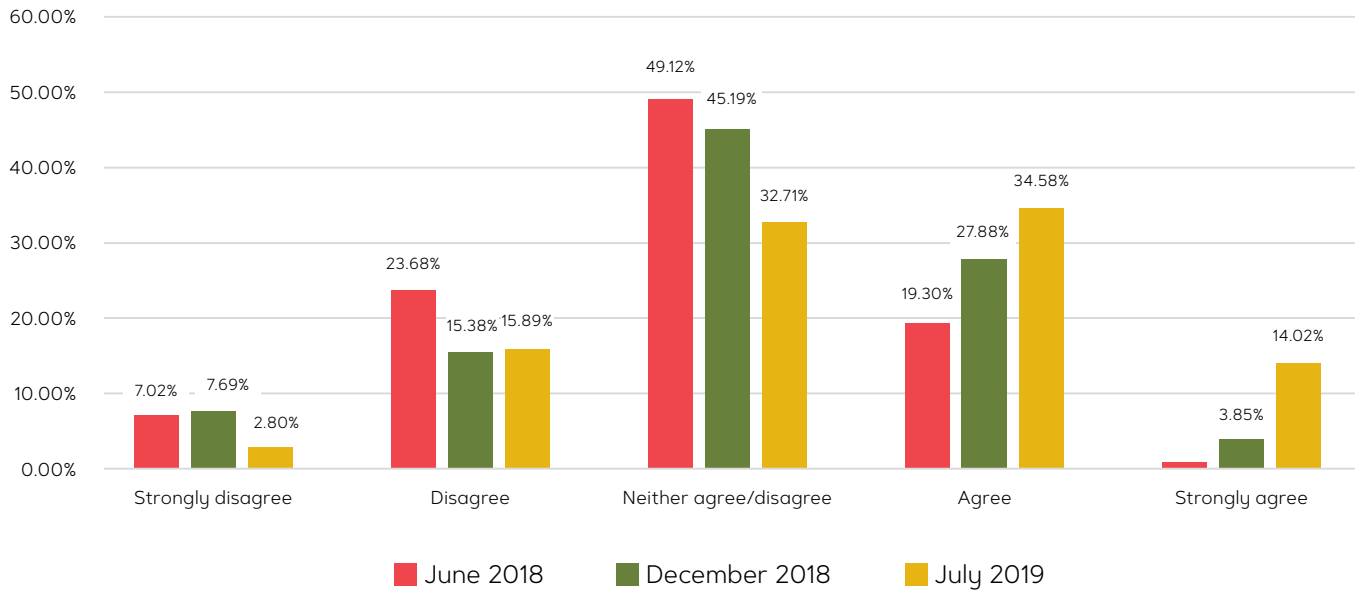
I feel welcome in my community.  
(Have visited RPCC = 24, Have not visited RPCC = 82, 1 unsure excluded)



## Sense of community

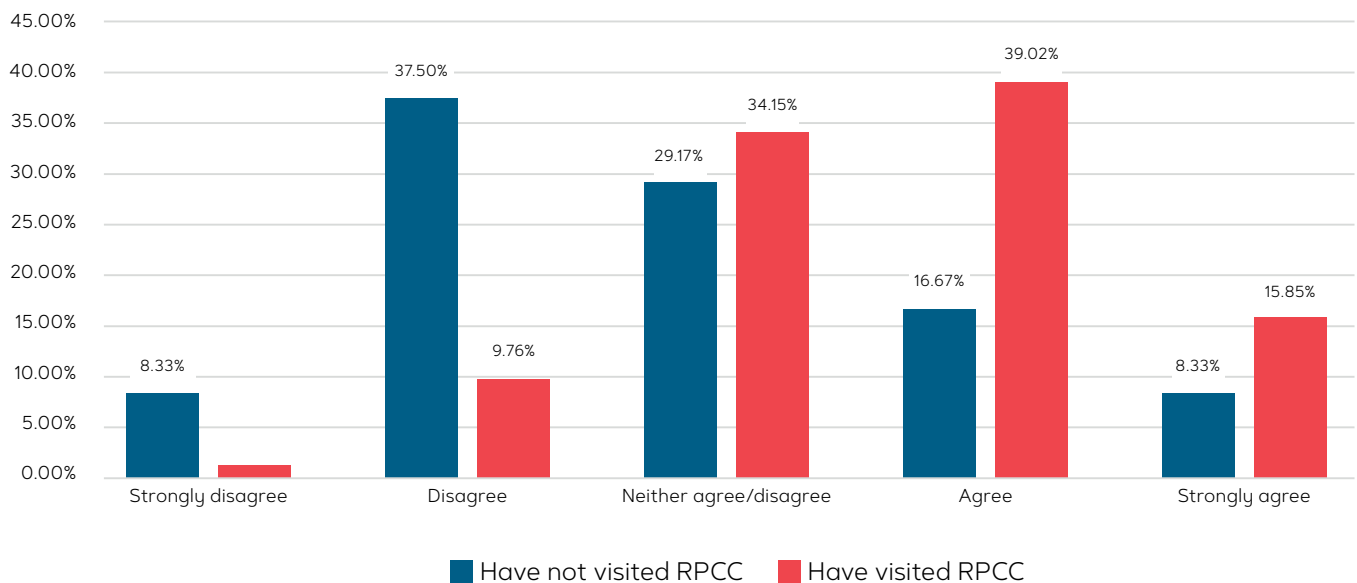
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, "There is a strong sense of community in my local area". 48.60% of people 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that there is a strong sense of community in their local area.

There is a strong sense of community in my local area.  
(Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 107)



Those respondents who had visited the Community Centre were more likely to feel that there was a strong sense of community in their local area.

There is a strong sense of community in my local area.  
(Have visited RPCC = 24, Have not visited RPCC = 82, 1 unsure excluded)



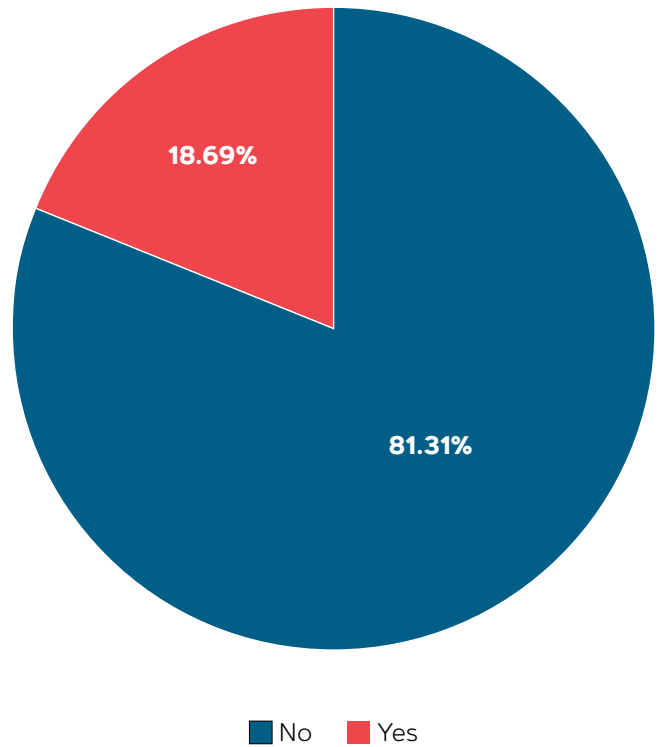
## Challenges in accessing services

Respondents were asked, "Have you experienced any problems accessing services or supports in the last 12 months?". This has remained relatively steady, with 18.69% of participants responding 'yes', in comparison to 19.24% in the six-month survey. Key access challenges included:

