



Living in Australia 2025: National Community Views Survey

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Thank you for downloading the Living in Australia 2025 report.

This report draws on the views of 4,907 people who participated in .id's annual national survey. We take a deeper look at the four attributes Australians consistently say matter most: feeling safe, affordable decent housing, access to the natural environment and high quality health services. We'll also explore how these are closely connected and share ideas from the community about how strengthening them together offers the greatest opportunity to advance quality of life.



Introduction

Australia's wellbeing and prosperity are built from the ground up. The strength of our nation depends upon the strength of our towns, suburbs and regions.

By many measures, Australia is one of the world's great success stories – prosperous, stable and with a relatively high quality of life. But sustaining that success as our population grows, ages and changes will require careful planning and new approaches.

.id's independent forecasts project that Australia will reach 30 million residents by 2032. This growth is driven by two powerful forces: rising migration and a declining birth rate. Combined with longer life spans and smaller household sizes, these trends add complexity to how we plan for the future - shaping decisions that must meet the needs of both local communities and the nation as a whole.

The big challenges we face – secure housing, climate resilience, ageing, health, immigration, community cohesion, urbanisation – are national in scale but deeply local in impact.

Housing pressure is rarely just about affordability. The challenges of affordability, appropriateness, diversity of housing choice, access to local amenity, and the need to maintain neighbourhood character and liveability are deeply interconnected. In some places, prices may be within reach but there is a shortage of homes that suit local needs, while in others there may be choice but little affordability. These factors combine to shape the lived experience of housing and the ability of people to find a home that truly supports their quality of life.

Health care shows a similar pattern of interconnected challenges. Demand is often highest in rural and remote areas with older populations, yet health service infrastructure, skilled professionals, and specialist services remain concentrated in major metropolitan areas and larger regional centres. The task is to balance equitable access, quality of care, workforce distribution, and the need to maintain local health services as a cornerstone of community liveability.

These differences matter. Solutions cannot be one-size-fits-all: they must reflect the unique context of each place, considering access to services, transport connections and the ability for people to live close to jobs and other essentials.

These local realities are closely tied to national outcomes. Economic productivity depends not just on policy settings but on how well we connect people, services and opportunities in the places they call home. Understanding these relationships – between housing and services, workforce and place, local realities and national ambitions – is critical to creating liveable, healthy and prosperous communities.

Strengthening local communities is, therefore, the most direct pathway to a stronger and more resilient Australia. Policy and investment decisions must not only address the pressing needs of today but also be designed with long-term prosperity in mind – delivering the right solutions, in the right places, at the right time.

From 'measuring what matters' to 'acting on what matters'

Over recent years, Australia has made important progress in broadening how we think about national success. The Measuring What Matters Statement and the Intergenerational Report both highlighted the need to consider wellbeing, sustainability and long-term resilience alongside traditional economic measures.

But recognition alone is not enough. The next step is to act on what matters to communities - to translate measurement into meaningful decisions, investments and choices that improve lives. Describing progress is valuable, but the imperative for 2025 and beyond is to deliberately shape it, ensuring that what we measure drives real-world outcomes and a better future.



A productive economy must be a liveable community

Local area liveability is where national ambition becomes real. Understanding how residents experience their community - whether it provides safety, housing choice, access to services and a sense of belonging - gives us the insight to target action where it will have the greatest impact.

Liveability is not separate from economic performance - it underpins it. A productive economy depends on people being able to live well: to find affordable, appropriate housing close to jobs, to access health care and education, to feel safe and to participate fully in community life. These conditions enable workforce participation, attract and retain talent and support innovation and resilience through times of change.

Productivity is ultimately about creating the conditions for people and places to flourish. When economic strategy aligns with community priorities, growth becomes stronger, more resilient, more inclusive and more widely shared. This is how we turn economic performance into lasting improvements in quality of life and set course for creating a more prosperous future that is experienced across all corners of Australia.



.id understands Australia from the local area up

Understanding Australia's local areas is the mission for us at .id. We strive to provide leading tools and services to inform decisions that contribute to building better communities, from the local area up.

For more than 25 years we have supported all levels of government, utility providers, emergency services and many private sector organisations to do just that.

We provide independent and accurate place-based information that quantifies demand for services, monitors the impact of policy changes and helps represent residents' best interests in decision making.

We have a range of datasets, services, tools and experts available to help people involved in location-based planning understand how current and future demographics, economics, housing trends and lived experiences impact local communities.

Digital solutions for informed decision making



National datasets to monitor and benchmark local area progress.



Consulting services informed by your needs



In 2021 we launched our Community Views service to help government and others better represent residents' values, experiences and future needs in strategic planning and advocacy decisions.

We have a long history of using demographics, economics and population forecasts to understand places and communities. The addition of our Views service builds on this by capturing the subjective perspectives of residents themselves.

By combining objective, data-driven insights with the lived experiences and priorities of local people, we give our clients a truly integrated understanding of their community and its unique context.

Community Views uses a survey-based approach, with a standard set of questions developed in response to common goals and themes found in government strategic and community planning documents. We also work with each customer to add tailored questions on locally relevant issues, delivering deeper insights to guide decision-making.



About Living in Australia

Living in Australia collects the views of approximately 5,000 people each year. This allows us to understand discrete perspectives across 21 regions, ranging from North Queensland to Greater Sydney and Hobart all the way over to regional Western Australia.

It also provides us with the ability to understand how views compare and contrast based on spatial characteristics, for example inner city residents vs those who live in major regional cities and, of course, understand the role of demography and life-stage.

We are proud that our approach ensures that all regions across Australia can be equitably represented through this survey and that our ability to tell a national story is not limited to just those who subscribe to our Community Views Service. More detail about the methodology can be found in the Appendix.



Understands views across regions, typologies, demography & life-stage



Used as spatial benchmarking for Community Views clients.



Annually updated and expanded to ensure contemporary context.



Insights and data made publicly available without fee.

WHAT MAKES SOMEWHERE A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

Overall Liveability

Overall Liveability in Australia

In 2025, the Overall Liveability Index for Australia was 59.5 out of 100, a significant fall from 63.4 in 2024. This marked decline shows a shift in how Australians view the quality of life in their local areas, reflecting growing pressures across the nation.

The Overall Liveability Index is a resident-centred outcome measure that quantifies quality of life at a point in time. It tracks how Australians rate their local area's liveability and how those ratings change over time. This approach places residents' voices at the heart of the measure, recognising that the best indicator of a community's quality of life comes from those who live there.

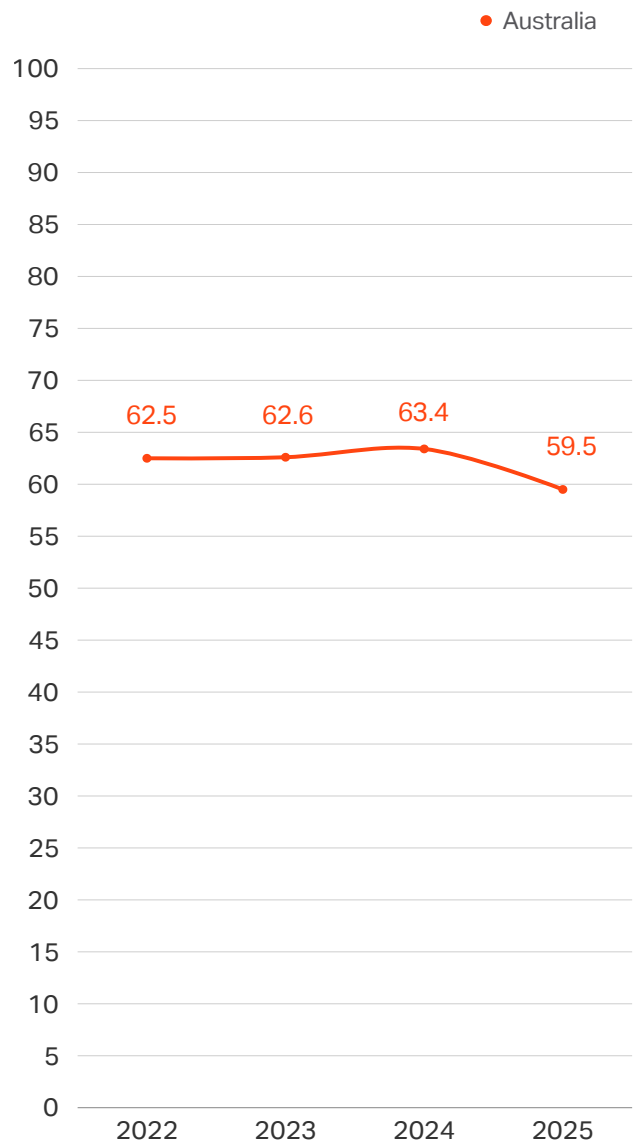
The Index considers both community values, the features residents believe most contribute to making somewhere a good place to live and local area experiences, how those features are actually delivered where people live. Most importantly, it identifies the specific priorities that, if improved, will have the greatest impact on advancing quality of life. This provides a clear direction for government, the private sector and community stakeholders to focus their efforts.



