

# BUCHAN GELANTIPY AND DISTRICTS COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

## October 2020

### Introduction

During July 2020, the Buchan Gelantipy and Districts Renewal Association (BGaDRA) conducted a community survey. A package was posted via Australia Post including:

- A cover letter from the BGaDRA updating the community to the Association's activities to date
- A BGaDRA membership form
- Community Survey
- Reply paid envelope

The survey was distributed to 315 properties via post based on the East Gippsland Shire Council property ownership database. To ensure that residents who rent, manage rural properties or have other residential arrangements, packages were placed at the Gelantipy and Buchan Bush Nursing Centres, Buchan Neighbourhood House and the Buchan Bushfire Recovery Hub. It is unknown how many of these packages were collected.

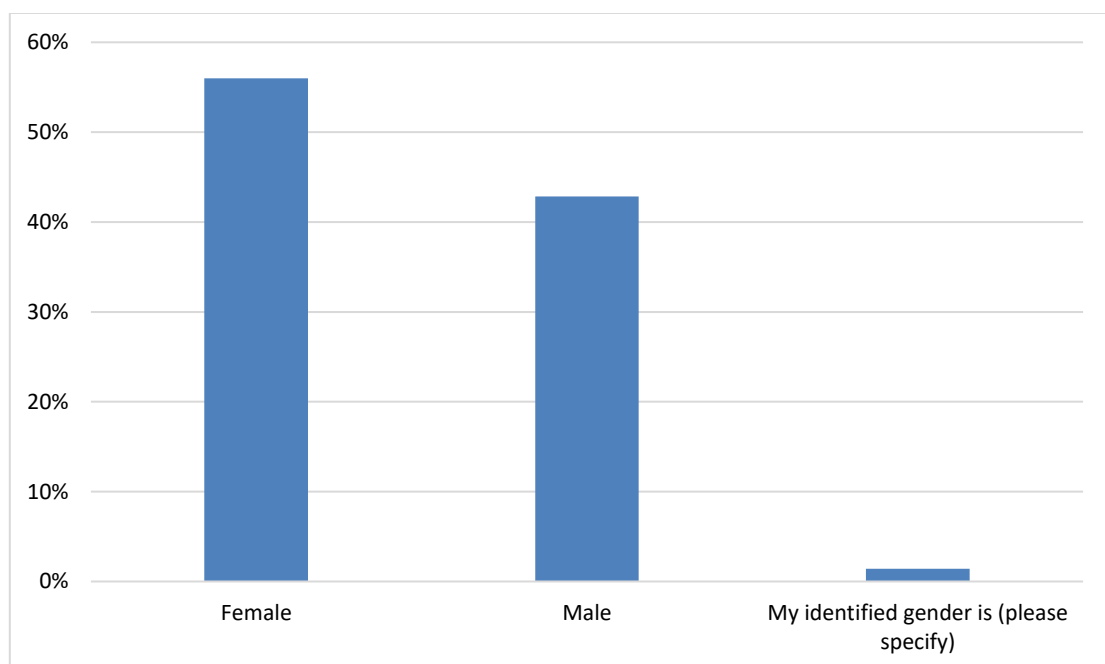
The survey could be completed either in hard copy or online. For this survey, half were completed online and half in hard copy.

The estimated resident population of this District is 458 (2019). Based on the 2016 ABS Census, the average age is 54 years. (By way of comparison, this is higher than the East Gippsland Shire average of 50 years and Regional Victoria of 43 years of age.)

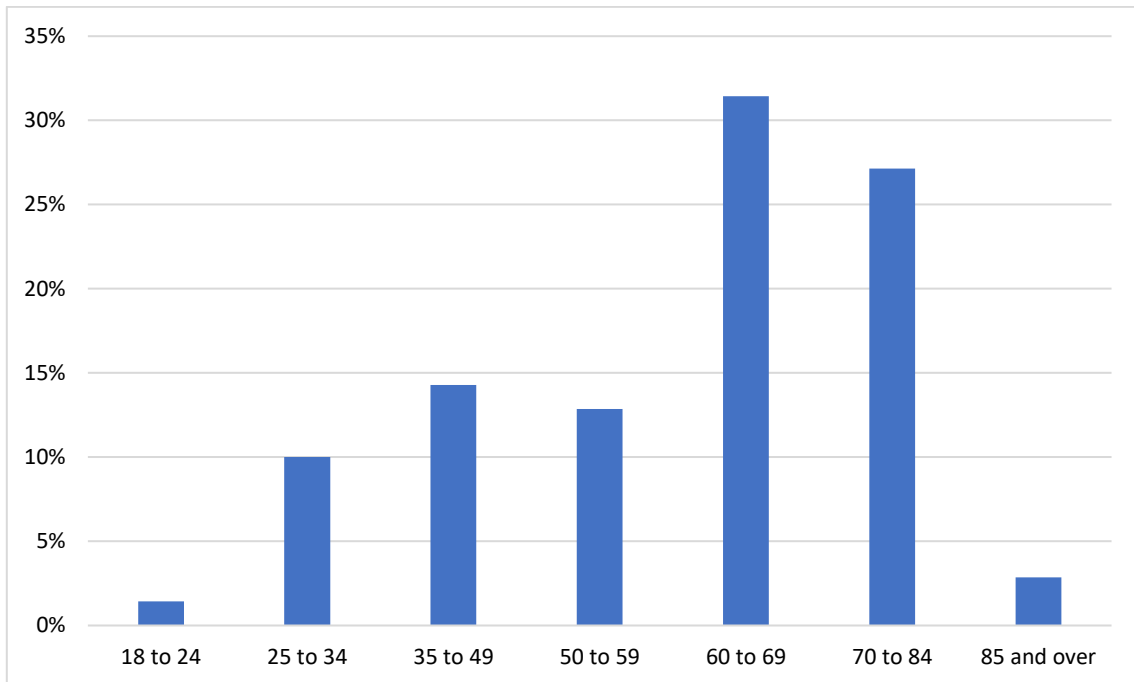
Seventy (70) surveys were returned. This is approximately a 15% return rate based on the population and 22% return rate based on the mail out numbers.

### Survey Responses

#### Question 1 What is your gender?

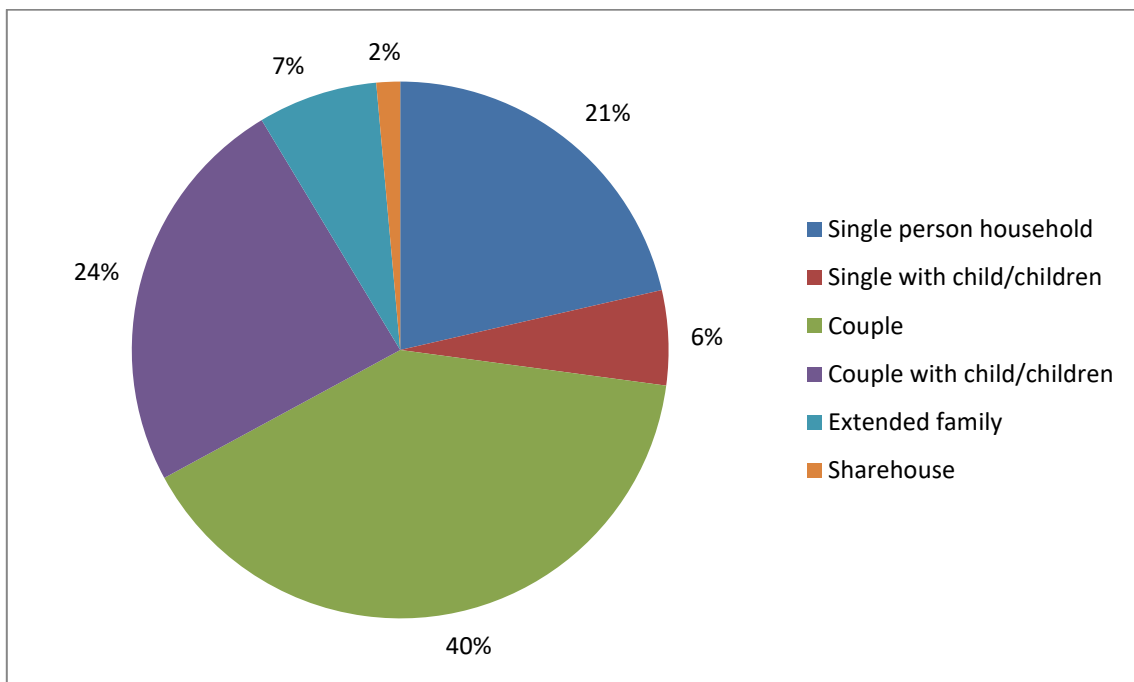


## Question 2 What age group are you?



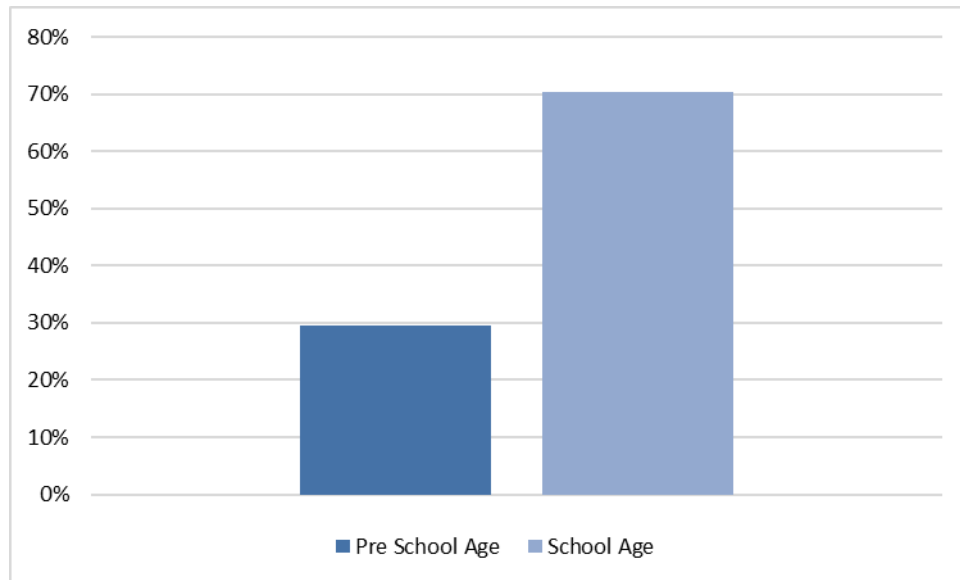
## Question 3 Which of the following best describes your household?

