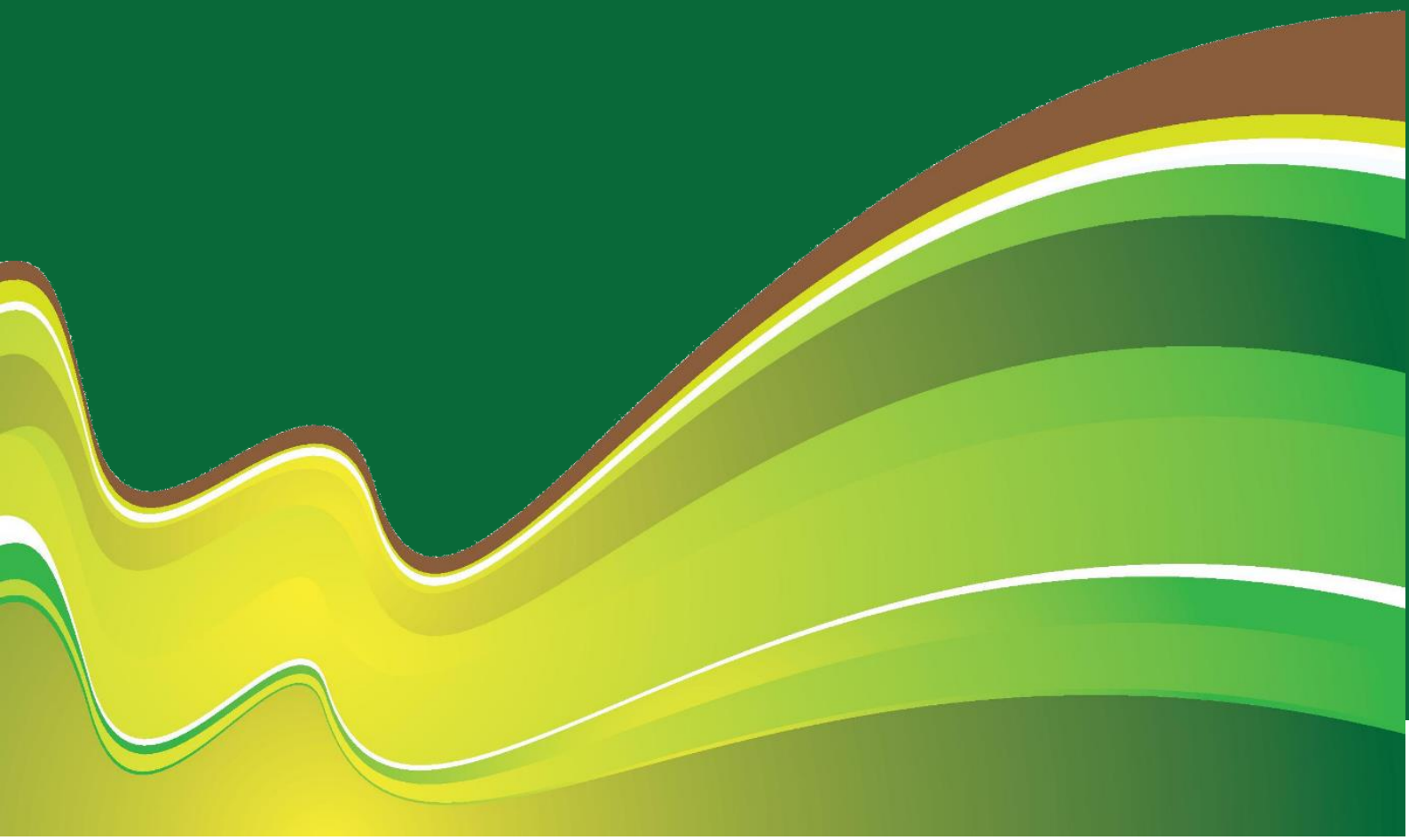




*South Gippsland  
Shire Council*

## **REGION PROFILE**

*Rolling green hills*



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We acknowledge the Bunurong and GunaiKurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

## BACKGROUND

The following document provides a snapshot of the South Gippsland Region as at 2021, with an update of Census data from the 2021 Census. The data herein draws together a range of data sources to provide a profile of the region, taking into account community characteristics, community health and wellbeing behaviours and needs, the environment and infrastructure, and the economy.

The main data sources used to develop this document were:

- ABS Census data (2006-2021);
- Forecast.id.com.au population forecasting;
- Victorian Population Health Survey (2008-2020);
- Crime Statistics Victoria;
- AODstats.org.au; and
- Data collected internally by Council.

In addition to these data sources, two stages of additional social research were conducted to develop further insights into the local community. These have been outlined in the following research methodology section.

Where possible, data has been presented showing trends across time and variations by ward. There are three wards in the Shire; Strzelecki, Tarwin Valley and Coastal Promontory.

Further details about vulnerable communities within the South Gippsland Shire can be found in the *Vulnerable Communities South Gippsland* document produced on 9 April 2020, accessible [here](#).



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There were two pieces of social research conducted to inform the development of this document. The aim of the research was to gain an understanding of community needs and perceptions, to provide Council with:

- Data to help inform strategic planning and grant applications;
- Baseline data for monitoring the success of Council plans and strategies, as well as the ongoing health and wellbeing of the community; and
- Filling the gap in knowledge about the community (where there is no publicly available data).

---

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The first phase of the research was in-depth interviews. The initial plan was to conduct focus groups, however COVID-19 restrictions were in place at the scheduled time for this research which prevented in-person activities. Therefore, 21 telephone in-depths interviews were conducted.

The aim of the in-depths was to better understand:

- Why participants like living in the South Gippsland region;
- How the region is unique;
- What the community priorities are;
- What the perceived current and future challenges for the community are;
- What the key community interests and aspirations are;
- The community vision for the future;
- In what ways the community characteristics are changing for the good/bad; and
- What key things the council needs to consider when meeting community needs.

### METHODOLOGY

Participants were recruited by an independent recruiting agency who used their own networks in the region, accumulated databases and the South Gippsland Shire community directory, to target, cold call and recruit participants for the in-depth interviews.

The following selection criteria was used as a guide for recruitment in order to obtain a broad selection of voices from residents living within the three Shire wards (Strzelecki, Tarwin Valley and Coastal Promontory):

- 7 X participants were selected per ward (21 recruited in total);
- People were recruited from out of township areas (not just in-town residents);
- Ages: 18+ but with half over 50 and half under 50 for each ward – where possible;
- Equal representation of males and females for each ward;
- Recruit two farmers per ward – where possible; and
- Obtain a representation of business owners and general population.

Interviews were conducted between 9 September 2021 and 20 September 2021 during the hours between 10:30 AM to 7:30 PM on any day of the week during this period.

Incentives were provided to encourage participation in the form of an electronic gift voucher to the value of \$75 for farmers and \$50 for remaining participants. Farmers were provided with a greater incentive as they are generally time poor and more difficult to contact in comparison to the general population.

The table below outlines the profile of participants that were interviewed.

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Strzelecki</b>	<b>Tarwin Valley</b>	<b>Coastal-Promontory</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Farmers</b>	2	2	2	<b>6</b>
<b>Business owners</b>	1	1	3	<b>5</b>
<b>General Pop</b>	6	6	4	<b>16</b>
<b>In town</b>	3	2	3	<b>8</b>
<b>Outside town</b>	4	5	4	<b>13</b>
<b>Males</b>	4	4	3	<b>11</b>
<b>Females</b>	3	3	4	<b>10</b>
<b>&lt;50 years old</b>	3	4	3	<b>10</b>
<b>50+ years old</b>	4	2	4	<b>10</b>
<b>Total*</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>

\*Column totals do not represent the sum total of column figures

Throughout this report, findings from this stage of the research have been presented in 'Community insights' boxes.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

7,856 households were randomly selected from Council's database of all residential properties in the municipality. Selection of households was stratified by township to ensure distribution in line with the population, with over-sampling in areas with a high instance of unoccupied private dwellings (holiday homes) to increase the likelihood of reaching occupied dwellings. The list of sampled households was then matched against Council's internal contact database to match occupier email address (rate payer for owner occupier, or registered pet registrar for non owner occupier); 67% of households had a matching email address.

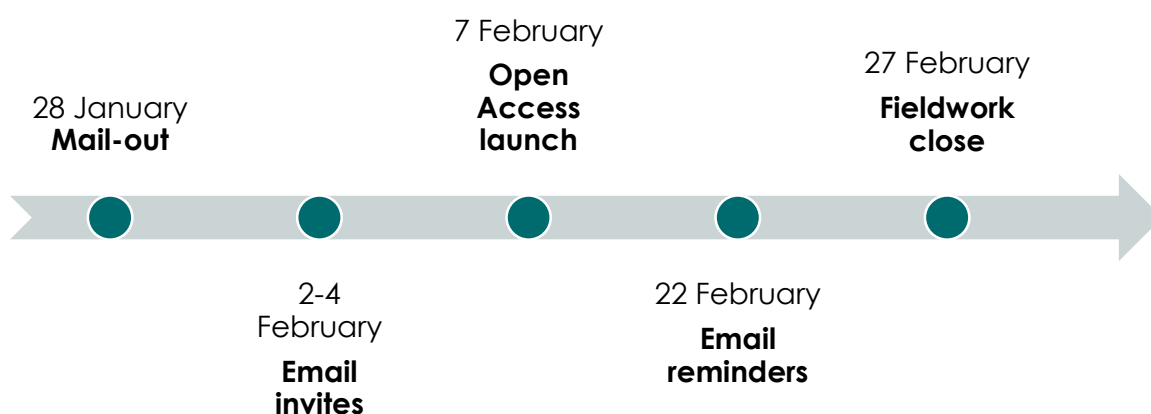
Where a verified email was available for a selected household, the email address was sent an email invite to participate in an online version of the survey. Others were sent an 8 page paper survey form (with cover letter) through the mail.



Paper forms were designed to be scanned by a forms scanner for increased accuracy of processing. Online surveys were hosted in Australia using the Limesurvey survey software. Each household was assigned an 'access code' so they could only complete the survey once.

An online 'open access' version of the survey was also promoted by Council through communication networks including social media and newspapers. This gave community members who were not randomly selected for the survey the opportunity to share their views.

The following shows the 2022 timeline for the fieldwork.



## RESPONDENT PROFILE

The distribution of the representative sample is closely in line with population distribution with regards to gender and household type. There is an under-representation of younger people, as is typically the case with social research (younger people are less inclined to participate in surveys). The 'next birthday' method was used to try and reach more younger people. A sample of 50 in the 18-34 age category is suffice to identify meaningful variations.

Demographic	Representative sample		Open access sample		2022 Population forecast	
	count	%	count	%	count	%
<b>Male (18+)</b>	764	46%	100	31%	11,891	49%
<b>Female (18+)</b>	872	53%	214	67%	12,204	51%
<b>18-34 years</b>	57	3%	21	7%	4,519	19%
<b>35-55 years</b>	425	26%	135	44%	7,328	30%
<b>55+ years</b>	1170	71%	154	50%	12,248	51%
<b>Household with kids</b>	454	27%	129	40%	4,265	33%
<b>One person household</b>	381	23%	34	11%	3,799	29%
<b>Couple with no kids</b>	766	46%	127	40%	4,670	36%

There was also a lower representation of renters, however this is likely due to the over-sampling in areas with a high instance of holiday homes, leading to a higher proportion of home owners. Indeed, 23% of the representative sample indicated the property for which they were responding was a holiday home.

Demographic	Representative sample		Open access sample		2016 Census	
	count	%	count	%	count	%
Disability	86	5%	12	4%	1,585	6%
Language other than English	82	5%	17	5%	972	3%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	14	1%	3	1%	278	1%
Owned outright	1081	64%	136	43%	4,785	41%
Owned with mortgage	455	27%	146	46%	3,695	32%
Rent	76	5%	18	6%	1,851	16%
Household income <\$650/week	381	24%	48	15%	2,757	25%
Household income \$650-\$1,999/week	530	33%	126	39%	5,064	46%
Household income \$2,000+/week	245	15%	47	15%	2,009	18%

The representative survey has an over-representation of respondents in the Coastal Promontory ward as a number of townships in this ward were over-sampled to cater for holiday homes. There is a very robust sample of over 400 respondents in each ward.

Ward	Representative sample		Open access sample		Council database	
	count	%	count	%	count	%
Tarwin Valley	494	29%	114	38%	5,443	34%
Strzelecki	478	28%	72	24%	5,228	32%
Coastal Promontory	727	43%	113	38%	5,439	34%

## THEMATIC ANALYSIS

For the questions collecting a written answer, responses have been grouped into meaningful themes to assist with analysis. Where relevant, individual comments have been assigned to multiple themes. An excel document with this thematic analysis has been provided in a separate document and allows for filtering of comments by themes.



## STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE TESTING

Results have been tested for statistical significance using the Bonferroni method at 95% confidence level. Where a statistically significant variation has been identified in the analysis, this has either been included in a written comment or demonstrated in charts and tables with arrows denoting a higher than average result (↑) or lower than average result (↓). To ensure relevance and usefulness of this report, cross analysis of variables which do not yield any statistically significant insights have not been included in the written analysis.

All findings have had significance testing conducted based on:

- Gender;
- Age;
- CALD; and
- Ward.

## GLOSSARY

<b>LOE</b>	Language other than English
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and linguistically diverse (defined as those who speak a language other than English at home)
<b>SGSC</b>	South Gippsland Shire Council
<b>VPHS</b>	Victorian Population Health Survey
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Area
<b>n=</b>	The number of respondents who contributed to the reported percentages (base number)
<b>Respondent</b>	Those who participated in the survey.
<b>Sample size</b>	The number of people who provided an answer to the question.
<b>Statistically significant</b>	Highlights a phenomenon / variation in the data that one can be confident is reflective of the entire target population. For more information see previous section.
<b>Thematic analysis</b>	Grouping of written comments into themes to assist in analysis. See previous section.

## WARD SUMMARIES

The following shows a summary of key Census variables by ward. This draws on the 2016 & 2021 Census data. This information is also available through an interactive dashboard (separate Excel document).

Census data	Coastal-Promontory		Strzelecki		Tarwin Valley		South Gippsland		Victoria	
	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021
<b>Population</b>	5,653	6,188	10,890	11,639	12,149	12,750	28,696	30,577	-	-
<b>% of population</b>	20%	20%	38%	38%	42%	42%	100%	100%	-	-
<b>Disability</b>	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%	6%
<b>Born overseas</b>	13%	14%	11%	11%	10%	11%	11%	11%	28%	30%
<b>Speak LOE</b>	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	26%	28%
<b>Christian</b>	44%	36%	51%	39%	50%	40%	49%	39%	48%	41%
<b>No religion</b>	40%	51%	38%	52%	39%	50%	39%	51%	32%	39%
<b>Unpaid care to person with a disability</b>	13%	14%	13%	15%	13%	15%	13%	15%	13%	13%
<b>Unpaid care of children</b>	20%	19%	28%	27%	28%	27%	27%	25%	27%	26%
<b>Volunteer</b>	30%	25%	28%	20%	30%	23%	29%	22%	19%	13%
<b>Unemployed</b>	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%	2%	6.6%	3%
<b>Education beyond year 12</b>	40%	47%	42%	46%	42%	46%	42%	46%	50%	53%
<b>Personal income &lt;\$500 per week</b>	44%	40%	42%	35%	42%	36%	42%	36%	38%	33%
<b>Travel 30km+ for work (workers)</b>	33%	N/A	31%	N/A	26%	N/A	29%	N/A	15%	N/A
<b>Work outside shire</b>	15%	20%	29%	33%	19%	21%	23%	26%	-	-
<b>Number of households</b>	2,691	3,047	4,170	4,577	4,858	5,344	11,718	12,971	2.5mil	2.5mil
<b>Average number of people per household</b>	2.03	2.02	2.51	2.51	2.39	2.34	2.33	2.32	2.55	2.55
<b>Internet access</b>	67%	N/A	76%	N/A	74%	N/A	73%	N/A	80%	N/A
<b>Kids in household</b>	22%	21%	38%	37%	35%	33%	33%	31%	41.5%	41%
<b>One person household</b>	32%	33%	24%	23%	26%	28%	27%	28%	23%	25%
<b>Renter</b>	15%	14%	14%	13%	17%	16%	16%	14%	28%	28%

2021 data	Coastal-Promontory	Strzelecki	Tarwin Valley	South Gippsland	Victoria
<b>Socially isolated</b>	10%	7%	9%	9%	-
<b>(all ages) Sport participation</b>	23%	25%	23%	24%	-
<b>Mostly / completely connected to community</b>	36%	33%	33%	34%	-



## 1 COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The population of South East Gippsland has been slowly increasing over time, and is expected to increase by around 1% a year into the future. As at the 2021 Census the population of the region was 30,577 (a similar number to the Victoria In Future estimate calculated in 2019; 30,263<sup>1</sup>).

In the 90s the region had a younger age profile, with almost a third of the population under the age of 18 in 1991 (32%), and 17% aged 60+. In more recent times, the age distribution has changed; as per the 2021 Census less than a quarter of the population is under 18 (20%) and a third is over 60 years (35%). This mix of ages is expected to continue over the next 15 years (in 2036 the region is forecast to have 22% under 18 and 34% 60+ years).

Just over one in ten (11% of the population was born overseas, mostly from English speaking backgrounds. One in 17 (6%) have a disability, which mostly occurs amongst the older population (47% 85+).

As at the 2021 Census there were approximately 350 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in South Gippsland, 61% of whom were under the age of 35.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/vif2019-population-5yr-ages-vifsa-lga-2036>  
(accessed 27 September 2021)

## 1.1 POPULATION CHANGE

<b>Source notes</b>	Forecast.id.com.au/southgippsland
<b>Update due</b>	2023

In the 90s the population of the municipality was relatively stable at around 24,000, then in the 00s it started to increase. In the 10 years from 2011 to 2021 the population was increasing by an average of 1.6% per year.

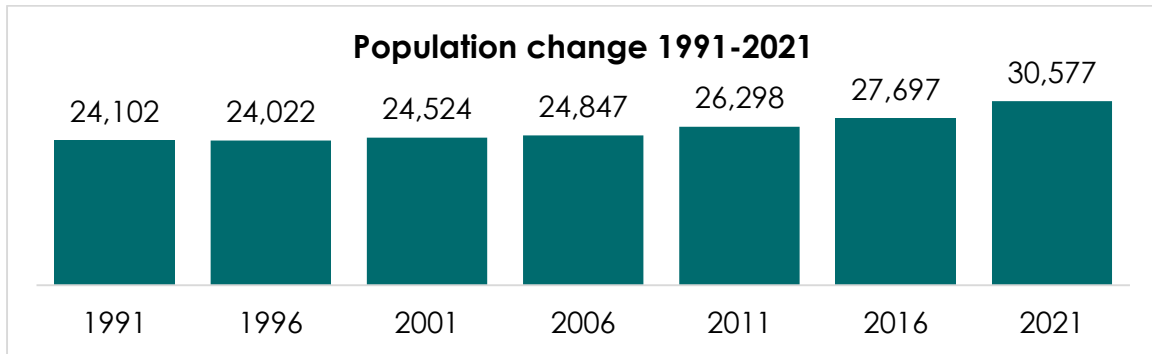


Figure 1 Population change (Census) 1991 to 2021

Most of the population change from 2016 to 2021 occurred in the Strzelecki (+749) and Tarwin Valley wards (+601).

Id forecasting suggests that the population is likely to continue to steadily increase at around half a percent per year.

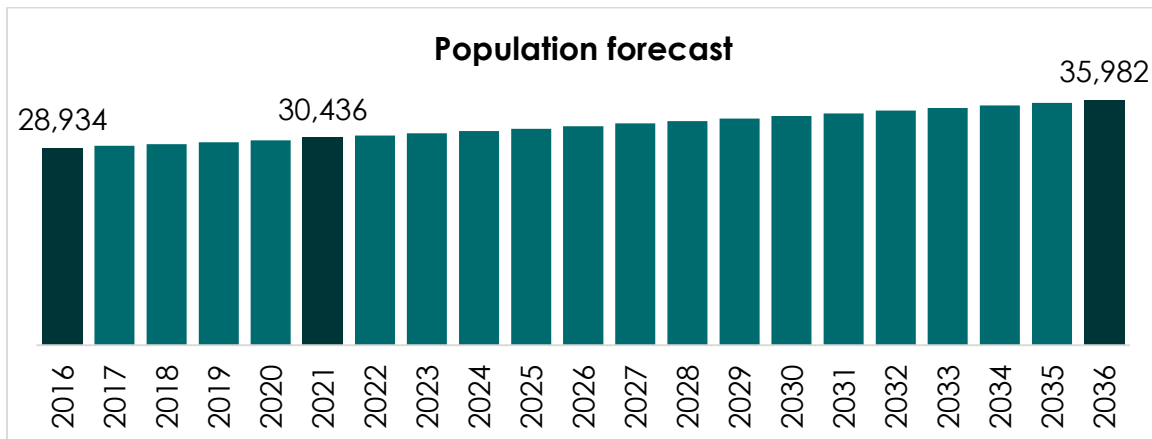
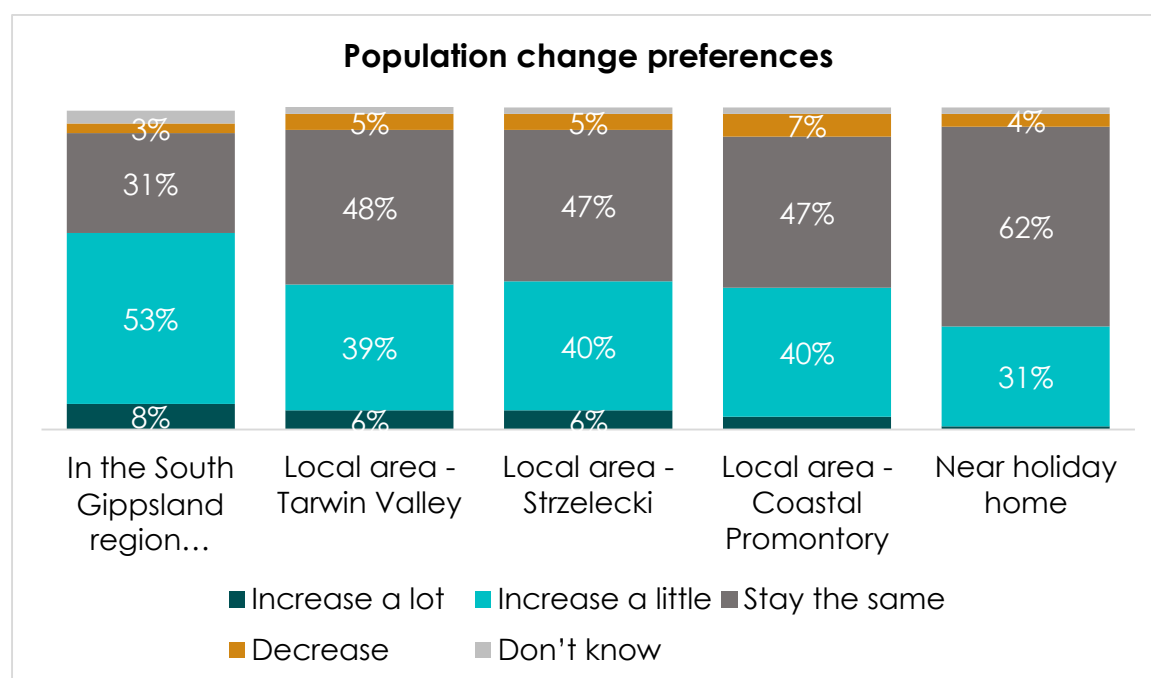


Figure 2 Population forecast

Most of the population increase over the next 15 years is forecast to occur in Strzelecki ward (+3,397), specifically Nyora, Poowong and district, and Korumburra. Leongatha is also expected to have a population increase of approximately 25% over the next 15 years.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q8. Thinking about population levels, would you like to see the population....? Q9. What do you think would be the benefits and/or challenges of an increase in population for the South Gippsland region?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Q9 gave the respondent space to write in their answer. Written answers were later coded for ease of analysis. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Whilst the majority of survey respondents indicated they would like to see the population in the South Gippsland Region increase (61%), the preferred increase is only a little (53%), with fewer than one in ten saying *a lot* (8%). Far fewer want the population increase to occur in their local area (45%, most of whom said *a little*; only 5% said *a lot*). Indeed, 18% of respondents said they wanted an increase for the broader region, but not in their local area. This 'not in my back yard' preference is more common amongst those aged 55 years or over (21%, compared to 10% of 35-54 year olds).



780 respondents wrote in a potential benefit of population increase. The key areas where the community thinks there will be a benefit to an increase in population were:

- Business and the economy (37%) – specifically support for small business and new business, more work for those in trade businesses and opportunities to



develop a more sustainable and prosperous economy. 35-54 year olds more often wrote in comments relating to this topic (46%);

- Opportunities for improving the shire in general (21%) – specifically through more rates money resulting in more money to spend on the community;
- Improve services (20%) – comments include mentions of infrastructure improvements, facilities, and amenities. Comments relating to this topic were more common amongst older residents (22% 55+ year olds, compared to 14% under 55s);
- Employment opportunities and job creation (17%); and
- More shops (11%) including retail, grocery stores, restaurants and cafes.

905 respondents wrote in a potential challenge from population increase. The key areas where the community thinks an increase in population could cause challenges were:

- Services and facilities keeping pace with the population (33%) – there is concern that facilities, resources, amenities, social services, utilities and infrastructure is already strained and wouldn't be able to adequately service an increase in population.
- Road maintenance and provision (26%) – some feel that the roads are already poorly maintained and under pressure, and that an increase in traffic and congestion could lead to more accidents and noise, reduced pedestrian safety, and reduced parking opportunities.
- Affordable housing (17%) – comments suggested that an increase in land prices and lack of rental and housing availability could be a challenge if the population were to increase.
- Environmental impact (15%) – There was concern for the ability to maintain the natural environment with an increased population, with mentions of climate change, pollution, preserving agricultural land (with loss to development). Maintaining the rural feel is also important.
- Proper control of urban development (12%) – there is a concern that inappropriate development to increase the population could result in overcrowding and underservicing, and poor sustainability outcomes.
- Healthcare access (12%) – the healthcare resources are already stretched, so servicing an increasing population could be challenging, specific to hospitals, GPs, specialists, allied health and mental health.
- Job creation (11%) – The challenge will be to ensure there is adequate job creation for a broad range of skillsets.

## 1.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>Source notes</b>	Census for 1991-2021, Forecast for 2036 (forecast.id.com.au/south-gippsland)
<b>Update due</b>	2023 (Forecast), 2026 Census

The age profile of the region has changed significantly in the last 20 years. In 1991, 32% of the population was aged under 18 years; by 2021 this had dropped to 20%. Conversely, in 1991 17% of the population was aged over 60 years; this has increased to 35% in 2021. This current age distribution profile is expected to remain relatively consistent until 2036 (22% under 18, 34% over 60 years).

During COVID (2021 Census) there was a big increase in the number of 60-84 year olds, likely due to the impact of lockdowns (people staying in holiday homes to escape metropolitan lockdowns) and fear of getting sick.

The number of residents over the age of 50 years has been steadily increasing and it is expected to continue to do so.

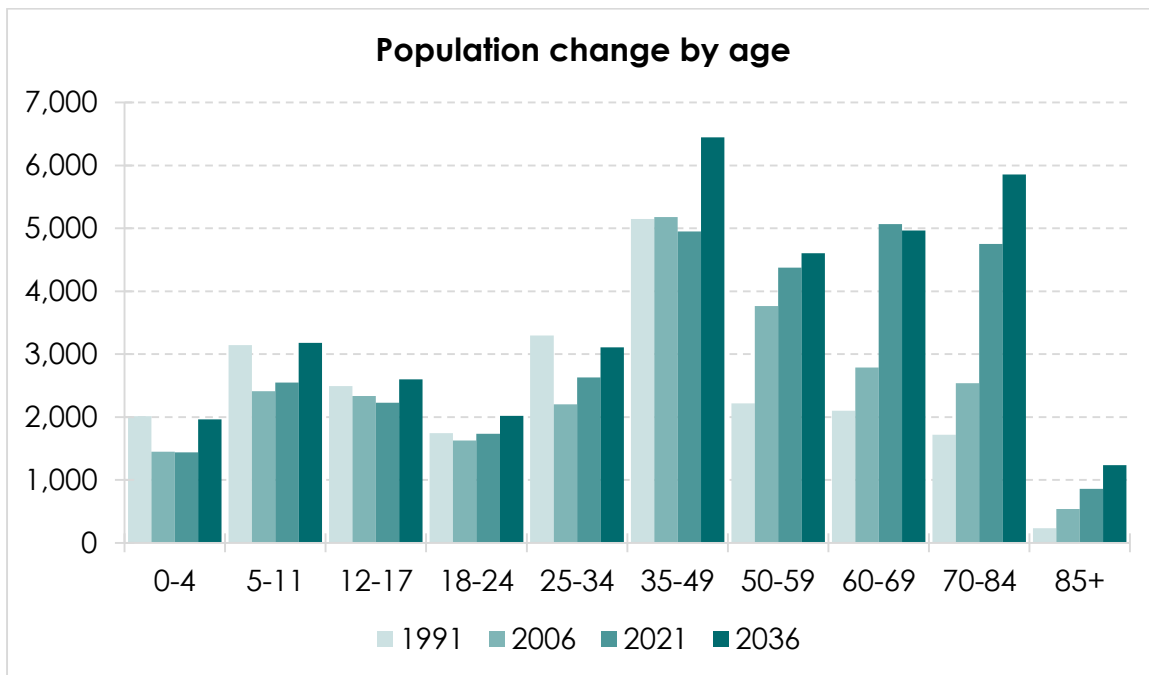


Figure 3 Population change by age

In 2021 the population was 49% male and 51% female. This gender distribution is expected to continue into the future.

### 1.3 DISABILITY

#### Source notes

Census, 2021. Combination of 3 questions:

Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, self care activities?

Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, body movement activities?

Does the person ever need someone to help with, or be with them for, communication activities?

#### Update due

2027 (2026 Census)

Overall, 6% of the South Gippsland community has a disability with which they have need for assistance. This is relatively consistent across wards, and similar to the proportion regionally (6% Latrobe – Gippsland region) and state-wide (6%).

The proportion with a disability increases significantly amongst those aged over 85 years.

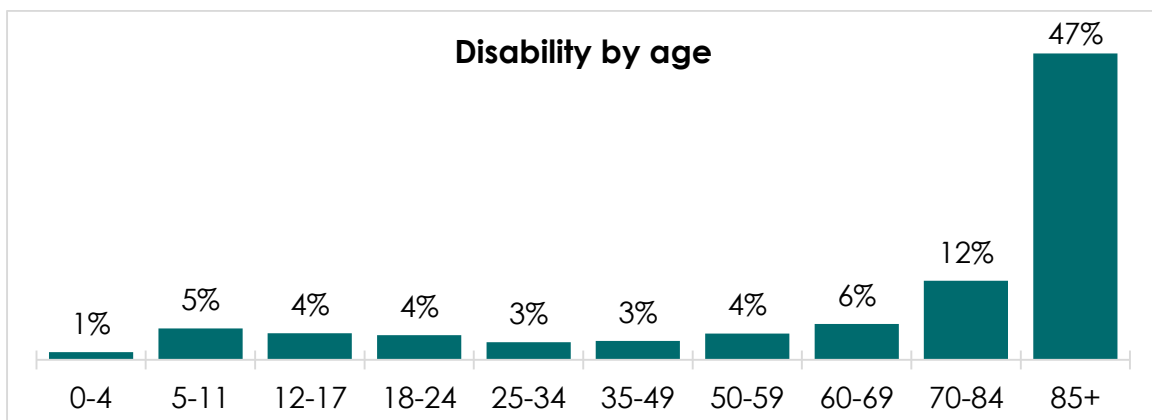


Figure 4 Incidence of having a disability by age range, 2021

There may be people in the community who require accessible infrastructure, communications or equipment who aren't captured by of the Census questions for disability. It is generally considered that the Census disability rates may be under-reporting actual levels of disability, as it doesn't identify people who are deaf, blind, or have an intellectual or physical disability who don't need support with everyday basic care needs from other people<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/disability-and-carers/Attachment\\_C\\_2016\\_Census\\_topics.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/disability-and-carers/Attachment_C_2016_Census_topics.pdf)

### Community insights

When the term diversity was used, it often referred to varying socioeconomic status, occupations and industries within the community and not necessarily multicultural or indigenous influences, though this was not ignored entirely and seen as a positive aspect to the region – and an area for improvement.

*"... plentiful, operating farms and a good cross section of people in the community; farmers and business people, retired people."* [Coastal-Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"It would be nice to see more diversity here. [...] Progress is a great thing. Diversity meaning boutiques and wineries, we have a great farming industry too. I think farmers are a bit hard done by."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Business admin]

*"We are becoming more diverse. There are people who've been living here forever and a day in the dairy and beef industry. Now tree changers are coming from Melbourne."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"Diversity is a positive in terms of people coming into the area. Different skillsets, mindsets, new businesses."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"Little towns are booming too. I like the quirkiness of smaller towns – beautiful artwork, street scapes. Different people and diversity in the area. Probably not enough diversity in the multicultural sense but there's not just white-collar people."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"We're not a very diverse community [as in] not very multicultural as a downside. A large component [of the community] is ageing tree changers moving in; not bad but just not multicultural and diverse."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"The community is great and strong. Due to the new influx of new people we need to welcome new people out here - open arms and embrace diversity. A lot of these places are very white. White males. That is shifting. [...] We're seeing people from all over the world moving here. There's more cultural diversity. More women in the workforce in an otherwise traditional agricultural setting. I'd like to see all people welcomed and included."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"Indigenous culture needs to be brought into it too. Coal Creek is as white as it comes [from a historical perspective]. White man came here, chopped down trees, dug a hole. Indigenous culture needs a boost in the area too."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

**Source notes**

Census, 2021

**Update due**

2027 (2026 Census)

Just over one in ten residents were born overseas. This has been relatively stable over time, unlike the state average, which has been increasing.