Overall liveability index (0-100)



OVERALL LIVEABILITY INDEX

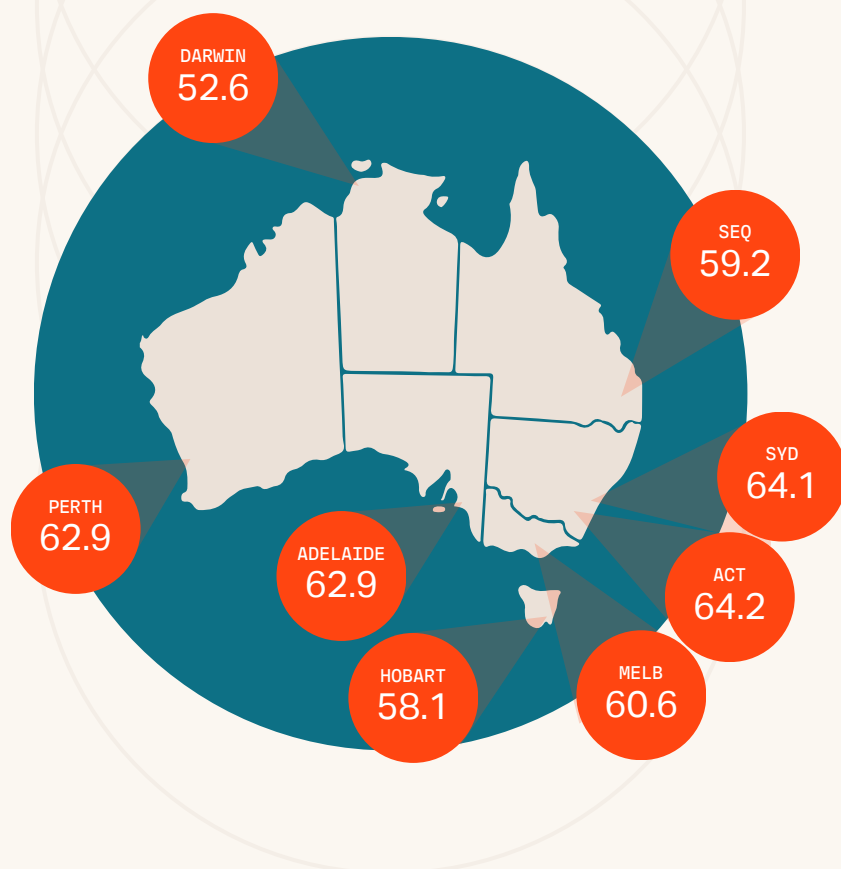


How is liveability experienced across Australia?

In 2025, Metropolitan Australia maintained a higher Index (61.2 in 2025, down from 64.5 in 2024) than Regional and Rural Australia (58.3 in 2025, down from 61.5 in 2024). However, both saw declines compared to the previous year.

Within Metropolitan Australia, the most liveable locations in 2025 were: ACT (64.2), Greater Sydney (64.1), Greater Perth and Greater Adelaide (62.9 each), followed by Greater Melbourne (60.6), South East Queensland (59.2), Greater Hobart (58.1) and Greater Darwin (52.6). All metropolitan areas recorded declines from 2024, with the steepest falls in Greater Darwin (down from 58.5) and Greater Melbourne (down from 65.5).

No regional or rural Australian local area, despite their many unique strengths, achieved a higher liveability score than the metropolitan Australian average. This is consistent with what we have observed in previous years, particularly 2024.



What makes somewhere a good place to live?

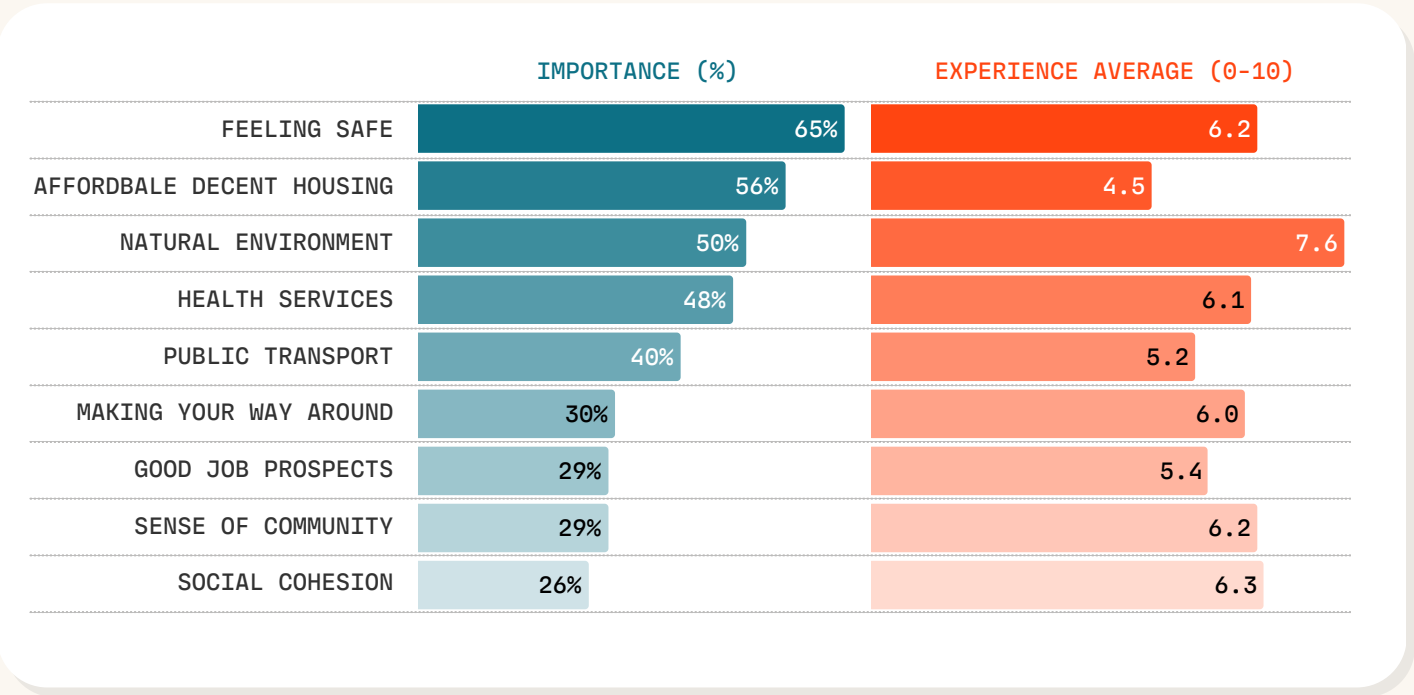
According to the values of Australians in 2025, liveable communities need to be safe, offer affordable and appropriate housing, allow good access to the natural environment, and provide high quality health services.

Based on experiences in neighbourhoods across Australia, essential services like healthcare, transport, and education often fall short of expectations. Employment opportunities, critical for younger populations, also remain under-delivered in many communities.

As found in previous years, one of Australia's greatest liveability barriers is the mismatch between housing importance and delivery and is increasingly recognised as a social and economic barrier to wellbeing.

- In 2025, the eight of sixteen items Australians most frequently selected as contributing to a good place to live were:
- Feeling safe – 65%
 - Affordable decent housing – 56%
 - Access to the natural environment – 50%
 - High quality health services – 48%
 - Reliable and efficient public transport – 40%
 - Making your way to and from services with ease – 30%
 - Good job prospects – 29%
 - A strong sense of community – 29%
 - Social cohesion – 26%

- Australians' reported local area experiences (out of 10) for these items in 2025 were:
- Feeling safe – 6.2
 - Affordable decent housing – 4.5
 - Access to the natural environment – 7.6
 - High quality health services – 6.1
 - Reliable and efficient public transport – 5.2
 - Making your way to and from services with ease – 6.0
 - Good job prospects – 5.4
 - A strong sense of community – 6.2
 - Social cohesion – 6.3



Critical focus areas to improve local area liveability

When we examine what drives overall liveability, four core values consistently stand out:

1 SAFETY

2 HOUSING

3 ENVIRONMENT

4 HEALTH SERVICES

These Core Four attributes are rated as highly important by Australians, regardless of where they live. Yet there is significant variation in how they are experienced. Some communities enjoy strong foundations for quality of life, while others report poor lived experiences and large gaps between importance and delivery.

The Core Four are deeply interconnected, both in their causes and their outcomes. Policy responses that improve quality of life rarely sit within a single domain. We learn through our analysis that perceptions of community safety are linked to feelings of social wellbeing and confidence in the local economy. Access to affordable decent housing provides the stability essential for safe-guarding mental health and advancing social participation, individual and collective prosperity, as well as a shared sense of place, connection and community cohesion. The ability to access nature is strongly associated with physical health, mental health and social wellbeing.

Recognising these interdependencies is critical. The levers decision makers choose to pull in relation to the Core Four can generate powerful flow-on benefits across the others, amplifying progress and helping to address broader issues facing communities. Approached in an integrated way, they unlock the opportunity to compound improvements in local area liveability.