The responses to this question as shown in the following chart. The results show that there is a relatively balanced representation of respondents for the remainder of the survey - 30% with children, 40% couples, 21% single people and the balance being extended family or share house.



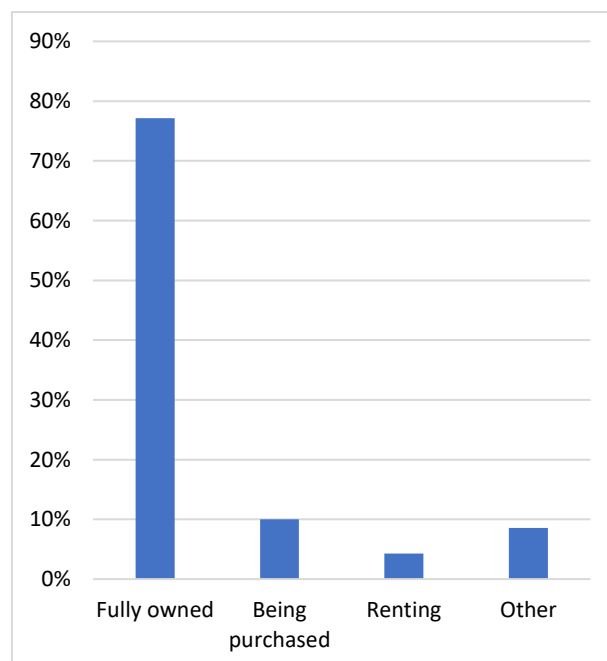
Question 4 The following refers to children in the household. If you do not have any children living in the household skip to Question 5

Twenty-one (21) respondents (30% of total) answered that they have children under the age of 18 years living in their household. The following shows the proportion of pre-school age versus school age (primary and secondary).



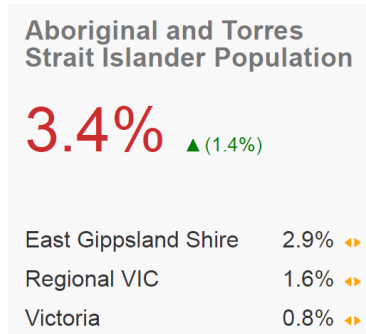
Question 5 Which of the following best describes your accommodation?

The following responses describes accommodations arrangements.

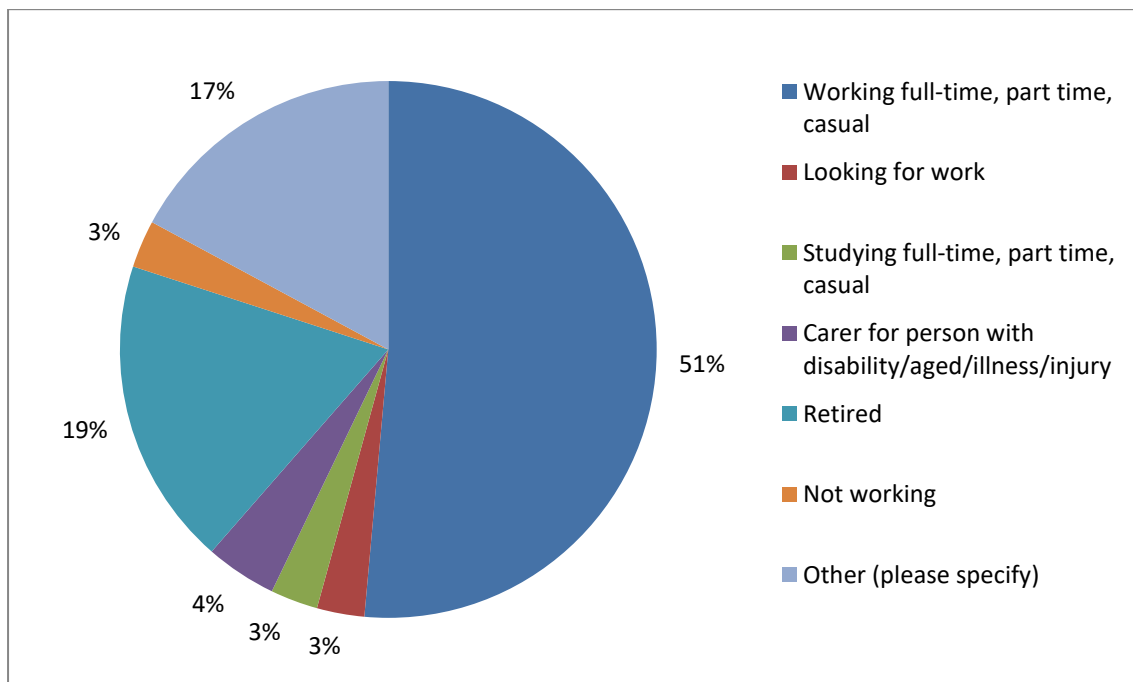


## Question 6 Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?

The responses from the survey did not provide any detail on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population across this district. The following information has been extracted from the 2016 ABS Census data for this district.



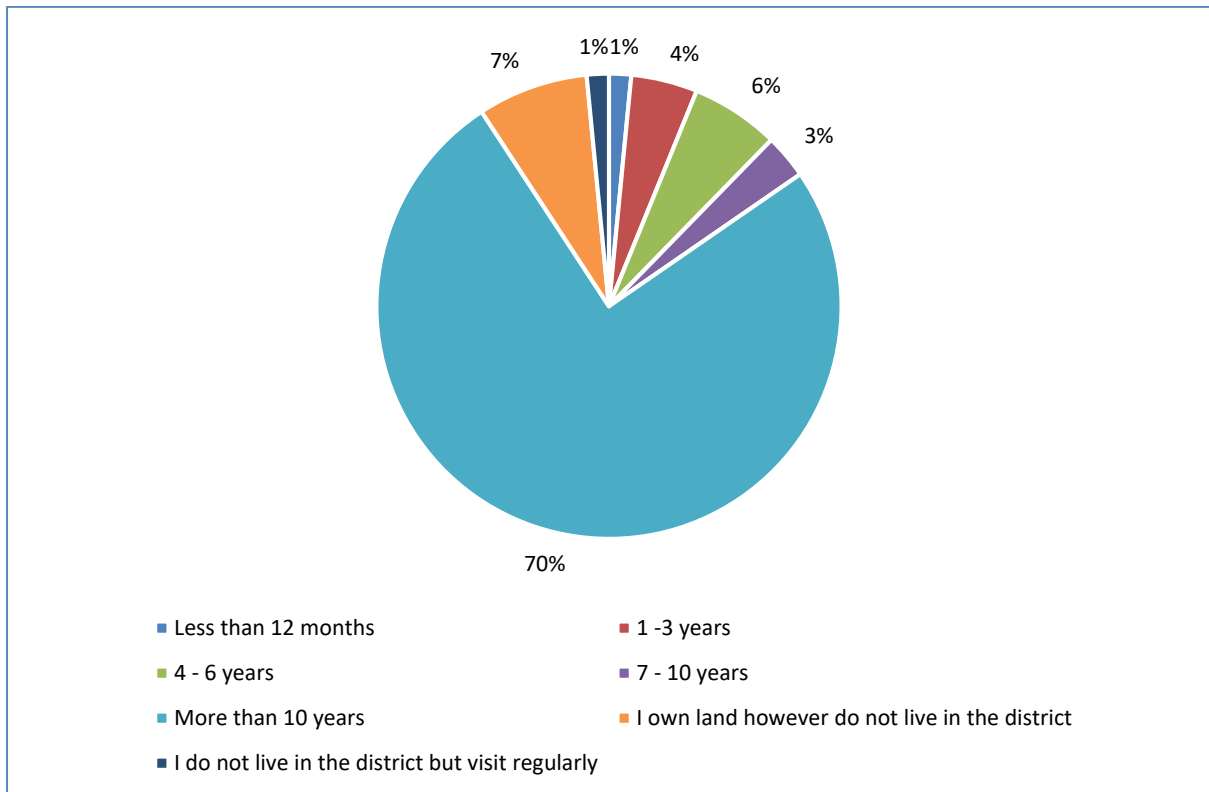
## Question 7 Which of the following would best describe your situation with regard to work, study or caring responsibilities?