- Centrelink
- dental services
- DV support
- employment support
- Legal Aid
- mental health services
- paediatrics
- public transport
- specialist services
- broader health services, including emergency.

Access challenges included affordability, transport and long waiting periods. One respondent said "Travelling to Ipswich by taxi to access specialist services when unable to drive. Taxi fare averages \$40 each way" while another said "[Difficult to find] Mental health service for children and adults, [which are] affordable and not very long waiting lists". Focus group participants commented that while there was a growing availability of services in Redbank Plains, including doctors and dentists, affordability barriers still exist, particularly for dental care. As noted below under 'Community challenges', 'Access to services and social infrastructure' remains an ongoing concern.

Challenges in accessing services  
(Respondents = 107)



## Community strengths

As a measure of community capacity, cohesion and social capital, community members were asked to identify what strengths the Redbank Plains community has. Response themes are presented in the table below, along with a demonstrative quote.

Consistent with previous surveys, the key strengths of the community included diversity, access to shops and services, sense of community, access to sports fields and outdoor spaces, and affordable housing. Focus group participants reflected on how well-used parks and sports fields are, including sports fields for cricket, tennis, soccer training, playing ball with kids and families. Focus group participants also discussed the Community Centre itself as a key strength in the community, helping to build a sense of community.

Theme	Instances	Representative Quote
Value of diversity	16	<i>"The community is highly multicultural .....also, long time residents are friendly and welcoming and readily available to help when needed".</i>
Access to shops and services	13	<i>"A wide range of services, resources, etc e.g shopping centres, parks, public areas, libraries".</i>
Sense of community	13	<i>"A community that comes together".</i>
Sports and outdoors	5	<i>"The park near School Rd is great for sports, kite flying bike riding picnics".</i>
Affordable housing	3	<i>"Cheaper rent".</i>
Great schools	3	<i>"[Redbank Plains has] good schools".</i>
Community groups	2	<i>"[Redbank Plains has] support groups". "Neighbourhood Watch".</i>
Great place for families	2	<i>"[Redbank Plains is a] great place for families".</i>
Growing community	1	<i>"It has been growing and improving". "Welcome people from various background".</i>
Proximity to other urban centres	1	<i>"Close to Ipswich, Springfield and Brisbane".</i>

## Community challenges

As a measure of community need, community members were asked to identify the key challenges facing the community. Response themes are presented in the table below, along with a demonstrative quote.

Reflective of the previous rounds of research, the key challenges include crime and safety, limited public transport, racism, financial pressures, hooning,

support for young people and upkeep of public areas. Focus group participants reflected on rising rents pushing people into suburbs further from urban centres, and the challenges facing pensioners. Focus group participants reflected on the challenges facing the Ipswich City Council, including access to representation, but also reflected on the work being done by council to reduce the risk of corruption and misconduct. The group also reflected on the ongoing challenges around racism and cultural cohesion.

Theme	Instances	Representative Quote
Crime	17	<i>"I hear of quite a few break and enters and theft".</i>
Limited public transport	13	<i>"Public transport in the area is impacting many families. Due to the limited route many people are walking significant distances to access the bus, which only operates once per hour and regularly late."</i>
Racism	10	<i>"Cultural clashes". "Safety, Discrimination, Racism".</i>
Financial pressures	9	<i>"Unemployment [and] inequality".</i>
Hooning	6	<i>"Trail bike riders".</i>
Support for young people	6	<i>"Limited free opportunities for young adults to meet, mingle and stimulate minds".</i>
Upkeep of public areas	6	<i>"The community wants to know how we can educate or reach out to ppl who seemed careless with the environment and their neighbourhood and litter/throwing things around that makes the place a bit untidy".</i>
Access to services and social infrastructure	5	<i>"Rapid growth and lack of infrastructure/parks etc. No local jobs". "New estates will be gettos [sic], no trees, no green space, not enough sport, not enough community".</i>
Drug use	4	<i>"Unemployment and drugs".</i>
Pressure of rapid development	4	<i>"Too many people crowded into small spaces, needs new skate park, needs a water park, better opening library hours, more tree planting to replace the destruction of the areas by new housing estates, more community waterways cleanups with the housing development companies putting money into the areas they destroy to make their profits".</i>
Safety	4	<i>"Afraid to leave home".</i>
Awareness of the Redbank Plains Community Centre	3	<i>"Wider advertising of centre services [needed]".</i>
Interpersonal conflict	3	<i>"Violence, criminal activities, domestic violence".</i>
Odour	3	<i>"Smells from Swanbank".</i>
Food insecurity	2	<i>"Not enough food for project nourish maybe".</i>
Mental health	1	<i>"Mental health, Addiction-drug &amp; alcohol, Isolation".</i>
Safety on the roads	1	<i>"Appalling driving, lack of police station, idiots on motor bikes".</i>
Access to motorway	1	<i>"[Problems with] Roads, litter and access to motorways".</i>

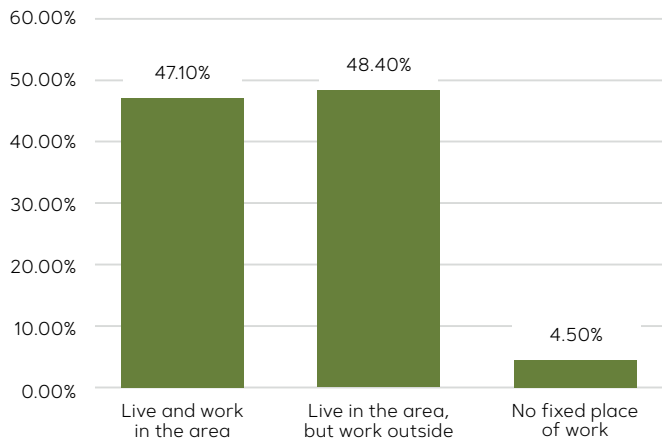


## Public transport and employment

Public transport and road connectivity remains a persistent challenge for the Redbank Plains community. This has emerged as a strong theme across the three rounds of research. One survey participant said *"Public Transport; doesn't come on time, big wait times, only one bus, not reliable"* while one focus group participant said, given time delays and lack of connectivity *"people would be foolish to use public transport"*.