Liveability is also shaped by demographic and life stage characteristics, population growth and change and both local and national economic conditions. Understanding these dynamics alongside spatial patterns is essential to designing solutions that are equitable, sustainable and responsive to local needs.

Ultimately, the solutions to advance the collective are found in the local - in understanding the unique combination of assets, challenges, priorities and opportunities facing each community.

The remainder of this report focuses on the Core Four: how they are valued, how they are experienced and the key factors shaping these experiences across Australia. By identifying what is working well and where improvement is most needed, we can target the most effective opportunities to strengthen liveability and ensure all Australians can enjoy thriving, well-served and safe communities.



IMPORTANCE

65%
+2%

EXPERIENCES

6.2
-0.6

THE FUNDAMENTAL

Feeling Safe



Feeling safe is the most crucial aspect of a good life, with 65% of Australians in 2025 identifying it as their top factor for what makes a good place to live.

Feeling Safe: The Fundamental

Feeling safe is one of the most consistently important aspects of life, regardless of age, background or location. Whether in a dense urban centre or a remote rural community, it is a universal foundation attribute - a basic condition that enables people to live well, connect with others and contribute to their community.

In our Living in Australia survey, feeling safe has always been the most important attribute Australians consider when thinking about what makes somewhere a good place to live. In 2025, 65% of respondents nominated it as their top factor, a level of agreement rarely seen across other measures of liveability.

While its importance remains constant, local experiences of safety vary significantly and in the past year have shifted notably. In 2025, Australians rated their local area 6.2 out of 10 for safety, a significant decline from 6.8 out of 10 in 2024. This places it first in importance but only fifth in positive experience.

Metropolitan Australians and those in regional and rural areas shared the same average score (6.2), but variation between locations was clear. Residents of Sydney and Adelaide felt most safe (7.0), followed by Hobart (6.9), ACT (6.6), Perth (6.5) and South East Queensland (6.2). Melbourne rated 5.9 out of 10 in 2025 - a steep decline from 6.9 in 2024.

In regional and rural Australia, the lowest safety ratings came from the Regional Northern Territory (2.8) and North Queensland (4.4).

FEELING SAFE

Experience ratings



METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA

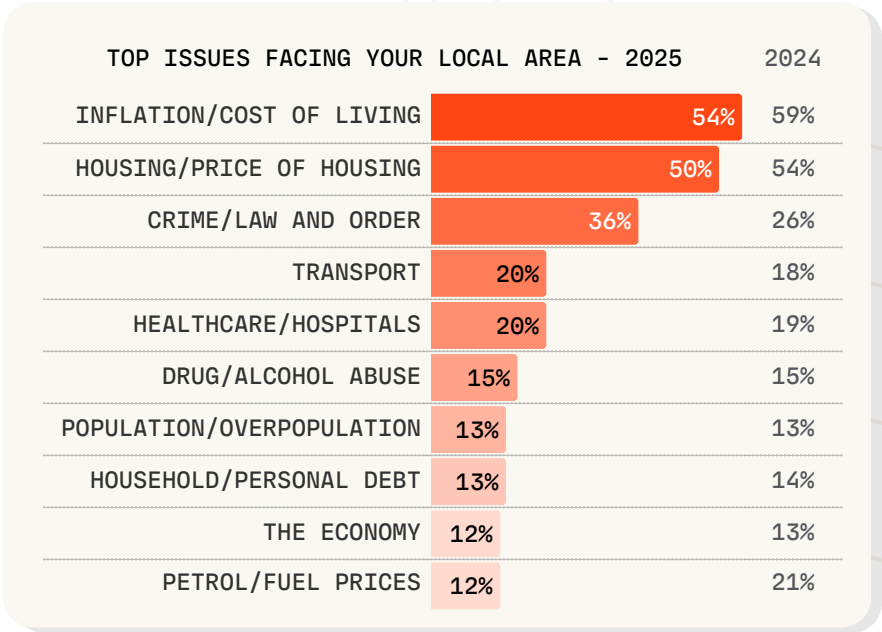
Greater Sydney	7.0
Greater Adelaide	7.0
Greater Hobart	6.9
The ACT	6.6
Greater Perth	6.5
South East QLD	6.2
Greater Melbourne	5.9
Greater Darwin	3.3

REGIONAL & RURAL AUSTRALIA

Southern NSW	7.4
Regional SA	7.0
Western VIC	6.9
Regional TAS	6.8
Regional WA	6.7
Central NSW	6.5
Eastern VIC	6.3
Central QLD	6.2
Central VIC	6.2
Northern NSW	5.9
North QLD	4.4
Regional NT	2.8

What’s Driving the Decreased Perception of Safety?

One of the clearest signals in 2025 has been the rise in concern about crime, antisocial behaviour, law and order. This year, 36% of Australians nominated these issues as one of the top three challenges facing their local area, making it the third most pressing concern after cost of living and housing affordability and up from 26% in 2024. Melbourne stands out as a concentrated example: it recorded the largest decline in metropolitan liveability, the sharpest fall in perceptions of safety and the highest increase in concern about crime, law and order, with 40% of residents selecting it as a top local issue (up from just 24% in 2024).



“There are worsening issues of homelessness and crime in surrounding areas. I believe that more help should be given to those who have been affected by the current economic climate. Temporary safe housing until they are able to find alternative accommodation.”

FEMALE | 35-59 YEARS | PERTH

When Australians were asked in an open-ended way what could be done to advance quality of life in their area, reducing crime to help people feel safer was the most frequently mentioned theme. The responses show a depth of thought given to possible solutions. Many people called for stronger law and order measures, including greater police presence, harsher penalties for repeat offenders and a judicial system that better reflects the community impact of crime. Concerns often centred on crimes against the person where victims are targeted at random or crimes on personal property - such as break-ins to homes or cars - where people feel they should be safest. Even when crime incidence rates are low, perceptions worsen when such crimes are seen to be rising, when victims are relatable or when they occur in familiar streets.

At the same time, many respondents recognised that law and order responses alone are not enough. There was strong public awareness of the underlying social drivers of crime (especially youth crime) and sympathy for the circumstances that lead people to offend. Many supported complementary approaches through public health, inclusion, mental health services and community programs that address root causes alongside enforcement. Another factor placing downward pressure on perceptions of safety is the rise in visible homelessness and the presence of people who appear to be drug-affected or experiencing mental health challenges in public spaces. Many community members perceive this visibility to have increased rapidly, particularly as a consequence of the housing crisis. While there is a high level of sympathy for those affected, the perception that this is on the rise can still affect how safe people feel.



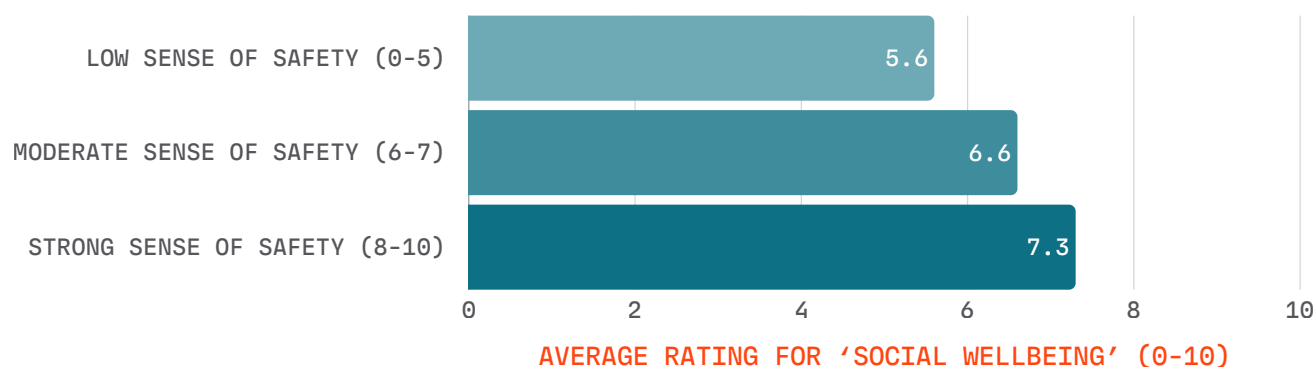
The Link Between Feeling Safe, Community Health and Economic Prosperity

Looking beyond the impact of safety on overall liveability, perceptions of safety also have clear downstream consequences for how people feel about their own social wellbeing and how they view the economic prospects of their local area. When people don't feel safe where they live, the impacts extend beyond day-to-day behaviour changes, they can influence personal resilience, connectedness and shape broader economic outlooks.

Australians who feel less safe in their local area tend to report poorer social wellbeing. Among those who rated their local area between 0 and 5 out of 10 for feeling safe, average self-reported social wellbeing was 5.6 out of 10 – well below the 6.6 reported by those who felt moderately safe (6–7 out of 10) and the 7.3 reported by those who felt very safe (8–10 out of 10).

A similar relationship emerges when looking at local economic confidence. More than half (56%) of Australians who feel unsafe expect their local area's economic situation to get worse in the coming year. This pessimism is less present than among those who feel moderately safe (39%) or very safe (31%).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A SENSE OF SAFETY AND SOCIAL WELLBEING



Feeling safe is a universal priority for Australians, consistently ranking as the most important attribute of a good place to live.

