

Living on the Sunshine Coast, 2023

views report

.id informed
decisions



community views | views.id

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SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Local Area Overview

About the Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council local government area - home of the [Kabi Kabi and the Jinibara peoples](#) stretches from Bribie Island in the south along the coastline to Coolum Beach in the north and as far inland to the small town of Cambroon. Known for its pristine beaches, rolling hinterlands and as a winter refuge for cold southerners, the Sunshine Coast sits about 90 minutes drive north of Brisbane's CBD. [More than 350,000 people live on the Sunshine Coast](#), making it one of the nation's largest LGAs by population. Beyond absolutes, the Coast's median age is 43 years, considerably older than the Australian median of 38.

The population of the broader [Sunshine Coast SA4 Region is predicted to grow considerably in the coming years](#). Already home to some of Australia's largest master planned communities - many of which are well underway - the greatest share of development is expected to take place in the southern parts of the Coast over the next 20 years.

The [local area economy](#) produces more than \$21b each year, with the LGA's main industries (by employment) being Health Care and Social Assistance, and Construction.

LIVING ON THE SUNSHINE COAST

About Living in Place for the Sunshine Coast Regional Council



About the Living in Place survey

[Living in Place](#) is an independent, robust and repeatable community survey that seeks to understand and help advance quality of life across Australia's local areas.

It uses 16 attributes to determine community values and experiences, calculate local area liveability and identify future needs. It also measures community health and wellbeing, financial circumstances, local area concerns and ideas for improving quality of life.

The Living in Place survey data is analysed and reported through our leading online platform, [views.id](#).

Together, Living in Place 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.

Living in Place is delivered in partnership with leading social research consultancy, Ipsos Public Affairs.

About Living on the Sunshine Coast

[.id](#) deployed the Living in Place survey across the Sunshine Coast local government area in April 2023, returning a sample of $n=1,734$ completed surveys. The social media advertising campaign used by [.id](#) to promote the survey was adjusted during the data-collection stage to more prominently reflect Sunshine Coast Regional Council as the survey's sponsor.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has contracted [.id](#) to deliver Living in Place annually between 2021 and 2026 to monitor how and where their community's views are changing in response to council's strategic policy agenda, advocacy efforts and external factors. This report shows the Coast's overall liveability in 2023 and speaks to five key insights regarding what the community believes needs to happen to advance quality of life.

Additional reports, data and resources are available from the [views.id reporting and exploratory platform](#).

OVERALL LIVEABILITY

The values, experiences, overall liveability and future needs of Sunshine Coast residents...

The chart below shows what Sunshine Coast Regional Council residents believe makes somewhere a good place to live and how they experience their local area in that regard. It also highlights how the Region's current Overall Liveability compares with March 2021.



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



March 2021 Overall Liveability Index



Results sorted by importance in Sunshine Coast

Natural environment

Feeling safe

Health services

A lack of road congestion

Affordable decent housing

Sense of community

Shopping, leisure & dining

Public transport

Making your way

Good job prospects

Social cohesion

Education

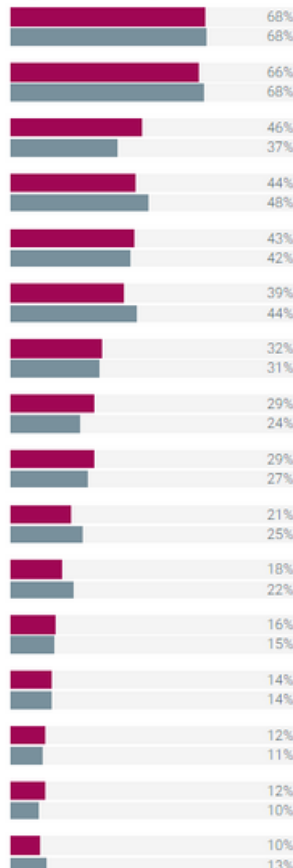
Opportunity for all

A prosperous economy

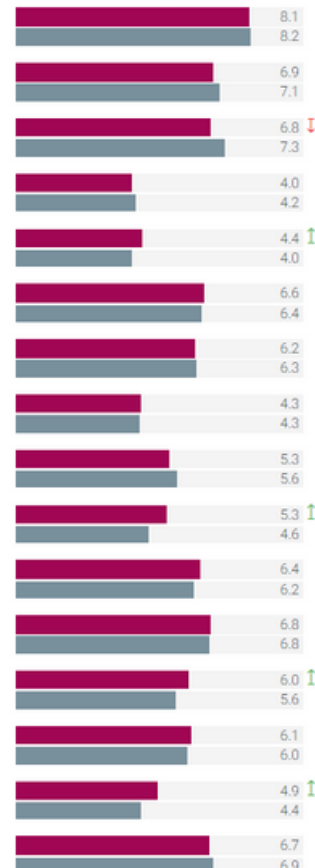
Cultural facilities

Sports and recreation

Importance Sort by



Experience Sort by



↑ Significantly higher ↓ Significantly lower

KEY INSIGHT 1

While the Sunshine Coast's Overall Liveability was 60.9/100, and this was subtly lower than Australian and South East Queensland averages, the Coast has clear strengths and opportunities to advance quality of life.

