

Huon Valley Community Views, 2025

Views report



community views | views.id

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<https://views.id.com.au/huon-valley-council>

Daniel Evans

dan@id.com.au | 0407 502 887

Jacquie Norton | Brigid Quinlan
jacquie@id.com.au | brigid@id.com.au



HUON VALLEY

Local Area Overview

About Huon Valley

Huon Valley - traditionally home to the Melukerdee people of the Huon River and the Lyluequonny people of the Far South - is located in Tasmania's southernmost region, about a 30 minute drive away from the state's capital, Hobart. Huon Valley covers an area of approximately 5,497 square kilometres, and is dominated by the Huon River which flows through its centre. It is a rural and residential area, and in addition to the Huon River, includes mountain ranges, parklands, and an abundance of wildlife.

More than 19,700 people currently live in Huon Valley. The population has risen by around 21 per cent over the past ten years. The median age of residents is 46 years, compared to 38 across Australia. There is a high proportion of older couples without children (14% compared to 10% across Australia), and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (10% compared to 3% across Australia). There are relatively lower levels of socio-economic disadvantage on average than in Tasmania, with a higher proportion of residents who are homeowners without a mortgage (42%, compared to 36%).

The local area economy produces \$1 billion each year and supplies over 6,000 local jobs. The LGA's largest industry (by employment) is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing.

HUON VALLEY COMMUNITY VIEWS

About Community Views for Huon Valley

About Community Views

Community Views uses a survey based approach to bring a credible resident voice to local area decision making.

Our standard questions cover a diverse range of topics including community values, experiences, local area liveability and future needs, health, wellbeing and financial circumstances, climate change, local area concerns and ideas to improve quality of life. Clients are also welcome to ask custom questions.

The survey data is analysed and published on our leading online platform, [views.id](#), which is supported by insights reporting, workshops, videos and on-demand assistance.

Together, Community Views and [views.id](#) provide councils and other organisations with a deep and representative understanding of their community's views to inform, monitor and evaluate strategic planning and advocacy.

Community Views is delivered in partnership with leading social research consultancy, Ipsos Public Affairs.

About Huon Valley Community Views

Community Views for Huon Valley was conducted between 4th April and 22nd May 2025, returning a sample of $n=1,246$ completed surveys. This is the second wave of the study, with the first wave conducted in 2021.

Beyond the standard questions, Huon Valley's Views also sought to understand residents' connection to the local area and council, the sustainable practises they engage in and preparedness for natural disasters.

The data was collected using a combination of Social Media Advertising and via Huon Valley Council's own channels. Controls were employed to ensure minimum representation from key groups of interest spatially and demographically.

A data-normalisation and weighting procedure was applied to ensure the survey sample reflected population characteristics.

Huon Valley residents views are compared against Australian, Regional Australian and Tasmanian benchmarks collected as part of .id's annual [Living in Australia](#) survey.

Reports, insights and data derived from Huon Valley's Views is available on views.id.com.au/huon-valley-council

HUON VALLEY COMMUNITY VIEWS

This report contains five key insights

1

Huon Valley residents most value feeling safe, high quality health services, and access to the natural environment.

2

Improving access to high quality health services in the Huon Valley is critical to progressing liveability and quality of life.

3

The surrounding natural environment is a local area strength in the Huon Valley, enriching quality of life and enhancing the region's distinctiveness.

4

Within the Huon Valley, there was a higher level of personal agency and resilience to the effects of climate change, and higher support for innovation in renewable energy.

5

Residents say improved communication, clearer links between feedback and decisions, and greater transparency are the key ways to make it easier to participate in Council consultation and engagement.

Huon Valley residents most value feeling safe, high quality health services, and access to the natural environment.

Huon Valley residents identified ‘feeling safe’ (61%), ‘high quality health services’ (58%) and ‘access to the natural environment’ (58%) as the three items that contribute most towards making somewhere a good place to live, from a list of 16 attributes. ‘Feeling safe’ and ‘high quality health services’ have risen in importance since 2021 (up from 58% and 54% respectively).

Experiences with ‘feeling safe’ and ‘access to the natural environment’ were positive (rated 6.6 and 7.7 out of 10). However, collective experiences with accessing ‘high quality health services’ (4.4/10) were relatively poor, with residents rating their local area lower in comparison to other attributes.

The combination of values and experiences gives the Huon Valley an Overall Liveability Index of 55.5/100. This is informed by residents’ experiences of the things they value most.



Australia	59.5 ↑
Regional Australia	58.3
Tasmania	58.4

	Importance	Experience
Feeling safe ↕	61%	6.6
Health services ↕	58%	4.4
Natural environment ↕	58%	7.7
Sense of community ↕	48%	6.6
Affordable decent housing ↕	41%	4.6
Public transport ↕	30%	4.1
Social cohesion ↕	27%	6.0
Shopping, leisure & dining ↕	24%	4.2
Good job prospects ↕	23%	4.0
Education ↕	23%	4.1
Making your way ↕	21%	5.8
Opportunity for all ↕	20%	5.4
A lack of road congestion ↕	20%	6.3
A prosperous economy ↕	17%	5.1
Cultural facilities ↕	16%	4.9
Sports and recreation ↕	11%	6.0

How does Quality of Life differ within the Huon Valley?

