Redbank Plains Community Centre

Measuring the Social Impact - 24-Month Study Results





November 2020

Community Development Section

Community, Cultural and Economic Development Department

Acknowledgement of Country

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

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- Multicultural Australia's former and current Centre Development Managers; Rose Dash and Jeril Thomas respectively, and volunteers at the Redbank Plains Community Centre, for their support with drafting and distributing the survey, support and co-facilitation at the focus group and ongoing feedback
- The many people of Redbank Plains community who provided their insights, knowledge and expertise via surveys and focus groups.

BACKGROUND

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

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

Council, in partnership with Multicultural Australia, has been conducting a multi-year social impact assessment, to track the impact of the Community Centre over time. A baseline study was conducted in June 2018, followed by an interim study after six months, in December 2018, that was repeated at 12-months, in July 2019. Two years since the Community Centre opened, this report documents the results of a 24-month study conducted in July 2020, and builds on data from the previous three collections. The purpose is to not only track the impact of the Community Centre, but to feed into centre planning and programming, and to provide an evidence base for the establishment of future community centres.



SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

Impact	Indicators
Social cohesion and social capital	 People from different demographics are engaging with centre activities Self-assessments of improved cross-cultural linkages Centre is considered culturally safe Community is considered safe Centre is accessible to all Collaboration between community groups is fostered
Community capacity	 Education, employment, skills, literacy improve Community is organising events The community centre is linking with community organisations and providing facilities for organisations Rates of volunteering and volunteering opportunities improve
Community needs: health, nutrition and wellbeing	 Quantification of activities Health services considered valuable Self-assessments of health and wellbeing Centre is considered a safe place to access health services
Community needs: local economic development	 Centre contributes to local economy Centre provides opportunities for businesses Increased opportunities for employment and income
Place-based community development	 Community centre recognised as a community hub Community has the capacity to self-organise Greater sense of safety Connections with Traditional Owners Community centre as a 'third place' Centre considered a safe place to organise collectively

Twenty-four-month study methodology

The above key indicators have been integrated into the design of the overall social impact assessment. The key methods used for the 24-month study included:

- a community survey which engaged 98 community members (see Appendix A). This survey included questions about:
 - key demographics
 - community strengths
 - community challenges
 - perceptions on safety and community cohesion
 - experiences of the Community Centre
 - engagement with the Community Centre during COVID-19 restrictions.
- a focus group with 17 community members, faceto-face and online. The focus group gathered feedback on:
 - survey findings
 - elaboration on key findings
 - feedback on key strengths and challenges.
- tracking of visits to the Community Centre by Multicultural Australia.

The same suite of methods has been used at each interval in the overall study. An exception to this was some adjustment at 24-months with regard for COVID-19 public safety restrictions (as an example, more online options were offered to engage with the study).

Also important to note is that the survey was conducted four months into the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst respondents were asked to base their answers on a time frame largely before the pandemic; 'thinking about the past 12 months' (2019-2020 financial year), and a question was introduced to gauge possible effects of the pandemic, the extent of its influence on overall responses is unclear and has implications for comparability between current and previous results.

The ongoing social impact assessment will include:

- surveying and focus groups at 3 years; and
- continued tracking of activity and attendance at the community centre by Multicultural Australia.



SURVEY RESPONDENTS

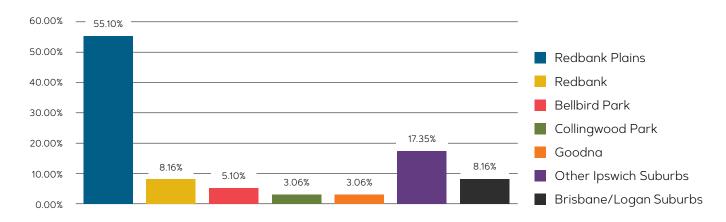
The following section outlines demographics data for survey respondents. Note that while the survey aimed to include the voices of as many Redbank Plains residents as possible, the respondent group is not statistically representative of the Redbank Plains

community. This section includes some comparison between ABS census and survey demographics where appropriate. For privacy, numeric results for small numbers of people have not been included.

Suburb of residence

The majority of people who responded to the survey were residents of Redbank Plains, or surrounding suburbs (around 74%). A further 17.35% of respondents were from other Ipswich suburbs, while 8.16% were from Brisbane or Logan suburbs.

Suburb of respondents (Respondents = 98)

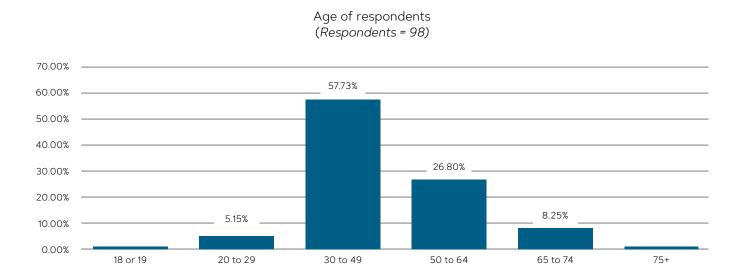




Age

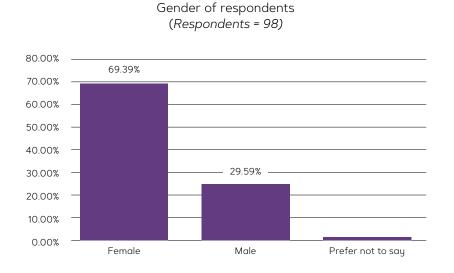
More than half of respondents (57.73%) were aged between 30 to 49 years and approximately one quarter of respondents (26.80%) were aged between 50 and 64 years.

According to 2016 ABS Census data, Redbank Plains has a higher proportion of people in younger age groups (0 to 17 years) and a lower proportion of people in older age groups (60+ years) when compared with the broader lpswich community. In 2016, 34% of Redbank Plains' population was aged between 0 and 17 years, and 8.7% were aged 60 years and over, compared with 27.9% and 15.2% respectively for the lpswich local government area (LGA) (id.profile, 2020).



Gender

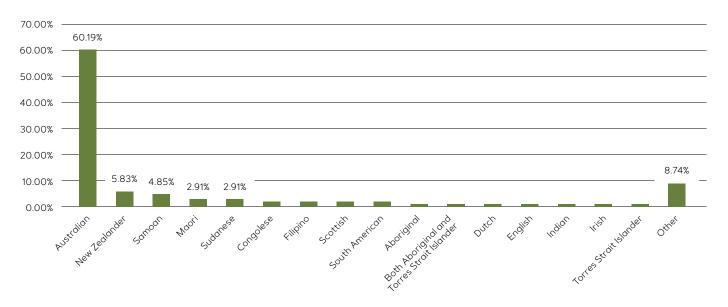
Just over two-thirds of survey respondents were women (69.39%) and just under a third of respondents were men (29.59%).



Cultural background

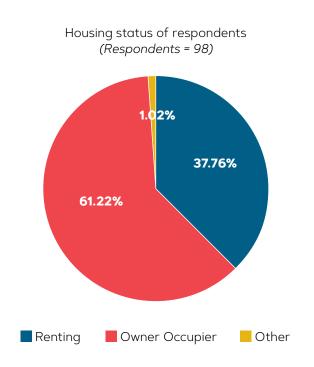
Redbank Plains is a diverse and multicultural neighbourhood. Drawing on 2016 ABS census data, 30.5% of Redbank Plains residents are born overseas, in comparison to 20.1% of the broader Ipswich community, and 21.6% of the overall Queensland population (id.profile, 2020). 4.2% of the Redbank Plains community identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (ABS, 2016). Other than English, the top languages spoken at home are Samoan (6.7%), Dinka (1.9%), Vietnamese (1.2%), Swahili (1.2%) and Hindi (0.8%) (id.profile, 2020). Survey respondents similarly reflect this diversity, with 39.81% of responses indicating a cultural background other than Australian. Other cultural backgrounds that 8.74% of respondents identified with included Bangladeshi, Canadian, Eritrean, Nigerian, South Sudanese, Tongan, Welsh, and Zimbabwean.

