



# City of Whittlesea Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey

## Highlights Bulletin

August 2018

*Metropolis*  
RESEARCH

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## 1. Introduction

The Research and Engagement Team of City of Whittlesea commissioned Metropolis Research to conduct this, its first *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey*.

The *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey* includes an extensive range of questions on the characteristics, behaviours, needs, and expectations of the Whittlesea community.

The 2018 *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey* provides some insight into the following:

- **Health and Wellbeing** – including disability, perception of general health, physical activity, organised sporting activity, food and beverage consumption, hours of sleep, attitudes to alcohol, quality of life, experience of or witnessing discrimination, and the perception of safety in the public areas of the City of Whittlesea.
- **Community** – including participation in community groups, volunteering, civic engagement, and sense of community.
- **Employment** – including qualifications, employment status, and satisfaction with current employment situation.
- **Income and financial security** – including personal income, housing related financial stress, household and personal expenses, access to emergency funds, actions taken due to a shortage of money, food security, and actions taken to make the food budget last longer.
- **Gambling** – including participation in forms of gambling, agreement with statements about the place of and impact of gambling in the community, and views about the number of poker machines in the local community.
- **Transport** – including ease of transport, daily average commuting time, and the impact of traffic congestion.
- **Parks, open spaces and Council facilities** – including frequency of visiting local parks and open spaces, barriers to visiting local parks and open spaces, and barriers to visiting selected Council facilities and spaces.
- **Environmental sustainability** – including the level of concern for environmental issues and environmental topics of interest.
- **Current issues** – including the top three issues for Council to address in the coming twelve months.
- **Demographic and household profile** – including gender, age, country of birth, language, household structure, period of residence, and housing situation.

This report has been prepared to provide an overview of the results, to highlight important findings, including differences by respondent profile (age, gender, and language spoken at home).

Readers are encouraged to contact the Community Building and Planning Department, City of Whittlesea directly to discuss the application of the data presented in this report to specific situations.

### 1.1 Methodology

The 2018 *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey* was a self-assessment survey distributed primarily via a drop-off and pick-up methodology over a number of weekends in May, June and July 2018. All survey drop-offs were conducted during the weekends, and the pick-ups were completed during the weekdays. A mail-out and reply-paid methodology was used for households in the Rural North precinct, due to occupational health and safety reasons.

A total of 1,777 surveys were distributed using the drop-off and pick-up methodology in the ten urban precincts of the City of Whittlesea, and 488 were distributed to the Rural North precinct using a mail-out and reply paid service.

An approximately equal number of surveys were distributed in each of the ten urban precincts of the City of Whittlesea in order to maximise the statistical strength at the precinct level, particularly for the smaller precincts. Results were then weighted by precinct population and number of households to ensure that each precinct contributed proportionally to the municipal results.

Households in the urban precincts of Whittlesea were approached in person by Metropolis Research fieldwork staff and invited to participate in the research. In the first instance, the fieldwork staff asked if there was a young person aged 15 to 24 years living in the household who may wish to participate in the research. If this was not the case, the individual who answered the door was invited to participate. This two-step approach was taken in an attempt to increase participation by the hard-to-engage younger residents.

Those accepting the invitation to participate were provided with a self-completion hard copy survey form. Metropolis Research staff made two separate visits to each household to collect the completed surveys. If the survey was incomplete or the resident was not home and had not left the survey out for collection, a reply-paid envelope was provided to households to allow them to mail in their completed survey for inclusion in the research.

If residents had difficulty with English and could not be understood by the staff member, a handout written in the top ten languages was available which provided details as to the survey and how residents could receive additional assistance with completing the survey.

A small number of residents also interacted with staff of Metropolis Research in a language other than English, with most of these interactions being around the nature and purpose of the survey.

The 2018 *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey* includes a total of 124 separate questions.

### 1.2 Metropolis Research

The Research and Engagement Team of the City of Whittlesea commissioned Metropolis Research to conduct the *City of Whittlesea – 2018 Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey*.

Metropolis Research was responsible for the implementation of the survey in the field, the data entry, cleaning and coding, data analysis and preparation of the main report, and this *Highlights Bulletin*.

### 1.3 Glossary of terms

The following are explanatory notes regarding the presentation of the results in this bulletin.

#### 1.3.1 Age structure (lifecycle stages)

For the majority of questions included in this survey, results are presented by age structure, otherwise referred to as lifecycle stages. Whilst the underlying data does contain single year or age data which can be used to provide results for custom age groups, the standard breakdown of age structures is as follows:

- Adolescents (aged 15 to 19 years)
- Young adults (aged 20 to 34 years)
- Adults (aged 35 to 44 years)
- Middle-aged adults (aged 45 to 59 years)
- Older adults (aged 60 to 74 years)
- Senior citizens (aged 75 years and over).