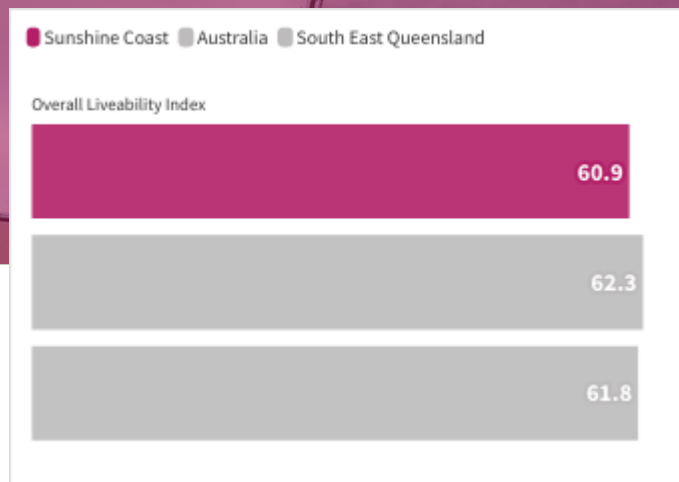
The Sunshine Coast's Overall Liveability Index – created by combining residents' values and local area experiences – returned a score of 60.9/100, lower than Australian (62.3) and South East Queensland (61.8) benchmarks.

Sunshine Coast residents have a clear set of beliefs regarding what makes somewhere a good place to live. And, it is how your residents experience those attributes in their local area that informs not only the Coast's current levels of overall liveability, but more importantly what the community believes needs to happen to advance quality of life.

In the 2023 Living on the Sunshine Coast survey, residents nominated 'access to the natural environment' (68% selected this among their top five items) and 'feeling safe' (66%) as the two attributes that contribute most towards making somewhere a good place to live. The community also reported positive local area experiences for both items, rating where they live an average of 8.1/10 for 'access to the natural environment' and 6.9 for 'feeling safe'.

In comparison to Australian and South East Queensland (SEQ) averages, Sunshine Coast residents placed more stock in and reported better local experiences for 'access to the natural environment' and 'feeling safe'.

While these two items represent positive points of difference for the Coast, your community's views regarding road congestion and housing place downward pressure on overall liveability. These need to be addressed to advance quality of life.



Forty-four percent of residents nominated 'a lack of road congestion' among their five most important liveability items (4th of 16). Despite high importance, the community rated their local area experiences of road congestion very poorly, averaging 4.0/10 (16th of 16). Your residents placed a considerably greater value on and reported significantly worse local experiences of road congestion in comparison to the Australian and SEQ averages.

Your community's views of road congestion - and to a lesser extent - related items like 'reliable and efficient public transport' and 'making your way to and from services such as employment, education and healthcare with relative ease' represent the greatest inhibitor to advancing local area liveability.

Residents also placed a high value on 'affordable decent housing' (43%, 5th) and reported poor local area experiences (4.4/10, 14th). While it has been widely acknowledged that the provision of 'affordable decent housing' is a truly national issue, your residents lived experiences of housing were worse than the Australian and SEQ averages.

KEY INSIGHT 2

'Access to the natural environment' continues to be an absolute and relative strength of the Sunshine Coast.

Sunshine Coast residents rated their local area an average of 8.1/10 for 'access to the natural environment', higher than the Australian (7.9) and South East Queensland (7.3) averages.

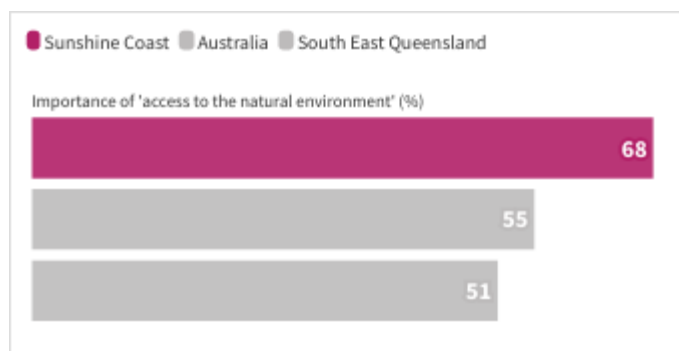
Sixty-eight percent of Sunshine Coast residents selected 'access to the natural environment' as an important attribute when asked to consider what makes somewhere a good place to live, making it the most important liveability aspect for the community just ahead of 'feeling safe' (66%).

Beyond values, residents rated their local area experiences of 'access to the natural environment' an average 8.1/10, making it clearly the most positively experienced of all 16 items.

While this combination of high importance and positive local area experiences determines that your community's views regarding their ability to access nature is the single biggest contributor to quality of life on the Sunshine Coast, it also tells us that residents will be aware of and very sensitive to any policy decisions or advocacy that could possibly detract from their ability to engage with nature. This insight is especially important for the Sunshine Coast, which has and is forecast to continue to experience considerable population growth and change in the coming years.



While 'access to the natural environment' was very important across the Coast, those who make their home in Urban B (75%) and Urban A (70%) placed a higher value on this attribute in comparison to those in Rural 2 (63%) Urban D (66%). Urban B, Urban D and Rural 1 residents reported the best local area experiences (8.4/10) in comparison to those from Urban C (7.9).



KEY INSIGHT 3

Sunshine Coast residents are in good health, and despite being an older community on average, are quite optimistic about their future health prospects.

The Sunshine Coast Health and Wellbeing Index was 7.3/10, higher than the Australian (7.1) and South East Queensland (7.2) Indices.

