



**CUMBERLAND
COUNCIL**

Community Facilities Strategy
ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cumberland Council acknowledges the Darug Nation and People as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Cumberland Local Government Area is situated and pays respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

Cumberland Council also acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples living and working in the Cumberland Local Government Area.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report details the engagement undertaken for the *Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029*. It outlines the engagement process and outcomes. The engagement formed a part of a community facilities review and needs assessment that is the basis for the *Cumberland Community Facilities Strategy 2019-2029*.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Council undertook community and stakeholder engagement between September 2018 and April 2019. A range of engagement methods were used to consult with community facility users and the local community. These are described in Table 1. The online survey and centre feedback boards were promoted through social media, the local newspapers, media releases, and emails to previous and current hirers of Council's community facilities.

Table 1: Summary of community and stakeholder engagement activities

Engagement activity	Purpose and description	Timeframe
Online survey	Purpose: To gain input from the broader Cumberland community regarding community facilities. Description: An online survey hosted on Council's Have Your Say website. The online survey also acted as an online portal for information relating to the project, including objectives, key dates, and contacts. The website could be translated into a variety of languages using its automatic language translation function. Survey participants were offered the chance to win one of five \$50 Stockland vouchers.	The survey was open for 89 days from 14 September to 11 December.
Centre feedback boards	Purpose: To supplement the online survey and obtain centre-specific feedback from users. Description: Feedback boards at each community centre on which users were invited to provide comments in an informal manner. Information was provided in English, as well as the most commonly spoken languages other than English in the local area.	Feedback boards were set up in November 2018 and feedback was documented in January 2019.
Council committees	Purpose: To obtain feedback and advice specific to various Council-run community committees and the respective groups they represent. Description: Council's advisory committees provide a forum for the community to engage with Council and provide advice to inform Council's policy, program, and service delivery. Committees were engaged at their respective meetings or through emailed surveys.	Committees were engaged between November 2018 and April 2019.
Community sector networking forum	Purpose: To understand the community facility attributes that would be beneficial to community organisations. Description: Council hosts quarterly community sector networking forums to provide local organisations and community groups the opportunity to build networks and collaborate.	The community sector networking forum was held on 30 October 2018
Feedback from other projects	Purpose: To maximise the use of other relevant engagement data and minimise engagement fatigue. Description: Engagement data collected for other recent projects that are relevant to community facilities will be analysed and incorporated into strategy development.	Not applicable

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Many community members told us how much they valued their local facilities and the services and programs provided. Community members and stakeholders also identified a number of ways Council's community facilities could be improved to better meet their own needs, or the needs of their families, friends, clients or group members.

Facility locations

The location of facilities was identified as the most important factor for many community members. Having a locally available facility that is accessible by public transport and/or has adequate parking were consistently mentioned as key. Close proximity to shops, services and other amenities was also identified to be of high importance, as was clear signage and wayfinding.

Places for all

Community facilities were recognised by the community as important spaces for connection and community interactions. Community members noted the need for spaces that are accessible to people of all abilities and welcoming to people of all ages and backgrounds. This includes accessible and child-friendly design, a feeling of safety and recognition of the cultural diversity of the local area, in particular the local Aboriginal culture. The community also would like programs where they can connect with and learn from people from different walks of life, such as through intergenerational or cross-cultural activities. Although cost of hire and programs was often cited as a significant determinant for users, having activities, services and events that are of interest were identified to outweigh barriers associated with affordability for most people.

Connections with facility staff

The community told us that rapport developed between facility staff and users significantly improves their experience. Council's staffed centres in Auburn, Berala and Guildford consistently perform better than non-staffed facilities, both in terms of utilisation and user satisfaction. Staffed centres and libraries are also used as points of contact with Council where the community can access a range of information and resources.

Management and bookings processes

At the time of writing, separate bookings processes are in place for Council's non-staffed community centres, halls and spaces, libraries, staffed multipurpose community facilities, and park halls. This creates complexity and reduces opportunities to effectively coordinate bookings and referrals across the different types of facilities. Users expressed a desire for an improved bookings system and keyless venue access for hirers.

Programs and services

Residents reported that they enjoy the range and quality of programs offered by Council and community organisations and there is a high level of interest for more activities. Specific activities that were identified to be of high value included programs for seniors and youth and language, computer and exercise classes. Although engagement suggests that programs are generally welcoming to a diverse range of people, some users still want a greater variety of programs that are not target-group specific. Some members of the community also suggested increasing programming at libraries, however understood the existing shortage of available spaces.

Key facility inclusions

The community and stakeholders identified key features they would like to see included at community facilities. These included larger activity spaces, upgraded kitchens, better

connection to quality outdoor spaces, flexible spaces that cater to different uses, youth spaces, performing arts spaces, and informal spaces for socialising and relaxing.

Stakeholders noted the increasing need for storage, especially for long-term hirers. Community service providers expressed interest in more office spaces at community centres to assist localised service delivery. In terms of technology, audio-visual systems, powerpoints and reliable Wi-Fi are considered minimum inclusions in venues for hire.

People also expressed an interest in environmentally sustainable facility design. Extending opening hours was also identified as something that would better accommodate those who work as well as a way to activate facilities and local areas during the evening.

Look and feel

The look and feel of a community facility contributes to how safe and welcoming a facility appears. A high standard of maintenance and cleanliness was seen by community members and stakeholders as crucial to ensuring positive facility user experience. Landscaping improvements, regular painting, introducing murals by local artists on blank walls and general maintenance upkeep were suggested as ways to improve the look and feel of Council's facilities. The importance of good natural lighting and ventilation was also identified.

Co-designing to meet community needs

Whether designing new facilities, upgrading existing spaces, or programming facilities, the involvement of the community is seen as vital to create a sense of ownership and pride. Co-designing with end users was identified as a way to ensure the needs of the local community will be successfully met. Engaging local artists and community groups and reflecting local heritage and culture in facility designs were also identified as important.

Promotion of facilities and services

Some members of the community informed Council that they were not aware of what community facilities were, what they are used for, what the programs they had on offer and what would be available to them. Community noticeboards and information, both at facilities and on Council's website, promoting all activities scheduled at facilities (Council and non-Council provided) were identified as ways to generate greater awareness and increase utilisation.

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE SURVEY

Overview

The wider community were provided the opportunity to comment on community facilities across Cumberland through Council’s Have Your Say over 89 days from 14 September to 11 December. The survey is attached in Appendix 1: Have Your Say Survey. The survey received 433 responses from 933 page visits. A demographic snapshot of respondents is in Figure 1.

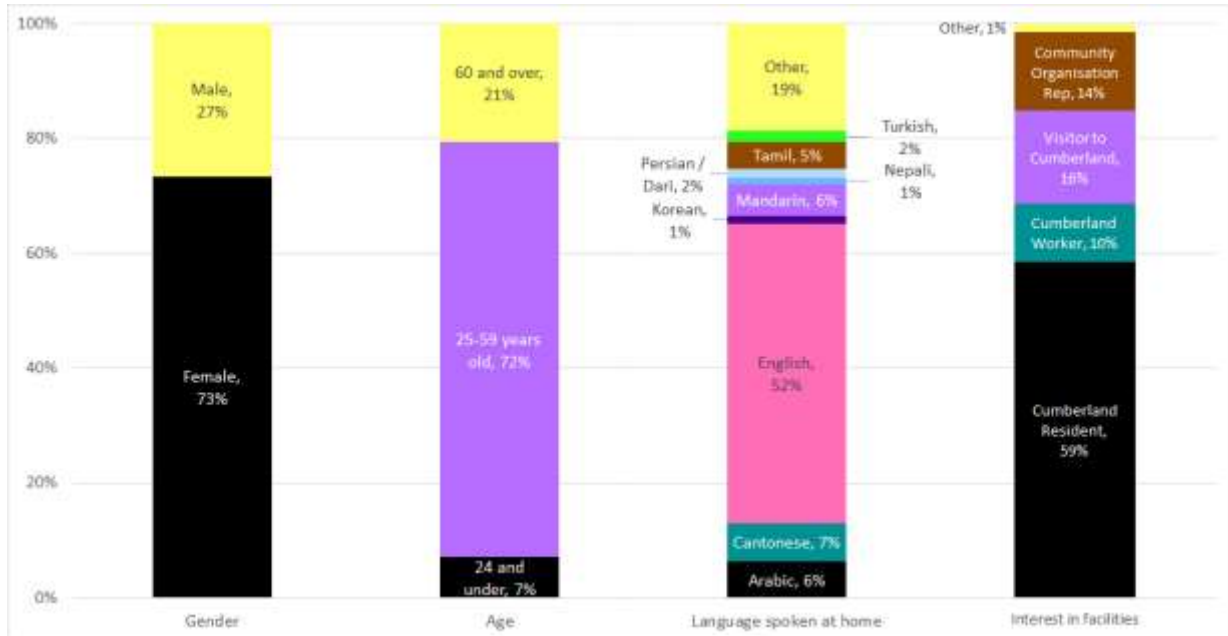


Figure 1: Demographic snapshot of respondents. *Note: A total of 38 languages other than English are spoken at home by the respondents

Other engagement methods were used to engage most of the less represented groups, for example through Council’s Aged and Disability and Youth Participation and Programs teams for seniors and youth respectively, and using languages other than English on feedback boards.

