

Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy Engagement Report

City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council
October 2021



I'm not necessarily concerned that there will be a bushfire in Canterbury-Bankstown, but rather the flow on effects - and I think a lot of that is linked to my anxiety around climate change."

- Focus group participant



Report title: Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy Engagement Report

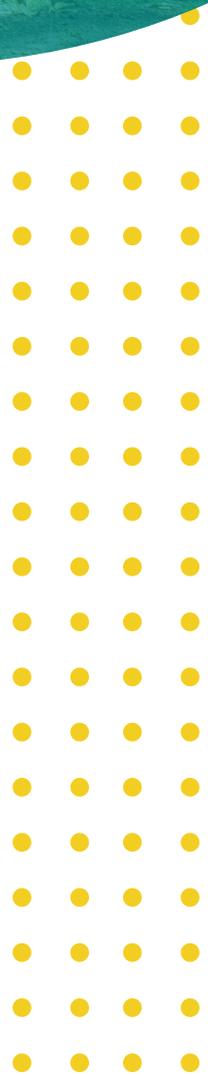
Client: City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council

Version: 1

Date: October 2021

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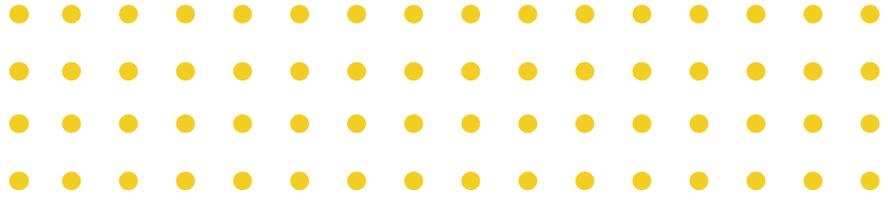


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1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the community and stakeholder engagement undertaken by Cred Consulting on behalf of the City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council, to help inform the development of the Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy.

1.1. Background

City resilience planning is recognised internationally as important for long-term sustainability. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include a specific commitment to enhancing the resilience and sustainability of cities. Regionally, the Sydney Metropolitan Plan addresses the need to adapt to the impacts of urban and natural hazards and climate change.

The City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement includes the aim to be a resilient, responsive and sustainable city with buildings, spaces and people that use and manage energy, water and waste efficiently.

The 2020 bushfires and Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how quickly our way of life can be disrupted. These events show the need for a Resilience Strategy to be developed with the community to ensure the City of Canterbury-Bankstown can achieve the community's vision to be a sustainable and prosperous city and to survive, adapt and thrive into the future.

Council engaged Cred Consulting to design and deliver community and stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy. Cred Consulting also undertook extensive staff engagement to inform the Strategy. The outcomes of staff engagement are summarised in a separate report.

1.2. Purpose of engagement

This report provides a summary of the engagement outcomes of consultation with the community and stakeholders. This was undertaken between July and August 2021 to inform the development of the Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy.

Consultation aimed to:

- Capture the views of a wide range of community, particularly targeting CALD and service providers working with vulnerable community members.
- Understand the community's knowledge of the concept of resilience and educate the community about the concept of resilience.
- Explore what the community perceive as the main shocks and stressors for CB City
- Understand the impacts that shocks and stressors have had and are having on the community
- Explore what makes the community strong and vulnerable
- Understand what resources are needed in an emergency and what is missing.

1.3. Engagement activities

The engagement program included:

- Three online community focus groups
- Interviews with targeted stakeholders
- An online workshop with service providers
- An online community survey

This report provides a summary of findings from all engagement activities listed above. Findings in this report have been summarised by engagement activity, with key findings overall summarised in Section 1.4.



Online focus groups

Three online focus groups were held with a total of 35 independently recruited community members from the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA.

These sessions were facilitated online conversations that were guided by the following questions:

- What shocks and stressors are you most concerned about?
- How have you or your family been impacted by shocks and stressors?
- What are the strengths in the community that help you to cope with emergencies? What would help you to cope better?



Stakeholder interviews

Three interviews were undertaken with key community groups via Zoom. Interviewees were asked about the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown.



Service providers workshop

An online workshop was conducted with service providers to explore the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown.



Online survey

An online community survey was undertaken with the Canterbury-Bankstown community to explore the main shocks and stressors for residents. A total of 74 responses were received.

1.4. What we heard: key themes

The following key themes emerged across engagement activities.

The Canterbury-Bankstown community is strong and resilient

Participants felt strongly that the Canterbury-Bankstown community is strong and highly resilient. They noted that the community has faced many challenges and continually bounces back from adversity, banding together and capitalising on strengths such as diversity, local networks and community organisations.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a significant shock that exacerbates existing stressors

Many participants indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic is the most prevalent shock they and their communities are experiencing. Participants noted that the pandemic has significantly exacerbated existing stressors in their lives and in the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA, including financial stress, limited access to technology and digital literacy, access to health care, social isolation and physical and mental health issues.

There is a need for a central information hub for clear, relevant messaging in a variety of formats

A central information hub was continually raised as a critical need in the Canterbury-Bankstown community, to combat misinformation, confusion and information fatigue. Many participants expressed concerns with the level and type of messaging they are receiving around emergency events and services, indicating that they need more relevant, simplified and trustworthy information. Participants also noted that messaging needs to be more inclusive and available in different languages and formats, to cater for culturally and linguistically diverse community members and those with lower levels of digital literacy.

Housing affordability and financial stress affects many in the community

Housing affordability was consistently rated as the top stress for participants in the focus groups, with participants noting that it is strongly linked to financial stress and can be caused by job uncertainty. Financial stress was also raised as a top stress by survey respondents. Participants expressed feelings of helplessness about their ability to afford to purchase a property in the area or even to continue renting. This was particularly prevalent for younger residents.

2. Community focus groups

Three community focus groups were held to explore resilience in the community. This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the focus groups.

2.1. About the community focus groups

Three community focus groups were held with community members from the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA.

- Focus Group 1: Tuesday 10 August 2021 with 11 participants
- Focus Group 2: Thursday 12 August 2021 with 12 participants
- Focus Group 3: Wednesday 25 August with 12 participants.

Participants were recruited independently by Jetty and Taverner Research. Participants were all residents of the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA and were recruited to be demographically reflective of the diverse community.

The purpose of the focus groups was to understand the community's knowledge about resilience, explore what they perceive as the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown, understand impacts of shocks and stressors and explore what makes the community strong and vulnerable.

Cred Consulting facilitated the focus groups online via Zoom, using Mentimeter as an interactive, live polling tool throughout. The sessions commenced with a brief presentation describing the project and providing context, followed by a facilitated conversation that was guided by the following questions:

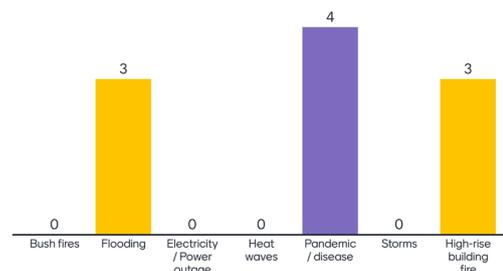
- What shocks and stressors are you most concerned about?
- How have you or your family been impacted by shocks and stressors?
- What are the strengths in the community that help you to cope with emergencies? What would help you to cope better?

Participants were provided the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas throughout the 1.5 hour sessions.

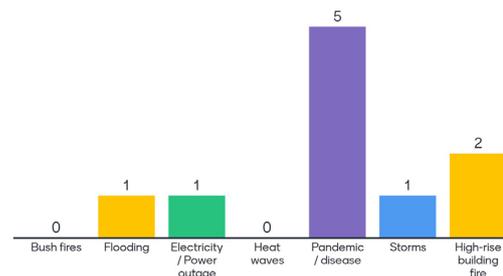
2.2. Identifying shocks and stressors

Shocks

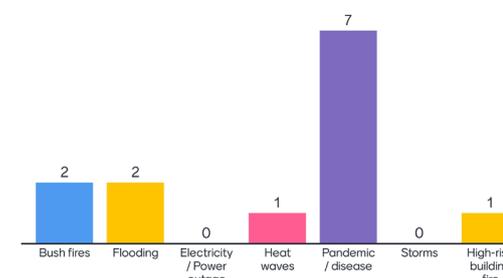
Participants were asked to identify the main shocks that they are concerned about, living in Canterbury-Bankstown, by voting on the Mentimeter poll. Participants in Focus Group 1 indicated that the pandemic was the most concerning shock for them (4 votes), followed by flooding (3 votes) and high-rise building fires (3 votes).