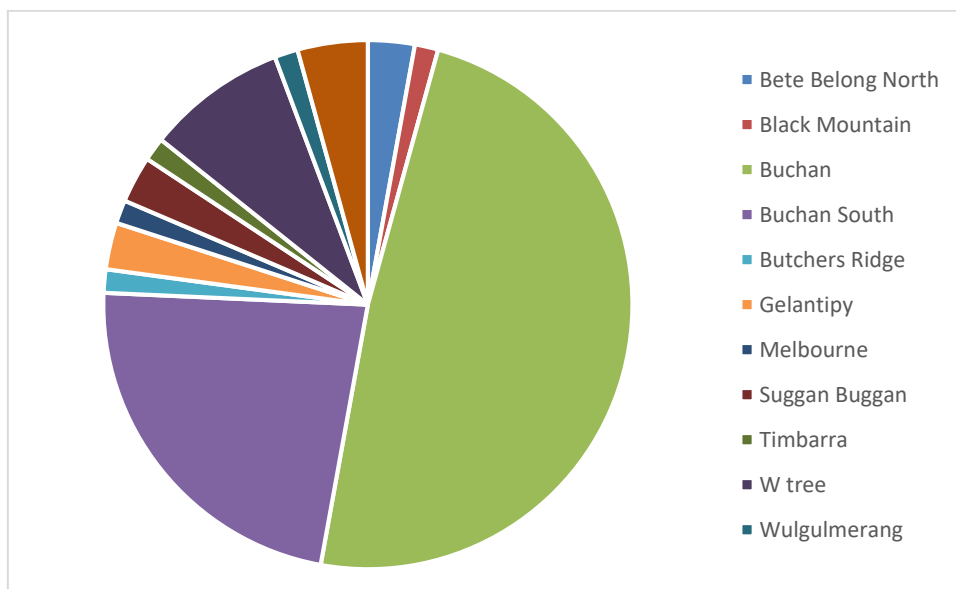
Of the twelve (12) respondents who selected *Other*, their responses included:

- Farming – either full time, part time or casually including for no regular income
- Caring for grandchildren
- Working and a carer
- Disabled
- Working casually and studying full time
- Self employed
- Volunteering

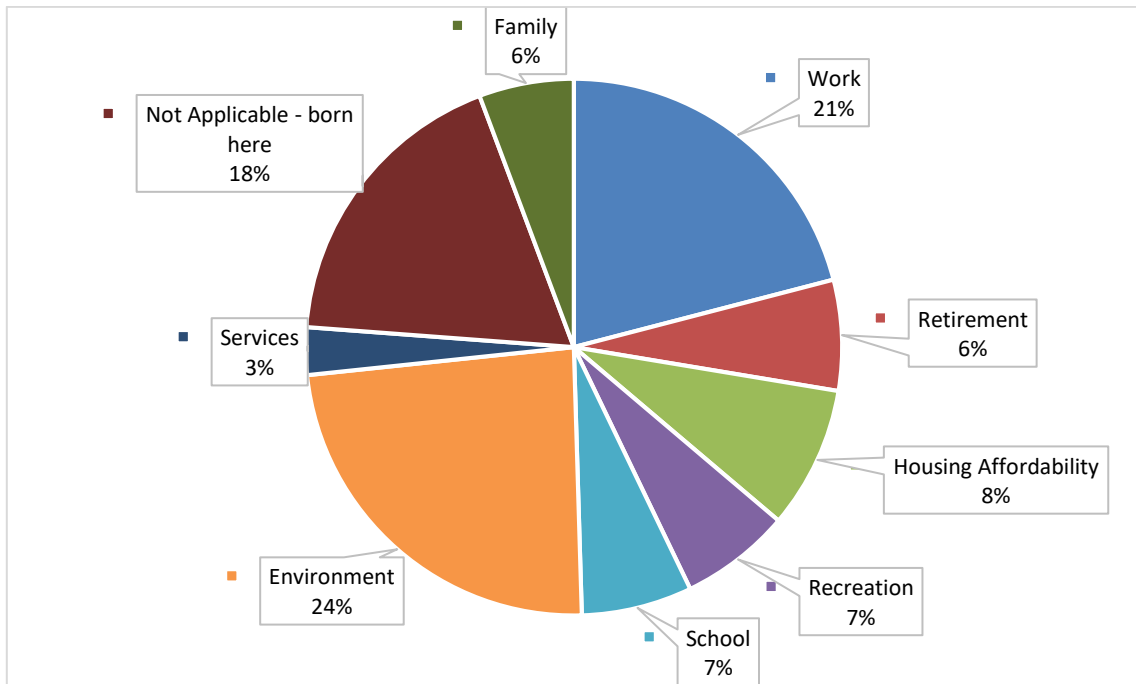
### Question 8 How long have you lived in the District?



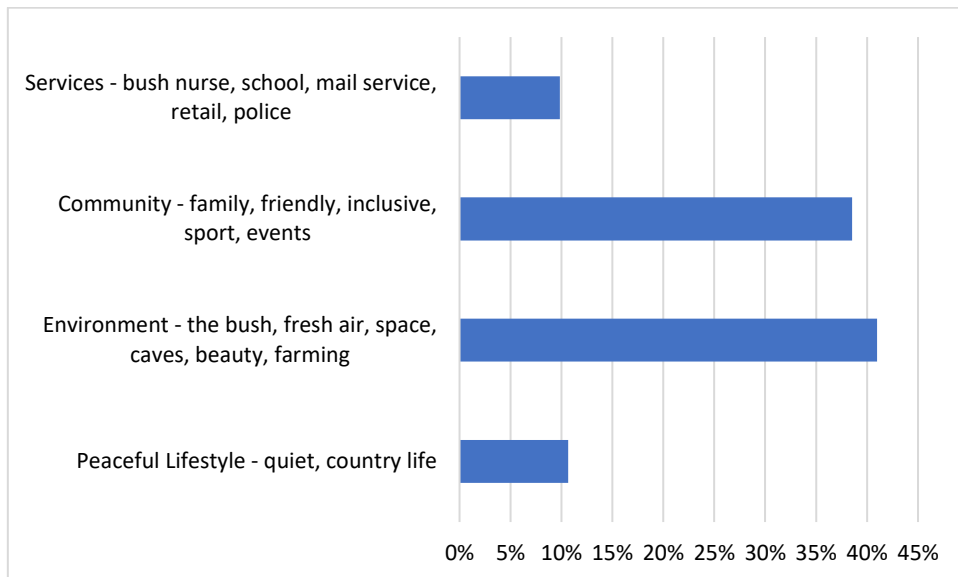
### Question 9 Which locality do you live in?



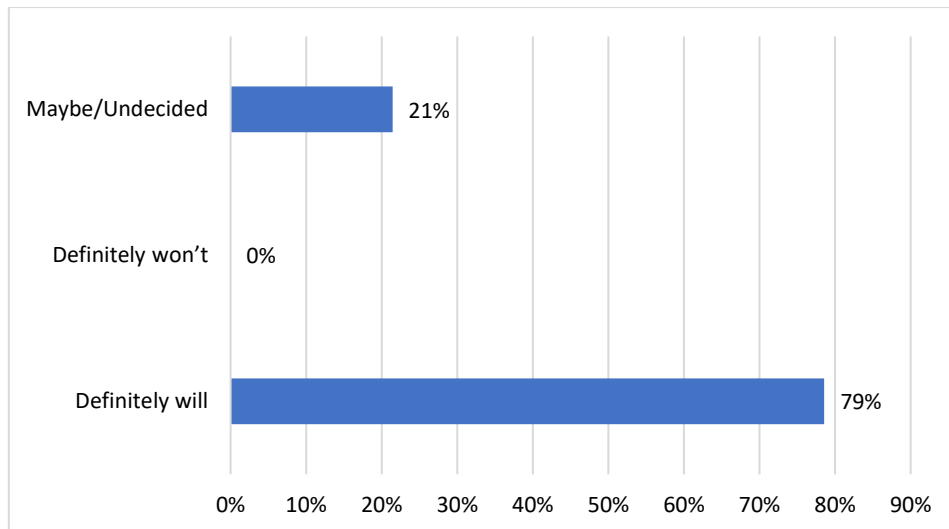
### Question 10 Why did you come to the District?



### Question 11 What do you value most about living in the District?



### Question 12 How likely are you to continue living in the District?

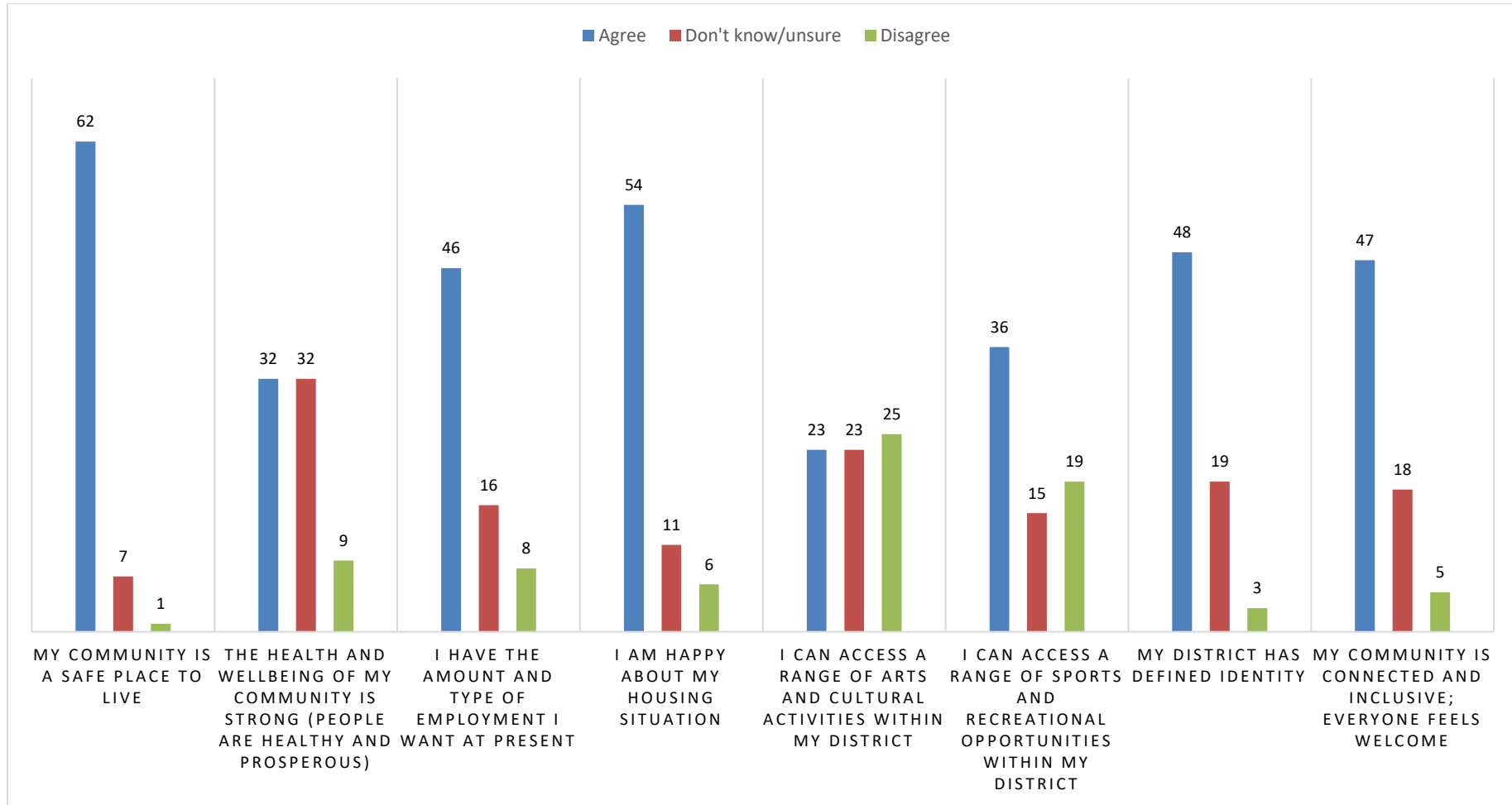


### Question 13 If you won't continue living here, why is that?

The following outlines the specific reasons why people may no longer live across the district into the future.