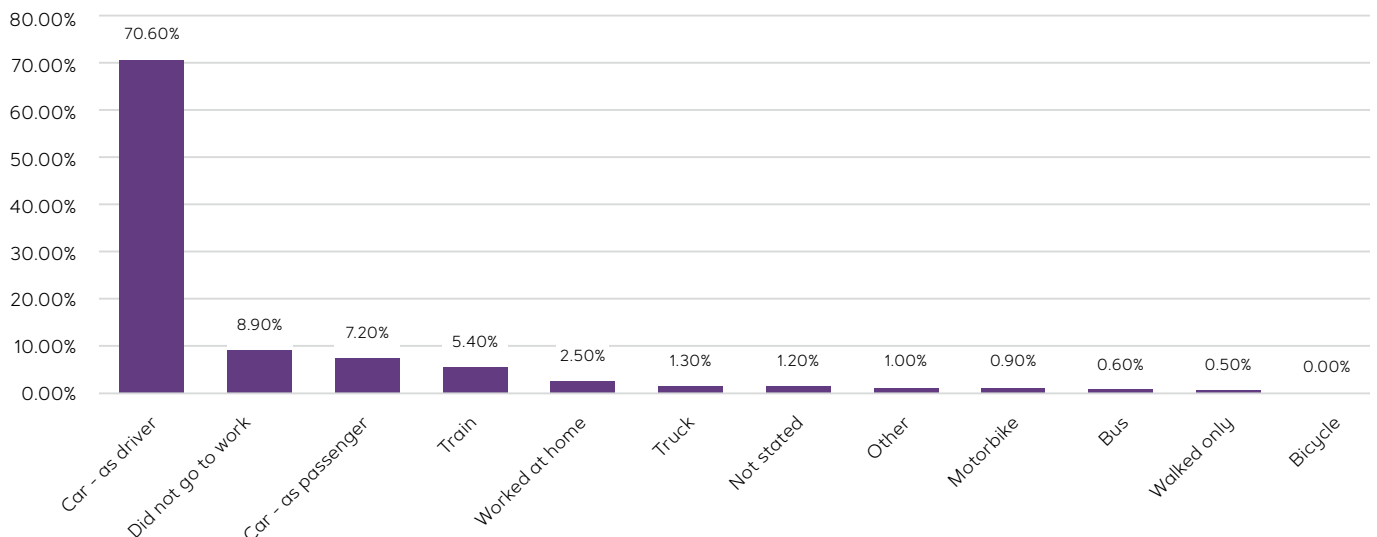
As with previous rounds of research, community members gave feedback on the links between poor public transport and employment. Focus group participants discussed the impacts that poor public transport has on families, with many families losing time to spend together to lengthy commutes. This is reflective of employment opportunities within Ipswich – 48.40% of working people in Ipswich work outside of the city, with the majority of these people going to Brisbane.

Employment location of resident workers by occupation  
(Source: ABS, 2016, via id.profile, 2019)



Drawing on ABS data, most working people in Ipswich – 69.00% - are travelling by car as a driver to get to work. For residents of Redbank Plains, this figure is even higher, at 70.60%, while just 0.60% of Redbank Plains residents are catching the bus to work, and 5.40% are catching the train to work.

Method of travel to work, Redbank Plains  
(Source: ABS, 2016, via id.profile, 2019)



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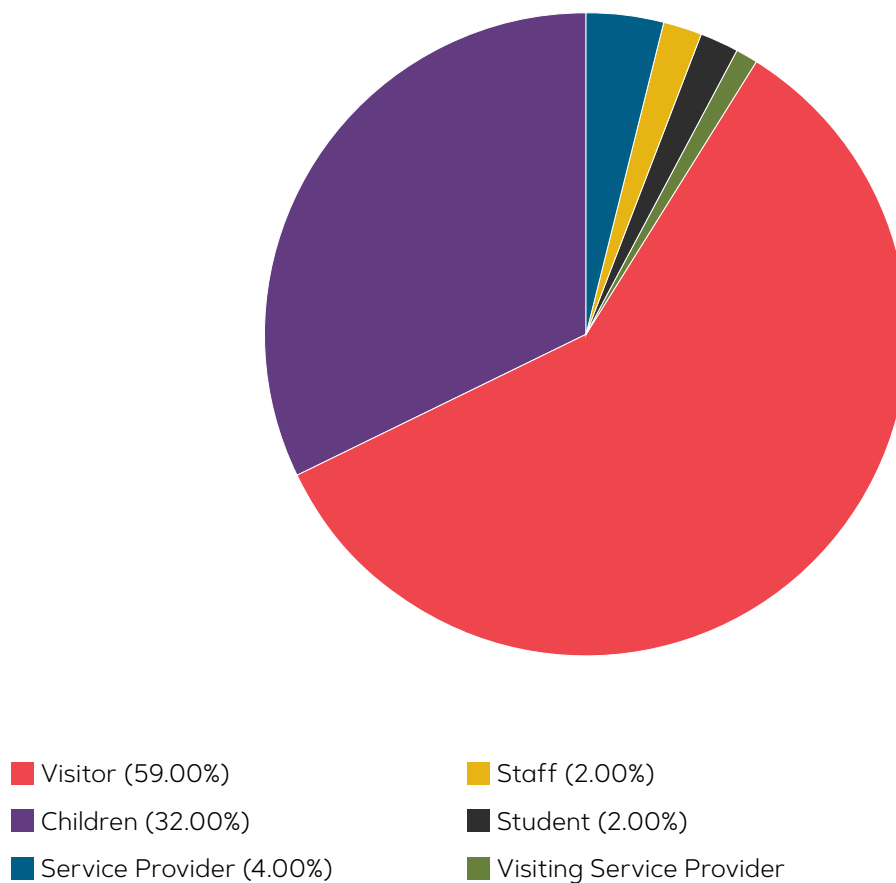
## ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

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The following section examines Community Centre records regarding community engagement with the Community Centre, with feedback on patronage and community and individual benefits.