In 2025, perceptions of local safety declined sharply, with particularly steep drops in Melbourne and very low ratings in parts of regional Australia. Rising concern about crime and antisocial behaviour has been central to this shift.

People place immense value on safety because it underpins everyday life and perceptions are especially shaken when crimes appear random, when victims are relatable or when incidents are seen to be increasing, even if the overall probability of being affected remains low. These perceptions fuel both the rise in concern about crime and the decline in how safe people feel.

In response, Australians call for stronger enforcement and visible deterrence, but many also recognise that law and order alone cannot address the issue. There is strong awareness of the need to reduce underlying social drivers of crime, through health, youth, housing and community programs that work alongside enforcement.

QUOTES FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS:

- "Do something about the youth crime, I have crippling anxiety just waiting for someone to break into my car or even worse my home"

(18-34 YO | FEMALE | REGIONAL TASMANIA)

- "Governments taking more action on crime. People are being murdered on the street, shops burnt to the ground and homes broken into. We need more action from authorities"

(18-34 YO | MALE | GREATER MELBOURNE)

- "Safety, reduce crime levels so that people feel safe again. Look after the presentation of all suburbs"

(35-59 YO | FEMALE | NORTH QUEENSLAND)

- "Find a solution to homelessness in the CBD and clean the streets of litter"

(18-34 YO | MALE | GREATER DARWIN)

- "There are worsening issues of homelessness and crime in surrounding areas. I believe that more help should be given to those who have been affected by the current economic climate."

(35-59 YO | FEMALE | GREATER PERTH)

CASE STUDY

How the City of Canning Is Promoting Community Safety

In the City of Canning in Perth's south, feeling safe was a top priority in 2023 - 76% of residents identified safety as a critical liveability factor, a significantly higher proportion than the average Australian did at the time. However, despite its paramount importance, the lived experience showed room for improvement: residents rated their local sense of safety at 6.2 out of 10, making it one of the lower-scoring attributes, ranking 11th out of 16 measured aspects.

In response, the City of Canning's 2025–2026 Better Budget strategically channelled substantial resources into public safety. It funded the Community Safety Service, which offers 24/7 street patrols, expanding the CCTV network and maintaining the popular Security Incentive Scheme.

By aligning budget allocations with community-voiced concerns, the City is taking tangible steps to bridge the gap between safety expectations and lived experience - actively working to make Canning a safer, more liveable place to call home.



SAFETY IN CANNING 2023

IMPORTANCE
76%
1st

EXPERIENCES
6.2
11th



Find out more about Canning resident views

IMPORTANCE

56%

+4%

EXPERIENCES

4.5

-0.2

WHAT'S HAPPENING AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Affordable Decent Housing



Housing is a fundamental human need that has increasingly shifted from shelter to a contentious asset class. The challenge is to expand diverse, affordable supply while preserving each community's unique character and identity.



Affordable Decent Housing: A National Pressure Point

Access to safe, secure and affordable decent housing is one of the most fundamental requirements for human wellbeing.

Shelter meets our most basic needs, providing the stability from which we can build social connections, pursue work or education and participate fully in community life. Over the last generation, the Australian experience has seen the concept of housing shift away from this primary purpose and become an increasingly contentious asset class - a store of wealth, a source of speculation and, for many, a marker of widening inequality.

Recognising that a "build baby build" approach is not the solution is critical. In infill and middle suburban areas, rapidly increasing supply without sensitivity to context can quickly erode the characteristics that make a place distinctive, attractive and liveable.

Equally, relying on delivering more housing in the outer suburban areas is not a sustainable long-term answer, given the distance from jobs, services and essential infrastructure. Nor should our major and middle-sized regional areas be reshaped by blunt, high-volume, low-density development models that mimic the outer suburban patterns of our largest metropolitan cities.

The challenge lies in increasing housing diversity to improve supply while preserving the amenity, character and identity that make communities unique and enhance liveability.

AFFORDABLE DECENT HOUSING

Experience ratings



METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA	
Greater Melbourne	4.8
Greater Hobart	4.7
Greater Adelaide	4.6
Greater Perth	4.6
The ACT	4.5
Greater Darwin	4.4
Greater Sydney	4.2
South East QLD	4.2

REGIONAL & RURAL AUSTRALIA	
Central NSW	5.2
Regional TAS	5.2
Central VIC	5.0
Eastern VIC	4.8
Western VIC	4.7
Central QLD	4.7
Regional SA	4.7
Regional WA	4.6
Regional NT	4.5
North QLD	4.3
Northern NSW	3.9
Southern NSW	3.7

In our Living in Australia survey, affordable decent housing is always among the most important attributes Australians consider when thinking about what makes somewhere a good place to live.

In 2025, 56% of Australians nominated it as one of their top five contributors to local liveability, second only to feeling safe. Despite this high importance, Australians rated their local area just 4.5 out of 10 for affordable decent housing in 2025, ranking it 16th in positive experience.

The disconnect between the value Australians place on affordable decent housing and their lived experiences represents the single biggest inhibitor to advancing quality of life. By extension, addressing this problem represents the single greatest opportunity to improve quality of life across the country.

The issue is becoming more acute. The importance Australians place on affordable decent housing has risen steadily - from 46% in 2023, to 52% in 2024, to 56% in 2025. At the same time, local area experiences have declined year-on-year, from 4.9 in 2023, to 4.7 in 2024 and now 4.5 in 2025. This inverse relationship - where lived experience deteriorates and importance rises - creates a compounding effect that increasingly weighs on overall perceptions of local liveability.



Where and Among Whom is the Housing Crisis Most Experienced?

Perceptions of the importance of affordable decent housing and local area housing experiences are largely consistent across the country, making it a truly national concern. While some locations experience the issue more acutely than others, the housing crisis is not confined to a handful of cities or regions, it affects metropolitan, regional and rural communities alike.

Life stage and housing tenure (whether people rent or own their home) play a more significant role in shaping the housing crisis than geography alone.

Tenure determines both how strongly people value affordable decent housing and how positively they rate their local area experience of it. Renters (who make up 30% of households across Australia) are the most likely to nominate affordable decent housing as a contributor towards making somewhere a good place to live, with 71% placing it in their top five. They also report the poorest local experiences, at 4.1 out of 10.

Mortgage holders (33% of households place a lower value on affordable decent housing (51%) and rate their local experience slightly higher, at 4.6. People who fully own their home (30% of households) place the least value on the attribute (45%) and report the highest experience rating (4.9). This pattern reflects the security and stability that comes with owning a home outright, as well as the financial pressures faced by those still paying for housing or renting in a competitive market.



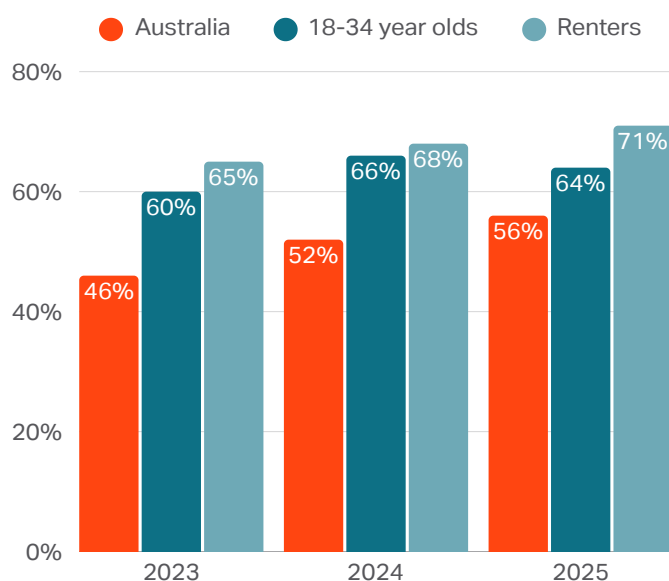


Age also shapes how people experience the housing crisis. Younger Australians, those aged 18–34, are the most likely to nominate affordable decent housing as important (64%), followed by 35–59-year-olds (54%), and those aged 60+ (49%). While housing matters to all age groups, it is clearly more acutely important for younger people, who are less likely to own their home outright and more likely to be exposed to housing cost pressures.

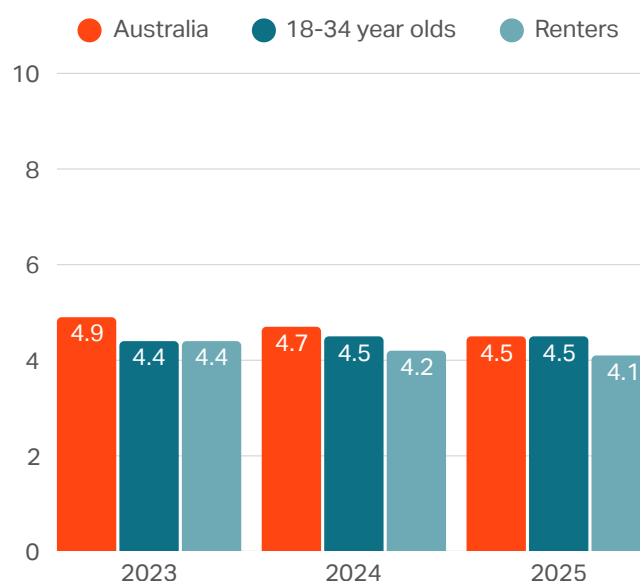
There is a strong overlap between age and renting. Younger Australians are significantly more likely to rent, which means the life stage and tenure effects are closely intertwined. The combination of high importance, poor local experience and insecure housing tenure makes the crisis most acute for younger renters, a group facing the greatest barriers to housing security and the most significant flow-on impacts to overall liveability.