Cultural background of respondents (Respondents = 98, note that some respondents selected more than one option)



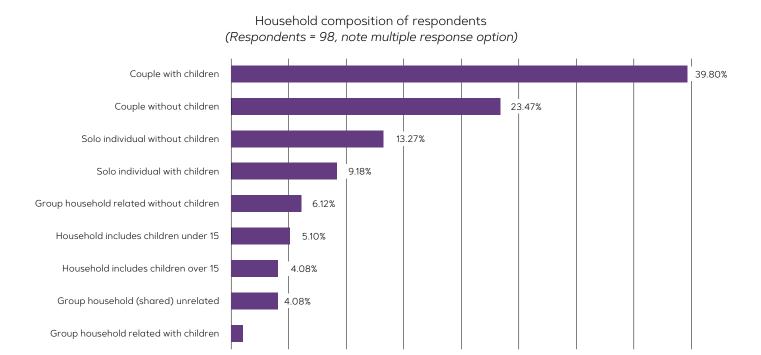
Housing

The majority of survey respondents (61.22%) indicated that they were paying a mortgage or owned the homes they live in, and 37.76% of respondents indicated that they were renting. At the time of the 2016 ABS Census, 40% of households in Redbank Plains were purchasing or fully owned their home, and 48.7% rented privately (id.profile, 2020).



Household

Nearly one in two respondents (48.98%) were from couple or solo individual households with children. According to 2016 ABS Census data, 56.2% of Redbank Plains households are home to children, in comparison to 48.1% of the broader Ipswich community, and 39.4% of the Queensland population (id.profile, 2020).



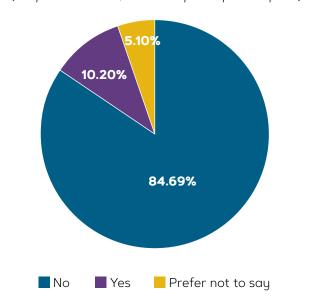
Disability

10.2% of survey respondents indicated that they identify as having a disability.

In the 2016 census, there were 11,044 people in the Ipswich LGA (or 5.7% of the city's population) that reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. There were also 17,162 carers (11.6% persons aged 15 years and over) providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age.

At the same time, 4.4% of the Redbank Plains community needed help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. Around 11.1% of people 15 years and over in Redbank Plains also provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age (id.profile, 2020).

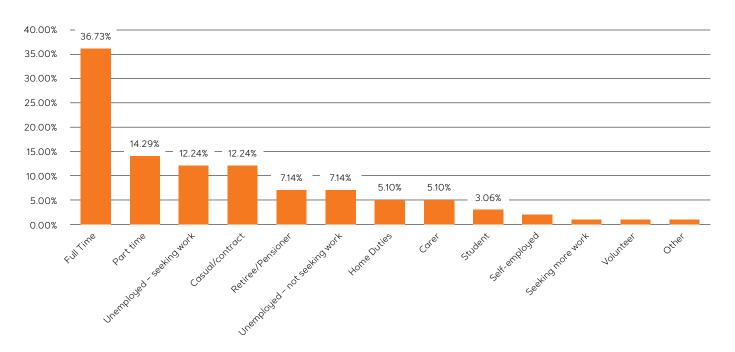
Disability status of respondents (Respondents = 98, note multiple response option)



Employment

Around 37% of respondents indicated that they were engaged in full-time work, 14.29% said they worked part-time and another 12.24% of respondents had casual or contract work. 12.24% of respondents indicated they were unemployed and seeking work. June 2020 quarter data reported unemployment in Redbank Plains to be at 12.1%, in comparison to the broader Ipswich LGA rate of 8.6% (Dept. of Education, Skills and Employment, 2020).

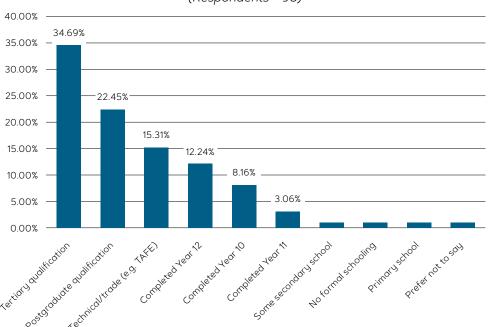
Employment status of respondents (Respondents = 98, note multiple response option)



Education

The majority of survey respondents had either a tertiary qualification (34.69%), a postgraduate qualification (22.45%) or a technical/trade qualification (15.31%).

Education status of respondents (Respondents = 98)



TWENTY-FOUR-MONTH SURVEY RESULTS

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

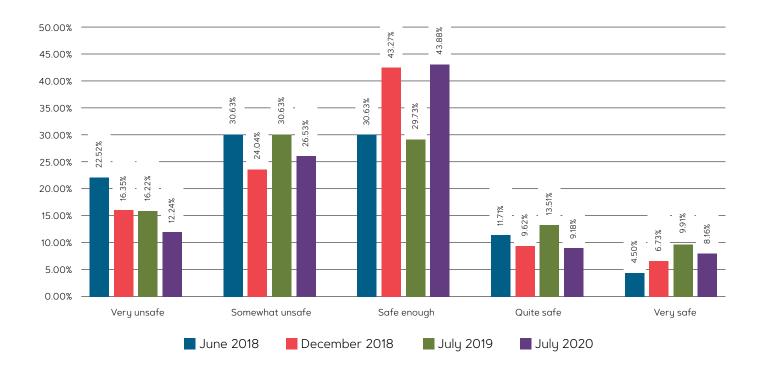
It should be noted that while respondents to the six-month survey were fairly evenly split between those people who had visited the Community Centre, and those who had not, following rounds of research have engaged larger proportions of people who had visited the Community Centre. At 12 months approximately 75% of survey respondents had

visited the Community Centre (25% had not), and with the 24-months group of respondents this levelled back to around 65% and 35% respectively. As such, results are likely to be somewhat skewed. Where relevant, results have been disaggregated for those who have visited the Community Centre, and those who have not, for comparison between these groups. Broadly, those who had visited the Community Centre reported higher levels of engagement, cohesion, community connections, and more positive attitudes towards diversity, as also reflected in the six and 12-month surveys.

Perceptions of safety

As a measure of community cohesion, survey respondents were asked 'how safe do you feel walking alone in Redbank Plains?'. A trend across all four surveys has been that consistently only a minority of respondents indicated that they felt safe. In response to the 24-month survey, less than a fifth (17.34%) of respondents indicated that they felt 'quite' or 'very' safe. Additionally, 43.88% of respondents reported they felt 'safe enough'. In contrast, over a third of 24-month survey respondents (38.77%) indicated that they felt either 'very' or 'somewhat' unsafe. For comparison, a nationwide report found that generally 66% of people felt 'very safe' or 'safe' walking alone at night in their local area (Scanlon Foundation, 2019).

How safe do you feel walking alone in Redbank Plains? (Respondents: Jun '18 = 111, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 111, Jul '20 = 98)

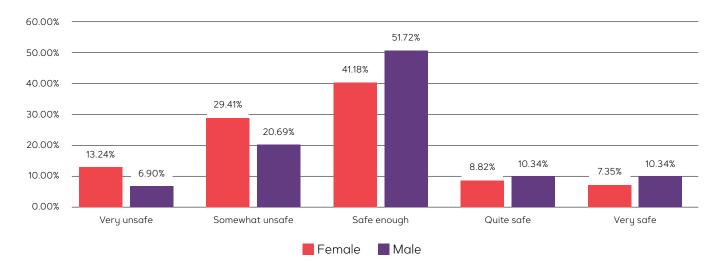


Focus group participants drew attention to safety concerns in Redbank Plains that corresponded with survey respondents' identification of local challenges around safety (see Community Challenges page 23). In particular, the focus group identified occurrences of violence and hooning as of particular concern to local safety and suggested developing a greater understanding around why violence is happening.

When asked 'what would make Redbank Plains a greater place for children, youth and families?', focus group participants conveyed 'an end to dirt bikes riding through streets' and hooning in the local area. As with previous research rounds, the group also highlighted upkeep of public areas as a factor connected to safety in the suburb, and suggested a need for 'better park lighting', 'more [CCTV] surveillance', 'improve signage' at recreational areas (e.g. White Rock) and to generally 'clean-up community' including 'graffiti, rubbish, 'unofficial' dump sites, and council's maintenance of weeds ... damaged street paths.'