Overall Liveability by Local Area

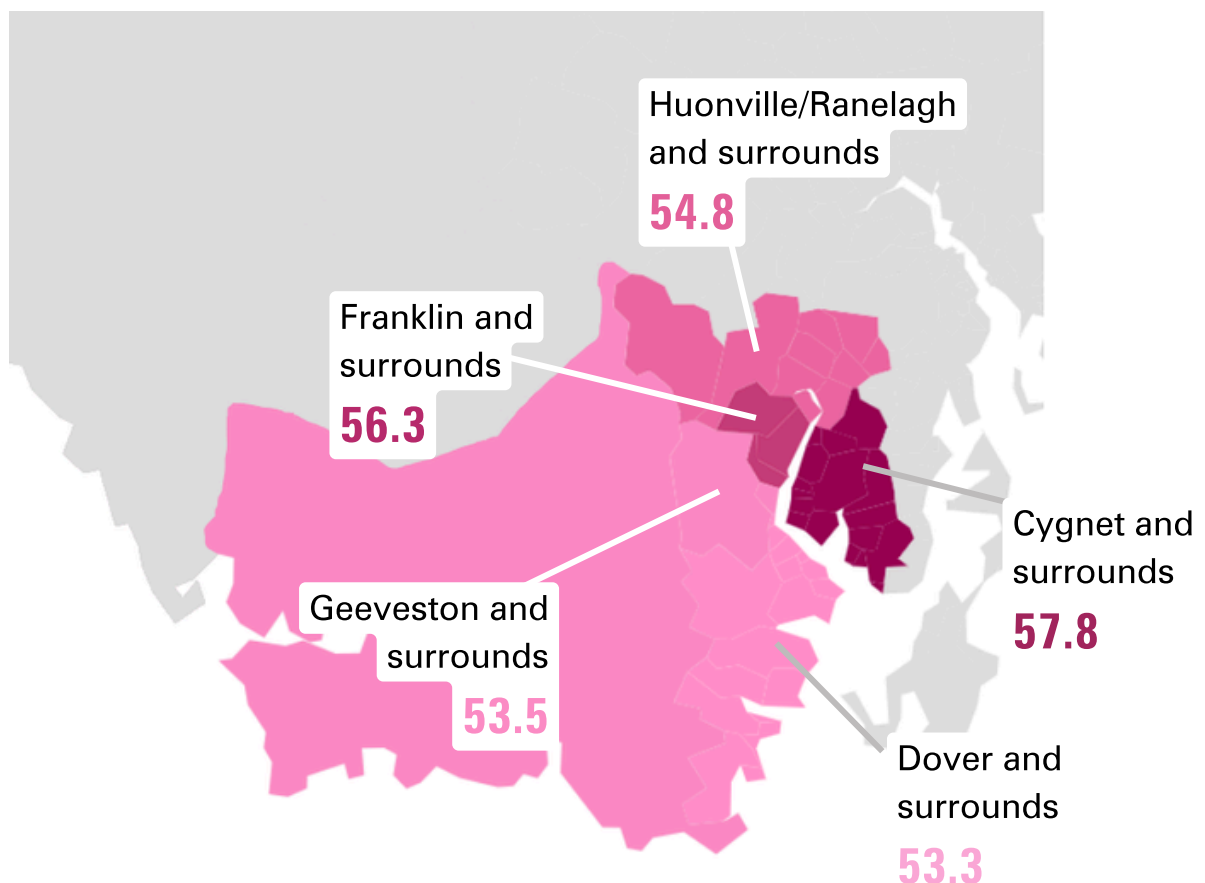
Liveability within the Huon Valley varied subtly by local area.

Perceived liveability was highest in Cygnet and surrounds (57.8/100) and Franklin and surrounds (56.3). Perceived liveability was lower in Dover and surrounds (53.3) and Geeveston and surrounds (53.5).

Cygnet and surrounds reported slightly more positive local area experiences for the top four aspects of liveability - high quality health services, access to the natural environment, feeling safe and a strong sense of community. Similarly, Franklin and surrounds reported more positive local area experiences for the top two most important aspects (health services and natural environment).

The key issues in Geeveston and Dover, where perceived liveability was lower, related to the ability to access health services. They told us they'd like improved medical facilities and broadened opening hours, particularly at the Geeveston Medical Centre. They suggested having a full-time doctor and more frequent access to healthcare providers, including allied health services and emergency care.

Overall Liveability Index



What's driving Quality of Life across the Huon Valley?

Mapping the 16 liveability attributes

By combining the community's values - what they believe makes somewhere a good place to live - with their local area experiences - how they experience those items where they live - we can clearly identify community priorities regarding which specific attributes are areas of relative strength (greater importance, better local area experiences) and relative weakness (greater importance, worse local area experiences).

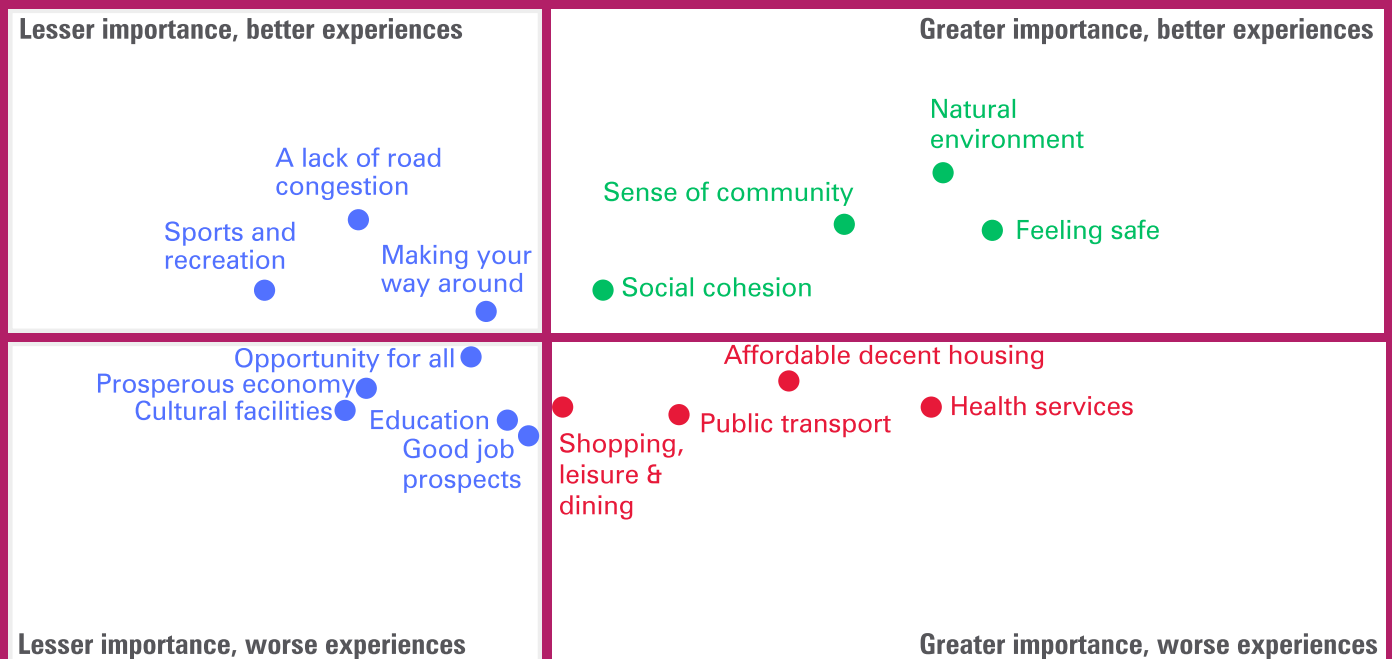
Attributes of high importance and above average in terms of local area experiences (i.e. **areas of strength**) include:

- 'access to the natural environment'
- 'feeling safe'
- 'a strong sense of community'
- 'social cohesion (e.g. acceptance of multiculturalism, religious groups living in harmony, etc)'

Attributes of high importance and below average in terms of local area experiences (i.e. **areas of relative weakness**) include:

- 'high quality health services'
- 'affordable decent housing'
- 'reliable and efficient public transport'
- 'a diverse range of shopping, leisure and dining experiences'