#### 1.3.2 Geography

In addition to a municipal overview for the City of Whittlesea, analysis of precinct level differences is included throughout the report. Precinct areas are defined based on the City of Whittlesea's Internal Place-based Geographic Planning Framework, which was introduced in 2016. The eleven precinct areas presented in this report include:

- Bundoora
- Doreen
- Epping
- Epping North
- Lalor
- Mernda
- Mill Park
- Rural North
- South Morang
- Thomastown
- Whittlesea Township

These precinct areas may or may not have the same boundaries as suburb areas. Some precinct areas fall within or cross-over suburb boundaries.

Please note: for the precinct areas of Donnybrook and Wollert, the current residential population is not large enough to report on the findings at a precinct level due to small sampling sizes; therefore, the data for these two precincts has been combined with the 'Rural North' precinct results.

## 1.4 Response rate

In 2018, a total of 2,265 surveys were distributed. Of these 1,777 were distributed in person to selected households across the urban precincts of the municipality, and 488 were mailed to residents in the Rural North precinct.

Of these 2,265 distributed surveys, a total of 1,097 were ultimately returned for inclusion in the research. This is a gross response rate of 48.4%.

## 1.5 Statistical strength

The total sample for the 2018 *Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey* was 1,097 individual respondents.

The 95% confidence interval (margin of error) of these results varies for each individual result, but is broadly stated as follows:

- Municipal results (of all respondents) – plus or minus 2.9% at the 50% level.
- Precinct results (of all respondents) – plus or minus 9.5% at the 50% level.
- Age structure results (of all respondents) – plus or minus approximately 6% at the 50% level, but is considered unreliable for adolescents, and more than 10% for senior citizens.
- Gender results (of all respondents) – plus or minus 4.4% at the 50% level.
- English / non-English speaking respondents (of all respondents) – plus or minus 4.5% at the 50% level.

In other words, if a yes / no question asked of every individual obtain a result of fifty percent yes, it is 95% certain that the true value of this result is within the range of 48.3% and 51.7%. The confidence interval is smaller the further the result is from the fifty percent level. These figures are based on a total sample size of 1,097 respondents, and an underlying population of the City of Whittlesea of 207,881 persons.

## 2. Health and Wellbeing

- 15.4% of respondents identified as having a **permanent or long-term disability**. The most common forms of disability were hearing impairment (5.7%) and mental health conditions such as depression and bipolar (4.9%).
- Respondents from Whittlesea Township (23.1%) and Thomastown (20.7%) were a little more likely than average, and respondents from Doreen (11.3%) a little less likely to have a disability.
- There was a clearly relationship between age and disability, rising from just 2.9% of adolescents to 37.4% of senior citizens.
- 82.5% of respondents reported that their **general health** was “excellent” (15.7%), “very good” (30.8%), or “good” (36.0%). Just 2.7% of respondents considered their health to be “poor”.

- This result did vary a little across the municipality, with respondents from the Rural North (63.8%) more likely than average to consider their health “very good or excellent”, and respondents from Thomastown (32.5%) were less likely.
- The perception of general health was relatively stable for young adults through to middle-aged adults, but declined substantially for older adults and senior citizens.
- There was a lot of variation in the amount of **moderate to vigorous physical activity** respondents usually do each week, with 11.9% doing usually doing none, 19.0% doing less than one hour, 45.9% doing between one and five hours, and 23.2% doing five hours or more per week.
- Respondents from the Rural North (46.5%) and Bundoora (33.1%) were more likely to do five hours or more of physical activity per week, whilst respondents from Thomastown (22.8%) were more likely to do no physical activity.
- There was no clear relationship between age and the amount of physical activity usually undertaken. Males were however more likely than females do to five hours or more physical activity per week, whilst female respondents were more likely to do between less than one hour and up to five hours per week.
- 31.6% of respondents that are doing some physical activity per week, do at least some of that physical activity as part of a **formal club-based activity** such as sports training or competition.
- A little less than half (45.1%) of respondents reported that they **consume the recommended two or more serves of fruit per day**, although respondents from Doreen (35.8%) and Mernda (33.8%) were less likely than average to consume the recommended serves.
- Young adults (37.6%), senior citizens (38.9%) and English speaking respondents (41.0%) were less likely than average to consume the recommended serves.
- 5.5% of respondents reported that they **consume the recommended five or more serves of vegetables per day**, although respondents from Epping (9.2%) were a little more likely and respondents from Epping North (2.5%) were a little less likely.
- There was no significant variation observed by age or language, although females (7.4%) were more than twice as likely as males (3.2%) to consume the recommended number of serves.
- 80.8% of respondents never or rarely **drink four or more alcoholic drinks on the same day**, whilst 11.7% do so at least once a week. Respondents from Epping and Epping North were more likely to never do this, whilst respondents from the Rural North were twice as likely as the average to do this at least once a week.
- Senior citizens were more likely to never drink four or more alcoholic drinks on the same day, while adults were more likely to rarely do this. Females were more likely

than males to never do this, and non-English speaking respondents were more likely to never do this than were English speaking respondents.