Of the respondents who are residents of Cumberland, the majority live in Auburn and Berala. This is likely due to the high utilisation of Berala Community Centre and Auburn Centre for Community by respondents.

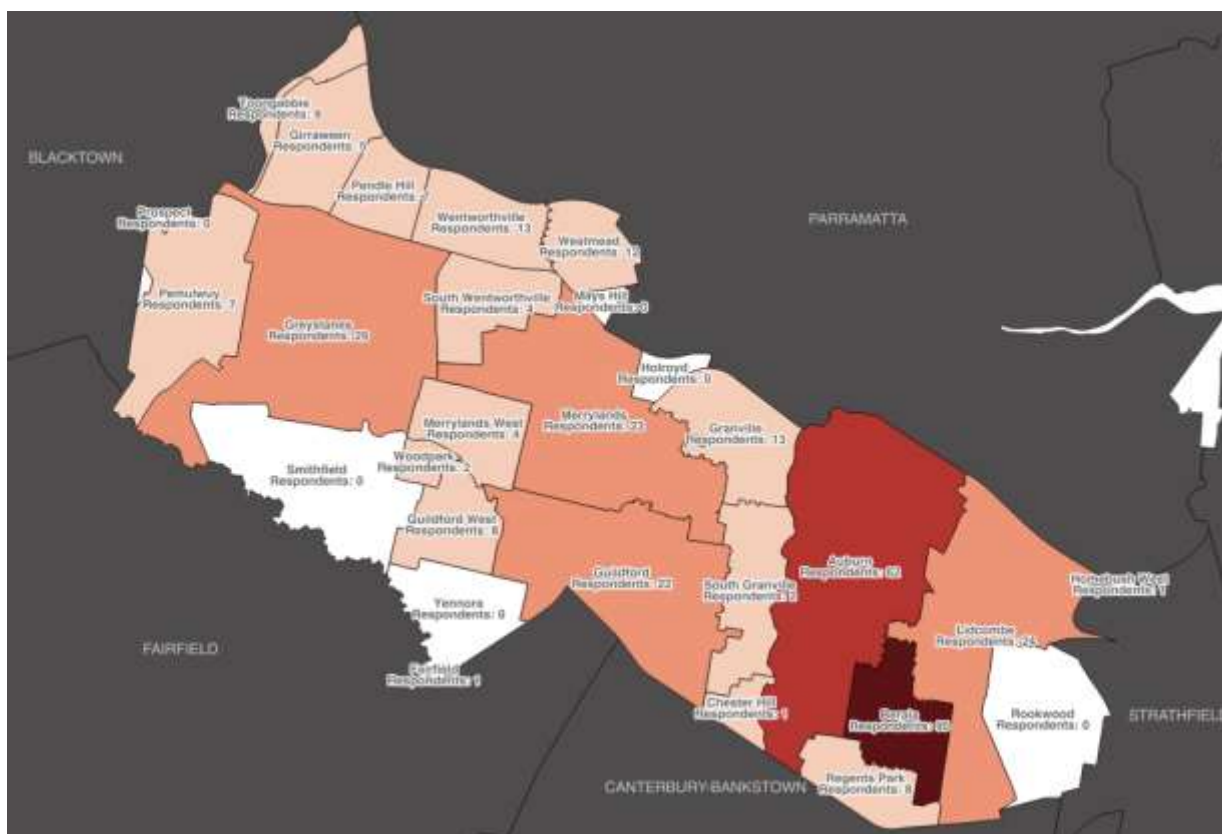


Figure 2: Respondents by suburb (Cumberland LGA only)

What we were told

Council community centres visited or used

A total of 400 respondents (93%) had visited or used at least one Council community centre, compared to 28 (7%) that stated they had not (428 responses). As this survey was targeted towards community facility users, this figure is not necessarily representative of the wider Cumberland community. Of the 28 who had never been to a Council community facility, the majority were not aware of community facilities or the programs and services available.

The top seven facilities that respondents had visited are all within a ten-minute walk to a train station. The bottom two facilities, Tom Collins Meeting Room and Domain Community Rooms, are also within walking distance to a railway station. It should be noted that survey response may not equate to utilisation because factors such as the amount of promotion of the survey by hirers and staff can skew results.

Over half (55%) of respondents have used Auburn Centre for Community and/or Berala Community Centre. Guildford Community Centre was the least frequented staffed facility with 8% of respondents (35), however it had only just become staffed when the survey was published. Fifteen per cent of respondents (65) had visited Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre, which was also staffed, before its closure in December 2018. Wentworthville Community Centre and Redgum Centre was the most used unstaffed facility by respondents (19% or 80 respondents).

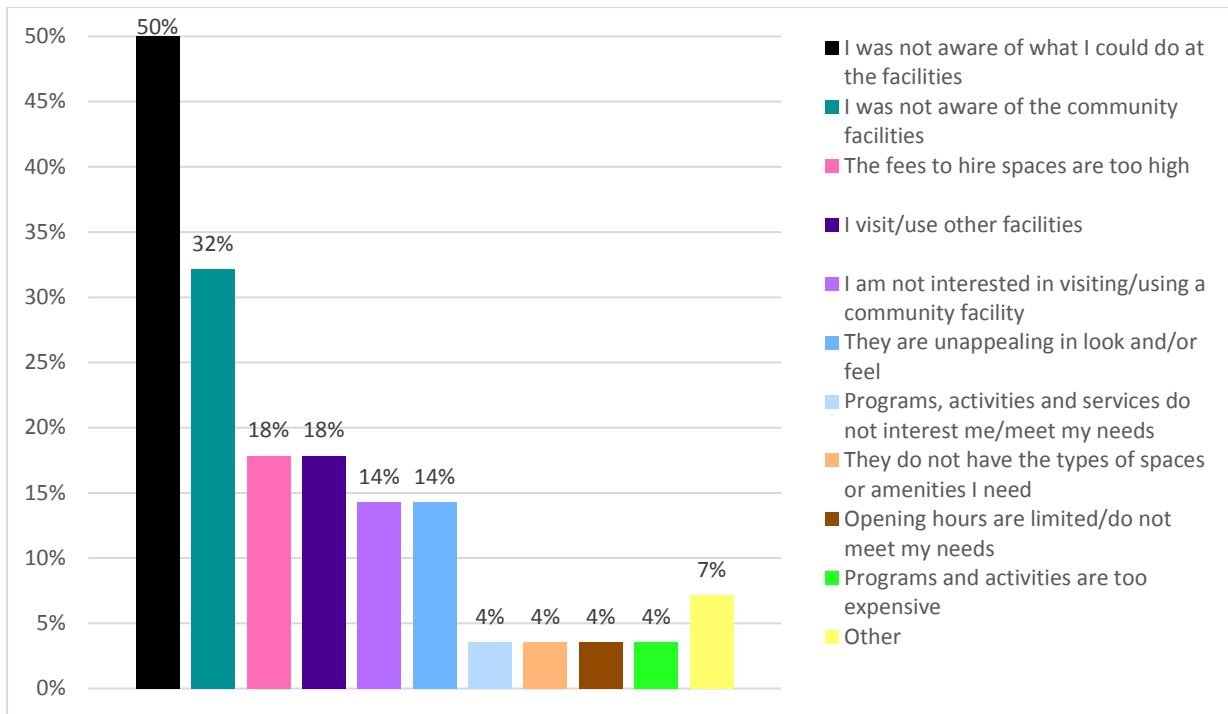


Figure 3: "Why have you not used any of these community facilities? Please select all that apply." (28 responses)