Affordable Decent Housing

IMPORTANCE



EXPERIENCE

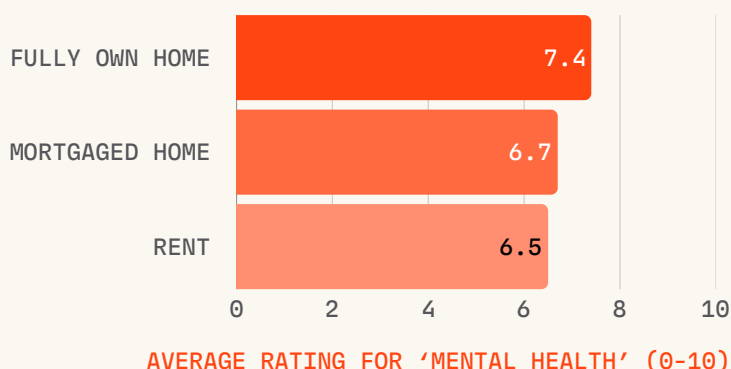


The Consequences of a Housing Crisis

The visible consequences of a lack of affordable decent housing go well beyond the value people place on it or how they experience it locally. Housing security affects core aspects of life - our health, our sense of wellbeing, how confident we feel about our personal financial circumstances and even our ability to meet our most basic commitments. It also shapes our capacity to plan for the future.

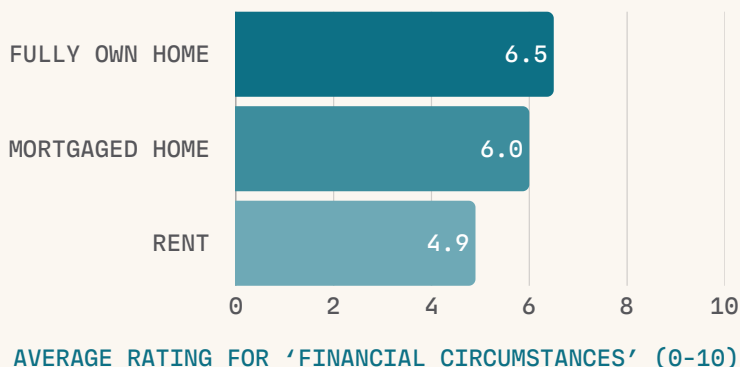
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME OWNERSHIP & MENTAL HEALTH

The 2025 Living in Australia survey shows a clear relationship between housing tenure and these broader outcomes. In terms of mental health, people who fully own their home reported the highest average rating at 7.4 out of 10. This drops to 6.7 among mortgage holders and 6.5 among renters, reflecting the additional stress and uncertainty faced by those still paying for housing or competing in a tight rental market.



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME OWNERSHIP & FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

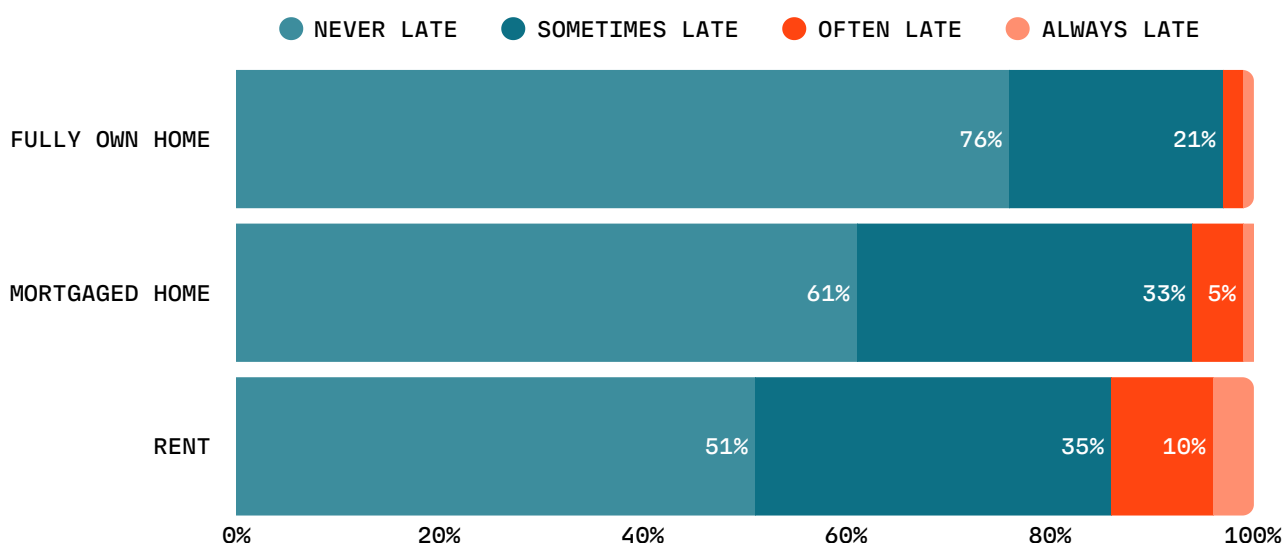
A similar pattern emerges when Australians are asked to rate their personal financial circumstances: 6.5 for full owners, 6.0 for mortgage holders, and just 4.9 for renters. It makes sense that people who fully own their home are generally more financially secure – they tend to be further along in life, they are not carrying the cost pressures associated with mortgage repayments or rent and they own an asset that contributes directly to their personal wealth. They are, in many cases, observers of the pressures faced by those with less secure housing arrangements.



However, these averages mask a pressing concern: the financial vulnerability of renters and, to a lesser extent, mortgage holders. When the average renter rates their personal financial circumstances below 5 out of 10, it signals a cohort under acute strain. This is further reflected in their ability to meet financial commitments: only 51% of renters say they are never late paying bills, compared with 61% of mortgage holders and 76% of full owners. One in two renters is regularly struggling to pay on time, compounding the stress of insecure housing and rising living costs.



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOME OWNERSHIP AND ABILITY TO MEET FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS





It is not realistic to expect identical financial circumstances across all tenure types, differences are inevitable. But what matters for liveability is keeping a close watch on those most vulnerable in the community. For renters and mortgage holders, housing insecurity, cost pressures and financial stress create an environment where reduced wellbeing and constrained participation in community and economic life become much more likely.

Affordable, decent housing has become one of the defining challenges for Australia's future. Its importance is rising year on year, yet lived experience is steadily declining, widening a gap that is eroding wellbeing and local liveability. This is most acute for younger Australians, renters and mortgage holders, whose financial vulnerability and housing insecurity compound stress and limit their ability to participate fully in community and economic life. Tackling this crisis requires more than simply building more homes – it demands a coordinated focus on housing diversity, affordability and security, delivered in ways that preserve local character and support access to jobs, services and infrastructure. Doing so represents not just the greatest opportunity to improve liveability, but a critical step towards a fairer, healthier and more resilient Australia.

QUOTES FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS:

- "The 3 tiers of Government - local, state and federal - need to cut the red tape for the building sector and get on with building affordable, clean and safe housing, Now"

(35-59 YO | MALE | CENTRAL QLD)

- "Availability of public housing and affordable housing for workers"

(35-59 YO | FEMALE | SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND)

- "Investment into social housing, homelessness services, helping people access affordable housing and improved affordable mental health services"

(35-59 YO | FEMALE | GREATER PERTH)

- "Housing for homeless especially women, lowering costs of housing and food, general cost of majority of items is too expensive for the majority of pensioners, people on lower incomes and poorer families"

(60+ YO | FEMALE | CENTRAL VIC)

- "Stop the over-development in my suburb of Ryde. All the houses are replaced with duplexes leading to more cars per house, roads are congested, traffic is a nightmare."

(60+ | FEMALE | GREATER SYDNEY)

Ipswich and the Provision of Affordable Decent Housing

In the City of Ipswich, affordable, decent housing emerged as a key liveability asset in 2024. As many as 48% of residents considered it an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live - consistent with broader national and regional trends. Importantly, their actual experience of housing affordability exceeded benchmarks, with residents rating their local area 5.3 out of 10 - significantly better than South East Queensland (4.2) and the national average (4.5).

In the Community Views framework, this places affordable housing squarely among "areas to maintain", indicating it is both valued and relatively well delivered.

Ipswich City Council has elevated housing affordability in its strategic agenda. In December 2024, the council adopted a new Local Housing Action Plan, aimed at boosting housing diversity, availability, choice and affordability in light of a doubling population trajectory by 2046. This underscores the local commitment to ensuring that every resident can find a safe, affordable home.