Participants in Focus Group 2 also voted primarily for the pandemic (5 votes), followed by high-rise building fires (2 votes).



Participants in Focus Group 3 voted for the pandemic as their top shock (9 votes), followed by bushfires (2 votes) and flooding (2 votes).



Participants noted that the pandemic is affecting their lives significantly, as many are unable to work and the community is grappling with the stress of lockdowns and the uncertainty of the future. One participant stated that they are not confident with technology and experienced difficulty when navigating online vaccination bookings and eligibility information. Participants also expressed concern about hospitals being underfunded and health care not being adequate to respond to the pandemic, alongside misinformation and confusion about the pandemic.

The participants who voted for flooding as their most concerning shock indicated that flooding is a reoccurring issue that puts community members at risk, particularly if they live in close proximity to the flood-prone Cooks or Georges Rivers, or if they live in apartment buildings with limited storm drainage capacity in underground carparks.

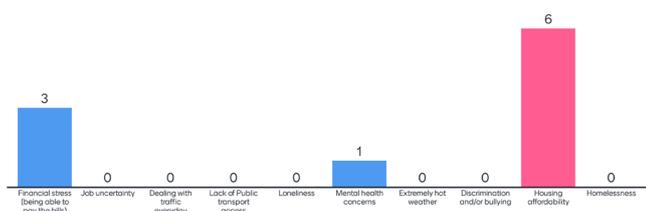
Participants expressed concern about high-rise building fires, noting that they represent a huge loss of life and infrastructure. Participants felt that with the increase in high-rise building developments in Canterbury-Bankstown, there is concern in the community about whether safety requirements are being met.

When asked about their perceptions of heat waves in Canterbury-Bankstown, participants noted that while the area does experience some extremely hot days that are forecasted to worsen as a result of climate change, they felt that timing impacted their response. One participant noted that other shocks are currently of greater concern for the community, while another participant felt that their response would be different if the conversation was occurring during summer.

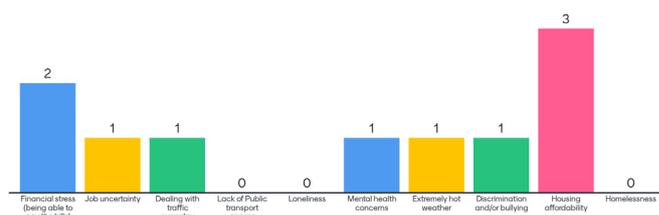
Participants did not feel that bush fires were of high concern, noting that there is limited bushland in the area. However, participants did express concerns about wildlife suffering in bushfires and the effects of climate change.

Stressors

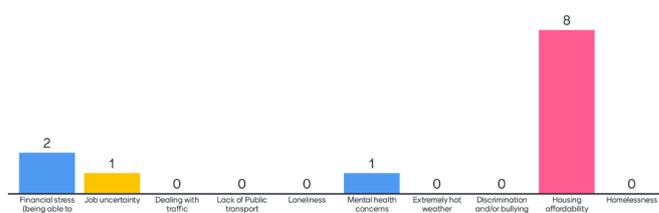
Participants were asked to identify the main stressors that they are concerned about in Canterbury-Bankstown. Participants in Focus Group 1 indicated that housing affordability was the most concerning stress for them (5 votes), followed by financial stress (3 votes) and mental health concerns (1 vote).



Participants in Focus Group 2 echoed this sentiment, voting for housing affordability and financial stress as the top two stressors (2 votes each).



Participants in Focus Group 3 also stated that housing affordability was the most concerning stress for them (8 votes), followed by financial stress (2 votes).



Participants noted that financial stress and housing affordability are closely linked. Participants expressed concern about the constant increases in rent prices and property prices in Canterbury-Bankstown. They noted that purchasing a property in the area feels impossible, and that such a high proportion of their income being used for rent contributes significantly to financial stress. Participants indicated that while they understood that housing affordability is not Council's fault, they felt that the government could provide assistance.

One participant stated that while housing affordability is one issue, accessibility is another. They noted that it can be difficult to secure a long-term property that fits people's needs and lifestyles. Participants also expressed concern about the high cost of government contributions, such as stamp duty and council rates.

Participants felt that the majority of stresses identified would combine to create mental health issues. They noted that mental health is a significant concern and felt strongly that there is a lack of action and funding to mitigate it.

Participants also indicated that job uncertainty and the shortage of jobs is concerning to them, with one participant noting that they have experienced significant difficulty in securing a job.

When asked if public transport is a stress in Canterbury-Bankstown, participants stated that most residents drive because there are limited direct trains and buses to suburbs outside of the area.

One participant raised telecommunications as an additional stress, noting that mobile phone connectivity is not adequate in parts of Canterbury-Bankstown.

2.3. Impacts of shocks and stressors

Participants were encouraged to share how they or their families had been impacted by shocks and stressors, by submitting anonymous answers on Mentimeter. Responses covered several themes, including:

- Feelings of loneliness and isolation due to the pandemic
- Unclear messaging about the pandemic causing confusion and anxiety, particularly for those who speak a language other than English at home
- Inability to work due to the pandemic, causing financial stress
- Inadequate public transport affecting the ability to travel to work and areas outside the LGA
- Rising house prices placing pressure on families and impacting whether residents can afford to stay in the area
- Difficulty affording food and child care
- Climate change concerns
- Flooding impacting homes and community centres
- Mental health issues, particularly as a result of the pandemic, and not enough mental health services or funding to support people
- Concerns about the lack of essential services and inadequate health facilities
- Traffic congestion
- Concern about bushfires and over-development of bushland areas creating safety hazards
- Rising population and over-development creating stress for residents
- Power outages being dangerous for elderly people who live alone
- Lack of confidence in the health care system
- Poor internet connection creating difficulties for those working from home
- Concerns about the quality of the roads and footpaths creating hazards for pedestrians and drivers
- Concerns about the portrayal of Western Sydney in the media as a negative place.

What would you do to prepare for these hazards in the future?

Participants indicated that many shocks and stressors identified, such as flooding and inadequate public transport, are out of their control. They noted that in most cases, it is the government's responsibility to allocate funding and prepare for these hazards appropriately.

Participants felt that responding to the pandemic requires a collective effort from the whole community to do the right thing and prevent the spread of the disease. They also noted that it is important to be financially

secure and have a job that allows them to work from home.

With regard to urban heat, several participants stated that they put ice in the freezer or purchase a portable air-conditioning unit to help on hot days.

How would you find out information in an emergency?

Participants indicated that their primary sources of information include the internet, ABC, government websites, Council alerts, emergency text messages and Facebook. One participant noted that they prefer to avoid mainstream media. Another participant saw value in joining Facebook groups to get to know locals in the area.

Participants felt that it is important for information to be provided to the community through a variety of channels, as many people do not have adequate access to technology or digital literacy. They saw value in information that they can keep in an emergency kit or on the fridge, so it is easily accessible.

Participants expressed concern about the pandemic restrictions in the LGA continually changing and sometimes contradicting each other, creating confusion about the correct guidelines and what people can and cannot do. Participants felt that it would be useful for Council to update its website with the most up-to-date information.

Participants also noted that many people have lost trust in the media due to the contradictory pandemic messaging. They expressed concern that it can be difficult to know who to trust.

Do you think shocks and stressors are felt more in some areas of Canterbury-Bankstown?