- Whilst 59.2% of respondents never or rarely **drink sugary drinks**, 30.0% do so at least once a week. Respondents from Thomastown, Whittlesea Township and the Rural North were more likely to never do this, whilst respondents from Mill Park were more likely to do so at least once a week.

- Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to drink sugary drinks at least once a week. Males were more likely than females to do this at least once a week, whilst females were more likely to never or rarely do this. English speaking respondents were more likely to do this at least once a week than non-English speaking respondents.
- 85.4% of respondents **share a meal with family or household members** at least once a week, with 54.5% doing so every day. There wasn't a large amount of variation in this result observed across the precincts.
- Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to share a meal with family or household members daily, whilst older adults and senior citizens were more likely to do so on a weekly basis.
- On average respondents usually consume 4.9 **glasses of water per day**, with 32.5% consuming less than four glasses, 33.4% consuming four or five, and 34.1% consuming six or more. There was no significant variation in this result across the precincts.
- Young adults (5.7) on average consumed more glasses per day than senior citizens (4.2). Non-English speaking respondents (5.2) on average consumed more than English speaking respondents (4.6).
- On average respondents usually get seven **hours of sleep per weeknight**, with 83.6% getting between six and eight hours per night. There was no significant variation in this result across the precincts.
- Whilst the small sample of adolescents on average got 8.2 hours of sleep per night, there was no meaningful variation in the average hours of sleep observed by respondents' age, gender, or language spoken at home.
- When asked to rate their agreement with **six statements about alcohol**, on a scale from zero (strongly disagree) to ten (strongly agree), respondents reported:
  - **Strong Agreement** – that alcohol consumption increases social harms in the community (7.36) and people should have access to social spaces that are alcohol-free (7.14). More than half of the respondents strongly agreed, whilst less than one-sixth disagreed.
  - **Moderate Agreement** – that there are too many opportunities for drinking alcohol nowadays (6.29) and that there are too many opportunities to access packaged alcohol in the respondents' community (6.04). Whilst more than one-third of respondents strongly agreed with these two statements, a little more than one-fifth disagreed.
  - **Moderate Disagreement** – that alcohol is an important part of social life (3.18). Whilst more than half of the respondents disagreed with this statement, a little less than ten percent strongly agreed.
  - **Strong Disagreement** – that getting drunk, to the point of losing balance every now and again is okay (2.17). More than three-quarters of respondents disagreed with this statement, whilst a little more than ten percent strongly agreed.

- There was relatively little significant variation in these results relating to statements about alcohol observed across the precincts.
- Generally speaking, it does appear that attitudes towards alcohol are less positive for older respondents than it is for younger respondents. There wasn't a significant degree of variation observed by gender, however generally speaking English speaking respondents tended to be a little more positive in their attitudes towards alcohol than non-English speaking respondents.
- When asked to rate their agreement with **four statements about quality of life** on a scale from zero (strongly disagree) to ten (strongly agree), respondents reported:
  - **Moderate Agreement** – that the respondent has adequate time to spend with family and / or friends (6.68), respondents often feel rushed or pressed for time (6.17), and respondents feel satisfied with their work / life balance (6.03). Whilst approximately one-third or more of respondents strongly agreed with these three statements, between one-fifth and one-quarter disagreed.
  - **Mild Agreement** – that the respondent has adequate time for keeping fit and / or recreational activities (5.82). Respondents were almost evenly split in terms of agreement with this statement, with a little less than one-third strongly agreeing, and a similar proportion disagreeing.
- There was little measurable variation in agreement with these statements observed across the precincts, although it is noted that respondents from the Rural North were more in agreement that “they have adequate time for keeping fit and / or recreational activities” than average and respondents from Epping were less in agreement.
- Older adults and senior citizens tended to be more in agreement with these statements than younger respondents. Females were more in agreement that “they often feel rushed or pressed for time”, whilst males were more in agreement that “they have adequate time for keeping fit and / or recreational activities”. Non-English speakers tended to be more in agreement with these statements than English speaking respondents.
- 34.9% of respondents reported that they had **witnessed** at least one of the seven types of discrimination listed on the survey, and 21.5% reported that they had **personally experienced** at least one of these types of **discrimination**. These seven types of discrimination include gender, sexuality, age, race, religion, disability, and physical attributes. Race-based discrimination was the most witnessed (19.2%) or personally experienced (9.4%).
- There was relatively little meaningful variation in these results observed across the precincts, although it is noted that respondents from the Rural North (26.4%) were less likely than average to have witnessed discrimination. There was some variation at the precinct level in terms of experiencing some forms of discrimination.
- Younger respondents tended to be more likely to have witnessed or personally experienced one or more of these seven types of discrimination than older respondents. There was no variation between males and females in relation to witnessing or experiencing one or more of these types of discrimination, although

females were more likely than males to have witnessed discrimination around disability and physical attributes. Non-English speaking respondents were more likely than English speaking respondents to have experienced race-based discrimination, and English speaking respondents were more likely to have witnessed discrimination around physical attributes.