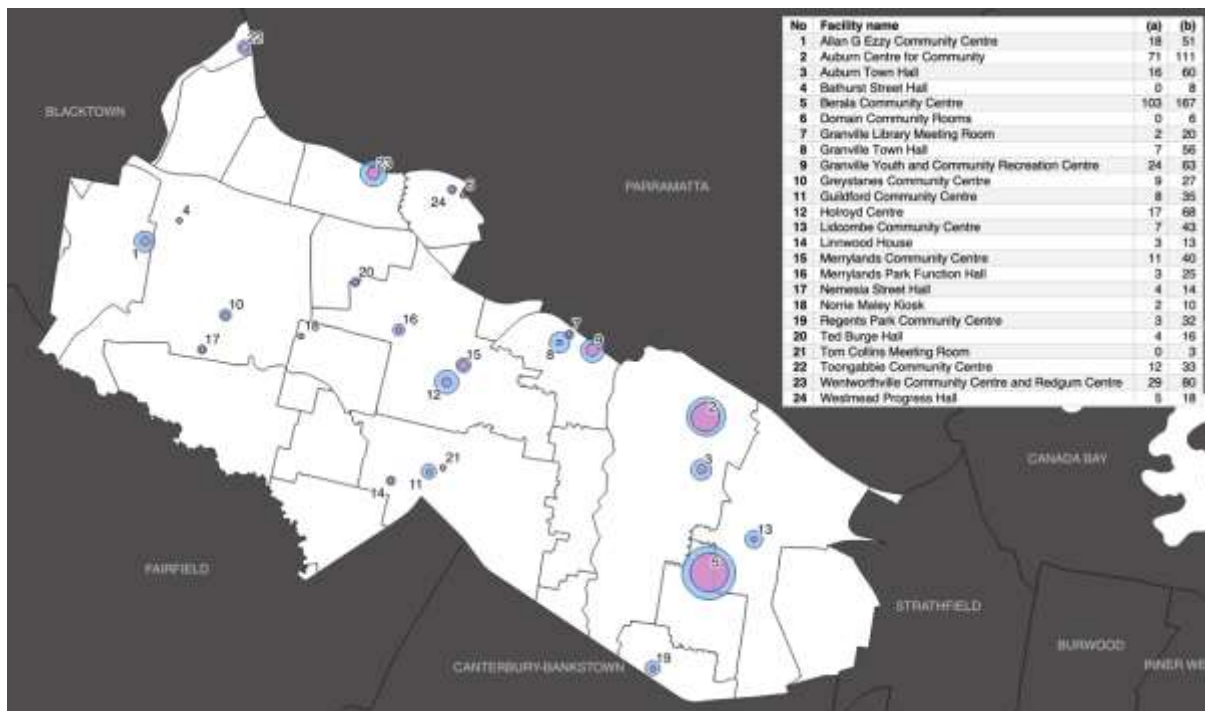


Figure 4: Facility patronage.
 (a)/pink: Facilities respondents said they used most; (b)/blue: Facilities respondents have used.
 *Note: The location of some centres have been altered to provide greater clarity.

Of the respondents, 36% have used other community facilities not owned by Cumberland Council (145 of 401 responses). They cited a range of reasons for using other facilities, including:

- amenities such as children's areas and larger kitchens;
- availability;
- better access hours;

- cleanliness and look and feel;
- more affordable;
- more convenient location;
- online and more user-friendly booking system;
- free programs of interest not available in Cumberland; and
- spaces that are larger and more flexible, and generally more suitable.

How the facilities are used

A total of 293 respondents have participated in a program at Council's community facilities (73% of 400 responses), of whom 140 had taken part in Council's Lifelong Learning Programs (48% of 289 responses). There is a high level of satisfaction for the Lifelong Learning Program, with 96% of respondents stating that they are satisfied or very satisfied (132 out of 138 responses). A breakdown of how facilities are used is in Figure 5.

Respondents also used community facilities for:

- medical check-ups and immunisations;
- voting;
- religious activities; and
- school excursions and programs.

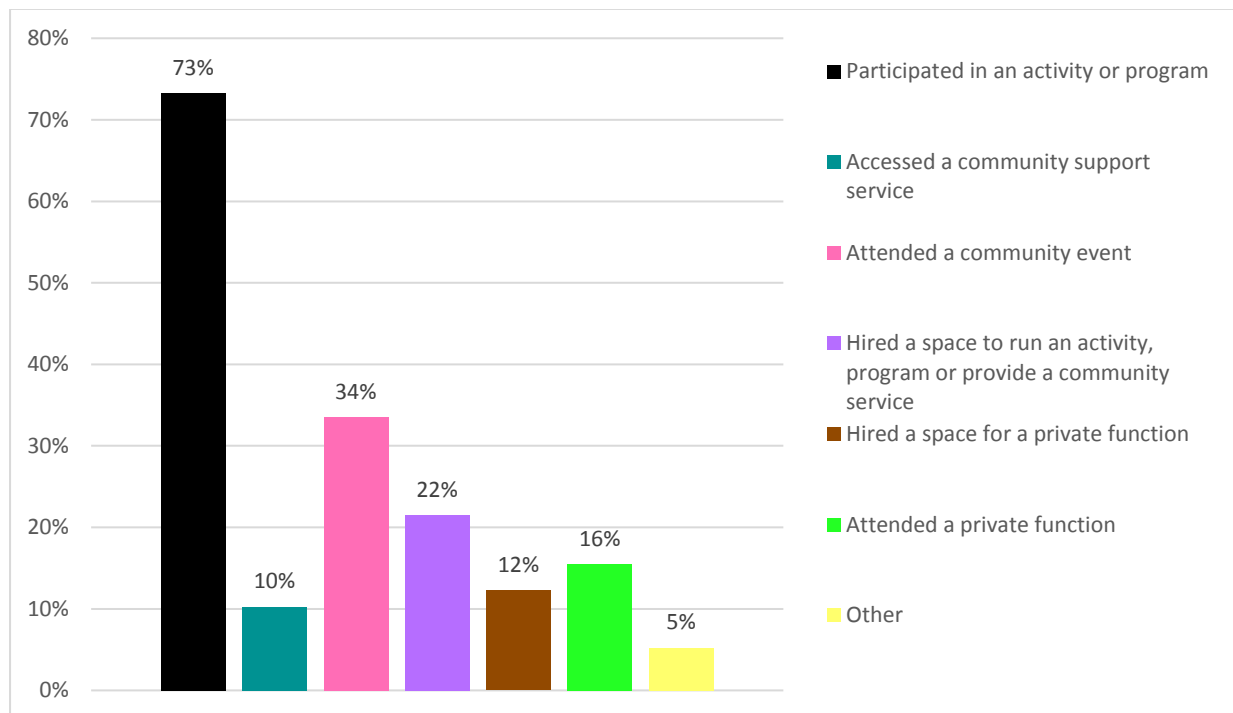


Figure 5: "Which of the following best describes how you used community facility(s)? Please select all that apply." (400 responses)

Satisfaction with community centres

Overall, 80% of respondents (295) were satisfied or very satisfied with community centres (368 responses excluding not applicable responses). Features of facilities that respondents were most satisfied with are the location, access by public transport, and programming. Cost to hire and the booking process are notable areas for improvement.