Participants indicated that power outages are an issue particularly in Greenacre, where the power supply cuts out when the weather becomes too hot.

One participant noted that if the conversation was being had in summer, responses about shocks and stressors may be different. They stated that power outages occur throughout Australia during summer.

Participants stated that shocks and stressors are often felt more by different groups of people, such as older people living alone, people casually employed and people who cannot work from home. They noted that demographics and age are key factors in experiences of shocks and stressors.

What does the community need to mitigate/minimise the impacts from this emergency/shock/stress?

Participants stated that they are relying on Council to provide accurate, up-to-date information on pandemic

restrictions. They also indicated a strong need for improved access to health care and mental health care.

Participants noted that with the increasing cost of fresh fruit and vegetables, they would like to see free community gardens. They also saw a need for more support groups and community groups.

Participants expressed concerns about rubbish dumping in the public domain and also stated the need for more shade in parks, however noted that shade infrastructure is often vandalised.

How do Council services help the community get through shocks and stressors?

Participants felt that public pools in Canterbury-Bankstown should be free or at the very least, more affordable, to encourage use from the community. Participants noted that they are effective in providing relief from heat but many families cannot afford to use them.

Participants suggested that Council create suburb-wide social media groups to encourage community connectedness during the pandemic. One participant noted that while they saw value in this initiative, Facebook groups can facilitate negative energy at times.

Participants noted that access to green spaces is an issue because many open spaces in Canterbury-Bankstown are messy and poorly maintained.

One participant expressed concern that they are often left to support themselves, without assistance from Council in times of crisis. The participant provided an example of storm clean-up, where residents were required to clean up tree waste on the street themselves as they were not street trees and Council did not assist.

"I'm actually unsure as to what degree social services are provided to assist residents or provide support in times of crisis."

- Focus group participant

"The cost of living is exceeding any normal pay rise that anybody would be receiving."

- Focus group participant

"I think that people have lost a lot of trust in the media. People don't know who to trust anymore."

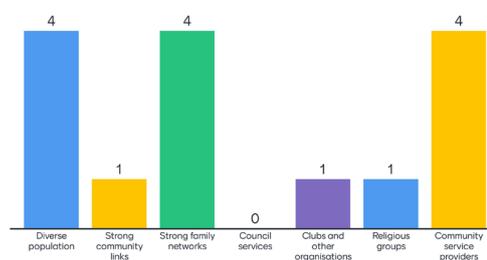
- Focus group participant

2.4. Strengths and vulnerabilities in the community

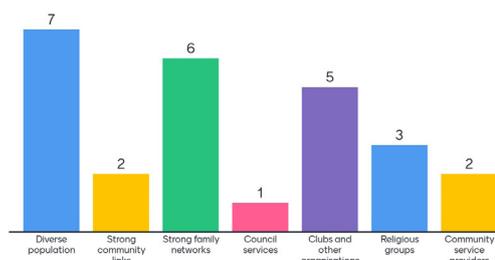
What are the strengths in the community that help you to cope with emergencies?

Participants were asked to vote for the strengths in the community that help them to cope with emergencies, by voting on the Mentimeter poll. Participants were able to vote for as many strengths as they liked.

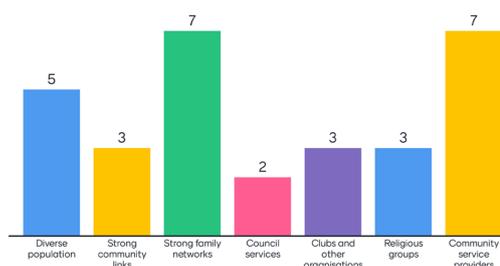
In Focus Group 1, diverse population and strong family networks were both indicated as the most popular strengths in the community (4 votes each). This was followed by community service providers (3 votes) and religious groups, strong community links and clubs and other organisations (1 vote each).



Participants in Focus Group 2 echoed these responses, with diverse population as the most popular strength (7 votes), followed by strong family networks (6 votes) and clubs and other organisations (5 votes).



Participants in Focus Group 3 indicated that community service providers (7 votes) and strong family networks (7 votes) are key strengths in the community, followed by the diverse population (5 votes).



Participants noted that diversity is a strength in the community, stating that people are willing to help others as neighbours, regardless of religion or language.

Participants felt that social diversity brings a range of skill sets into the community, which can be beneficial in emergencies. One participant noted that while they value the diversity in the community, they wondered whether the variety of languages creates challenges when the community needs to come together.

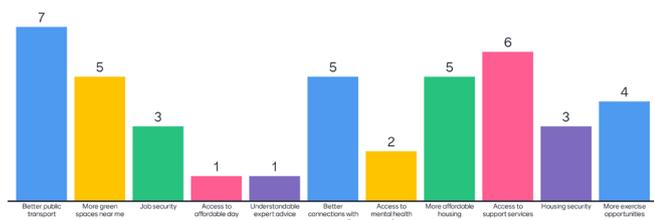
Participants felt that in an emergency, community service providers would be the first people to help others. Participants noted that service providers are very visible in the community during emergencies. However, one participant stated that while there is a large, diverse range of services available, many people do not know they exist and as a result, would experience difficulty in accessing them.

One participant noted that the Council website is an effective tool.

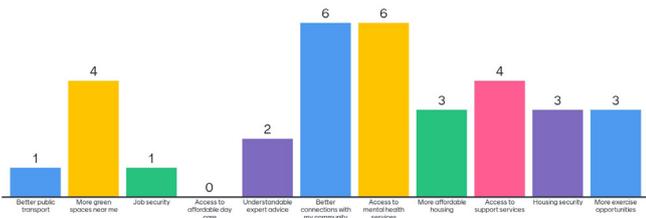
What would help you to cope better with stressors and shocks?

Participants were asked to vote for improvements that would help them to cope better with stressors and shocks, by voting on the Mentimeter poll. Participants were able to vote for as many options as they liked.

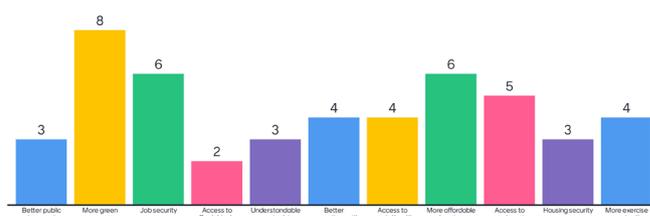
In Focus Group 1, better public transport was indicated as the most popular option (7 votes), followed by access to mental health services (6 votes) and access to support services (6 votes).



Participants in Focus Group 2 voted primarily for better connections with community (6 votes) and access to mental health services (6 votes).



Participants in Focus Group 3 indicated that more green spaces (8 votes) would help them to cope better with stressors and shocks. This was followed by more affordable housing (6 votes) and job security (6 votes).



Participants expressed concern that the public transport in the area is not adequate and that when train replacement buses are in use, they are poorly planned and can double the trip time. Participants also felt that existing green spaces could be improved and cleaned more effectively.

Participants noted that the waiting lists for support services, mental health support and community health services are currently very long, and that more equitable access to these services for families is important. One participant suggested that Council develop a booklet of all services and facilities available in the area.

Participants also expressed feelings of isolation from their community, with one participant suggesting that Council hold an event to encourage people to get to know each other. Participants saw value in community members from different religions and backgrounds connecting, and also felt that there is a need for more nursing homes, particularly for ethnic groups.

Participants stated that housing and job security is critical, with one participant noting that they were significantly impacted by the pandemic and that they are experiencing difficulty in obtaining a job due to being aged over 50.

Participants felt that more green space for exercise is important to bring people together outdoors. One participant suggested that Canterbury-Bankstown have its own local news station on television, with information on topics such as community issues, mental health awareness and sports. They felt that this would be an easy channel for people to access information and feel like part of the community.

"I know how many services there are out there, but in the same breath, I know that so many people have no idea about them."

- Focus group participant

"I love the fact that it's a beautiful and diverse population here."