Despite the Sunshine Coast's median age of 43 years being considerably higher than the Australian and SEQ medians (38), and the incidence of chronic illness being slightly higher on the Sunshine Coast (34% of SC residents reported having at least one long-term health condition at the 2021 ABS Census) in comparison to Australia (32%) and SEQ (33%), those who make their home on the Coast reported relatively high levels of current **physical health** (7.3/10), **mental health** (7.5) and **social wellbeing** (7.2). Beyond the now, this community was also considerably more optimistic than pessimistic about their near term physical health (31% believe their physical health will improve in the next 12 months, 10% believe it will get worse), mental health (24%, 9%) and social wellbeing (21%, 10%) prospects.

Sunshine Coast residents also place a premium on being able access '**high quality health services**', with 46% of the community nominating it as one of their top five things that contribute towards making somewhere a good place to live. While the value your residents place on this liveability attribute was consistent with Australian and SEQ averages (both 46%) your residents - on the whole - reported better local area experiences for '**high quality health services**'



(6.8/10) in comparison to Australia (6.0) and SEQ (6.6) averages.

Importantly, Sunshine Coast residents aged 60+ placed considerably higher value '**high quality health services**' (60%) relative to those aged between 35 - 59 years (43%) and 18 - 34 years (29%). This value distribution - where older residents place considerably higher importance on health services - is consistent with what is observed elsewhere across the Nation.

Spatially, your Urban residents reported significantly better local area experiences for '**high quality health services**' (Urban B = 7.8/10, Urban C = 7.2) in comparison to those who make their home in Rural 1, where the communities of Bribie Island North, Beerwah, Maleny, Glass House Mountains and surrounds rated their local areas an average of 5.8/10 for '**high quality health services**'.

KEY INSIGHT 4

Where Sunshine Coast residents make their home has an influence on how they perceive local area liveability and, more importantly, what they believe needs to happen to advance quality of life.

While the Overall Liveability Indices reported across the Sunshine Coast's 4 x Urban and 2 x Rural Areas show a clear liveability gap, each community has a slightly different set of future needs to advance quality of life.

The Sunshine Coast's large geographic footprint, population, and the evolving role and function of its communities, determines that planning is well served through the local community lens. Understanding the values, experiences and future needs of your communities should lead to actions and advocacy that serve specific local issues, solving local problems. When administered consistently over several years, this approach should deliver better local area experiences which will, by extension, return a collective benefit to the Sunshine Coast's liveability in the macro.

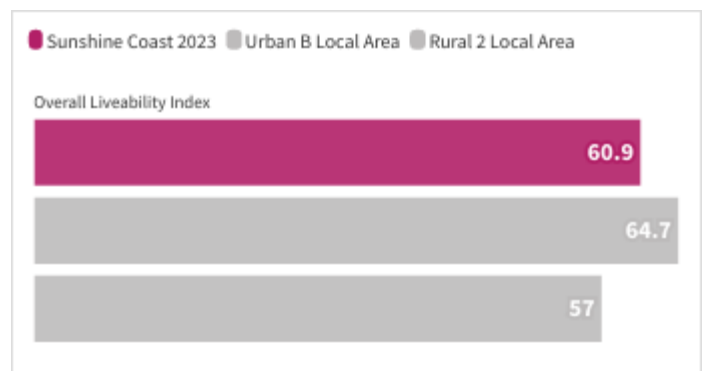
While the Living on the Sunshine Coast survey delivers insights and provides data for 6 x local areas (see the Local Area Insights section), here we compare and contrast the strengths and opportunities of two communities - Urban B and Rural 2.

Residents of Urban B (Wurtulla, Mountain Creek, Parrearra and surrounds) returned an Overall Liveability index of 64.7/100, higher than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9). While these residents' beliefs regarding what makes somewhere a good place to live were relatively consistent with the broader community, their local area experiences for those items – specifically 'access to the natural environment', 'high quality health



services' and 'a diverse range of shopping, leisure and dining experiences' were considerably better than Sunshine Coast averages. Beyond values and experiences, residents of Urban B reported subtly better levels of self-reported health and personal financial circumstances in comparison to the average Sunshine Coast resident.

In contrast, those who make a home in Rural 2 (Nambour, Bli Bli, Palmwoods and surrounds) returned an Overall Liveability index of 57.0/100. In comparison to the Sunshine Coast averages, these residents placed a considerably higher value on and report significantly worse experiences for 'affordable decent housing'. They also reported poorer local area experiences for other important liveability attributes like 'access to the natural environment', 'feeling safe' and 'high quality health services'.



KEY INSIGHT 5

Understanding your community's values, experiences and future needs through an age-group lens can help you plan for a higher quality of life.

The Sunshine Coast has and is predicted to continue being one of the fastest growing large LGAs in Australia. As the Coast grows and evolves, so too do your residents future needs.

The Sunshine Coast population at the 2021 ABS Census was 342,541; a 33% increase in comparison to 2011 (257,939). While the number of people making a home across the Coast has grown considerably in absolute terms, the population's composition has also adjusted in relative terms.

Understanding how the communities values, experiences and future needs manifest across the Sunshine Coast according to age is one way for Council and others to represent these communities' best interests in decision making.

Understanding 18-34 YOs...

In 2021, there were 62,576 18-34 YOs living on the Sunshine Coast, representing 23% of the 18+ population. The Overall Liveability Index for 18-34 YOs was 58.3/100. In comparison to the average Sunshine Coast resident, these younger adults placed more value on 'affordable decent housing' (70% vs 43%) and 'good job prospects' (31% vs 21%) and less stock in 'a strong sense of community' (31% vs 39%) and 'high quality health services' (29% vs 46%). 18-34 YOs reported poorer local area experiences for 'affordable decent housing' (3.7/10 vs 4.4), poorer mental health (6.3 vs 7.5), social wellbeing (6.4 vs 7.2) and personal financial circumstances (5.0 vs 6.1). Improved local area experiences of 'affordable decent



'housing' represents the single biggest opportunity to advance quality of life for these younger residents.