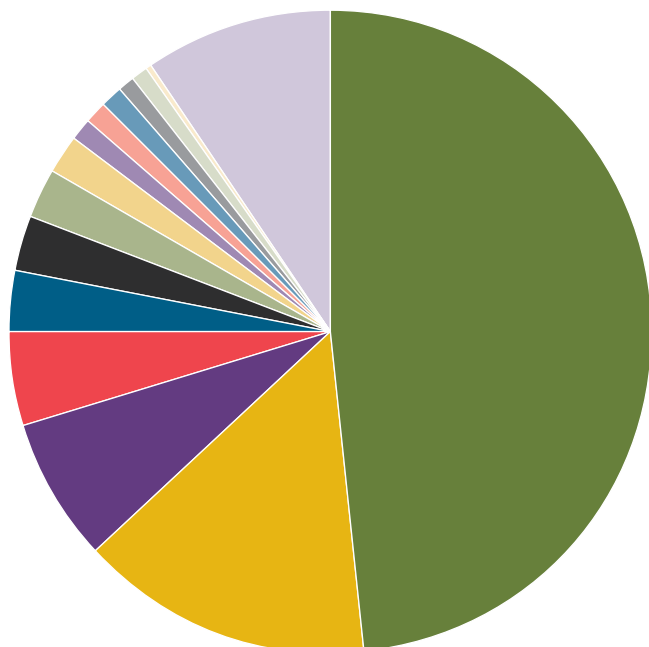
Between June 2018 and June 2019, there were 8,235 visits to the Community Centre, collected via electronic registration at the welcome desk (note that this includes return visits by individuals). Of these visits, 32.00% were children.

Visits to the Community Centre



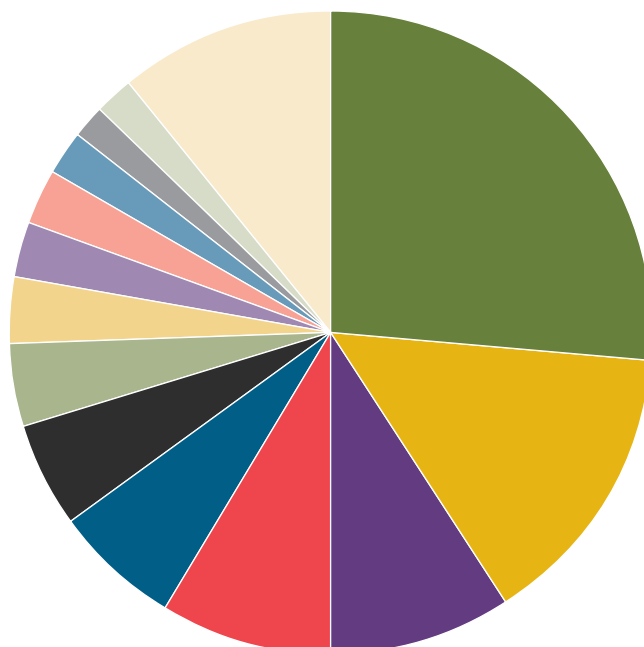
Of these visits, the majority of visitors were from Australia, New Zealand, South Sudan, Samoa, Philippines, DR Congo, and the United Kingdom. This is broadly consistent with survey respondents, most of whom identified as Australian (54.95%), New Zealander (10.81%) and Samoan (5.40%). Around 26.00% of visitors are visiting to access Project Nourish, followed by meetings (14.52%) and the midwifery clinic (9.01%).

Country of origin



- Australia (48.55%)
- New Zealand (14.75%)
- South Sudan (7.01%)
- Not Provided (4.80%)
- Samoa (3.03%)
- Philippines (2.88%)
- DR Congo (2.59%)
- United Kingdom (1.71%)
- Spain (1.34%)
- India (1.08%)
- Argentina (1.04%)
- Kenya (0.91%)
- Vietnam (0.60%)
- American Samoa (0.52%)
- Other (9.19%)

