



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023

The City of Greater Geelong adopted a new Community Engagement Policy in March 2021.

We made a commitment to our community to report on the impact and achievements delivered under the policy every 12 months.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Under the guidance of the Local Government Act 2020 community engagement at the City of Greater Geelong saw some valuable advancements in the past 12 months. The City has:



been living the **Community Engagement Policy**



improved the accessibility of our online Have Your Say website



increased page views by **8% (222,893 views)** on the Have Your Say website



increased the number of submissions by **over 100% (to 17,381)** via the Have Your Say website



conducted **more deliberative engagement** projects with our community



improved engagement with **First Nations people**

ALIGNING TO OUR PRINCIPLES

Engaging with the community ensures that Council listens and makes decisions based on community lived experience and in line with community views and values.

We have delivered our engagement activities under our five engagement principles in the design, delivery and reporting of all engagement activities.



A community engagement process must have a **clearly defined** objective and scope.



Participants taking part in community engagement must have access to objective, **relevant and timely** information to inform their participation.



Participants taking part in community engagement must be **representative** of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of community engagement.



Participants taking part in community engagement are entitled to **reasonable support** to enable meaningful and informed engagement.



Participants taking part in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will **influence** Council decision making.

DELIVERING DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Deliberative engagement is a tailored process that ensures a representation of participants that reflect our community are brought together into the engagement process and closer to the decision makers than other forms of engagement.

Deliberative practices, which may be co-designed, take place to allow for a representative group to deliberate on an issue in depth, over time, before coming to an informed consensus or decision.

Deliberative engagement methods this year have included advisory committees, workshops, community panels, reference groups and focus groups.

Examples include:

- All Advisory Committees provided input on a range of engagements in deliberative settings
- Asset Management Plan
- Positive Aging Strategy Action Plan
- A Conversation about 26 January
- North Bellarine Aquatic Centre Community Advisory Panel
- Northern Aquatic Hub Liaison Reference Group
- Labuan Square public space redevelopment
- Rainbow Youth Advisory Group



MONITORING AND REPORTING

We are committed to monitoring processes, information sharing and decision making to understand the overall level of success in the policy's implementation. Measures of our success include:

CONNECTION WITH COMMUNITY

82,891

people visited the Have Your Say website

72

projects were shared on the Have Your Say website

1,608

new Have Your Say registered members (an increase of 30%)

TOP HAVE YOUR SAY PAGES VISITED

- Market Square Masterplan (3,361 visitors)
- Dogs in Public Places Policy Review (2,607 visitors)
- Ocean Grove Sporting Infrastructure Plan (2,475 visitors)
- Urban Geelong Long Term Settlement Boundary Review (1,729 visitors)

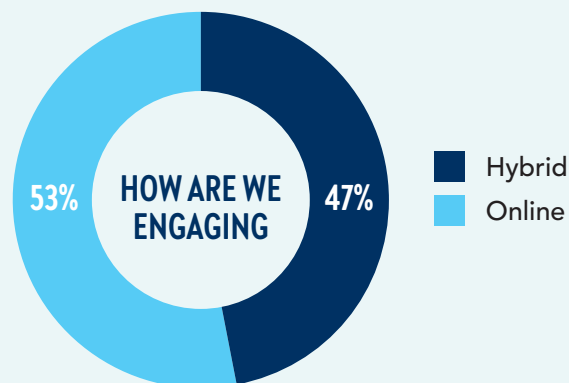
WHO WE ARE HEARING FROM

We have developed a range of optional demographic questions which the community can choose to answer that will help us measure whether we are successfully reaching diverse communities across the Greater Geelong Region. These questions include:

- Gender
- Connection to the area
- Age group
- Town or suburb
- Do you identify to any of the following?
- Additional supports

HOW WE ARE ENGAGING

As we emerged from Covid-19, we moved from a dependence on online engagement, to a hybrid approach of face-to-face and online engagement. Our future approach will be to engage face-to-face as much as possible.

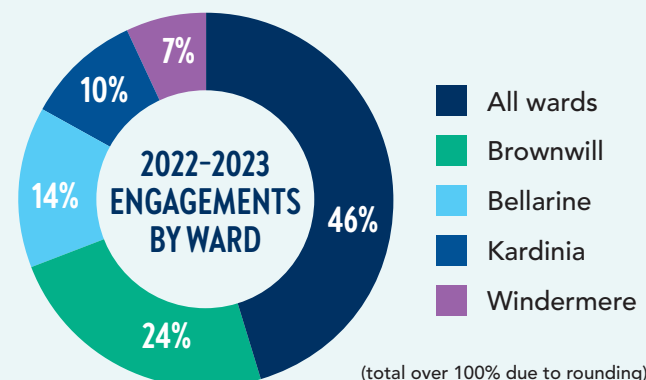


OUR COMMUNITY PLAN 2021-25

Our Community Plan 2021-25 outlines how we will work towards making Greater Geelong a clever and creative city-region. All our engagements aligned to one or more of the four strategic directions:

- Strategic Direction 1 – Healthy, caring and inclusive community (18%)
- Strategic Direction 2 – Sustainable Growth and environment (14%)
- Strategic Direction 3 – Strong local economy (26%)
- Strategic Direction 4 – High-performing council and organisation (42%)