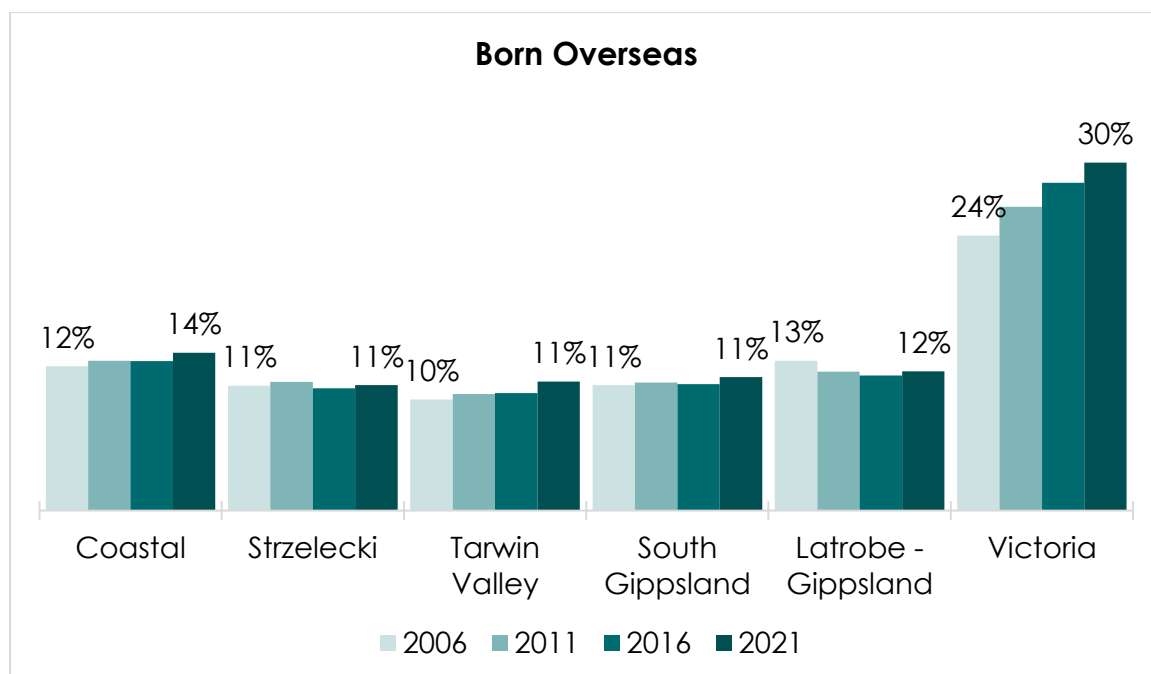


Figure 5- Proportion of population born overseas by ward

The main overseas countries of birth of residents are as follows. These have been the top 4 from 2006 to 2021:

- England (3.7%);
- New Zealand (1.2%);
- Netherlands (0.8%); and
- Italy (0.6%).

As per the 2021 Census, only 4% of the population of South Gippsland said that they speak a language other than English (up from 3% in 2016), which is slightly lower than the regional average (5% Latrobe – Gippsland) and much lower than the state average (28%). The main language other than English spoken are Italian (0.6%) and German (0.4%). Only 5% of those who speak a language other than English indicated that they speak English not well or not at all.

The proportion of the population stating their religion as 'no religion' has been increasing over time, and is at a similar proportion to that recorded in the broader region and state-wide.

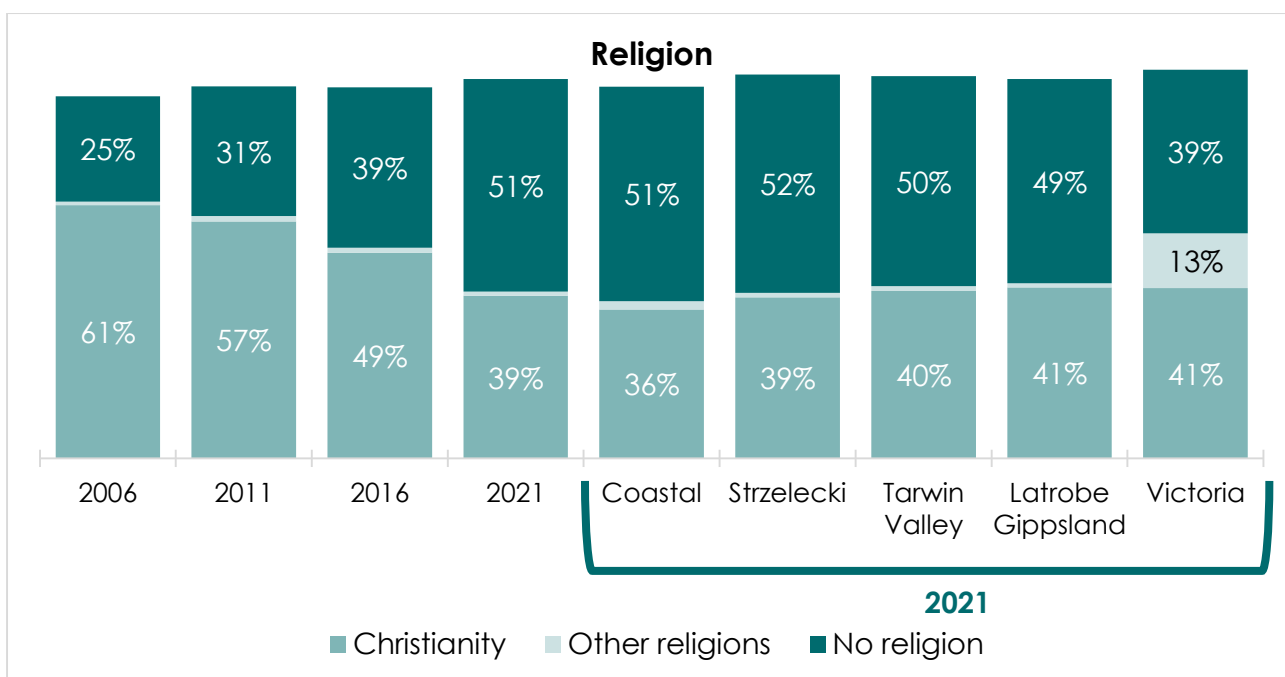


Figure 6 Religion 2006 to 2021 and by ward

The Coastal Promontory ward has fewer residents who identify as Christian than the other areas of the municipality.

The main other religions in the municipality are Buddhism (0.5%) and Hinduism (0.2%).

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2020
<b>Update due</b>	2023

Despite the region having lower levels of diversity than other areas of the state, the proportion of the South Gippsland population that thinks multiculturalism makes life in their area better is at a similar level to the broader Gippsland region, although lower than the state-wide average.

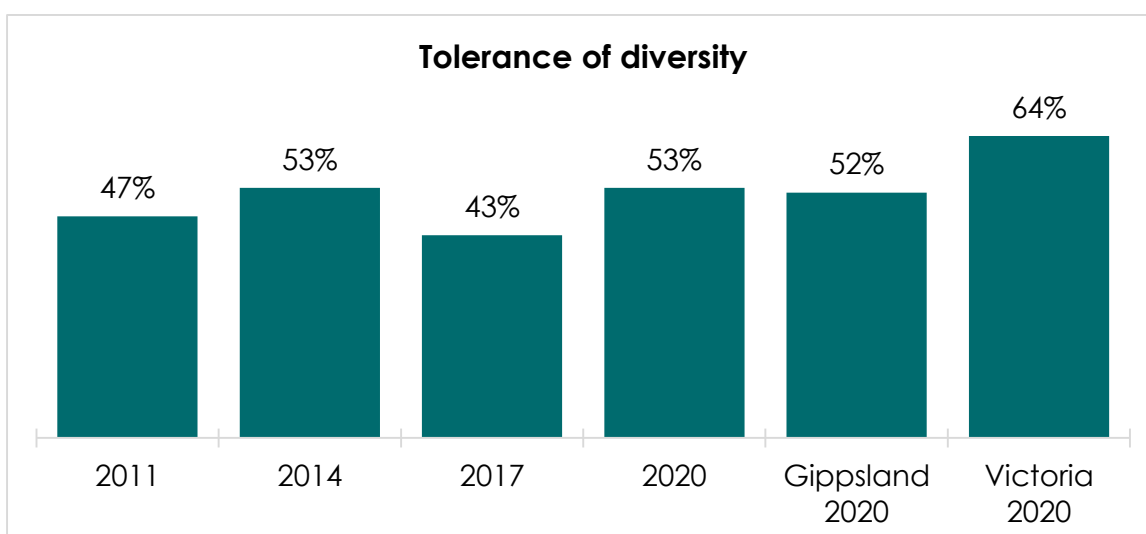


Figure 7 Proportion who definitely thought that multiculturalism makes life in their area better



## 1.5 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

When referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, please do not abbreviate to the initials as it is disrespectful. Using the term 'Indigenous' is often OK, but the best option is to check the preference of the local community with whom you are interacting.

<b>Source notes</b>	Census, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

As at the 2021 Census there were approximately 357 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people living in South Gippsland Shire (1.2% of the population), up from 278 in 2016 (1%), 205 in 2011 (0.8%) and 116 in 2006 (0.5%). The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Gippsland Shire in 2021 (1.2%) was slightly lower than is recorded in the broader Latrobe – Gippsland region (1.9%) yet higher than state-wide (1.0%).

The age profile of indigenous residents is quite young, with almost three quarters under the age of 35.

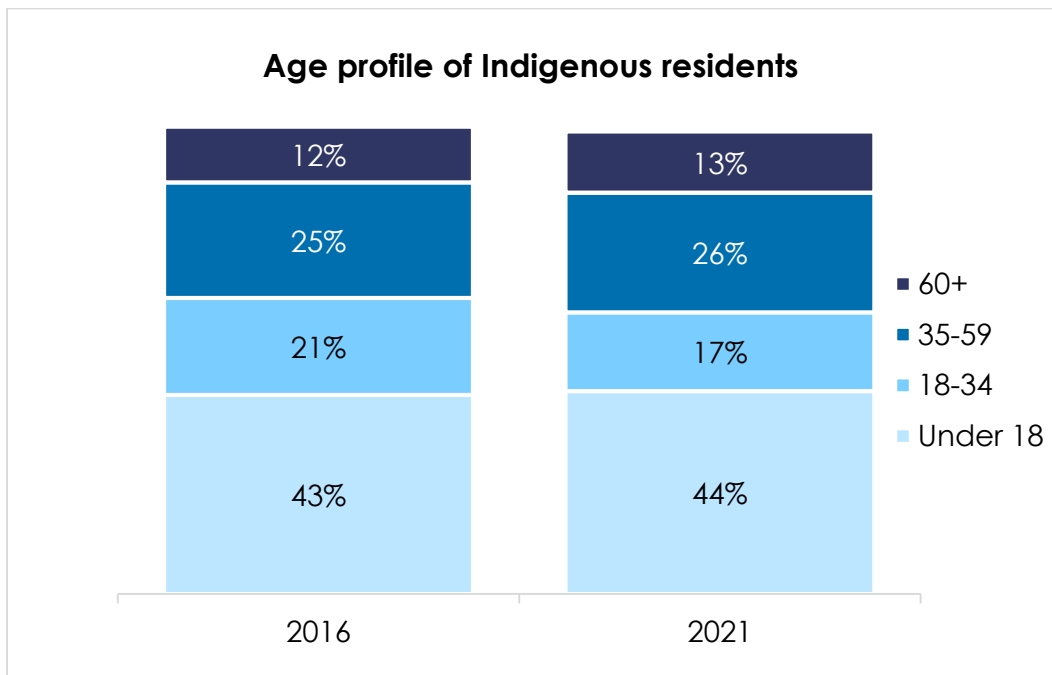
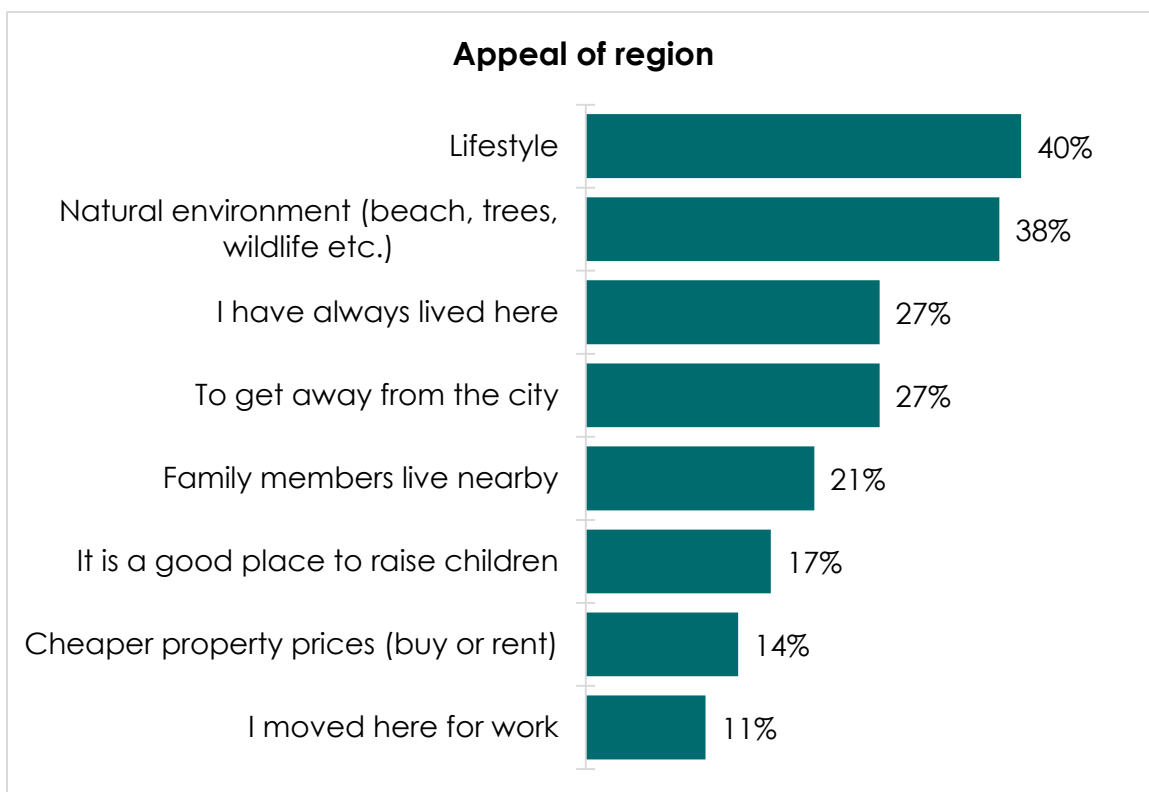


Figure 8 Age profile of Indigenous residents, 2016-2021

## 1.6 APPEAL OF THE REGION

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q2. What attracted you to live / own property in South Gippsland? Q3. What, if anything, do you like about South Gippsland? Q4. What, if anything, do you dislike about South Gippsland?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Amongst residents who completed the survey, the main drawcards for living in the region were the lifestyle and the natural environment.

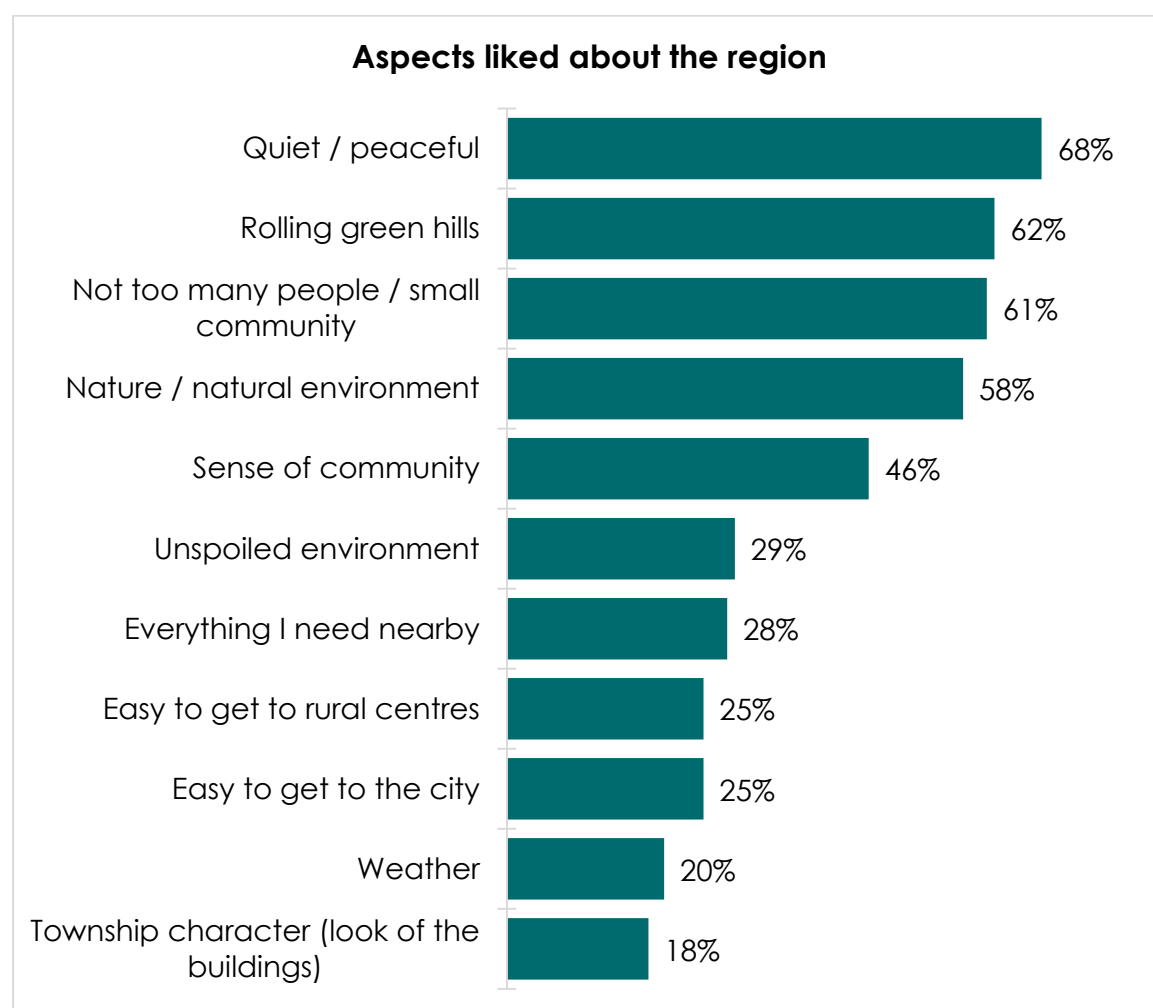


There were a number of notable variations in the survey data:

- Females more often said they live in the region to be close to family (24%, compared to 18% males);
- Males more often said they live in the region to get away from the city (31%, compared to 24% females) and for the lifestyle (44%, compared to 38% females);
- Almost half (47%) of those under the age of 35 said they live in the region because they have always done so, compared to just 25% of 55+ year olds.
- Tarwin Valley ward residents more commonly stated always living there (34%), family members living nearby (25%) and it's a good place to raise children (20%) as reasons for living in South Gippsland.

- Strzelecki and Coastal Promontory residents more often stated that they lived in the area for the lifestyle (41% and 47% respectively) and to get away from the city (29% and 34% respectively);
- More than half of those living in the Coastal Promontory ward said they do so due to the natural environment (52%, compared to 32% other wards).
- Those who said they had lived in the area for more than 30 years more commonly cited their reason for living there as being because they always have (55%), because it is a good place to raise children (23%), and/or for work (17%).
- More recent arrivals to the region (within the last 10 years) more commonly moved for the lifestyle (52%), natural environment (46%), to get away from the city (37%) and/or cheaper house prices (26%).
- Those who own a weekender or holiday home say they chose the region primarily for the natural environment (79%), but also the lifestyle (43%) and to get away from the city (42%).

The main aspects residents said they like about the region were that it is quiet, the rolling green hills, the small community and the natural environment.

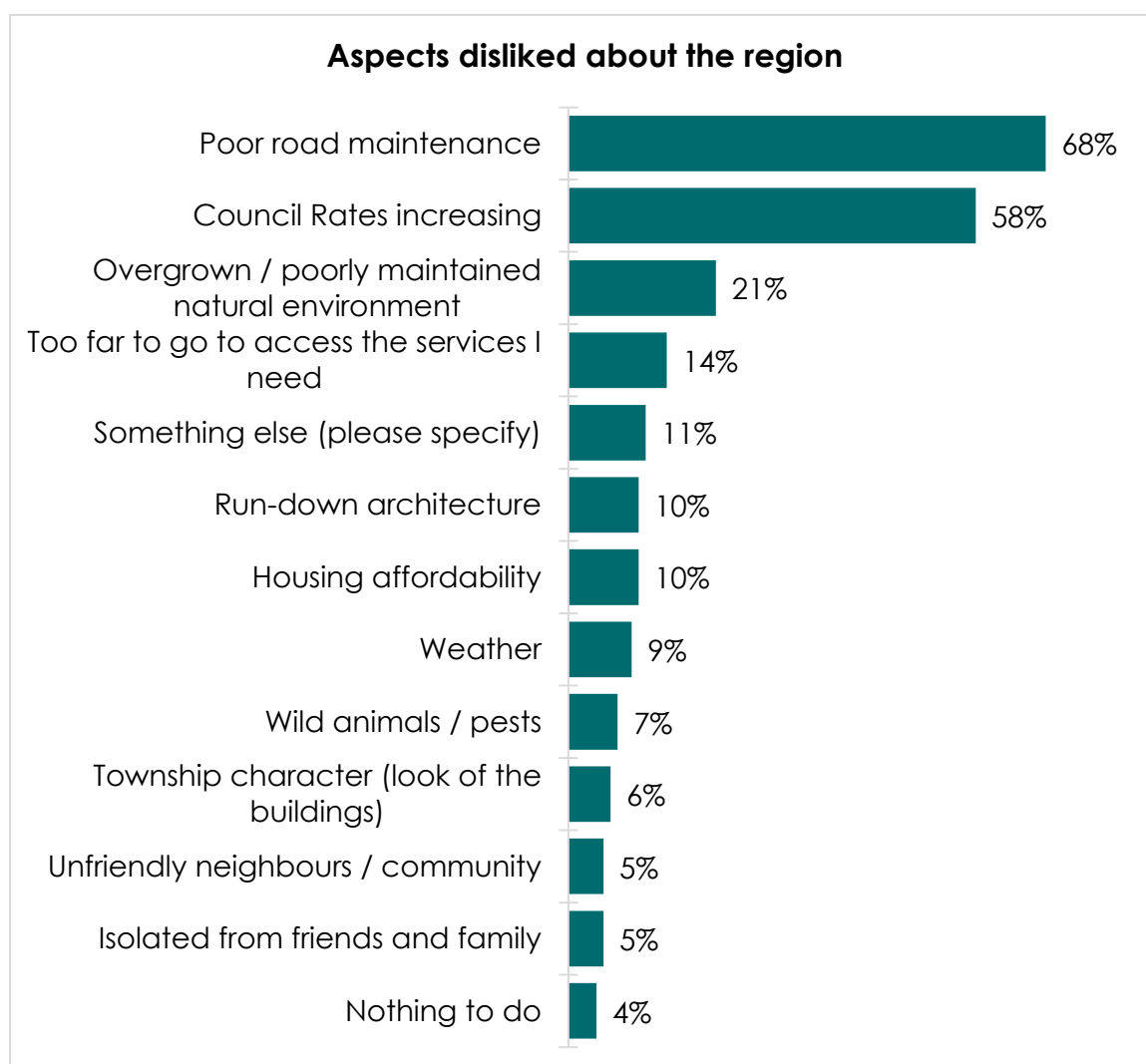


Residents aged 55 years and over more commonly said they like that everything they need is nearby (33%) and it is easy to get to rural centres (29%).

Variations by ward are apparent:

- Tarwin Valley residents more commonly said they like the rolling green hills (67%, compared to 48% Coastal Promontory), and everything they need is near by (35%, compared to 25% other wards).
- Those in Strzelecki ward more commonly said they liked the rolling green hills (69%), sense of community (50%, compared to 40% Tarwin Valley) and easy to get to the city (29%, compared to 17% coastal Promontory).
- For Coastal promontory residents the main things they liked were quiet / peaceful (74%) and the natural environment (70%).

When asked what they dislike about South Gippsland, the main dislikes were relating to roads and rates.



Some stand-out dislikes by ward were:

- Tarwin Valley residents more often mentioned poor road maintenance (72%, compared to 62% Coastal Promontory) and Housing affordability (13%, compared to 8% in other wards).
- Strzelecki ward residents more commonly mentioned Council rates increasing (65%, compared to 55% other wards), overgrown / poorly maintained natural environment (27%), and run-down architecture (13%)
- Coastal Promontory residents more commonly mentioned too far to access needed services (18%).

## 2 LIFESTYLE

There are a broad range of factors associated with lifestyle that can have an impact on an individuals' physical and mental health. In South Gippsland Shire the following lifestyle factors are of particular concern.

- Increase in the rate of experiencing harm from alcohol consumption, particularly amongst males.
- Declining levels of trust in people in general.
- Declining opportunities to have a say on issues of importance.
- Declining levels of feeling valued by society.
- Reduction in physical activity.
- Recent increase in proportion of households experiencing food insecurity.
- The South Gippsland Community is losing half a million dollars a month to poker machines.

### Community insights summary

- Mental health issues, particularly among the youth, has been seen as a concern. More funding for the drop-in centres for these issues, including support for drug and alcohol problems would be seen as a positive move.
- The influx of people moving from Melbourne has created a level of discomfort that was not previously there as people within communities generally knew each other.
- Many residents don't feel heard by council and also believe that decisions are made without being consulted.
- Covid has impacted participation in sports and related physical recreation. Better support for community sports from council, though good, may need to be reviewed again in general.
- Recreational facilities are seen as being vehicles for community inclusion but their funding is considered under threat due to the emergence of other priorities during the pandemic that are competing for the same resources.
- Many people in the community have been "doing it hard" in the community due to job losses and lockdowns but generally perceived to be not as bad as Melbourne.



## 2.1 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS

### Community Insights

Mental health issues, particularly among the youth, has been seen as a concern. More funding for the drop-in centres for these issues, including support for drug and alcohol problems would be seen as a positive move.

*"We have lots of mental health youth issues. [There are] drop-in centre where youth can see a mental health/drug and alcohol nurse, Doctor or GP. We help with things like getting them a Medicare card etc. We need more funding so we can see more kids. Leongatha modelled their clinic after our youth clinic in Foster." [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]*

**Source notes** AODstats.org.au

**Update due** Annual

In the South Gippsland Shire, the rate per 100,000 population of ambulance attendances for alcohol has been steadily increasing since the 2017/18 financial year. Ambulance attendances for illicit drugs has remained relatively stable across the last 10 years. The rate for illicit drug intoxication is also trending upward since the 2014/15 financial year, although at a slower rate than alcohol attendances.

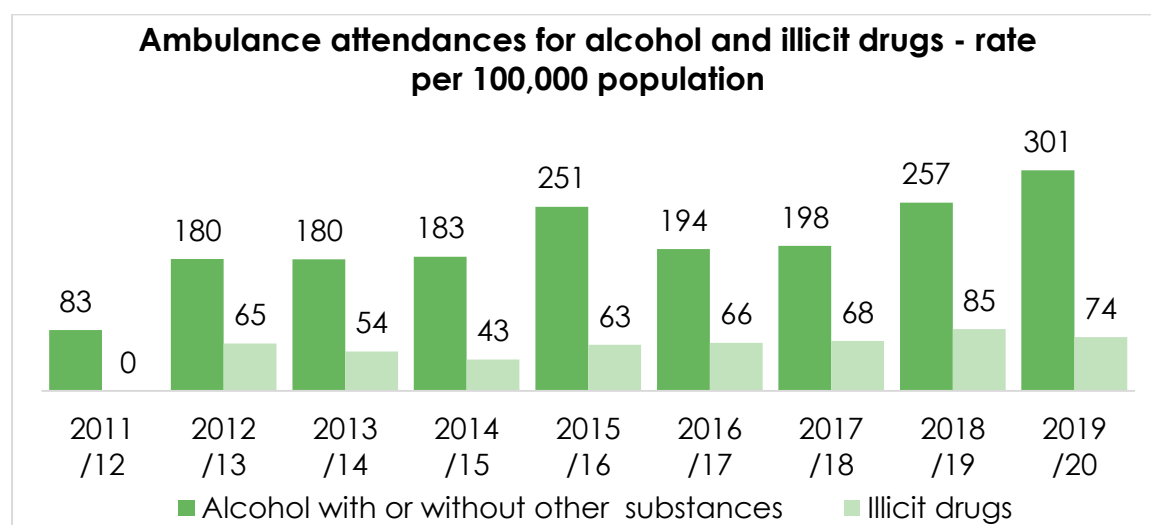


Figure 9 Ambulance attendances in South Gippsland Shire for alcohol and illicit drugs. Rate per 100,000 from 2011-20

Ambulance call-outs in South Gippsland Shire for alcohol intoxication were more common amongst males and this rate trended upward over the last decade. The rate for females has also seen an increased trend but at a slower rate than males.

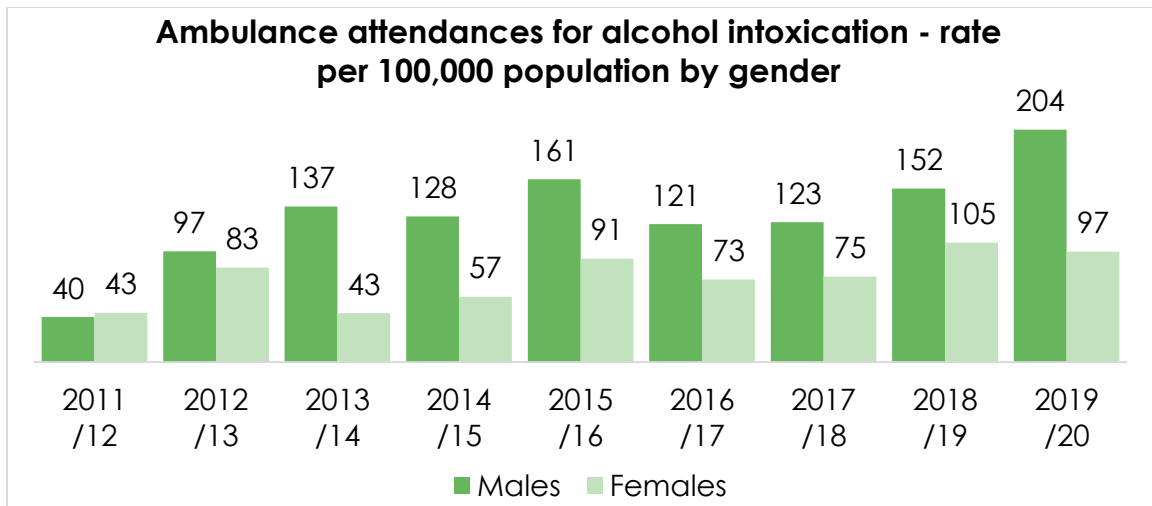


Figure 10 Ambulance attendances in South Gippsland Shire for alcohol by Gender. Rate per 100,000 from 2011-20

In the past, ambulance attendances for illicit drugs in South Gippsland Shire has been consistently more common amongst males, with the exception of 2018-19 financial year where the rate amongst females was slightly higher

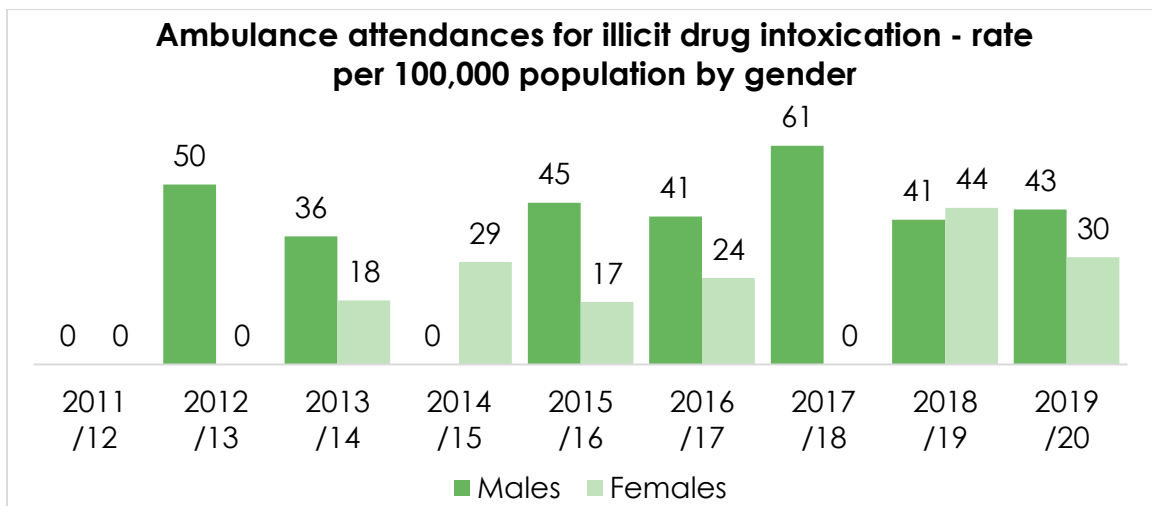


Figure 11 Ambulance attendances in South Gippsland Shire for illicit drugs by Gender. Rate per 100,000 from 2011-20

Most ambulance attendances in South Gippsland Shire for alcohol or illicit drugs results in the individual being transported to hospital.