Understanding 35-59 YOs...

In 2021, there were 110,928 35-59 YOs living on the Sunshine Coast, representing 41% of the 18+ population. The Overall Liveability Index for 35-59 YOs was 61.4/100. In comparison to the average Sunshine Coast resident, these mid-aged adults placed more value on 'a strong sense of community' (45% vs 39%). Given they are the dominant age group, the balance of their values and experiences were consistent with Sunshine Coast averages.

Understanding 60+ YOs...

In 2021, there were 96,929 adults aged 60+ living on the Sunshine Coast, a substantial increase from the 63,120 who were in that cohort at the 2011 Census. This 60+ group is the fastest growing age cohort on the Coast. The Overall Liveability Index for those aged 60+ was 61.8/100. In comparison to the average Sunshine Coast resident, these older residents placed a considerably higher value on 'high quality health services' (60% vs 46%) and lesser value on 'affordable decent housing'.

LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Urban A

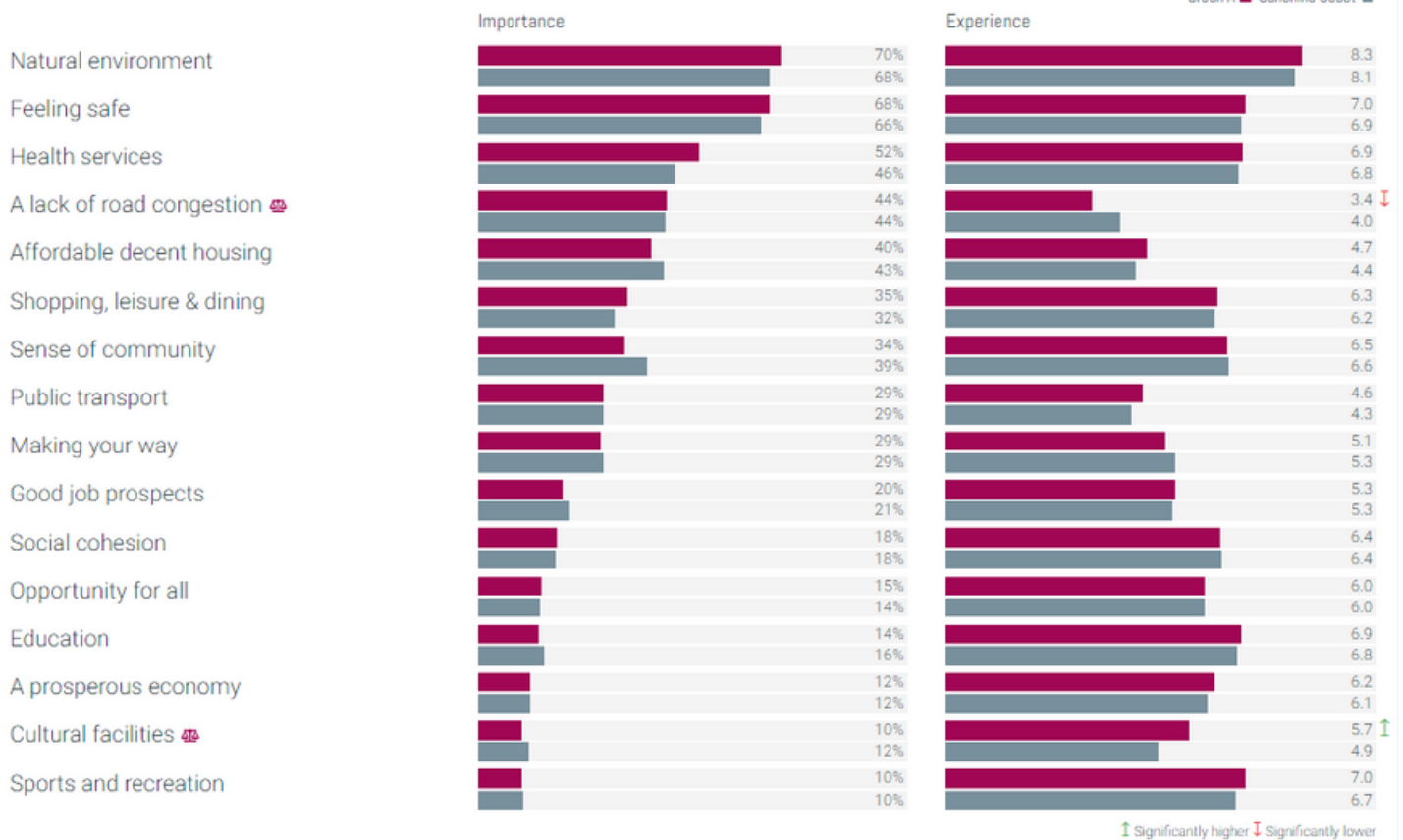
The Urban A Local Area is made up of Aroona, Baringa, Battery Hill, Bells Creek, Caloundra, Caloundra West, Currimundi, Dicky Beach, Golden Beach, Kings Beach, Little Mountain, Meridan Plains, Moffat Beach, Nirimba, Pelican Waters, and Shelly Beach. 377 residents from Urban A participated in the survey.