- When asked to rate their **perception of safety in six locations and situations** on a scale from zero (very unsafe) to ten (very safe), respondents reported feeling:
  - **Very Safe** – in the local neighbourhood during the day (7.60). Approximately two-thirds of respondents felt very safe, whilst almost ten percent felt unsafe.
  - **Moderately Safe** – in and around the local shops (6.99). Whilst a little more than half of the respondents felt very safe, a little less than one-sixth felt unsafe.
  - **Mildly Safe** – on walking and / or cycling paths (5.93), in local parks and gardens (5.83), in the local neighbourhood at night (5.43), and travelling on and waiting for public transport (5.36). Respondents were relatively evenly spread in terms of their perception of safety at these locations and situations, with approximately one-third feeling unsafe, one-third neutral to somewhat safe, and one-third very safe.
- There was some variation in the perception of safety across the precincts, with respondents from Whittlesea Township, Doreen, Mernda, Epping North, and South Morang tending to feel a little safer than average, whilst respondents from Epping, Lalor, and Thomastown tended to feel measurably less safe than average.
- Male respondents tended to feel more safe than female respondents, and non-English speaking respondents tended to feel more safe than English speaking respondents.

### 3. Community

- 46.0% of respondents participate in at least one type of **community group**, with Religious / Places of Worship (20.1%), sports clubs (12.8%) and exercise groups (7.1%) the most common types of groups.
- Respondents from the Rural North (64.8%) were more likely, whilst respondents from Mill Park (37.4%) were measurably less likely to participate in one or more community groups.
- Older adults (57.6%) and senior citizens (55.3%) were more likely to participate in one or more community groups than younger respondents. There was no variation based on gender, although non-English speaking respondents (48.7%) were a little more likely to participate in one or more community groups than English speaking respondents (44.0%).
- 19.4% of respondents **volunteer**, with 13.7% volunteering locally and 5.7% non-locally.

- Respondents from the Rural North (41.8%), Mernda (30.8%), and Doreen (28.3%) were more likely than average to volunteer.
- There was no meaningful variation observed by gender, however English speaking respondents (21.3%) were somewhat more likely than non-English speaking respondents (16.7%) to volunteer.
- 40.2% of respondents had participated in at least one form of **civic engagement**, with the most common forms being signed an online petition (23.0%), signed a paper petition (13.4%), and participated in a survey, meeting or workshop on a local issue or decision (12.5%).
- Respondents from the Rural North (69.2%), Mernda (53.8%), and the Whittlesea Township (50.0%) were more likely than average to participate in civic engagement, whilst respondents from Lalor (32.4%) and Thomastown (31.0%) were less likely.
- There was little meaningful variation in participation in at least one form of civic engagement by age structure, except for senior citizens (25.8%) who were measurably less likely to participate. Females (44.1%) were more likely to participate than males (35.4%), and English speaking respondents (48.3%) were more likely to participate than non-English speaking respondents (31.6%).
- When asked to rate their agreement with **ten statements about the sense of community** on a scale from zero (strongly disagree) to ten (strongly agree), respondents reported:
  - **Moderate Agreement** – that I feel proud to live in my neighbourhood (6.70), people in my neighbourhood are accepting of people from other cultural / religious backgrounds (6.60), I could turn to the neighbours for help (6.54), and I often stop and chat with someone when walking in my neighbourhood (6.07). Whilst more than one-third of respondents strongly agreed with each of these statements, between one-tenth and one-quarter of respondents disagreed.
  - **Mild Agreement** – that most people in my local neighbourhood can be trusted (5.95), I feel part of my local community (5.72), and people in my neighbourhood have a strong sense of community (5.46). Whilst approximately one-quarter of respondents strongly agreed with these statements, approximately one-fifth disagreed.
  - **Mild Disagreement** – that there are opportunities to have a real say on local issues that are important to me (4.74), and people in my neighbourhood get involved in local issues (4.69). Whilst approximately one-sixth of respondents strongly agreed with these two statements, approximately one-third disagreed.
  - **Moderate Disagreement** – that I participate in local community activities and events (4.02). 12.8% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement, whilst 46.8% disagreed.
- Whilst there was variation in agreement with individual statements relating to sense of community observed across the precincts, generally speaking respondents from Whittlesea Township and the Rural North tended to more strongly agree with these statements, except for “people in my neighbourhood are accepting of people from

other cultural / religious backgrounds”. Respondents from Lalor and Thomastown tended to less strongly agree with these statements.

- Agreement with many statements relating to sense of community tended to rise with the respondents' age. Females tended to report slightly higher agreement than males. English speaking respondents tended to report marginally higher agreement than non-English speaking respondents, with the exception of "people in my neighbourhood are accepting of people from other cultural / religious backgrounds".