Reason for visit

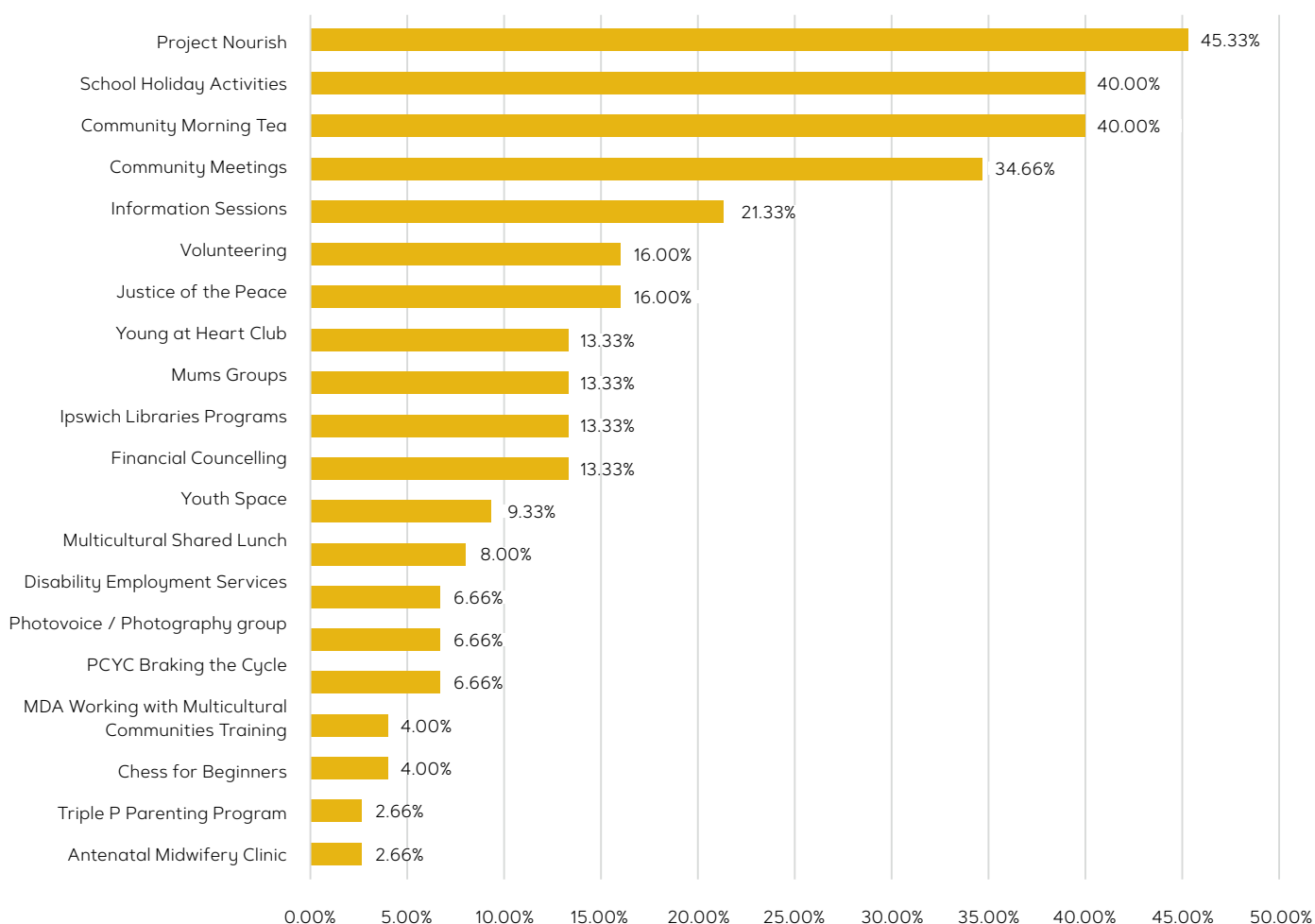


- Project Nourish (26.49%)
- Meeting (14.52%)
- Midwifery Clinic (9.01%)
- Training (8.79%)
- Volunteering (6.32%)
- Community Morning Tea (5.20%)
- Ipswich Libraries Program (4.34%)
- PCYC Braking the Cycle (3.18%)
- RPCC Mums Group (2.93%)
- OCTEC Appointment (2.78%)
- Seniors Space (2.05%)
- MDA Staff (1.87%)
- Youth Space (1.72%)
- Other (10.80%)

## Engagement by respondents in Community Centre programs

Survey respondents who had visited the Community Centre were asked to indicate what programs they had taken part in at the Community Centre. Many survey respondents had taken part in Project Nourish, a weekly food bank facilitated by OzHarvest (45.33%), school holiday activities (40.00%), community morning teas (40.00%) and community meetings (34.66%).

What programs and activities have you taken part in at the Community Centre?  
(Respondents = 75)



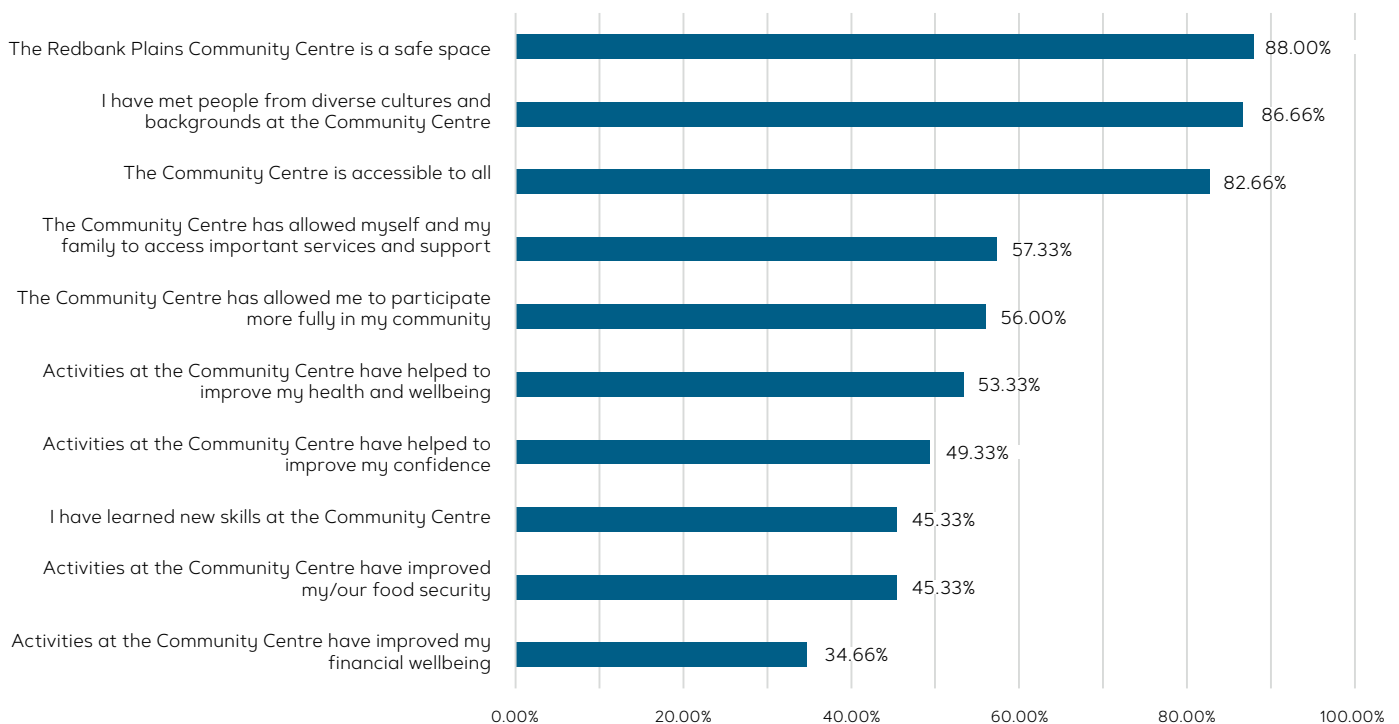
- Project Nourish** – This program is managed and led by the Community Centre’s volunteers. The Community Centre receives contributions for food relief through OzHarvest. The Community Centre applies no eligibility criteria to accessing a bag of food, with around 30 families using the service each week.
- School Holiday Programs** – A range of programs for primary and high school aged children and their families throughout the school holiday period are hosted through the Redbank Plains Community Centre.
- Community Morning Teas** – Every Tuesday morning, members of the community are invited to use the Community Centre space to share morning tea and engage in conversation. It has been effective in welcoming and introducing people who are new to Redbank Plains to the programs and activities that are offered at the Community Centre and surrounding suburbs.
- Community Meetings** – Community meetings and information sessions are hosted by the Community Centre and also external groups and organisations on a range of topics and issues.

## Benefits of the Community Centre to individuals

Measuring the ways in which the Community Centre is meeting community need, respondents who had visited the Community Centre were asked to reflect on a series of statements regarding possible benefits. Top responses included:

- 88.00% of people felt the Community Centre is a safe space (see further discussion on this below)
- 86.66% of people responded that they had met people from diverse cultures and backgrounds at the Community Centre (up from 68.85% at the last survey)
- 82.66% of people felt that the Community Centre is accessible to all
- 57.33% of people felt that the Community Centre had allowed them and their family to access important services and support
- 56.00% of people felt that activities at the Community Centre had allowed them to participate more fully in the community

Benefits of the Community Centre to individuals  
(Respondents = 75)



A key goal for the Redbank Plains Community Centre is to be “a welcoming, safe and inclusive space for everyone in the community”. Focus group participants reflected on the ways in which the Community Centre aims to achieve this goal. Many talked about the ways in which the Community Centre is a welcoming space for people of all cultures. One participant said “[there is a] very diverse mix of people at the Centre every time I visit”. Others talked about the efforts to make the Community Centre a ‘third place’ where people can feel welcome at any time. Participants talked about people being drawn to the Community

Centre for particular programs, who then got to know other visitors through informal meetings over cups of tea. One participant said “we tell people, come here any time, even if just for a coffee”, while another said “people can come in and make a cuppa, and they get to know everybody”. One participant reflected on the Community Centre being an important place for combatting social isolation for some people. One survey respondent said that the Community Centre has a “Very relaxing and friendly atmosphere” while another said that it “provides a great resource to the community and surrounds”.