Huon Valley - Values and Experiences Matrix

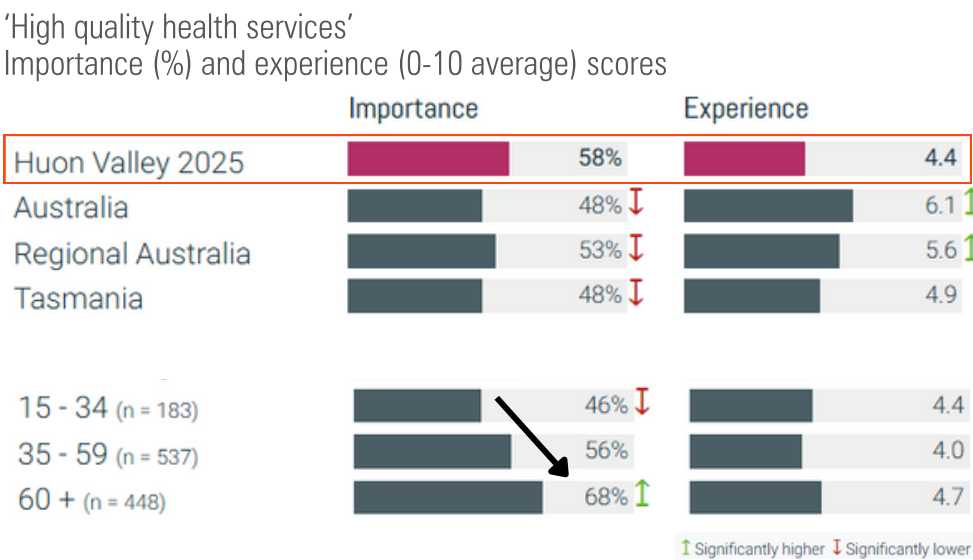


Improving access to high quality health services in the Huon Valley is critical to progressing liveability and quality of life.

Access to ‘high quality health services’ was the equal second most important liveability attribute among Huon Valley residents (58%). However, resident experiences rated at 4.4/10, lower than comparable benchmarks: including Tasmania (4.9/10), Regional Australia (5.6/10), and Australia (6.1/10). This gap suggests that investment in health services is likely to deliver a positive uplift to perceived overall liveability in the region.

Older residents placed the highest level of importance on this attribute, with 68% of those aged 60+ stating it was important to them, compared to 56% among 35-59 year olds and 46% among 15-34 year olds.

Given the Huon Valley’s older age profile (average age of 46 years vs. 42 years for Tasmania and 38 years for Australia), local healthcare must scale and adapt to meet the rising demand. Advocating for the health needs of the community is critical to ensuring that the specific demands of the ageing population are prioritised in planning and resource allocation.



There were also localised differences in importance and lived experience with accessing ‘high quality health services’ across Huon Valley. For instance:

- In Geeveston and surrounds, resident experiences were significantly lower than the Huon Valley average (3.1/10 vs. 4.4/10), despite a higher proportion perceiving this attribute as important (62% vs. 58%). Here, it ranked 1st in importance out of 16 attributes, demonstrating a disconnect between what makes a good place to live and actual lived experience.
- In Dover and surrounds, access to ‘high quality health services’ also ranked 1st in importance (67%), significantly higher than the Huon Valley average (58%). Experience was slightly above the Huon Valley average (4.6/10 vs. 4.4/10) but still ranked only 10th for lived experience, reinforcing a mismatch between importance and satisfaction.

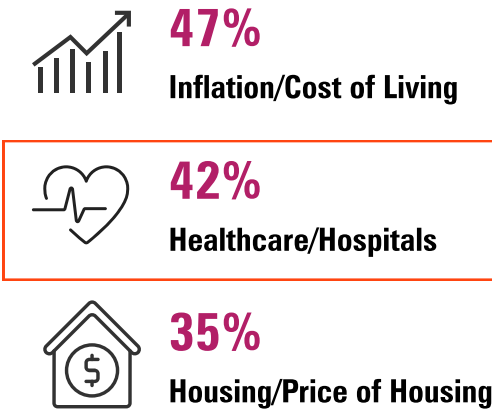
When asked to identify the top three issues facing the local area (from a list of 19), four in ten Huon Valley residents (42%) identified 'Healthcare/Hospitals' as a top local issue, ranking it second overall, behind 'Inflation/Cost of Living'. This is a similar proportion to 2021 at 41%.

A higher proportion of Huon Valley residents identified 'Healthcare/ Hospitals' as a key issue affecting their community than the average across Tasmania (37%), Regional Australia (28%) and Australia (20%) respectively.

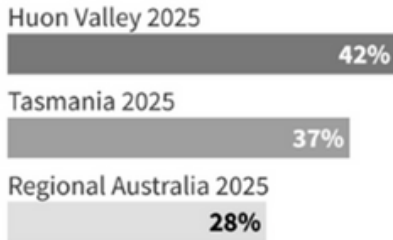
Health service provision in regional and rural areas of Australia presents a complex set of challenges that impact the accessibility, quality, and sustainability of care. These challenges stem from geographic, demographic, workforce, and infrastructure-related factors, and can contribute to poorer health outcomes for rural populations compared to their metropolitan counterparts.

Open-text responses provided a more in-depth understanding of the experiences of Huon Valley residents in relation to health services. Residents mentioned a need for better access to general practitioners, mental health services, and after-hours care. Some residents expressed frustration with long wait times for appointments and the lack of bulk billing options. There was also a call for additional medical centres and allied health services like dental and physiotherapy.

What are the top three issues facing your local area?



Top three issues facing local area - 'Healthcare/ Hospitals'



“Emergency GP centres and the return of bulk billing to re-route people from hospital. Adding subsidies for healthier living options (i.e. weight loss or smoking cessation).”

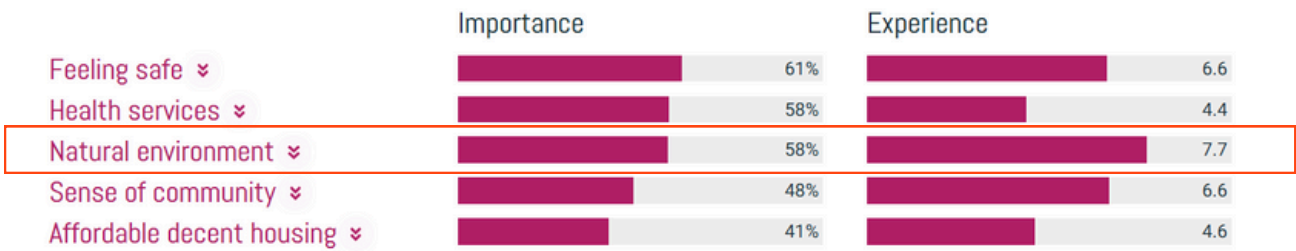
Female | 35-59 years | Dover and surrounds

“It would be very beneficial to have better access to public health services in Huonville, such as after-hours clinics or a hospital.”