## 4. Employment

- 79.4% of respondents had a post-secondary school **qualification**, an increase on the 71.3% recorded in the *Household Survey* last year. The slightly different methodology may have a small impact on the comparability of these results.
- 47.8% of respondents had a certificate or diploma qualification, whilst 30.7% had a Bachelor or Higher degree.
- Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to have a post-secondary school qualification, and in particular young adults (48.8%) and adults (44.7%) were measurably more likely than older adults (20.2%) and senior citizens (8.4%) to have a Bachelor or Higher degree.
- In relation to current **employment status**, 64.8% of respondents were employed, with 41.5% employed full time or self-employed. 16.9% were retired, 8.0% were engaged in home duties, 4.0% were unemployed, and 2.3% were engaged in full or part time studies, and 2.0% were employed and studying. These results are similar to those recorded in the *Household Survey* last year, although respondents were somewhat more likely this year to be engaged in home duties and less likely to be engaged in study. This is likely to reflect the slightly different methodology.
- There was some variation in these results observed across the precincts, with respondents from Epping North (53.8%) and Epping (43.8%) more likely to be employed full time, respondents from Whittlesea Township (28.8%) more likely to be retired, and respondents from the Rural North more likely to be self-employed (11.6%) or retired (25.6%).
- There was also variation observed by respondent profile, with younger through to middle-aged adults more likely to be employed full time, younger adults more likely to be employed part time or casually (29.3%), and older adults (54.4%) and senior citizens (82.0%) more likely to be retired. Males (49.4%) were more likely than females to be employed full time, and female respondents were more likely to be employed part time (21.9%) or engaged in home duties (13.2%). English speaking respondents (18.6%) were more likely than non-English speaking respondents to be employed part time.
- 70.6% of employed respondents were **satisfied with their current employment situation**, with 11.0% dissatisfied because they work too many hours, and 11.6% because the commute time was too long.

## 5. Income and financial security

- The **median annual income of all respondents** was \$42,796, which is significantly higher than the \$31,044 recorded in the *Household Survey* last year. The difference in the median income is likely to partly reflect the methodological difference.
- Income varied substantially across the municipality, with Epping North (\$53,144), Doreen (\$50,024), and Mernda (\$49,400) reporting higher median incomes, and respondents from Bundoora (\$37,648), Whittlesea Township (\$36,504), Lalor (\$33,800), and Thomastown (\$28,340) significantly lower incomes.
- The **median income of full time / self-employed** respondents was \$71,604 per annum, significantly higher than the \$56,940 reported in the 2017 *Household Survey*.
- Full time / self-employed males (\$78,000) earned 21.5% more than female respondents (\$64,220), whilst English speaking respondents (\$72,644) earned three percent more than non-English speaking respondents (\$70,512).
- 72.8% of mortgagee and rental households reported that the household's **housing** costs placed at least some **stress on the household's finances** in the last twelve months. This result is marginally lower than that recorded in recent years in the *Household Survey*.
- Whilst some caution should be exercised due to small sample sizes, it is noted that one-parent families and older sole person households were the most likely to report some level of housing related financial stress than other household structures.
- Respondents were asked whether their **household had been able to consistently meet a range of financial obligations on time as needed**. The results show that there is a small proportion of respondent households across the municipality that have difficulty in consistently paying for a range of expenses, with dental treatments (14.0%), utility bills (13.3%), fines (11.3%), communication bills (11.2%) the expenses that they could most often not pay as needed.
- There was variation in the results observed across the precinct for individual financial obligations, however in general terms it was respondents from Whittlesea Township, Mernda, and Epping North who were the least likely to be able to pay for these expenses on time as needed.
- Whilst bearing in mind the small sample sizes for some household structures, in general terms it was one-parent families and younger sole person households who tended to be the least likely to be able to pay for these expenses on time as needed.
- 51.6% of respondent households reported that their household could definitely (30.4%) or possibly (21.2%) **obtain \$2,000 within a week for an unexpected emergency**.