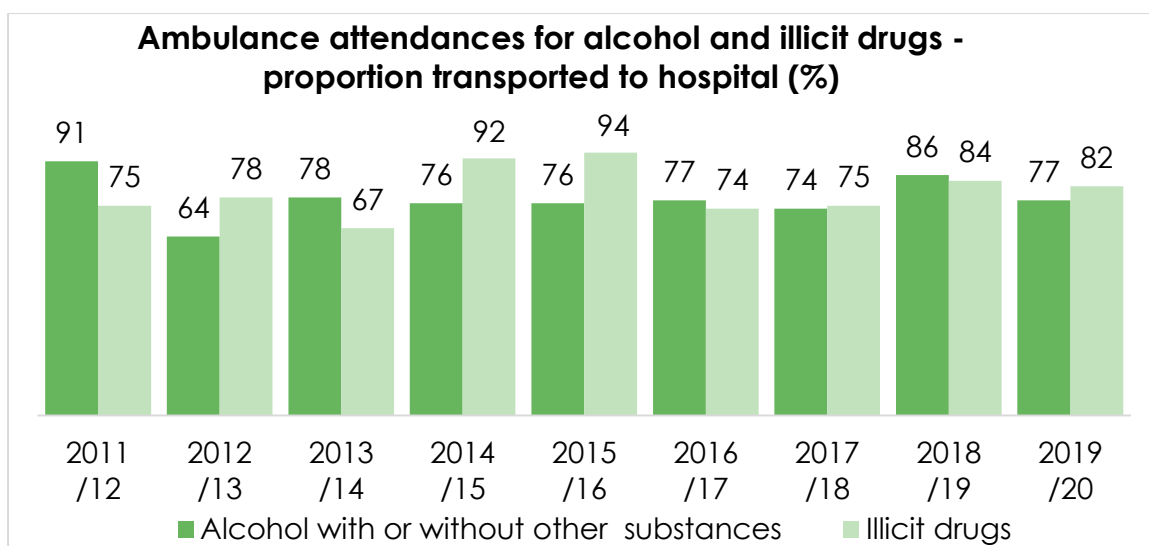


Figure 2.1 Proportion of ambulance attendances in South Gippsland Shire for alcohol or illicit drugs that result in transportation to hospital, from 2011-20

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS
<b>Update due</b>	2024 (2023 VPHS)
<b>Notes</b>	VPHS changed the way alcohol related harm was calculated in 2014, therefore comparisons to earlier datasets (2008 and 2011) are not possible. The region definition changed in 2017. Prior to 2017 the region was 'Gippsland, in 2017 it covers 'inner Gippsland'.

Two thirds of South Gippsland residents have alcohol consumption behaviours that put them at risk of harm over their lifetime, based on National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines (2009). These guidelines state that "To reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury, healthy men and women should drink no more than 10 standard drinks a week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day"<sup>3</sup>.

From 2014 to 2017 there was an increase in the proportion of South Gippsland survey respondents reporting alcohol consumption behaviours that put them at risk of alcohol related harm over their lifetime. However, this change is right on the edge of the error margin for the sample size (58.6%-73.7% for the 2017 figure), therefore future datasets will be needed to identify if this is a trend. The previous method for measuring long-term risk didn't reveal any notable increase from 2008-2011 (83%-85% at risk).

Although risk of lifetime harm is higher in South Gippsland than the broader region or Victoria, the variation is not statistically significant.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/alcohol> (accessed 27 September 2021)

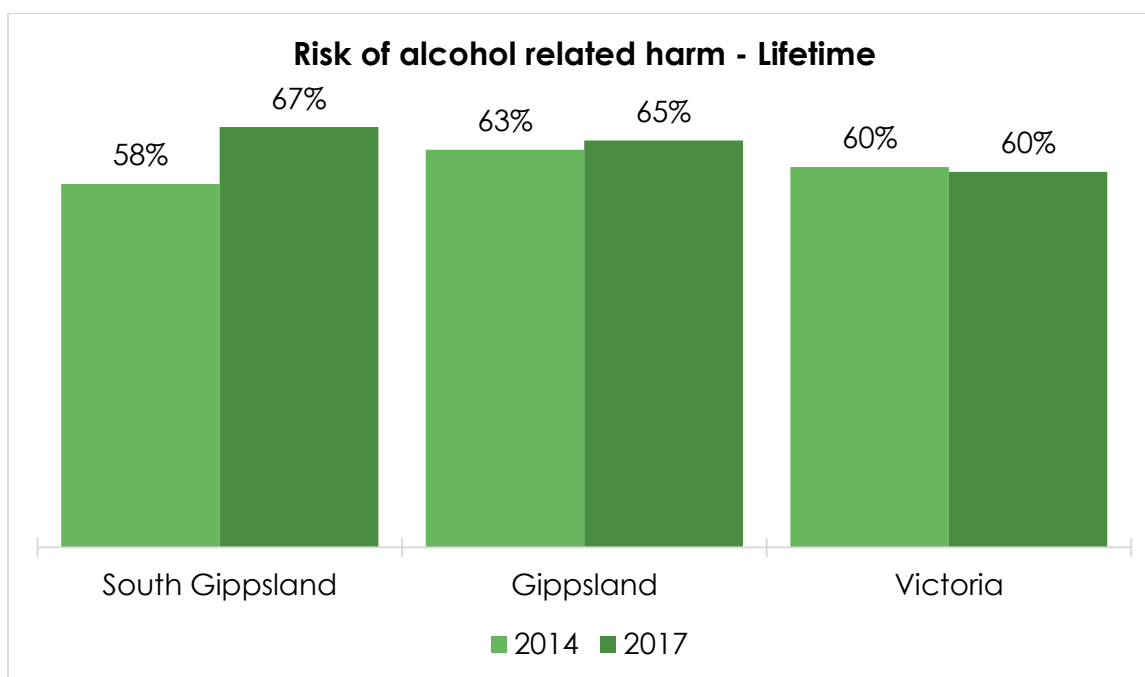


Figure 12 Risk of alcohol related harm over a lifetime, 2014-2017

Almost one half of South Gippsland survey respondents reported alcohol consumption behaviour that puts them at risk of harm on a single occasion of drinking. This is similar to the regional average, and slightly higher than the state average.

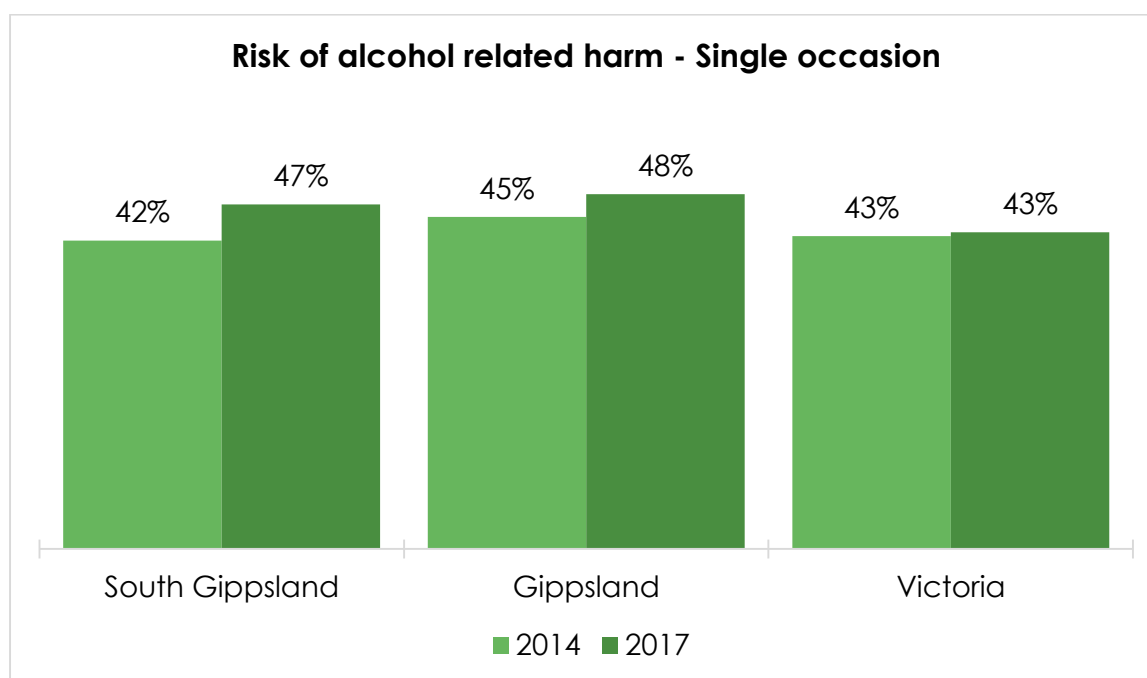


Figure 13 Risk of alcohol related harm in a single occasion, 2014-2017

Prior to 2017 the rate of smoking in the South Gippsland community was steadily declining, however in 2017 it increased back up to 2008 levels. A similar trend was observed state-wide.

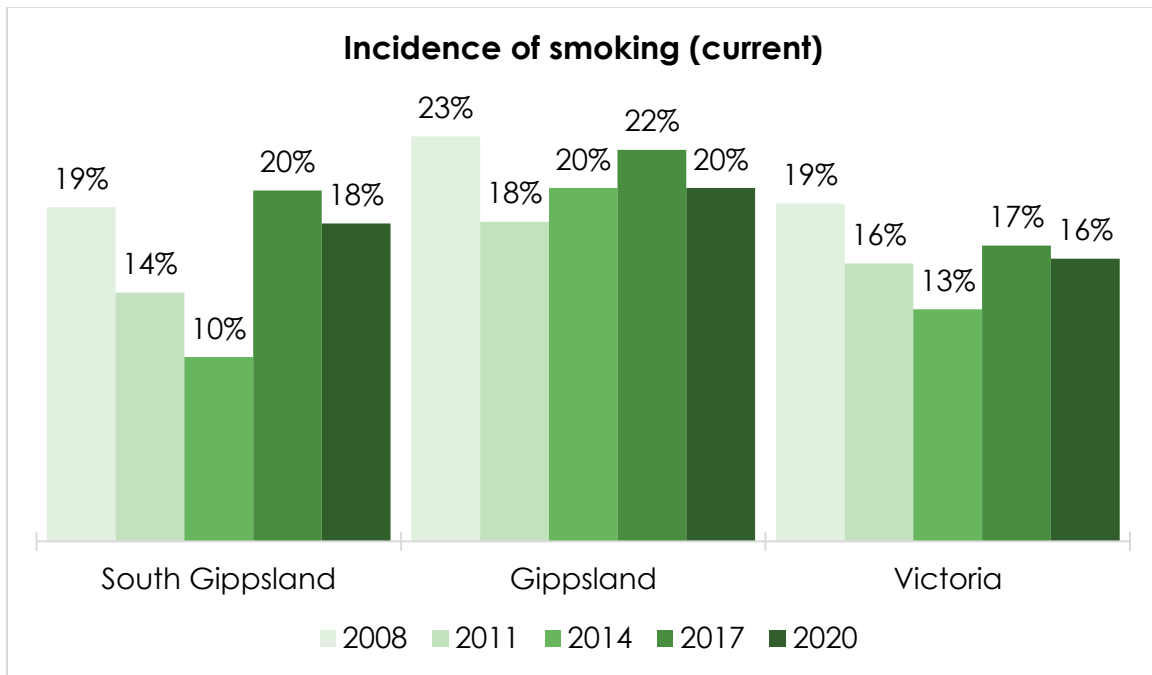


Figure 14 Incidence of current smokers, 2008-2017

<b>Source notes</b>	Crimestats.vic.gov.au
<b>Update due</b>	2022

The rate per 100,000 population of drug offences recorded by Victoria Police in South Gippsland fluctuates over time, with no clear trend over the last 7 years. The state-wide increase since 2018 has not been experienced locally.

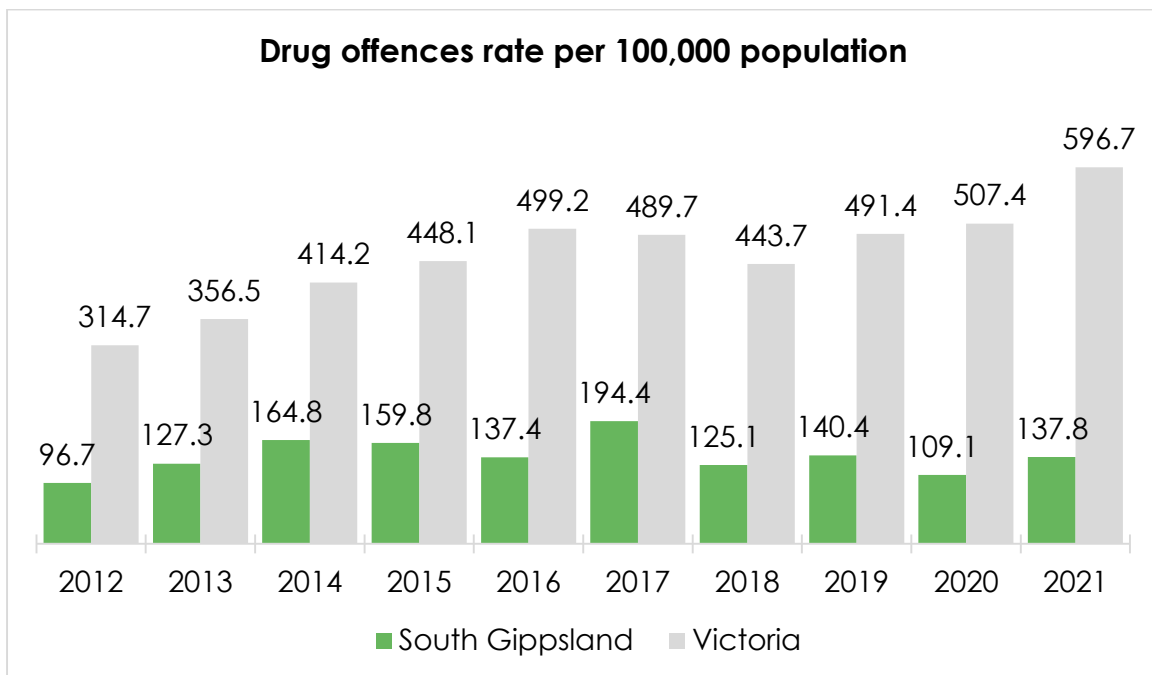


Figure 15 Drug offences rate per 100,000 population, 2012-21

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Alcohol addiction and binge drinking was selected by 3% of respondents as an item that had a negative impact on the respondent or their household within the 12 months prior to interview. This increased to 9% amongst those aged under 35.

Drug abuse was selected by 2% of all respondents as an issue they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview.

## 2.2 SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

### Community Insights

The influx of people moving from Melbourne has created a level of discomfort that was not previously there as people within communities generally knew each other. Council may have an opportunity to help new people connect to existing residents.

*"So much building (in Foster alone). When you walked the streets you used to know the people. Now you see new people and can't help but get suspicious. But you get used to that. I run a community group and see new people."*  
[Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

*"There are some people who say they used to walk up the street and know everyone but that's not the case now. But I don't think that's a bad thing."*  
[Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"We've lost a lot of community in the last 40 to 50 years. Everyone knew everybody's birthday, anniversary. Everyone would walk to someone's birthday or anniversary to celebrate the event. On our road, everyone was involved. If someone had a baby everyone turned up. New people came to the area, and everyone turned up with casseroles, beer etc. That is all lost."*  
[Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"It's nice to walk down the street and know the local people. Half the time now you don't know who they are. Some people don't even say g'day like they used to."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"It's going to take a proactive approach from council and groups to seek connection to new people coming to town. These people are coming from non-regional areas where nobody knows your business to everyone knowing your business. That can be great and bad but it is something that would not come naturally to someone not used to it – bring them in, help them along."*  
[Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]



<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2020
<b>Update due</b>	2023

From 2011-2017 there was a decline in the proportion of the South Gippsland population who said that they definitely agree that most people can be trusted, however the 2020 level shows a recovery back to the 2011 level, and is also higher than regional and state-wide averages.

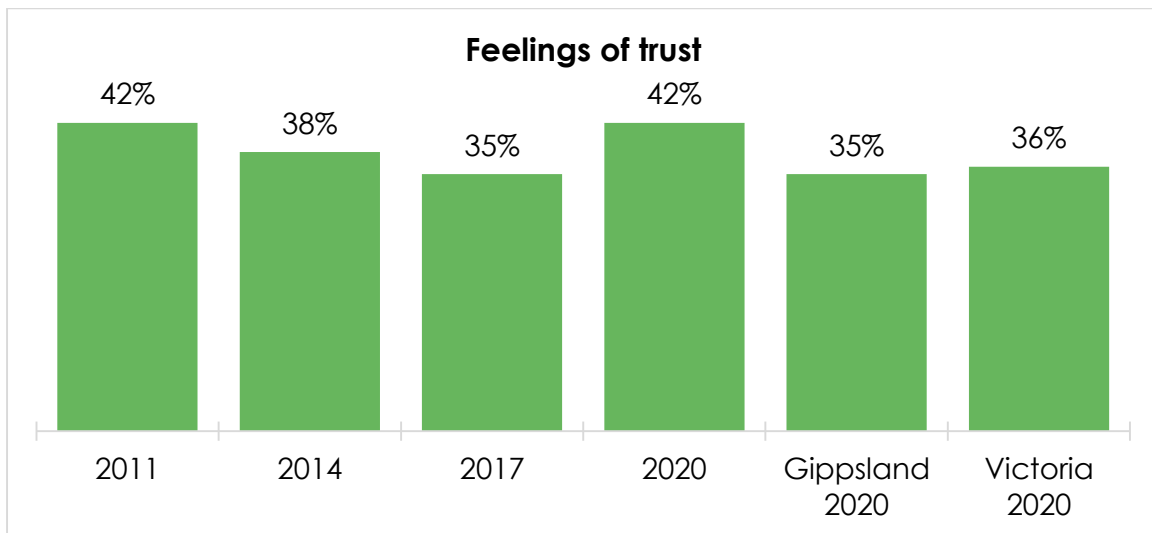


Figure 16 Proportion who definitely agreed that most people could be trusted

### Community Insights

Many residents don't feel heard by council and also believe that decisions are made without being consulted.

*"They need to listen people more [The Council]. I don't attend council meetings but I know people that do. A lot of the time the community voice is not heard. Council goes down the path they want to go."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Business admin]

*"One thing people would like, they have not seen the council say they are here to help me. Council is now 'How can we be a pain in the arse for you?'"* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"Council needs to engage with the community before decisions are made."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

*"The problem I have with councils in general is they come out to be the experts instead of asking. I'd like to see councils approach members of community groups what they need and consult with people about that they need."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"The feeling in smaller communities is that council is Leongatha centric."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Retail]

*"The community knows what needs to be done but voices are not getting consulted at all or their voices listened to."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"Council used to run this thing, like run by a company, like yours, where they would run focus groups in the community. They would be different funds for different things and people would suggest what needed to be done. Like fix up a car park. It was a really good way of getting to what the community wanted... Run them in a hall, have a facilitator. Lots of ideas thrown around. The last one was run 6-7 years ago. The issue was on our stadium. Holes in the roof. For example someone suggested putting in meeting rooms. The hospital [representatives] was there and they said they had parking problems. They were across the road, so we arranged parking on the showgrounds for the hospital when they needed it. We'd use it when we needed it. It connects the community. Unless you have these things, you don't know about them [and how to come up with creative solutions]."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017 & 2020
<b>Update due</b>	2023

There has been a decline in the proportion of the South Gippsland population who said that they have definitely had opportunities to have a real say on issues that were important to them. Furthermore, the 2017 level is lower than regional and state-wide averages. This is a measure of having a say in general (not specific to Council) and can help understand the level of inclusion and participation people have in their local community as a whole.

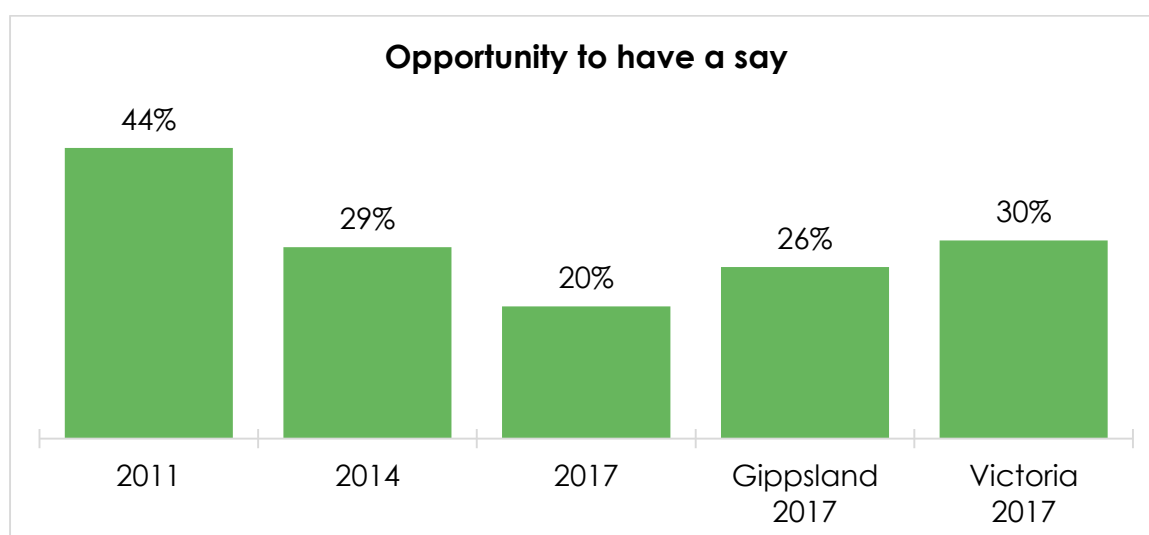


Figure 17 Proportion who definitely had the opportunity to have a real say on issues that were important to them

From 2011 to 2017 there was a steady decline in the proportion of the South Gippsland population who said that they feel valued by society. However, the 2020

level shows a significant recovery, and is now higher than the regional and state-wide averages.

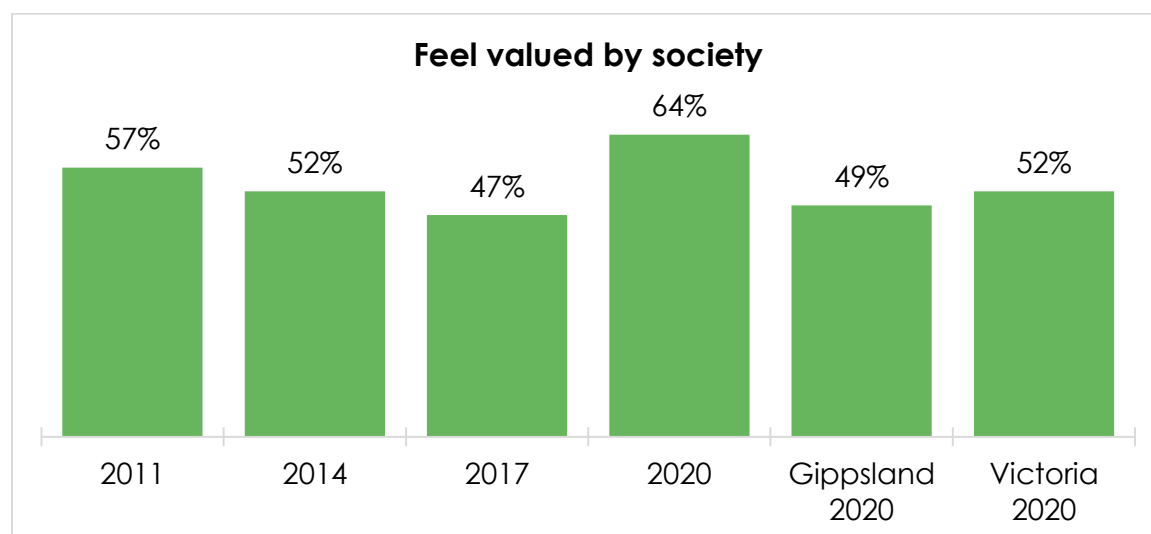


Figure 18 Proportion who definitely feel valued by society

## 2.3 SPORTS PARTICIPATION

### Community Insights

Covid has impacted participation in sports and related physical recreation. Council's support for community sport - though good - may need to be reviewed in light of these impacts.

*"Sport suffered, we have to get sports up and running again."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"Our soccer club has taken a big hit. We've had to pare back to two teams, maintain what we had. 6 teams were lost."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Teacher]

*"Kids depend on community sport and it's been hard on them not being able to play sport."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"Sporting infrastructure is high on my list. We share a ground with a cricket club. We have two soccer pitches on it. It would be good to have separate facilities."* [Strzelecki: Male, Retired]

#### Source notes

2022 Community Survey (part of this project)  
Does the person play organised sport?

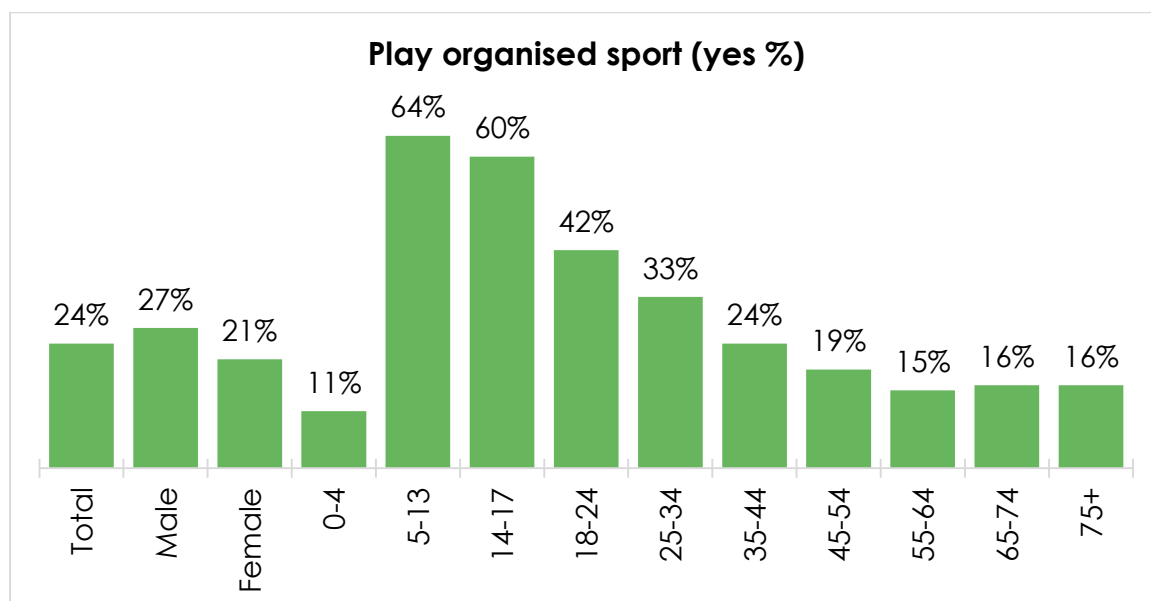
#### Update due

None planned

#### Notes

Collected for each member of the household. Data shows findings for 2,472 individuals across 1,258 resident households from the representative sample component.

More than six in ten children aged 5-17 play organised sport. The participation rate drops off notably when they reach 18, then continues to decline with age. Participation in organised sport is slightly more common amongst males.



When analysing by Ward there is very little variation in sports participation; 23% Tarwin Valley, 25% Strzelecki; and 23% Coastal Promontory.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Sports – maintenance of sport grounds / sport club facilities* was ranked as number 1 priority by 1% of respondents. Just under one in ten overall (9%) ranked this in their top 5, increasing to 17% among those aged under 35 years.

## 2.4 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017
<b>Update due</b>	2024 (2023 VPHS)
<b>Notes</b>	Physical activity guidelines for adults are 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity exercise or 1.25 to 2.5 of high intensity exercise most days <sup>4</sup> .

The proportion of South Gippsland residents who didn't meet recommended guidelines for physical activity time and sessions increased significantly in 2014, and remained high in 2017; however, the 2017 proportion is at a similar level as the regional average, and slightly lower than the state average.

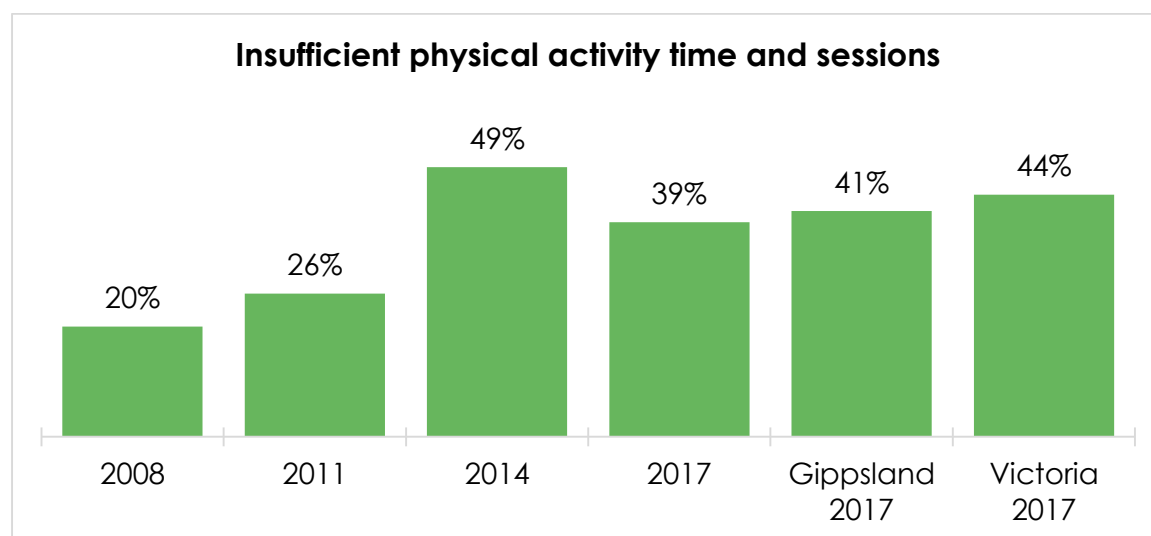


Figure 19 Insufficient physical activity time and sessions

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-adults-18-to-64-years> (accessed 27 September 2021)

## 2.5 FOOD

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017
<b>Update due</b>	2023 (2020 VPHS insufficient sample size to report a figure)
<b>Notes</b>	Fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines are 5-6 serves of vegetables and 2 serves of fruit per day, where a serve is one medium piece of fruit an half a cup of cooked vegetables or a cup of salad vegetables <sup>5</sup> .

Variations in food security measures across time can mostly be attributed to sample variance (therefore not statistically significant). The level of food insecurity in South Gippsland is comparable to regional and state-wide averages.

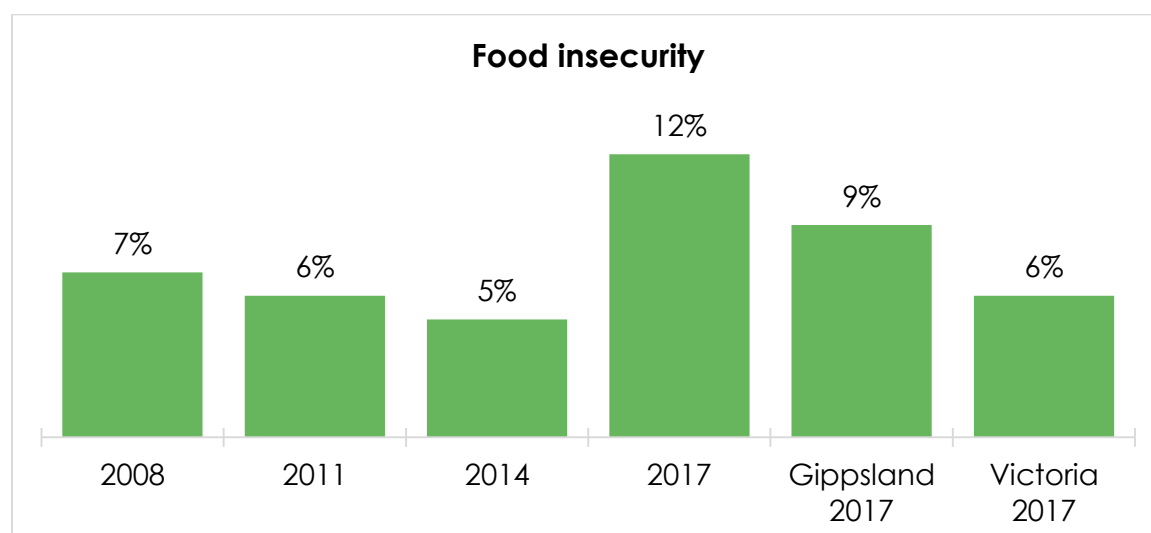


Figure 20 Proportion who had run out of food and could not afford to buy more in the 12 months prior to interview

The proportion of the South Gippsland population who eat the recommended daily serves of fruit fluctuates at around 40%-50%, which is a similar result to that recorded across the region and the state. Vegetable consumption at recommended levels is low, and has been declining over time, however this is also at a similar level to averages across the region and state-wide.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/how-much-do-we-need-each-day/recommended-number-serves-adults> (accessed 27 September 2021)

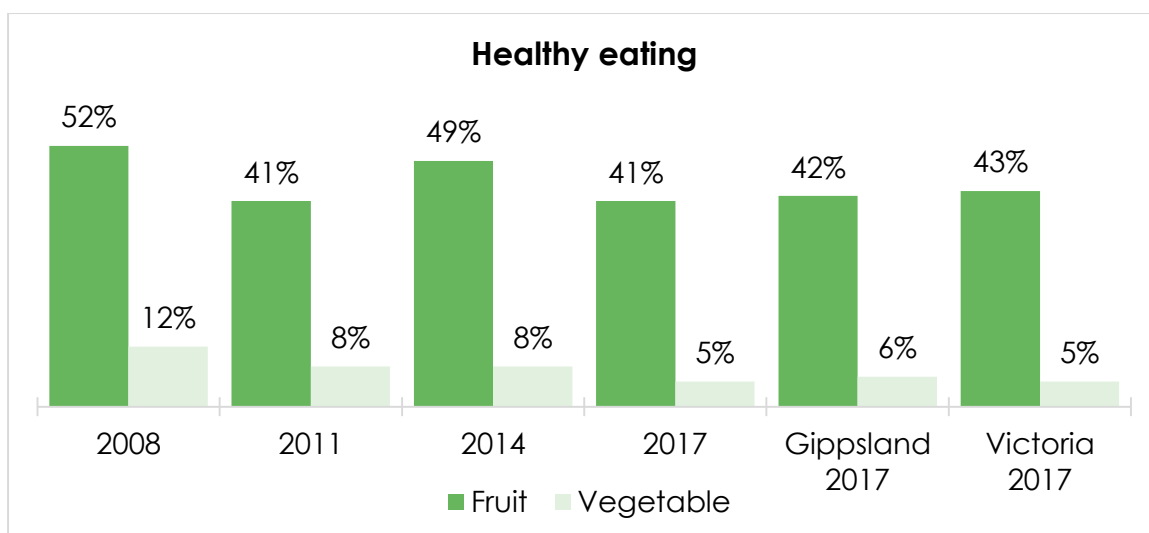


Figure 21 Proportion eating the recommended daily serves of fruit and vegetables

As per a calculation conducted by Council's GIS team, there are areas of the municipality where no households are within 3.2km of a food outlet; specifically Agnes, Bena, Darlimurla, Hedley, Nerrena, Port Franklin, Strzelecki and Waratah Bay.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 2% selected *ran out of food and didn't have money to buy more*. This was more commonly chosen by under 35 year olds (9%, compared to 1% 55+ year olds).