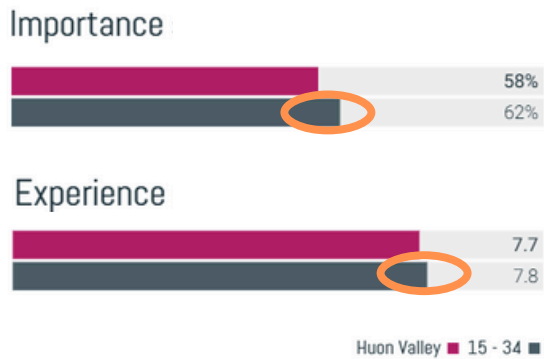
Female | 35-59 years | Huonville/Ranelagh and surrounds

The surrounding natural environment is a local area strength in the Huon Valley, enriching quality of life and enhancing the region's distinctiveness.

'Access to the natural environment' was identified as a key liveability factor among Huon Valley residents. It was the equal second most important attribute (58%) and was by far the most positively experienced (7.7/10).



It was particularly important for younger residents aged 15-34 (62%), who outscored the Huon Valley average (58%), along with their older counterparts (35-59: 57%, and 60+: 56%), which may be indicative of the proportion of people in this age cohort who have recently moved to the area, motivated by the abundance of natural features within the region.



Across the local areas, there were also subtle differences in both perceived importance and experience. In Franklin and surrounds (64%) and Cygnet and surrounds (62%), residents placed more value on access to the natural environment, and their experience of it was also slightly higher than the Huon Valley average (7.9/10 vs. 7.7/10 respectively). In both places it ranked 1st out of 16 attributes for experience.

In Dover and surrounds, residents were significantly less likely to place importance on this attribute (40%), despite reporting the highest experience score compared to all local areas (8.1/10). These distinct differences reflect the diverse geography of Huon Valley and highlight the need for Council to tailor engagement and planning strategies to local priorities.

In addition, 27% of Huon Valley residents identified 'Environmental Concerns' as an issue facing the local area, up from 22% in 2021 and significantly higher than the national average of 10%.

Open-text responses reinforced the value that Huon Valley residents placed on the natural environment.

Community comments echoed the significance of the natural environment, with some calling for local landscapes to be protected, action against climate change, and fish farming be limited to safeguard local waterways. These views reflect a tension between environmental stewardship and economic reliance on agriculture, forestry and fishing - the region's largest employment sector, comprising 24% of local jobs.

This tension highlights the opportunity for Council to lead with sustainable practices, foster innovation, and engage residents in collaborative planning that balances economic and environmental priorities.

"Hold the natural environment of Huon region in higher regard, improving protections - in particular of our public waterways."

Male | 35 - 49 years | Cygnet and surrounds



What could be done to improve the quality of life for people in your local area?

"No more farmed salmon in or around the Huon River. Not just for the precious health of our environment but also to get huge tanker trucks off our narrow highways and industrial boats out our once-pristine waterways."

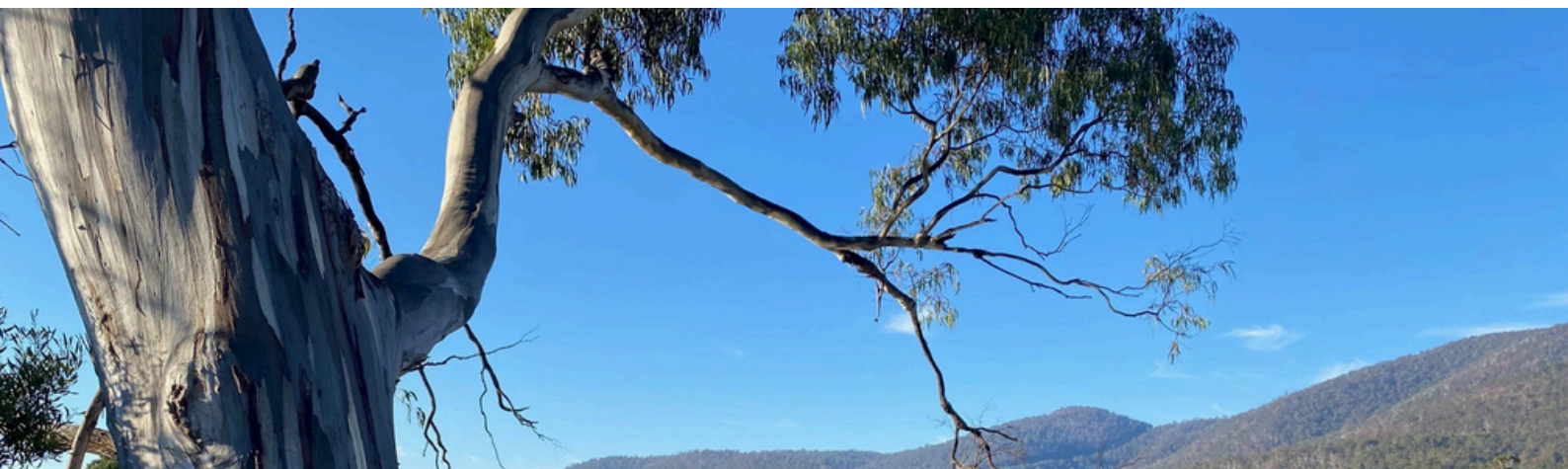
Male | 15-34 years | Geeveston and surrounds

"More walking tracks so we can make use of the natural beauty around us."

Female | 60+ years | Huonville/Ranelagh and surrounds

"Protect the environment and get ready to deal with severe climate impacts."

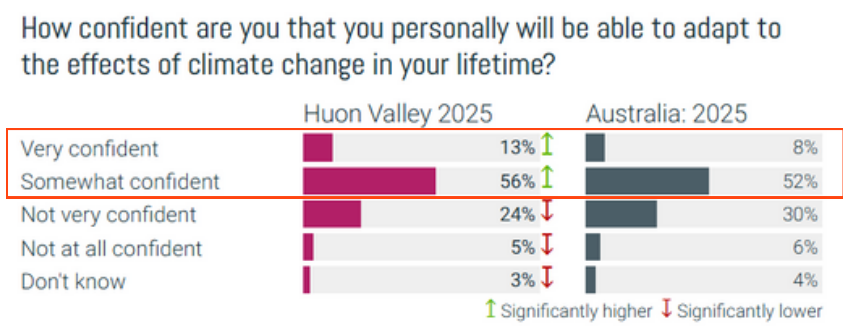
Male | 60+ years | Huonville/Ranelagh and surrounds



Within the Huon Valley, there was a higher level of personal agency and resilience to the effects of climate change, and higher support for innovation in renewable energy.

Climate change resilience is critically important to local areas because it directly affects their ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from the increasing risks posed by a changing climate.

Almost seven in ten Huon Valley residents (69%) felt very or somewhat confident in being personally able to adapt to the effects of climate change within their lifetime, compared to 60% across Australia.



Residents were asked which natural disaster preparation tasks they have undertaken within the last year. The top three actions were knowing what type of emergencies could affect them or their property (69%), using the TasALERT App (63%) and completing maintenance activities around my house to reduce my risk.