The Urban A Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 61.6/100, higher than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

Urban A Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Urban B

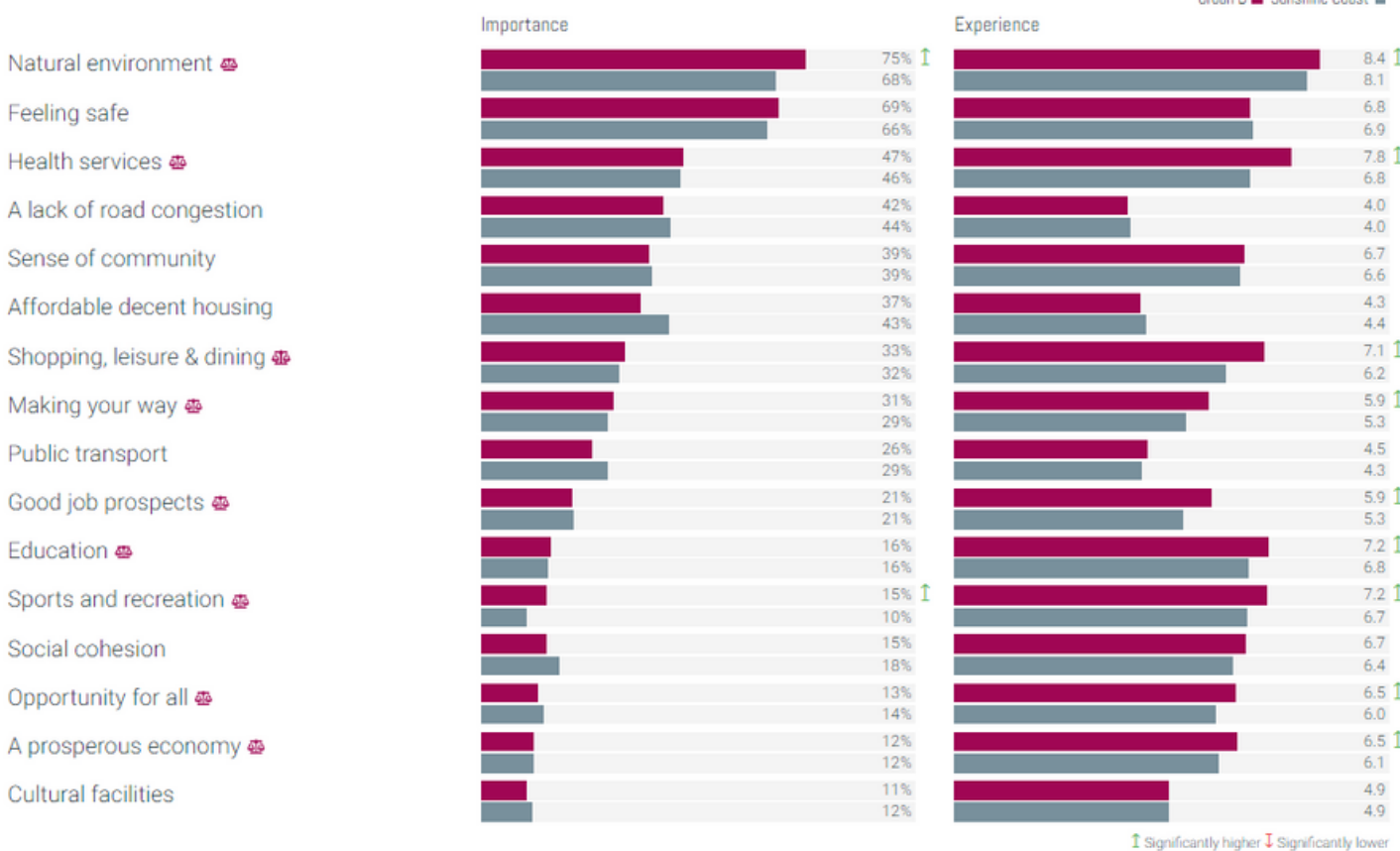
The Urban B Local Area is made up of Birtinya, Bokarina, Buddina, Minyama, Mountain Creek, Parrearra, Warana, and Wurtulla. 207 residents from Urban B participated in the survey.

The Urban B Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 64.7/100, higher than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