As market pressures intensify and housing demand grows, the city recognises the need to strategically plan for future supply. This reflects a commitment not only to preserve affordability, but to ensure that the next generation of residents can continue to access secure, diverse and appropriate housing options.

CASE STUDY

AFFORDABLE DECENT HOUSING IN IPSWICH 2024

IMPORTANCE
48%
3rd

EXPERIENCES
5.3
11th



Find out more about Ipswich resident views

IMPORTANCE

50%

-3%

EXPERIENCES

7.6

-0.3

PROTECTING A VALUED STRENGTH

Access to the Natural Environment



Access to nature universally contributes to a better quality of life by supporting physical health, improving mental well-being, lowering stress, and strengthening community ties.

Nature: A Part of Our Identity

Australia's identity is closely tied to its natural landscapes. From beaches and bushlands to national parks and rural open space. These landscapes are more than scenic backdrops:

- Indigenous Australians have a spiritual and custodial relationship with land ("Country") that deeply informs connection, culture, and health.
- European settlers romanticised the bush and coast, embedding nature as part of the national psyche.
- The idea of the "Aussie lifestyle" is intrinsically tied to outdoor living, recreation and leisure—from beach culture to backyard barbeques.

Access to nature is a universal contributor to quality of life. Across cities, towns and regional communities, the ability to connect with the natural environment underpins health, wellbeing and social connection. Research consistently shows that time spent in nature supports physical health, lowers stress, improves mental wellbeing and helps build a sense of belonging. Nature also provides important spaces for informal social interaction and recreation, strengthening community ties.

In our 2025 Living in Australia survey, 50% of Australians nominated access to the natural environment as one of the top items that contributes to making somewhere a good place to live, making it the third most important liveability attribute behind only feeling safe (65%) and affordable decent housing (56%). Unlike housing, where Australians report poor experiences despite its high importance, residents generally rate their local area highly for access to nature, with a national average experience score of 7.6 out of 10. This strong alignment between value and lived experience means that access to nature makes a significant positive contribution to overall liveability.

ACCESS TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Experience ratings



METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA

Greater Hobart	8.2
Greater Adelaide	7.8
The ACT	7.8
Greater Perth	7.8
South East QLD	7.6
Greater Darwin	7.5
Greater Sydney	7.4
Greater Melbourne	7.1

REGIONAL & RURAL AUSTRALIA

Southern NSW	8.7
Regional WA	8.4
Eastern VIC	8.4
Northern NSW	8.1
Western VIC	8.1
Regional TAS	8.1
Central NSW	7.9
Regional SA	7.9
Central VIC	7.8
North QLD	7.7
Central QLD	7.4
Regional NT	7.0

A Consistently Valued and Well-Experienced Attribute

Australians have consistently placed high value on access to nature over the past three years. Importance has held steady at 50% in 2025, 53% in 2024 and 52% in 2023. Experiences have also remained strong, 7.6 in 2025, 7.9 in 2024, and 7.7 in 2023 - making it one of the few liveability attributes where satisfaction remains high even as its importance endures.

This value is shared across the country, but there are notable regional differences in lived experience. Regional Australians report better access to nature overall, with 51% rating it as important and giving an average experience score of 8.1 out of 10. Metropolitan Australians place a similar level of importance on it (50%) but record a lower average experience rating of 7.4 out of 10.

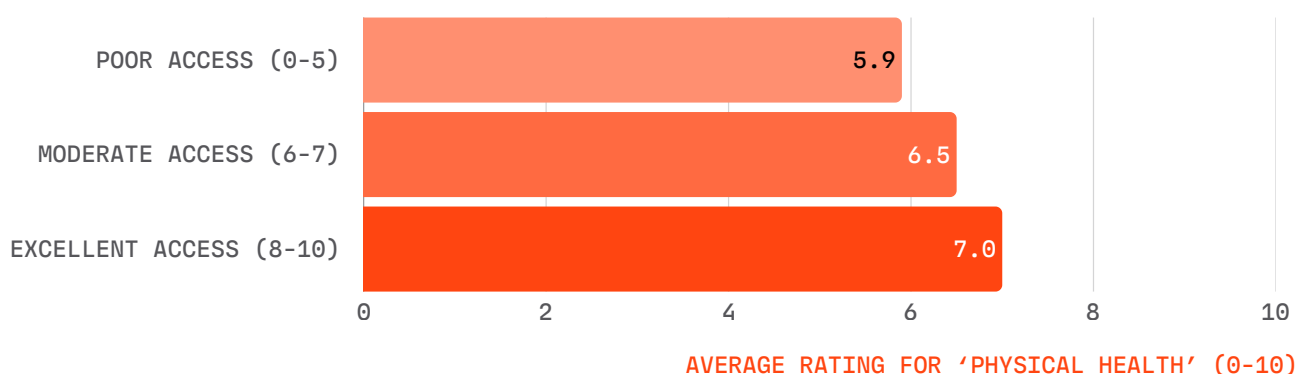
Some areas demonstrate exceptional performance in both importance and experience, highlighting access to nature as a defining local strength. In Southern New South Wales, 63% of residents consider it important and rate their local area 8.7 out of 10. Regional Tasmania records 61% importance and an 8.1 experience rating, Eastern Victoria 65% importance and 8.4 experience, and Regional Western Australia 59% importance and 8.2 experience. In these areas, natural beauty, coastal landscapes and forested environments contribute significantly to amenity and lifestyle, forming a key part of the local identity.



Contribution to Health, Wellbeing, and Social Connection

The benefits of access to nature go far beyond aesthetics. People who report poor access to nature (rating their local area between 0 and 5 out of 10) have poorer self-reported physical health, averaging 5.9 out of 10. Those with moderate access (6–7 out of 10) report moderate physical health at 6.5 out of 10, while those with strong access (8–10 out of 10) report the highest physical health at 7.0 out of 10.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACCESS TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL HEALTH



"We desperately need native trees and greenery to provide shade, improve aesthetics, and food/shelter for wildlife. The afternoons are so hot and uncomfortable."

FEMALE | 35-59 YEARS | PERTH

This pattern reinforces the important role that nature plays in supporting healthy, active lifestyles. Whether through regular walking, sport, recreation or simply time spent outdoors, the connection between access to nature and improved health outcomes is clear. In this way, protecting and improving access to nature is not just an environmental or amenity issue - it is a public health priority.

Natural environments are not just recreational - they're also vital for urban resilience. Trees and green infrastructure reduce urban heat, improve air quality and buffer flooding risks. For Australian communities, this is becoming an increasingly urgent issue due to rising temperatures and urban heat islands, flooding and coastal erosion, bushfires, water scarcity and biodiversity loss. Green infrastructure and access to natural environments are critical tools for managing these risks and this explains why so many Australians value natural spaces as part of local liveability.



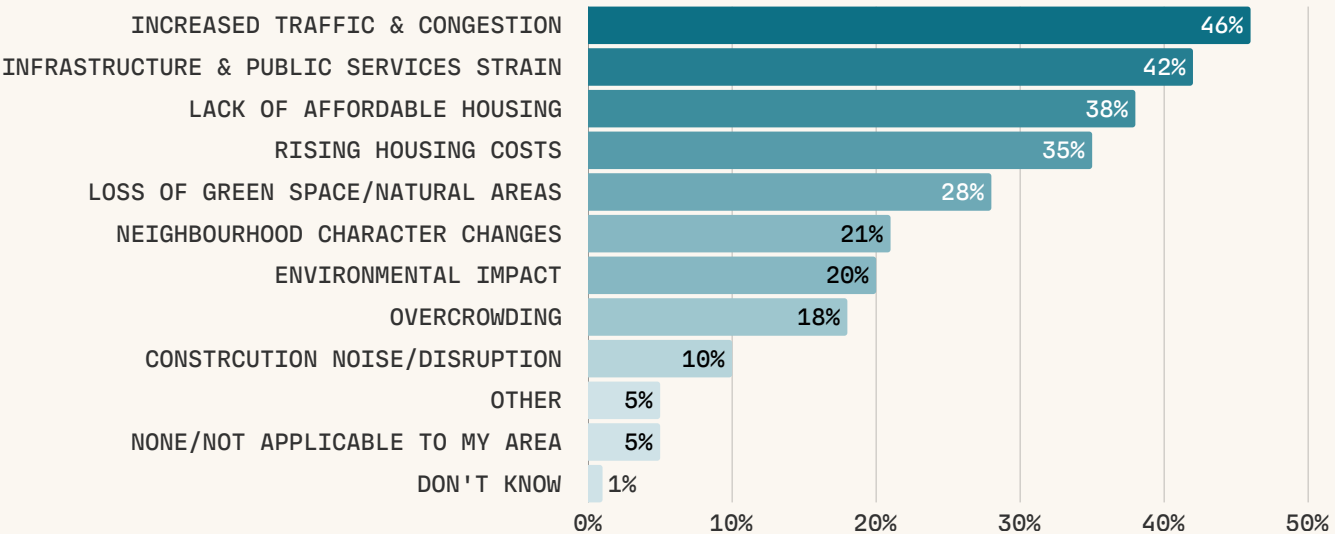
Sensitivity to Change and the Need for Careful Planning

Because Australians place such high value on access to nature and report positive local experiences, communities will be particularly sensitive to any changes that could disrupt it. As many as 28% of Australians are concerned about the potential loss of green space or natural areas associated with residential development and 20% are concerned about the general environmental impact.