- Focus group participant

"We all rely on each other and we feed off each other and we help each other out."

- Focus group participant

Today's agenda

- Welcome and introduction to the project
- Purpose of this consultation
- Let's introduce ourselves!
- Activities
- Activity 1: Identifying local shocks and stressors
- Activity 2: Uncover impacts of shocks and stressors and stories of resilience
- Activity 3: Identifying strengths and weaknesses in CB City community
- Next steps and close



Project background

The City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council is preparing a Resilience Strategy to set out a vision and direction for creating a resilient community, who are connected and prepared for emergencies and change.

What is a resilient city?

- '*Resilience*' is defined as the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, business and systems to survive, adapt and grow no matter what kinds of stresses and shocks they experience.
- *Resilient cities* have the ability to prepare for, recover and adapt to shocks and stress. They promote sustainable development, wellbeing and inclusive growth.

Figure 1 - Focus group presentation slides

3. Stakeholder interviews

Three interviews were held with key community groups to explore the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown. This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the stakeholder interviews.

3.1. About the stakeholder interviews

Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the Canterbury-Bankstown community, nominated by Council during the consultation period. A total of three group interviews were held with community groups. Interviews were conducted via Zoom.

The purpose of the interviews was to explore the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown.

Stakeholders interviewed were from the following community groups:

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group
- Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Reference Group.

3.2. What we heard

Several common themes emerged during the stakeholder interviews.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most prevalent shock for many communities

Stakeholders across all interviews indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic is the most significant shock they are experiencing. This was due to not only the initial impacts, but the flow on effects and cumulative impacts people experience as a result of financial stress, limited access to technology, access to health care, social isolation, physical and mental health issues and digital literacy.

Canterbury-Bankstown is a resilient community

Stakeholders felt strongly that the Canterbury-Bankstown community is highly resilient, having the ability to bounce back from adversity, such as emergencies, racism and discrimination. They saw many strengths in the community, including diversity, local networks and community organisations.

Clear, relevant and reliable information is key

Stakeholders expressed many difficulties the community face with the level of messaging they are receiving. Stakeholders saw a need for a central information hub, and for messaging to be relevant, simplified and available in community languages, to combat misinformation, confusion and information fatigue.

3.3. Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

What do you think are the main shocks and stressors your community is most concerned about?

Stakeholders indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has been the main shock for the community due to the flow on impacts it has on income, rent, access to health care and access to food. Stakeholders noted that many children learning from home do not have access to electronic devices and internet. This is coupled with the fact that many children may speak a language other than English at home, creating difficulties for them when engaging in Zoom classes.

Stakeholders felt that there are many stressors for the culturally and linguistically diverse community, many of whom may have only recently settled in Australia or may not be confident speaking English. Stressors include limited access to education, including early learning, financial stress, social isolation and fear of the pandemic.

Stakeholders saw a need for information to be available in community languages and for there to be a central information hub.

What helps them get through when they are impacted by these things? What makes it more difficult for them to cope?

Stakeholders indicated that SBS radio community programs are a useful tool for people to access information, as they are held in community languages and people can listen without too much effort. The concierge at Business NSW was also mentioned as a potential central information hub.

Stakeholders felt that word of mouth as a communication channel is critical, noting that people hear information from family and friends and that the local newspaper and library are important tools. Lifeline was raised as a service that people can use to access mental health assistance and be directed to the services they need. Social media was also expressed as a key tool for people to access information, particularly Whatsapp and Facebook.

However, stakeholders noted that language in translations is often very formal and needs to be simpler and more accessible. Stakeholders felt that translated messages should be brought to the community, such as through posters in shopping centres. Stakeholders also indicated that online communications are not targeted and are not reaching the people who need it. They noted that ethnic specific services are a key connector and that there needs to be a greater focus on ethnic radio, newspapers and in libraries as key information hubs.

What are the strengths in the community that help them withstand shocks/stressors?

Stakeholders felt that the Canterbury-Bankstown community is highly resilient and continually works together and bounces back from adversity.

They noted that Council plays an important role in bringing a range of services together, and felt that Council is best-placed to take the lead and help harness the strength of the community.

Stakeholders suggested mail drop-off as a method for Council to reach people in their homes, with simple information in community languages.

They also noted that community members who have recently settled in Australia experience language as a key barrier, and they struggle to access the services they need. Stakeholders felt that service providers need to ensure they provide the best and most accessible service possible, and focus on the human interaction and wellbeing aspect.

"The community of Canterbury Bankstown is amazing – continually resilient, it bounces back."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

"If you think about the future of the last twenty years and what the community has had to go through, we've got a lot to be proud of."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

"Mental health plays a massive part in every part of the community. Those who are less connected have poorer mental health."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

"Social isolation can exacerbate already bad situations. Without face-to-face interaction, this is worsening and online engagement is not accessible for all"

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

"People who are not connected with existing services don't find information"

- Canterbury-Bankstown Multicultural Interagency

3.4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

What do you think are the main shocks and stressors you/your community is most concerned about?

The two main shocks and stressors the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group raised were the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

Stakeholders noted that the pandemic and subsequent isolation across the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and the LGA has been difficult, with immediate and ongoing impacts. Stakeholders felt that connecting children to remote learning on laptops creates stress for caregivers. They also indicated that people struggle when they are not able to see each other in person, and that Elders do not always have the option of joining a Zoom meeting.

Stakeholders indicated that climate change is a key stressor, noting that Bankstown is becoming increasingly hot and there is a loss of shade and trees, alongside an increase in multi-storey buildings which trap heat. Stakeholders felt that climate change creates stress due to sleepless nights and feeling uncomfortable, and that there is a need to regulate development to promote trees and shaded spaces.

What helps you get through when you are impacted by these things? What makes it more difficult for you to cope?

Stakeholders felt that the lockdown due to the pandemic is very difficult, as they need to stay home and do everything on a mobile phone. They noted that it is hard to bounce back from these experiences, even after restrictions ease.

Stakeholders expressed the importance of family and friends, and making an effort to explore connections in their local area. They felt that local information is vital, and that messages should be filtered to local levels and kept relevant and simplified, as people are fatigued from constant changes in messaging. Stakeholders also saw importance in local leaders, such as the Mayor, speaking out on impacts in the community and responding quickly and vocally to shocks and stressors.

How do you prepare for and get information in an emergency? Are there any barriers for you when trying to access the services you need?

Stakeholders indicated that they access information through news sources such as the ABC, however they noted that because they have not experienced many emergencies, there is uncertainty about where to find information.

Stakeholders felt that better plans should be in place in

case of emergencies, such as the Cooks River flooding.

What are the strengths in the community that help you withstand shocks/stressors?

Key strengths that stakeholders saw in the community include their strength of mind and ability to move on from experiences. They noted that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community is incredibly resilient and have always drawn on the strength of the community, in different ways and in different circumstances.

Stakeholders also felt that local networks are a strength in the community, including social networks, school networks and community worker networks. These networks come into play when the community is experiencing stress or going through a difficult time.

What would help you to cope better with the stressors/shocks in your lives? How could Council better support you?

Stakeholders saw significant value in greater commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and recognition of the impacts of colonisation.

They felt that it is important to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as sovereign, rather than on the other side of the gap the government is attempting to close.

Stakeholders ultimately noted that there needs to be swift responses to fundamental challenges.

“Being able to lift each other up as a community is important.”

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

“People who normally would have lots of people around them don’t have that contact with people.”

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

“Some parts of the LGA have a connection to the natural environment, but others don’t.”

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

3.5. Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Reference Group

What are the top three shocks and stressors you're most concerned about?

The main shock that members of the Youth Reference Group indicated that they were concerned about was the COVID-19 pandemic. They saw many flow on effects from this shock, including unemployment and redundancies, limited ability to exercise and play to alleviate stress, difficulties in finding food due to shop closures, mental health impacts, financial stress and racism in the treatment of people from Canterbury-Bankstown compared to other areas of Sydney.