## 2.6 RECREATION FACILITIES

In South Gippsland there are:

- 6 Libraries (Foster, Leongatha, Poowong, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Welshpool).
- 10 Community Centres in Venus Bay, Sandy Point, Allambee South, Dumbalk, Lang Lang, Leongatha, Inverloch, and Korumburra, and 2 in Foster; Manna Gum and the War Memorial Arts Centre.
- 2 Information centres (Prom Country in Foster and Citizens advice in Leongatha).

South Gippsland also has 105 parks with playgrounds, rotundas and BBQs, and 72 recreation reserves. Please see section 5.1 Public open space for more information.

### Community Insights

Recreational facilities are seen as being vehicles for community inclusion but are also seen as under threat of further funding due to other priorities due to the pandemic.

*"I'd also love to see ... priority go to recreation for everyone, not just sport and not just art but providing for a variety of recreation for everyone. It brings the community together and not a 'them vs us' mentality... We'll be ... challenged to maintain sporting facilities and recreational facilities because I don't think they'll be prioritised."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"With our sports club we had to finish the season and there was no social events we usually have to raise money [Due to covid]"* [Strzelecki: Male, Retired]

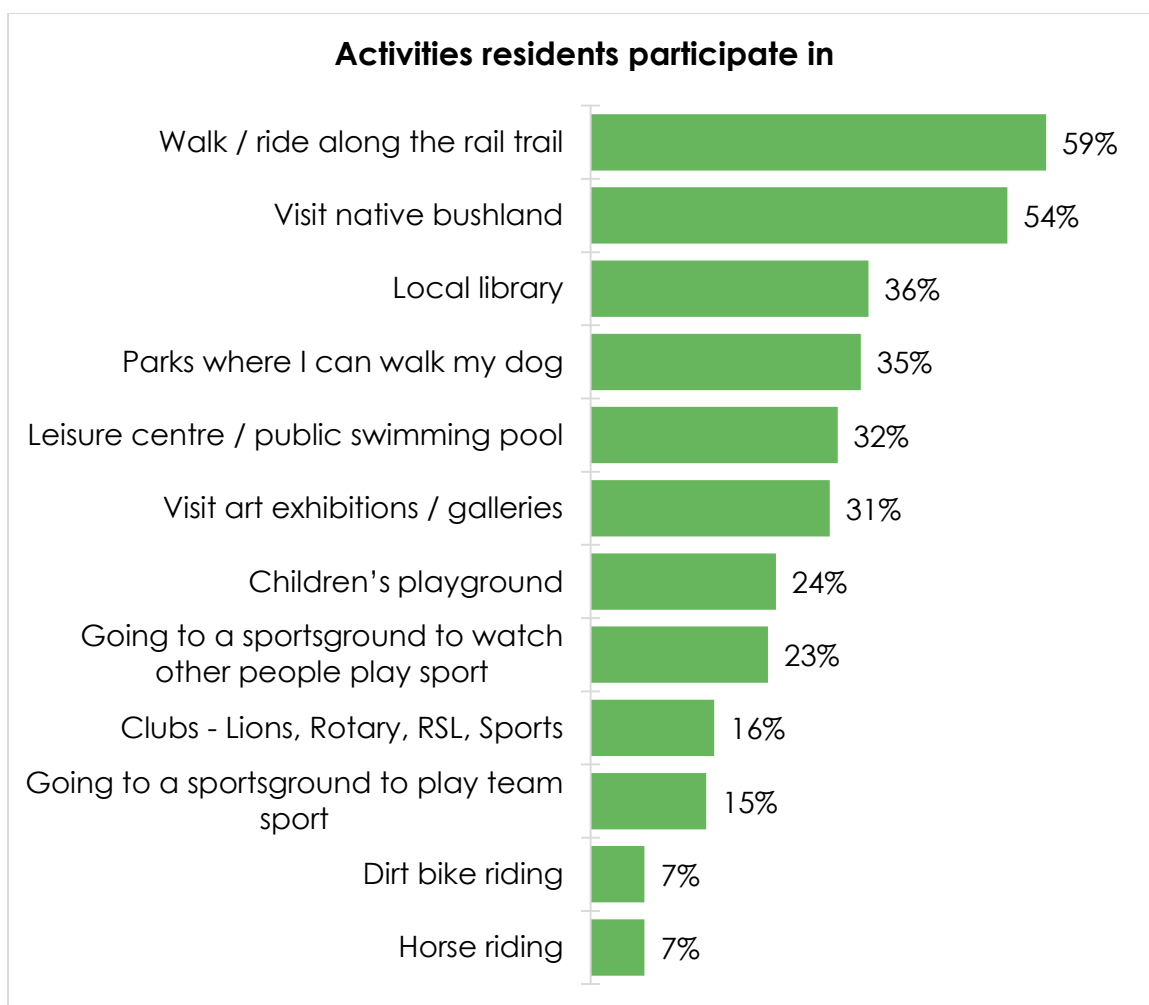
*"Rebuild sports complex, swimming complex."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"[literally as in maintenance] The pool, tennis courts, local sporting clubs."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"Funding. E.g. getting behind local sporting groups in Leongatha and the Shire. Tennis club needs to upgrade but needs to get funding. Support active clubs. Any sport and fitness is important."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q10. Which of the following types of activity do you like to participate in?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Use of open space, specifically the rail trail and native bushland, is the most popular activity where residents use Council managed facilities.



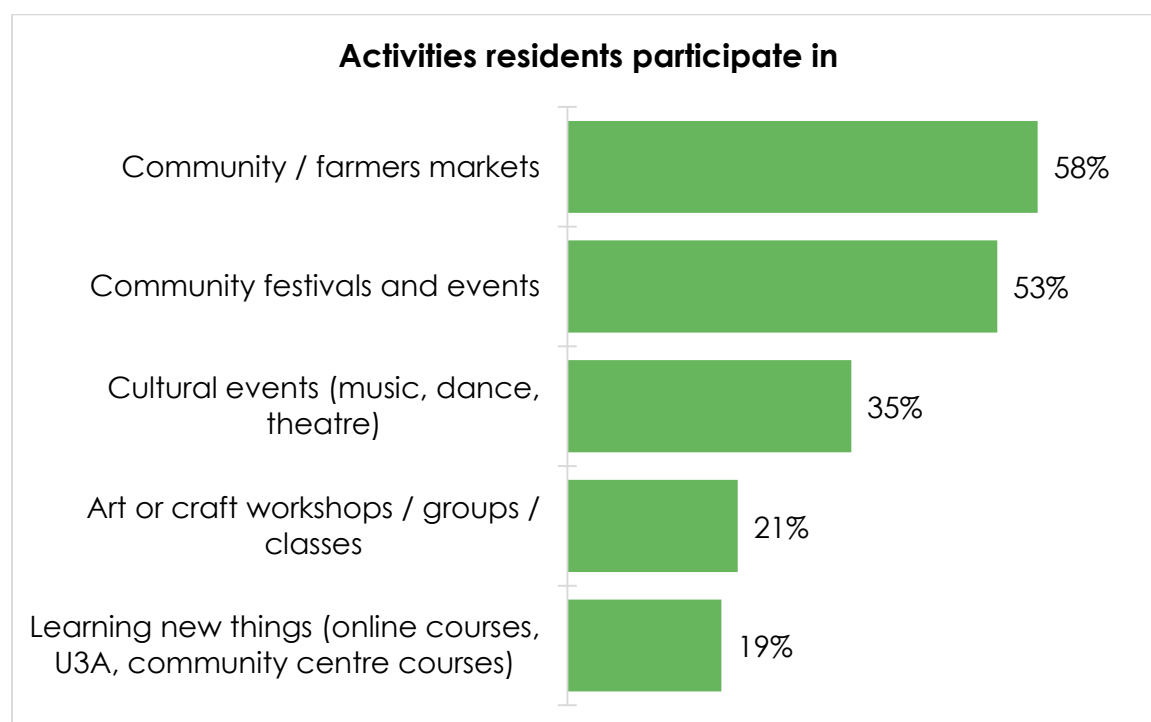
The survey shows some notable variations in recreation activities by demographics:

- A notably higher proportion of females undertake many of these listed recreation activities, with the exception of *going to a sportsground to watch other people play sport* (26% males, compared to 21% females) and dirt bike riding (9% males, compared to 6% females).
- Use of leisure centres, playing sport at a sportsground, visiting children's playgrounds, dirt bike riding, and walking the dog at a park all show notable declines in participation when people pass the age of 55 years. Those aged 55 years and over far more often participate in gardening (67%, compared to 45% under 35 year olds).
- There were no notable variations in recreation facility activities when comparing results by ward.

## 2.7 ART AND CULTURE PARTICIPATION

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q10. Which of the following types of activity do you like to participate in?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
	Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

The most popular arts and culture activities are markets and community festivals/events.



Females show a higher instance of undertaking each of these art and culture participation activities, and visiting art exhibitions / galleries is more common amongst those aged 55 years and over (34%, compared to 23% under 55 year olds). All other activities have similar levels of participation across all age ranges and wards.

## 2.8 PROVIDING UNPAID CARE

<b>Source notes</b>	Census, 2021 Provided care in the 2 weeks prior to the Census date.
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

Just over one in ten residents provide unpaid care, help or assistance to family members or others because of a disability, a long term health condition or problems related to old age; and a quarter spend time looking after a child (either their own or someone else's), without pay.

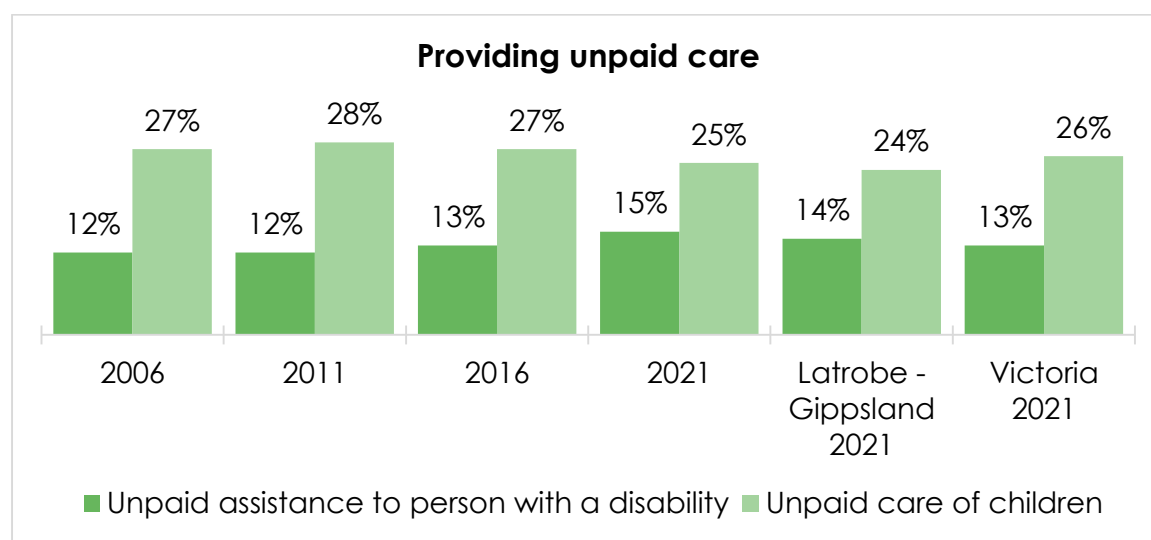


Figure 22 Proportion of people who provide unpaid care

Caring is disproportionately undertaken by females; 17% of adult females provide unpaid care to a person with a disability (compared to 13% of males) and 28% of adult females provide unpaid care of a child (compared to 22% males).

## 2.9 GAMBLING

The data for 2019-20 has been affected by the closure of venues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are 4 venues in the Shire of South Gippsland with a total of 105 Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM / poker machines).

Location	Ward	Number of machines
Foster golf club	Coastal Promontory	25
Korumburra Hotel	Strzelecki	16
Leongatha RSL	Tarwin Valley	44
McCartins Hotel	Tarwin Valley	20

<b>Source notes</b>	VLGCR, 2021. Expenditure is total amount lost by players.
<b>Update due</b>	Annual (2022)
<b>Notes</b>	Rate per population calculated using ABS ERP figures per year. <a href="https://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ERP_Q">https://stat.data.abs.gov.au/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=ERP_Q</a> <a href="#">UARTERLY</a>

Prior to the temporary closure of venues with electronic gambling machines (EGMs) during the COVID-19 pandemic, the average annual expenditure per head of population in South Gippsland Shire was decreasing over time.

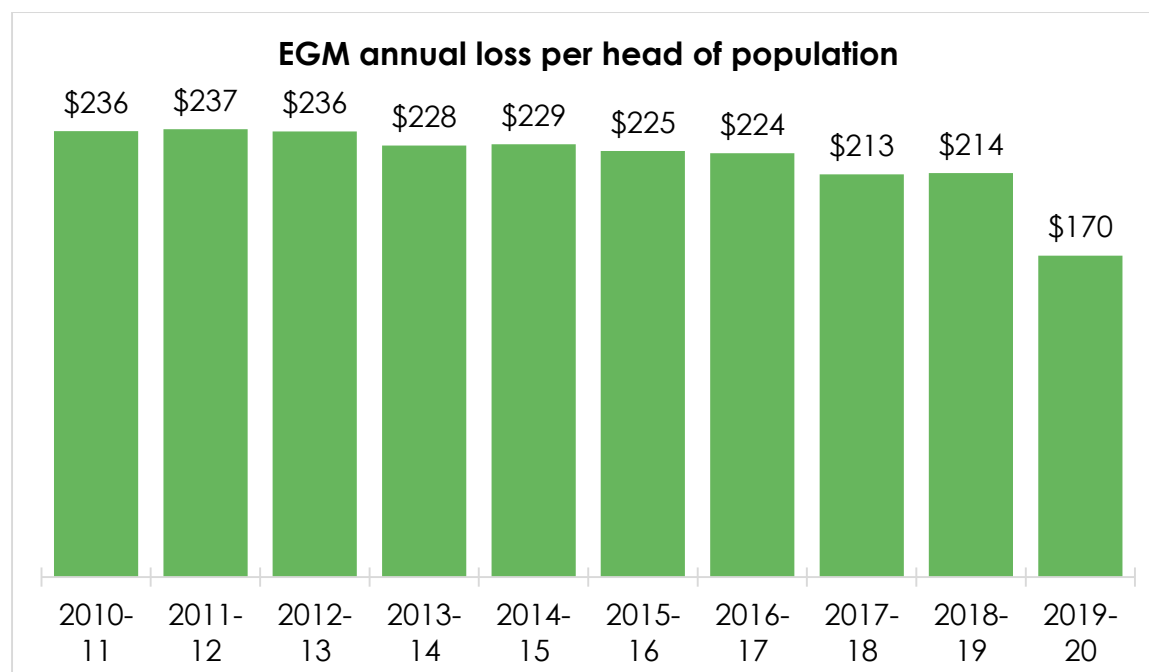


Figure 23- Gambling expenditure by head of population

Once venues began to open up after COVID-19 restrictions, losses increased, reaching a peak of over half a million dollars lost on EGMs in South Gippsland Shire in March 2021.



Figure 24 EGM monthly losses 2021-22

Prior to COVID-19 the average monthly losses on EGMs in South Gippsland Shire was just over half a million (\$533,067 average per month in 2018-19 financial year).

### 3 HEALTH PROTECTION

Local Governments having a plan to ensure the health and wellbeing of the local community is a requirement under Victorian State Government legislation. Based on publicly available data on health and wellbeing, the potential risks to health protection in South Gippsland Shire are:

- Recent decline in self-reported health as excellent or good (lower levels than state average).
- Fewer residents are having regular health checks for preventable diseases.
- Increasing incidences of asthma and obesity.
- Increasing need for GP and health services.

Council can typically address these issues through health education and service advocacy.

#### Community insights summary

- Community members are pleased that the vaccination rates (especially for covid-19) for the region are comparatively high to other jurisdictions.
- People report access to medical care as good.
- However some are finding it difficult to make a doctors appointment due to the increase in population due to people migrating to the region from Melbourne.
- Health and aged care was cited as a potential concern moving forward, though not a critical problem at present.

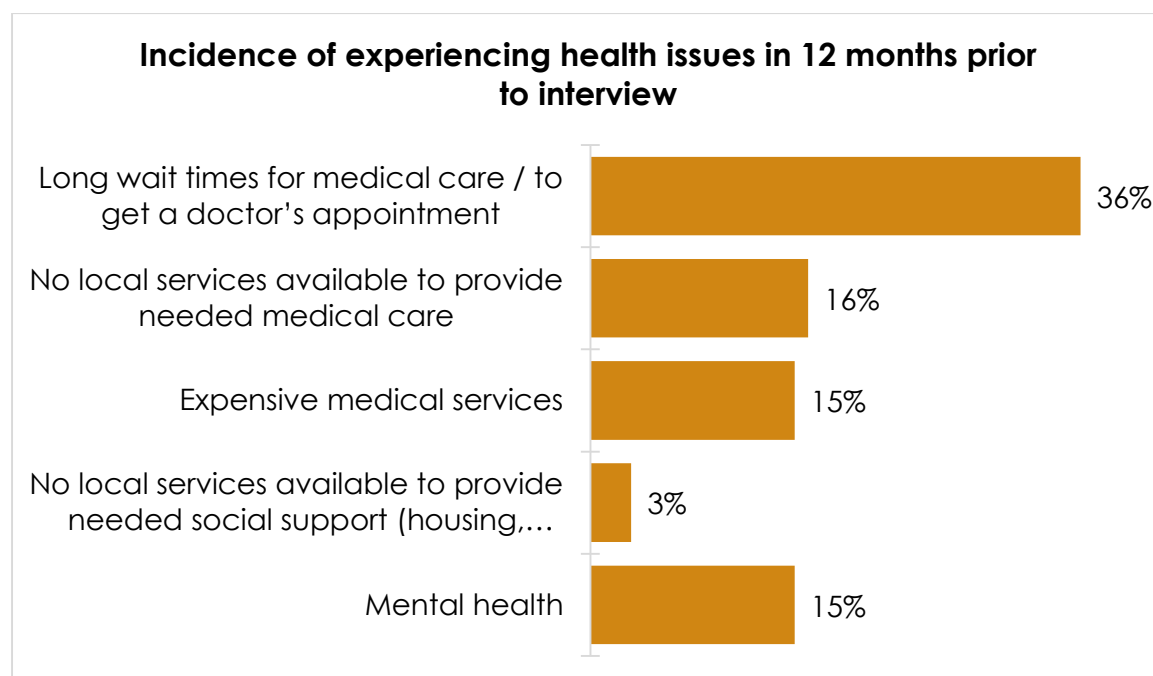
<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Health – access to medical services (physical and mental health)* was ranked as number 1 priority by 9% of respondents and in the top 5 by 40%. Females show a notably higher instance of ranking this in their top 5 (42%) than males (36%).



<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 43% selected a health related issue (expensive, wait times, no local services). This was higher amongst females (48%, compared to 38% males).



Mental health was more commonly mentioned by females (18%) and younger people (36% under 35 year olds and 28% 35-54 year olds, compared to 9% 55+ year olds).

## 3.1 IMMUNISATION

### Community insights

Community members are pleased that the vaccination rates (especially for covid-19) for the region are comparatively high to other jurisdictions.

*"I'm at the point that I'm hoping it [Covid-19] will just go away. I think the community feels safe. We have not felt the threat. We have good healthcare and a high vaccination rate."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"... Hopefully vaccination rates are high [remaining so], and we are able to manage. We are over 80% on the first shot and over 50% on the second. [very high rates at the time of the interview compared to Melbourne.]"* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Business Owner]

*"We're 85% vaccinated [in Sth Gippsland]. We have a brilliant medical centre."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

<b>Source notes</b>	VicHealth Childhood Immunisation coverage data by SA3
<b>Update due</b>	Quarterly (June 2022)
<b>Notes</b>	Immunisation data is only available by SA3, and therefore covers South Gippsland Shire as well as Bass Coast Shire.

The proportion of children fully immunised at 60-63 months has been increasing over time, and sits at 97%. The national aspiring coverage target is 95%, which is also the current average for the state.

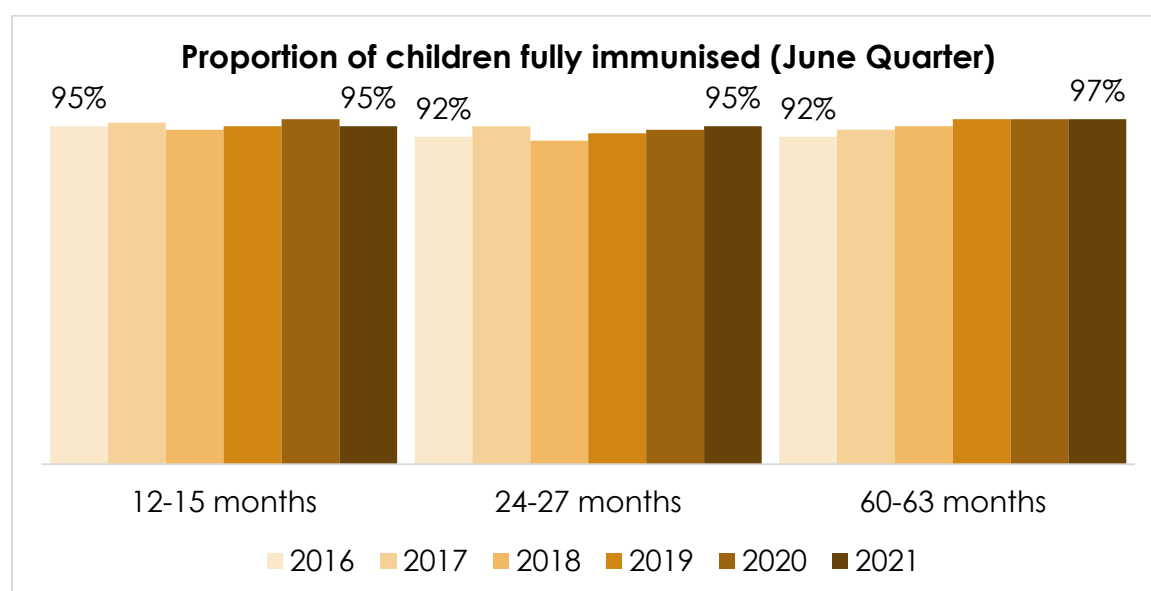


Figure 3.1. Proportion of children fully immunised 2016-21, June quarter

At the time of writing (27 September 2021) the COVID-19 vaccination rate amongst the adult population of South Gippsland was 84% first dose and 54% second dose.

## 3.2 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

<b>Source notes</b>	Council Storm Recovery survey conducted in September 2021. Survey was undertaken amongst those who had experienced storm damage in recent storms. n=108.
<b>Update due</b>	Not known

Most respondents in the 2021 storm recovery survey indicated that they find out about impending emergencies through the Vic Emergency App and/or Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Warnings. Social media and ABC radio are also important channels for communicating impending emergencies.

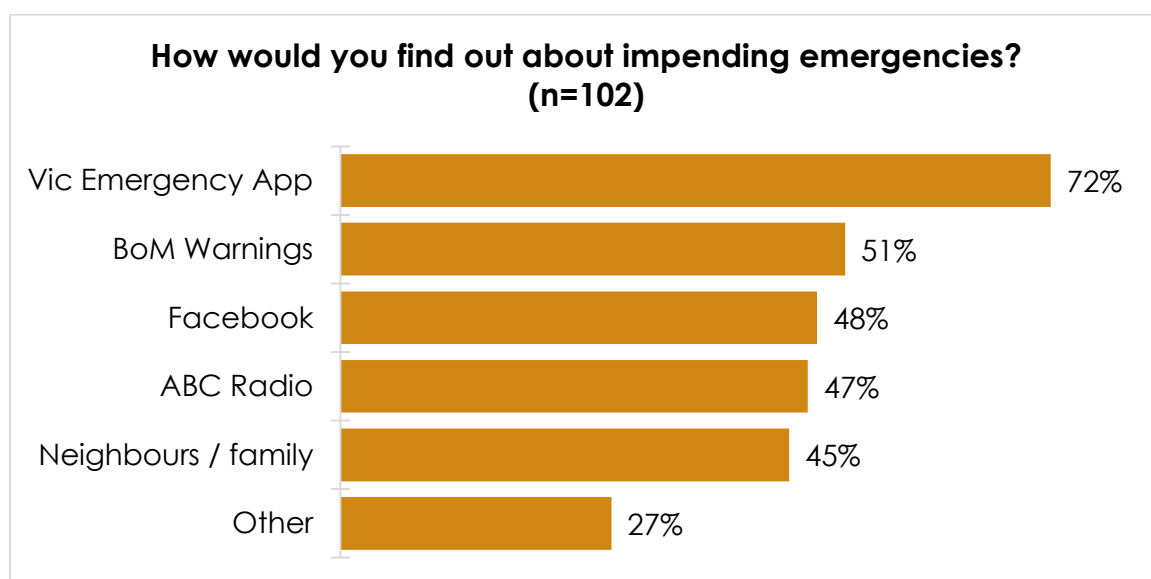
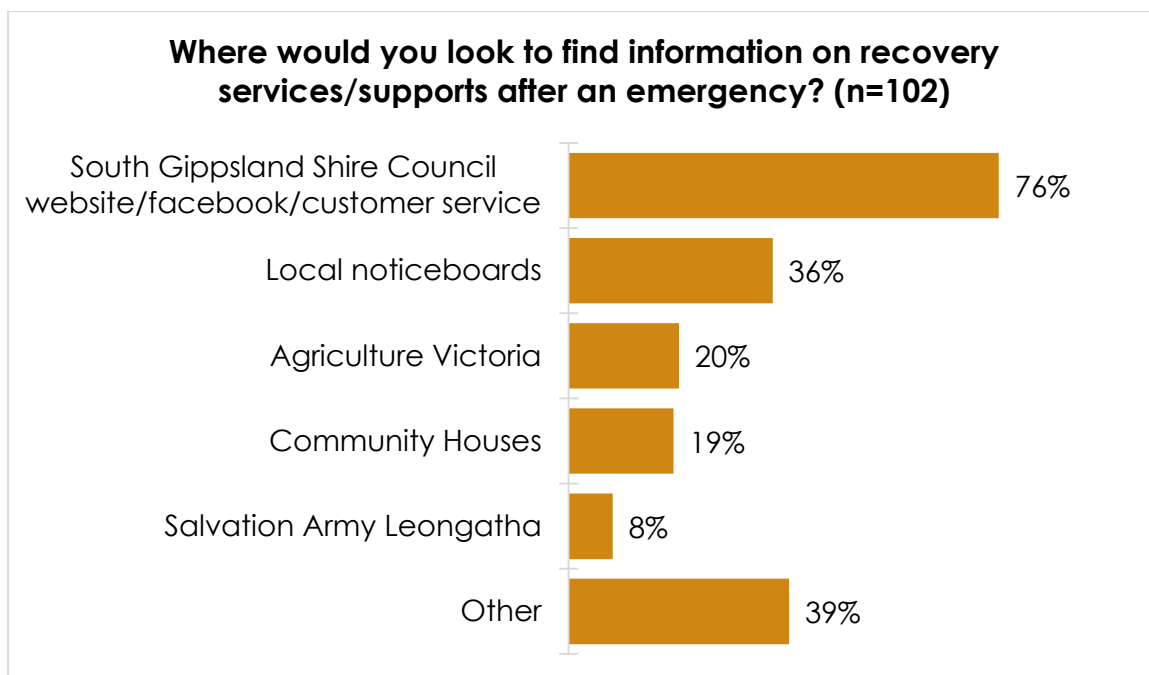


Figure 25 How would you find out about impending emergencies.

For information about road closures, most would look at the VicRoads Website or the Council website/Facebook.

The most common places that respondents said they would go to find information on recovery services / supports after an emergency were Council's website or Facebook and local noticeboards.



*Figure 26 Where would you look to find information on recovery services/supports after an emergency.*

Of those surveyed, the mean level of preparedness for emergencies before the 2021 storm event was perceived to be 2.89 out of 5 (where 1 is not prepared and 5 is highly prepared), whilst after the event it increased to 3.32 out of 5.

The most commonly stated future activities to be more prepared for storms and flooding were back-up power/generators (81%), improved understanding of the impacts of power outages (27%) and more options for accessing emergency information (26%).

### 3.3 SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

<b>Source notes</b>	Women's Health Atlas, various years
<b>Update due</b>	Not known

The birth rate amongst teenagers (13-19 year old) in South Gippsland has been falling over time, in line with regional and state averages.

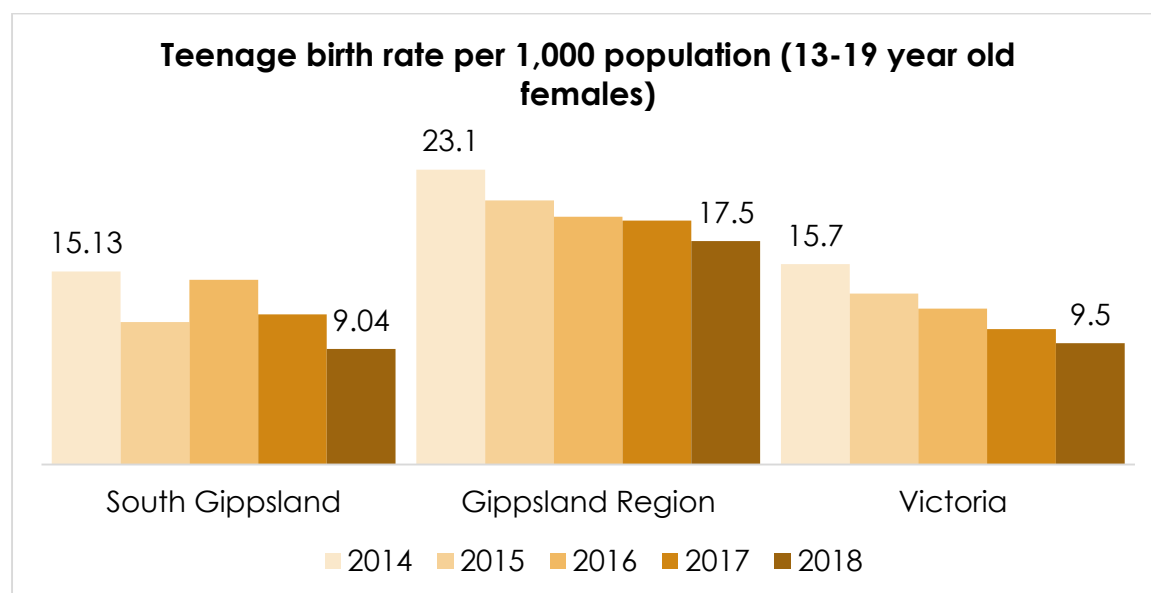


Figure 3.3. Rate per 1,000 of female teenagers (13-19 years) giving birth by year, 2014-2018

The fertility rate amongst females in South Gippsland has been steadily declining from 2015-2019, yet is still higher than the regional or statewide average.

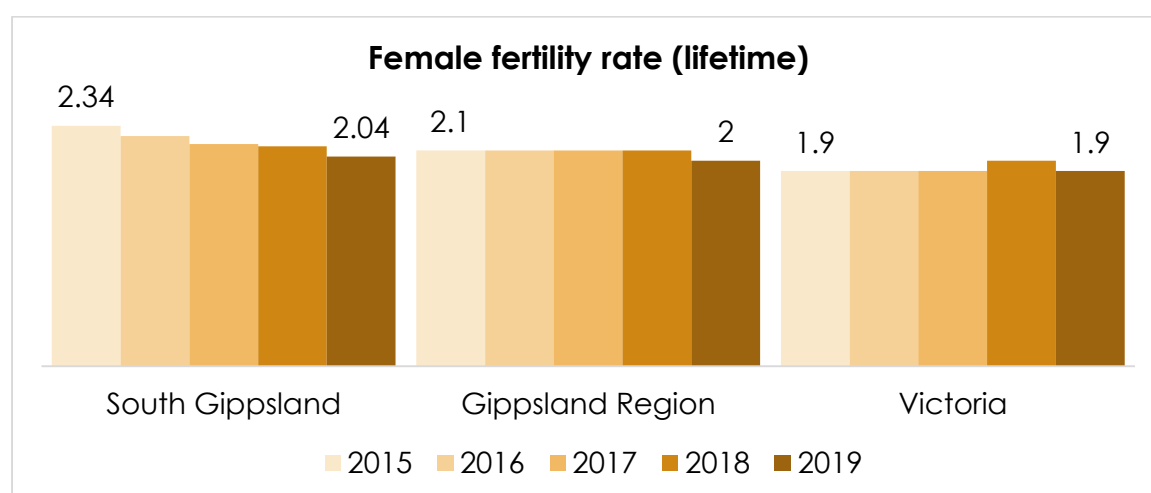


Figure 3.3. Female lifetime fertility rate, 2015-2019

Rates of sexually transmissible diseases is lower in South Gippsland than regional or statewide averages.