- Respondents from the Rural North (56.0%) and Doreen (42.5%) were the most likely to be definitely able to obtain the funds, whilst respondents from Whittlesea Township (32.5%) were the most likely not to be able to obtain the funds within a week.
- Respondents were asked how often they had taken **seven actions due to a shortage of money** in the last twelve months. A significant proportion of respondents reported that they had at least once in the last twelve months delayed the payment of bills (36.2%), not participated in social activities due to a shortage of money (30.1%), borrowed money from family or friends (24.8%), or been unable to heat or cool the home as much as needed (23.3%).
- There was variation in the results observed across the precincts in relation to individual actions, however in general terms respondents from Mernda were slightly more likely than average to have engaged in some of these actions due to a shortage of money.
- With a couple of exceptions, there was relatively little measurable variation in these results observed by age structure. There was little variation observed by gender, although it is noted that English speaking respondents were a little more likely than non-English speaking respondents to have never engaged in some of these actions due to a shortage of money.
- Whilst the overwhelming majority (82.3%) of respondent households reported that they had never **run out of food and couldn't afford to buy more**, 9.6% reported that they had run out of food at least once in the last twelve months.
- Respondents from Mernda (15.4%), Epping North (14.4%), and Epping (13.7%) were slightly more likely than average to have run out of food at least once in the last year.
- Whilst bearing in mind the small sample sizes for some household structures, it is noted that one-parent families with children aged up to 18 years (20.2%) and one-parent families with adult children only (18.4%) were the most likely to have run out of food at least once in the last twelve months.
- Respondents were asked how often they or members of their **household had done any of seven actions to make the household food budget last longer**. A significant proportion of respondent households had at least rarely (or a few times) limited the variety of food eaten (28.1%), chosen foods based on quantity rather than quality (25.7%), and reduced the amount of food eaten (20.0%) to make their household food budget last longer.
- There was variation in the results observed across the precincts in relation to individual actions. In general terms however respondents from Epping North and to a lesser extent Mernda tended to be slightly more likely than average to have engaged in some of these actions to make the household food budget last longer, whilst respondents from the Rural North were measurably less likely.

- Whilst bearing in mind the small sample sizes for some household structures, it is noted that one-parent families with children up to 18 years and older sole person households were the most likely to have taken some of these actions to make the household food budget last longer.

## 6. Gambling

- 26.2% of respondents reported that they **had engaged in at least one of the nine listed types of gambling** (including “other”) in the last twelve months. This result is very similar to the 24.8% recorded in the *Household Survey* in 2015. The three most common forms of gambling were pokies at a local venue (10.7%), Casino (8.1%), and pokies at a non-local venue (5.8%).
- Respondents from Epping North (15.9%) were measurably less likely than average to have engaged in at least one form of gambling than the municipal average.
- Older adults (35.4%) were more likely to have engaged in gambling than other age groups. There was little variation observed by gender, however English speaking respondents (30.9%) were more likely than non-English speaking respondents (21.6%) to have engaged in a form of gambling in the last twelve months.
- When asked to rate their agreement **with ten statements about gambling** on a scale from zero (strongly disagree) to ten (strongly agree), respondents reported:
  - **Very Strong Agreement** – that gambling negatively affects peoples’ health and wellbeing (8.26). Three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed with this statement, whilst nine percent disagreed.
  - **Strong Agreement** – that there are too many opportunities for gambling nowadays (7.88), more should be done to discourage online betting in the local community (7.74), and poker machines are a serious social problem in the local community (7.60). More than two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed with these statements, whilst a little more than ten percent disagreed.
  - **Moderate Disagreement** – that gambling is a form of entertainment and recreation (3.12). Two-thirds of respondents disagreed with this statement, whilst approximately one-sixth strongly agreed.
  - **Strong Disagreement** – that poker machines are good for the local economy (2.29). Almost three-quarters of respondents disagreed with this statement, whilst less than ten percent strongly agreed.
  - **Very Strong Disagreement** – that gambling is an important part of social life (1.57). More than four-fifths of respondents disagreed with this statement, whilst six percent strongly agreed.
- There was relatively little significant variation in these results about attitudes towards gambling observed across the municipality. There was also little discernible pattern evident in the views of respondents based on their age, gender, or language spoken at home.

- 61.4% of respondents considered that **the number of poker machines in the local area** should decrease, either a little (9.7%) or a lot (51.7%). Just two percent of respondents considered that the number of poker machines should increase.
- Respondents from Epping (74.7%), the Rural North (71.4%), and South Morang (69.8%) were the most likely to consider that the number of machines should decrease, whilst respondents from Doreen (45.2%) were the least likely.
- Middle-aged adults (66.5%) were the most likely age group to consider that the number of machines should decrease, whilst young adults (55.2%) were the least likely. Males were more likely than females to consider that the number of machines should decrease a lot. There was no significant variation observed by language spoken at home.

## 7. Transport

- When asked **how easy or difficult it is to get to a range of destinations by car**, on a scale from zero (very difficult) to ten (very easy), respondents reported:
  - **Extremely Easy** – to get to the local shops (8.38). Three-quarters of respondents considered it very easy to get to the local shops by car, whilst less than ten percent found it difficult.
  - **Very Easy** – to get to leisure activities (7.59), health and other services (7.49), and public transport by car (7.36). A little less than two-thirds of respondents found it very easy to get to these destinations by car, whilst less than one-sixth found it difficult.
  - **Moderately Easy** – to get to the respondents' place of work (6.42). This includes a sample of 632 employed respondents. Whilst almost half found it very easy to get to work by car, more than one-quarter found it difficult.
  - **Mildly Easy** – to get to the respondents' place of study (5.72). This includes a sample of just thirty-one respondents engaged in study. Whilst one-third found it very easy, more than one-quarter found it difficult to get to their place of study by car.
- The southern urban precincts particularly Bundoora, but also to some extent Lalor, Thomastown, and Mill Park tended to find it easier to travel to most destinations by car than average, whilst respondents from Mernda and Doreen tended to find it more difficult to travel to most destinations by car than the municipal average.
- Female respondents tended to find it easier to travel to most destinations by car than did male respondents. There tended to be no meaningful variation in these results observed by the respondents' language spoken at home.
- 58.3% of respondents took less than one hour to **commute to and from work each day** (down from 65.0% in the 2017 *Household Survey*), whilst 41.7% (up from 35.0%) took one hour or more per day.