As with previous analyses, results of the 24-month survey again reflected differences between male and female perceptions around safety, with 42.65% of female respondents indicating that they felt 'very' or 'somewhat' unsafe, compared to 27.59% of male respondents.

Perceptions of safety by gender (Respondents = 97, including only respondents who identify as male or female)



Engagement in community meetings

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

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

As a measure of community capacity and cohesion, respondents were asked if they had taken part in community meetings in the past 12 months. As with previous survey results, there has been a steady increase in the number of respondents indicating that they have taken part in community meetings, both at the Community Centre and elsewhere. This result also corresponds with Centre records that indicate a sizeable proportion of visitations at the Centre are for the purpose of community meetings (see Engagement with the Community Centre page 26). Similarly a number of survey respondents made reference to the Community Centre's strengths as a 'meeting place for the community' and as a 'place to come together'.

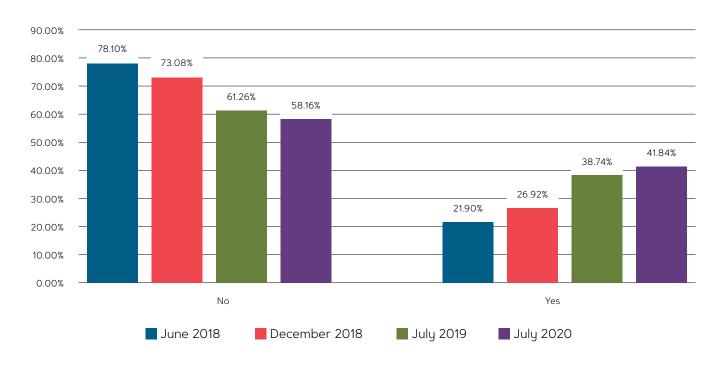
Many respondents indicated that they had taken part in community meetings hosted at the Community Centre, including:

- Redbank Plains Neighbourhood Watch (6)
- council community consultations (3)
- Sisterhood Empowerment group
- Man up group
- parents group
- seniors group
- food distribution
- job search group
- photography group
- West Moreton Health Midwifery Clinic.

Other meetings in the broader community included:

- 'Community Champions' meetings
- community services network meetings
- Inala Ipswich Multicultural Network meetings
- Acholi community in Queensland
- church meetings
- community elders
- Multicultural Australia Community Leaders Forum
- Redbank Plains Youth Hub.

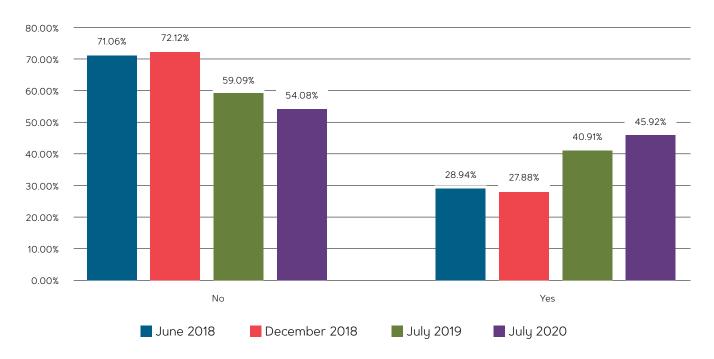
Have you taken part in any community meetings in the past 12 months? (Respondents: Jun '18 = 113, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 111, Jul '20 = 98)



Volunteering

As a further measure of community capacity, respondents were asked if they had volunteered or assisted with any community groups in the past 12 months. Reflective of the large proportion of respondents who have visited the Community Centre, 45.92% of respondents indicated that they had recently volunteered in the community.

Have you volunteered in the community or assisted with community groups in the past 12 months? (Respondents: Jun '18 = 113, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 110, Jul '20 = 98)



For many, this included volunteering opportunities at the Community Centre that included:

- general volunteering at the Community Centre (5)
- helping at Project Nourish
- provision of Justice of the Peace services
- helping at Midwifery Clinic
- delivery of the Driving program
- helping with Future Fit group
- assistance with Homework Club (SALBAGOSS)
- assistance with photography group
- volunteering with the Sisterhood group.

Other volunteering that respondents were engaged in included:

- community awareness/action meetings (7)
 e.g. environmental, political, health
- charity organisations/public sector initiatives (5)
 e.g. Clean Up Australia, Red Cross, RSPCA,
 Care Army
- church groups (4)
- local schools/playgroups (3)
- assisting seniors in the community
- providing meals e.g. to homeless people, medical staff
- cultural group meetings
- dance group
- parenting program
- sports program.

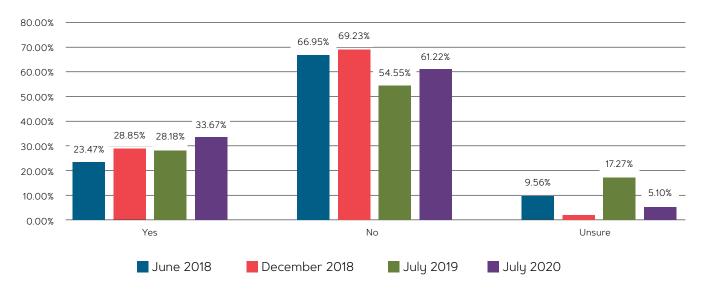
Connections between cultural groups

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

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

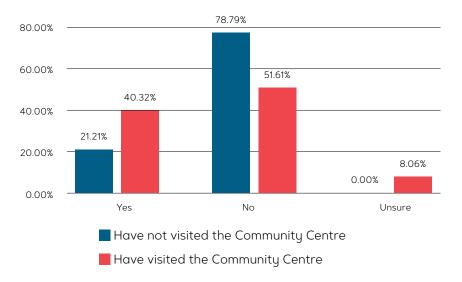
As a measure of community cohesion respondents were asked, 'Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in the Redbank Plains area?'. The proportion of respondents who indicated 'yes' increased slightly (approximately 5%) on previous results.

Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in the Redbank Plains area? (Respondents: Jun '18 = 115, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 110, Jul '20 = 98)



Notably, those respondents who visited the Community Centre were more likely to indicate that they had connections to cultural groups and communities other than their own. 40.32% of people who had visited the Community Centre had connections to cultural groups other than their own, in comparison to 21.21% of people who had not visited the Community Centre.

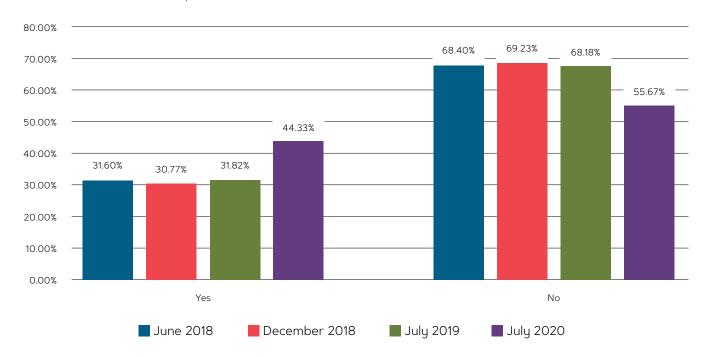
Do you have any connections to cultural groups or communities other than your own in the Redbank Plains area? (Have not visited RPCC = 33, Have visited RPCC = 62, 1 unsure excluded)



Involvement in community groups

As a further measure of community cohesion respondents were asked 'are you a member of any community groups?'. 44.33% of respondents conveyed their membership with community groups. This represented a notable 12.51% increase on the previous 12-month responses to this question.