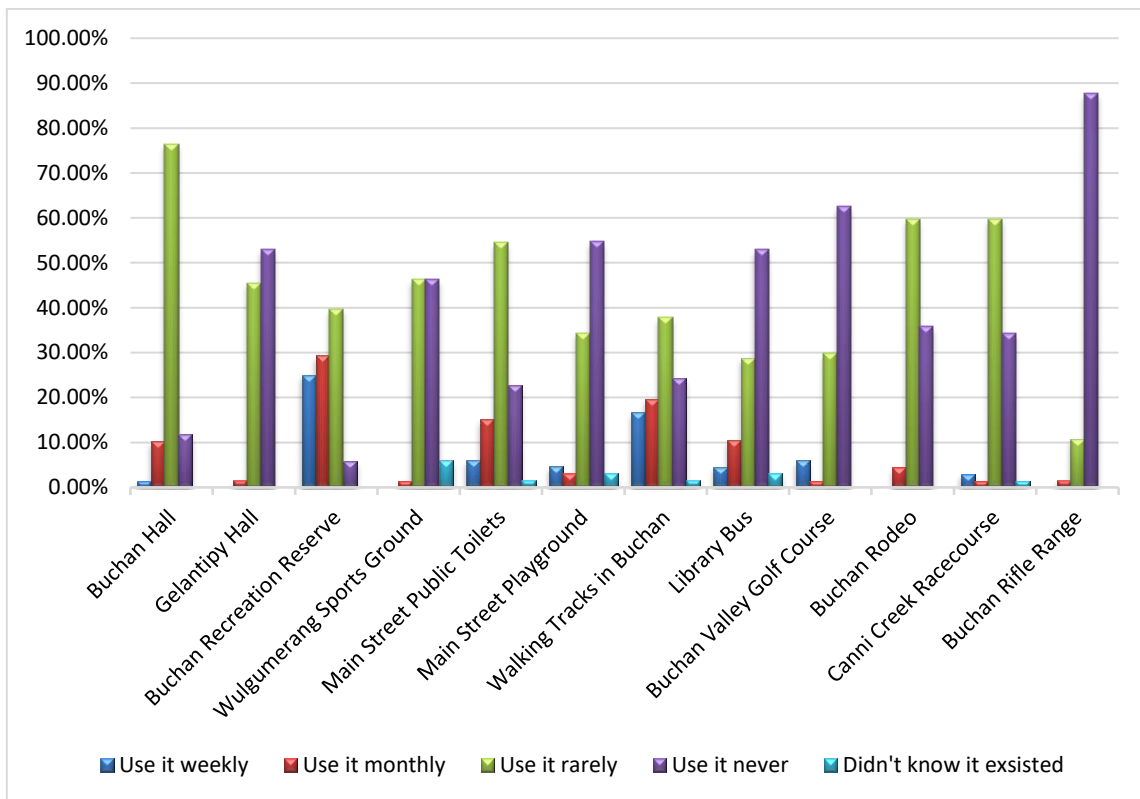
Will continue coming as often as possible	Possible bureaucratic issues	Limited employment
Living with a disability getting too hard by myself	Lack of accessibility to health services that may mean as I age I will need to move to Bairnsdale as many have had to do at Buchan.	Access to adequate Health Education and services. Not much happening to upgrade any of these in Buchan or increase accessibility/ exercise spaces for people
We likely will stay, who knows what will happen as we age? Who knows what will happen with fire? We have no plan to leave	I want to explore the world a bit and live in different places but eventually come back.	Lack of facilities/opportunities for children in the town
May go into care	In the next 10 years we will make a decision about where we want to live in our retirement years. North of Buchan is not an option as it is too remote for us to live once we are in our 80s, we have lived there since 1984 and absolutely love it... Buchan may or may not be an option, we love it and love living here, but it also may be challenging in our 80s due to the distance from Bairnsdale.	Distance from extended family; ongoing fire issues; distance from larger towns for social and arts activities.

Question 14 How much do you agree with the following statements?

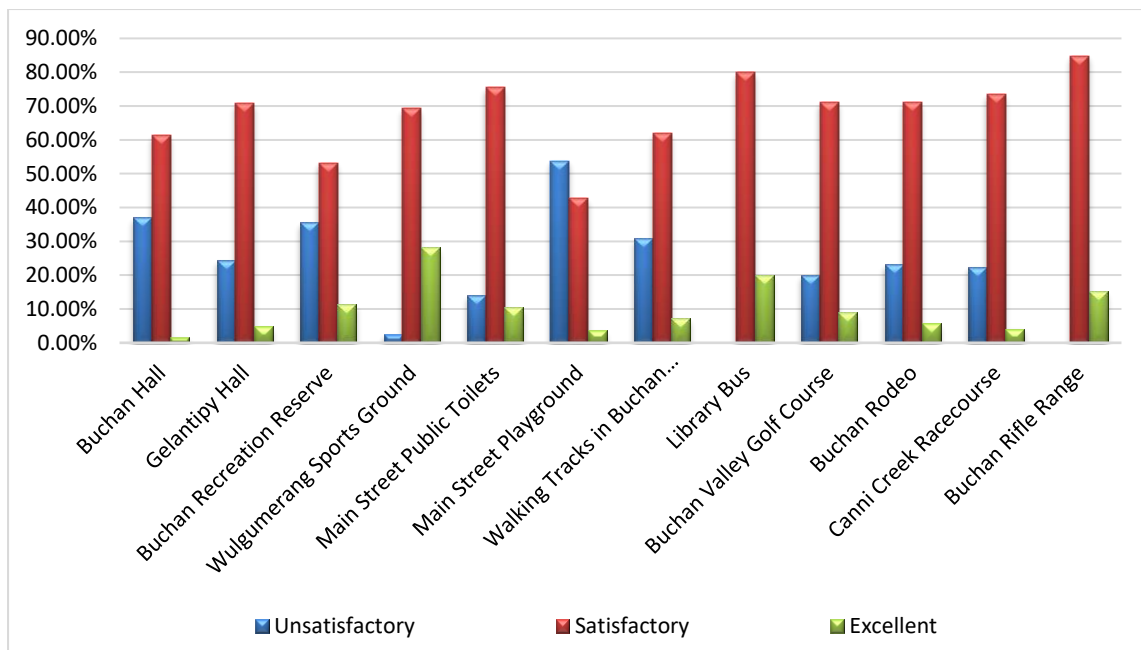




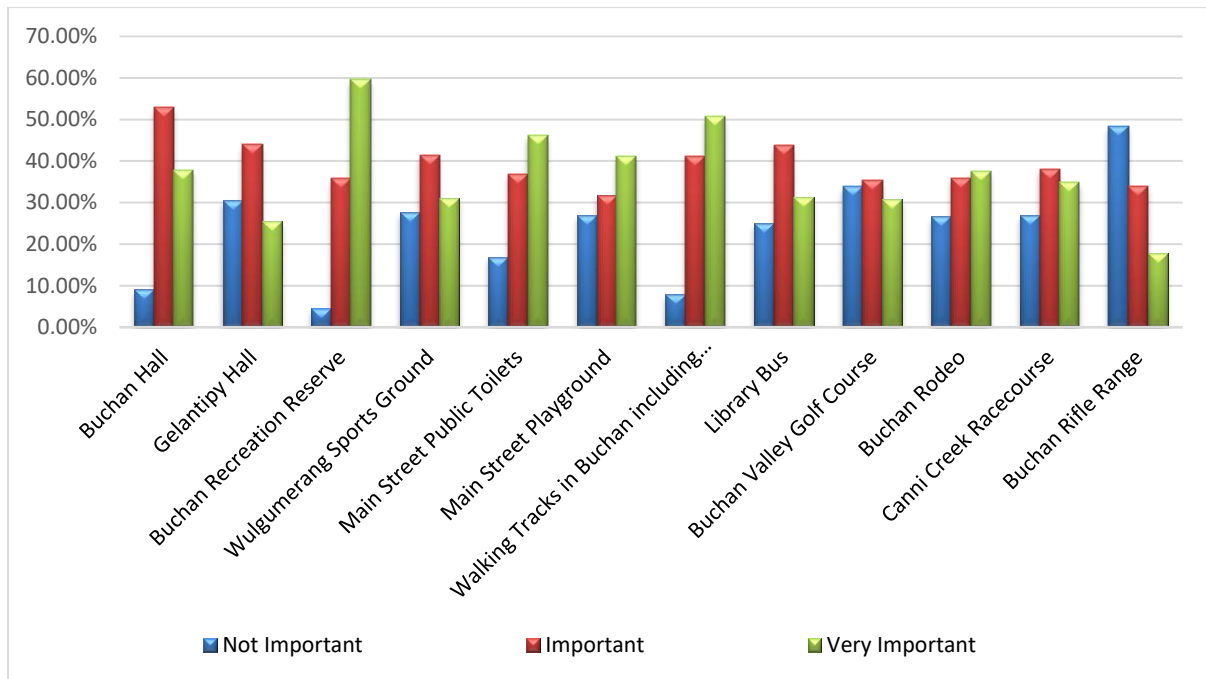
Question 15 For each of the following please indicate: How often you use it – Weekly, Monthly, Rarely, Never, Didn't know it existed?