Other stressors magnified by the pandemic include access to technology and internet, with many young people in the community not having access to computers for remote learning.

Stakeholders noted that there is limited trust in authority figures as a result of the pandemic, expressing anxiety about police patrolling supermarkets and not knowing their rights if they are questioned by police. They ultimately felt that there is stress about the unknown when things are not normal.

Other shocks and stressors raised by stakeholders included bushfires, floods, family medical emergencies, intergenerational trauma for people from migrant backgrounds, stress about entry into university and stress about the community acceptance of LGBTIQ+ people.

Sense of identity and sense of belonging in their community (whether it is their school, friends or sporting group community) was also raised, particularly for young people who identify with minority groups. It is important for young people to find a way to connect with others, develop their sense of self and understand how they fit in the world.

What helps you get through when you are impacted by these things? What makes it more difficult for you to cope?

When asked what helps them get through shocks and stressors, stakeholders saw value in feeling heard, having plenty of information and feeling like they can control small things in their lives. They indicated that they like to keep themselves busy and be kinder to themselves during tough times. Stakeholders felt that leadership from community leaders and the government is critical, along with a united approach.

Stakeholders noted that the lack of youth-friendly public open spaces is hard. They also felt that government advertisements that use scare tactics do not appeal to them, and instead saw the need for co-designing campaigns and messaging with young people, and reflecting people of diverse backgrounds in these

campaigns.

How do you prepare for and get information in an emergency? Are there any barriers for you when trying to access the services you need?

Stakeholders noted that they often use government sources, and also find information on social media. They felt that it is important to provide a variety of methods for people to seek information.

What are your strengths or the strengths in the community that help you withstand shocks/stressors?

Stakeholders indicated that there is plenty of diversity in the community, which is beneficial to its strength. They felt that the Canterbury-Bankstown area has faced a lot of racism and discrimination and has developed resilience as a result of these experiences.

Stakeholders also expressed the importance of supportive government organisations, businesses and community centres, such as the Bankstown Arts Centre, that provide safe spaces for minority groups, including LGBTIQ+ people or people with disability.

What would help you to cope better with the stressors/shocks in your lives? How could Council better support you?

Stakeholders felt that information is critical, including pamphlets about how to stay safe and healthy. Stakeholders also expressed the importance of community initiative, and having multidisciplinary teams of people wanting to make a meaningful impact.

Stakeholders saw value in Council and the government giving young people a chance to share their thoughts, and for the government to consider how situations will affect young people and co-design processes with them.

"I'm tired of being divided and I want the community to be united."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Reference Group

"I feel like I constantly have to be productive but need to recognise that there's a limit to what I can do."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Reference Group

"Council does a lot for young people, but we aren't just one single group, we have a lot of differences."

- Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Reference Group

4. Service providers workshop

An online workshop was held with service providers to explore the main shocks and stressors for Canterbury-Bankstown. This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the service providers workshop.

4.1. About the service providers workshop

An online workshop was held with service providers in Canterbury-Bankstown during the consultation period.

6 service providers attended from a variety of organisations working in Canterbury-Bankstown. The purpose of the workshop was to explore the main shocks and stressors experienced in the community.

Cred Consulting facilitated the workshop online via Zoom. The workshop commenced with a brief overview of the project, followed by a facilitated conversation that was guided by the following questions:

- What do you think are the main shocks and stressors your community is most concerned about?
- What helps them get through when they are impacted by these things? What makes it more difficult for them to cope?
- How does your community prepare for and get information in an emergency? Are there any barriers for them when trying to access the services they need?
- What are the strengths in the community that help them withstand shocks/stressors?
- What would help your community to cope better with the stressors/shocks in their lives? How could Council better support them?

Participants were provided the opportunity to share their experiences and ideas throughout the 1.5 hour session.

4.2. What we heard

What do you think are the main shocks and stressors your community is most concerned about?

Participants felt that the pandemic is the most significant shock in the community currently. They indicated that the community are concerned about misinformation, health and wellbeing, domestic violence and implications on finances, employment and schooling.

Participants noted that the pandemic brings significant challenges, including financial stress and unemployment, access to technology and mental health issues, alongside difficulties for people with disability when accessing support services. Participants expressed concern about the long-term impacts of the pandemic and noted that while shocks impact everyone, the hierarchy of needs comes into play for many families who are worried about basic survival.

It was stated that children often play a carer role in households and are deeply absorbing the fear rooted in pandemic messaging, in addition to potential confusion around contradictory messages and misinformation. Participants also noted that many people in the community watch in-language news, so may be aware of what is happening in their home country but not their local area.

Participants noted that many young people of colour have had negative experiences with police and authority figures, so they may feel more targeted by the ongoing police presence. There is underlying fear and distrust of authority figures, which may contribute to confusion and feelings of being victimised.

Other shocks and stressors raised by participants included the lack of access to public transport, building fires, flooding (including flash flooding, which is a major risk in the area) and extreme heat. Participants also stated that extreme heat is a particular issue during religious fasting periods.

Participants noted that communication is an issue, due to the need for translations and unique cultural aspects in how people access information. They felt that the divide between Canterbury and Bankstown also provides a

barrier in terms of service provision.

What helps them get through when they are impacted by these things? What makes it more difficult for them to cope?

Participants indicated that clear and consistent communication is key, alongside consistent leadership and messaging that people can digest easily.

They noted that the community need to feel connected and feel like there is an understanding and a care beyond just physical needs. There is a need for a genuine, holistic, person-centred approach where people feel they are understood as humans.

How does your community prepare for and get information in an emergency? Are there any barriers for them when trying to access the services they need?

Participants stated that they communicate with their communities through text messages, social media, translated material, radio and the school system.

To help their communities prepare for emergencies, participants indicated that they develop flood plans, bushfire strategies and provide messaging around the importance of emergency kits. One participant noted that schools and the Department of Education can support communities by providing trustworthy, relevant information and acting as a source of truth.

What are the strengths in the community that help them withstand shocks/stressors?

Participants felt that the Canterbury-Bankstown community comes together in times of crisis, with positive responses from the business community who are willing to provide support within the LGA.

Participants indicated that social cohesion is a key strength, emphasising the need to be socially cohesive in times of crisis. Local groups and networks, informal or formal, are important sources of assistance when responding to shocks and stressors.

What would help your community to cope better with the stressors/shocks in their lives? How could Council better support them?

Participants felt that there is a need for a central hub of information, with emergency resources and other important information. They noted that having this resource kept updated regularly and available to the general public would be of significant benefit.

Participants indicated that the perceptions of risk are different across the community, and that more work needs to be done on information sharing and cross-promotion.

5. Online survey

The City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council prepared an online community survey to explore the main shocks and stressors for residents. This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the community survey.

5.1. About the online survey

The City of Canterbury Bankstown Council undertook an online community survey as part of the community engagement to inform the Canterbury-Bankstown Resilience Strategy. The survey was hosted on Council's 'Have Your Say' online engagement platform from 14 June 2021 to 9 September 2021. A total of 74 respondents contributed to the survey during this period.

5.2. Respondent profile

Survey respondents were characterised by the following attributes.