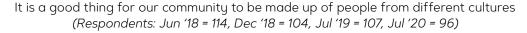
Are you a member of any community groups? (Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 110, Jul '20 = 97)

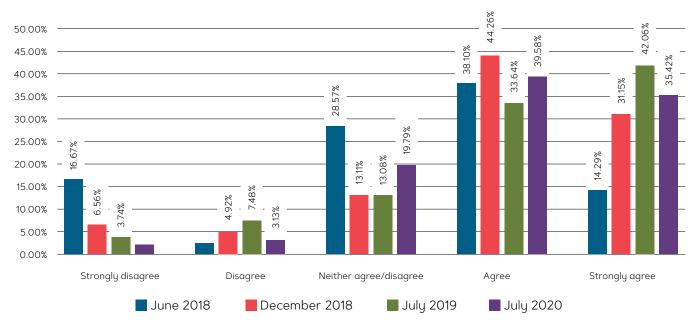




Valuing diversity

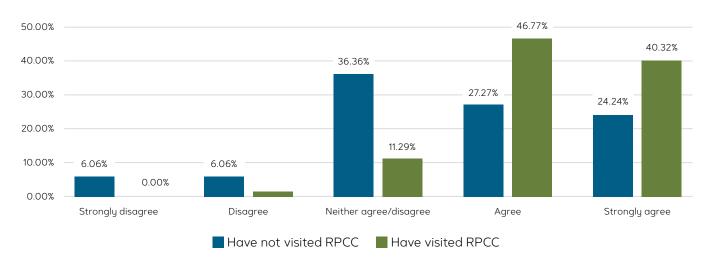
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, 'It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures'. Consistent with the previous 12-month survey results, most respondents to the 24-month survey (75%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the value of diversity.





Those respondents who had visited the Community Centre were more likely to feel positive about diversity – 87.09% of people who had visited the Community Centre felt positively about diversity, compared to 51.51% of people who had not visited. This is similar to results from the previous 12-month survey.

It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures (Have not visited RPCC = 33, Have visited RPCC = 62, 1 unsure excluded)

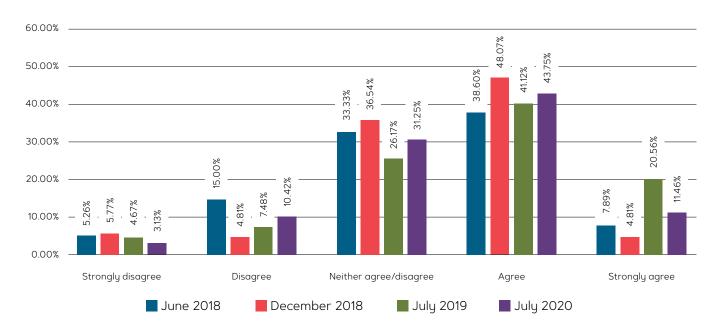


Nationwide, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that 80% of General Social Survey respondents agreed it is 'a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures' (ABS, 2019). Similarly, the Scanlon Foundation report found that 85% of people agreed that 'multiculturalism has been good for Australia', while 53% of people felt that levels of migration are 'about right' or 'too low' (Scanlon Foundation, 2019). Attitudes towards migration are often closely linked to employment levels, suggesting that a core factor in community cohesion is economic wellbeing.

Sense of welcome

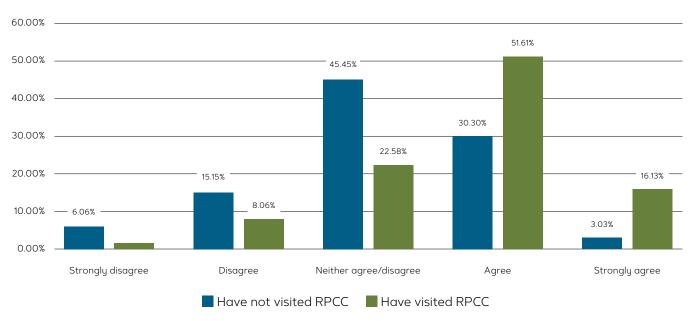
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, 'I feel welcome in my community'. Just over 55% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcome in their community. This represents 6.47% less agreement when compared with the previous 12-month survey results.

I feel welcome in my community. (Respondents: Jun '18 = 114, Dec '18 = 104, Jul '19 = 107, Jul '20 = 96)



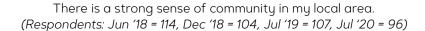
Respondents to the recent 24-month survey who had visited the Community Centre in the past twelve months were more likely to feel welcome in their community. This is consistent with the previous 12-month survey results.

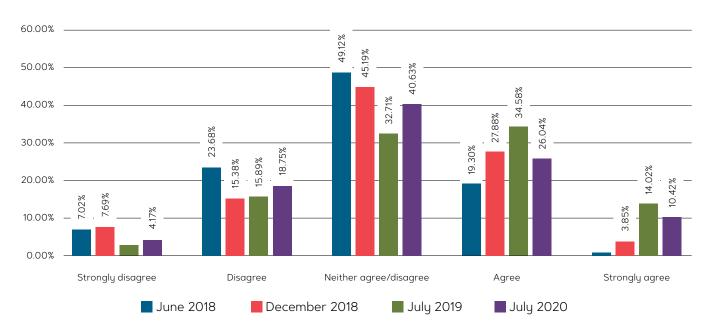
I feel welcome in my community.
(Have not visited RPCC = 33, Have visited RPCC = 62, 1 unsure excluded)



Sense of community

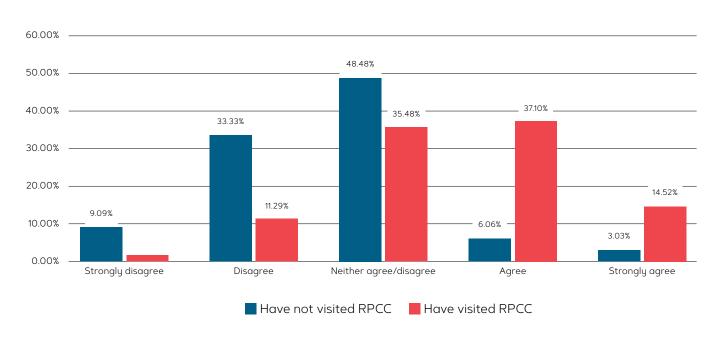
As a measure of community cohesion, community members were asked to indicate to what degree they agreed with the statement, 'There is a strong sense of community in my local area'. 36.46% of survey respondents 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that there is a strong sense of community in their local area. This result also represents 12.14% less agreement than was previously indicated by community members who responded to the 12-month survey.





As with respondents to the 12-month survey, respondents to the 24-month survey who had visited the Community Centre were also more likely to feel that there was a strong sense of community in their local area.

There is a strong sense of community in my local area. (Have not visited RPCC = 33, Have visited RPCC = 62, 1 unsure excluded)



Community strengths

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

Consistent with responses to previous surveys, the key strengths of the community were reiterated by 24-month survey respondents and again included diversity, sense of community, outdoors sports and recreation areas, access to shops, services and facilities, and affordable housing. Focus group participants highlighted outdoor activities and sports programs as a strength connecting the local community.

Theme	Instances	Representative Quote
Value of diversity	22	'The diverse range of cultures opens up opportunities to explore and develop new skills and knowledge whilst in turn helps us achieve a better overall understanding.'
Sense of community	12	'The community is friendly and warm and engaging!', 'Supporting one another', 'We are all in this together'.
Outdoors sports and recreation areas	10	'Lots of great parks and bush walks close by.'
Access to shops, services and facilities	9	'Libraries, education, shopping centres in close proximity', 'Most day-to-day needs are available in this single suburb - even a choice of providers in most instances'.
Affordable housing	5	'Cheaper housing', 'Affordable housing and rent'.
Community groups, activities	4	'It provides for children such as, holiday programs, sports and parks', 'Variety of support that me and my kids can access'.
Great place for families	4	'Young families make it an active and mostly friendly place', 'Family oriented'.
Growing community	4	'Redbank Plains is in the midst of continual growth which has helped strengthen the bonds between the various cultures that reside in the area', 'Lot of people building up population'.
Proximity to other urban centres	1	'Connection to Ipswich and Brisbane City.'

Community challenges

As a measure of community need, community members were asked to identify the key challenges facing the community. Response themes are presented in the table below, along with demonstrative quotes. Similar to previous rounds of research, key challenges identified by survey respondents and reiterated by focus group participants were; crime, limited public transport, financial pressures and of rapid development, racism, interpersonal conflict, and support for young people. As reported earlier (see page 13) focus group participants expressed concerns around local safety as interrelated with hooning and the upkeep of public areas.

Focus group participants also elaborated on survey results by indicating that challenges/limitations in access to and awareness about services and social

infrastructure included disability, employment, and diversionary programs or services. The group reflected on what would 'make Redbank Plains a greater place for children, youth and families' and suggested more provision of activities and services for young people, including 'after-hours and during school holidays'.