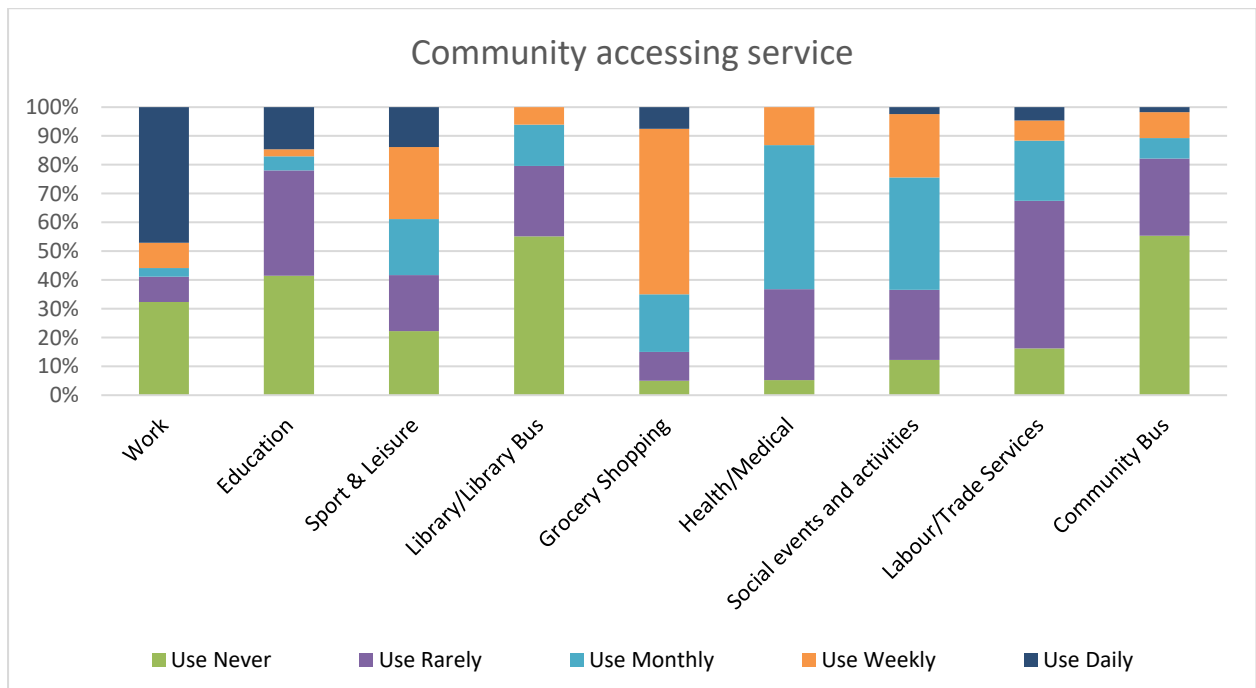
Question 16 For each of the following please indicate: How do you rate it's condition - Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Excellent?



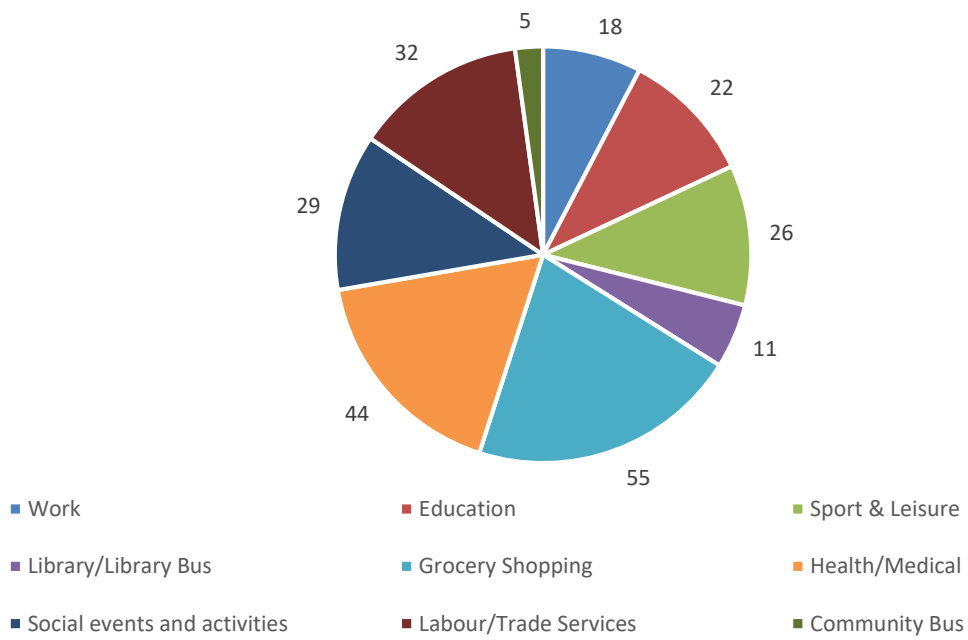
Question 17 For each of the following please indicate: How important is it to you – Not Important, Important, Very Important?



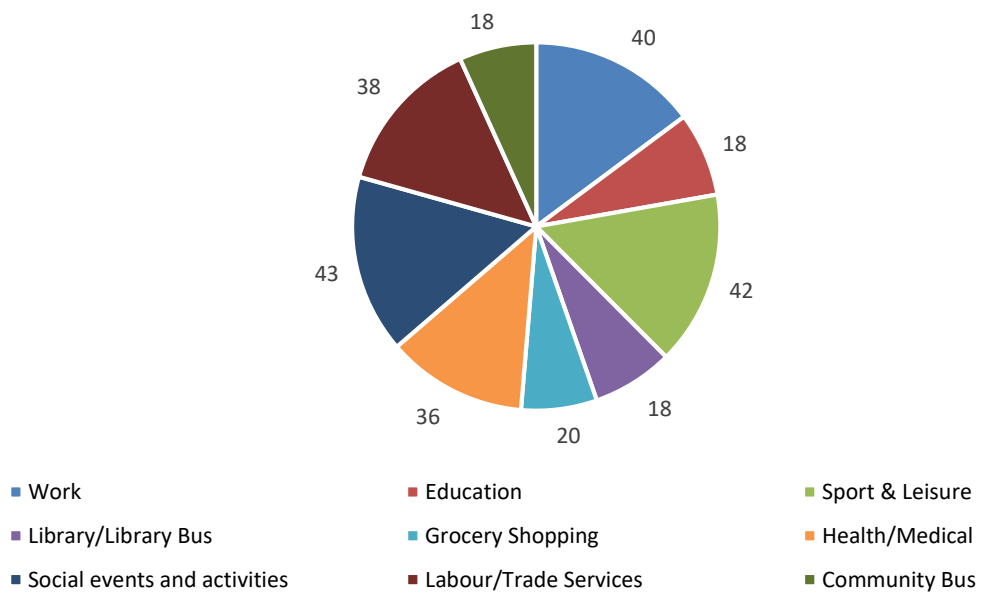
Question 18 In normal times (not the last 6 months) Which services do you utilise in the district and what do you travel to outside your District for?



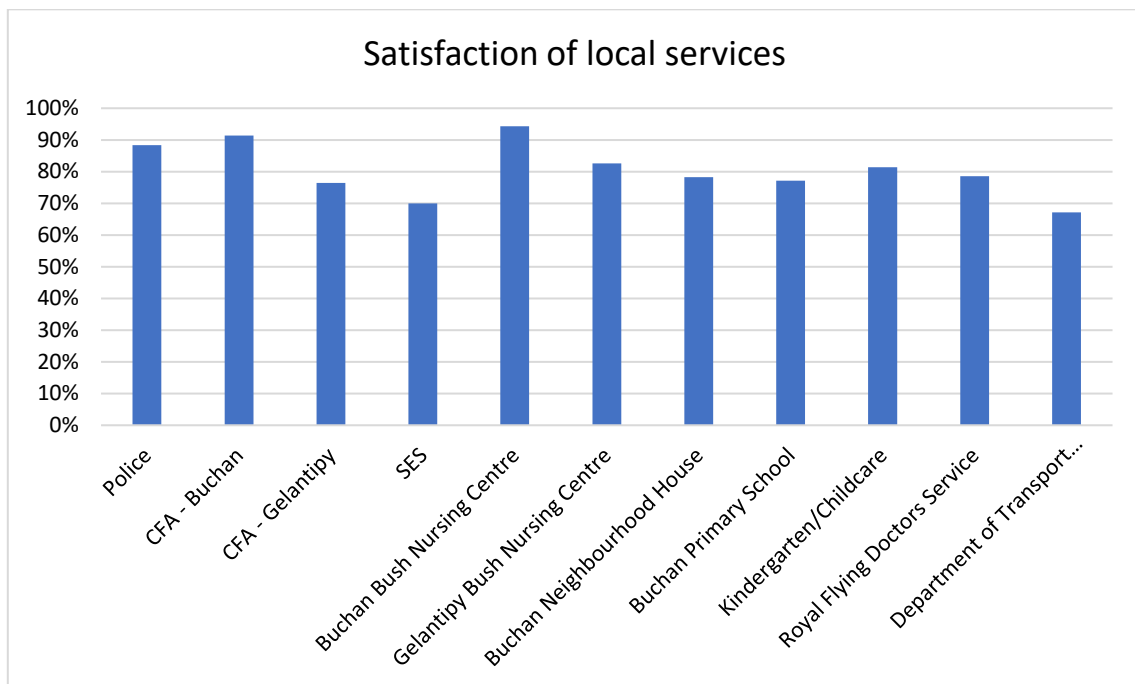
### Accessing Service outside the district