Sensitivity to environmental impact is especially strong in regional areas, where the relationship with the natural environment is often deeply ingrained in local culture and identity. Large-scale energy transition developments, changes to land use or other shifts that reduce people's ability to engage with nature risk undermining one of the most valued contributors to liveability.

It is important not to underestimate the role nature plays, not only in shaping local area liveability, but in supporting physical health, mental wellbeing and social connection. These benefits become even more critical in the context of population densification, an ageing society and the growing challenge of loneliness.

CONCERNS ABOUT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT





As Australia grows and changes, access to nature should be treated as a key consideration in planning and development, ensuring that people continue to enjoy meaningful opportunities to connect with the natural environment close to where they live. Getting the balance right is crucial - recognising both the contribution nature makes to making somewhere a good place to live and the economic opportunities it creates. Poorly managed, these opportunities risk diminishing the very qualities that make nature so valuable; well managed, they can enhance liveability and prosperity side by side.

QUOTES FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS:

- "Replace the giant golf course with nature or a regular park."
(18-34 YO | FEMALE | GREATER SYDNEY)
- "Increase the natural environment, prevent high rise development."
(60+ YO | FEMALE | GREATER SYDNEY)
- "Affordable housing and stop taking the natural environment away!"
(18-34 YO | FEMALE | NORTHERN NSW)
- "Stop surrounding our small towns with massive renewable energy developments. Our whole way of life and healthy environment is set to change."
(60+ | FEMALE | CENTRAL NSW)

CASE STUDY

The Value Sunshine Coast Residents Place on Natural Amenity

On the Sunshine Coast in South East Queensland, in 2025 access to the natural environment ranked second in importance, with 67% of residents identifying it as a key factor in choosing where to live. It was significantly more important on the Sunshine Coast compared to the average across Australia.

The lived experience of accessing natural amenity was very positive: residents rated their experiences 8.1 out of 10, indicating substantial satisfaction and positioning this attribute among the region's strongest performing areas.

Reflecting this community sentiment, Sunshine Coast Council has embedded environmental stewardship into its strategic planning and on-the-ground programs. Through its Environment and Liveability Strategy, Council is advancing initiatives such as the Cool Urban Forests project - co-developed with the University of the Sunshine Coast to identify and cool urban "hot spots" - as well as expanding coastal pathway networks to support sustainable enjoyment of coastal environments.

Council also champions hands-on community engagement through programs like BushCare, where over 1,500 volunteers annually plant native vegetation, restore bushland and build habitat corridors across the region.

By aligning local budgets with what the community loves most - nature in its many forms - the Sunshine Coast not only lives up to residents' expectations but also sets a benchmark for integrated environmental liveability.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ON THE SUNSHINE COAST

IMPORTANCE
67%
2nd

EXPERIENCES
8.1
1st



Find out more about Sunshine Coast resident views

IMPORTANCE

48%

+3%

EXPERIENCES

6.1

-0.4

A NATIONAL PRIORITY

High Quality Health Services



Quality healthcare is vital for well-being and the economy. The sector is growing, but it faces two key issues: making sure services are accessible and solving the ongoing workforce shortages.

High Quality Health Services: A National Priority

Access to high-quality health services is the backbone of a thriving community, underpinning both individual wellbeing and broader social and economic prosperity. They are also one of Australia's most dynamic economic engines, driving job creation and fostering community connection. Informed Decisions' economic data and insights show that Healthcare and Social Assistance is among the fastest-growing sectors in the country, with demand for services and employment rising sharply. This rapid growth brings a dual challenge: aligning the location of new facilities and service delivery with transport and population centres to ensure access, and addressing persistent skills and workforce shortages that risk constraining the sector's ability to keep pace with population growth and an ageing demographic.

In the 2025 Living in Australia survey, 48% of Australians selected access to high quality health services as one of the top attributes that contribute to making somewhere a good place to live. This makes it the fourth most important liveability item nationally. Australians rated their local area 6.1 out of 10 for access to high quality health services, making it the seventh most positively experienced attribute. Over the past three years, the importance of this item has been consistently high (45% in both 2023 and 2024) and local area experiences relatively steady, with scores of 6.2 in 2023, 6.5 in 2024, and 6.1 in 2025. This consistency masks significant differences in experience across the country, where spatial and demographic factors reveal much deeper inequities.

HIGH QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES

Experience ratings



METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA

Greater Sydney	7.0
South East QLD	6.8
Greater Melbourne	6.6
Greater Perth	6.6
Greater Adelaide	6.5
The ACT	5.9
Greater Hobart	4.8
Greater Darwin	4.7

REGIONAL & RURAL AUSTRALIA

Central VIC	5.9
Western VIC	5.8
North QLD	5.8
Regional WA	5.4
Regional SA	5.4
Central NSW	5.1
Regional NT	5.1
Northern NSW	5.0
Eastern VIC	5.0
Southern NSW	4.9
Regional TAS	4.9
Central QLD	4.3

Regional Disadvantage: Spatial Differences in Health Access

Regional Australians place a significantly higher value on access to high quality health services than the national average, with 53% nominating it as important.

For them, it is the third most important attribute contributing to local liveability. However, they rate their local area experiences just 5.6 out of 10. This gap exerts significant downward pressure on the Regional Australian Liveability Index, which stands at 58.3, notably lower than the Metropolitan Australian Index of 61.2.

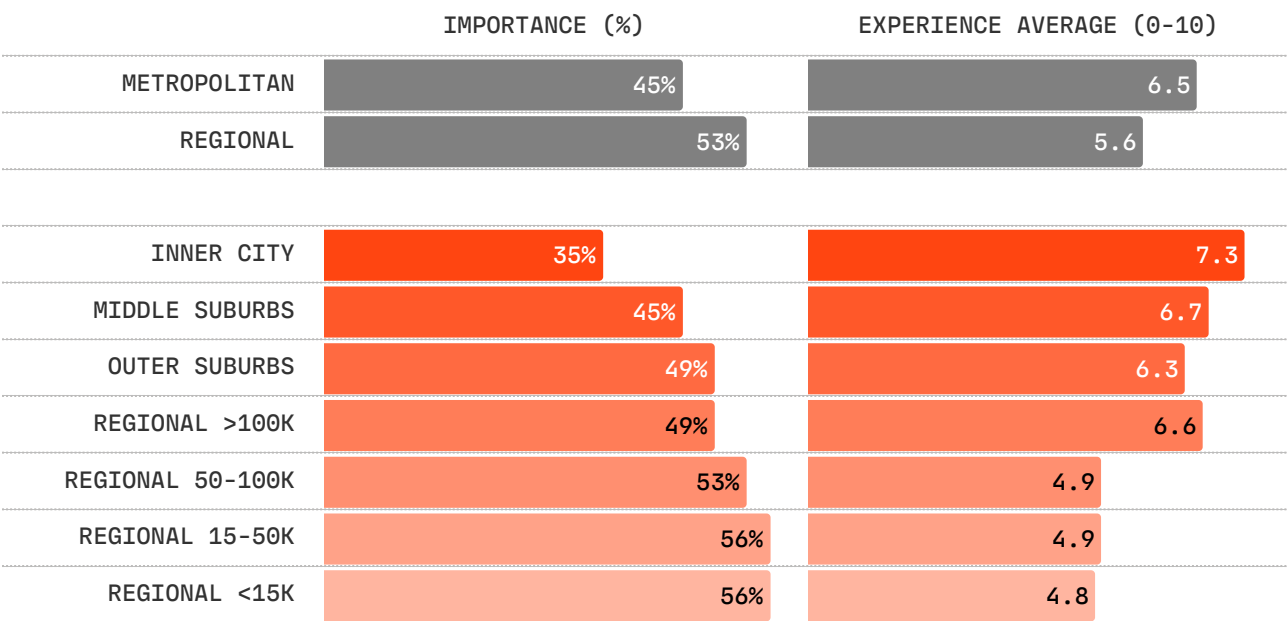
Metropolitan Australians generally enjoy better local area experiences of accessing health services, particularly those living in Inner City LGAs, who rate their local area 7.3 out of 10. These areas tend to host major tertiary hospitals and a dense network of ancillary health and community services, supported by strong transport connections.

In Middle Suburban LGAs, experiences drop to 6.7, and in Outer Suburban LGAs to 6.3, reflecting the greater distances to major facilities and fewer service options.

Larger Regional Cities with more than 100,000 residents tend to fare better, with an average rating of 6.6, benefiting from economies of scale and the ability to sustain a broader range of services. However, in Smaller Regional and Rural Areas (those with fewer than 100,000 residents) experiences decline sharply, reflecting limited infrastructure, fewer specialists and longer travel times. Many of these smaller communities are also home to older populations, further increasing demand pressures.

While it is unrealistic to replicate the scale of service provision found in Inner City LGAs everywhere, there is value in learning from these better-served areas to inform long-term decision-making. The priority is to work towards reducing the health equity gap in service access and preventing further divergence between metropolitan, large regional and smaller regional and rural communities.