During the focus group there was brief discussion around challenges in keeping up with rapid population growth. Population estimates at 30 June 2019 were that 23,218 people were residents of Redbank Plains at that time and following 5% growth in population since the previous year. This compares with 4.09% population growth across the broader Ipswich area and 2.2% in South East Queensland during the same time period (id.profile, 2020). Over the past ten years Redbank Plains resident population has approximately doubled.

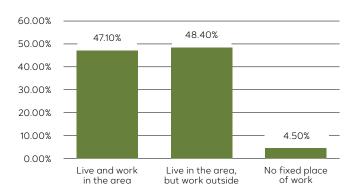
Theme	Instances	Representative Quote
Crime	19	'There are pockets of areas where the crime rate is high.'
Limited public transport	13	'Isolation within the suburb', 'The lack of public transport on the southern side of Redbank Plains Rd is extremely painful to even be able to get out of the suburb', 'Only one bus that doesn't stretch the whole of the estates. More buses please!'.
Financial pressures	12	'Financial challenges', 'Unemployment', 'Lack of job opportunities'.
Pressure of rapid development	10	'Too much growth too fast', 'Maybe not all getting their needs met', 'Density in housing'.
Racism	9	'Cultural differences at times.'
Support for young people	8	'No activities to engage youth', 'Youth support facilities'.
Interpersonal conflict	8	'Theft, drugs and violence', 'Including domestic violence'.
Access to services and social infrastructure	5	'No Medicare Human Services office', 'Require more free children and youth programs, groups assistance to learn English language, school children require more support for homework, free skill based groups or programs for unemployment.'.
NEW: COVID-19 pandemic, safety restrictions	5	'I think everyone's biggest challenge now is this pandemic.'
Drug use	4	'Crime and drugs.'
Odour pollution	4	'Smell coming from the tip or the factories', 'It makes the area feel less [of a] nice place to live. We have to lock up the house to stop the smell.'.
Hooning	3	'Speeding drivers at night where we live, we can clearly hear cars doing burn outs', 'Dirt bikes riding (fast) on paths'.
Safety	3	'At times I don't feel safe.'
Upkeep of public areas	2	'Lighting and amenities in the parks requires improvements litter, broken glass and dumped rubbish', 'Graffiti, maintenance of council areas'.
Awareness of the Redbank Plains Community Centre	2	'Still people are unaware that there is a community centre', 'Not a lot of marketing for the events that are on, so it's hard to know about them.'.

Public transport and employment

As a consistently strong theme through four rounds of research, 'public transport remains a persistent challenge for the Redbank Plains community'. Focus group participants emphasised and reiterated survey respondents' frustrations with there being limited public transport available within and connecting the suburb externally to other places, such as the Community Centre and for work. Community members described challenges that concerned frequency and reliability of public transport in the area, that was seen to contribute to 'isolation within the suburb' and that made it 'extremely painful to even be able to get out of the suburb.'

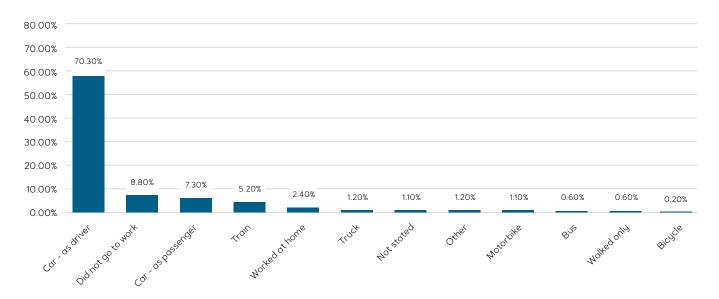
Similar to previous rounds of research, community members gave feedback on the links between poor public transport and employment and described related pressures placed on family time and resources, such as balancing work commitments elsewhere and enabling children and young people to participate in family/local activities. As one survey respondent indicated 'We only have one car which I use for work ... my family has to wait until I get home.' Experiences such as these can also be understood to reflect employment opportunities within Ipswich. 48.4% of working people in Ipswich work outside the city, with the majority of these people commuting to Brisbane.

Employment location of Ipswich resident workers (Source: ABS, 2016, via id.profile, 2020)



Most working residents of Redbank Plains (70.3%) travel by car as a driver to get to work, while just 0.6% and 5.2% respectively catch a bus or train to work.

Method of travel to work for employed residents of Redbank Plains (Source: ABS, 2016, via id.profile, 2020)

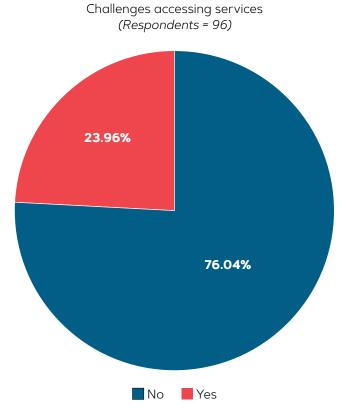


Additionally, and somewhat unsurprisingly, in this round of research community members indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic represented a new and widespread challenge for the local community, as with other areas. More specifically, some survey respondents indicated that some challenges accessing services were also related to COVID-19 public safety restrictions. As noted above under 'Community challenges', more generally, as a consistent theme across multiple rounds of this research, 'Access to services and social infrastructure' remains an ongoing concern.

Challenges in accessing services

Respondents were asked, 'Have you experienced any problems accessing services or supports in the last 12 months?'. Whilst responses to this question had been relatively steady, with 19.24% and 18.69% of participants respectively responding 'yes' to 6-month and 12-month surveys, 23.96% of respondents to the 24-month survey conveyed a slight increase in problematic experiences accessing services, some of which was expressed as COVID-19 related. Key access challenges included:

- dental services
- legal support
- generalised COVID-19 related access challenges
- health services
- mental health services
- employment support
- free community program spaces
- disability services
- environmental support services
- referrals to community services
- specialist services.



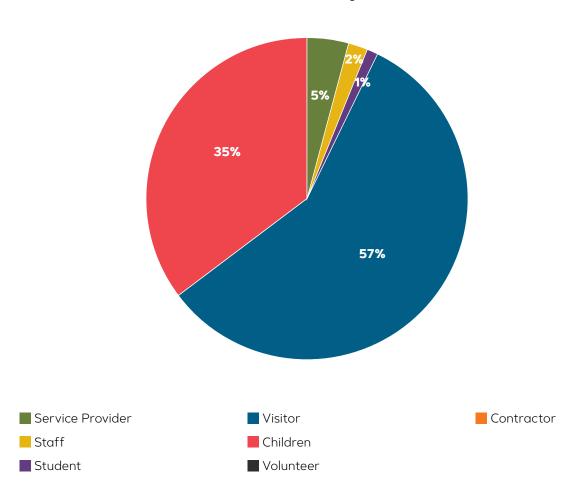


ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The following section examines Community Centre records regarding community members' engagement with the Community Centre, and includes feedback on patronage, along with community and individual benefits from survey respondents.

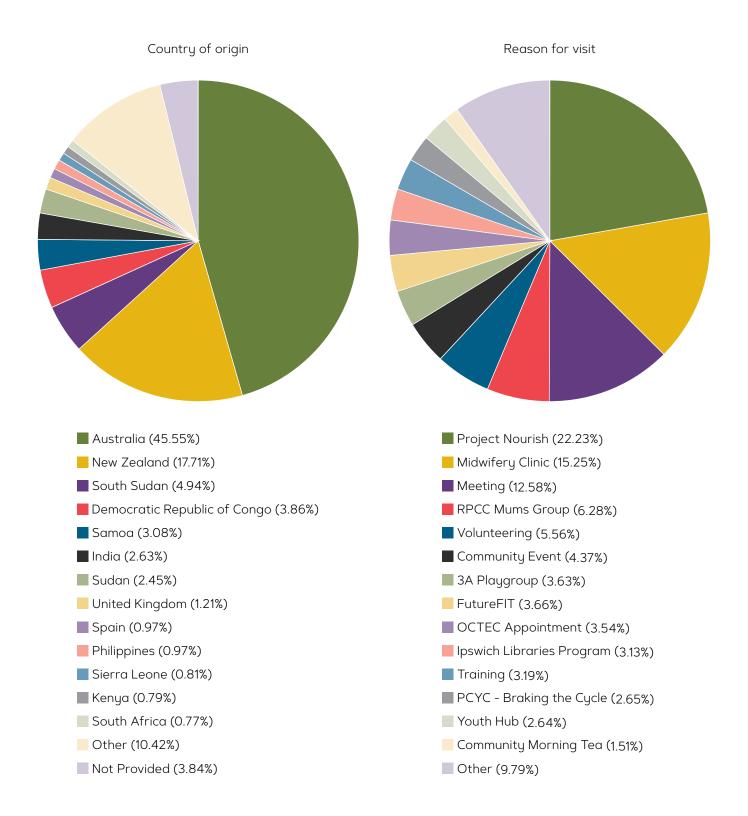
Between July 2019 and June 2020, there were 7,739 visits to the Community Centre, collected via electronic registration at the welcome desk (note that this includes return visits by individuals). Of these visits, 35% were children.