### Accessing Service within the district

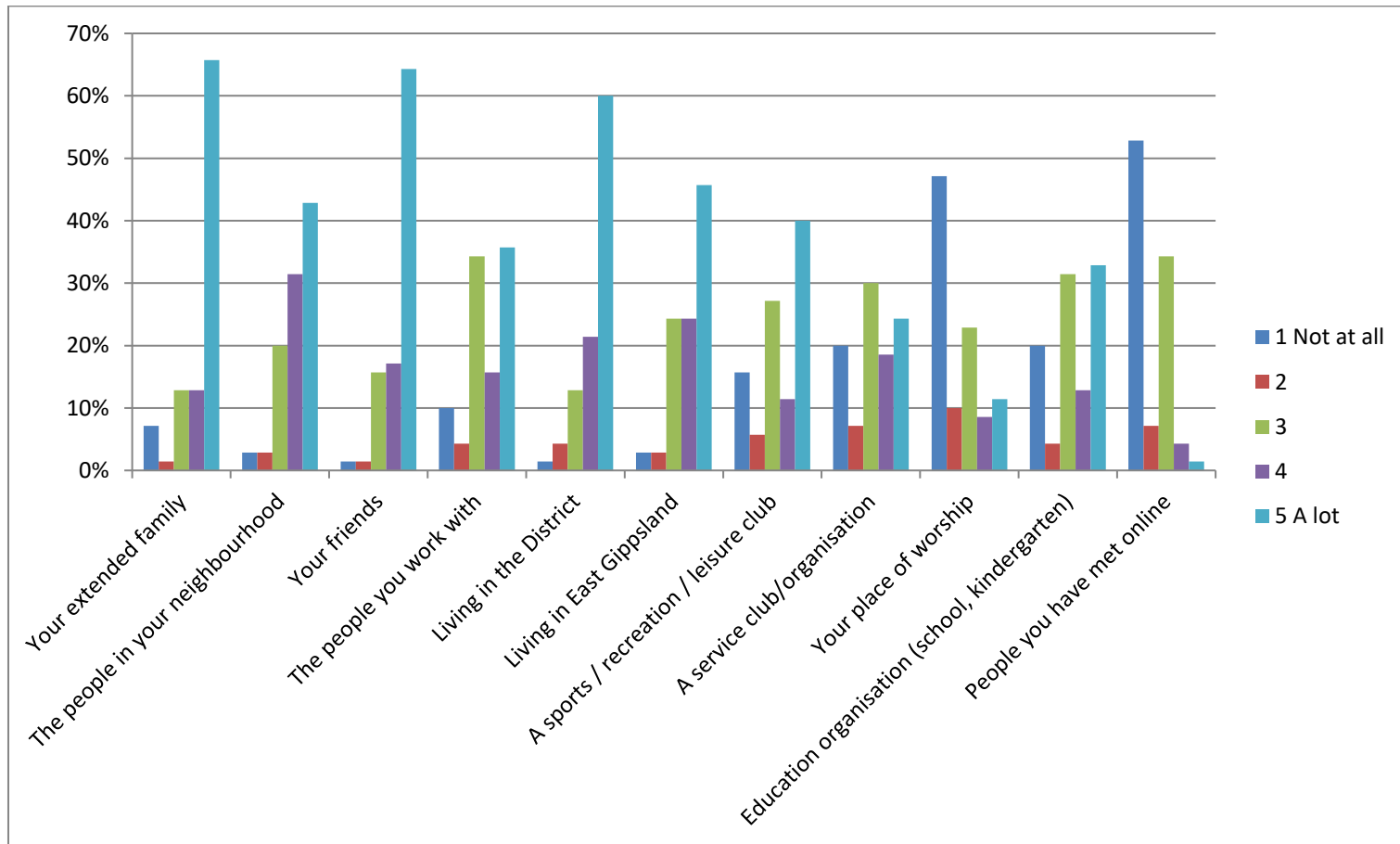


## Question19 Our agencies provide satisfactory services in the District



Question 20 On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being not at all and 5 being a lot, how much do the following people, groups or activities give you a sense of community, connection and feeling of belonging?

The following chart shows what is important to the respondents as to a sense of belonging. The purple and light blue bars show those aspects that are most important and dark blue and red are the least.



From this point on in the report, where appropriate, the analysis of the survey has been displayed to align with the state adopted lines of recovery – namely the five pillars of social, economic, cultural, built and environment.

Question 21 What do you feel have been the key challenges that you individually, the community and the District has faced over the last ten years?

		RELEVANT PILLARS OF RECOVERY				
	No. responses	Economic	Environment	Culture and Healing	Built	Social
Threat and devastation of bushfires	57	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drought	43	✓	✓	✓		✓
Population decline/nothing to attract young people + families to the area	29	✓		✓		✓
Lack of employment opportunities	26	✓				✓
Closure + no maintenance of facilities (including lack of disabled access and closure of pool)	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Dealing with government bodies/lack of funding/not listening/very slow to process permits	15	✓		✓	✓	
Threat of floods	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Access to health care	11			✓		
Rebuilding homes + businesses after the fires	10	✓		✓	✓	
COVID-19	10	✓		✓		✓
Environmental protection + climate change	10	✓	✓		✓	
Unreliable internet + telecommunications	8	✓		✓		✓
Loss of industry	8	✓			✓	
Difficulty starting, growing or rebuilding a business	8	✓		✓	✓	
Remoteness/isolation	8			✓		✓
Access to water	5		✓			
Roads need maintenance	4	✓	✓		✓	

Question 22 What do you feel will be the key opportunities you individually, the community and the District will face in the future?

**RELEVANT PILLARS OF RECOVERY**

	No. responses	Economic	Environment	Culture and Healing	Built	Social
Grow the tourism industry/improve caves location/promote longer stays, not just day trippers	21	✓	✓	✓	✓	
The connection of the community/community cohesion/strong sense of community	9	✓		✓		✓
It's a great place to raise a family/the childcare, kinder (including bush kinder) and school are great assets	9	✓	✓			✓
Increase business opportunities (increase jobs)	9	✓			✓	
The natural environment/open space and access to nature	7	✓	✓	✓		✓
Upgrade town facilities (rec reserve, playground, open pool, hall)	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enhanced liveability/healthy lifestyles/low cost living	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The ability to be heard by Council after many years of no support/secure grants and funding	4	✓	✓	✓		



Increased ability to work from home	2	✓				
Volunteering opportunities (BlazeAid etc)	2		✓	✓		✓
Faster internet and improved telecommunications	2	✓				✓
Food growing opportunities; growing organic	2	✓	✓			
Bush nurse network	1					
Buchan could become more open minded to opportunities and ideas/ more progressive and collaborative approach	1	✓		✓		✓
Increasing occupancy of existing housing/additional accommodation on existing properties/independent living accommodation	1				✓	
Upskill young people	1	✓				

Question 23 If you had the power to change one thing in this District what would it be?

	Economic	Environment	Culture & Healing	Built	Social
More people - more young people, families, housing, residents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
More social activities			✓		✓
Working together and reducing social isolation			✓		✓
Youth engagement			✓		✓
Communication - within, between and outside community			✓	✓	✓
Improved allied health for children	✓				✓
Recreation Reserve (including emergency elements)	✓			✓	✓
Sporting facilities	✓			✓	✓
Nature playground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pump track	✓			✓	✓
Swimming pool & walking tracks (improve caves reserve\ town connection)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
More parking on Main St	✓			✓	✓
Attract more visitors, keep here for longer & offer more diverse attractions	✓		✓	✓	
Manage Crown Land appropriately including fuel reduction		✓			
Increase mobile service & high speed internet	✓		✓		✓
More businesses and employment	✓		✓	✓	✓
Increase industry	✓			✓	

## Question 24 What kind of place would you like this District to be in 2030?

Progressive. Peaceful Living

A small tribal community that lives and survives within the natural system

Thriving community in its own little hub which is generating its own economy, largely independent not relying on hand outs, area to stay much the same, generating tourism

Welcoming, accepting, prosperous, safe, resilient, community

A thriving content community where my grandchildren and their children can live safely and in harmony

More residents and work opportunities

More vibrant, more things to attract people

An environmental and sustainable district with agreed land use management plans for the region with no deer or wild dogs or cats in the district.

Green, prosperous employment for kids. Proactive for fuel reduction and limiting fire risk. A place where tourists could fill in a weekend of visiting attractions.

Serve notices to people who live in squalor, clean up around housing in main street. between sale yard road and toilet block

A small community, something similar to Buchan. Something closer than Buchan. Open more land spots for people to buy and move

A kinder one

As it is

Tourism, keep people in Buchan, visit the caves and stay for the day. Spend some time and money in town

Serene, thriving, prosperous

Not overcrowded, peaceful, just like it is

Larger community with diversity. The Shire to allow farmers to subdivide some blocks off for hobby farmers (5-acre blocks) to allow community to grow

Much the same but better Council services

Much like it is now - we don't want it to become far more invented (?) but to remain a rural retreat area where the rat race doesn't reach

Thriving again with eco-tourism and sustainable farming and bush/forestry industries

Vibrant, healthy, active

I would like to see farming still very much part of the district but you can see farming generation declining as our younger children are moving away to work. 2030 I would still like Buchan and district to be very much agricultural

I hope I am still alive! A happy thriving community with young families. Good seasons for the farmers

Prosperous and friendly

Community, the same

See the district grow

Main street Buchan has a store with bulk food and local produce. Cafes are happening and healthy. Fantastic nature playground. W Tree food Co-op still happening with a renovated building. Young families in town. Good internet

More facilities for tourists eg: Skate park, bike track, caves pool open

Would like to see more happening in main street but there is parking issue

A place where people work together to achieve common goals

The recent bushfires have showed me how resilient our community is. Hopefully our community will keep being strong, understanding and resilient

An environmental beauty for people to come and visit: eco-tourism. A place where the forests are protected and nurtured, Buchan had a working swimming pool and the nature playground which is (*illegible*). The shops in Buchan co-operated with each other and the caves were thriving as coaches to caves stopped in Buchan for lunch a bush walk and swim. Young families flourishing as well. We could also have a (*illegible*) food co-op at W Tree.

The same with less bushfires

A community valuing nature and landscape, producing high quality value-added 'boutique'-type agricultural produce. Some tourism based on the beautiful landscapes and nature that enhance rather than detract from the district

Productive and healthy

Little tourist town with our caves, bike track, kids park skate park in beautiful garden surrounds, good food & accommodation. Perhaps even community solar system. Drainage sorted out to cope with crowds & floods! Our own Doctor in town & independent living pods so our locals can stay where they belong.