Urban B Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Urban C

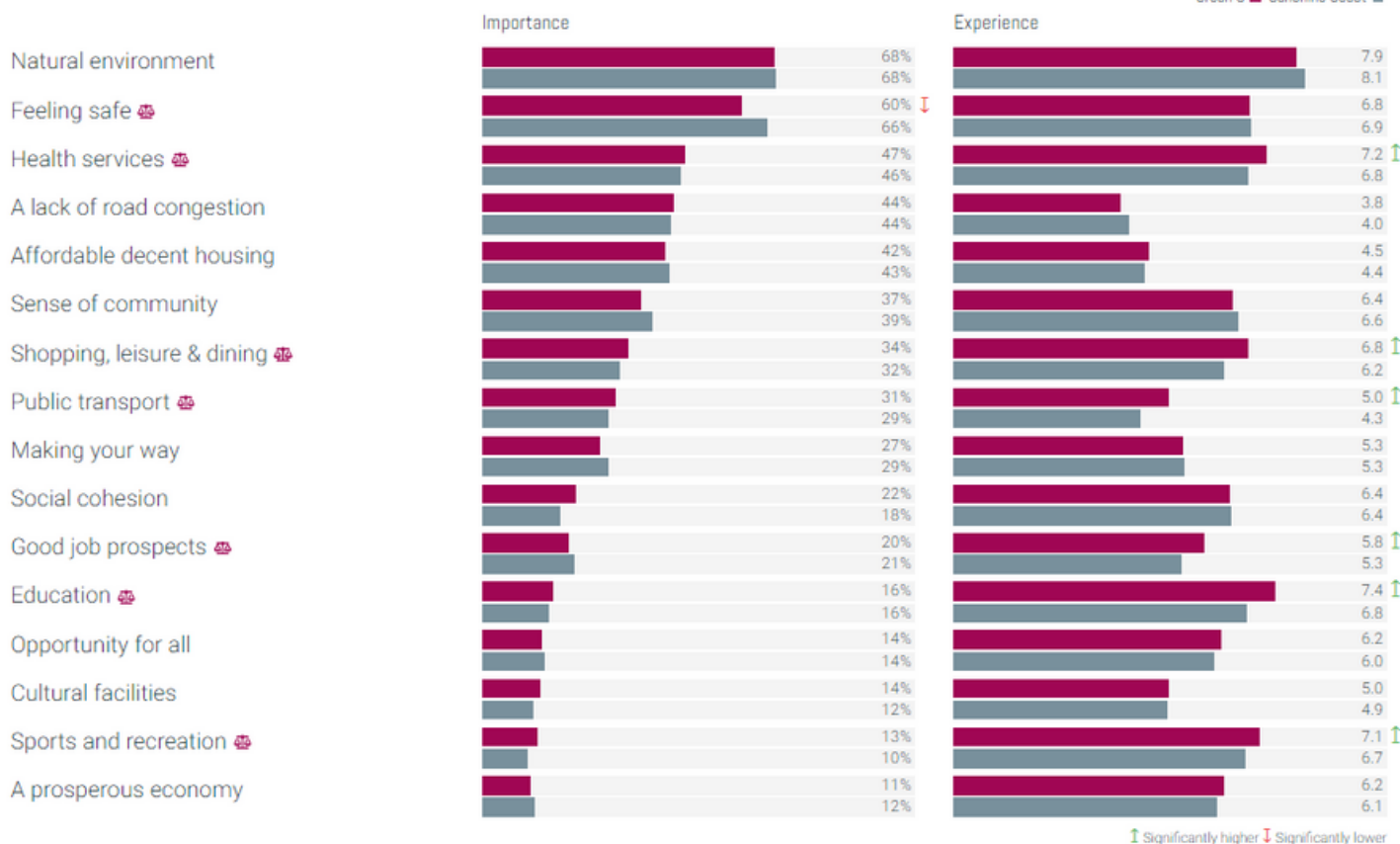
The Urban C Local Area is made up of Alexandra Headland, Buderim, Kuluin, Maroochydore, Mons, Mooloolaba, Palmview, and Sippy Downs. 384 residents from Urban C participated in the survey.

The Urban C Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 62.0/100, higher than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

Urban C Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Urban D

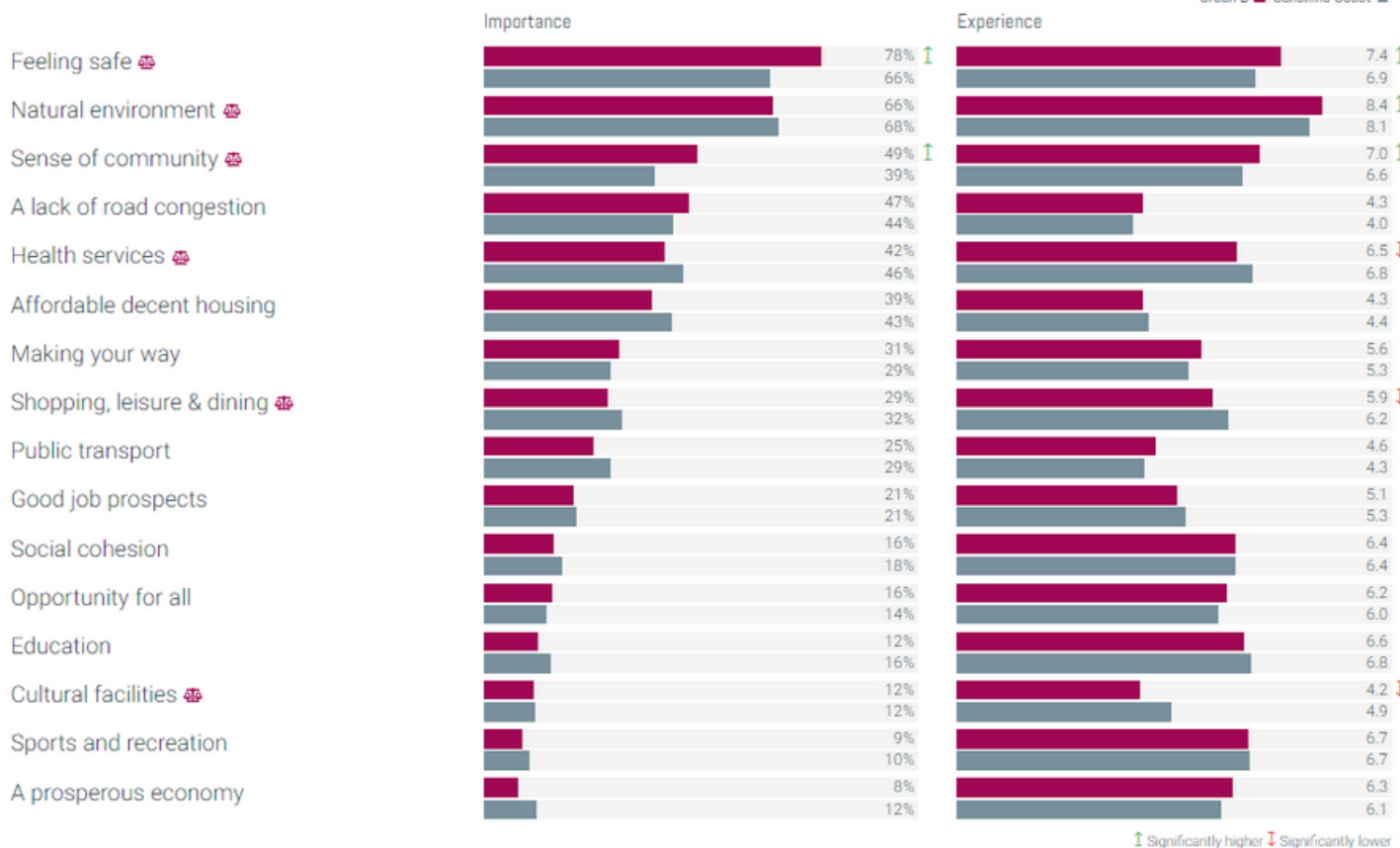
The Urban D Local Area is made up of Coolum Beach, Marcoola, Mount Coolum, Mudjimba, Pacific Paradise, Peregrian Springs, Point Arkwright, Twin Waters, and Yaroomba. 215 residents from Urban D participated in the survey.