The majority of visitors to the Community Centre were from Australia, New Zealand, South Sudan, DR Congo, Samoa, India, Sudan, and the United Kingdom. This has some consistency with survey respondents, most of whom identified as Australian (60.19%), and New Zealander (5.83%).

Many visitors came to the Community Centre to access Project Nourish (22.23%), the midwifery clinic (15.25%), community meetings (12.58%), the Centre's Mums Group (6.28%), and volunteering (5.56%).

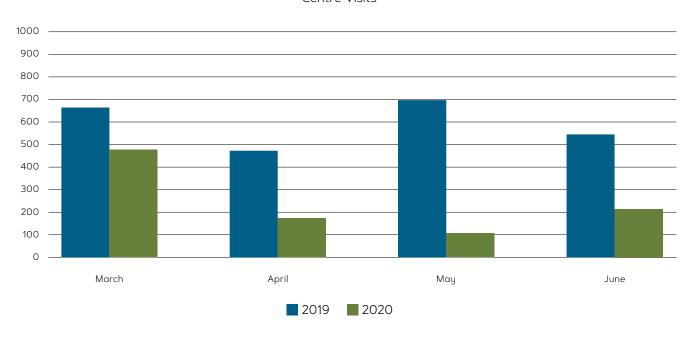


Comparison of visitations between financial years indicates there were 465 less visitations recorded at the Community Centre between 2018-2019 (8,204 total visits) and 2019-2020 (7,739 total visits). As could be expected this reduction in visitations was most acutely experienced by the Centre during the initial four months of the COVID-19 pandemic (1,776 less visits between financial years' March to June period; 2019 (3,002 total visits) and 2020 (1,226 total visits)). More than half (56%) of survey respondents

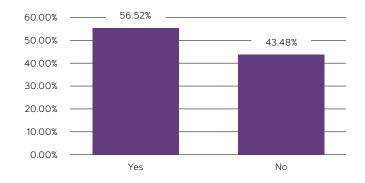
indicated, their engagement with the Community Centre had been affected by COVID-19 related public safety restrictions and social distancing practices.

On the other hand, before the COVID-19 restrictions came into effect, Community Centre records indicated there had been 1,311 more visits than the same period in the previous year (i.e. 5,202 total visits between July 2018 and February 2019, compared with 6,513 total visits between July 2019 and February 2020).

Centre Visits



Has COVID-19 had any affect on your engagement with the Centre?
(Respondents = 92)



"The Centre has been closed so unable to connect with others there... Feeling isolated."

"Not being able to have gatherings due to risk to community... Engaging safe practices."

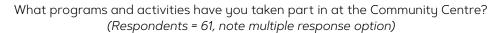
"The programs I attended were cancelled."

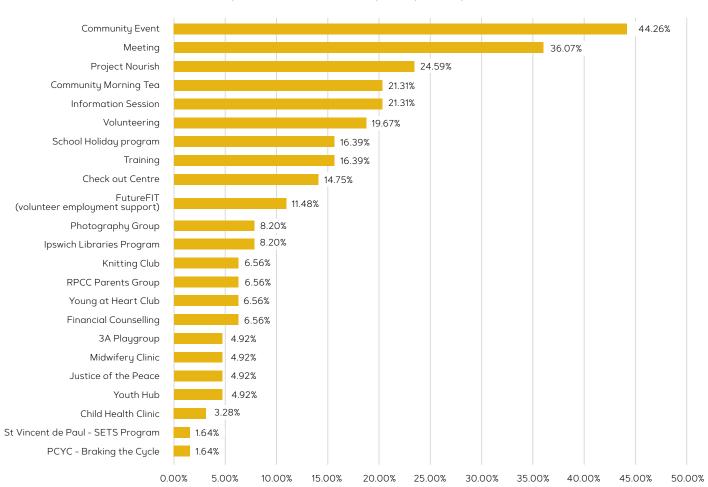
"Limited access and number of people to attend."

"We haven't been at the Centre since COVID-19 started. My kids are bit unhappy unable to go for activities at the Centre."

Engagement by respondents in Community Centre programs

Survey respondents who had visited the Community Centre were asked to indicate what programs they had taken part in at the Centre. Many respondents had taken part in community events (44.26%), and meetings (36.07%), Project Nourish, a food bank facilitated by OzHarvest (24.59%), community morning teas (21.31%), information sessions (21.31%) and volunteering (19.67%).





- Community Events Community events are hosted by Redbank Plains Community Centre and external groups and organisations. In the 2019-2020 financial year events have included: Employment Expo, school holiday activities, Outdoor Christmas Cinema and events like Orange Lady and a BBQ at the Centre to raise awareness and change the conversation about domestic violence.
- Community Meetings Community meetings and information sessions are also hosted by the Community Centre along with external groups and organisations on a range of topics and issues.
- Project Nourish This program is managed and led by the Community Centre's volunteers. The Community Centre receives contributions for food relief through OzHarvest. On average 32 families used this service each week during this report period. Weekly service use fluctuated between approximately 35 families per week before COVID-19 and 28 families during COVID-19.
- Community Morning Tea Although popular again with survey respondents, the morning teas were suspended during COVID-19 in this report period.
- School Holiday program This program continued delivery during COVID-19; mostly online and through the Youth Hub at the Community Centre.

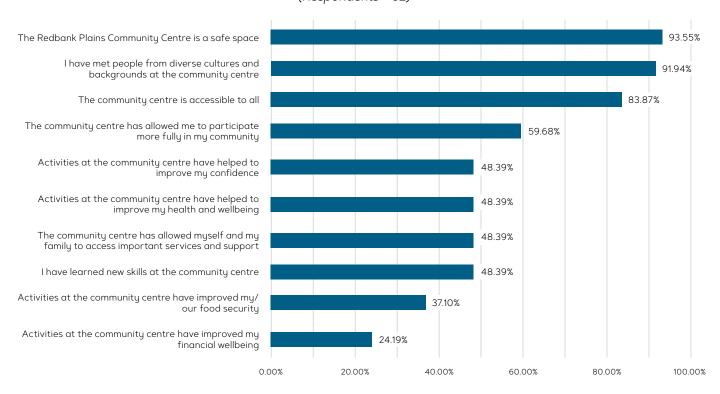
Benefits of the Community Centre to individuals

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

- 93.55% of people felt the Redbank Plains Community Centre is a safe space
- 91.94% of people responded that they had met people from diverse cultures and backgrounds at the Community Centre
- 83.87% of people felt that the Community Centre is accessible to all
- 59.68% of people felt that the Community Centre had allowed them to participate more fully in the community.

The above response options (along with 'learning new skills' - see below graph) all improved to some degree on results of the previous 12-month survey. In contrast, the remaining response options were less selected by respondents as a benefit of their engagement with the Community Centre. For instance 57.33% of respondents to the 12-month survey indicated that the Community Centre had allowed them and their family 'to access important services and support', compared with 48.39% of 24-month survey respondents. Being that the remaining response options each involve access to activities, services and support at the Centre, it is possible that COVID-19 related temporary closures, cancellations and postponements have played a part in these results. As previously mentioned, 56% of respondents indicated that COVID-19 had impacted their engagement with the Community Centre. As one respondent explained they were "unable to attend ... [due to] limits on numbers".