### 3.4 ACCESS AND EQUITY

#### Community insights

Most people report access to medical care as good, but some find it lacking because of distances they have to travel, even within the region.

However some are finding it difficult to make a doctors appointment due to the increase in population due to people migrating to the region from Melbourne.

The ageing population is also seen as a challenge to future access to healthcare.

*"We have a really good health system, great doctors and a little hospital that does surgeries." [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]*

*"...We have a new hospital, here so that is nice." [Tarwin Valley: Female, Retired]*

*"We have great health services for a small country town. Aged care home, access to 15 doctors in the clinic and hospital." [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Business Owner]*

*"As far as facilities ... Doctors and hospitals are good. Don't think we're missing out on much." [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Teacher]*

*"Sometimes we're restricted in terms of services but no other drawbacks... Medical is one. Sometimes you have to travel to get to medical services. Medical is the big one." [Tarwin Valley: Female, Business admin]*

*"We have new people ... It's hard to get an appointment at the medical centre. The town is growing, and the facilities are not keeping up with demand." [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]*

*"I'm not across all of the numbers but I think we have an ageing population. Particularly Tarwin Valley and the Coastal Promontory ward. Places pressure on our health services as well." [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]*

#### Source notes

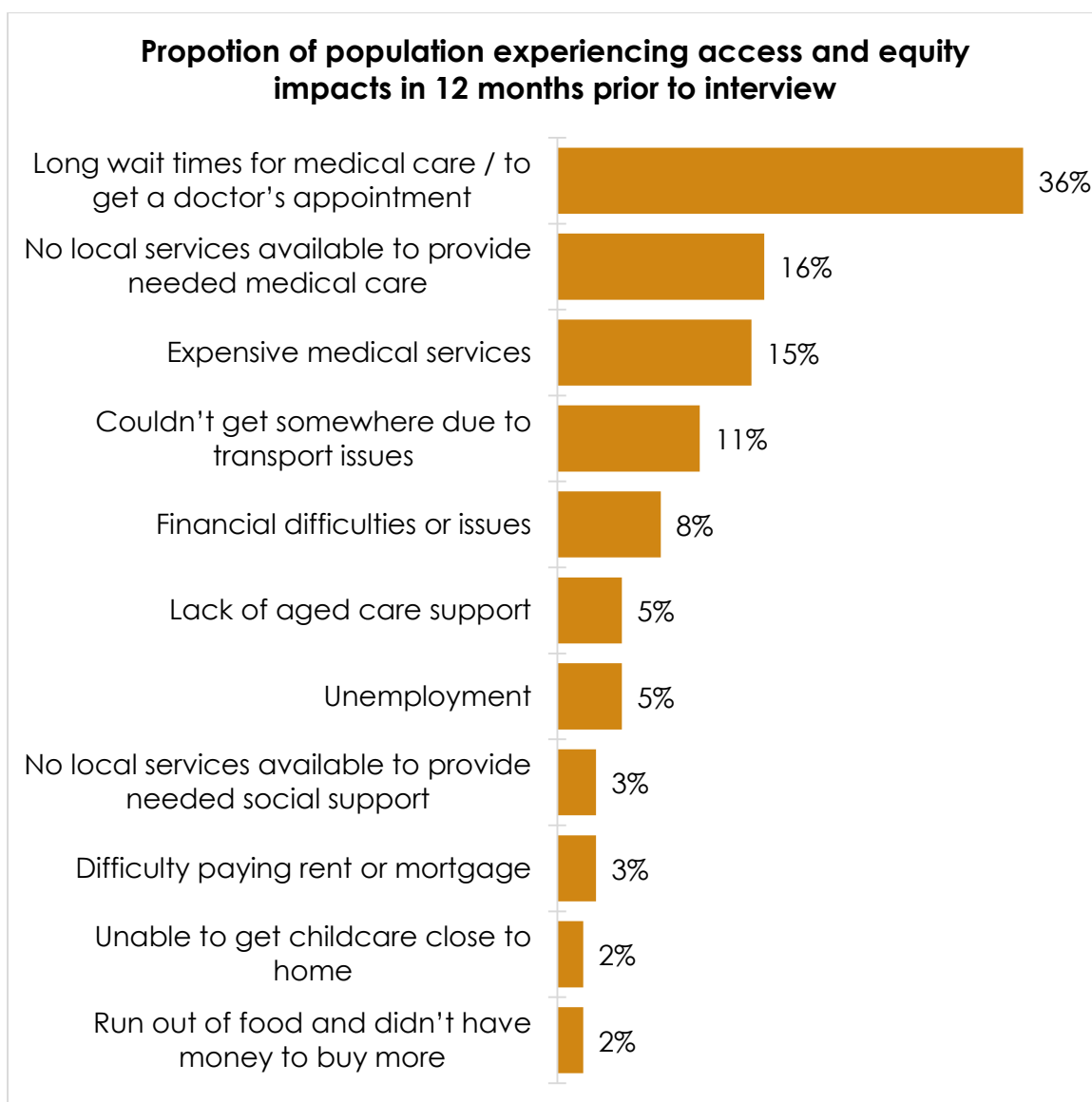
2022 Community survey (part of this project)  
Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?

#### Update due

None planned

Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Over a third of the community indicated that they had experienced long wait times for medical care in the 12 months prior to interview.



*Figure 27 Proportion of population experiencing access and equity impacts*

Overall, 51% of respondents said they or their family had experienced one or more of the charted access and equity issues, increasing to 57% amongst females (compared to 44% males). 35-54 year olds show a higher instance of having experienced one or more of these access and equity issues (59%, compared to 48% 55+ year olds).

Those in Tarwin Valley ward more commonly state that they have been unable to get childcare close to home (3%, compared to 1% Coastal Promontory), while Strzelecki ward respondents more commonly state that they had run out of food and didn't have money to buy more (3%, compared to 1% Tarwin Valley).



### 3.5 DISEASE, ILLNESS AND HEALTHCARE

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2020
<b>Update due</b>	2023

There was a dip in the incidence of South Gippsland residents reporting excellent or very good health in 2017. This recovered during the pandemic, with higher levels of excellent / very good reported in South Gippsland than regional or state-wide averages.

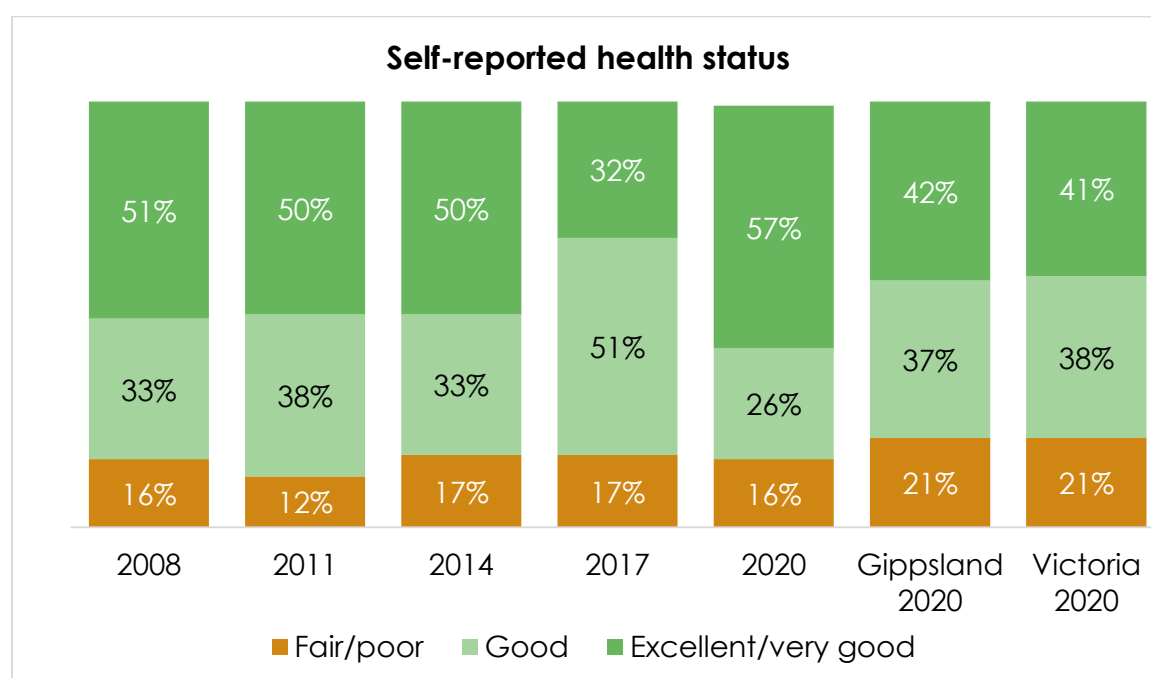


Figure 28- Self-reported health status

When assessing key health and healthcare measures, data suggests that residents in South Gippsland show the following characteristics:

- Slightly increasing incidence of asthma.
- Increasing incidence of obesity, with obesity levels higher than the state average. In the 2020 VPHS survey this figure had increased to 29%.
- Incidence of recently having a blood cholesterol check dropped in 2017 and is lower than the regional and state averages.
- Incidence of recently having a blood glucose check dropped in 2017 and is lower than the regional and state averages.
- Incidence of 50+ year olds having a bowel cancer check recently increased, but is still less than half of the population.

	South Gippsland				2017	
	2008	2011	2014	2017	Gippsland	Victoria
<b>Has had asthma</b>	17%	-	19%	21%	20%	20%
<b>Obese</b>	17%	18%	23%	25%	22%	19%
<b>Diabetes</b>	7%	5%	4%	6%	7%	6%
<b>Blood cholesterol check</b>	49%	51%	51%	44%	51%	57%
<b>Blood glucose check</b>	73%	78%	81%	72%	82%	80%
<b>50+ year olds doing bowel cancer check</b>	27%	28%	48%	47%	48%	46%
<b>Arthritis</b>	21%	21%	25%	22%	25%	21%
<b>Cancer</b>	8%	8%	7%	10%	9%	8%
<b>Heart disease</b>	8%	8%	9%	5%	7%	7%

**Source notes** AHIW (Gippsland South West – also includes Baw Baw LGA)  
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/cancer/cancer-statistics-for-small-geographic-areas/data>

**Update due** Unsure

From 2010 to 2014 the age standardised incidence rate of cancer in the Gippsland South West region was 549.6 people per 100,000, and the mortality rate was 222 per 100,000 people. The region is ranked 33 highest out of 66 regions in Victoria.

**Source notes**

AHIW (Gippsland South West – also includes Baw Baw LGA)  
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/primary-health-care/medicare-subsidised-health-local-areas-2019/data>

**Update due**

Unsure

The proportion of the population using allied health and GP services is increasing over time.

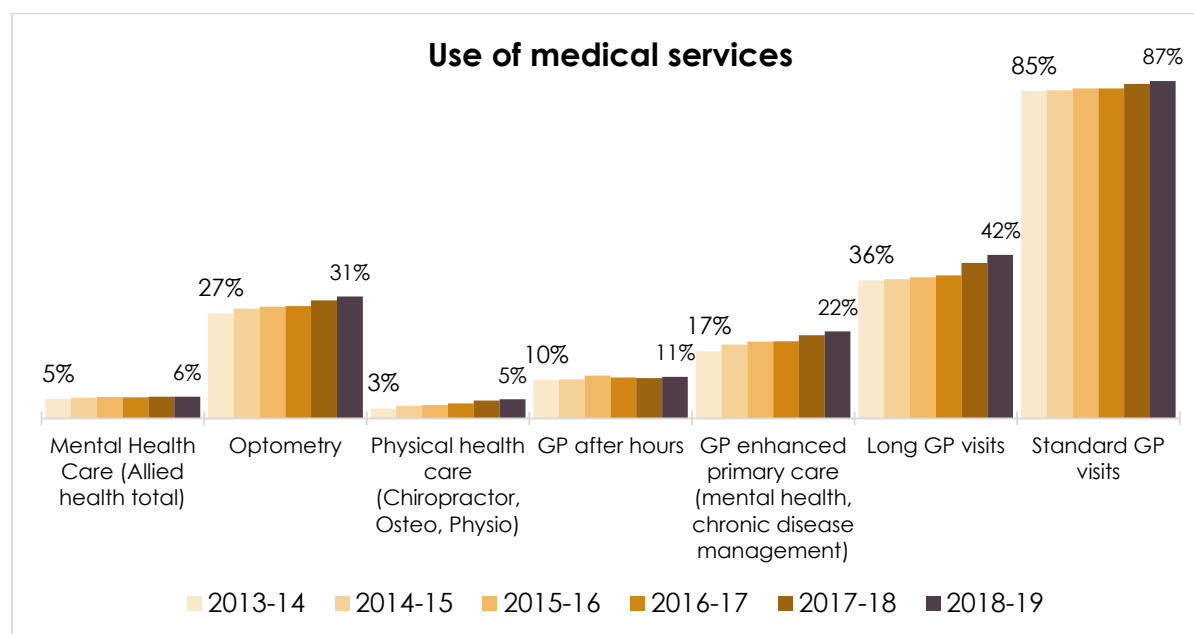


Figure 29 Proportion of the population using medical services 2013-2018

In 2018-19 a range of demographic variations in health attendances were apparent:

- A higher proportion of females had attended allied health (47%) than males (33%)
- A higher proportion of females had attended a GP (95%) than males (87%).

The number of service provided per 100 population is also increasing over time.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mental Health Care (Allied health total)	23.02	24.36	25.05	23.68	25.4	25.08
Optometry	37.46	38.37	39.64	39.77	41.86	43.50
Physical health care (Chiropractor, Osteo, Physio)	8.7	11.44	11.74	13.08	15.2	16.08
GP after hours	14.92	15.65	17.16	16.92	16.76	17.68
GP enhanced primary care (mental health, chronic disease management)	35.41	40.88	43.45	44.33	47.63	51.65
Long GP visits	74.11	75.55	76.75	78.57	89.29	96.08
Standard GP visits	448.37	464.41	457.89	458.07	463.16	464.16

## 4 COMMUNITY WELLBEING

The wellbeing of a community can be impacted by a range of factors, primarily relating to safety, resilience and social cohesion.

In South Gippsland Shire, the main wellbeing challenges relate to:

- Increasing incidence of crimes against the person.
- Expected increase in number of children over the next 15 years.
- Increasing incidence of depression and anxiety, particularly amongst females
- Increasing rate of family violence.
- Lack of feelings of connection amongst those who have recently moved into the area.
- Females undertaking more unpaid domestic work and unpaid childcare, and on lower wages due to more often undertaking part time work.

### Community insights summary

- The region is largely considered a safe environment and a safe place to raise children.
- People within the South Gippsland community traditionally have supported and watched over each other. However, the recent influx of new people appears to have diminished this element – some have attributed this to an increase in property break-ins, as people aren't as aware of what's going on in the neighbourhood(s) as much as they used to.
- There is a strong tradition of volunteering in South Gippsland communities. However, as people move in who are more time poor there is general concern that this is on the decline. Unfortunately, this is key to what existing residents see as an important part of belonging to the community and 'giving back'; supporting local activities that benefit others and the individuals themselves.
- Childcare was an often-cited issue. Childcare services are in greater demand due to migration of families from the Melbourne to the area. It is a current issue in some locations and is also flagged as a challenge for the future as the population increases.
- There is very strong concern over mental health, especially among the youth, due to the effects of covid restrictions. It has been difficult for adults as well, given that extended family often live in the Melbourne area. Many have not been able to visit parents, children or grandchildren for many months due to travel restrictions. Given that people in the Gippsland area value relationships community and especially family, this has caused concern and some distress for some. Not necessarily among interviewees but with people they know within the community and/or have observed.
- There was a general concern of the community members losing the social connections they have traditionally enjoyed as a hallmark for living in the region. Residents don't want to feel as though the majority of people they meet are now going to be or act as strangers. There is a general acceptance of 'progress' but also a belief that this does not necessarily mean that should be at the expense of a lack of community cohesion and connection or loss of the community feel.

- Residents believe that council should help (via support of local groups) to facilitate activities that bring people together e.g. festivals, markets, sponsor activities of local clubs and groups.
- A continued strong theme throughout the in-depth interview process was a sense that people within the South Gippsland community will support each other in times of need. This is part of what participants believe makes the community unique.

## 4.1 COMMUNITY SAFETY

### Community insights

People within the South Gippsland community traditionally have supported and watched over each other. However, the recent influx of new people appears to have diminished this element – some have attributed this to an increase in property break-ins, as people aren't as aware of what's going on in the neighbourhood(s) as much as they used to.

However, the region is largely considered a safe environment and a safe place to raise children.

*"There is a disconnect between the community and governing bodies. For example that would include the Shire police. Despite what Vicpol says crime is going up [not down]. There's a lot more break ins; a close community keeps an eye on one another and that is getting a little lost a bit."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"... a friendly community. Safe community. That's appealing to this area and a slower pace of life compared to Melbourne."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"I had a chat with my husband about this. There were a few things we agreed on. It's a safe place to raise children. A sense of owning and belonging and care for our region."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Volunteer]

*"I was secretary of a [community club]. I'm a community minded person. My husband was [in] the CFA. Our kids went to school here. It's just a nice place to bring up a family."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Retired]

<b>Source notes</b>	Crimestats.vic.gov.au
<b>Update due</b>	Annual

The rate of criminal incidents per 100,000 population in South Gippsland is lower than recorded across the broader Eastern region, however it has been increasing since 2018.

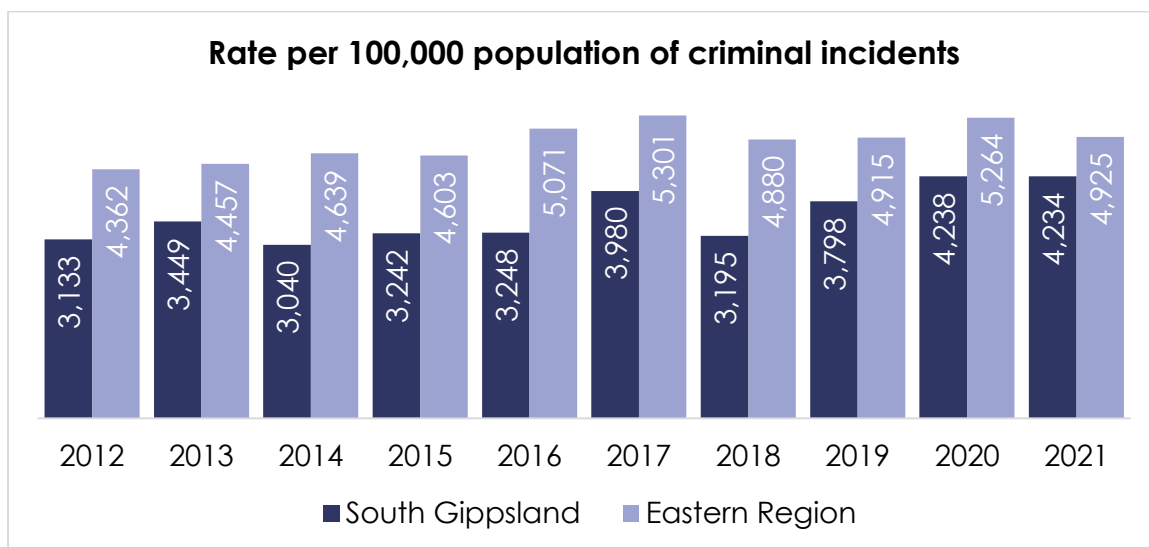


Figure 30- Rate per 100,000 population of criminal incidents, 2012-2021

This recent increase can be mostly attributed to an increase in crimes against the person and justice procedures offences.

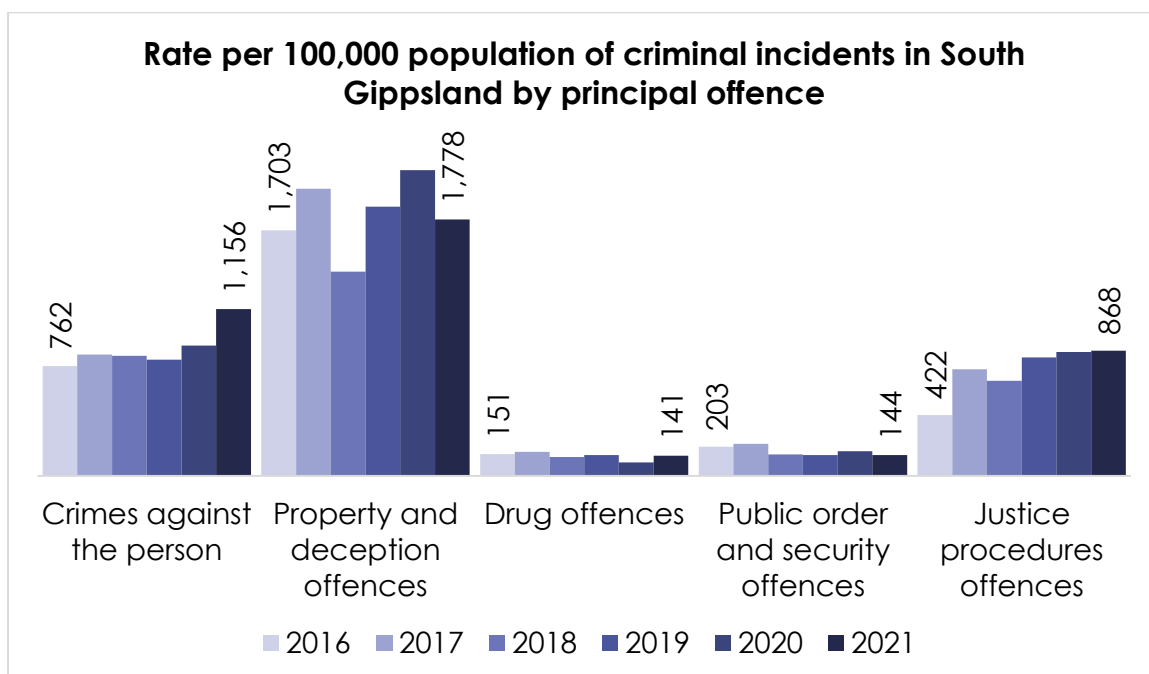


Figure 31- Rate per 100,000 of criminal incidents in South Gippsland by principal offence, 2012-2021

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017
<b>Update due</b>	2022 (2021 VPHS)

Perceptions of safety in South Gippsland are consistently higher than regional and state-wide averages, and have remained relatively stable over time.

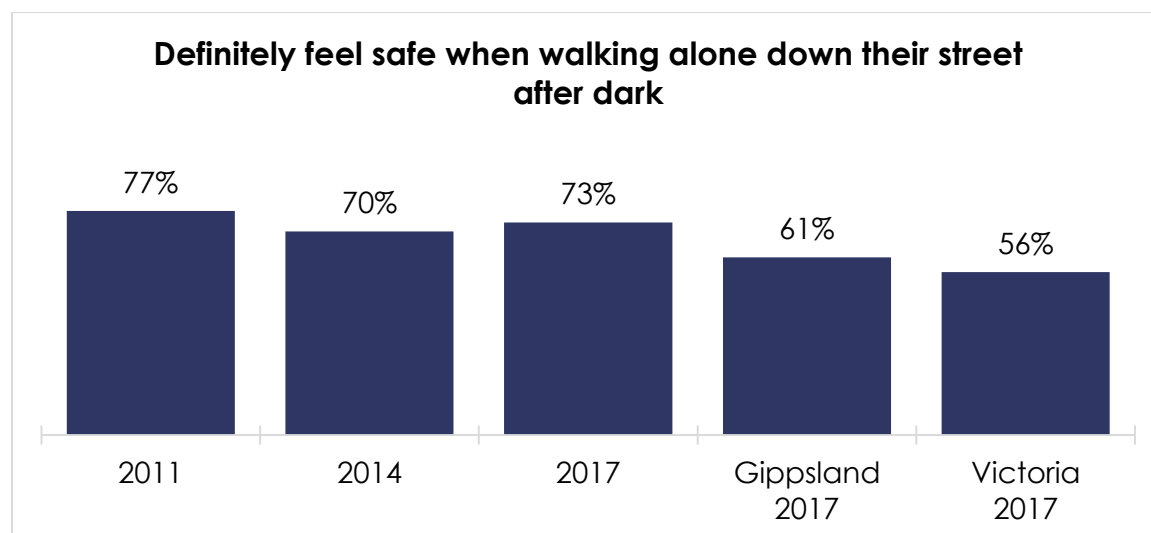


Figure 32 Proportion who definitely feel safe when walking down their street after dark

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 7% selected *crime or safety issues*. This was higher amongst males (9%, compared to 6% females) and younger people (25% under 35 year olds, compared to 5% 55+ year olds).

Furthermore, 15% said they had experienced dangerous driving. This was more common in Strzelecki ward (18%, compared to 12% Coastal Promontory).



## 4.2 VOLUNTEERING

### Community insights

There is a strong tradition of volunteering in South Gippsland communities. However, as people move in who are more time poor, there is general concern that this is on the decline.

Unfortunately, this is key to what existing residents see as an important part of belonging to the community and 'giving back'; supporting local activities that benefit others and the individuals themselves.

*"I'm into sport There's a lot of stress on clubs. There just aren't people to participate and put time into the clubs. People have less time these days. They are busy with their family. People are more selective with their time." [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]*

*"New people are not as involved. I'm in the fire brigade. I volunteer to give back to the community that gives to me. Giving back is rewarding. That's what living is about. It's disheartening when you don't see people do it. Not that they don't want to but maybe they just don't know... My family is involved in the local scouts. Scouts push for community involvement. Less people are involved that are willing to do the work. Numbers are larger but you always see the families same families [getting involved] all the time." [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]*

*"Parents don't have time to be involved with community groups. I tend to see the same faces in various community groups I'm involved with. People are more time poor. Parent's don't have time to stay and help when they drop their kids off at sport." [Tarwin Valley: Female, Retired]*

**Source notes**

Census, 2021

**Update due**

2027 (2026 Census)

The proportion of the population who volunteer is higher in South Gippsland than the regional or state-wide average. The incidence of volunteering has fallen in 2021, a phenomenon that has been observed across the state and is likely due to COVID restrictions.

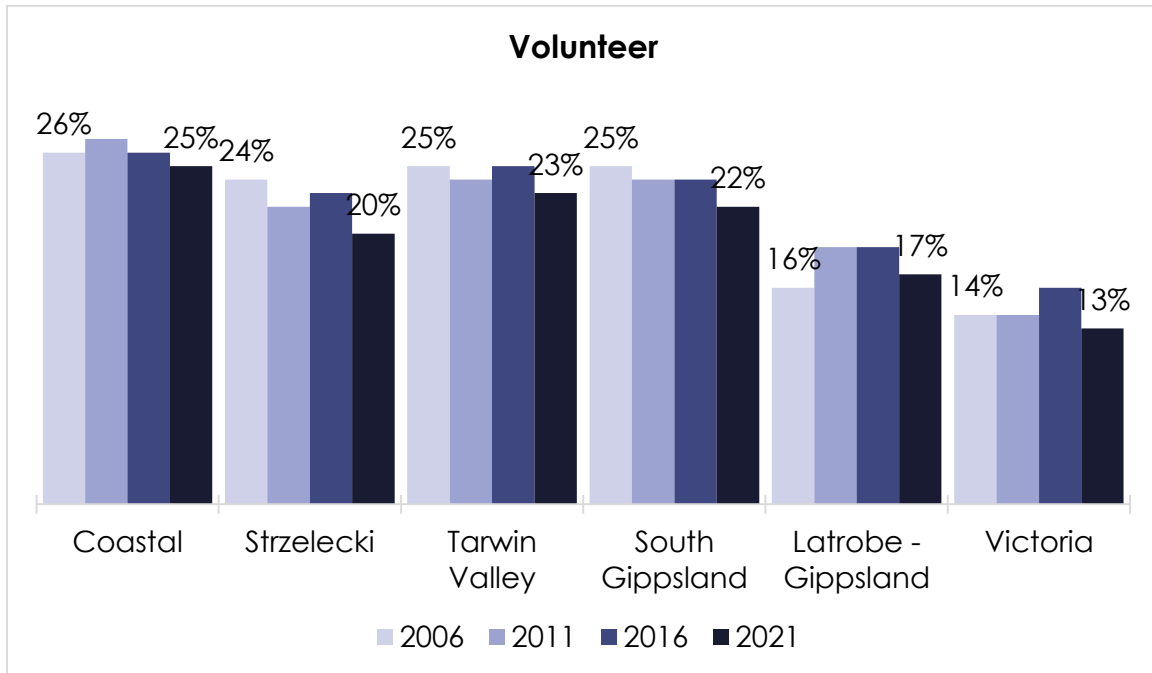


Figure 33 – Proportion of population who volunteer

Volunteering is more common amongst females and those aged 35-49. Incidence of volunteering decreases after the age of 70-84. The decline in volunteering observed in 2021 mostly occurred amongst those aged under 60 years.

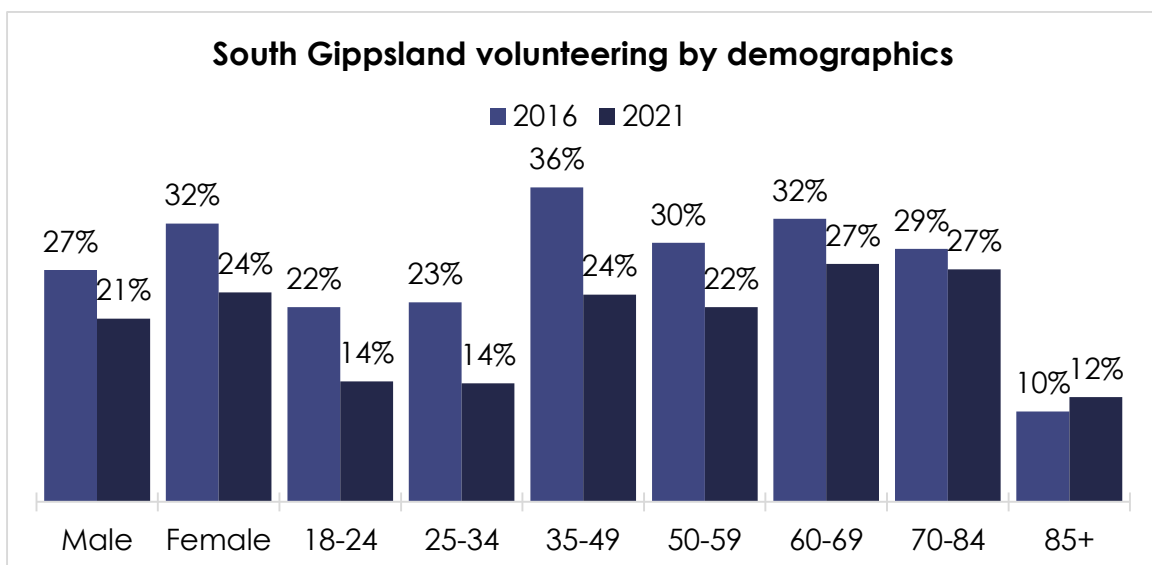


Figure 34 Proportion of people who volunteer by age

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q10. Which of the following types of activity do you like to participate in?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

A quarter of those surveyed (26%) indicated that they participate in *volunteering – CFA, friends of, community support, landcare*. The incidence of stating participation in volunteering is higher amongst 55+ year olds (28%, compared to 21% under 55 year olds) and those in Coastal Promontory ward (30%, compared to 26% Strzelecki and 23% Tarwin Valley).

## 4.3 ACCESS TO CHILDCARE SERVICES

### Community insights

Childcare was an often-cited issue. Childcare services are in greater demand due to migration of families from the Melbourne to the area. It is a current issue in some locations and is also flagged as a challenge for the future as the population increases.

*"As we get larger childcare is becoming an issue. The childcare centre is at capacity. The childcare centre was supposed to last ten years according to the modelling but it is over capacity now."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"Childcare ... will be pressured and not in an incremental way but in a BIG short term change; immediate demand, not gradual. There will be step changes instead of incremental changes."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"The downside is I have two children. One is a paramedic and the other is a dairy farmer. I look after their kids. For others childcare could be an issue here because they [children] cannot go to school and parents need to work."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

*"... We have new people, new families, and as a result childcare is at capacity...The town is growing, and the facilities are not keeping up with demand."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

**Source notes** Forecast.id.com.au/south-Gippsland

**Update due** 2023

Forecasting suggests that there is likely to be an increase in the number of 0-2 and 3-4 year old children in the municipality over the next 15 years (+157/16% and +117/14% respectively), suggesting that there will be a need for more childcare and kindergarten services.