Which of the following natural disaster preparation tasks have you undertaken within the last year?
Top 3



69%
know what type of emergencies could affect me or my property



63%
using the TasALERT App



53%
have completed maintenance activities around my house to reduce my risk

“Better community structure & networks to build stronger resilience for current and upcoming issues that we face.”
Male | 35-59 years | Cygnet and surrounds

Huon Valley residents were asked what they feel are the best ways to address the effects of climate change in their local area.

The results suggested the community was very environmentally conscious there was a high support for protecting and enhancing local biodiversity (62%) and greater education for residents on how to live more sustainably (60%). This suggests that residents want to be able to do their part.

There was a focus on local solutions - options for recycling waste (58%), reducing pollution of the environment locally (57%), and conserving natural resources in the area (56%) and encouraging residents to buy locally (48%).

Many Huon Valley residents were open to innovation in the renewable energy space, with a higher support for things like adopting (52%), hosting (46%) and creating (42%) renewable energy sources than the national average (48%; 36%; 38% respectively across Australia).

Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure ensures that local populations - especially vulnerable groups like the elderly, children, and people with disabilities - remain protected.

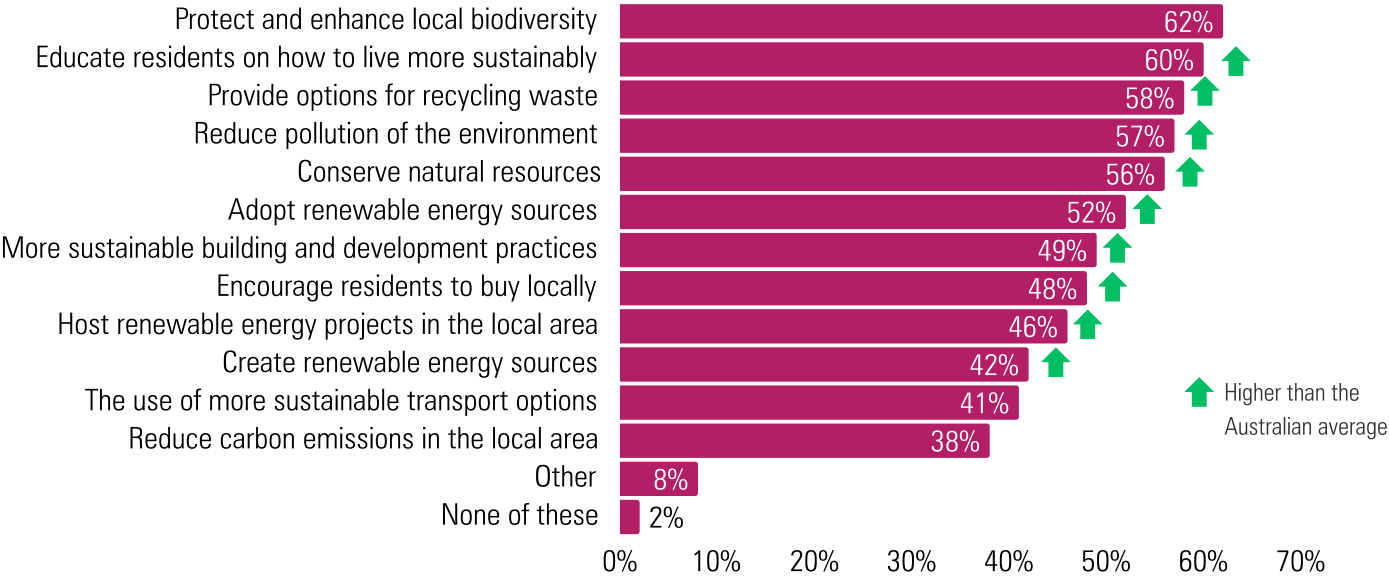


“Add a rebate/tax incentive for building smaller, low energy houses-something like the timber workers housing.”
Female | 60+ years | Geeveston and surrounds

“Protecting the environment and getting ready to deal with severe climate impacts.”
Male | 60+ years | Huonville/Ranelagh and surrounds



What do you feel are the best ways to address the effects of climate change in your local area?



Residents say improved communication, clearer links between feedback and decisions, and greater transparency are the key ways to make it easier to participate in Council consultation and engagement.

Residents were asked how Council could make it easier for them to participate in Council's consultation and engagement activities. The top priorities included improved communication about upcoming opportunities (47%), demonstrating how feedback influences decisions (47%) and enhancing transparency in the decision-making process (46%). This suggests a desire for greater awareness about when and how to get involved, a strong demand for closing the feedback loop (i.e. demonstrating to residents how their input shapes outcomes), and trust-building through visible, open processes.

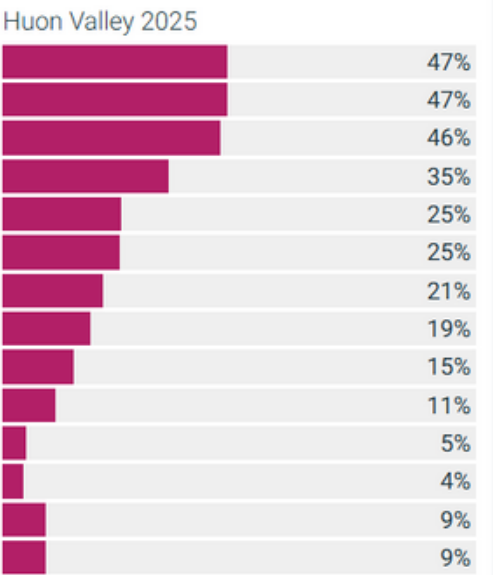
Other priorities included more convenient locations or online options (35%) and more flexible timing options (25%) - offering a variety of ways people can participate was valued.

A quarter (25%) felt that connecting topics more clearly to community impacts would make it easier for them to participate, highlighting that residents are more inclined to engage when they see how issues affect them.

Support for those less confident in sharing (21%) and creating more welcoming environments (19%) indicated the importance of psychological safety and inclusivity - some residents may require assistance or encouragement to speak up.



How could we make it easier for you to participate in Council's consultation and engagement activities?