The group reflected on ideas for the Community Centre to do more to achieve this vision, such as more regular community BBQs, a coffee kiosk, a community garden, or a fun run. The group also reflected on the challenges of promoting the Community Centre, and getting the word out to the community, so more people are able to benefit from the programs offered. Ideas included more advertisement at the Ipswich

City Council (ICC) libraries, welcome packs for new residents, text messages to community members, and encouraging people to talk about the Community Centre to their friends and neighbours. The focus group also discussed the challenges of overcoming perceptions that the Community Centre is designed only for multicultural communities, and letting people know that the Community Centre is open to everyone.

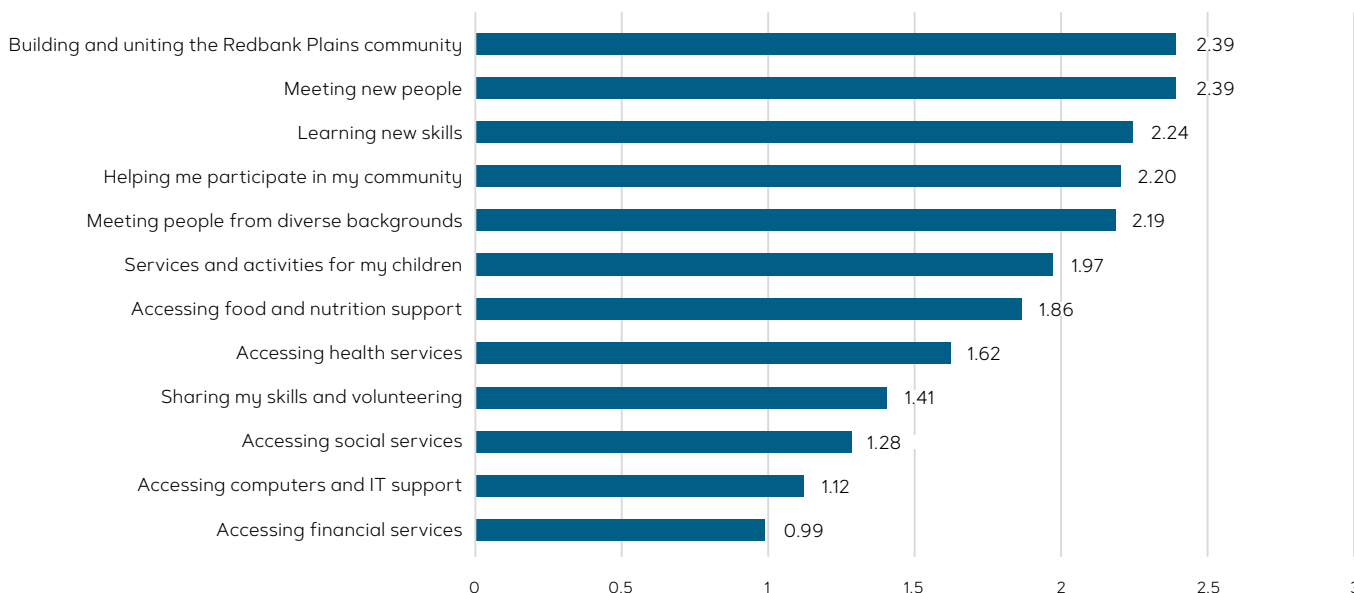
## Most important aspects of the Community Centre

As a way of tracking Community Centre contribution to community capacity, cohesion, and meeting community need, respondents who had visited the Community Centre were asked to select the five top most important aspects of the Community Centre. These are reflected in the graph below, with scores presented as an average response out of five.

As a reflection of building social capital and community cohesion, the top aspects selected by respondents were:

Theme	Representative Quote
Building and uniting the Redbank Plains community	<i>"Bringing the community together".</i>
Meeting new people	<i>"Having a morning tea catching up with the people in the community".</i>
Learning new skills	<i>"Gets us meeting so we're no longer strangers".</i>
Helping me participate in my community	<i>"Volunteers are given opportunities to operate some admin tasks in preparation for obtaining a full or part time paid jobs...".</i>
Meeting people from diverse backgrounds	<i>"Helping people in need".</i>
Services and activities for my children	<i>"Accommodating the needs of different cultural groups. Also, very welcoming to the community."</i>

What are the five most important aspects of the community centre for you?  
(Respondents = 74, scores are an average rating by participants out of 5)