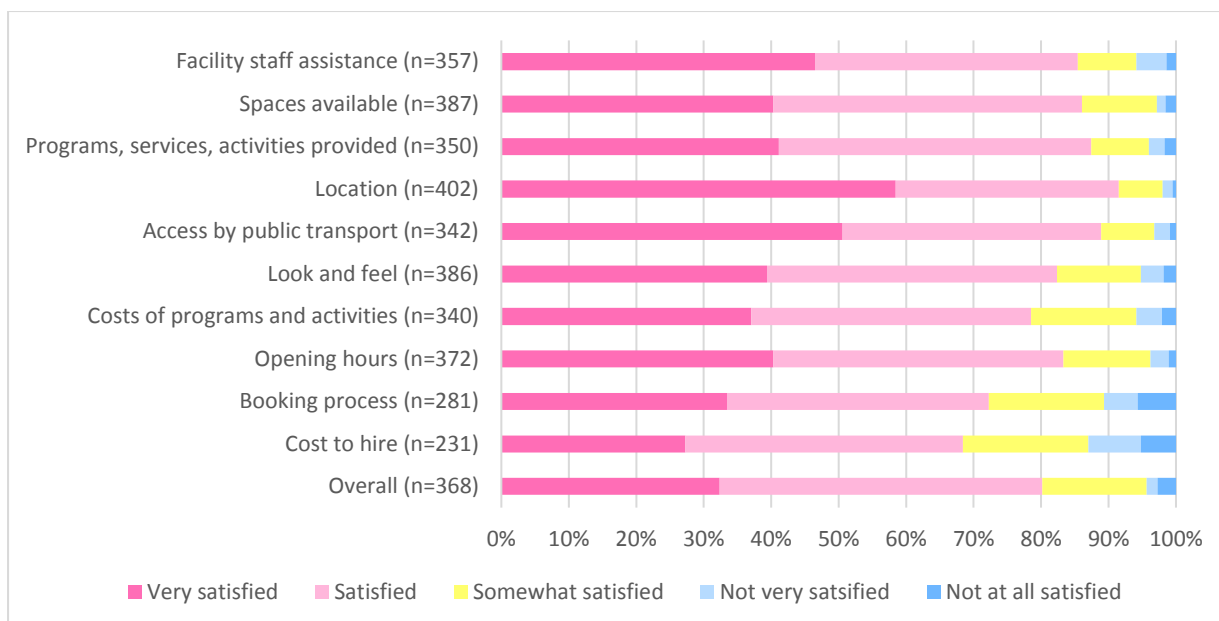


Figure 6: "How satisfied were you with the centre(s) you used in terms of:" *Number of responses (n) excludes not applicable responses

The importance of community centres as spaces for community integration, socialising, and promoting Council programs and services was highlighted. Council's facilities are doing well in embracing cultural diversity and providing variety in programming – the computer skills and Mandarin classes, skill development workshops, children's activities, fitness programs, and school holiday programs were specifically highlighted. Having centres locally provides greater opportunity to access these programs and services. Respondents also stated that drinking fountains, youth spaces, and shaded outdoor areas, such as Auburn's Friendship Garden, increased their level of satisfaction. An appreciation was shown towards the relationships built between facility staff and users through high-quality communication and interactions, exemplified by a number of long term users. Tours of venues before hiring are highly valuable and contributed to building rapport. Finally, the look and feel played a role in respondent satisfaction, with respondents complementing contemporary and well-maintained buildings as well as those that acknowledged heritage and local history, such as Auburn Centre for Community.

Opinions varied in the following areas, likely due to differences in location, age, and size of facilities, but also highlighting an opportunity to evaluate the strengths of each facility and implement what is working well consistently across Cumberland:

- accessibility by public transport;
- affordability of spaces and programs;
- communications with regard to non-staffed facilities;
- quality of equipment and amenities; and
- parking availability.

The three most common causes for dissatisfaction are the booking system and key collection, cleanliness, and maintenance. An online booking system that has the ability to check availability was suggested to overcome double bookings. Hirers not incorporating set up and pack up time into bookings also creates conflicts with subsequent bookings. Hours for access, key collection, and venue inspection are inconvenient for hirers, especially full-time workers. On a similar note, some isolated facilities are not listed on GPS devices, Google Maps, or other mapping systems, resulting in navigation and access problems. Hire cost is also considered unaffordable for many individuals and not-for-profits, with a

recommendation to allow free or subsidised access for local residents or those providing a community service or program.

Several respondents commented on inadequate cleanliness and maintenance at facilities and delayed responses to issues – poor lighting and air-conditioning was specifically mentioned. User safety during and after evening events was raised as a concern, especially as emergency and security contact details are difficult to locate. These factors, along with dated interiors, degraded the look and feel of some facilities to the point which they appeared uninviting.

Certain aspects of facility design were cited as areas of improvement, including:

- better acoustic insulation between rooms;
- updating equipment, especially technology such as audiovisual systems and Wi-Fi;
- larger spaces, including kitchens;
- provision of children's equipment, including small tables and chairs, and children's play area;
- better wheelchair accessibility, especially in toilets; and
- more and better quality outdoor areas that are also child friendly.

Some facets of programming were also mentioned:

- more activities for the general public (not just target-group specific);
- weekend and after hours programs for working people;
- the re-introduction of number of programs previously offered, including glass painting, card making, and Gentle Exercises; and
- due to the exceeding demand for some facilities, programming should be prioritised to be more community focussed.

Finally, there is still a lack of awareness and promotion of what community facilities are and the programs and services they offer.

Interest in hiring facilities in the future

Half of respondents stated that they are interested in hiring a community facility in the future (203 out of 403 respondents). This is a 75% increase from respondents who have hired a facility in the past (29% or 114 out of 400 respondents). Figure 7 provides a breakdown of what respondents are interested in using the facilities for in the future.

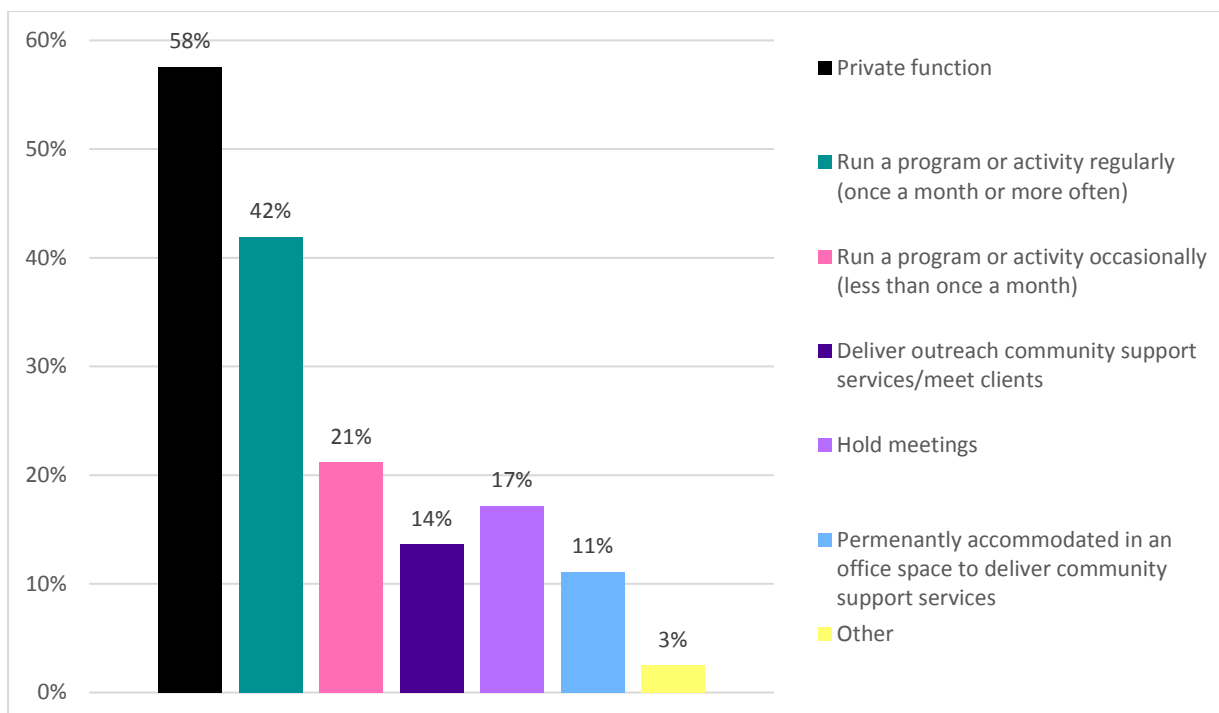


Figure 7: "If [you are interested in hiring a facility], which of the following best describes your interest:" (198 responses)

Looking forward

Almost half of respondents (48% or 196 of 410 respondents) stated that it is important to have local facilities close to home. Figure 8 shows how respondents ranked other features in terms of importance.

Respondents also wanted certain design features in new and existing facilities:

- outdoor play areas that are safe for children;
- a dedicated event hall, performance space, or theatre with blackout curtains, dressing rooms, and better stage lighting;
- children's play area and equipment, especially for parents attending programs;
- sensory play and design for children;
- parents toilets;
- more meeting rooms;
- larger spaces and kitchens;
- food and shops nearby or on-site;
- sustainable design that improves and integrates the natural environment and more natural lighting;
- safety considerations including CCTV and lighting outside;
- signage for accessible access;
- trees and shading;
- modern looking, built to last, and state of the art;
- multi-purpose;
- community created décor and murals by local artists for ownership;
- barbeque areas and bubblers;
- flexible spaces;
- spaces that accommodate creative arts, including walls to hang exhibits;
- noise attenuation for noise-sensitive activities; and
- sports and recreation equipment.