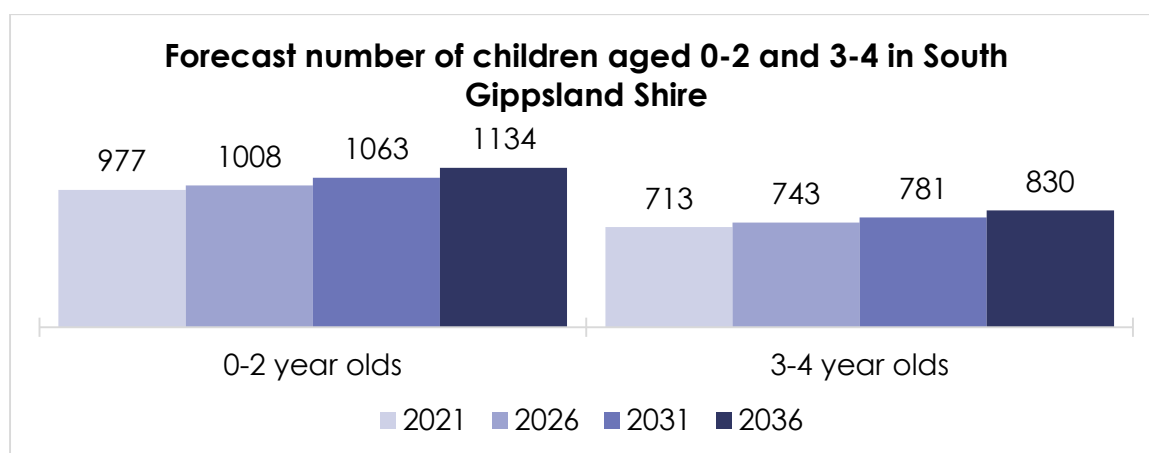


Figure 35 Forecast number of children aged 0-2 and 3-4 in South Gippsland Shire, 2021-2036

### Community insights

There is very strong concern over mental health, especially among the youth, due to the effects of covid restrictions. It has been difficult for adults as well, given that extended family often live in the Melbourne area. Many have not been able to visit parents, children or grandchildren for many months due to travel restrictions. Given that people in the Gippsland area value relationships community and especially family, this has caused concern and some distress for some. Not necessarily among interviewees but with people they know within the community and/or have observed.

*"We have lots of mental health youth issues. There is a drop-in centre where youth can see a mental health/drug and alcohol nurse, Doctor or GP. They help with things like getting them a Medicare card etc. They need more funding so they can see more kids. Leongatha modelled their clinic after the youth clinic in Foster."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

*"[The impact of covid] In terms of people inside the community it's abysmal. Mental health challenges in the general community. Isolation in a community is never good in a regional town; especially for accepting new people."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"I think from my own mental state [covid is] making people think about what's important. People are not able to visit family. That makes people reflect on that importance."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"It affected younger kids a lot [covid]. My grandson misses training and his friends; could not go to school. They're not getting exercise and covid has affected them physically and mentally."* [Strzelecki: Male, Retired]

*"Mental health issues will be significant but not as significant as Melbourne. Access to mental health services will be a challenge. The same everywhere but a challenge."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Business Owner]

*"I know what it can do to you physically and mentally. Young kids in grade two and prep have been affected immensely. My daughter is in prep. She got to make new friends in school and then not see them. My son is in grade two is not as bad but he is affected too."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"Mental health will have a big effect if not addressed. I have a sense that there is more of a focus on covid and the issue of covid [meaning the physical health problem of the disease and spread]."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Volunteer]

*"Mental health will be a challenge. Community health, especially young people like 15 to 22 year olds. I really feel for. Their formative years have been taken away [A significant portion]. I worry about the consequences and the challenges."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"I'm hoping there's less sense of uncertainty. It has been hard to plan. Less uncertainty to ease the struggle. Recent lockdowns made it worse mentally. As a business owner I still had to pay staff, even though they're not working."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017
<b>Update due</b>	2022 (2021 VPHS)
<b>Notes</b>	Psychological distress is measured using the Kessler 10 scale. Figures of psychological distress are reporting the high to very high distress end of the scale <sup>6</sup> .

From 2008 to 2017 there was a steady increase in the incidence of South Gippsland residents self-reporting depression or anxiety. The 2017 level was similar to the average across the region, yet higher than the state average.

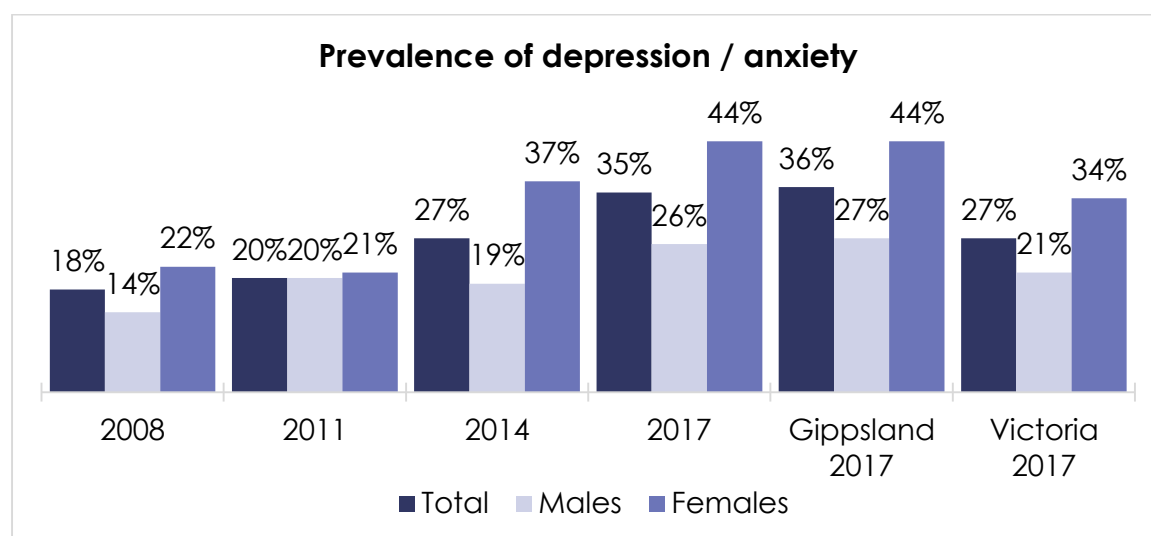


Figure 36 Proportion who self-reported experiencing depression or anxiety

COVID-19 research has shown an increase in anxiety levels during the pandemic, therefore it is anticipated that the 2021 results will show an increase in this figure that will likely be attributable to the pandemic.

Prevalence of depression and anxiety is more common amongst females than males.

The incidence of psychological distress amongst South Gippsland residents increased significantly in 2014, and has remained high. This increase was primarily driven by an increase amongst females. The prevalence of psychological distress amongst females in South Gippsland is higher than both regional and state-wide averages. In the 2020 VPHS data (not released by gender) 9% report high or very high levels of psychological distress, compared to 24% state-wide.

<sup>6</sup> <https://asdfresearch.com.au/knowledgebase/standard-questions-kessler-10-psychological-distress/> (accessed 27 September 2021)

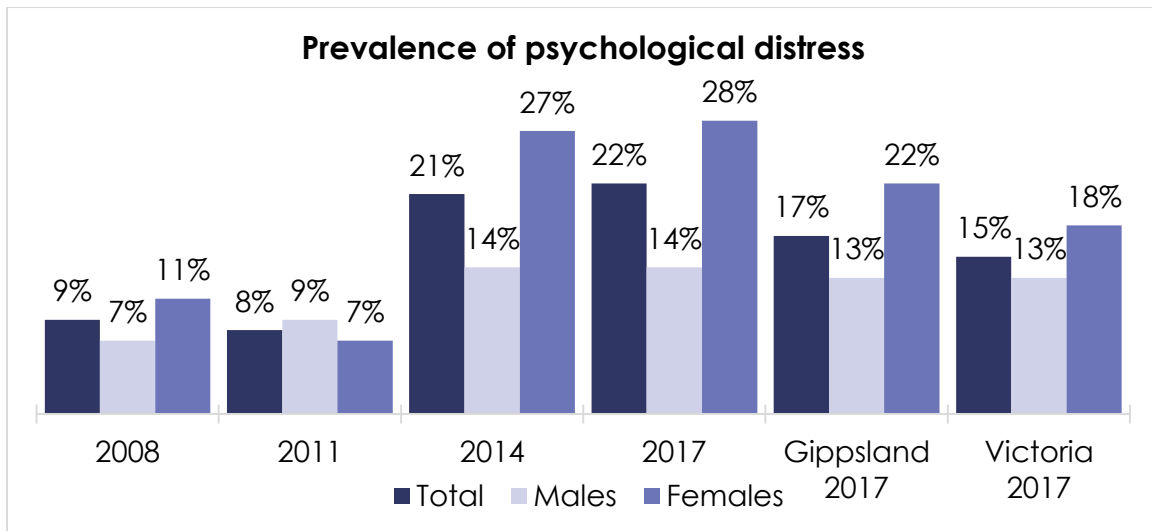


Figure 37 Proportion who self-reported experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress

<b>Source notes</b>	Census, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)
<b>Notes</b>	New question added in 2021

In the 2021 Census, 10% of the South Gippsland community reported having a long term mental health condition (including depression or anxiety). This was consistent across wards, and was a similar result to that recorded for Gippsland (10%) and state-wide (9%).



## 4.5 FAMILY VIOLENCE

<b>Source notes</b>	Crimestats.vic.gov.au family violence portal, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	Annual

The rate per 100,000 population of recorded family incidents in South Gippsland increased significantly in 2021. Across the region and the state the rate of family incidents has been gradually increasing over time.

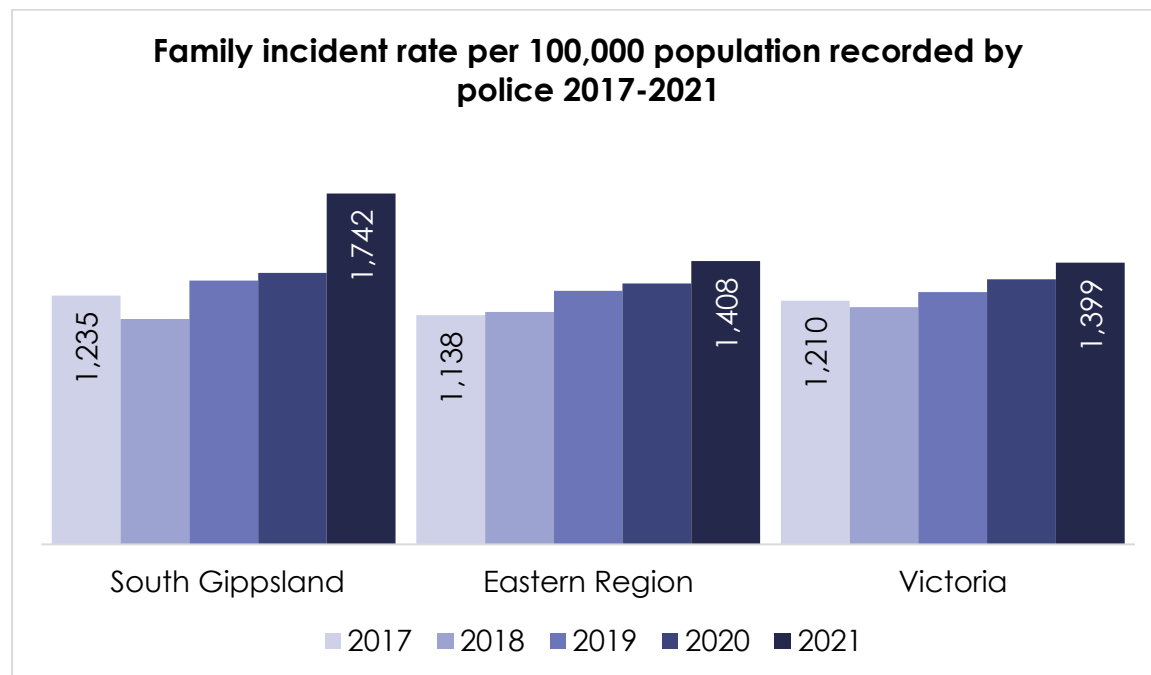


Figure 38- Family incident rate per 100,000 population recorded by police 2017-21

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 1% selected *family violence issues*. It should be noted that this may be under-reported. This was higher amongst 35-54 year olds (4%, compared to 1% 55+).

## 4.6 SOCIAL CONNECTION

### Community insights

There was a general concern amongst community members that the social connections they have traditionally enjoyed in the region are diminishing. Residents don't want to feel as though the majority of people they meet are now going to be or act as strangers. There is a general acceptance of 'progress' but also a belief that this should not come at the expense of community cohesion, connection, and community feel.

Residents believe that council should help (via support of local groups) to facilitate activities that bring people together e.g. festivals, markets, sponsor activities of local clubs and groups.

*"It's going to take a proactive approach from council and groups to seek connection to new people coming to town. These people are coming from non-regional areas where nobody knows your business to everyone knowing your business. That can be great, and bad, but it is something that would not come naturally to someone not used to it – bring them in, help them along."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"[Future challenge] Pressure of population growth from Melbourne. They don't have a connection with the land but they're here."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"There are more out of towners coming here to live. They expect things different to what we expect. They expect a lot more. Cafes – we have only 2 or 3 cafes in each town. If they want choice they go to Leongatha. It's a bit frustrating because they think they'll get the same convenience [as in the city]."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"... Now tree changers are coming from Melbourne... There are more diverse people doing different things and from different backgrounds. I think this is fabulous because it makes things much more interesting place. You don't want to be stuck back in 1950s farming. Not that there was anything wrong with that then, but it is more interesting now – more appealing to people too."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"From a personal point of view I'm a coach of a local club and we struggle for numbers at the moment, so people coming here from town is good."* [Strzelecki: Male, Retired]

*"We should support being a small community I hope people from Melbourne are coming here to get away from the rat race and not make us to be like Melbourne. They should be part of the community."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"People get together community wise, but some others don't [referring mainly to new people]."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"More and more people are coming from Melbourne. It was a small country town when I moved here."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"Community festivals and markets being well supported. I'd like to see that continue to grow and be supported. It keeps the community together; allows the community to come together."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Volunteer]

*"For Korumburra to be a more inclusive community. For people to be more informed. We have a community paper but we have a lot of people who don't know what's going on."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"Some things in the main street are good like street festivals, stalls, social catch-ups.... Pre-covid there were good community events. Christmas BBQ. Funding for those things goes a long way to get people to meet."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"... maintain the small community. Not folding and going to the big centres that happens all the time."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

**Source notes**

2022 Community survey (part of this project)

Q12. How connected do you feel to the following parts of your local community? Is this level of connection right for you?

Q13. How often do you have face-to face, telephone, written or online contact with ...?

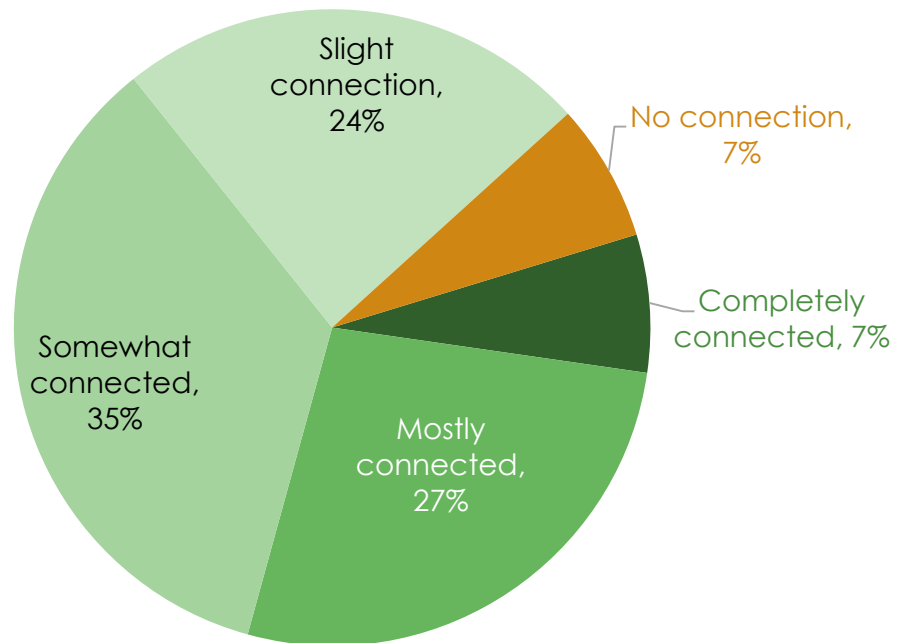
**Update due**

None planned

Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

A third (34%) of South Gippsland residents surveyed said they felt completely or mostly connected to the local community. The incidence of feeling completely or mostly connected to the community was higher amongst those aged 55+ or over (38%) than those aged under 35 (17%). When analysing sense of connection to the community by years lived in South Gippsland, it would appear that the level of connection starts to strengthen after 10 years, and jumps significantly after 30 years.

### Sense of connection to the local South Gippsland community



Most felt that their level of community connection was about right (74%), although those who had been in the area for a shorter period commonly stated that their sense of connection was not enough (41% of those who moved to the region within 2 years prior to survey).

Respondents were asked how often they have face-to-face, telephone, written or online contact with family members who don't live with them, friends who don't live with them, social clubs and neighbours. A variable was generated to identify those who are socially isolated, defined as those who don't have any of these types of contact weekly. Survey findings suggest that overall around 9% of the South Gippsland population are socially isolated. There are no significant variations by demographics or location.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Sense of community – encourage and celebrate community connections, country feel and township character* was ranked as number 1 priority by 3% of respondents,

with this being particularly important for those who had lived in the area for less than 2 years (10% ranked as number 1). One in seven overall (16%) and one third of those who had recently moved to the region (31% lived in South Gippsland up to 2 years) ranked this in their top 5.

## 4.7 RESILIENCE

### Community insights

A continued strong theme throughout the in-depth interview process was a sense that people within the South Gippsland community will support each other in times of need and local businesses. This is part of what participants believe makes the community unique. They don't want to see this aspect lost as the population grows.

*"... the community rallies when it needs to. There is a lot of good in the community, but leadership is lacking...Some businesses have learned to adapt quickly and diversified their business plan to adapt. I applaud that. Local people supported them."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"We moved from the city SE suburbs. Like the open spaces. Nice community to join. Fewer people, ... There's local businesses and shops and everyone knows everyone. Lots of support."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Teacher]

*"The sense of community. I had a bereavement a few years ago and felt supported by the community. People looking out for each other."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

*"Even though covid is bad, it is good to see people support businesses and each other. Keep that going."* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Volunteer]

*"... if you need something and you chat to enough people, it can be done."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

<b>Source notes</b>	VPHS, 2017
<b>Update due</b>	2022 (2021 VPHS)

The proportion of South Gippsland residents who indicated they could get help with care in an emergency remains relatively high over time, and is higher than the state-wide average.

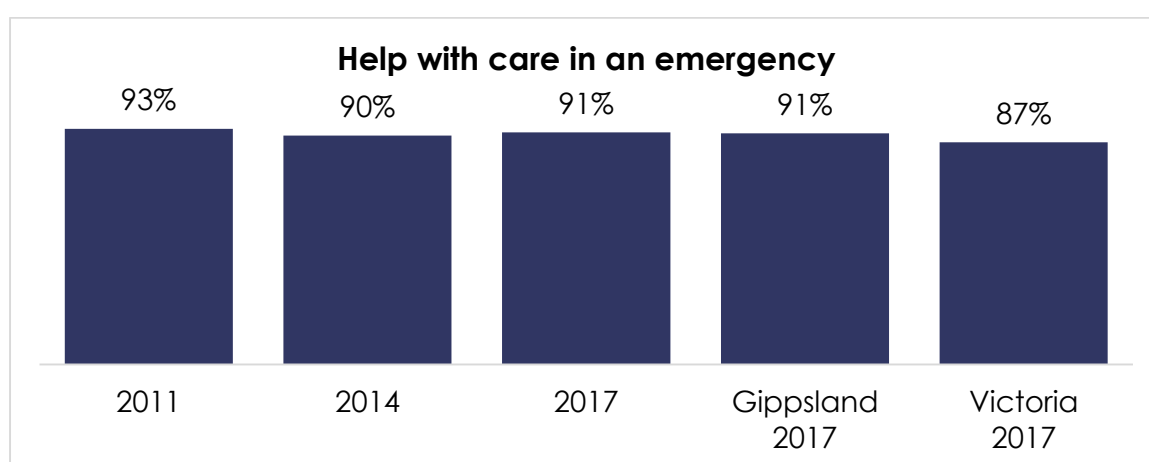


Figure 39- Description, base and source (insert as caption)



Since 2011 the proportion of the South Gippsland population who said they couldn't raise \$2,000 in an emergency has remained steady at around 16%. This is a similar level to the broader region, and slightly higher than the state-wide average.

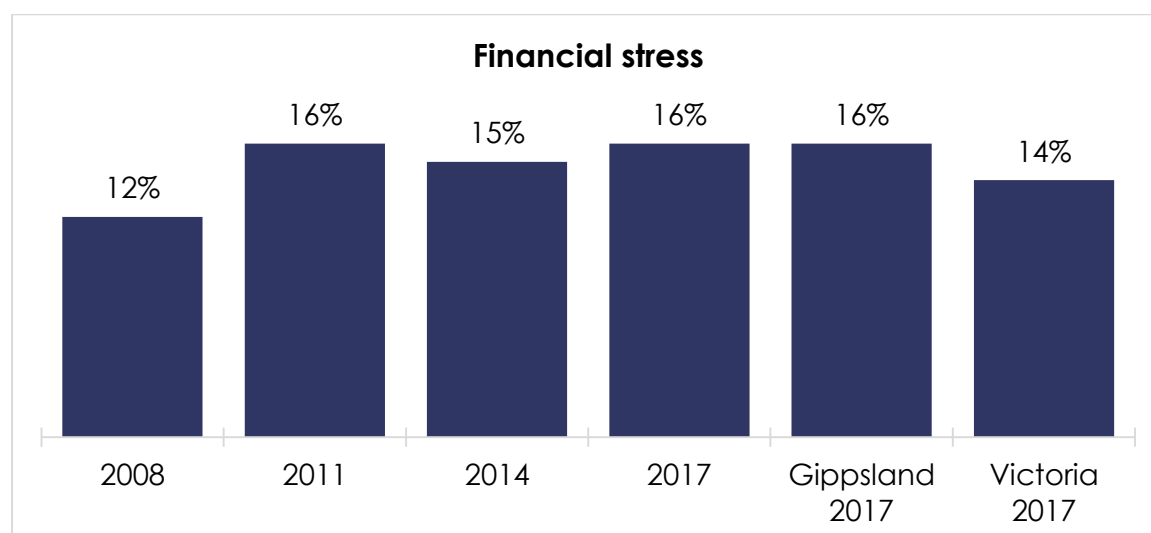


Figure 40 Proportion who couldn't raise \$2000 within two days in an emergency

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 8% selected *financial difficulties or issues*. This was more commonly chosen by females (10%, compared to 5% males), and young people (22% under 35 year olds, compared to 5% 55+ year olds).

## 4.8 GENDER EQUITY

<b>Source notes</b>	Census data by gender for employment status, income, unpaid carer and domestic duties, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

There are clear differences in the format and type of education undertaken by females when compared to males. Just over half (55%) of adult females have not undertaken any education beyond high school, compared to 52% males. When they do undertake further education, females more often undertake university level education and males more commonly undertake certificate level further education.

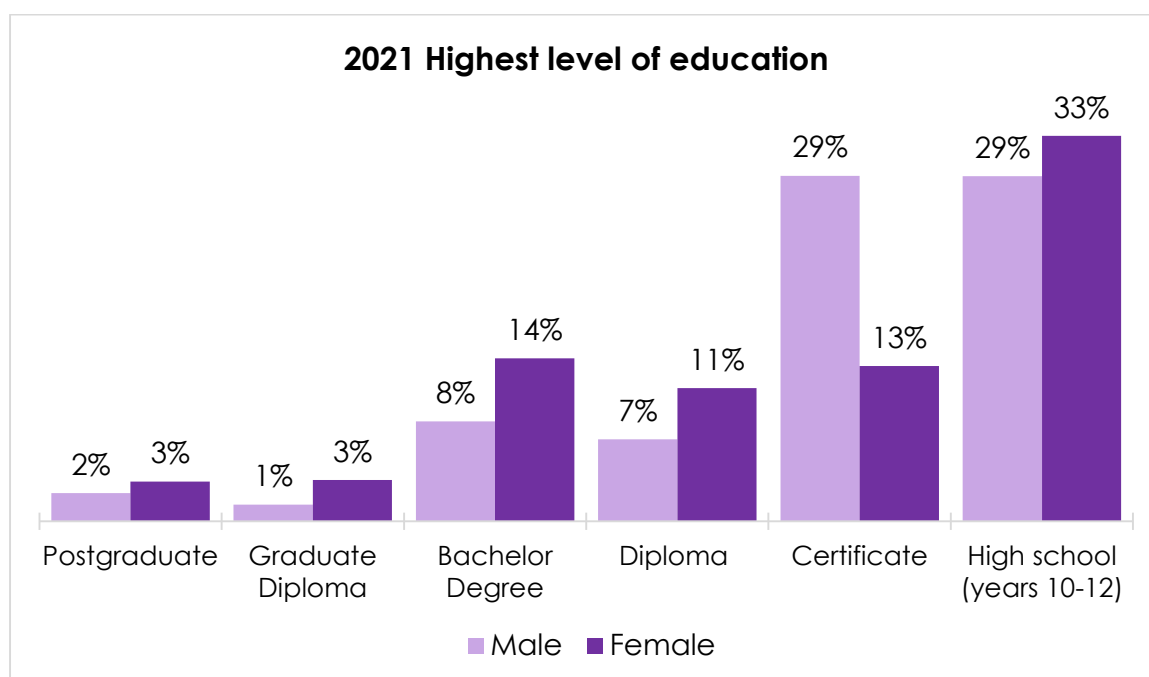


Figure 41 Highest level of education by gender, 2021

When undertaking further study, the topic areas studied also vary by gender; in 2021 the main 2 subjects amongst males being engineering (29%, compared to 2% females) and architecture / building (13%, compared to 1% females), whereas for females it was health (19%, compared to 4% males), society and culture (16%, compared to 5% males), education (16%, compared to 5% males) and management (15%, compared to 8% males). This trend has remained consistent across the previous 3 Census (2006, 2011 and 2016).

In terms of work, females undertake more unpaid domestic work and unpaid childcare than males. Over the 5 years from 2016 to 2021 the number of unpaid domestic work hours has remained unchanged for females, but has increased for males. The proportion of both females and males undertaking unpaid child care has been decreasing over time.

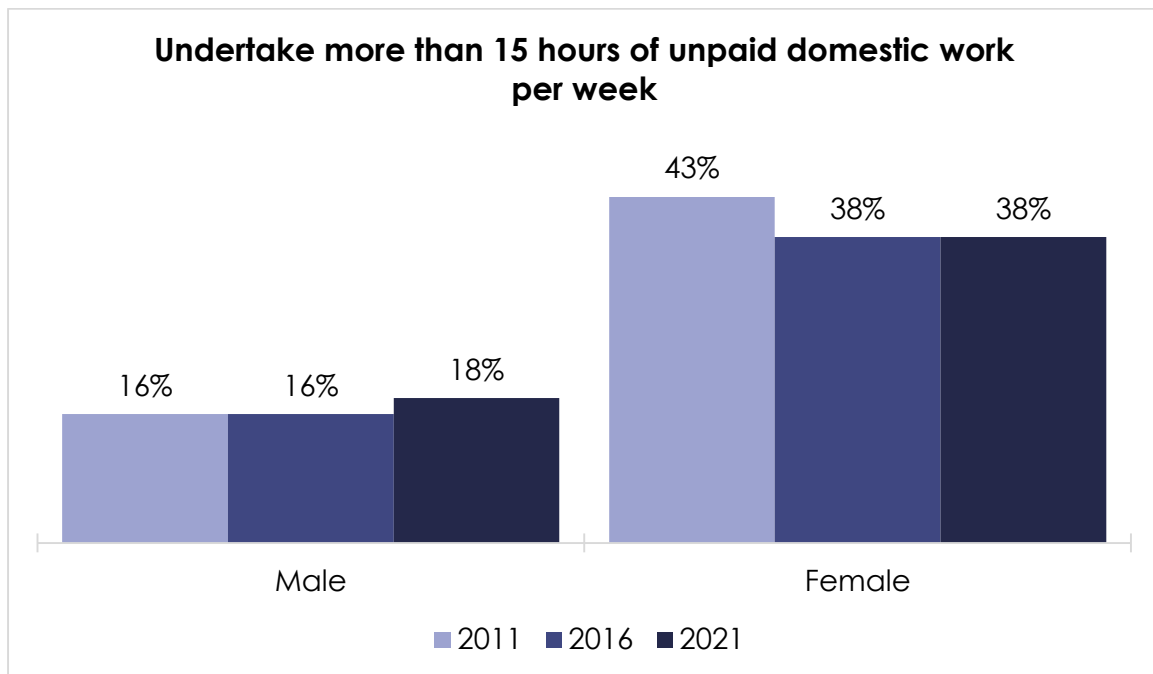


Figure 42 Incidence of undertaking unpaid domestic work by gender, 2011-2021

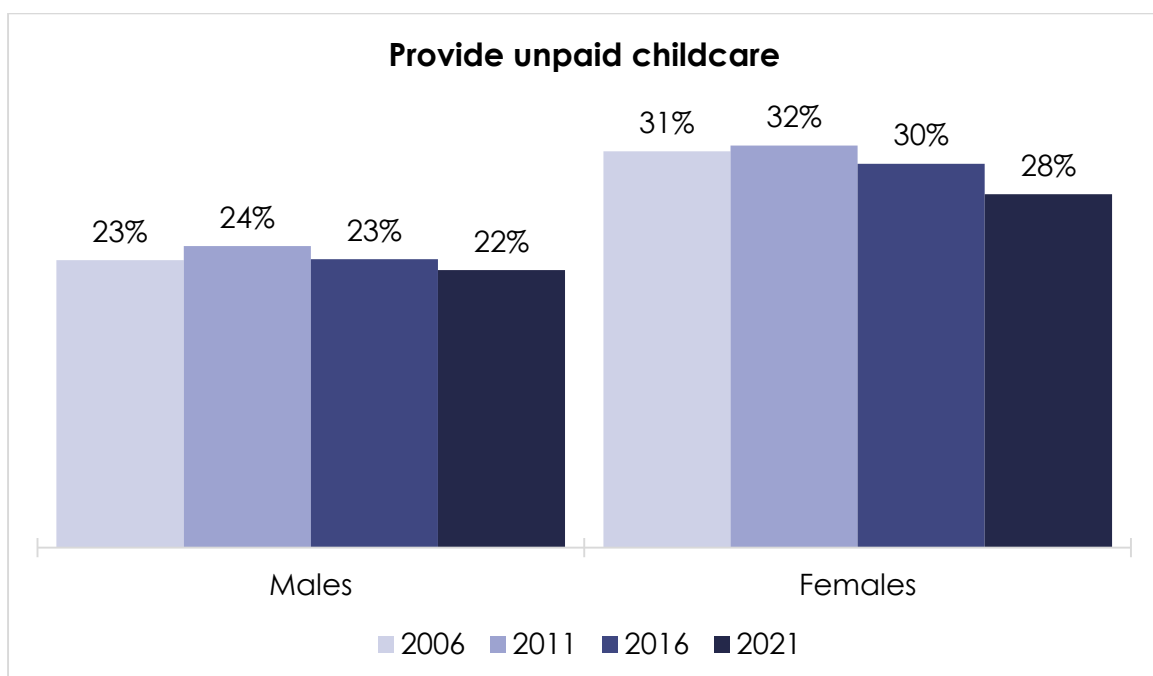


Figure 43 Incidence of providing unpaid childcare by gender, 2006-2021

Females are more often in part time work, or not in the labour force. Proportions have remained relatively constant over time.

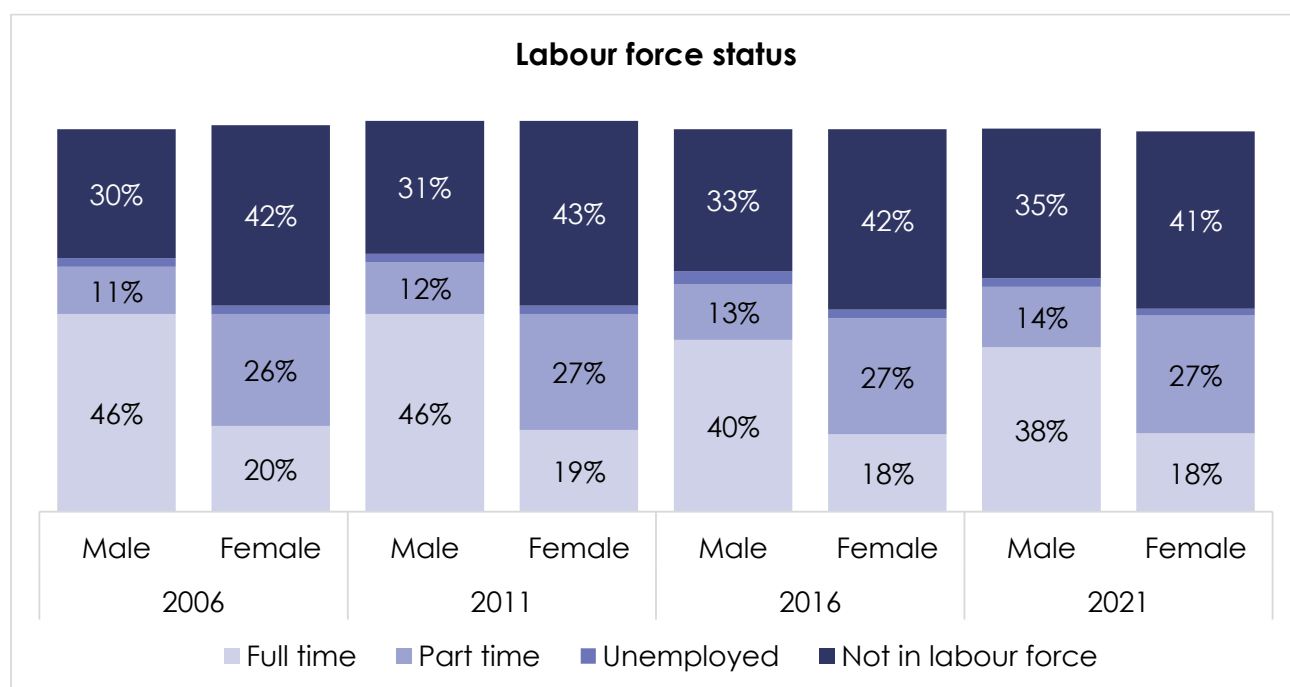


Figure 44 Labour force status by gender, 2006-2021

Given this difference in work hours, there are also clear differences in personal income. Whilst the proportion of females making less than \$400 a week has been declining over time, there are consistently more females within this lower wage range than males.