Gender

- 21.6% identified as male
- 74.3% identified as female
- 2.7% identified as non-binary
- 1.4% prefer not to answer

Age profile

- Under 18 years of age: 1.4%
- 18-24 years of age: 1.4%
- 25-34 years of age: 13.7%
- 35-39 years of age: 17.8%
- 40-49 years of age: 23.3%
- 50-59 years of age: 17.8%
- 60-69 years of age: 16.4%
- 70-84 years of age: 8.2%

Cultural diversity

- 3.1% of the respondents identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Suburb

- Ashbury (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Bankstown (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Belfield (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Belmore (5.6%, 4 respondents)
- Beverly Hills (1.4%, 1 respondents)

- Campsie (6.9%, 5 respondents)
- Canterbury (4.2%, 3 respondents)
- Chester Hill (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Clemtown Park (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Condell Park (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Earlwood (12.5%, 9 respondents)
- East Hills (4.2%, 3 respondents)
- Georges Hall (4.2%, 3 respondents)
- Greenacre (5.6%, 4 respondents)
- Hurlstone Park (5.6%, 4 respondents)
- Milperra (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Mount Lewis (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Padstow (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Padstow Heights (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Panania (5.6%, 4 respondents)
- Picnic Point (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Punchbowl (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Revesby (5.6%, 4 respondents)
- Revesby Heights (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Riverwood (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Roselands (1.4%, 1 respondents)
- Sefton (2.8%, 2 respondents)
- Yagoona (5.6%, 4 respondents)

Years of residency in the suburb

- less than a year: 6.8%
- 2-5 years: 22.9%
- 6-10 years: 20.3%
- 10 years: 50.0%

Connection to Canterbury Bankstown

- 95.9% live in Canterbury-Bankstown
- 2.7% work in Canterbury-Bankstown
- 1.4% work in support services in Canterbury-Bankstown

Household type

- Lone person: 13.5%
- Couple with children: 52.7%

- Couple without children: 17.6%
- One parent family: 5.4%
- Group: 10.8%

Speak a language other than English at home

- Yes: 24.3%
- No: 75.7%

Language spoken at home

- Arabic: 20%
- Greek: 15%
- Calabrese: 5%
- Cantonese: 5%
- Filipino: 5%
- Hindi: 10%
- Indonesian: 5%
- Italian: 5%
- Konkani: 5%
- Russian: 5%
- Spanish: 5%
- Swedish: 5%
- Tagalog: 5%
- Urdu: 5%

Place of birth

- 18.9% (or 14) of the respondents were born overseas
- 81.1% (or 60) of the respondents were born in Australia

Year of arrival to Australia

- 1975-1980: 2
- 1981-1985: 0
- 1986-1990: 4
- 1995-2000: 1
- 2001-2005: 2
- 2006-2010: 2
- 2011-2015: 2
- 2016-2020: 2

55.4% of respondents advised that they would like to be notified when this project is being discussed at an upcoming council meeting.

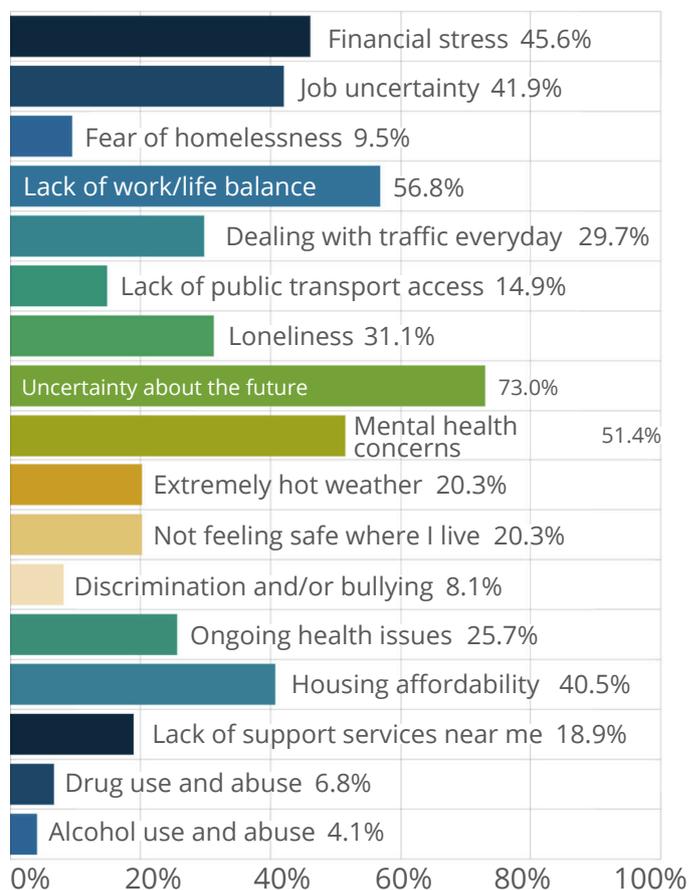
5.3. Top stressors

Respondents were asked which stressors have made life more difficult for them and their family over the past 6-12 months.

The top five stressors selected by respondents were:

- Uncertainty about the future (73.0%, 54 respondents)
- Lack of work/life balance (56.8%, 42 respondents)
- Mental health concerns (51.4%, 38 respondents)
- Financial stress (being able to pay the bills) (46.0% , 34 respondents)
- Job uncertainty (41.9%, 31 respondents).

Figure 2 - Top stresses



5.4. Coping in tough times

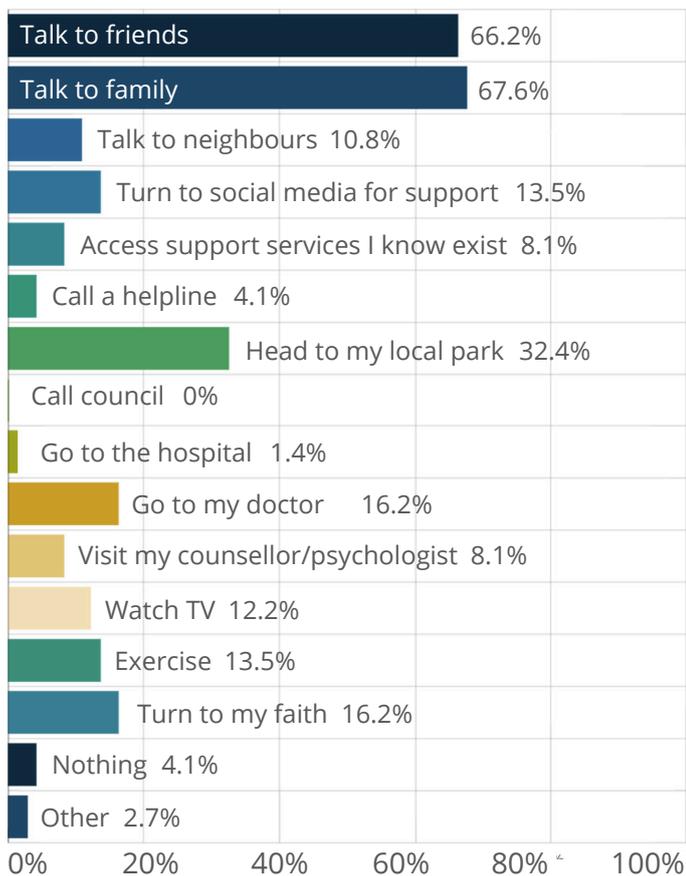
5.4.1. What do you do to cope?

Respondents were asked what they do to cope when they are going through tough times, including emergencies or natural disasters.

The top ways to cope, as selected by respondents, were:

- Talk to family (67.6%, 50 respondents)
- Talk to friends (66.2%, 49 respondents)
- Head to my local park (32.4%, 24 respondents)
- Go to my doctor (16.2%, 12 respondents)
- Turn to my faith (16.2%, 12 respondents).

Figure 3 - Coping measures

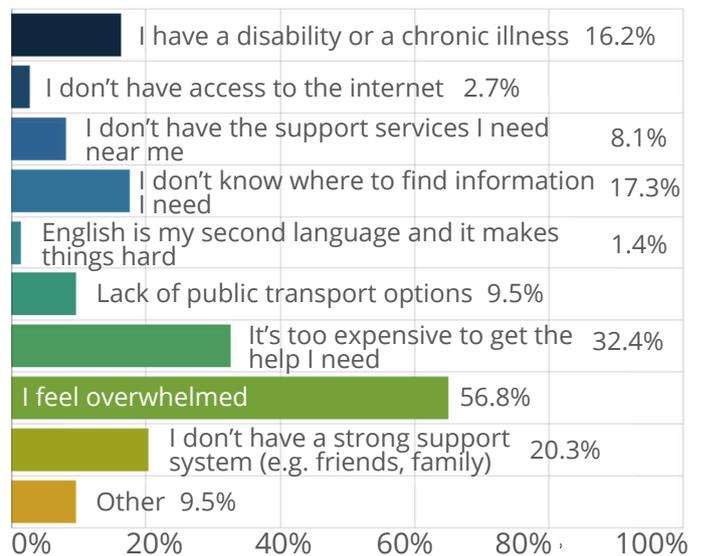


5.4.2. What makes it more difficult for you to cope?

The top five challenges that respondents indicated impact their ability to cope were:

- I feel overwhelmed (56.8%, 48 respondents)
- Its too expensive to get the help I need (32.4%, 24 respondents)
- I don't have a strong support system (20.3%, 15 respondents)
- I don't know where to find the information I need (17.3%, 13 respondents)
- Turn to my faith (16.2%, 12 respondents).