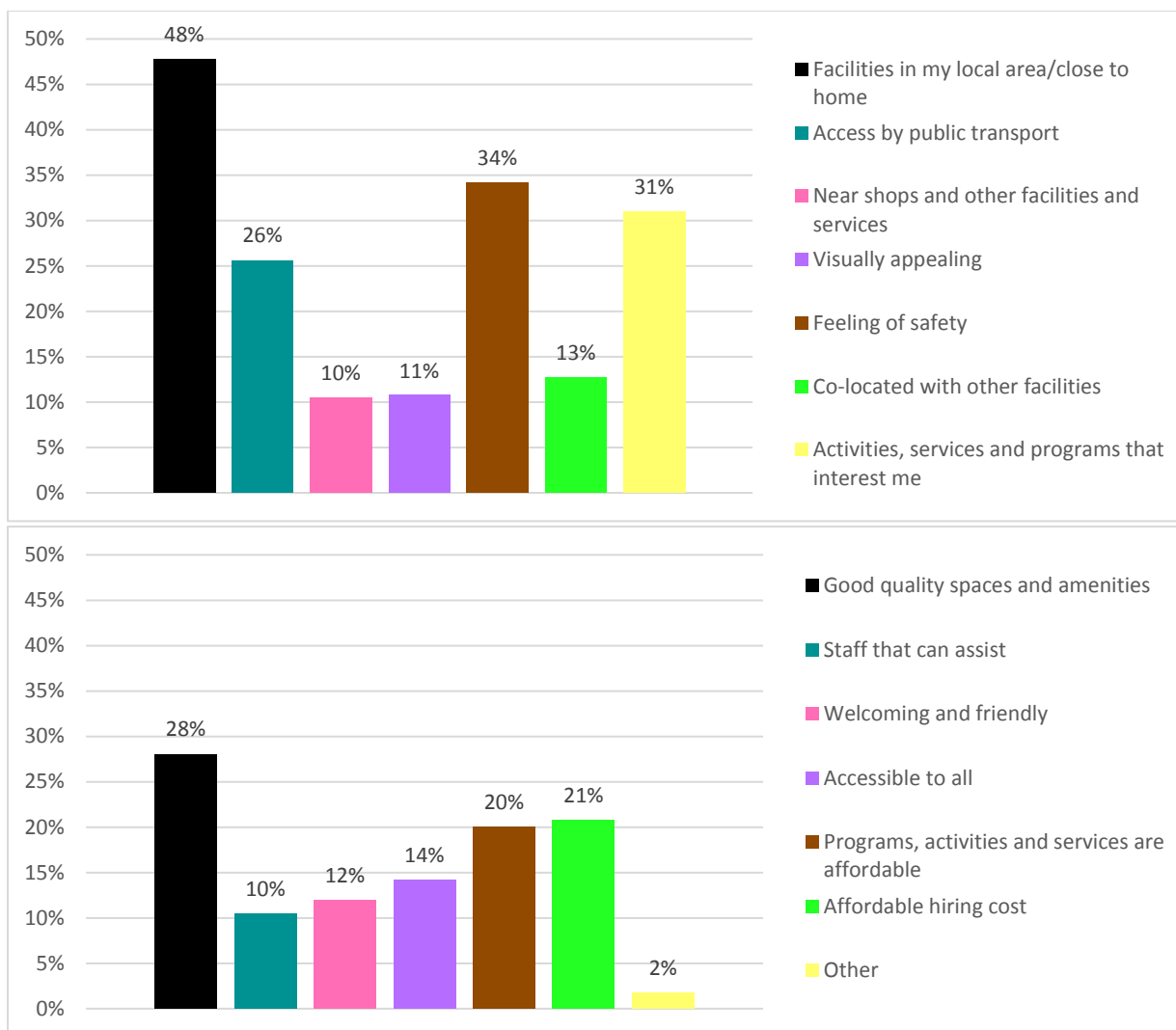


Figure 8: "Which of the following are most important to you? Please select up to three of most importance to you:" (Both charts, 410 responses)

Fitness, exercise, and recreation programs is the type of activity most participants wanted to see in the future (43% or 174 of 406 respondents). Figure 9 depicts the other programs and services respondents would like at our centres. Other activities and services respondents specifically mentioned include:

- programs for people aged 25-55, and the wider community more generally;
- wellbeing programs for stay-at-home-mums;
- environmental and sustainability programs;
- STEM programs;
- a number of programs that are no longer offered, such as glass painting, card making, and Gentle Exercises;
- religious activities;
- family gatherings;
- weekend and after school activities;
- girl youth services;
- intergenerational activities;
- community markets, such as farmers markets, arts and craft stalls, and trash and treasure;
- services and programs for those who work;

- training for prospective volunteers for groups with special needs;
- programs for special needs children;
- council customer service functions;
- talent shows;
- library services; and
- social events targeted at all adults regardless of age.

Activities that were specifically mentioned include clay courses, playgroups, and the following classes:

- crochet, knitting, and sewing;
- gardening;
- cooking;
- fitness and Zumba;
- computer skills;
- painting;
- piano; and
- English and other languages.

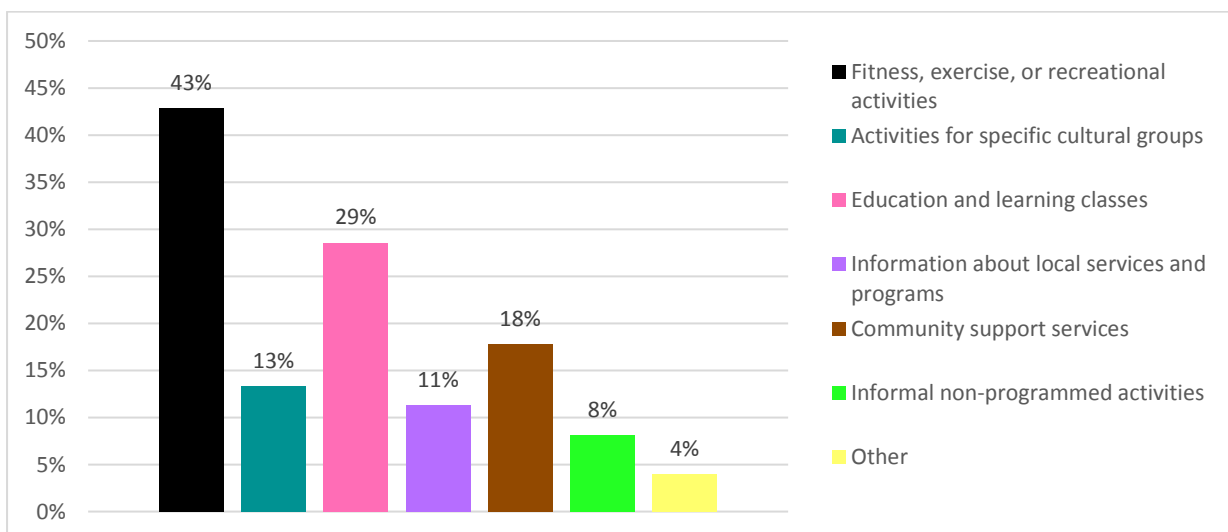
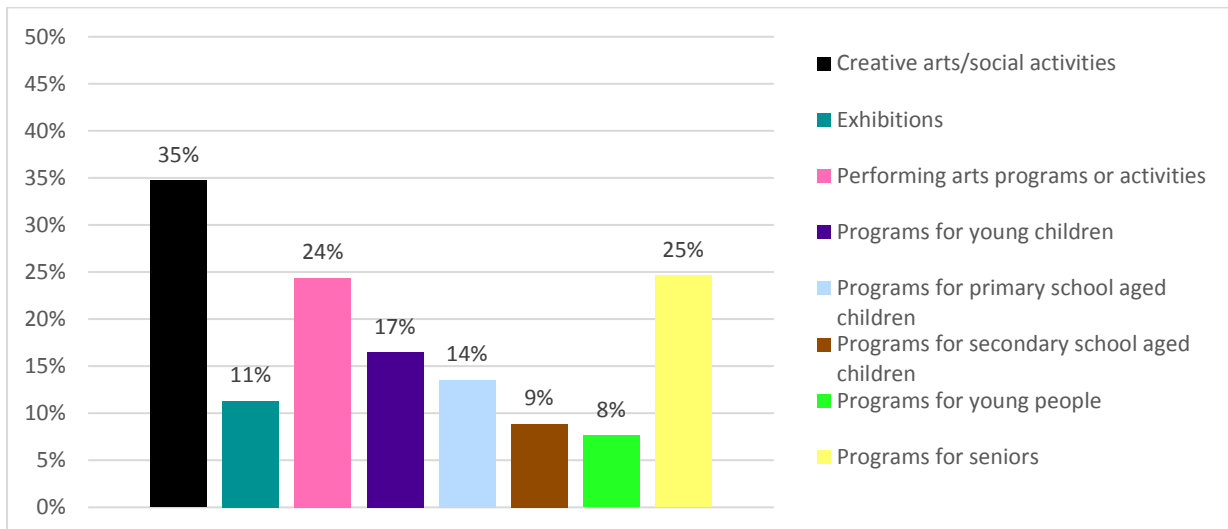