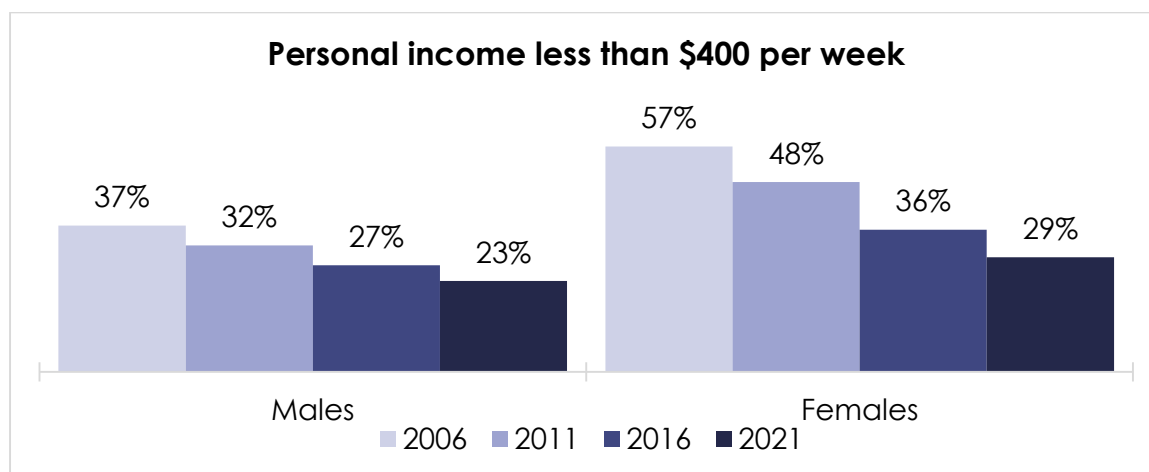


Figure 45 Personal income less than \$400 a week by gender, 2006-2021

Females most often work in the healthcare (24%, compared to 4% males), retail (11%, compared to 6% males) and education (12%, compared to 4% males) industries, whereas males more commonly work in agriculture (20%, compared to 10% females), construction (18%, compared to 3% females) and manufacturing (9%, compared to 4% females).

## 5 BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is critical for enabling residents to travel around safely, and have public spaces for recreation, which can have flow-on impacts on mental and physical health.

In South Gippsland, the main built and natural environment challenges relate to:

- Ongoing provision of the rail trail and native bushland for recreation.
- Providing open space where residents can exercise, picnic, go bushwalking and watch nature.
- Maintain safe roads.
- Affordable housing.
- Preparing for extreme weather, particularly regarding its impact on utilities and infrastructure.

### Community insights summary

- Careful planning of township expansion was very often mentioned – not wholesale housing developments.
- The rail trail was seen as a great community asset and tourist attraction gaining widespread support.
- Childcare, education, investment in sports facilities and importantly investment in other community halls and spaces where other activities can take place (arts and the performing arts, public education programs, club meetings, community events and activities for children and youth) were seen as important investments in community, not merely as artefacts or structures, but as vehicles for the common good and community cohesion.
- Seen as an important issue presently and growing in the future. Road maintenance is high on the list of priorities for the communities across the South Gippsland region.
- Public transport – lack thereof between towns is also seen and a growing concern as the population ages.
- With development comes the need for infrastructure.
- Housing affordability is a major concern given the rapid increase in house prices caused by ‘‘cashed up people from Melbourne competing for real estate in the region. This has posed challenges for locals buying and/or renting property as well as the agriculture industry being able to house labourers during peak times in Airbnbs and other forms of, until recently, more affordable accommodation options.
- Participants often commented that each town or community had its own identity and things to offer. It is what, to them, made the region a unique place to live; how each community or town had its own identity be it street scapes, street art etc.
- There is a strong connection to the region's identity as a farming area. However it is felt by some, especially farmers, that this is not fully recognised by council – that farming, not tourism or niche businesses, is the major economic driver in the region. In that sense, land use for productive farming should be preserved and not broken up into smaller acreages and reforested.

- Also, housing price increases, rather than farm production is determining the land value of farms. This has caused rates to skyrocket above what farmers believe should be their fair share of the tax burden for the region.
- Maintaining the character of the rolling green hills is what people want , universally, preserved
- Many see the population growth from city migration to the area as an opportunity to develop and build the communities within the region on a sustainable footing, now. Avoiding the cost burden in converting to more sustainable practices in the future – the future is now; the environment and liveability of the region [a main community aspiration] can be maintained in this way.
- Protection of the natural environment was also a major concern and should not be at the expense of population increases.
- Highly productive farmland should be preserved, not converted back to bushland – that should be done in low productive land areas.
- Tourist attractions like Coal Creek should be self-sustaining and not a drain on the council [rate payers] purse.
- There is an opportunity to develop the South Gippsland area in a sustainable way and build a sustainable community of tomorrow today – because that is the way the world at large is headed. This is an opportunity to 'grow the right way'.
- Sustainability has massive opportunities in export markets that purchase dairy and beef products from the region. Clean food is highly sought after internationally – the worlds breadbasket.

## 5.1 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

### Community insights summary

Careful planning of township expansion was very often mentioned – not wholesale housing developments.

The rail trail was seen as a great community asset and tourist attraction gaining widespread support.

*"[Development]Not letting it get too big and crazy. I know we need to grow but not like Melbourne where the outskirts were country and all farmland but now with all the building and people living on top of one another, there's no grass or open spaces...We still have a lot of lovely stuff not too far from town. Some nice parks for example. However the best park is not useable for the entire spring season because they won't do anything about of magpie attacks. They maul you to death. If something could be done to help with that.*  
Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"We need things to be well planned and not a free for all. We have large dairy farms; can't see them selling off soon but I want to keep the open spaces and not subdivide too much – well planned development."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Teacher]

*"I'd like to see the rail trail expanded so it goes into smaller towns so they can exercise more easily. I'm in town with no footpaths so people are forced to walk on the roads."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

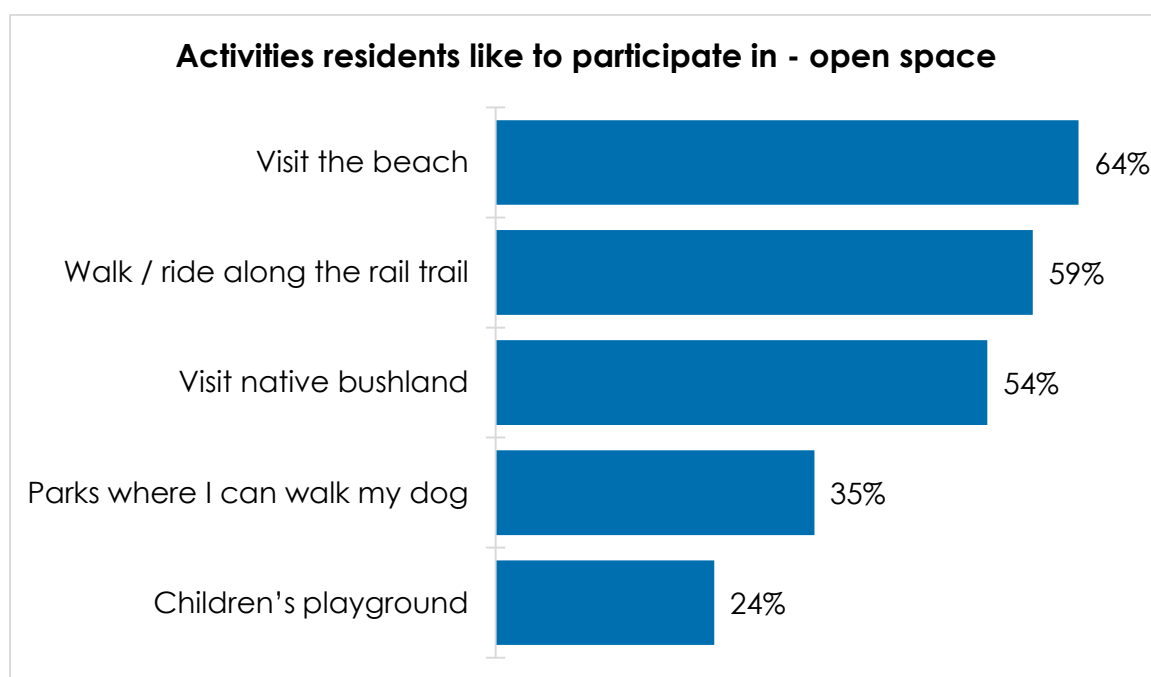
*"[Keep up general...] Maintenance and maintenance outside of what is generally just seen. All towns have nice streets nice trees but also expanding it into other streets. More beautification."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

<b>Source notes</b>	GIS
<b>Update due</b>	On request

Overall, 97% of households within South Gippsland Shire have public open space within 400m of their home. Overall there are almost 780 hectares of open space in South Gippsland Shire, the majority of which is in Tarwin Valley ward (394ha), followed by Strzelecki (257ha) and Coastal (123ha).

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q10. Which of the following types of activity do you like to participate in? Q11. What do you do when you visit local parks?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned  Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Over half of residents said they like to visit the beach, the rail trail and/or native bushland. Visitation to public open spaces is more common amongst females and younger people.

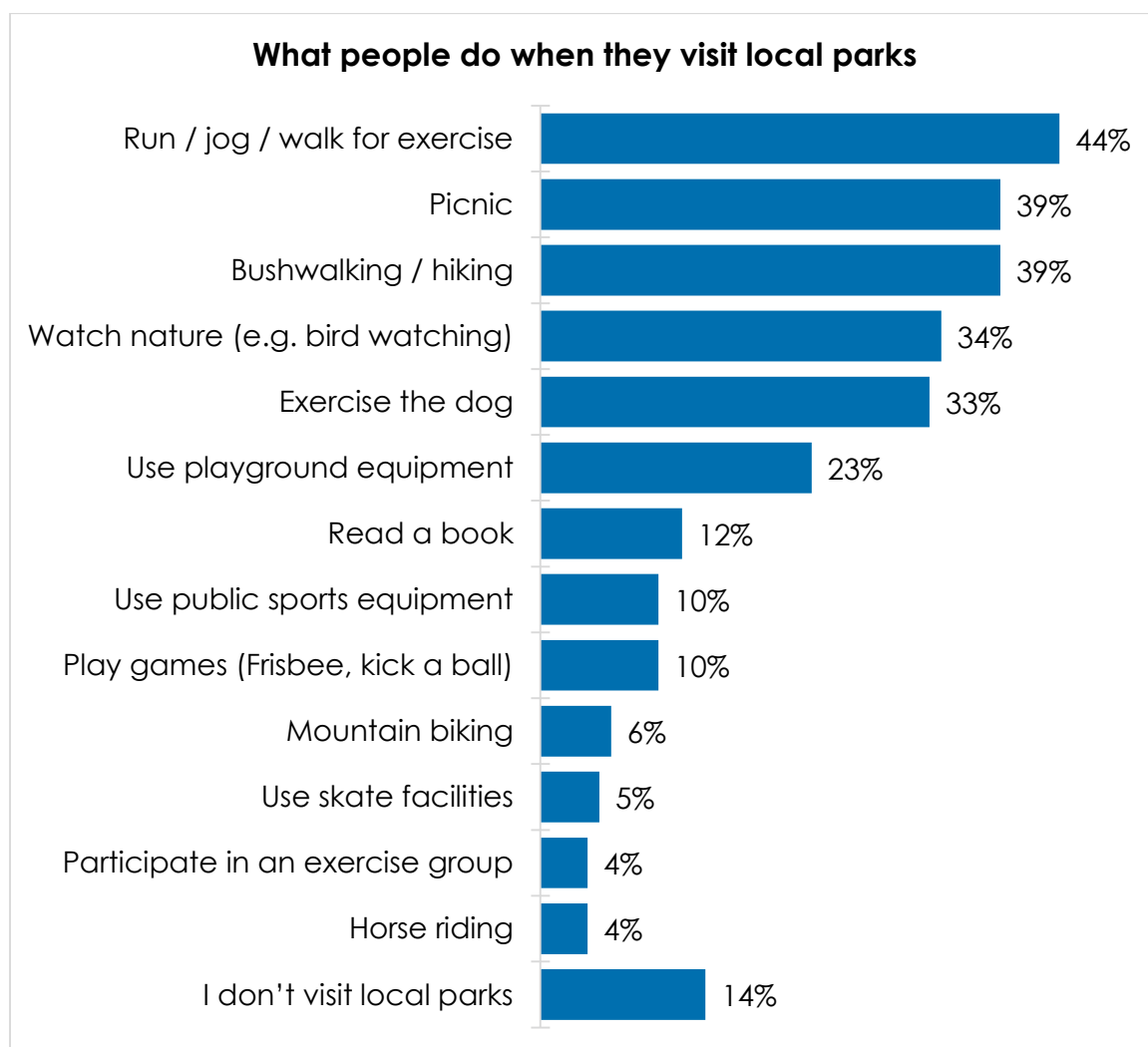




Over six in ten (62%) of those with children under the age of 18 said they visit children's playgrounds.

Visiting the beach is notably more common amongst those in Coastal Promontory ward (78%).

When residents visit local parks, the main activities they participate in are exercise, picnicking and bushwalking.



The survey data suggests that local park activities which are more common amongst younger people (under 35 year olds) are exercising the dog (58%), bushwalking / hiking (53%), picnicking (53%), using playground equipment (51%), and using public sports equipment (31%). One in seven (16%) of 55+ year olds said they don't visit public parks.

Bushwalking / hiking and watching nature are notably more common amongst residents in Coastal Promontory ward (46% and 42% respectively).

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Outdoor space – free public recreation spaces such as parks, playgrounds and casual exercise facilities* was ranked as number 1 priority by 3% of respondents, and 17% ranked it in their top 5 priorities. A higher proportion of younger people ranked this in their top 5 (28% under 35 year olds and 24% 35-54 year olds, compared to 14% of 55+ year olds).

## 5.2 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### Community insights summary

Childcare, education (schools, libraries), investment in sports facilities and importantly investment in other community halls and spaces where other activities can take place (arts and the performing arts, public education programs, club meetings, community events and activities for children and youth) were seen as important investments in community, not merely as artefacts or structures, but as vehicles for the common good and community cohesion. Careful planning that keeps pace with population growth is also important.

*"Updating skate parks and put in more playgrounds for kids to go to now that new estates are going in... There are plans for moving the library to a different space, there are community projects happening but with new houses coming into the area these things might be too small by the time it happens [facilities are built]."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"There's an education precinct through the middle of Leongatha, great idea, centralise it. We have two kinders, one in the precinct and one the other on the other side of town. A new kinder is being put in a place where the towns not expanding. No forethought. Put things where people can access it... Next to the cinema there was a café and shops. [...] Shire needed more space so they moved in. A restaurant and café are gone now and filled with Shire stuff. The shire does not need to be located in the entertainment precinct. It was just not thought out."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"I think we need to lean more towards people being more individual; spaces for galleries; doing something that not a multinational is doing it but handmade - locally made arts and crafts but also [things like] handmade cheeses, artisan butchers. Enable more creativity in general."* [Coastal-Promontory: Female, Business Owner]

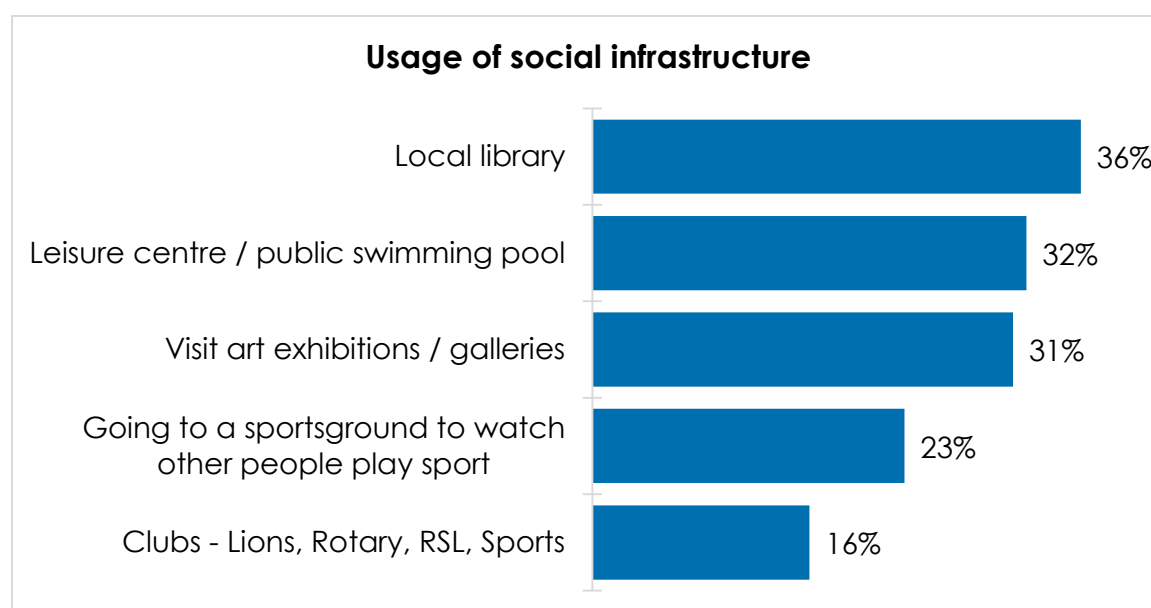
<b>Source notes</b>	GIS
<b>Update due</b>	On request

In South Gippsland there are:

- 6 Libraries (Foster, Leongatha, Poowong, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Welshpool.
- 11 Community Centres in Venus Bay, Sandy Point, Allambee South, Dumbalk, Lang Lang, Leongatha, Inverloch, Korumburra, Milpara and 2 in Foster; Manna Gum and the War Memorial Arts Centre.
- 2 Information centres (Prom Country in Foster and Citizens advice in Leongatha).

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q10 Which of the following types of activity do you like to participate in?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and could select more than one answer. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Just over a third of those who participated in the community survey said they visit the local library (36%) and almost a third said they visit the leisure centre / public swimming pool. Households with children under the age of 18 show a notably higher incidence of saying they visit the library (40%) and/or leisure centre / pool (63%).



## 5.3 TRANSPORT

### Community insights summary

Seen as an important issue presently and growing in the future, road maintenance is high on the list of priorities for the communities across the South Gippsland region.

Public transport – lack thereof between towns in the South Gippsland region (not necessarily to Melbourne) is also seen and a growing concern as the population ages.

With development comes the need for infrastructure.

*"Roads [are a priority]. People always complain about them. I used to work in store. Now I go out to farms. I see 120 farms, 3,000 km per month in the truck. I travel a lot of roads. Some are better than others. It is quite variable. There are more cars on the roads now."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"The main thing is roadworks."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"... I regularly go to Peter McCallum medical centre [In Melbourne]. The roads are poor, both state and local. Not much else really."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"I have to travel everywhere. Roads are terrible. A fix here and there but nothing done properly... Only problem is roads getting done properly."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"We need to keep infrastructure up, roads, local roads other stuff like that. Roads are atrocious."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"[Public] Transport is already a challenge. Not for me at the moment because I have a car. People are not going to carry shopping from the V/Line depot to the shopping area. Leongatha has things that Foster doesn't so people rely on travelling there... Fixing the roads is a challenge too."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, retired]

*"Not from my perspective because I'm able bodied and can get in a car and go where I want to whenever I want to, but for some people public transport is lacking. Not so much to Melbourne because we have V/Line bus service but just to connect to other areas like Wonthaggi and even Latrobe valley. There are a lot of hurdles using public transport."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"Public transport is an issue, not for me, but I see others struggle- If they are not driving.... Roads [are also an issue]. They're disgusting. We have an enormous amount of roads in the Shire, they affect a lot of people."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, business owner]

<b>Source notes</b>	Census, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

In South Gippsland, the proportion of workers who travel to work by car fell in 2021, after a trending increase over the previous 15 years. This phenomenon has been observed across all areas and may be due to people switching to working from home during COVID.

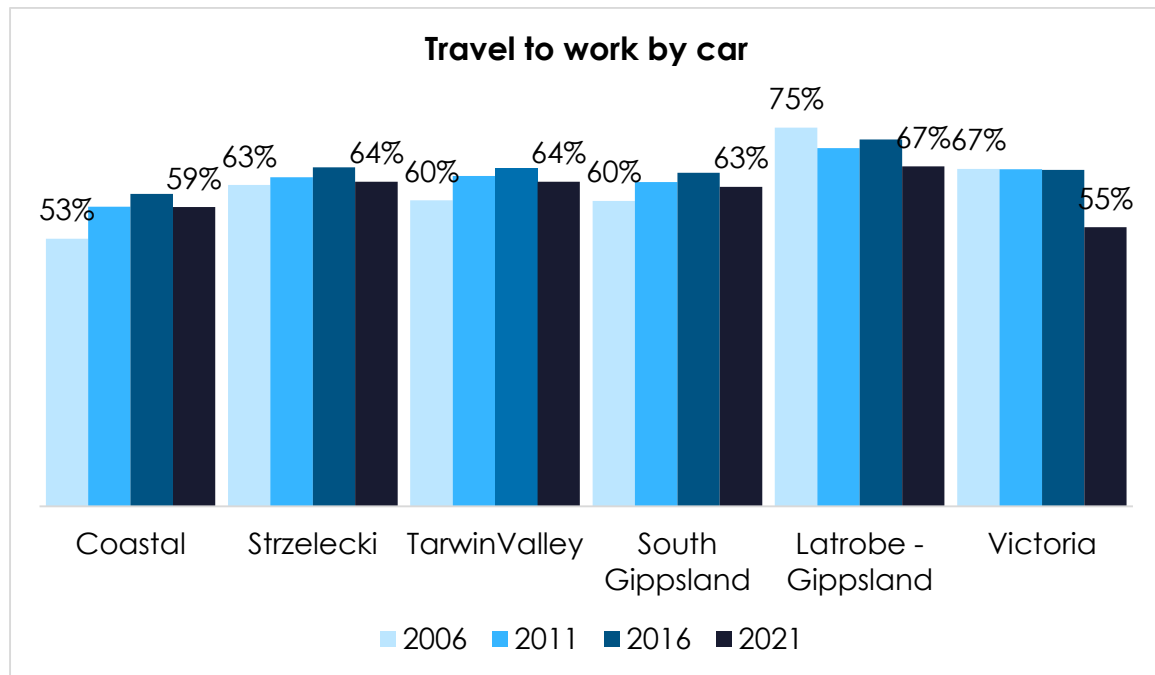


Figure 46 – Proportion of those who travel to work by car (including passengers)

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *roads – maintain roads and verges* was the most commonly selected option as ranking number 1 (26%), particularly amongst residents of Tarwin Valley (28%, compared to 20% of Coastal Promontory ward). Roads was ranked in the top 5 by 57% of respondents.

*Public transport – improve access and frequency* was ranked as number 1 by 6% of respondents, and in the top 5 by 23%.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community survey (part of this project) Q14. Have any of the following had a negative impact on you or your family in the last 12 months?
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Presented as a list of option that respondents could choose from. They could choose more than one. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to indicate which of a range of issues they or their family had experienced in the 12 months prior to interview, 11% said they *couldn't get somewhere due to transport issues*.



## 5.4 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

### Community insights summary

Housing affordability is a major concern given the rapid increase in house prices caused by “*cached up people from Melbourne competing for real estate in the region*”.

This has posed challenges for locals buying and/or renting property as well as the agriculture industry being able to house labourers during peak times in Airbnbs and other forms of, until recently, more affordable accommodation options.

*“The expansion that is taking place. Lots of people coming from Melbourne. Massive growth. Housing development. Being able to cope will be a challenge. Just accommodation will be challenging.”* [Tarwin Valley: Female, Volunteer]

*“Increase in housing process and reduced housing affordability within the last 12 months with covid. This will change the socioeconomic profile of the area as well. Also, it makes it hard for industry to find accommodation for staff.”* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*“How we look after the poor? Lots of schemes [from local government] but can't see how were going to house the younger people who cannot afford to live here. How do we house them? Where's the social housing policy. We have none. Open land for social housing. I know the state government is doing something but the Shire is not involved in that role.”* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Business Owner]

*“A shortage of housing. Social housing for low-income people needs to be better accommodated, not just shoved in a corner. We have that kind of problem and we need to include those people in the community more.”* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*“Now house prices have gone up. Locals are priced out of the market. People are realising that they don't need to be localised, they can work anywhere. They don't need to be in the office five days a week, maybe one day.”* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*“Pressure on workers to find an airbnb or affordable accommodation [with rise in house prices].”* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*“Housing affordability. Some people are afraid - Their parents, grandparents and great grandparents lived here but they won't be able to afford to live here.”* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]



<b>Source notes</b>	Housing monitor - <a href="https://housing.id.com.au/south-gippsland">https://housing.id.com.au/south-gippsland</a>
<b>Update due</b>	Annual

A small proportion of the population (3.2%) is in need of affordable housing, primarily housing appropriate for one person.

Only 8% of housing sales in the region are affordable for those on low incomes, with a median house price of \$525,000 (above an average for Gippsland of \$495,000).

Only 17% of rentals are affordable for low income earners, with a median rental price of \$370 a week.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *affordable housing* was ranked as number 1 priority by 2% of respondents, increasing to 8% amongst those aged under 35 years. Just over one in ten (12%) ranked it in their top 5 priorities for the region (24% amongst those aged under 35 years).

## 5.5 WASTE MANAGEMENT

<b>Source notes</b>	Know your Council website (LGPRF performance tracking)
<b>Update due</b>	Annual

The proportion of waste diverted from landfill has remained relatively constant over time. In 2021, the level of community satisfaction with waste management decreased.

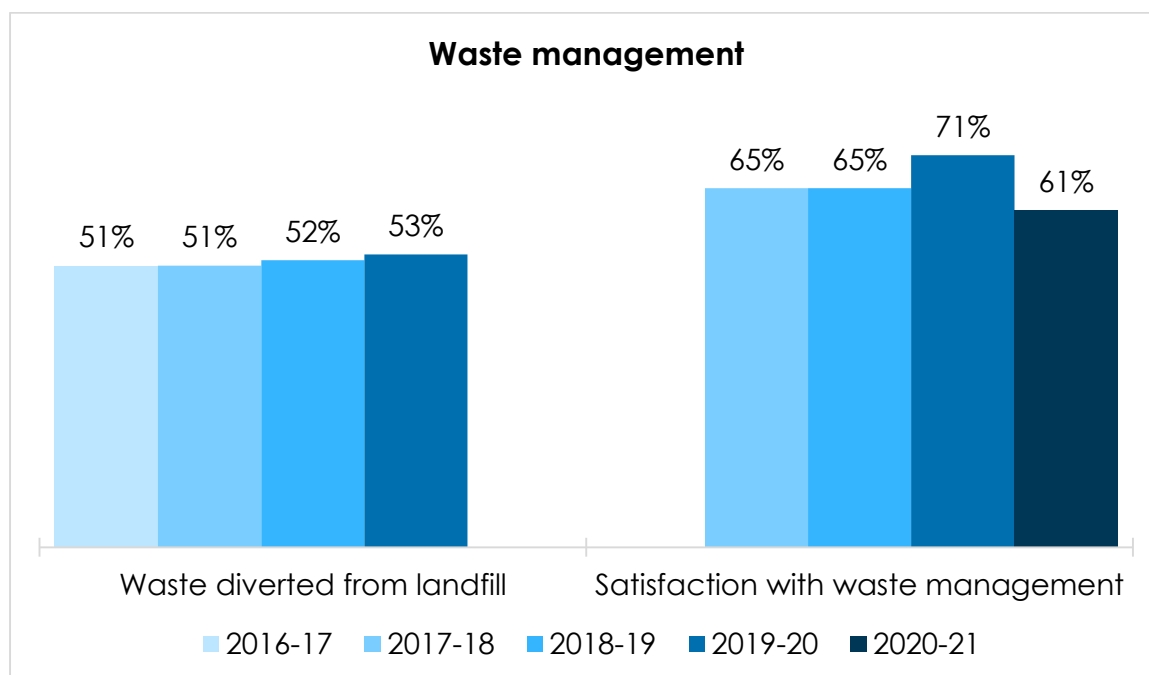


Figure 47- Waste management 2016-2021

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, waste management was ranked in the top 5 by 15% of respondents. This was relatively consistent across all demographics and localities.

## 5.6 TOWNSHIP CHARACTER

### Community insights summary

Participants often commented that each town or community had its own identity and things to offer. It is what, to them, made the region a unique place to live; how each community or town had its own identity be it street scapes, street art etc. People do not want to lose that sense of identity and small community feel.

*"Small towns struggle to keep an identity. Community groups are not as supported, as they used to be. A negative is the community is becoming disconnected and the expansion is part of that. We're getting housing estates instead of keeping as part of the town... Each town has its own identity. Meeniyan has the café arts and crafts feel. Towns that have that history and spirit, community feel. We don't have billboards up everywhere you go ... It's country. [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]*

*"[Need to maintain] The regional feel of the town. KFC came in and that's disgusting and horrible. I don't want to be another highway town on the way to Wilsons Prom. Maintain our quaintness with our country cafes and bakeries. We can do it too as we grow, we just need to make the right decisions; decisions in the interest of the community and not just in the interests of a couple of wealthy community members." [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]*

*"It is still small. Huge region but the community is small. Leongatha and Korumburra are a bit bigger but are not huge and there's lots of little towns that have their own quiriness. Each is different in their own way." [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]*

*"We all have our own uniqueness and reasons to go to other towns and experience what they've got. People come from Melbourne to look in shops and knick-knacks and things and enjoy the country, food and the green rolling hills. I'd like to see all those towns grow and be supported and thrive on what they've got... We're lucky here in Korumburra, having money spent on infrastructure, we're just on the cusp now of a whole new facelift for our town. A community hub being built and a whole development with the old railway station and the rail trail. Things are being brought up to date... the street scape is changing but retaining its historical charm." [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]*

*"You can still say hello to people down the street, but it is becoming more of a café culture. Where that goes to, I don't know. I'm all for business but I'd like to preserve what was." [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]*

*"Poor local shops struggle as it is. But having covid and having to survive on take away coffees, that's going to take a long time to come back from. They're just holding on, just holding on, just holding on and - I hope we don't lose those smaller things that make it that little, small town community feel." [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]*

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Planning for infrastructure, land use and housing developments* was ranked as number 1 priority by 5% of respondents and in the top 5 by 19%. Males more often ranked this in their top 5 (24%) than females (15%).

## 5.7 HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

<b>Source notes</b>	Census, 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

Coastal Promontory ward shows a higher incidence of full home ownership than the other wards, and indeed the averages across the state. This is likely due to the high incidence of holiday homes in this area.

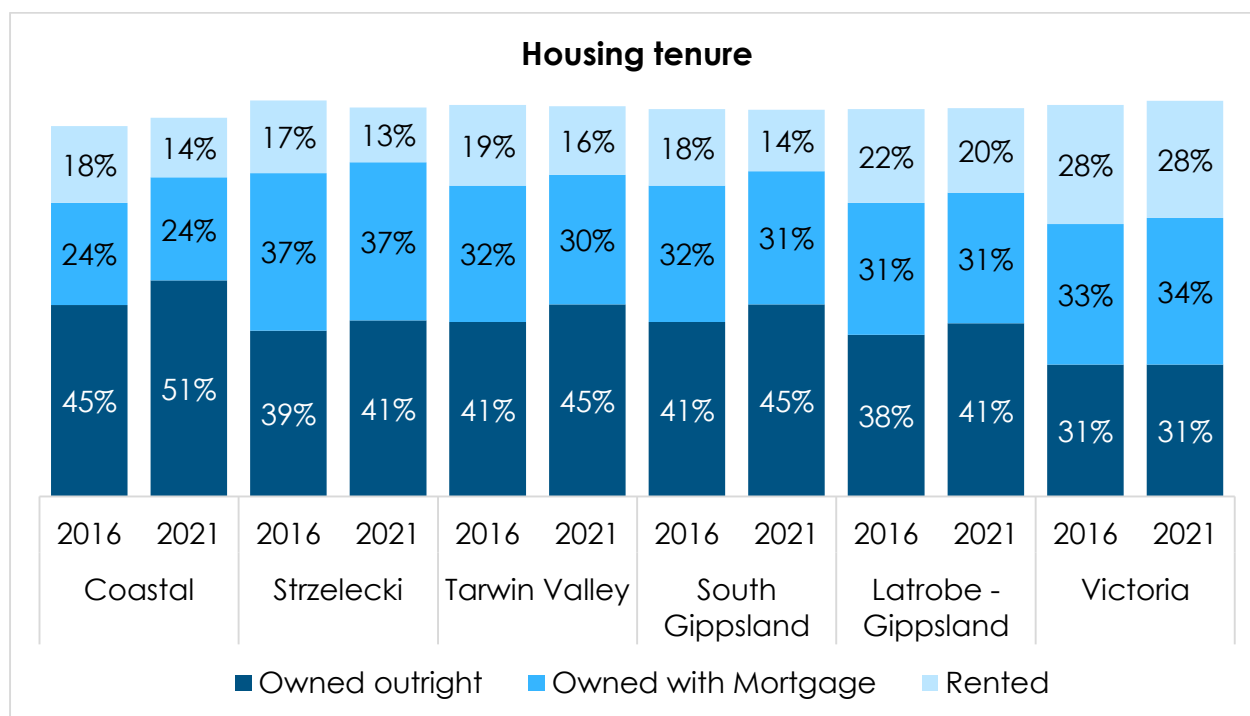


Figure 48 – Housing tenure type by ward over time

### Community insights summary

There is a strong connection to the region's identity as a farming area. However it is felt by some, especially farmers, that this is not fully recognised by local council – that farming, not tourism or niche businesses, is the major economic driver in the region. In that sense, land use for productive farming should be preserved and not broken up into smaller acreages and reforested.