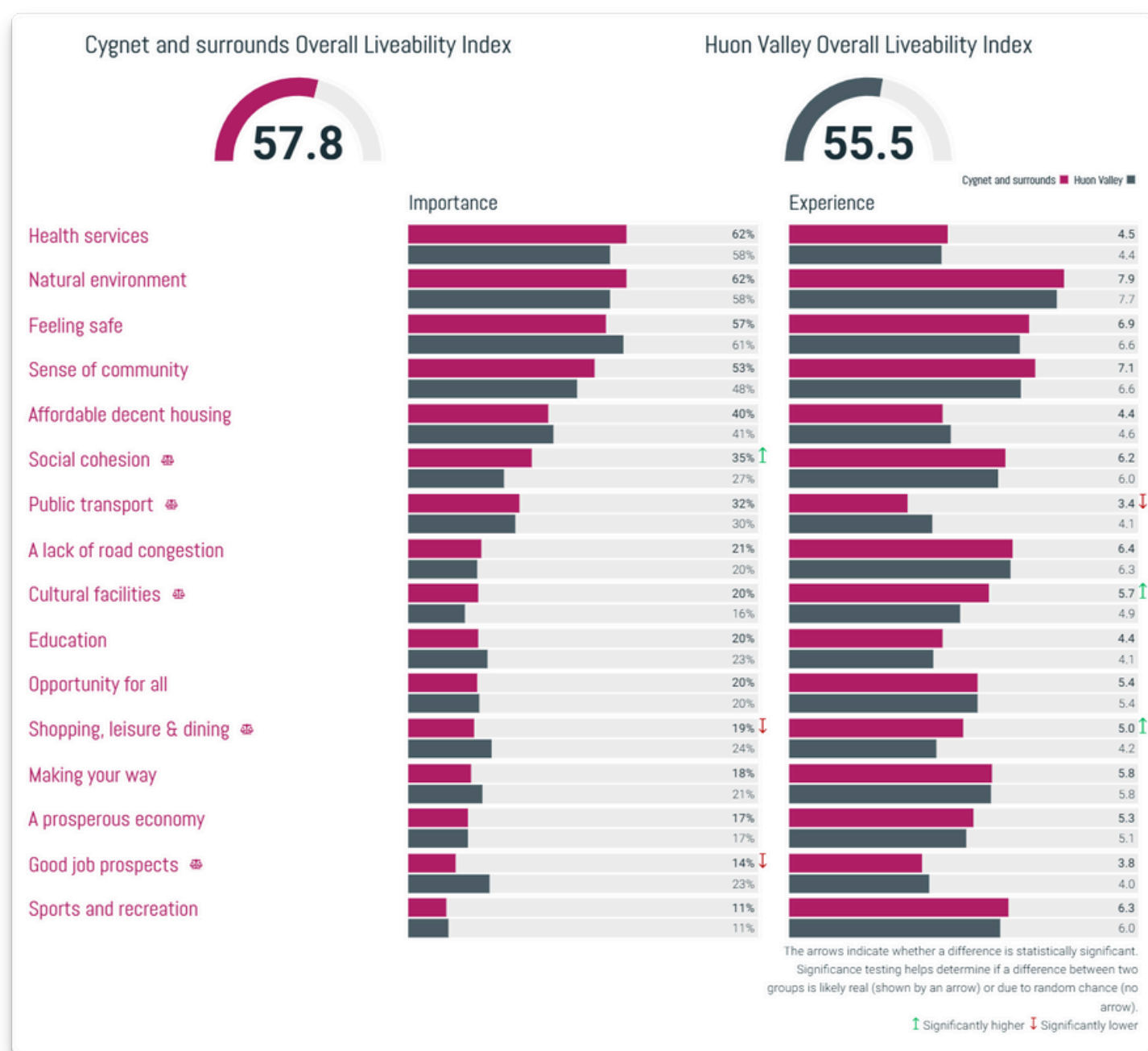
APPENDIX

LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS: CYGNET AND SURROUNDS

Cradoc, Cygnet, Petcheys Bay, Deep Bay, Gardners Bay, Glaziers Bay, Woodstock, Pelterata, Verona Sands, Wattle Grove, Lymington, Garden Island Creek, Upper Woodstock, Nicholls Rivulet, Abels Bay, Eggs and Bacon Bay, Lower Wattle Grove, Charlotte Cove, and Randalls Bay.

The Overall Liveability Index for Cygnet and surrounds was 57.8/100, higher than the Huon Valley Index (55.5).

Sample size: n=348



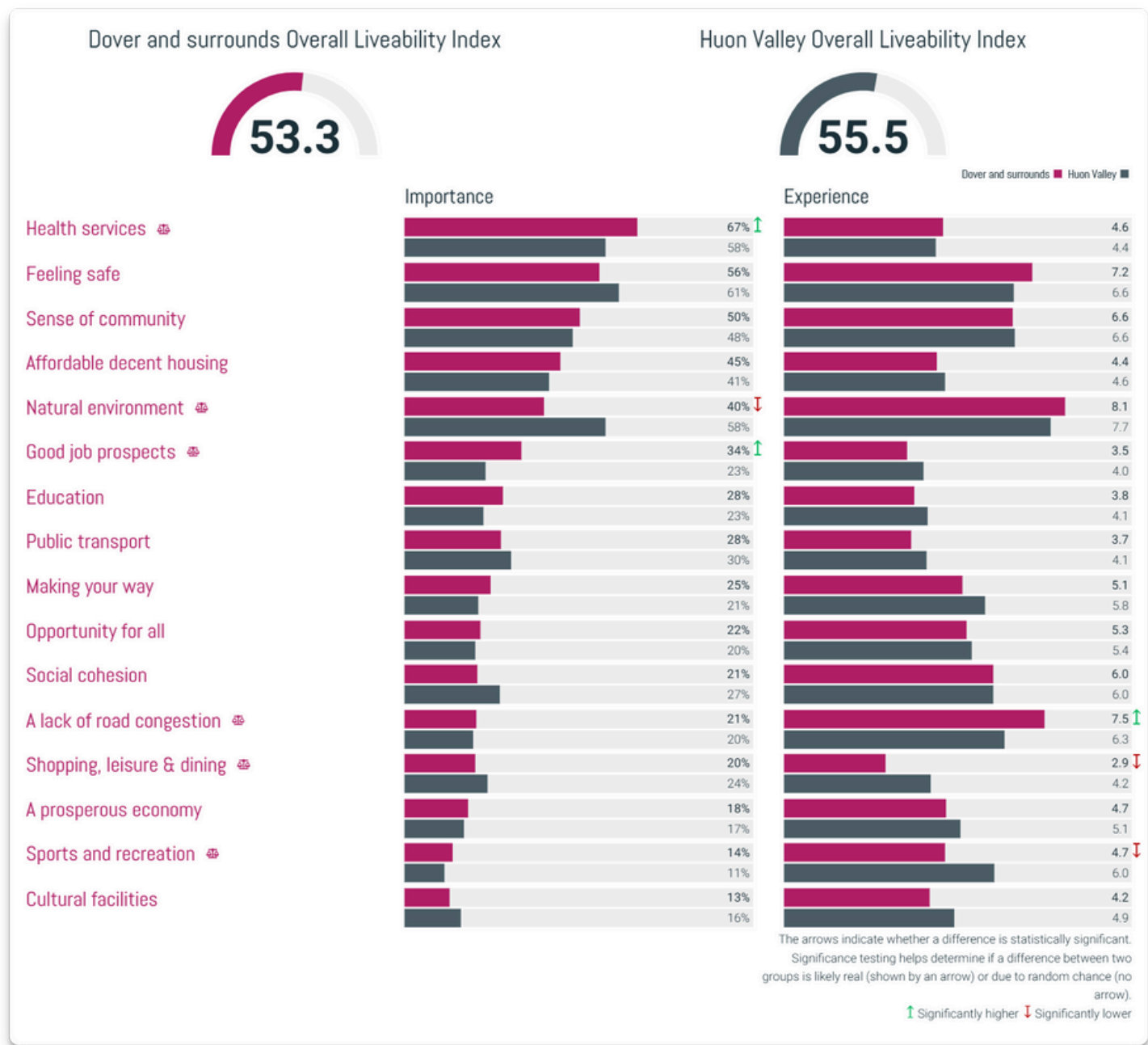
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LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS: DOVER AND SURROUNDS

Dover, Brooks Bay, Raminea, Police Point, Waterloo, Strathblane, Surges Bay, Hastings, Cairns Bay, Recherche, Southport, Surveyors Bay, and Glendevie.