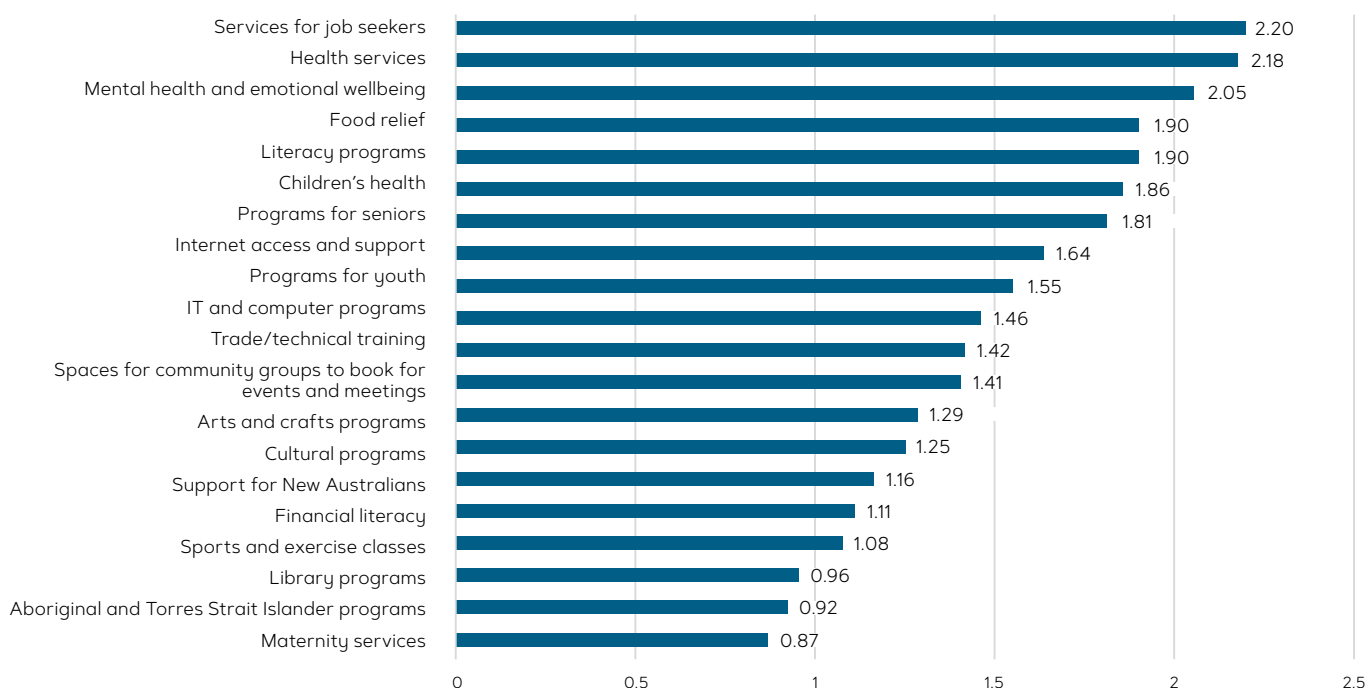


## Community Centre programs and community need

As a measure of community need, and community ambitions for the Community Centre, all survey participants were asked to rank those programs and services that they felt were most important for the Community Centre to offer. These are reflected in the graph below, with scores presented as an average response out of five. Broadly reflective of previous rounds of research, the top services identified were:

- **Services for Job Seekers** – In meeting this need, the Community Centre hosts the FutureF.I.T ‘Fostering Independence Together’ program every Friday. This program includes resume writing and job application support. The sessions are facilitated by Community Centre volunteers and staff.
- **Health Services** – In meeting the need for health services, West Moreton Maternal Health Clinics deliver antenatal care to pregnant mothers at the Community Centre. These appointments are arranged through Ipswich Hospital. The clinics are run three times a week for the general, Pasifika and CALD populations.
- **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing** – In meeting this need, a men’s (ManUp) and women’s (Sisterhood) group meet at the centre once a week. The facilitators of the program are accredited volunteer members of the community. Welcoming individuals who may be experiencing social isolation, depression, anxiety, relationship issues, etc. to be supported in a confidential environment.
- **Food relief** – In meeting this need, a weekly food relief program ‘Project Nourish’ assists around 30 families each week.
- **Literacy Programs** – In meeting this need, FutureF.I.T ‘Fostering Independence Together’ provides free English classes to members of the community in partnership with Supportlinks. The classes are facilitated by volunteers. The Community Centre also refers individuals to the Ipswich Community Hubs English classes.
- **Children’s Health** – In meeting this need, West Moreton Child Health, Baby Drop-In and Ipswich City Council’s Community Immunisation Clinics occur at the Community Centre on the first Wednesday of every month. It is open to members of the community, with no appointments required.
- **Programs for Seniors** – In meeting this need, the weekly ‘Young at Heart Club’ is a space for the community members in Ipswich region aged 55 and over to come together and participate in various activities including knitting, Zumba, canvas painting, pottery, candle-making and African drumming. Funded by the Department of Communities, Age Friendly Grants program until September 2019, however it is planned for this group to continue.

Which of these programs/services would be most important for the Community Centre to offer?  
(Respondents = 91, scores are an average rating by participants out of 5)



## Suggestions for activities

Survey respondents and focus group participants also made a number of suggestions for future programs and initiatives at the Community Centre, including:

- a community garden
- language classes, including ESL
- activities for pet owners
- support for single parents
- lower-cost hiring of spaces for community groups
- a coffee kiosk at the Community Centre
- quarterly BBQs to welcome new people to the neighbourhood
- better promotion of the Community Centre:
  - use text messaging to get the word out
  - poster distribution around the community
  - welcome pack for new residents
  - put notices in local Libraries
  - promotion in the council's quarterly booklet and news
- improved access to the Community Centre, including:
  - better footpaths
  - bigger carpark
  - public transport access.



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# CONCLUSIONS

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The following section provides an overview of the data collected in the twelve-month research, in relation to the key impacts and indicators.

## Social cohesion and social capital

For those community members engaging with the Community Centre, survey and focus group data suggests that there have been improvements in social cohesion and social capital. Feedback on sense of community and sense of welcome have improved, and 86.66% of people responded that they had met people from diverse cultures and backgrounds at the Community Centre, up from 68.85% at the last survey. However, as noted across the previous rounds of research, persistent challenges exist in the Redbank Plains community around safety, support for young people, racism, access to services and social infrastructure and pressure of rapid development.

## Community capacity

There have been some improvements in community capacity. For those people engaging with the Community Centre, Community Centre activities have helped to facilitate engagement in community meetings, volunteering and involvement with community groups. Many people who have engaged in the Community Centre also reported that they had learned new skills, and that activities at the Community Centre had allowed them to participate more fully in their community.

## Community needs: health and wellbeing

Data on community need suggests there are ongoing challenges around employment and economic stability for many families and individuals, food insecurity, mental health, and broader health concerns. A portion of the community are facing ongoing challenges in accessing important services, including dental care, due in part to affordability and transport. However, the Community Centre is also helping to facilitate access to services, such as child and maternal health care, food security and financial counselling.

## Community needs: local economic development

Economic challenges, unemployment and inequality have emerged as key issues across the three rounds of research. This is reflected in survey responses, but is also reflected in the ongoing demand for support services such as Project Nourish and financial counselling. These issues are in part linked to challenges around public transport, and are contributing to the inaccessibility of specialist, dental and other health services. The Community Centre is continuing to meet this community need, with a regular food program, financial counselling, employment services, health services and access to volunteering which may help community members secure employment.

## Place-based community development

The Redbank Plains community is going through a period of exceptional growth. Pressures associated with rapid growth, including the lagging pace of infrastructure, has emerged as a key issue across each round of research. One survey respondent said *"Rapid growth and lack of infrastructure/parks etc. no local jobs"*, while another said *"too many people crowded into small spaces, [the area] needs new skate park, needs a water park, better opening library hours, more tree planting"*. There are persistent challenges around developing a sense of community and sense of welcome. However, for those people engaging with the Community Centre in particular, a sense of place is developing. 'Diversity' and 'Sense of Community' are seen as key community strengths. Many of those respondents visiting the Community Centre have built social connections, and found further opportunities to engage in their community.

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## NEXT STEPS AND ADVOCACY

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The results of this twelve-month research will be shared with the community via this report, and in a series of posters at the Community Centre, and will be used to help develop ongoing programming at the Community Centre.

The baseline and the six-month report have both been used by the Community Centre in the design of ongoing programming, and as supporting documentation for grants and funding. The reports have also been shared with other community centres, and data shared at a number of community development conferences. The previous reports have been used by Ipswich City Council in conversations and advocacy with the Queensland State Government.