Also, housing price increases, rather than farm production is not determining the land value of farms. This has caused rates to skyrocket above what farmers believe should be their fair share of the tax burden for the region.

Maintaining the character of the rolling green hills is what people want, universally, preserved.

*"Expansion. Expanding in the wrong direction. We're using valuable farmland for housing rather than looking at good vs bad farming areas for development. We're using good space instead of more arid land towards Geelong."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"[About nearby quarry] You think for God's sake guys \$14k [per annum paid to the council for quarry lease] in the grand scheme of things is chicken feed. We hardly have any vegetation left in South Gippsland. 200 extra trucks per day coming through Fish Creek, when gravel can be easily sourced at hundreds of different sites throughout the district. It's not unique or special. You think come on guys, the forest is precious, the trees are precious. If we need to mine something, do it where you don't need to bulldoze trees."* [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

*"There's more urbanisation happening out here. Farm sales used to be based on farm earnings but now housing prices are driving land prices. Affluence is rising from people moving in. Farms are being chopped up this is both good and bad – probably more bad. It can be great but if we're chopping up farms for people who only stay here two or three weeks a year that is a bad thing. It is better if people stay because it brings life back into the town."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"Coastal areas preserved and not developed. I don't want towns to join up. I like to have space to drive in between."* [Coastal- Promontory: Female, Teacher]

*"Ensure the rolling green hills stay rolling green hills. People come to see the rolling green hills and if the rolling green hills are full of houses it won't look the same."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Environment – protect and enhance the natural environment* was ranked as number 1 priority by 8% of respondents and in the top 5 by 30%. Four in ten (40%) residents surveyed in Coastal Promontory ward ranked this in the top 5.

## 5.9 EXTREME WEATHER ADAPTATION

### Community insights summary

Many see the population growth from city migration to the area as an opportunity to develop and build the communities within the region on a sustainable footing, now. Avoiding the cost burden in converting to more sustainable practices in the future – the future is now; the environment and liveability of the region [a main community aspiration] can be maintained in this way.

Protection of the natural environment was also a major concern and should not be at the expense of population increases.

*"There's little thought for zoning. You can throw a stone from the Mitre 10 car park into the flood waters in winter... Leongatha's development wasn't really thought out. Not just Leongatha but Korumburra too. A housing estate is being built in a flood area. There was no consultation with the community."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Business owner]

*"People would enjoy living down here [if the area developed with sustainability at the core]. Attract diversity to the area. Not just tourism and agriculture but looking at what the future looks like in low carbon economic space. Opportunity to build for the future now - start with something that's a bit braver."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Business Owner]

*"The region already has an element of climate refugees. People moving south which is the forecast across Australia. It's going to put extra pressure on the area and agriculture."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"East Gippsland fires a couple of years ago and severe storms a few months ago. So much damage in the region. The biggest issue is declaring a climate emergency... We have this huge opportunity and we need to be leaders need and not shy away and think it's too hard [to address climate change and sustainability]. For example Fish Creek there was an old quarry on public land. The council sold the lease and now 50 Hectares of indigenous bush can*



now be cleared, all for only \$14K royalties per year to the Shire. [Strzelecki: Female, Agriculture]

#### Source notes

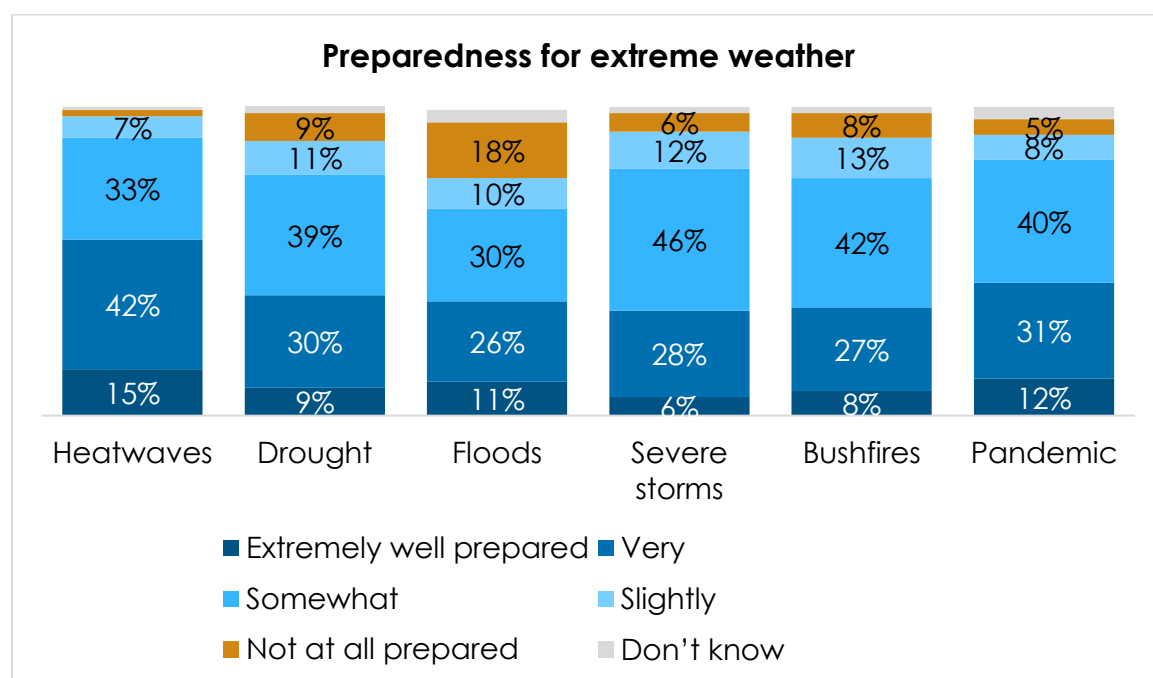
2022 Community Survey (part of this project)  
Q15. How well prepared are you for the following?  
Q16. What sort of extreme weather / climate change impacts are you currently experiencing or have already experienced in the last 2 years?

#### Update due

None planned

For question 16, respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to select all that apply.  
Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

Most residents who were surveyed said that they were at least somewhat prepared for the different types of extreme weather, although less than half indicated high levels of preparation for drought, floods, severe storms or bushfires.

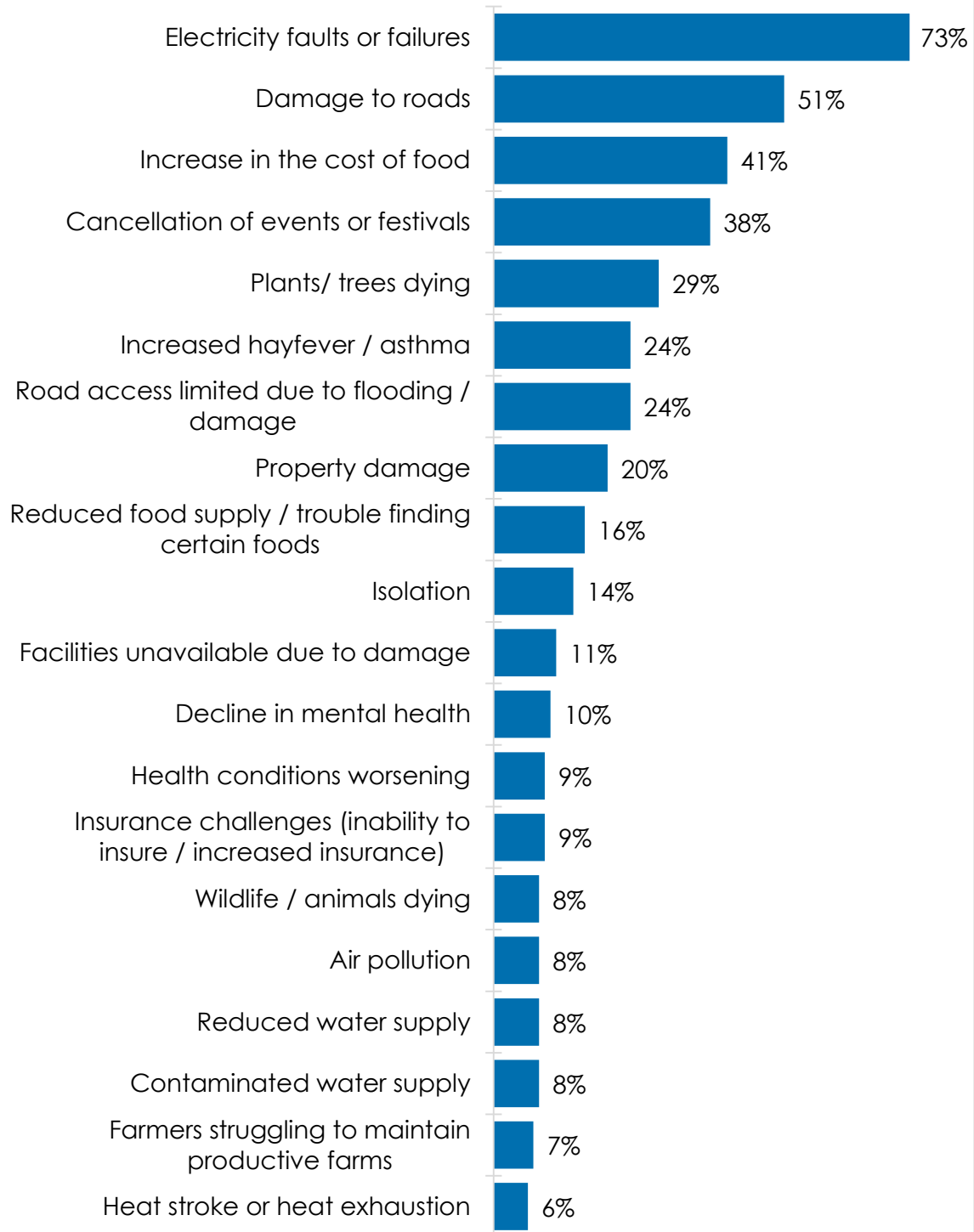


The only notable variation by ward was that those in Strzelecki and Tarwin Valley wards were more commonly extremely well prepared for floods (13%, compared to 7% of those in Coastal Promontory ward).

Those aged 55 years and over showed consistently higher levels of preparation for all forms of extreme weather.

South Gippsland residents are already experiencing a wide range of impacts from extreme weather. Those are mostly infrastructure and food related. This highlights the importance of planning for infrastructure disruptions due to extreme weather events.

### Extreme weather impacts



Just over a third (37%) of respondents mentioned something health related (heat stroke, health conditions worsening, decline in mental health, increase in disease, personal injury, increased hayfever / asthma). The incidence of having experienced an extreme weather related health impact was more common amongst females (43%, compared to 30% males), and younger people (58% under 35 year olds compared to 33% 55+ year olds).

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Climate change – reduce environmental impact and plan for more frequent extreme weather and health impacts* was ranked as number 1 priority by 6% of respondents and in the top 5 by 23%.

## 6 ECONOMY

The diversity and sustainability of the local economy can have significant impacts on financial capabilities of residents, and in turn effect an individual's capacity to participate in social and health promoting activities. Understanding information about businesses, income, financial position and tourism can help guide Council's economic strategy and service development.

### Community insights summary

- Recognise that farming is the driver of the economy; through new boutique businesses, niche markets and tourism are important, farming is boutique on a global scale.
- Sustainability has massive opportunities in export markets that purchase dairy and beef products from the region. Clean food is highly sought after internationally – the worlds breadbasket.
- Council should not be slow to act on opportunities for larger businesses like Big W, Bunnings etc. to operate in the larger community hubs like Leongatha and Korumburra. They have sorely “missed the boat” in the past.
- Getting permits and approvals are painfully slow, tick a box, and viewed as unnecessarily bureaucratic, both for business and a residential initiatives.
- Highly productive farmland should be preserved, not converted back to bushland – that should be done in low productive land areas.
- There is an opportunity to develop the South Gippsland area in a sustainable way and build a sustainable community of tomorrow today – because that is the way the world at large is headed. This is an opportunity to ‘grow the right way’.
- Tourism is important but many have said that towns should not just be a pass through. Efforts should be made to attract people to stop locally while on their way to the coast, Wilson’s prom or the mountains.
- Tourist attractions like coal creek should be self-sustaining and not a drain on the council [rate payers] purse.
- There was some criticism that Leongatha ‘closes shop’ on the weekends despite council saying the town is “open for business”.

6.1 SEIFA

<b>Source notes</b>	ABS SEIFA calculation of advantage and disadvantage – Quartiles at State Suburb Level for families at place of enumeration. SEIFA combines Census information on income, education, employment, occupation and housing to develop a measure of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society.
<b>Update due</b>	2023 (2021 Census)

The following chart shows household level SEIFA quartiles by ward. Quartile 1 shows the proportion of households who fall within the lowest 20% of scores for the region, while quartile 5 shows the proportion of households within the top 20% for the region.

Overall, a quarter of South Gippsland households are within the bottom 20% of SEIFA scores (more disadvantaged), with all of these in the Coastal Promontory and Strzelecki wards. In Tarwin Valley all households are in the mid-range of SEIFA scores (none in the lowest nor highest 20%).

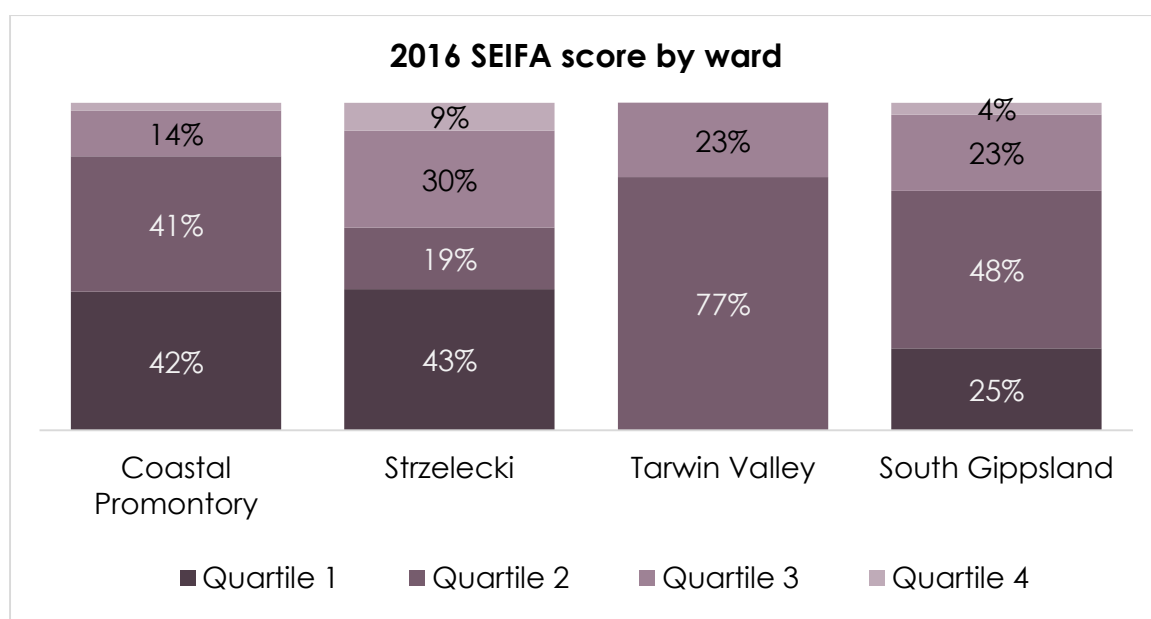


Figure 49 – 2016 Household SEIFA quartiles by ward

Overall, South Gippsland's SEIFA score is 990 (where 100 is the median for the state). This places it at 47<sup>th</sup> out of 79 local government areas.

The localities with the smallest and highest SEIFA scores (relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage) in each ward are as follows:

	Smallest		Highest	
	Locality	Score	Locality	Score
<b>Coastal Promontory</b>	Toora	899	Waratah Bay	1043
<b>Strzelecki</b>	Korumburra	917	Leongatha South	1044
<b>Tarwin Valley</b>	Foster	952	Allambee Reserve	1057

## 6.2 INCOME

<b>Source notes</b>	2021 Census
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

One in six households in South Gippsland are living with a household income of less than \$500 per week. In the coastal promontory ward a higher proportion of households are on low incomes of less than \$500 a week, and fewer households are on higher incomes of over \$2,000 per week; however it should be noted that around half of residential properties in this ward are holiday houses and therefore didn't fall within the South Gippsland component of the Census data.

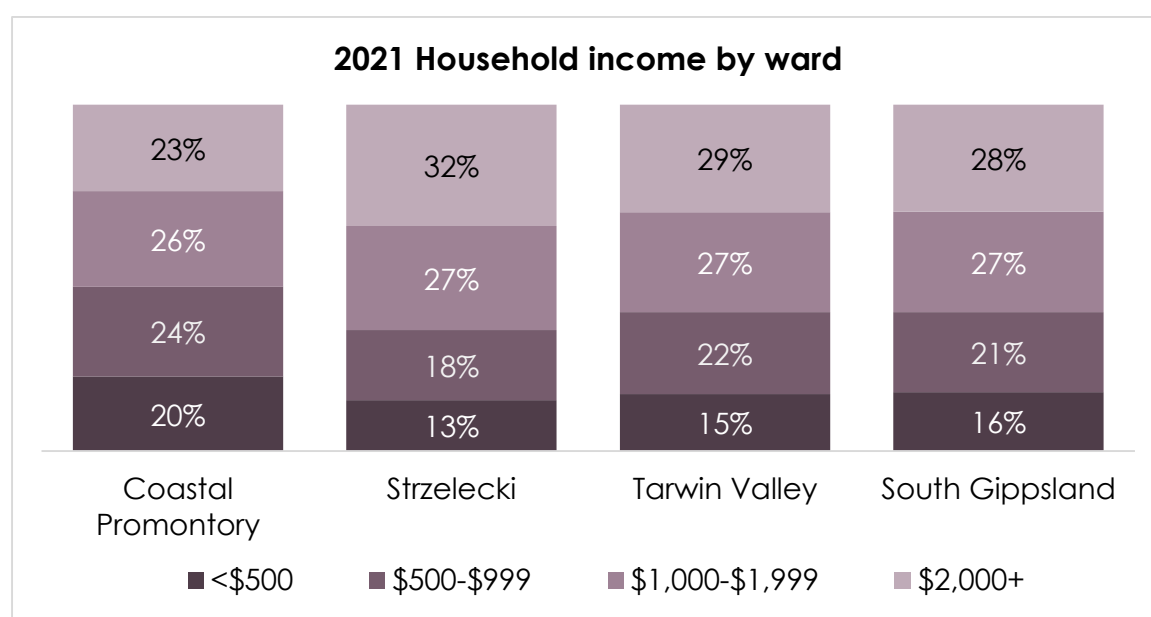


Figure 50 – 2021 Household income by ward

### Community insights

Tourism is important but many have said that towns should not just be a pass through. Efforts should be made to attract people to stop locally while on their way to the coast, Wilson's Promontory or the mountains.

Tourist attractions like coal creek should be self-sustaining and not a drain on the council [rate payers] purse.

There was some criticism that Leongatha 'closes shop' on the weekends despite council saying the town is "open for business".

*"...We're a tourist area. If that can't keep going then things stop [due to covid]. We're on the road to a main attraction, Agnes Falls. It has been very quiet lately... Covid hasn't helped. Businesses rely on people during busy times [tourist season] but they can't do anything about it."* [Coastal- Promontory: Male, Agriculture]

*"... good for some traders as there's tourist attractions. National parks like Wilsons Prom, rolling hills, scenery. It's very picturesque. Down here there's something to look at wherever you look. It's not like other places in Victoria."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"... South Gippsland people rely on an influx of people coming to town on their way to Wilson's prom, Coal Creek or tourism to trails etc."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"There's lots of exciting things happening. The rail trail is happening. That will bring tourists. Make use of what is now an abandon area. It will bring life back."* [Strzelecki: Female, Business Owner]

*"We have a fantastic heritage village, Coal Creek. Admission is a good coin donation. However it needs to make money, not be a financial drain. It's a good idea, it's Shire run but as a rate payer, it's great to have it, but it should not be a financial drain. It needs to be sustainable from a financial perspective."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]

*"I think we're going to get swamped by Tourists [when Covid restrictions end]. Absolutely hammered. All the people that could not go to Bali last summer will come here. Once vaccine passports come it and Melbourne is open we will be swamped. Not a bad thing for business. We need some stimulus – small business, retailers."* [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]

*"It's a great town on weekdays but closes down on weekends. That's bad for tourism. All they get is Maccas or KFC on weekends... Chamber of Commerce says they are open every business day but shut midday on Saturday and go to the football... Then people go to Meeniyan a much smaller town but they're open. That might be good now but a challenge in future. We would hope we would become a more rounded town in time."* [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]



<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Tourism – promote the area and support the tourism industry* was ranked as number 1 priority by 1% of respondents and in the top 5 by 11%.

## 6.4 BUSINESS TYPE

Farming is the main driver of the South Gippsland economy.

### Community insights

Recognise that farming is the driver of the economy; through new boutique businesses, niche markets and tourism are important, farming is boutique on a global scale.

Sustainability has massive opportunities in export markets that purchase dairy and beef products from the region. Clean food is highly sought after internationally – the world's breadbasket.

*"Farming is important. We need to up the profile of the farming community. When things are good nobody cares, but when crook, oh poor farmers. If you asked people in town about farming they'd say 'They're just about done for aren't they?' Even though farming is key to the economy. People need to understand farming importance [to the local economy]." [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]*

*"... [Originally] there was no statement for agriculture in economic development and environment. This has been rectified by the Committee for Gippsland and agriculture is now more recognised." [Strzelecki: Male, Agriculture]*

*"The region needs to embrace that we produce commodities [Milk, meat] and not be ashamed of that. We tend to think boutique or niche is great but commodities are great too. Sure promote the local cheese maker, that's fine but the guy growing beef is being served in gourmet restaurants in Japan – that is also boutique! Just because we're exporting hundreds and thousands of 1000 kg pallets of meat does not mean it is not boutique. It is boutique on a global scale, massively... on a trade delegation to Japan ... on dairy products. They just lapped up the Australian product and the image... the green grass and the rolling hills and it was just what they wanted to hear! You know [our products] don't just arrive in a little foil wrapper." [Tarwin Valley: Male, Agriculture]*

<b>Source notes</b>	ABS 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2017 to June 2021
<b>Update due</b>	Annual

*Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* and *Construction* are the two primary business types in the region.

In the three years from 2019 to 2021 the number of registered businesses in South Gippsland increased from 3,625 to 3,787. The greatest increase in number of businesses (taking into account entries and exits) occurred in *Construction* (+37 – 7% increase) and *Professional Services* (+27 – 13% increase), whilst *Retail Trade* declined (-6, 3% decrease).

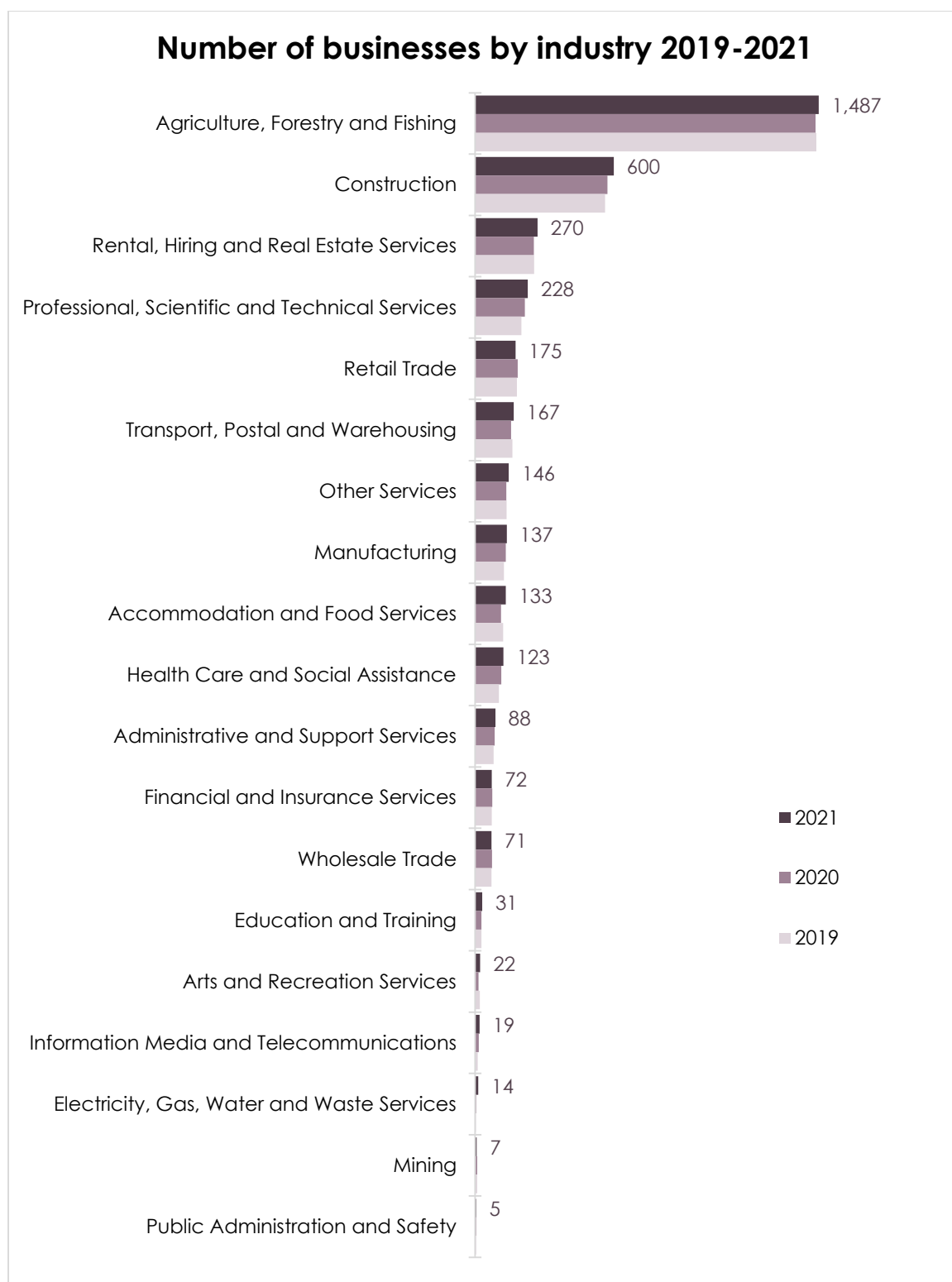


Figure 51 Number of businesses by industry 2019-2021

Two thirds (66%) of businesses in the region don't have any employees (non-employing). A high proportion of businesses are non-employing in the *Rental, Hiring and Real Estate* (86%) and *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* (77%) industries. In contrast, industries where the majority of businesses have employees are *Public*

Administration and Safety (100% employ at least one person), Accommodation and Food Services (76%), Mining (64%) and Retail Trade (60%).

Industry	Non employing	1-19 Employees	20+ employees
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,146	332	5
Construction	362	236	6
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	229	36	0
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	144	83	3
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	89	78	0
Manufacturing	84	47	5
Health Care and Social Assistance	78	40	6
Retail Trade	69	100	4
Administrative and Support Services	53	32	6
Financial and Insurance Services	49	29	0
Wholesale Trade	35	32	3
Accommodation and Food Services	31	95	3
Education and Training	22	9	0
Arts and Recreation Services	13	9	0
Information Media and Telecommunications	11	5	0
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	6	5	0
Mining	5	6	3
Public Administration and Safety	0	3	0
Other Services	74	73	0
Currently Unknown	3	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>1,233</b>	<b>47</b>

Figure 52 Number of businesses with employees by industry

## 6.5 EDUCATION

<b>Source notes</b>	Highest level achieved, Census 2021
<b>Update due</b>	2027 (2026 Census)

South Gippsland, and the broader Gippsland region is, on average, slightly more educated than the Victorian average. There is no major difference in level of education across wards.

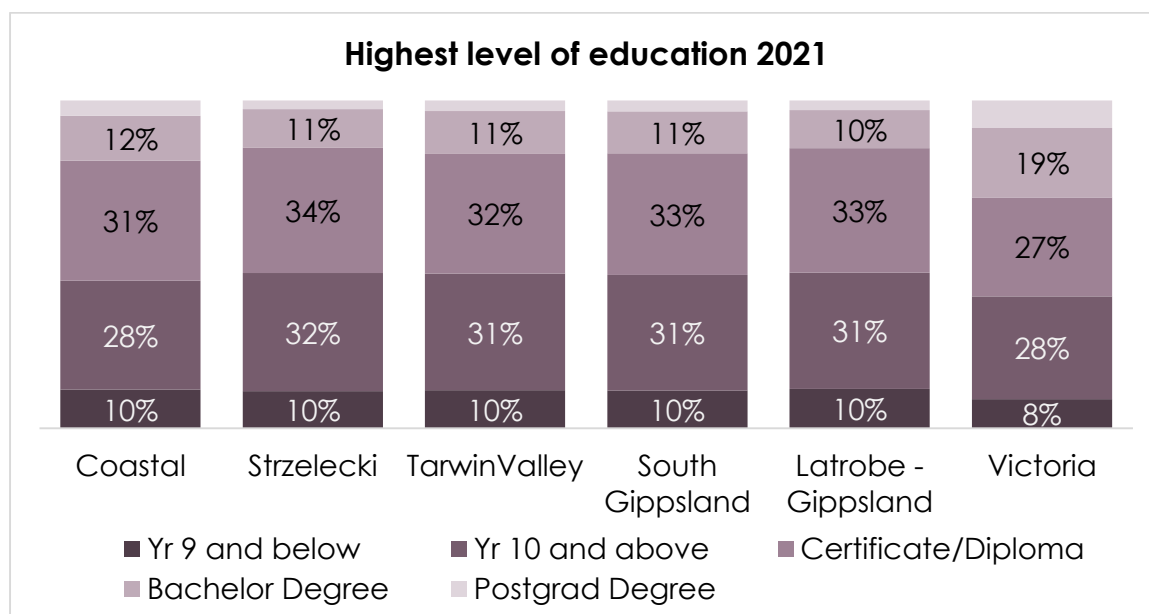


Figure 53 – Highest level of education by ward 2021

The incidence of residents having undertaken University level education is increasing over time, in line with state averages. This increase is more pronounced in the Coastal Promontory ward.

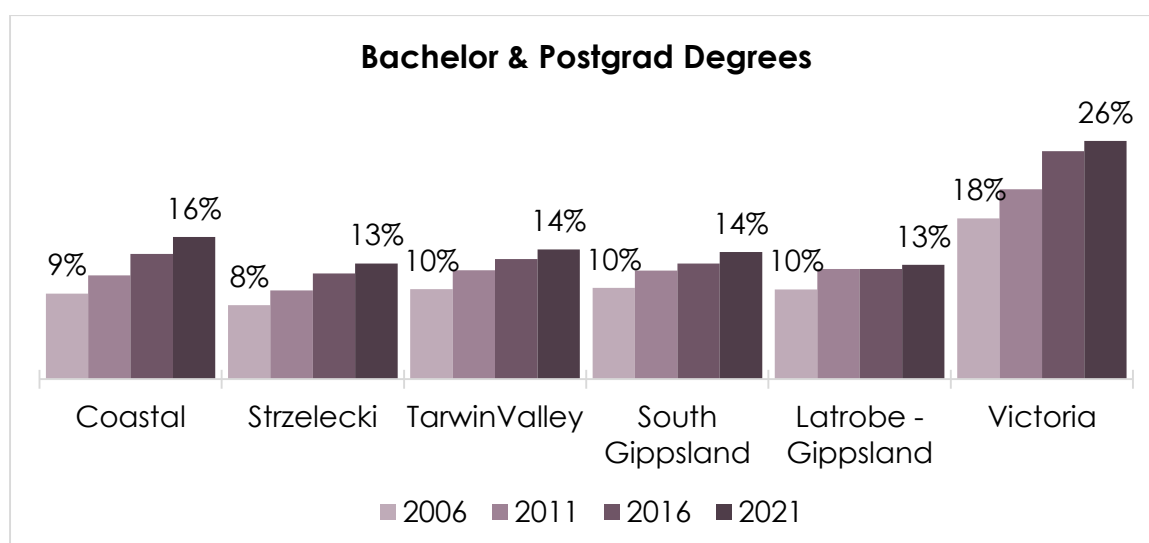


Figure 54 – Proportion of those whose highest level of education was a bachelor or postgraduate degree.

<b>Source notes</b>	2022 Community Survey (part of this project) Q6. From the list below please number the top priorities for the South Gippsland region in the next 5 years, where 1 is the number 1 priority.
<b>Update due</b>	None planned
<b>Notes</b>	Respondents were presented with a list of options and asked to rank them in order of priority. Data drawn from the resident component of the representative sample, so as to represent residents at the time of survey.

When asked to rank 24 priorities for the South Gippsland region for the next 5 years, *Education – good quality schools, and higher education options* was ranked as number 1 priority by 2% of respondents and in the top 5 by 15%.