Figure 9: "Which of the following types of programs, activities or services would you most like to see provided at community facilities in the future? Please select up to three of most importance to you:" (Both charts, 406 responses)

Operationally, the following improvements would improve user experience at centres:

- upgrading the booking system, especially to book and view availability online and to avoid double bookings;
- offsetting bookings to prevent traffic chaos;
- ensuring that simultaneous bookings are compatible;
- allowing keyless access or providing regular hires with keys yearlong;
- greater sustainability culture;
- prioritising local residents and ratepayers through subsidies;
- greater promotion of programs, through local papers and letterbox drops;
- supplying cleaning products and ensuring greater accountability for cleanliness;
- making hire more affordable and including security and front of house staff in cost;
- considering shared facilities with schools;
- increasing the number of staffed facilities;
- minimising hazards for hirers, especially for rubbish disposal;
- maintaining higher standards of cleanliness and maintenance, for example through stricter schedules for refurbishment, maintenance, and cleaning; and
- ensuring long-term hires are community-focussed and not predominantly for private or religious groups.

CENTRE INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK BOARDS

Overview

A1 information and feedback boards were placed at 20 community facilities across Cumberland to inform facility users about the Community Facilities Strategy and provide an informal avenue for engagement. The boards were placed at:

- Allan G Ezzy Community Centre;
- Auburn Centre for Community;
- Auburn Town Hall, Exhibition Gallery and Somerville Room;
- Bathurst Street Hall;
- Berala Community Centre;
- Domain Community Rooms;
- Granville Library Meeting Room;
- Granville Town Hall;
- Guildford Community Centre;
- Lidcombe Community Centre;
- Merrylands Community Centre;
- Merrylands Park Function Hall;
- Nemesia Street Hall;
- Norrie Maley Kiosk;
- Regents Park Community Centre;
- Ted Burge Hall;
- Tom Collins Meeting Room;
- Toongabbie Community Centre;
- Wentworthville Community Centre and Redgum Centre; and
- Westmead Progress Hall.

Users of the facilities were asked to provide answers to the following questions directly on the boards:

1. What do you like most about this community centre?
2. How could this community facility be improved?

Understanding Cumberland's cultural diversity, feedback boards were translated into the two or three most spoken non-English languages in the respective localities. Comments were invited in any language to engage those not confident in English. Centre staff promoted these boards at staffed centres amongst hirers and users. Council's Aged and Disability and Youth Participation and Programs teams encouraged program participants to provide feedback. In total, 195 comments were made on the boards across Cumberland.

What we were told

Summary

Overall, feedback suggested that the majority of Cumberland's community facilities are well-located in close proximity to transport options and have sufficient parking. The quality and range of programs on offer are well-regarded by users, as was the support from centre staff. Frequently mentioned areas for improvement include the bookings system, cleanliness, and maintenance. Provision of Wi-Fi and audiovisual equipment was also often desired. Finally, a number of users commented on the appearance of centres, commenting that exterior and interior art and landscaping works would create more inviting spaces.

Below is a summary of facility specific feedback.

Allan G Ezzy Community Centre

The Allan G Ezzy Community Centre is described as neat, clean, and well-lit and there is sufficient parking. Double bookings have been an issue for hirers at this venue while extra storage would be beneficial for regular hirers.

Auburn Centre for Community

Auburn Centre for Community is clean and has an inviting atmosphere. The outdoor space and community garden is a highlight for many users, along with the Wi-Fi, water fountain, and clean toilets. The centre staff have been noted as being particularly helpful.

The community would like more programs and events at this centre, particularly in conjunction with Auburn Girls' High School and for the broader public more generally. Longer opening hours and a higher standard of maintenance would also be appreciated.

Berala Community Centre

Berala Community Centre was distinguished for having a good range of free programs, especially for children, to the extent that some sessions are overcrowded now. Table tennis is particularly popular amongst centre users. The centre itself is clean and has friendly and helpful staff.

In terms of improvements, co-location with a library would be advantageous and there are some recurring maintenance issues, for example air-conditioning malfunctions. Some users would also like more fresh air ventilation throughout the facility, with the installation of ceiling fans as a possible solution. Finally, greater incorporation of sustainable practices, including environmentally friendly building design, would be a desirable trait.

Granville Library Meeting Room

Granville Library Meeting Room is clean, located in a convenient location, and has sufficient parking. A microwave and water fountain would be a welcome addition to the venue.

Guildford Community Centre

Guildford Community Centre is considered a "second home" for some users, with a welcoming atmosphere and staff that provide great support. However, the physical aspects of the centre appear to require improvements according to feedback. Artwork and colour throughout and outside the building would create an even more vibrant and inviting space and a single entry point will increase legibility and ease of access for patrons. A purpose-built space for children's programs and more youth amenities, such as musical and sports equipment, would be appreciated by two groups that frequently use the centre. Features seen at other centres, such as a community garden and an informal space that members of the public can access for free, were suggested to be suitable for Guildford as well. Finally, it was suggested that better Wi-Fi and better catering for programs would lead to an enhanced user experience.

Lidcombe Community Centre

Comments received about Lidcombe Community Centre describe the facility to be slightly dark and having a number of maintenance issues, relating in particular to the piano, power points, and whiteboard.

Regents Park Community Centre

Regents Park Community Centre is in a convenient location with good programs with a demand for more activities, in particular the exercise classes. The air-conditioning is also greatly appreciated. On the other hand, the facility appears outdated, especially the exterior, and has a number of maintenance issues.

Toongabbie Community Centre

Toongabbie Community Centre could be improved by more natural light and exteriors and interiors decorated by local artists. Features that cater to the needs of young families were suggested, including parents' rooms, smaller furniture and toilets, and fenced-in garden spaces. Cleanliness was also raised as needing improvement, with a recommendation of having communal cleaning products and a vacuum cleaner on the site for hirer use. Some hirers would appreciate more storage spaces, with an option to hire long-term. Finally, feedback indicates that accessible parking spaces are being misused and should be more strictly enforced.

Wentworthville Community Centre and Redgum Centre

Wentworthville Community Centre and Redgum Centre is located in a convenient location with adequate parking. Spacious rooms and low noise levels are positive aspects of its physical design. Community members appreciate the diversity of community and cultural programs on offer at this centre.

In terms of improvements, hirers would like more communal resources, such as projectors and screens, and storage for regular hires. Feedback suggests that the kitchen should be upgraded and more accessible toilets are required. Cleanliness throughout the centre is an area in need of improvement, as is the issue of double bookings. Finally, a first-aid kit and landline on site would be welcome, and similarly reliable Wi-Fi.

Westmead Progress Hall

The location of Westmead Progress Hall in close vicinity to local schools and public transport, along with sufficient parking, means it is highly accessible to users. It is suggested that beautification upgrades are required to improve its look and feel, in particular for the exterior. There appears to be a cockroach problem at the centre too. The provision of sound and light systems and tableware would be beneficial for some users of the hall and the piano is in need of tuning or an upgrade. It was also stated that heating would be appreciated for the winter.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Overview

Council's advisory committees provide a forum for the community to engage with Council and provide advice to inform Council's policy, program, and service delivery. In late 2018 and early 2019, the following committees were engaged:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative (ATSIC) Committee
- Access Committee
- Arts Advisory Committee
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee

The Youth Week 2019 Planning Team is a group of local young people who planned and delivered Youth Week 2019, supported by Council. Although not a Council committee, the team was engaged to provide an additional youth perspective, especially given the use of community facilities for Youth Week.

Committee members were asked for their vision for community facilities throughout Cumberland and the features, programs, and services that would make Council's facilities more inclusive and welcoming for Cumberland's diverse community.