Benefits of the Community Centre to individuals (Respondents = 62)



A key goal for the Redbank Plains Community Centre is to be 'a welcoming, safe and inclusive space for everyone in the community'. Focus group participants reflected on the ways in which the Community Centre aims to achieve this goal and with a COVID-19 operational context in mind.

Survey responses and focus group feedback, talked about the ways in which the Community Centre is a welcoming space for people of all cultures. Participants described the Community Centre as having 'welcoming and friendly staff', 'good people managing and volunteering', who were 'accepting' and 'very helpful'. As one respondent expressed, the Community Centre was seen to 'provide a range of support services to people from various cultural backgrounds.'

Additionally, and as has previously been raised, there was some discussion around challenges to overcome perceptions that the Community Centre is designed only for multicultural communities, and letting people know that it is open to everyone. Along with suggestions to raise awareness generally about the Community Centre (e.g. where it is, what it is about, who it serves and how to book spaces) participants suggested cultural exchange activities aimed at

further bringing the community together. In particular, and similar to suggestions at 12-months, a community garden connected to the Community Centre was expressed by participants as a way towards achieving this aim. Participants also made suggestions around the use of technology (e.g. coordinated on-line group chats/programs, and virtual expos) as ways for the Community Centre to navigate through COVID-19.

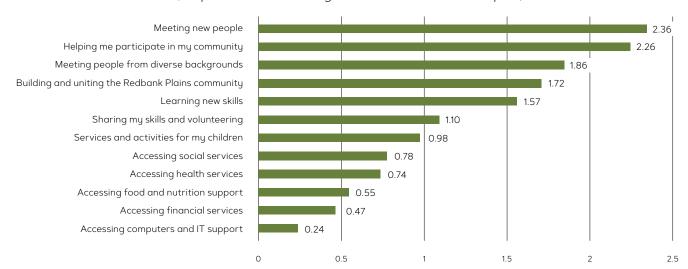
Most important aspects of the Community Centre

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

The top aspects selected by respondents were generally consistent with those selected by previous survey respondents.

Theme	Representative Quote
Meeting new people	'A great environment to meet people, to hold meetings and to engage with the community.'
Helping me participate in my community	'It has made a community in a community and when Co-vid hit, so many people realised how much they missed the friendships they made by attending different programs at the centre.'
Meeting people from diverse backgrounds	'Provides a range of support services to people from various cultural backgrounds', 'Accepting, welcoming. Tries to meet the needs of community'.
Building and uniting the Redbank Plains community	'It is a wonderful hub for the community', 'Community link', 'It's a place to come together', 'Source of community support, information and connection'.
Learning new skills	'Capacity building.'

What are the five most important aspects of the Community Centre for you? (Respondents = 58, average score out of 5 for each aspect)



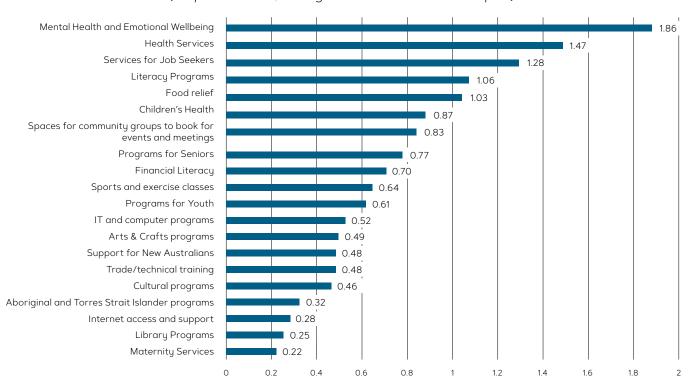
Community Centre programs and community need

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

- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing To address this need, a men's (ManUp) and women's (Sisterhood) group meet at the centre once a week. The facilitators of the program are accredited volunteer members of the community. Welcoming individuals who may be experiencing social isolation, depression, anxiety, relationship issues, etc, to be supported in a confidential environment.
- Health Services In recognition of a need for health services, West Moreton Maternal Health Midwifery Clinics deliver antenatal care to pregnant mothers at the Community Centre. These appointments are arranged through Ipswich Hospital. The clinics are run three times a week for the general, Pasifika and CALD populations.
- Services for Job Seekers In response to this need the Community Centre hosts the FutureF.I.T 'Fostering Independence Together' program every Friday. This program includes resume writing and job application support. The sessions are facilitated by Community Centre volunteers and staff. 231 people attended this program during this report period.

- Literacy Programs Serving this need, FutureF.I.T 'Fostering Independence Together' provides free English classes to members of the community in partnership with Supportlinks. The classes are facilitated by volunteers. The Community Centre also refers individuals to the Ipswich Community Hubs English classes.
- Food relief Addressing this need, a weekly food relief program 'Project Nourish' assists around 32 families each week.
- Children's Health Responding to this need, West Moreton Child Health, Baby Drop-In and Ipswich City Council's Community Immunisation Clinics occur at the Community Centre on the first Wednesday of every month. It is open to members of the community, with no appointments required.

Which of these programs/services are most important for the Community Centre to offer? (Respondents = 87, average score out of 5 for each aspect)



Suggestions for activities

Survey respondents and focus group participants made a number of suggestions for future activities and initiatives at the Community Centre that generally covered three themes; Programming, and raising awareness about and access to the Community Centre. Suggestions included:

Programming

- A community garden connected to the Community Centre
- Family fun days/BBQs/cultural exchange activities to bring the community together
- Identify local service duplications and gaps
- Local government, councillor sessions
- Regular Qld Police Service sessions
- Domestic and Family Violence prevention programs and services
- Legal support
- Interactive virtual programs, virtual expo
- Opportunities for community members to upskill others
- More activities for young people and seniors
- Pet get-together days

Awareness

- Better promotion of the Community Centre:
 - Where it is, what service offerings are available, how to access
 - Visual advertising of events and programs
 - Noticeboards at shopping centres, public places

Access

- Improved access to the Community Centre:
 - Lower-cost hiring of spaces
 - Availability of mixed/fit for purpose spaces
 - Easy-to-find/follow booking process
 - More outreach into community



CONCLUSIONS

The following section provides an overview of the data collected in the 24-month research, in relation to the key impacts and indicators.

Social cohesion and social capital

Survey responses suggest that the majority of social cohesion and social capital markers asked about at 24-months have continued to strengthen and improve. In comparison to previous rounds of research, respondents' participation (both at the Community Centre and within the broader community) at community meetings, with connections to other cultural groups or communities, and through involvement in community groups each reflect some degree of proportionate increase. Respondents and focus group participants alike also continue to place a high value on diversity with 75% of respondents indicating that 'it is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures'. Similarly, survey respondents and focus group participants, identified diversity as a top strength of their local community.

In contrast, there was some decline noted through responses to questions about sense of welcome, sense of community and perceptions of safety relating to the local area, when compared with 12-month survey results. Indeed focus group participants emphasised that safety continues to be of concern with discussion connecting perceptions about safety with challenges experienced in the local community that included hooning and the upkeep of public areas especially in terms of lighting, signage and surveillance. Consistent with previous survey results, access to services and social infrastructure, pressures of rapid development, racism and support for young people are noted as persistent community challenges.

Community capacity

As with the previous round of research, there was some improvement in community capacity reflected through survey responses. 41.84% of respondents indicated they had participated in community meetings (both at the Community Centre and in the community) compared with 38.74% of respondents in the previous 12-month round. Similarly there was an increase in the proportion of survey respondents who indicated their involvement in volunteering and community groups. More than half of respondents who had visited the Community Centre indicated they had benefited from being enabled to participate more fully in their community. Many respondents also indicated their skills, confidence and health and wellbeing had improved through engagement with the Community Centre.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic was identified as a new challenge to community capacity. 56% of respondents indicated that public health restrictions had more recently had a negative effect on their engagement with the Community Centre. Similarly, 23.96% of respondents to the 24-month survey conveyed a slight increase in problematic experiences accessing social services, some of which was expressed as COVID-19 related.



Community needs: health and wellbeing

As with responses to the previous 12-month survey, the top local services and programs identified by respondents as needed in the local community were in the areas of mental health and emotional wellbeing, health services generally, services for job seekers, literacy programs, food relief and children's health. Over the 12 month period of this report, the Community Centre has continued its provision and facilitation of access to a range of programs and services aimed at responding to these community needs. Additionally some respondents indicated difficulty with access to dental services (noted in previous research rounds as due in part to affordability and transport).