Figure 4 - Challenges impacting ability to cope



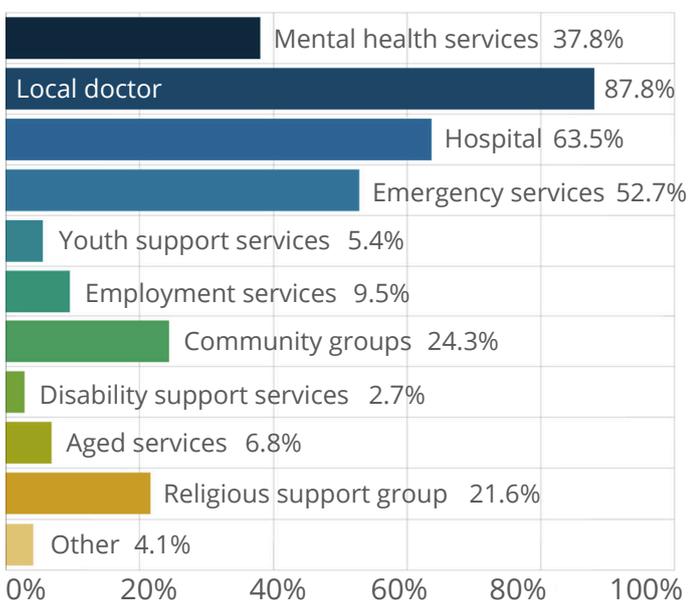
5.5. Accessing support services

5.5.1. Which services can you easily access?

The top five services that respondents indicated were easiest to access were:

- Local doctor (87.8%, 65 respondents)
- Hospital (63.5%, 47 respondents)
- Emergency services (52.7%, 39 respondents)
- Mental health services (37.8%, 28 respondents)
- Community groups (24.3%, 18 respondents).

Figure 5 - Easily accessible support services



5.5.2. What are the barriers to accessing services?

32.4% of respondents answered this question. Respondents identified the following key barriers to accessing services including:

- Distance to services, lack of transport to services or mobility issues for respondents (21.2%, 7 respondents)
- Cost for services (15.2%, 5 respondents)
- Lack of knowledge about services (15.2%, 5 respondents)
- Availability/high demand for services (6.1%, 2 respondents)
- Complex sign-up, paperwork, long phonecalls (6.1%, 2 respondents)
- Operational hours (6.1%, 2 respondents)
- Covid-19 restrictions (6.1%, 2 respondents)

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

- Lack of availability of services during pandemic, excess demand during pandemic, costs, distance to some services
- I don't know where they are. And there are not community groups of Spanish speakers in my area.
- I think lack of knowledge where to go for what issue is a big stressor in itself.
- I find it hard to access mental health, employment and community groups (for my age) because they're not child-friendly and are at times when I'm taking care of the kids.
- There aren't any community groups or services suitable for me in this area. A lot of support services are based on religion or certain ethnic groups.
- Services booked out or over-stretched.
- Financial constraints and difficulties getting to doctor and psychologist, especially due to COVID 19.
- Lack of parking and public transport availability at the places where these services are provided.
- Mental health services have long wait times and are unaffordable.

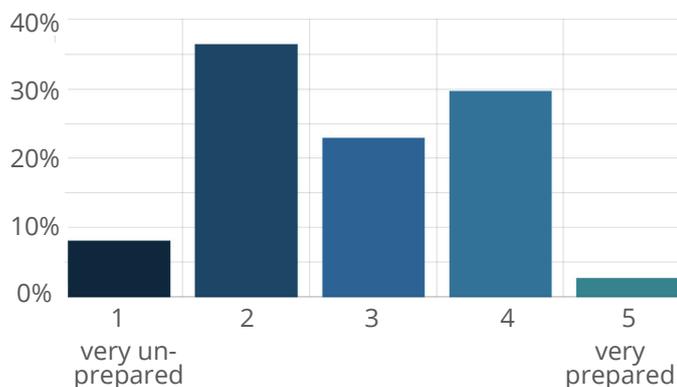
5.5.3. How prepared is your household to deal with these kind of emergencies?

Respondents were asked how prepared their household is to deal with sudden shocks and unexpected events such as financial crisis, water crisis, digital network failure, terror attack, a pandemic, or cyber-attacks.

Respondents were asked to rate their household's preparedness from 1 (low) to 5 (high):

- 1 low (8.1%, 6 respondents)
- 2 low to medium (36.5%, 27 respondents)
- 3 medium (23.0%, 17 respondents)
- 4 medium to high (29.7%, 22 respondents)
- 5 high (2.7%, 2 respondents).

Figure 6 - Household preparedness



Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

- Some of those things are very difficult to prepare for - but I do sometimes feel vulnerable to drought as we're not in a financial position to purchase water tanks, and we grow a lot of our own food.
- Lack of knowledge on how to prepare.
- Barriers include the anxiety and fear of being under the threat of the pandemic, which does not help with feeling ready or prepared to tackle on the pandemic, whether individually or collectively.
- I feel like I don't have any of the tools I would need to survive the above things. I would need to stock up on food and supplies and don't have enough money for all these things.
- I don't have a plan for this. I don't know of any community groups or organisations who could help with this.
- Can't afford to spend on preparing for unknown shocks, too busy and need to fund current problems now.
- You cannot be prepared for anything in our society unless you have money. Everything you need to access is only available via internet - unless you have a mobile phone and data access or computer and internet, you have no access to services including Centrelink. There are very few if any public telephones.

5.5.4. What are the barriers to preparedness?

50% of respondents answered this question. Respondents identified the following key barriers to being better prepared for sudden shocks:

- Financial constraints (33.3%, 14 respondents)
- Lack of knowledge on how to prepare (23.8%, 10 respondents)
- Other: current stressors are too prevalent to think about preparedness for future events (9.5%, 4 respondents)
- No alternative water supply (7.1%, 3 respondents)
- Need council support to better prepare (7.1%, 3 respondents)

5.5.5. Have you heard of or downloaded the Red Cross 'Get Prepared' phone app?

Out of the 74 respondents, only 6.8% (5 respondents) were aware of the Red Cross 'Get Prepared' app and none had the app downloaded.