What we were told

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative (ATSIC) Committee

Access Committee

The ATSIC and Access Committees were briefed on the project and engaged simultaneously. The majority of the committee members had not been to any of Council's community facilities and were not aware of the programs and services available at the centres. They cited a need for greater promotion. Those that were aware of the facilities commented that the booking system is cumbersome and time-consuming, presenting a barrier for hiring. Merrylands Community Centre was specifically raised as an unappealing facility, however having a space is better than nothing especially considering its central location close to public transport.

For the ATSIC committee, it is important that local Aboriginal cultures are represented, whether through art or naming of facilities and rooms. The suitability should be confirmed with the committee before use. They would also like to see more programming that reflect the local Aboriginal culture, not just aimed at Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, but more generally to educate and engage the broader community. In particular, they would like to see a concerted effort to promote these programs with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Accessibility must meet minimum Building Code of Australia standards. It is crucial that access considerations are not limited to those with physical disabilities and reflects the needs of people with other types of disabilities. The committee specifically referred to a number of design features that would create facilities that are more welcoming to people with disabilities:

- aural feedback, for example in lifts;
- accessible toilets and ramps;
- consistency in signage and standards across facilities;
- automatic doors; and
- the use of colours and technology.

The following more general features were also mentioned as making centres more appealing:

- clean;
- air-conditioning;
- in-house catering;
- break-out rooms, in particular for child minding;
- better technology, especially Wi-Fi and projectors;
- buildings with character that reflects the local community and heritage; and
- accessible by public transport.

Both committees advised that the best avenue for engagement is to communicate directly with the respective committees in the first instance. Further required actions can be advised on a case-by-case basis. They would prefer to be consulted when concept plans are available.

Arts Advisory Committee

The Arts Advisory Committee noted that for community facilities to facilitate arts and cultural activities, they need to have:

- a range of adaptable and flexible spaces;
- the ability to hold large performances;
- appropriate functional inclusions, such as lighting, audiovisual systems, stage and sprung wood, floors;
- strong connections with the local area in their design;
- skilled and knowledgeable staff to manage the facilities; and
- significant input from end users during the design phase.

Community facilities and their programming also offer a range of opportunities to showcase Cumberland's unique identity and local talent, especially through the employment of local artists for murals, decor, activities and events. They are also important in fostering an inclusive spirit that encourages participation from all community members regardless of age, background, and ability.

Community noticeboards and information, both at facilities and on Council's website, promoting all activities scheduled at facilities (Council and non-Council provided) were identified as ways to generate greater awareness and increase utilisation, as was reducing the complexity in accessing spaces.

Within the Cumberland area, there is a noted want for performance halls and exhibition spaces.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Committee

The CALD Advisory Committee advised that their vision is for Council's facilities to be:

- environmentally friendly, including water and energy efficient design and greenery;
- staffed, with the ability to provide on-the-spot assistance;
- welcoming to diverse cultures, children, and women;
- easier to book and access;
- relaxing, bright, and spacious; and
- safe, accessible, and clean.

They also suggested that the following programs and amenities would benefit our community facilities:

- social support groups and community events;
- youth and children’s programs, especially for children with disabilities; and
- computers and audiovisual equipment.

Youth Advisory Committee

The Youth Advisory Committee provided a more tangible wish list of amenities, activities, and services they would like to see in future community facilities, including:

- night-time or overnight activities, such as movie nights and overnight stays;
- a range of health and wellbeing programs and facilities, such as sports, yoga, meditation, and dance workshops;
- events that foster intergenerational interaction;
- personal and professional development, such as mentoring programs, speed networking, skill development workshops, career guidance and support, and language classes;
- audiovisual equipment, virtual reality, e-book library, free printing, and fast Wi-Fi;
- carpooling, bike parking, and accessibility to public transport;
- hot desks and spaces for start-ups and freelancers;
- multimedia studios, including green rooms and recording facilities;
- silent and study rooms;
- water refill stations, bubblers, and modern and clean bathrooms;
- shaded outdoor areas for relaxing, chillout lounges and sleep pods;
- storage spaces; and
- on-site cafes.

It is also important that facilities are eco-friendly and modern with a range of resources. They should also be easier to book and affordable.

Youth Week 2019 Planning Team

The Youth Week 2019 Planning Team saw potential in Council’s community facilities to provide “inner-city” experiences in the local area, including pop ups, craft and secondhand markets, and night-time experiences. Similarly, they could act as community hubs where residents can access a range of Council resources and information in satellite locations. Other desirable features mentioned by the Youth Week 2019 Planning Team are:

- music and arts and craft workshops;
- professional and personal development, including mentoring programs and career skills workshops and seminars;
- study support, including both HSC and tertiary;
- health and wellbeing programs, including sports, workouts, and animal interactions;
- intergenerational activities;
- language classes;
- quiet areas for study;
- modern and clean bathrooms;
- community gardens;
- a range of food options and cafes;
- community noticeboard, especially to start and sign up to groups and networks; and
- gaming and programming rooms.

They also recognised the importance of community facilities that feel welcoming in attracting people and organisations to the facilities and programs. This involves creating child-safe, modern, and bright buildings that are embellished with greenery, fitted with air-conditioning, and have extended opening hours.

COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORKING FORUM

Overview

Council hosts quarterly community sector networking forums to provide local organisations and community groups the opportunity to build networks and collaborate.

At the 30 October forum at the Merrylands RSL, participants engaged in an interactive activity to present their vision for community facilities throughout Cumberland. Keywords and images on posters conveyed the characteristics the forum attendees considered desirable for community facilities.

The forum was attended by 91 individuals, including 6 tertiary students, representing 49 organisations. Of the attendees, 17 stated that their respective organisation regularly use Council's facilities, a further 18 use them on a casual basis, and two hold yearlong bookings. A breakdown of community service areas represented at the forum is in Table 2.

Table 2: Sector networking forum services represented

Service	Individuals in attendance
Aged and disability services	10
Arts and culture	1
Domestic and family violence	3
Drug/alcohol	2
Early intervention	5
Education	16
Employment	8
Government (including Cumberland Council)	12
Health/wellbeing	11
Housing/homelessness	3
Law and justice	4
Settlement	8
Tertiary student	6
Other	2

What we were told

Characteristics of facilities

Participants commented heavily on the intrinsic characteristics and design of facilities. They preferred facilities that are:

- universally accessible, safe, inclusive, and welcoming;
- affordable, easy to book and use, and close to public transport;
- multi-purpose, with the flexibility to adapt to a diverse range of needs;
- embracing cultural diversity and Aboriginal heritage;
- creating social cohesion and connection;
- designed in collaboration with the community and best-practice;
- integrated into the natural environment and environmentally-sensitive; and
- vibrant, colourful, well-lit, and modern.

Amenities

Participants listed a number of amenities that would complement the use of community facilities, these include:

- audiovisual equipment, and communal IT facilities, such as computers and phones;

- cafés, kitchen facilities, and community gardens;
- office and counselling spaces for community sector and outreach use;
- sports and recreation facilities, such as kids rooms, skate parks, and outdoor gym equipment;
- a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces;
- breakout spaces that promote casual social cohesion and connection; and
- sufficient parking.

Activities

Participants mentioned certain activities that Council could provide at community facilities, encompassing matters such as:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture;
- Australian history;
- cooking;
- education and employment support;
- health and wellbeing, both physical and mental; and
- music and dance.

Key groups

Participants acknowledged that community facilities must embrace diversity, with particular emphasis on:

- the elderly and youth, and promotion of intergenerational connection;
- the LGBTQI community; and
- Cumberland's multicultural diversity.

APPENDIX 1: HAVE YOUR SAY SURVEY

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Community Facilities Survey

PART A: Your thoughts on Council's community facilities

The following questions ask you about your use and experience using Council's community facilities.

1. Which of the following Council community centres have you visited/used? Please select all that apply. (Choose all that apply)

- Allan G Ezzy Community Centre (Pemulwuy)
- Auburn Centre for Community (staffed)
- Auburn Town Hall, Exhibition Gallery or Sommerville Room
- Bathurst Street Hall (Greystanes)
- Berala Community Centre (staffed)
- Domain Community Rooms (Westmead)
- Guildford Community Centre (staffed)
- Granville Library Meeting Room
- Granville Town Hall
- Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre (staffed)
- Greystanes Community Centre
- Holroyd Centre (Merrylands)
- Lidcombe Community Centre
- Linnwood House (Guildford)
- Merrylands Community Centre
- Merrylands Park Function Hall
- Nemesia Street Hall (Greystanes)
- Norrie Maley Kiosk (Central Gardens, Merrylands)
- Regents Park Community Centre
- Ted Burge Hall (Merrylands)
- Tom Collins Meeting Room (Guildford)
- Toongabbie Community Centre
- Wentworthville Community Centre and or Redgum Centre
- Westmead Progress Hall
- None of the above/I have not used any of these community centres.