- Respondents from Thomastown (73.5%) and Bundoora (66.1%) were more likely to take less than one hour per day, whilst respondents from Whittlesea Township (65.5%), Doreen (59.3%), the Rural North (54.0%), and Epping North (53.5%) were more likely than average to take one hour or more.
- When asked what **impact traffic congestion had on seven aspects of their lifestyle**, on a scale from zero (no impact) to ten (high impact), respondents reported:
  - **Moderate Impact** – on feeling stressed and angry when driving (6.09) and the time to spend with family and / or friends (6.07). Whilst a little less than half of the respondents rated the impact on these two aspects to be very high, a little more than one-quarter rated the impact low or no impact.
  - **Mild Impact** – on the time to prepare food at home (5.35). A little more than one-third of respondents rated the impact on this aspect as very high, whilst a similar proportion rated it little or no impact.
  - **Neutral** – on the productivity at work, study, or home (5.14), the time for leisure activities (5.14), and the time for exercise (4.98). Respondents were relatively evenly spread in terms of the impact of traffic congestion on these three aspects, with approximately one-third rating the impact very high and a slightly higher proportion rating it low or no impact.
  - **Mildly Low impact** – on the time for sleep (4.25). Almost half of the respondents rated the impact of traffic congestion on the time for sleep as little or no impact, whilst one-quarter rated it high impact.
- The impact of traffic congestion on these lifestyle aspects tended to be somewhat higher in the northern growth areas particularly Epping North, and to a lesser extent Mernda and for some aspects also the Rural North precinct. The impact tended to be lower in the southern urban precincts particularly Bundoora, Thomastown, and Lalor.
- Older adults and senior citizens tended to rate the impact of traffic congestion on these lifestyle aspects measurably and significantly lower than younger respondents. There tended to be relatively little variation observed for most of these aspects based on the respondents' gender or language spoken at home.

## 8. Parks, open spaces and council facilities

- 59.9% of respondents visit walking / cycling paths, 41.6% visit playgrounds, 36.3% visit informal open grassed areas, 33.3% visit sporting reserves, 24.7% visit picnic facilities, 12.3% visit dog-off leash areas, and 4.7% visit skate facilities at least once a month. Particular attention is drawn to the fact that 37.0% of respondents visit walking / cycling paths at least once a week. Respondents were much more likely to visit playgrounds, sporting reserves, and informal open grassed areas on a weekly rather than a daily basis.
- There was some variation in these results observed across the precincts, but without a strong pattern evident for all types of local parks and open spaces. There was also some variation in these results observed by respondents' age structure, gender, and

- language spoken at home, but again it varied depending on the type of local park and open space.
- 82.5% of respondents nominated at least one **barrier to them visiting local parks and open spaces**, at an average of less than two barriers each. The most commonly nominated barriers were a lack of time (39.2%), not aware of them (24.1%), no public toilets / baby change facilities (20.7%), respondents do not feel safe in them (13.9%), and because they believe the spaces are not well maintained (11.4%).
  - There was some variation in these results observed across the precincts and by respondent profile including age structure, gender, and language spoken at home.
  - Respondents were asked if there were any **barriers to them visiting halls and community activity centres, sports and recreation facilities, and libraries**. The most common barriers preventing respondents from visiting these three types of facilities were as follows:
    - **Hall and Community Activity Centres** - were not aware of them and what they offer (34.4%), a lack of time (20.5%), and the facilities do not meet their needs (9.3%).
    - **Sports and recreation facilities** – were a lack of time (23.4%), not aware of them and what they offer (16.1%), and the facilities do not meet their needs (8.9%).
    - **Libraries** – were a lack of time (21.2%), not aware of them and what they offer (10.3%), and too far to travel from home (6.2%).
  - There was some variation in these results observed across the precincts and by respondent profile including age structure, gender, and language spoken at home.