Community needs: local economic development

Financial pressures and unemployment persist as key local challenges identified by respondents. Similar to previous rounds of research, community members expressed links between poor public transport, employment and accessibility to social and health services. Respondents also described transport related pressures placed on family time and resources, such as balancing work commitments elsewhere and enabling children and young people to participate in family/local activities. The Community Centre continued to experience strong demand for its food relief program, along with financial counselling, volunteer-run employment program and facilitation of access to health related services.

Place-based community development

The Redbank Plains community continues to experience rapid population growth. Consistent with the previous three rounds of research, survey respondents and focus group participants again highlighted local area challenges keeping up with this growth. Lagging social and economic infrastructure continued to be identified as a key challenge for the community and included difficulties accessing social services, limited public transport and local employment opportunities, along with facilities, such as the local library, that was seen as 'too small' relative to the population size.

Survey responses reflect continued challenges around further developing both a sense of welcome and a sense of community. As with previous rounds of research, the 24-month survey responses again conveyed that in general those respondents who visited the Community Centre were more likely to experience greater connections with a variety of cultural groups and communities, and perceive a stronger sense of welcome and sense of community in Redbank Plains than those respondents who had not visited the Community Centre.

NEXT STEPS AND ADVOCACY

The results of this 24-month research will be shared with the community via this report, and in a series of posters at the Community Centre, and will be used to help develop ongoing programming at the Community Centre.

The previous three reports (baseline, 6-months and 12-months) have been used by the Community Centre in the design of ongoing programming, and as supporting documentation for grants and funding. The previous reports have also been shared with other community centres, at a number of community

development conferences and used by Ipswich City Council and in conversations and advocacy with the Queensland state government.

The next round of research will take place in mid-2021, marking three years since the Community Centre opened. Whilst challenges persist, tracking community experiences and aspirations over time has also highlighted the important role the Community Centre is playing by providing a place of social connection and support in a rapidly changing environment.

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APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY

Redbank Plains Community Centre: Two Year Survey (July 2020)

Now that the Redbank Plains Community Centre has been open for two years, Ipswich City Council and Multicultural Australia Ltd would like to hear from residents and community centre visitors. Our purpose in asking for feedback is to understand the needs of the Redbank Plains community, to support work being done by the Redbank Plains Community Centre, and to assess the impact of the community centre. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey by 16 August.

This survey is for people aged 15 years and over and will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your responses are anonymous, however you can provide your details if you would like to take part in a focus

group, or be kept up-to-date about activities at the community centre. If you choose to be kept up-to-date regarding the community centre, the contact details you provide will be shared with Multicultural Australia Ltd. Your personal information is handled in accordance with council's Privacy Statement and you will not be personally identifiable in any reports that come out of this project.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Manager - MYVP, International Students, Youth Hubs & Redbank Plains Community Centre, RoseD@multiculturalaustralia.org.au.

1.	How old are you? (please select one of the □ 0 to 14 □ 15 to 17 □ 18 to 19 □ If you are under 18, do you have parent/	□ 20 to 29	□ 30 to 49 rmission to comple	□ 50 to 6 ete this sur		□ 75+
2.	What is your gender? (please tick one of tl☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Transgender		Variant/non-confo	orming [□Prefer not to say	
	What is your cultural background? (please Aboriginal		ural background t Malaysian Maori Melanesian New Zealander Samoan Scottish South African South American]] []]	ost identify with) Spanish Sri Lankan Sudanese Tamil Torres Strait Isla Vietnamese Other	
4.	What suburb do you live in? (please comple	ete)				
5.	What is your housing status? (please tick o □ Renting □ Owner Occupier	one) Other				
6.	Which of the following best describes your Solo adult without children Couple with children Couple without children Group household (shared) unrelated Group household related without children Group household related with children Household includes children under 15 Household includes children over 15		(please tick as m	nany as ap	ply to you)	

5	as having a disability? No 🔲 Prefer	(please tick one) not to say			
8. What is your em ☐ Full-time ☐ ☐ Unemployed -	-		9	□ Unemployed - seeki	_
□ No formal sch	ooling 🗆 Primary Sch	nool Some Seco	ndary School 🛚 Yea	mpleting? (please tick one ar 10 🗆 Year 11 🗀 Year e 🗆 Prefer not to say	12
10. What strengths	does the Redbank Pla	ins Community hav	e? (Briefly describe	below)	
	allenges that the Redl				
Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Safe enough	Quite safe	Very safe	
1	2	3	4	5	
9	part in any communit etail)				
	olunteered in the cometail)			ups or events in the past	12 months?
Redbank Plains	nnections to cultural g	roups and commun	ties other than your	own in the	
∐ Yes (please de	area? etail)			□Unsure	

On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements (please circle one number from each question):

17.	There is a strong sense	of community i	in my local area
-----	-------------------------	----------------	------------------

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

18. I feel welcome in the local community

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

19. It is a good thing for our community to be made up of people from different cultures

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

L. L.		
20. Have you experienced any probl (eg - health services, dental care,	ems accessing services or supports in t	he last 12 months?
☐ Yes (please detail)	3	lo 🗆 Unsure
21. Have you visited the Redbank Pla	ains Community Centre in the past 12 ma	onths?
\square Yes (please go to question 22)	☐ No (please go to question 25)	\square Unsure (please go to question 25)
These questions (22-24) are for p	eople who have visited the communit	y centre
22. What programs and activities had (Please select as many as apply)	ave you taken part in at the Community	Centre?
☐ 3A Playgroup	☐ Humanitarian Settlement	☐ Photography Group
☐ Check out Centre	Program	☐ Project Nourish
☐ Child Health Clinic	☐ ICC Community	☐ RPCC Parents Group
☐ Community Event	Immunisation Clinic	☐ School Holiday Program
☐ Community Morning Tea	☐ Information Session	☐ St Vincent de Paul -
☐ Disability Employment	☐ Ipswich Libraries Program	SETS Program
Services	☐ Justice of the Peace	
☐ English Class	☐ Knitting Club	☐ Volunteering
☐ Financial Counselling	☐ Meeting	☐ Young at Heart Club
☐ FutureFIT (volunteer	☐ Midwifery Clinic	☐ Youth Hub
emploument support)	☐ PCYC - Braking the Cycle	☐ Other

23. Do the following statements apply to you?

I have learned new skills at the Community Centre	Yes	No	N/A
I have met people from diverse cultures and backgrounds at the Community Centre			
The Community Centre has allowed myself and my family to access important			
services and support			
The Community Centre is accessible to all			
Activities at the Community Centre have helped to improve my health and wellbeing			
Activities at the Community Centre have helped to improve my confidence			
The Community Centre has allowed me to participate more fully in my community			
Activities at the Community Centre have improved my financial wellbeing			
Activities at the Community Centre have improved my/our food security			
The Redbank Plains Community Centre is a safe space			

^{24.} What are the five most important aspects of the Community Centre for you? (Please select your top FIVE aspects)

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

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

	Most Important	2nd Most Important	3rd Most Important	4th Most Important	5th Most Important
Literacy Programs					
IT and computer programs					
Internet access and support					
Trade/technical training					
Arts and Crafts programs					
Services for Job Seekers					
Health Services					
Children's Health					
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing					
Financial Literacy					
Food relief					

Aboriginal and Tor Islander programs	res Strait					
Support for New A	 .ustralians					
Cultural programs						
Sports and exercis	e classes					
'	nity groups to book					
Programs for Senic						
Programs for Yout						
Library Programs	<u> </u>					
Maternity Services						
Other suggestion:						
27. Is there any other Community Cent	er feedback you'd like to p tre?	provide regard	ing Redbank F	Plains and you	ır ideas for th	e
the Community	terested in taking part in Centre, in August 2020? (rovide your details below)	If yes, we will b				-
•	o be kept up-to-date abo rovide your details below)	-	Centre activit	ies?		
This information wil	l be shared with Multicultu	ıral Australia:				
Name						
Email Address						
Phone Number						

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

To find out about upcoming events at the Community Centre, visit the facebook page: Facebook.com/Redbankplainscommunitycentre