A community that supports the wellbeing and aspirations of everyone

Socially the same, but with more economic activity

Safe and good community

The same as it is now, just without the drought and fire risks. Friendly inclusive community.

A place where visitors can come and stay and feel welcome. A place where access to places of interest is easy, encouraged and safe. A place where all facilities exist for the benefit of residents and visitors alike and are of a high standard. A place where the people enjoy living here, are forward thinking and accepting of others.

A more inclusive community where all the different community agencies actually work together! The Buchan Caves Reserve being utilised more as a tourist and wellness opportunity with walking programmes and a fun run. A central hub with space for Arts activities and a welcoming space. A great environmental play space for local kids that is also a tourist venue. Swimming pool in caves reserve or elsewhere for health, leisure and tourist attraction. Especially for our increasingly hot summer.

A place that is more economically stable with a diverse and growing population for all ages.

If all the challenges/opportunities were addressed properly in question 21, that would be a start.

Healthy happy and vibrant.

I'd like the district to be attractive to young families because we need more young families in the district.

A vibrant engaged employed proud compassionate & healthy community

A lot of young families in the area.

Prosperous

More appealing place to younger generations.

Less governing of your own land and way less parks

Strong with good facilities.

Prosperous and active socially.

Thriving seasonal location that has lots of opportunities for young families to live and work in it and a place where I am still able to use and access services safely and easily.

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I would love to see Buchan retain its lovely friendly feel, it is such a special place, all it needs is people staying in the town and spending their money at local businesses for it to thrive. The people who stay in the Caves Reserve seem to remain there and not come in to the town so much, where people free camping at the bluff are more likely to spend money in town. I would also like to see the Buchan Hall have a makeover, it is about the ugliest building in town, second only to the church beside the bridge really. It could use a complete make over, it sits beside the beautiful new Buchan Pub and is such an eyesore, surely it is due for a new do-over! With our lovely new CFA, SES, Police station and the Callemonda makeover, surely the Halls time has come!

A place that provides great health and well-being opportunities for all levels of our community and has stable economic foundations which allows for ongoing prosperity.

A cohesive kind community with people working together for the betterment of the community and the environment.

A place where lots of young families live and where there are more businesses open in the main street.

Progressive, open minded. Ability for people to work from home (good internet also in W Tree and further north). Buchan being inviting and welcoming town with good cafe's, shops, tourism. Family friendly to attract younger people into the area (decent playground, walking tracks, pool). More frequent bus run between W Tree and Bairnsdale to link in with town easier. More of a balanced blend between agricultural, horticultural and tourism.

I would like to see a prosperous vibrant community with more families moving into town. I would like to see the current businesses thriving and successful established new businesses. I would like to see a town that harnesses the tourists that the caves attracts and see them stopping in town at the beautiful nature playground and the pump track, having a dip in the pool and enjoying walks along the walking tracks that connects the caves to the town. I would like to see new and improved rec facilities offering a range of sporting opportunities. I would like to see the forest regenerated and animals returning. I would like to see the people who lost homes in the fires settled into their new homes and living happy peaceful lives.

A thriving town with multiple local businesses and locally employed people that tourists come to visit and stay all year around. There would be annual events like festivals, markets and the like that target differing groups of people and bring them to stay in the town. These events would give locals the chance to show off talents and skills and maybe showcase some of the heritage skills that are slowly being lost - woodwork, lacework, ironwork, forging, slabbed timber, crafts, cooking, preserving, etc. At the same time, we need to maintain some of the quiet that is enjoyed by many. So, it is about targeted periods of time - maybe 4 major events of the year. Currently we have the Easter weekend so one event is taken care of so another 3 could be spread over the year - maybe looking at the different seasons of the town. Sporting events - maybe getting a major sports stadium that could hold tournaments of some of the indoor summer and winter sports. Basketball, table tennis, squash, indoor year around pool incorporating the ability to provide water therapies. More than just football, netball, cricket and tennis. Need some activities for the aged including bowls, croquet, etc. (might as well be in the indoor stadium so they are year around events). People all smiling because they are happy to be here rather than potentially trapped by circumstance. Some independent living units within the town to enable our elderly or less able to remain within the community and nearer assisting services. Locally available homecare services.

I would like our District to be vibrant and alive. I would like it to be a close-knit community, with people working collaboratively and I would like to see a community excited about our opportunities. I would like to see it as a place where young families choose to live because it is so inclusive and diverse.

People take action on climate change. Increase 4% university completion to closer match 18% university completion in Melbourne.

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Question 25 What three words would you use to describe your vision for this District?

Tourism vibrant progressive Healthy **Prosperous** Sustainable Community  
 Progressive Healthy **community** safe Sustainable  
 Sustainable Vibrantwelcoming

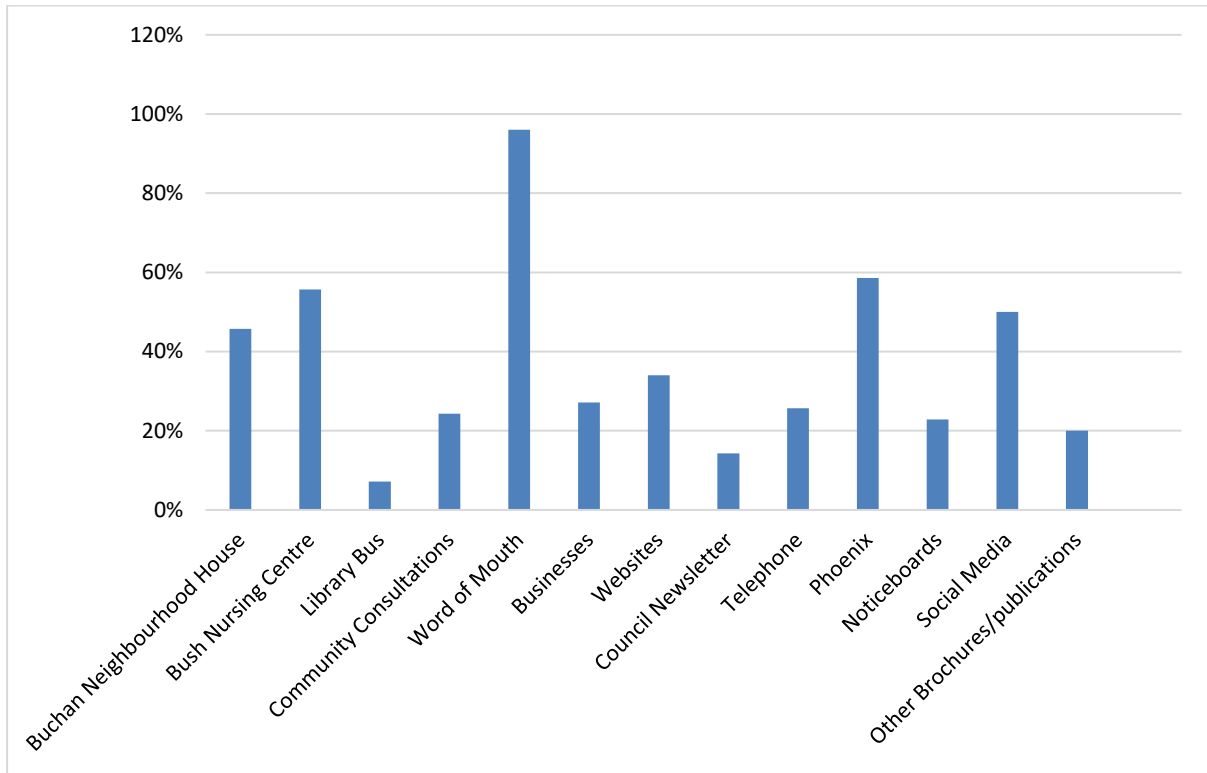
Themed Responses	No. of Responses
Community; community minded; cohesive community, harmonious, cooperation, welcoming, inclusive, open minded, understanding	41
Prosperous, thriving, growth, opportunity	19
Happy, kind, friendly, fun, positive, hope	15
Healthy, active, caring, generous	14
Progressive	12
Tourism/ Ecotourism	10
Sustainable, resourceful	10
Vibrant, Innovative, creative, artistic	10
Safe, secure	8
Environment, nature, natural beauty	7
Productive, practical	5
Peaceful, quiet	5
Resilient, strong	3
Rural/ Farming	4
Social	3
Work, employment	3

Question 26 If you had to nominate what the top three priorities for this District should be in the next 5 years, what would they be?