## 9. Environmental sustainability

- When asked their level of **concern with seven environmental issues** on a scale from zero (no concern) to ten (high concern), respondents reported:
  - **Very High Concern** – with the increasing amount of rubbish and what to do with the material now and into the future (8.07). More than two-thirds of respondents were very concerned about this issue, whilst 6.1% were unconcerned.
  - **High Concern** – with the loss of natural environment (e.g. River Red gums, bushland, grasslands, waterways and wildlife) (7.65), the effects of polluting chemicals and other materials on the environment (7.41), the level of environmental leadership from state and federal governments (7.09), the overall impact of climate change (7.07), and the current availability of sustainable transport options (7.00). Between approximately half and two-thirds of respondents were very concerned with these issues, whilst approximately ten to fifteen percent were unconcerned.
  - **Moderate Concern** – with the level of environmental leadership from Council (6.65). A little less than half of the respondents were very concerned with this issue, whilst almost one-sixth were unconcerned.
- Whilst there was some variation in the individual results observed across the precincts, in general terms respondents from Whittlesea Township tended to be

somewhat more concerned with most of these environmental issues, whilst respondents from Doreen tended to be somewhat less concerned.

- In general terms younger respondents tended to be a little less concerned with these environmental issues than older respondents, although senior citizens tended to be less concerned than older adults. Female respondents tended to be a little more concerned with most of these issues than male respondents. There was little significant variation based on the respondents' language spoken at home.
- 82.5% of respondents were interested in **learning more about at least one of the eight (including "other") environmental topics**, with the most common topics of interest being saving energy / renewable energy (60.3%), recycling and reducing waste (51.0%), and saving water (49.7%).
- Respondents from the Rural North (94.5%) were more interested than average in finding out about at least one of these environmental topics, whilst respondents from Mill Park (75.8%) were somewhat less interested.
- There was little meaningful variation in this result observed by age structure or gender, although it is noted that non-English speaking respondents (85.8%) were marginally more likely than English speaking respondents (80.0%) to be interested in finding out more about at least one of these environmental topics. There was some measurable variation in the individual topics of interest observed by respondent profile.

### 10. Current issues to address in the City of Whittlesea

- 66.0% of respondents (down from 76.7% in last year's *Household Survey*) nominated at least one **issue to address in the City of Whittlesea at the moment**, at an average of around 2.4 issues each.
- The top five issues this year were traffic management (43.4% down from 53.5%), safety, policing, crime and drug related issues (13.7% down from 14.3%), public transport (8.8% down from 12.6%), parks, gardens, and open space issues (6.7% down from 7.7%), and parking (6.7% down from 8.5%).
- There was a significant degree of variation in these results observed across the precincts, with particular attention drawn to traffic management in Epping North (72.3%), Mernda (70.3%), Whittlesea Township (59.0%), and the Rural North (58.2%), as well as safety, policing, crime and drug issues in Mill Park (20.2%).
- There was relatively little significant variation in these results observed by respondents' age structure, gender, language spoken at home, or the household structure.

## 11. Demographic and household profile

- The demographic questions were included in this survey predominantly to facilitate analysis of the other questions included in the survey, rather than as a measure of the underlying demographic profile of the municipality. A more detailed picture of the demographic profile of the City of Whittlesea is available in the 2016 *Census* and the 2017 *Household Survey*.
- The sample did somewhat under-represent adolescents and young adults, and slightly over-represented adults, middle-aged adults, and older adults. Senior citizens were appropriately represented as per the *Census* results. The variation between the *Census* results and the sample for this survey reflects the nature of the methodology of the survey. Forty respondents did not provide a response to this question on age.
- The sample included 45.1% males and 54.7% females, with 0.2% identifying as other or non-gender specific. Thirty-two respondents did not provide a response.
- 55.1% of respondents were born in Australia, 5.8% were born overseas in a mainly non-English speaking country, 35.5% were born in a mainly non-English speaking country, and 3.7% inadequately described their country of birth.
- The top six countries of birth were Australia (55.1%), India (7.1%), Italy (4.5%), Macedonia (4.1%), Sri Lanka (2.0%) and Vietnam (2.0%).
- 73.1% of overseas born respondents had lived in Australia for ten years or more, whilst 14.4% had lived in Australia for less than five years, and 12.4% for between five and less than ten years.
- 53.0% of respondents speak English at home and 47.0% speak a language other than English. The top five other languages were Italian (7.3%), Macedonian (5.6%), Greek (3.4%), Arabic (3.1%), and Vietnamese (2.4%).
- 64.6% of respondents were from two-parent families, 9.5% from one-parent families, 12.1% couple families without children, 7.5% sole person households, 3.5% group households, and 2.8% extended or multiple families.
- 46.7% of respondents had lived at their current address for ten years or more, 34.6% had lived at the address for less than five years, and 18.8% for between five and less than ten years.
- Respondents who had moved to the current address in the last five years were most likely to have moved from Epping (9.0%), Thomastown (8.4%), Reservoir (6.6%), South Morang (5.4%), and Mill Park (5.4%).
- 38.4% of respondent households owned their home, 41.0% were purchasing their home, 20.0% were renting their home, and 0.6% had another arrangement.