The Urban D Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 62.5/100, higher than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

Urban D Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Rural 1

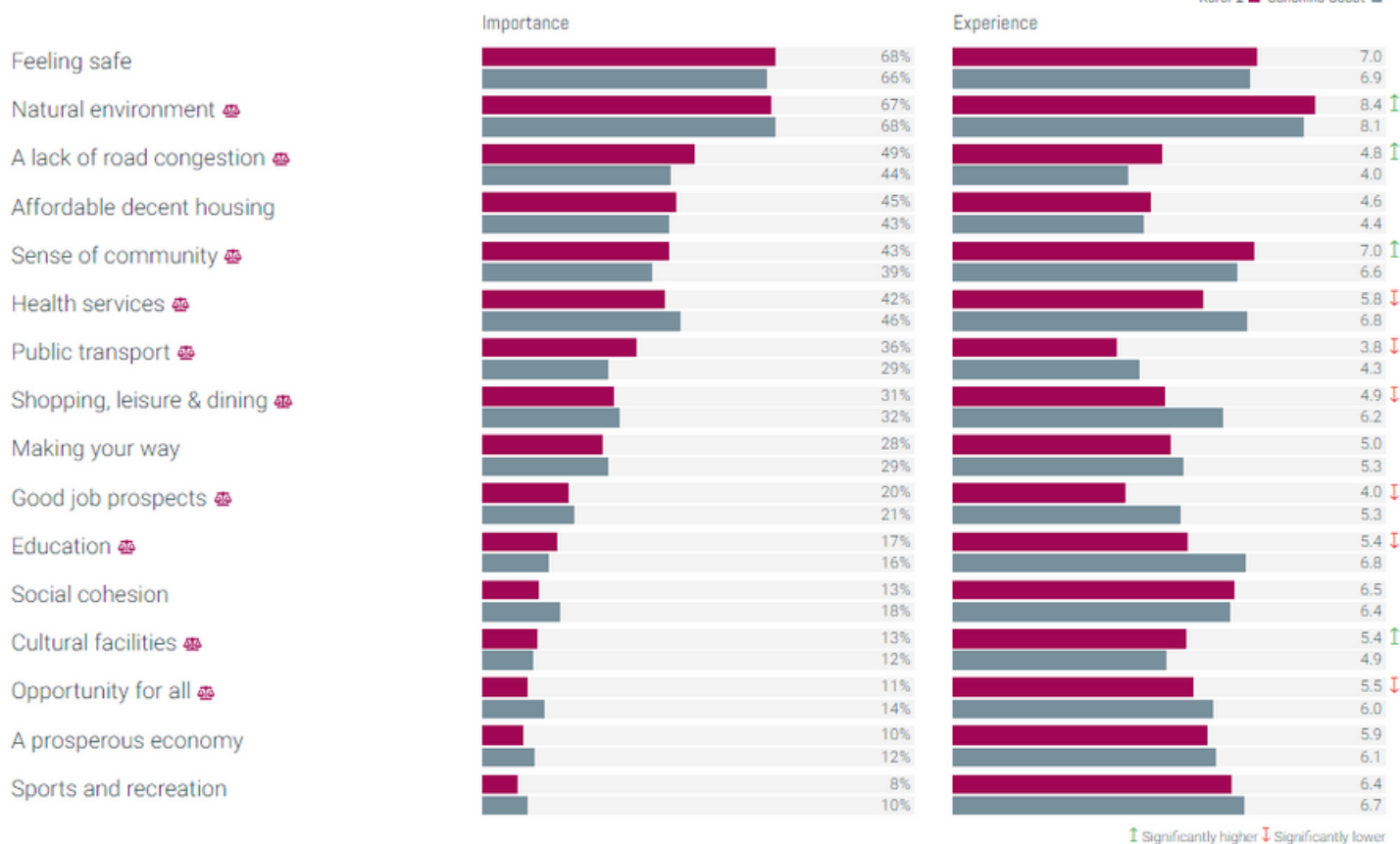
The Rural 1 Local Area is made up of Beerburrum, Beerwah, Booroobin, Bribie Island North, Cambroon, Conondale, Diamond Valley, Glass House Mountains, Kenilworth, Landsborough, Maleny, Mooloolah Valley, Mount Mellum, North Maleny, Peachester, Reesville, Witta, Curramore, Crohamhurst, Coochin Creek, and Balmoral Ridge. 205 residents from Rural 1 participated in the survey.