The next round of research will take place in mid-2020, marking the two-year mark of the Community Centre being open. The results from the six-month and twelve-month rounds of research indicate promising outcomes for those community members engaging with the Community Centre. While some of the challenges documented in this social impact assessment are likely to persist in some form, we anticipate that further progress around community cohesion, social capital and community capacity will be seen, as more members of the community engage with the Community Centre, access services, and meet their neighbours.

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## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY

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### Redbank Plains Community Centre: 12-Month Survey (June/July 2019)

Now that the Redbank Plains Community Centre has been open for twelve months, Ipswich City Council and Multicultural Australia would like to hear from residents and community centre visitors. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. This survey is for people aged 15 and over. Our purpose in asking these questions is to understand the needs of the Redbank Plains community, to support work being done by the Redbank Plains Community Centre, and to assess the impact of the community centre. The survey is anonymous, however you can provide your details if you would like to take part in a focus group, or be kept up-to-date about activities at the community centre. If you choose to be kept up-to-date regarding the community centre, the contact details you provide will be shared with MDA. You will not be personally identifiable in any reports that come out of this project. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Community Research Officer, Amy MacMahon, at amy.macmahon@ipswich.qld.gov.au.

1. How old are you? (please select one of the below)  
 0 to 14     15 to 17     18 to 19     20 to 29     30 to 49     50 to 64     65 to 74     75+  
 If you are under 18, do you have parent/guardian permission to complete this survey?
2. What is your gender? (please tick one of the below)  
 Female     Male     Transgender     Gender Variant/non-conforming     Prefer not to say
3. What is your cultural background? (please tick the cultural background that you most identify with)  
 Australian     Aboriginal     Torres Strait Islander     Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
 Samoan     Chinese     Fijian     South African     Dutch     German  
 Sudanese     English     Indian     Vietnamese     New Zealander  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What suburb do you live in? (please complete) \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your housing status? (please tick one)  
 Renting     Owner Occupier     Other
6. Which of the following best describes your household? (please tick as many as apply to you)  
 Solo adult without children  
 Solo adult with children  
 Couple with children  
 Couple without children  
 Group household (shared) unrelated  
 Group household related without children  
 Group household related with children  
 Household includes children under 15  
 Household includes children over 15
7. Do you identify as having a disability? (please tick one)  
 Yes     No     Prefer not to say
8. What is your employment status?  
 Full-time     Part-time     Casual/contract     Seeking further work  
 Unemployed - seeking work     Unemployed - not seeking work     Student

9. What is your highest level of education? (please tick one)

- No formal schooling  
  Primary School  
  Secondary School  
  Year 10  
  Year 11  
  Year 12  
 Technical/Trade (e.g. TAFE)  
  Tertiary qualification  
  Postgraduate  
  Prefer not to say

10. What strengths does the Redbank Plains Community have? (Briefly describe below)

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11. Are there any challenges that the Redbank Plains community is facing? (Briefly describe below)

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12. How safe do you feel walking alone in Redbank Plains? (please circle one of the below)

Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Safe enough	Quite safe	Very safe
1	2	3	4	5

13. Have you taken part in any community meetings in the past 12 months?

- Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
  No

14. Have you ever volunteered in the community or assisted with community groups or events in the past 12 months?

- Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
  No

15. Do you have connections to cultural groups and communities other than your own in the Redbank Plains area?

- Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
  No  
  Unsure

16. Do you run/own a small business in Redbank Plains/Ipswich?

- Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
  No

17. Are you a member of any community groups?

- Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
  No

On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

18. There is a strong sense of community in my local area (please circle one of the below)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

19. I feel welcome in the local community (please circle one of the below)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

20. It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures  
(please circle one of the below)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

21. Have you experienced any problems accessing services or supports in the last 12 months?  
 (eg - health services, dental care, legal services)  
 Yes (please detail) \_\_\_\_\_  No  Unsure

22. Have you visited the Redbank Plains Community Centre since it opened in May?  
 Yes (please go to question 23)  
 No (please go to question 26)  
 Unsure (please go to question 26)

**These questions (23-25) are for people who have visited the community centre**

23. What programs and activities have you taken part in at the Community Centre?  
 (Please select as many as apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antenatal Midwifery Clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural Shared Lunch   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chess for Beginners        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mums Groups                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Health Clinic        | <input type="checkbox"/> PCYC Braking the Cycle       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Meetings         | <input type="checkbox"/> Photovoice/Photography group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Morning Tea      | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Nourish              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Counselling      | <input type="checkbox"/> School holiday activities    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homework Club              | <input type="checkbox"/> School holiday events        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ipswich Libraries Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors Space                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Justice of the Peace       | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Space                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kangatraining              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                  |

24. Do the following statements apply to you?

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
I have learned new skills at the Community Centre			
I have met people from diverse cultures and backgrounds at the Community Centre			
The Community Centre has allowed myself and my family to access important services and support			
The Community Centre is accessible to all			
Activities at the Community Centre have helped to improve my health and wellbeing			
Activities at the Community Centre have helped to improve my confidence			
The Community Centre has allowed me to participate more fully in my community			
Activities at the Community Centre have improved my financial wellbeing			
Activities at the Community Centre have improved my/our food security			
The Redbank Plains Community Centre is a safe space			

25. What are the five most important aspects of the Community Centre for you?  
 (Please select your top FIVE aspects)

	Most Important	2nd Most Important	3rd Most Important	4th Most Important	5th Most Important
Meeting new people					
Meeting people from diverse backgrounds					
Learning new skills					
Accessing health services					
Helping me participant in my community					
Accessing financial services					
Building and uniting the Redbank Plains community					
Accessing social services					
Sharing my skills and volunteering					
Services and activities for my children					
Accessing food and nutrition support					
Accessing computers and IT support					

26. Which of these programs/services would be most important for the Community Centre to offer?  
 (Please select your top FIVE programs/services)

	Most Important	2nd Most Important	3rd Most Important	4th Most Important	5th Most Important
Literacy Programs					
IT and computer programs					
Internet access and support					
Trade/technical training					
Arts and Crafts programs					
Services for Job Seekers					
Health Services					
Children's Health					
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing					
Financial Literacy					
Food relief					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs					
Support for New Australians					
Youth Programs					
Cultural programs					
Sports and exercise classes					
Spaces for community groups to book for events and meetings					
Programs for Seniors					
Programs for Youth					
Library Programs					
Maternity Services					

27. Would you be interested in taking part in a community focus group, about the Redbank Plains community and the Community Centre, in August 2019?

Yes (please provide your details below)

No

28. Would you like to be kept up-to-date about Community Centre activities? (This information will be shared with MDA)

Yes (please provide your details below)

No

Name	
Email Address	
Phone Number	

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our survey. We rely on your feedback to help us improve our programs. Your input is greatly appreciated.







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