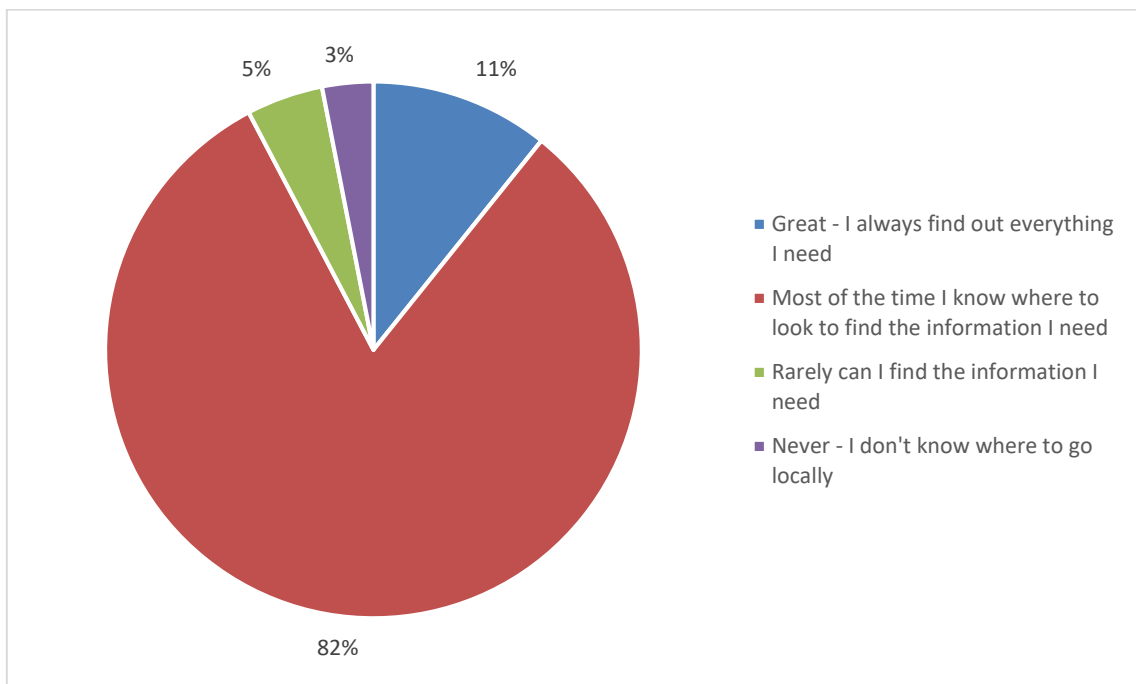
Themed responses	No. of responses
Tourism - improve, more, expand, increase numbers, better marketing, increased camping opportunities (caves reserve, rivers, bluff) RV friendly including dump point, viewing platforms, public toilets along river, arts facilities, vibrant main street , new toilets, upgraded car parking, improved accessibility, walking tracks including bridge from caves reserve to bluff	31
Playground (family friendly, facilities for children), pump track, BMX, skate park, water park, exercise equipment	22
Increased local work, more opportunities for work, economy growth, stable and increased business(es), attracting families, encouraging young people back	18
Recreation Reserve upgrade including sporting opportunities	16
Review and improve community facilities including Buchan Hall Buchan Golf Club Butter Factory Uniting Church Rodeo Grounds Bluff Upgrade	12*
<i>(*Number of votes not indicative of all facilities - have just bundled together)</i>	
Swimming Pool (reopen)	11
Community focus, community cohesion, progressive, community spirit, community engagement	11
Communications/ Telecommunications across all localities including high speed internet	10
Rebuild homes lost post bushfire	9
Health Services including upgrade bush nursing centre, medical services on weekends, mental health support, allied health	9
Environmental protection, regeneration post fire, weed and pest animal control	9
Fire Management including Crown Land, roadside management and maintenance	8
Government support, listening and action	6
Roads - maintain, upgrade, improve	6
Self-sustaining community including installation of renewables, climate change mitigation and adaptation	6
Access to water	3
Aging in place; services for elderly and disabled, unit for elderly	3
Improve education outcomes	3

### Question 27 Where do you get your information?

Please note, that respondents were asked to tick all answer that applied – each information source is out of 100%.

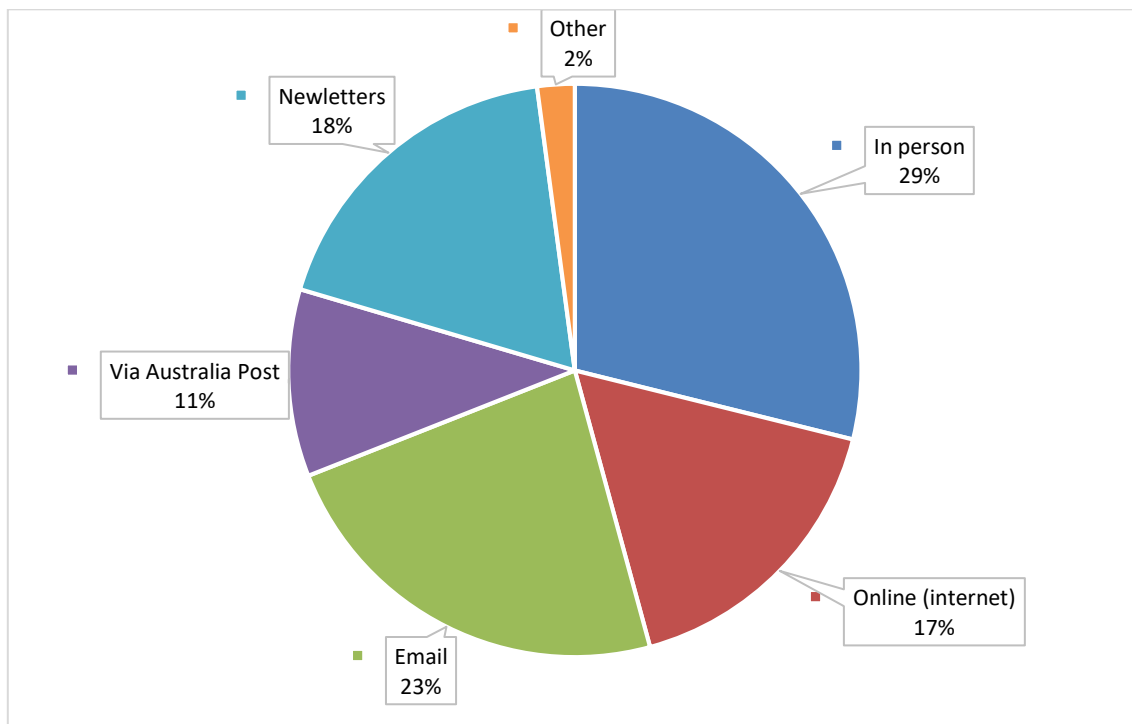


### Question 28 How would you rate these methods of communication?





### Question 29 What is your preferred method of communication?



### Question 30 Any additional comments you would like to add?

The following includes verbatim, respondent's further contribution to the survey. Twenty-nine (29) people responded to this question.

It is a beautiful area. We need to be more humane. Less greedy. Help one another and protect the planet, it provides us with everything we need

I would also like a walking/bike track to be built along riverbank from Mitton's bend to the bluff for all abilities to use. We need things to keep visitors here. Also, I would love the junction to be cleared of weeds and under growth so it can be used for BBQs, picnics and swimming like it used to be

After disaster we have the opportunity to create a vision and a reality for the future of our community, family and friends. Get it right and we thrive. Get it wrong and our community will continue to shrink and eventually die

This organisation is much needed and a great idea- Thanks to you all

Go team

There isn't any work. Create long time work and families would stay

I believe the creation of a park- like sitting at the bluff featuring gazebos or other shelter, deciduous trees, small structure to house local business, cafe, craft etc during tourist times. This will support local accommodation venues and the local population

Buchan needs a war memorial in the town centre for local soldiers. There needs to be an escape route out of caves reserve. Another bridge or safe route over the hill and back into town capable of a vehicle which could carry the elderly and disabled. Due to great number of tourists in normal times there should be medical access on weekends. More cohesion

between locals and new arrivals. The Buchan community did an amazing job over the bush fires and they should be very proud

Investigating the possibility of 1-bedroom units being built to accommodate the elderly who can still be independent and would prefer to stay in the district

Very happy with the area, very much enjoy the rural quietness and do not want to see development.

Need more young people to help run organised meetings etc go for grants from shire. Cemetery needs roads looked after also bike track skate park. Let's look more like Lakes Entrance, Metung etc!

I would like to see separate rooms for the umpires at the rec

Better NBN, phone connections

Lower rates so we can recover from the fires and drought

Please get quarry trucks to do 40 or lower in town

If you can't be nice, say nothing. Together we stay strong

We could do so much ethically and ecologically if all govt departments consulted the community and each other. For instance, the wood on the side of the road after the fires- someone could have a business collecting it and either selling for firewood, furniture etc and/or wood chips rather than stacking and burning it- we've had enough fire. The roadside could be mowed rather than sprayed. We care for the environment; we all have because of natural worlds. No other reason.

Start the three levels of government working on an updated tourism strategy given East Gippsland economy has been hit hardest of everyone's across Aus. The strategy needs to be for the whole district not just the popular money pits council is used to funding. Get the Police to help out our local guy by pulling up the people calling themselves hunters that are giving the industry a bad name. It is quickly becoming lawless. We know of two local families who have lost stock in the last week but are too scared to report, in case they get targeted and more stock get shot. This is a common story in this space. Do a survey on that and see how you go. Ask how many people lose stock to spot lighters.

How about three lookouts, on the outskirts of Buchan. One on the Old Buchan Rd, one up on the Gelantipy Rd near the Telstra tower looking over Sunny Point, and one on the Orbost Rd, looking over Buchan Station

Q 20: Do you mean how much these people etc give a sense of belonging in the BUCHAN DISTRICT or generally? I assumed you mean the Buchan district and answered that way. I use the Caves Reserve a lot but there was no mention of it in the questions. I think it's an under used resource that could be improved but it needs the pool reinstating first!

I am sad that if there is no action on some of the issues mentioned, our small community of Buchan will slowly die

Our copper is a great bloke but needs some support to deal with idiots who are here doing the wrong thing like spot lighters etc.

Since the amalgamation to much bigger councils most of our most isolated communities have suffered a massive reduction in services & general maintenance post bushfire money is assisting greatly how even this will run out and unless this situation is vigorously addressed we will return to out of sight out of mind same old same old thing the squeaky wheels closer to the main office will still get oiled the most

Thank you for putting this survey together, and for all the work the Committee does! We appreciate the opportunity to put in some input and look forward to hearing about the plans for the district.

I have written letter to the council three times in the last ten years about upgrading play grounds and creating a skate park and have received very little dialogue and have begun to think it is futile to request Council support as we have gotten nothing from them in the last 25 years!

Our community strives to be productive. Many services have been centralised, creating greater barriers to access systems and resources. There is also a pattern of spending by governments that reflects this centralisation, yet we are constantly told tourism and recreational fields will be the next big industries for our catchment. None of this will happen without spending on infrastructure and frameworks to encourage visitors and commerce in remote areas. Small places like us are continually marginalised by government systems. It is becoming hard for any businesses to exist in our catchment.

We need investment from government to realise changes to our community's health and wellbeing. While governments reduce spending in remote areas and remove existing industry, they choke the viability of rural communities through economic marginalisation.

I am grateful for the establishment of the renewal committee. I feel that Buchan has a bright future and look forward to seeing where this journey takes our community.

A community is made up of people and can only be what people choose to make it. It takes effort from all people not just one or two. Somehow people need to be able to be part of the process of renewal to enable a sense of ownership of the achievements. People need to take responsibility for their part of the community and not wait for others to always be the doers so they can be criticized for not getting it right.