HIGH QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES



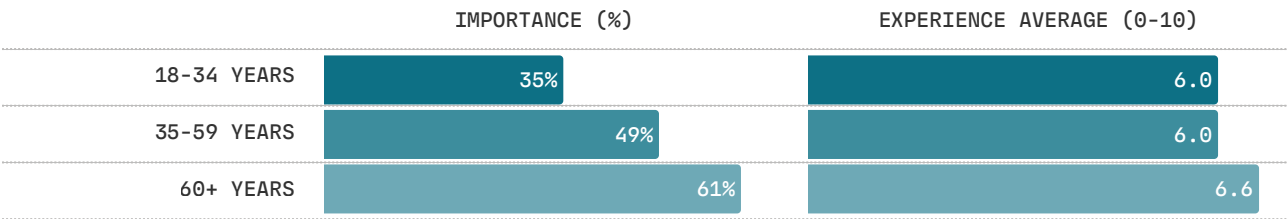


Demographic Differences

The need for health services varies by age, with increasing general medical needs of older Australians and unmet mental health challenges faced by younger people.

Older Australians (those aged 60 and over) are much more likely to place high value on access to health services, with 61% nominating it as important, compared to 35% of those aged 18–34. This is consistent with their greater likelihood of engaging with health services. Many regional communities have older population profiles than metropolitan areas, meaning these two dynamics overlap: higher demand for health services in areas where access is already poorer.

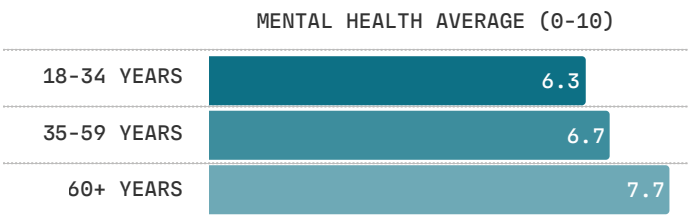
HIGH QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES



While younger Australians are less likely to prioritise health services overall, they report poorer experiences with mental health, a critical issue that often goes unmet, especially outside major cities. This reinforces the need for councils and service providers to expand access to youth-targeted mental health services, alongside traditional aged-care and general medical investments.

This generational divergence in health service needs also highlights the importance of locally tailored service planning. In many regional and rural areas, where older cohorts make up a larger share of the population, ensuring access to timely, appropriate and locally available health care will be essential for supporting both ageing in place and broader regional liveability. For Councils and health planners, this means balancing long-term infrastructure investment with immediate solutions like telehealth, mobile clinics, GP recruitment and community-based preventive programs, particularly in places where demand is already outpacing supply.

MENTAL HEALTH





QUOTES FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS:

There is much to celebrate in Australia's provision of high-quality health services. Our health system is recognised internationally as one of the safest, most effective and most equitable in the developed world. Many communities – particularly in metropolitan and large regional centres – benefit from well-developed infrastructure, a highly skilled workforce and integrated service networks that deliver strong health outcomes.

However, the data shows a clear equity gap, with significant disadvantages for smaller regional and rural areas and some outer suburban growth areas. These gaps are expected to widen without targeted action, particularly as these communities age and demand for services rises. The challenge for the coming decades is to sustain and expand the models that work well, and to replicate them - in appropriate, scalable forms - across the nation to ensure equitable access to the health services that underpin quality of life.

- "Improved access to specialist healthcare and lower hospital waitlists."

(60+ YO | FEMALE | NORTHERN NSW)

- "Actually put more money in health, education and social issues to address crime, poverty, housing, alcohol/drug abuse not locking people up"

(35-59 YO | FEMALE | DARWIN)

- "Barwon Health cannot sustain Geelong's population and all other hospitals in Geelong are private - there is a health epidemic here and no one's listening and it's terrifying."

(18-34 YO | FEMALE | WESTERN VICTORIA)

- "Health care for older people. We have a new hospital in Bega but we still have to travel to Canberra to have anything done."

(60+ YO | FEMALE | SOUTHERN NSW)

- "Spending on health initiatives to get more healthcare workers."

(60+ | FEMALE | NORTHERN NSW)

CASE STUDY

Health Services in Focus: What Matters to Clarence Valley Residents

In the Clarence Valley in regional NSW, high quality health services ranked as an important liveability priority in 2024, 51% of residents identified it as important in choosing where to live. When asked which services residents would like to see Clarence Valley Council advocating for, the top response was 'Health services (e.g. hospitals, doctors, specialists, etc.)' at 62%. Experiences with accessing high quality health services were rated 4.8 out of 10, and therefore a key priority for elevating quality of life in the region.

This data supports Councillors in advocating for improved healthcare services, alongside other priority issues identified in the survey. Clarence Valley Council is working collaboratively with local providers and community networks to strengthen service coordination, enhance mental health and wellbeing initiatives and give residents a stronger voice in regional healthcare planning.

By aligning advocacy efforts with strong community sentiment around health services, Clarence Valley is positioning itself to turn survey insights into tangible improvements, making its healthcare landscape more responsive, connected and liveable.

HEALTH SERVICES IN CLARENCE VALLEY 2024

IMPORTANCE
51%
3rd

EXPERIENCES
4.8
13th



Find out more about Clarence Valley resident views

LIVING IN AUSTRALIA - 2025

Appendix

ABOUT COMMUNITY VIEWS

Community Views is an independent, robust and repeatable community survey that seeks to understand and advance the liveability of Australians’ local areas. Community Views provides participating organisations with a deep and representative understanding of their community’s values, experiences and needs, and creates a resident centric evidence base to inform, monitor and evaluate strategic planning and advocacy. It is delivered in partnership with Ipsos Public Affairs.

HOW WAS THE SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The survey was collected between 8 April and 4 May 2025 using .id’s proven social media advertising approach. Social media advertising is an emerging social research methodology, and .id leads the way in using and proving its viability. It is used as the main data collection methodology when working with local governments as it is the best available methodology to generate large and diverse samples of residents across small geographic areas.

WHO DID WE SURVEY?

We surveyed n=4,907 residents in total, resulting in a maximum margin of error at the 95% confidence interval of +/-1.4%. In simple terms, this means that if (for example) 50% of survey respondents place importance on ‘reliable and efficient public transport’, we can be 95% confident that between 48.6% and 51.4% of the total Australian adult population place importance on ‘reliable and efficient public transport’.

WAS THE SURVEY SAMPLE ADJUSTED?

Upon completion, the survey sample was compared with the population of interest (all Australian residents aged 18+) to identify if any responses to the the demographic and life-stage questions were skewed relative to their share of the actual population. Taking into consideration the impact of these skews, .id elected to normalise the survey data using age and local area. Data-weighting is a common practice in social research. It aims to improve the representativeness of survey results.

HOW IS THE OVERALL LIVEABILITY INDEX CALCULATED?

The Overall Liveability Index (OLI) is a product of two measures:

- The values residents place on each of the 16 attributes of liveability (% of respondents that nominated each in their top five)
- The local area experiences of residents for each of the 16 attributes (mean score based on ratings from 0-10)

For each attribute, the values proportion is multiplied by the average experience score, and the total sum is multiplied by two to get a score out of 100 for each local area.

SAMPLE SIZES

Australia	4,907
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METROPOLITAN AUSTRALIA

Greater Sydney	430
Greater Melbourne	456
South East QLD	531
Greater Perth	333
Greater Adelaide	207
The ACT	188
Greater Hobart	168
Greater Darwin	199

REGIONAL & RURAL AUSTRALIA

Northern NSW	218
Central NSW	198
Southern NSW	207
Eastern VIC	219
Central VIC	218
Western VIC	195
North QLD	220
Central QLD	227
Regional WA	220
Regional SA	144
Regional TAS	145
Regional NT	147

LIVING IN AUSTRALIA - 2025

Materials

INSIGHTS

- [Why social cohesion is crucial for a functioning society](#)
- [Understand the community's views on climate change and its local impact](#)
- [The community's views on 'cost of living': who is concerned and implications for health and wellbeing](#)
- [The importance of feeling safe: a key factor in Australian communities](#)
- [A Place to Call Home: The High Impact 'Affordable Decent Housing' has on Liveability](#)

CASE STUDIES

- [Helping Clarence Valley council inform its community strategic planning and advocacy agenda](#)
- [Using the community's views to shape the City of Banyule's future](#)
- [How Community Views helped City of Canning's strategic decision making](#)
- [Understanding community values, experiences and priorities to advance quality of life across Gippsland](#)
- [Living on the Sunshine Coast - the role of nature](#)

INTERACTIVE TOOLS, DATA AND VIDEOS

- [Community Views: Living in Australia - annual survey of n=5,000 residents](#)
- [Community Views \(client example\): Sunshine Coast Council - annual survey of n=1,500 residents](#)
- How Community Views can help you understand resident perspectives on [Health and Wellbeing](#), [Housing](#), [Transport Infrastructure](#), [Social Infrastructure](#), [Financial and Economic Confidence](#).

GET IN TOUCH



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