The Overall Liveability Index for Dover and surrounds was 53.3/100, lower than the Huon Valley Index (55.5).

Sample size: n=144



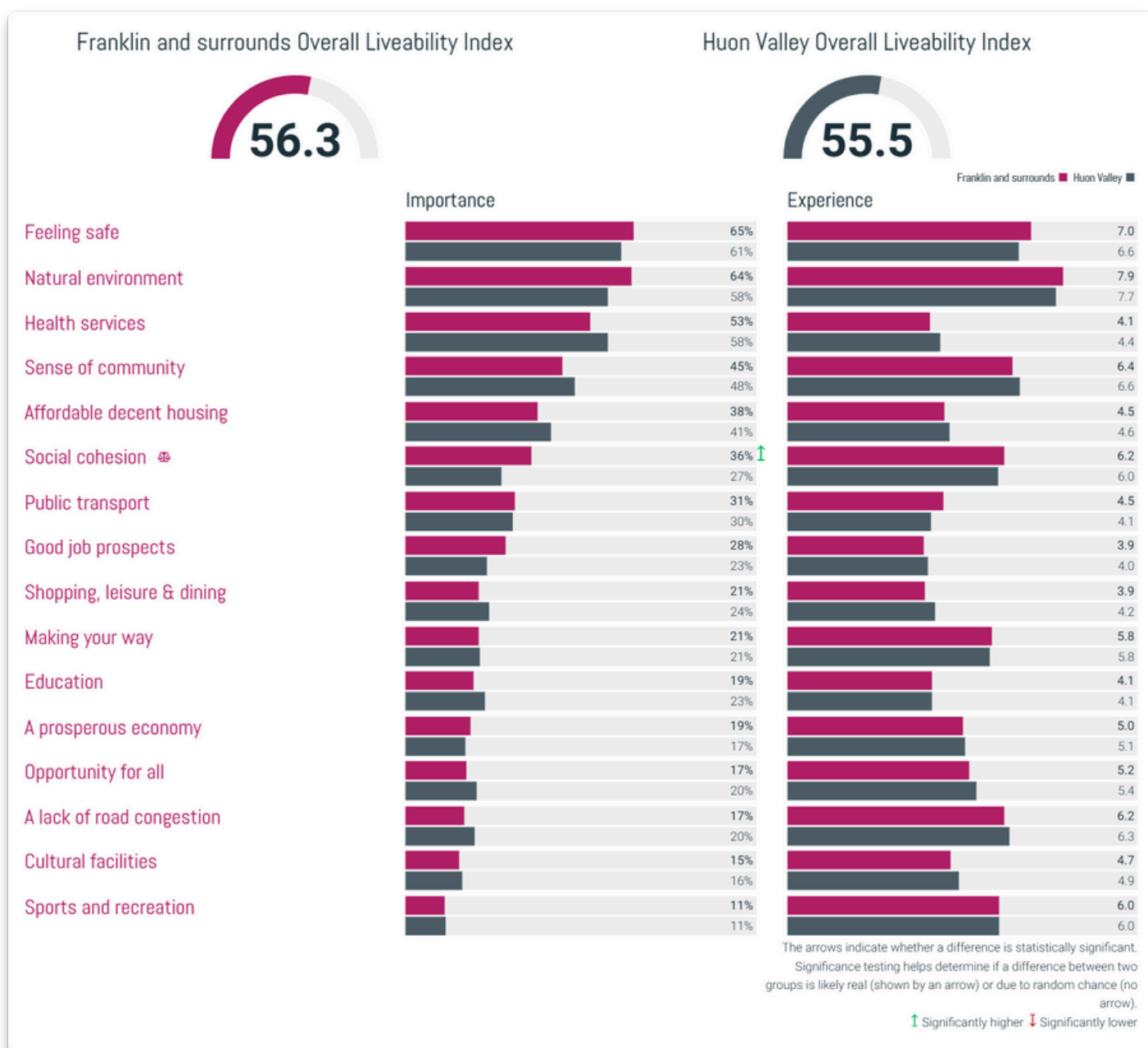
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LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS: FRANKLIN AND SURROUNDS

Franklin, Glen Huon, and Castle Forbes Bay.

The Overall Liveability Index for Franklin and surrounds was 56.3/100, higher than the Huon Valley Index (55.5).