WHERE ARE WE ENGAGING





MAKING THE CITY MORE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE

- Translation support
 - › Promotion material translated into 10 languages
 - › Translation information on every Have Your Say project page
- Face-to-face engagements
 - › Regular community engagement roadshows including at Royal Geelong Show and Wurriki Nyal Open Day
 - › Delivery of hybrid engagements (online and face to face) providing greater choice and access
- 'Join Us' campaign - Promoting the Have Your Say website and encouraging community to sign up
- Mapping engagements by ward to highlight the spread of engagements
- Increased use of Advisory Committee representative expertise and online hub support
- Promotion of a Reasonable Adjustment and Support resource
- More deliberate and timely engagement with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, for example:
 - › A Conversation about 26 January
 - › Biyal-a Armstrong Creek Library
 - › Poa Banyul Community Hub
 - › Labuan Square redevelopment
 - › Borongcook Drysdale Library

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Almost 80 projects delivered a range of improvements and deliverables positively influenced by the community feedback received. Some example engagement projects include:



AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

Objective:

To introduce the draft Avalon Corridor Strategy to the community, test whether input from the first round of consultation in 2021 had been adequately incorporated in the draft strategy, gain feedback on overall directions and guiding principles and gain an understanding of any specific issues or concerns.

The final plan will guide land-use decision making in the Avalon Corridor, such as the location and extent of future development.

Positive outcome from engagement:

The City realised we couldn't undertake this planning alone. This led to a collaborative partnership between the City of Greater Geelong and Wyndham City Council.

We engaged with a broad range of residents, developers, landowners, environmentalists, farmers, government, services and utilities, transport, peak bodies, tourism and recreation organisations which elicited a number of common themes identified between the first and second consultation period. These include agricultural land capability, including a green break, regional biodiversity, significant projects, Avalon Airport, employment and development, transport, townships - Lara and Little River, tourism and connection opportunities, landscape amenity and character.

LABUAN SQUARE

Objective:

To engage with the local community to inform the development of a public realm landscape design plan to guide and prioritise investment in the treasured local place.

Positive outcome from engagement:

We partnered with Norlane Community Initiatives to talk with the local community about what they valued about Labuan Square and what they would like improved.

Stakeholders and the community loved the natural environment, shops and the opportunity to meet friends and socialise. The community prioritised a sustainable landscape, access to nature, play experiences and public art for the redevelopment along with safety infrastructure, public WiFi and improved lighting.

Community priorities were incorporated into the landscape design and construction is underway and due to be complete in June 2023.



A CONVERSATION ABOUT 26 JANUARY

Objective:

To listen to and seek feedback from the Greater Geelong community about 26 January, celebrated as Australia Day.

Positive outcome from engagement:

The Conversation about 26 January, is the most comprehensive we have ever undertaken on this topic and identified the diversity of views about Australia's national day. The unique engagement was delivered over a six-month period (from May to November 2022) with Stage One devoted to hearing from First Nations Peoples, before broadening out to hear from the whole community in Stage Two.

A series of Yarn Ups, forums, conversations and meetings were held with community, organisations, community groups and event organisers from across the region, along with a survey.

We received 957 survey responses, 447 responses from First Nations Peoples (equivalent to 12.5% of the First Nations' community) and 510 responses were from the broader community. This is the largest number of contributions we have ever experienced from the First Nations community on any issue.

Engagement feedback showed all First Nations respondents (100%) wanted a change to the way the day is commemorated. Across the broader community, 68% of survey respondents said change was needed with suggestions including greater cultural acknowledgment, cultural events, increased inclusion of First Nations Peoples art, music and culture. 32% of the broader community opposed changes to the day.

Recommendations are to be presented to Council in May 2023 to guide our future approach to activities and commemorations held on 26 January.



POSITIVE AGING 2022-25 ACTION PLAN CO-DESIGN PROCESS

Objective:

To bring the Positive Ageing Strategy 2021-47 to life by asking the community to co-design the actions needed to make Greater Geelong a more age friendly place to be. Codesign invited the community to be active participants in the design process to ensure the action plan was truly meaningful to the residents of Greater Geelong.

Positive outcome from engagement:

The co-design process began by capturing community stories through conversations. Over 240 community members over the age of 55 participated and were then invited to take part in the design process.

Thirty community members chose to continue their involvement and attended a design forum. This forum brought together a diverse group of stakeholders including local agencies and City staff, providing an opportunity for community representatives to develop a deeper understanding of the issues raised in phase one, thus enriching the outputs, strengthening relationships, and paving the way for future collaboration.

Some of the key issues raised for action were access to transport, age friendly infrastructure, social connections, digital literacy, safety and promoting ways older people can live at home for longer.

SUMMARY

There have been many positive outcomes as a result of community engagement activities over the past 12 months, however we recognise that there is always room for improvement.

As we look to the next 12 months, we aim to continue to build on our relationships with community, to conduct successful community engagement projects with a focus on being community-centred that deliver positive outcomes for both community and council, in line with our engagement principles.

We also aim for a consistent approach to community engagement across the organisation to provide a synonymous customer experience whether the feedback is being sought for a strategy, project or service.

Thank you for your support of our engagements over the past 12 months and we look forward to hearing from you again soon.

www.yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au



To develop the Kardinia Park Master Plan, we invited the local community to suggest ideas that will help Kardinia Park retain its position as a premier sport and recreation destination.

**We Acknowledge
the Wadawurrung People as
the Traditional Owners of
the Land, Waterways and
Skies. We pay our respects
to their Elders, past,
present and emerging.**

**We Acknowledge all
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander people who are
part of our Greater Geelong
community today.**

**HAVE
YOUR
SAY** 

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