The Rural 1 Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 59.0/100, lower than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

Rural 1 Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST

Living in Rural 2

The Rural 2 Local Area is made up of Belli Park, Bli Bli, Burnside, Chevallum, Coes Creek, Diddillibah, Doonan, Dulong, Eerwah Vale, Eudlo, Eumundi, Flaxton, Forest Glen, Glenview, Hunchy, Ilkley, Image Flat, Kiamba, Kiels Mountain, Kulangoor, Kureelipa, Landers Shoot, Mapleton, Maroochy River, Montville, Nambour, Ninderry, Obi Obi, Palmwoods, Peregian Beach, Rosemount, Tanawha, Town Mountain, Valdora, Verrierdale, West Woombye, Weyba Downs, Woombye, Yandina, Yandina Creek, and Parklands. 346 residents from Rural 2 participated in the survey.

The Rural 2 Local Area Overall Liveability Index returned a value of 57.0/100, lower than the Sunshine Coast average (60.9).

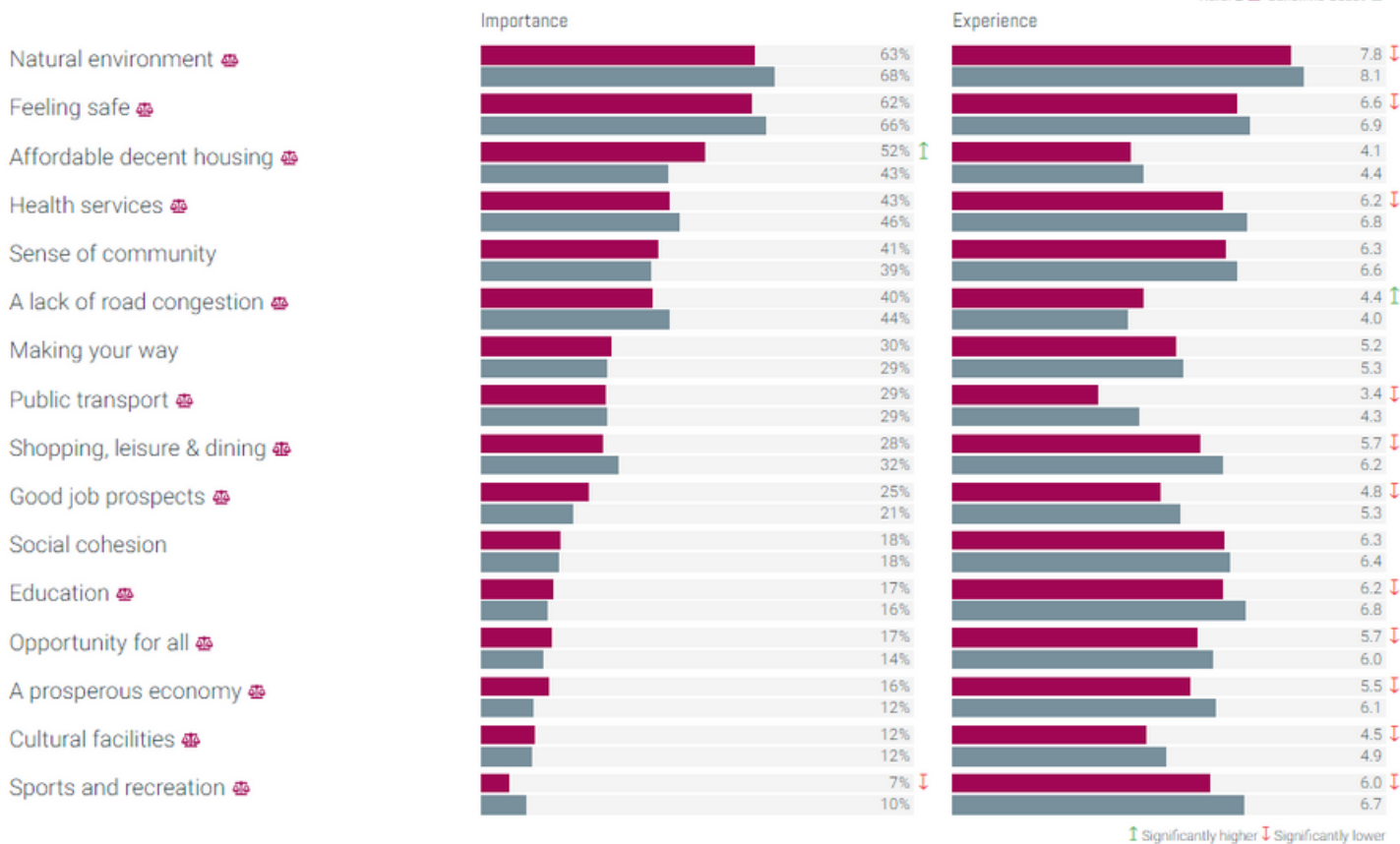
Rural 2 Overall Liveability Index



Sunshine Coast Overall Liveability Index



Rural 2 ■ Sunshine Coast ■





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Please visit views.id.com.au/sunshine-coast
for additional insights, resources and data.