Figure 7 - Experience with the Red Cross 'Get Prepared' app



- Yes, I have heard of it 6.8% (5 respondents)
- Yes, I have downloaded it 0%
- No 93.2% (69 respondents)

5.5.6. How do you prepare yourself and your family for emergencies and unexpected events?

Respondents identified the following ways they prepare themselves for emergencies or unexpected events:

- Have savings (16.5%, 13 respondents)
- Stay informed with current events (TV, online, radio) (15.2%, 12 respondents)
- Stocked up on food and other essentials (13.9%, 11 respondents)
- In touch with close knit community, group, family or friends (11.4%, 9 respondents)
- Had many conversations or have a plan in place (8.9%, 7 respondents)

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

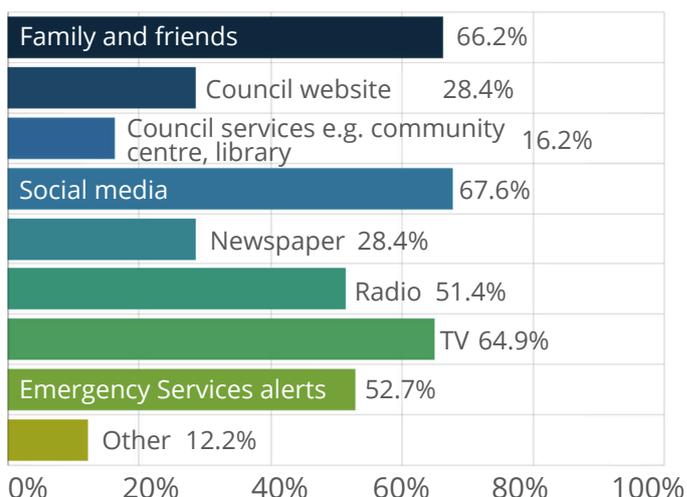
- We have a vague plan but with our limited support network I think we would struggle.
- Have food, money and other essentials saved
- By knowing how to cultivate our own food, and keeping healthy bodies of water in our backyard. We've learn what to do in case of fires.
- Planning for financial security, organisation of Go Bag in event need to leave home unexpectedly, contact with family.
- Keep a good stock of food staples including a couple of bottles of water. Keep a torch handy. Keep house well maintained at all times. Keep a stock of firewood
Make sure car has petrol. Keep some cash in case no internet/electricity. Keep in touch with family and friends.
- Research online, get shared knowledge from friends and trusted sources. Find resources in their language (many family members speak English as their second language)
- We have savings. We have solar power, a water tank, and keep in the home candles for a blackout and a first aid kit. We have good neighbors and family who can help. We have access to the internet.

5.5.7. How do you get information in an emergency?

Respondents identified the following top five sources for information in case of an emergency:

- Social media (67.6%, 50 respondents)
- Family and friends (66.2%, 49 respondents)
- TV (64.9%, 11 respondents)
- Emergency Services alerts (52.7%, 39 respondents)
- Radio (51.4%, 38 respondents)

Figure 8 - Information sources in an emergency

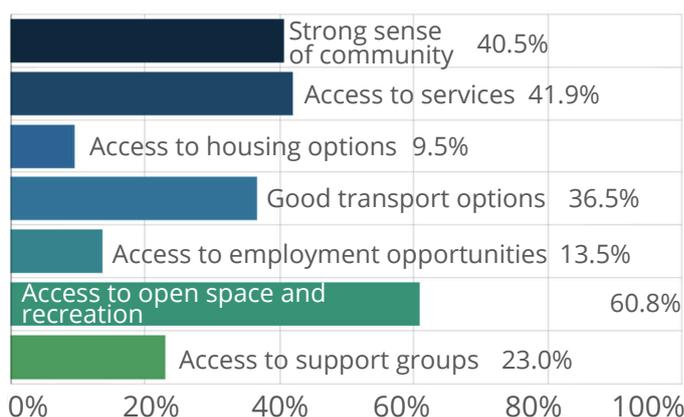


5.5.8. What makes the CBCity community strong to withstand shocks/stressors?

Respondents identified the following top five areas that makes the Canterbury-Bankstown community strong to withstand shocks and stressors:

- Access to open space and recreational facilities (60.8%, 45 respondents)
- Access to services (41.9%, 31 respondents)
- Strong sense of community (40.5%, 30 respondents)
- Good transport options (36.5%, 27 respondents)
- Access to support groups (23.0%, 17 respondents)

Figure 10 - Strength to withstand shocks and stressors

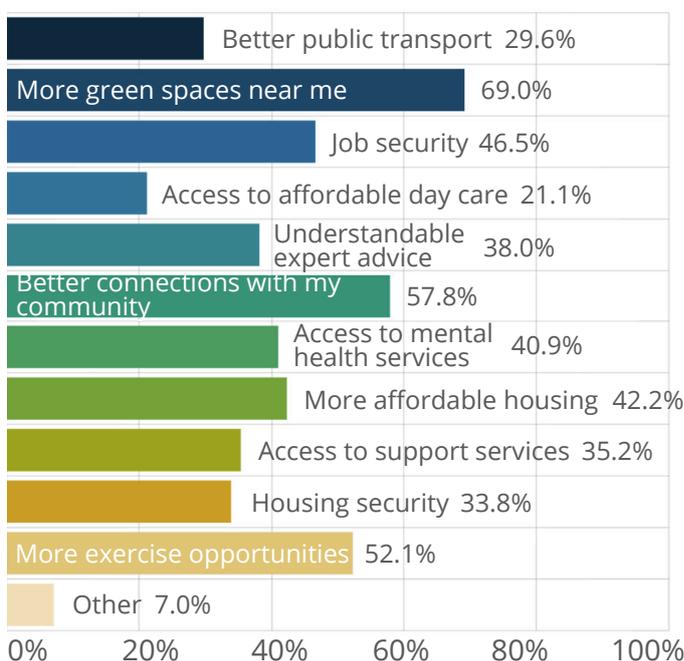


5.5.9. What would help you to cope better with the stressors and shocks in your life?

Respondents identified the following as the top five things that could help them to cope with shocks and stressors:

- More green spaces near me (69.0%, 49 respondents)
- Better connections with my community (57.8%, 41 respondents)
- More exercise opportunities (52.1%, 37 respondents)
- Job security (46.5%, 33 respondents)
- More affordable housing (40.5%, 30 respondents)

Figure 9 - Ways to cope with shocks and stressors



5.5.10. How do you think Council could better support the community in coping and adapting to stressors and major events?

68.9% of respondents answered this question.

Respondents identified the following key areas where Council could better support the community in coping and adapting to stressors and major events:

- Create more housing security by providing and subsidising social, affordable and cooperative housing (6.1%, 6 respondents)
- More free support services (6.1%, 6 respondents)
- Make information easily accessible, i.e. messages in different languages, improve navigation on council website (5.1%, 5 respondents)
- Council to put more effort in informing, leading and supporting climate action (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- More parks, expand open and green spaces (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- Plant trees and create framework that supports tree and greenery (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- Support community groups, social hubs and community meetups (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- Improve communication, trust and visibility of our councillors with the community (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- Maintain civic places better i.e. parks, walking tracks, public spaces (4.1%, 4 respondents)
- Better cycling and public transport, incl. free bike workshops (3.1%, 3 respondents)
- Lower council rates (3.1%, 3 respondents)

Verbatim comments from survey respondents:

- Put more effort into informing, leading and supporting individual and community approaches to slowing and resisting climate change
- Provide more green spaces, shade and other shelter and facilities (such as toilets).
- Support community green spaces, including bushland and gardens, and groups to maintain them and use them as a social hub.
- Support cycling and other sustainable transport, including free bike and scooter maintenance workshop and safe places to park bikes and scooters.
- Provide more support services, especially for groups such as young people.
- Provide specialised services for children who have experienced anxiety/trauma, such as specialised yoga or relaxation classes.
- Provide more exercise opportunities and social opportunities for different age groups.
- Provide social housing, affordable housing and cooperative housing opportunities, and rules for standards for existing housing (such as green spaces, facilities for children and hanging washing outside in units).
- Provide support and advocacy to women and children who have experienced domestic violence and other trauma.
- If there was an improvement to the local shops, facilities and better management of parks it would be a better place to live.
- A great proportion of our community speak English as their second or third language. Providing bilingual timely updates and resources would be incredibly helpful. Quality translations will mean better uptake and trust from those in the community hearing or reading it. An awareness of cultural differences when creating resources is also important.
- Make the council website easier to navigate, e.g. finding important information quickly such as on the front page. Create community projects such as community gardens in more local spaces.
- Support efforts to update and adequately staff Canterbury Hospital.
- Support students from disadvantaged families and communities, including those with a migrant, refugee or First Nations background to maximise their chances of academic and vocational success.
- Address climate change and environmental degradation including by tree planting on a massive scale.
- Free public transport from all suburbs to access hospital, mental health & housing services, free local pay phones connected to government services, housing.



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