Sample size: n=163



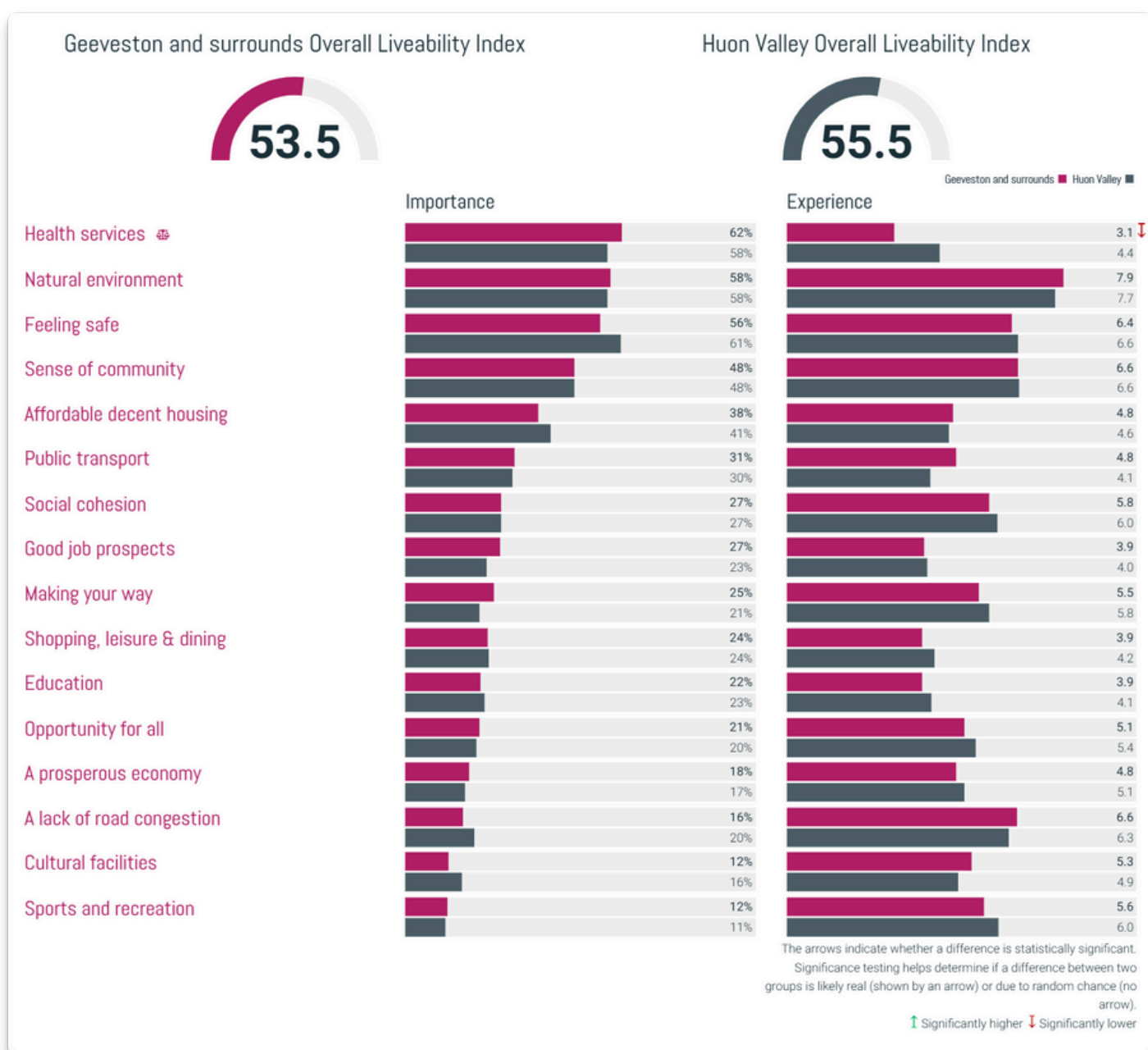
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LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS: GEEVESTON AND SURROUNDS

Port Huon and Geeveston.

The Overall Liveability Index for Geeveston and surrounds was 53.5/100, lower than the Huon Valley Index (55.5).

Sample size: n=159



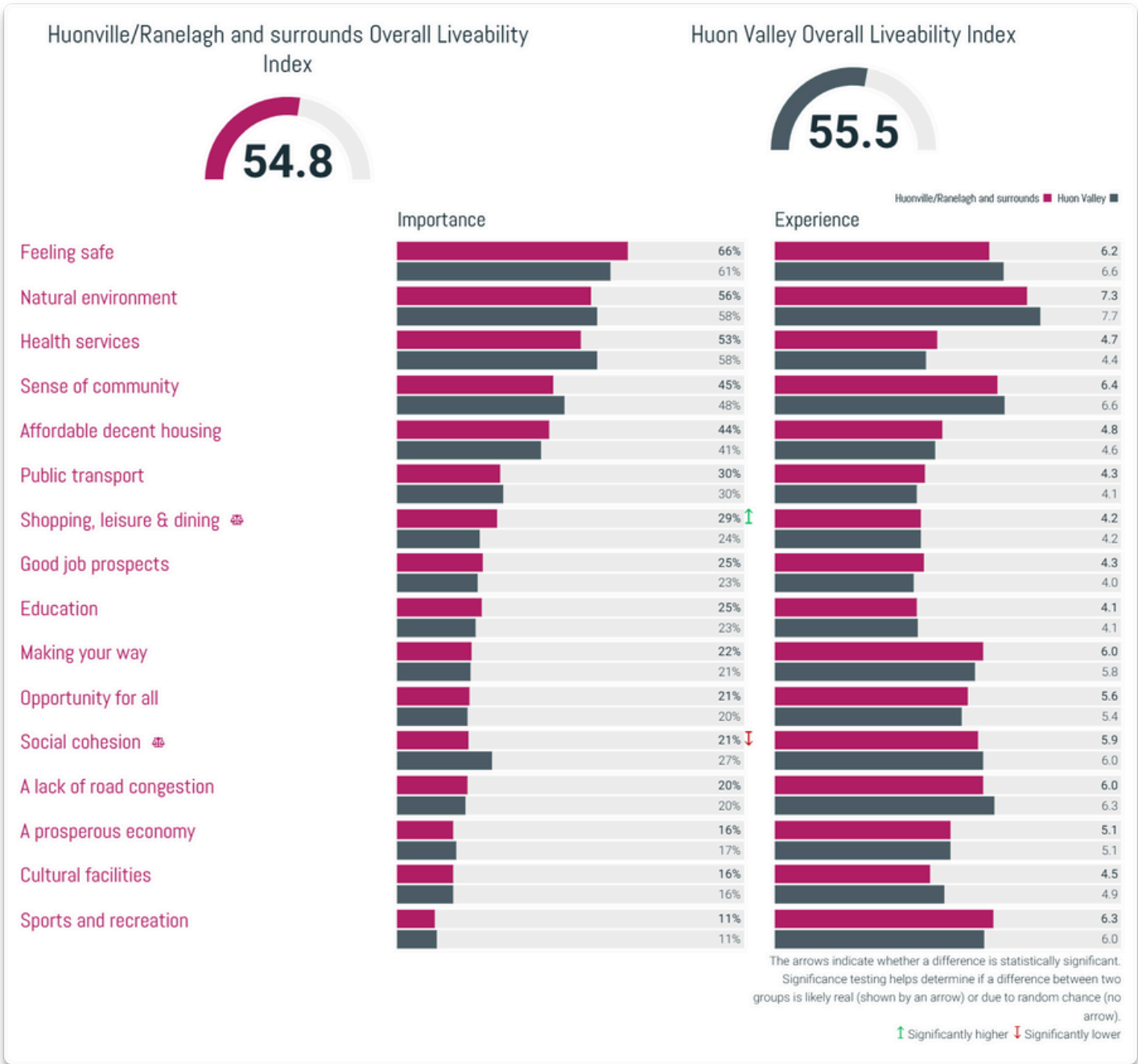
APPENDIX

LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS: HUONVILLE/RANELAGH AND SURROUNDS

Huonville, Lucaston, Grove, Ranelagh, Judbury, Crabtree, Mountain River, Lonnavaile, and Lower Longley.

The Overall Liveability Index for Huonville/Ranelagh and surrounds was 54.8/100, lower than the Huon Valley Index (55.5).

Sample size: n=432





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Please visit views.id.com.au/huon-valley-council
for additional insights, resources and data.



Daniel Evans
dan@id.com.au
0407 502 887



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jacquie@id.com.au



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