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Answer this question only if you have chosen None of the above/I have not used any of these community centres. for 1. Which of the following Council community centres have you visited/used? Please select all that apply.

1a. Why have you not used any of these community facilities? Please select all that apply. (Choose all that apply)

- They are unappealing in look and/or feel
- I was not aware of the community facilities
- I was not aware of what I could do at the facilities (e.g. the programs, activities, events or services offered)
- The programs, activities and services provided do not interest me or meet my needs
- They do not have the types of spaces or amenities I need
- They are not well located/difficult to get to
- Opening hours are limited/do not meet my needs
- The fees to hire spaces are too high
- The programs and activities are too expensive
- They are unappealing in look and/or feel
- I visit/use other facilities
- I am not interested in visiting/using a community facility
- Other

Note: Respondents to the above can skip to Q7 on Page 2.

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 1a. Why have you not used any of these community facilities? Please select all that apply.

Please specify:

2. Which of the following best describes how you used this community facility(s)? Please select all that apply. (Choose all that apply)

- Participated in an activity or program
- Accessed a community support service
- Attended a community event
- Hired a space to run an activity, program or provide a community service
- Hired a space for a private function
- Attended a private function
- Other

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 2. Which of the following best describes how you used this community facility(s)? Please select all that apply.

Please specify:

Answer this question only if you have chosen Participated in an activity or program for 2. Which of the following best describes how you used this community facility(s)? Please select all that apply.

2a. Have you participated in any of Council's LifeLong Learning Programs? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 2a. Have you participated in any of Council's LifeLong Learning Programs?

2b. Overall, how satisfied were you with the program(s) you participated in? (Choose any one option)

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

3. Which facility have you most used/visited? (Choose any one option)

- Allan G Ezzy Community Centre (Pemulwuy)
- Auburn Centre for Community (staffed)
- Auburn Town Hall, Exhibition Gallery or Somerville Room
- Bathurst Street Hall (Greystanes)
- Berala Community Centre (staffed)
- Domain Community Rooms (Westmead)
- Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre (staffed)
- Guildford Community Centre (staffed)
- Granville Library Meeting Room
- Granville Town Hall
- Greystanes Community Centre
- Holroyd Centre (Merrylands)
- Lidcombe Community Centre
- Linnwood House (Guildford)
- Merrylands Community Centre
- Merrylands Park Function Hall
- Nemesia Street Hall (Greystanes)
- Norrie Maley Kiosk (Central Gardens, Merrylands)
- Regents Park Community Centre
- Ted Burge Hall (Merrylands)
- Tom Collins Meeting Room (Guildford)
- Toongabbie Community Centre
- Wentworthville Community Centre and or Redgum Centre
- Westmead Progress Hall

Thinking of the facility you visit/use most, please answer the following:

4. How satisfied were you with the centre(s) you used in terms of:

Questions	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Not applicable
Facility staff assistance						
Spaces available						
Programs, activities and services provided						
Location						
Access by public transport						
Look and feel						
Costs of programs and activities						
Opening hours or hours available for use						

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Questions	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Not applicable
Booking process						
Cost to hire						
Overall						

5. Please tell us about your response

6. Have you used any other community facility/facilities within the Cumberland area or in another Council area? (Choose any one option)

- Yes
- No

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 6. Have you used any other community facility/facilities within the Cumberland area or in another Council area?

If yes: Which facility/facilities have you used and why did you choose to use it?

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

PART B: Your thoughts on community facilities in the future

The following questions ask you about your priorities and thoughts about community facilities to inform Council's planning for facilities in the future.

7. Which of the following are most important to you? Please select up to three (3) of most importance to you: (Choose all that apply)

- There are community facilities in my local area/close to my home
- I can easily access community facilities by public transport
- Community facilities are located near shops and other facilities and services
- Community facilities are visually appealing
- I feel safe at community facilities
- Community facilities are co-located with other facilities (e.g. libraries, childcare centres, early childhood health centres, community support services)
- There are activities, services and programs that interest me
- Good quality spaces and amenities are provided
- There are staff at community facilities that can assist me
- Community facilities are welcoming and friendly
- Community facilities are accessible to all (including people with disability and older people)
- Programs, activities and services are affordable
- Spaces to hire are affordable
- Other

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 7. Which of the following are most important to you? Please select up to three (3) of most importance to you:

Please specify:

8. Which of the following types of programs, activities or services would you most like to see provided at community facilities in the future? Please select up to three (3) of most interest to you: (Choose all that apply)

- Creative arts programs / Social activities
- Exhibitions
- Performing arts programs or activities (e.g. music, dance, drama, singing)
- Programs for young children (0-4 years)
- Programs for primary school aged children (5-11 years)
- Programs for secondary school aged children (12-17 years)
- Programs for young people (18-25 years)
- Programs for seniors (55 years and over)
- Fitness, exercise or recreational activities
- Activities for specific cultural groups
- Education and learning classes (e.g. computer, language, budgeting/financial planning classes)
- Information services (e.g. about what is on offer or happening in my local area)
- Community support services (e.g. legal support, counselling services, assistance with filling out forms, employment support etc.)
- Informal/non-programmed activities (e.g. meeting friends, relaxing, studying, reading)
- Other

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 8. Which of the following types of programs, activities or services would you most like to see provided at community facilities in the future? Please select up to three (3) of most interest to you:

Please specify:

9. Are you interested in hiring a space(s)/ facility in the future? (Choose all that apply)

- Yes
- No

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 9. Are you interested in hiring a space(s)/ facility in the future?

If yes, which of the following best describes your interest: (Choose all that apply)

- Hire a space for a private function
- Hire a space regularly to run a program or activity space (i.e. once a month or more often)
- Hire a space occasionally to run a program or event (i.e. less often than once a month)
- Hire a space to deliver outreach community support services/meet clients
- Hire a space to hold meetings
- Be permanently accommodated in an office space to deliver community support services
- Other

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for if yes, which of the following best describes your interest:

Please specify:

10. Is there anything you would like Council to consider in planning community facilities in the future (including in the planning for any refurbishments, expansions, new facilities or programming and management improvements)?

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

PART C: About you

The following questions help us to understand the mix of people that responded to this survey.

11. Which suburb do you live in? *(Required)*

12. What is the main language you speak at home? *(Choose any one option)*

- English
- Arabic
- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Persian/Dari
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Nepali
- Korean
- Other

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 12. What is the main language you speak at home?

Please specify:

13. What is your gender? *(Choose any one option)*

- Male
- Female
- Other

14. How old are you? *(Choose any one option)*

- Under 12 years
- 12-17 years
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-59 years
- 60-69 years
- 70-84 years
- 85 years and over

15. Which of the following best describes you (in relation to your interest in Council community facilities). *(Choose all that apply)*

- I am a resident of the Cumberland area
- I work in the Cumberland area
- I visit the Cumberland area (to access shops, services, facilities etc. or visit family or friends)
- I am a representative of an organisation or group that delivers programs, activities or services
- Other

Community Facilities Strategy - Interactive feedback boards at your local centre

Have Your Say Cumberland

Answer this question only if you have chosen Other for 15. Which of the following best describes you (in relation to your interest in Council community facilities).

Please specify:

16. Would you like to keep up-to-date on the development of Council's Community Facilities Strategy or any other community facility planning projects? *(Choose any one option)*

- Yes
 No

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 16. Would you like to keep up-to-date on the development of Council's Community Facilities Strategy or any other community facility planning projects?

Name

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 16. Would you like to keep up-to-date on the development of Council's Community Facilities Strategy or any other community facility planning projects?

Email or address:

17. Would you like to go in the draw to win one of five \$50 Stockland vouchers? *(Choose any one option)*

- Yes
 No

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 17. Would you like to go in the draw to win one of five \$50 Stockland vouchers?

Name

Answer this question only if you have chosen Yes for 17. Would you like to go in the draw to win one of five \$50 Stockland vouchers?

Email



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