



People with Disability

A Social Profile

Blacktown City Social Profile 2016



Blacktown
City Council

For further information regarding issues identified in this profile or if you are seeking information on issues not included please contact the Social Planning Team on 02 9839 6420.

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Executive summary

This profile outlines the major social issues currently facing people with disability in Blacktown City. It explores the key issues for 11 priority areas being the social gradient, stress, early life, social exclusion, work, unemployment, social support, addiction, food, transport options and service development. It also provides a snapshot of community strengths and needs for people with a disability.

The profile is a resource to support planning and research. It is a tool for strategic planning, reviewing strategic plans and should be used along-side consideration of the policies and activities of organisations, Local, State and Federal governments.

The executive summary provides an overview of findings from research and community engagement conducted in 2014/15 and identifies the following key issues and strengths for people with disability:

Issues

- In 2016, there were 17,277 people with a need for assistance in Blacktown City. This represents 5.1% of the total Blacktown City usual resident population, slightly higher than Greater Sydney (4.9%). Proportions ranged from a low of 1.6% in Colebee to a high of 9.6% in Willmot.
- There were 29,131 carers in Blacktown City providing unpaid assistance to a person with disability, long term illness or old age. This represented 11.2% of the Blacktown City population. A total of 2,195 people were aged between 18 and 24 years old.
- Residents of Blacktown City say there are cost barriers when living on a disability pension, for example, “paying bills, buying things you need”, this often means people go without the things they need or want. Analysis of household income of those who need assistance in Blacktown City in 2016 shows that residents who need assistance are more likely to have a low household income (less than \$650 per week) and less likely to have a high household income (\$2,000 or more per week) than residents who do not need assistance.
- In Blacktown City, there were a smaller proportion of people with a need for assistance in Blacktown households who owned or were purchasing a dwelling or renting privately and a larger proportion in social housing compared to comparable Greater Sydney households.
- Employment services say there is a double disadvantage experienced by unemployed people with a disability. People with disability have both lower participation and higher unemployment rates than people without disability.
- Recreational, wellbeing and inclusion are important for quality of life. Compared with the whole population, people with disability participate less than those without disability.

- Services in Blacktown City are concerned about social isolation and mental illness for people with disability.
- Mobility and transport play an essential role in social, educational and work-related activities. Across our city, there is inequity in access to public transport for people with disability. This includes affordability, service coverage and physical and geographic barriers.
- People with disability report access for people with limited mobility and in wheelchairs is still challenging in many areas of the city.
- Discrimination continues to be an issue for some of our residents with a disability.
- Residents are concerned about personal and community safety in their neighbourhoods, and around their homes.
- People are concerned about the maintenance of our parks, equipment, roads, footpaths, trees and waterways and untidiness of streets, rubbish and litter.
- Services are at capacity and do not have the resources to meet current needs.
- There is concern about capacity of National Disability Insurance Scheme to meet individual needs.
- The need for information in community languages for people with disability.

Strengths

- Residents with disability say accommodation, having a home, living close to work, supported accommodation and having carers to provide support is important.
- There are a high number of residents who identify that the convenience and availability of shops and services is the thing they like best about living in the city.
- Many residents say there are plenty of recreational, sporting, social, religious or cultural activities, with lots of things for different age groups and backgrounds.
- Many residents report that they like where they live because it is quiet but this is matched equally by residents who dislike the noises in their neighbourhoods.
- Many residents report that their neighbourhood is a friendly place with community spirit
- There are great disability services that respond to needs, provide a network of support, teach people with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities, safety in the community and in the home.

Recommendations

- Children with a disability need to have access to recreational activities.
- Increased opportunities for employment for residents with disabilities.
- Increased access to recreational facilities and programs for residents with disabilities.
- Public transport should equally accessible for all residents.
- Provision of support for people with disability, their carers' and workers in the disability sector as they adjust to a different model of care through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

1. Introduction

Social and community planning helps us focus on the needs and aspirations of local communities through a whole of community approach. It provides an evidence base that guides our activities over the short-term and long-term.

This profile, focused on people with disability, presents research from the Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 and provides a more detailed understanding of the social situation for people with disability in Blacktown City.

The principles of equity, access and social justice underpin this profile. The profile is also strength based, recognising community strengths and resources which can be used to build strong, healthy and sustainable communities.

While we have a lead role in addressing many of the issues identified, we recognise not all issues raised in community engagement are solely the responsibility of local government and require strategic linkages and collaborative partnerships with the community sector and other stakeholders. This document will guide us in focussing resources on key issues and actions in response to community need and mindful of the directions of other stakeholders.

The profile is a resource to support planning and research. It is a tool for strategic planning, reviewing strategic plans and should be used along-side consideration of the policies and activities of organisations, local, state and federal governments.

The social profile of people with disability includes the following sections:

- What does the data say? The key social indicators for people with disability.
- What do the community and service providers say? A summary of the priority issues people with disability identified in our community engagement.

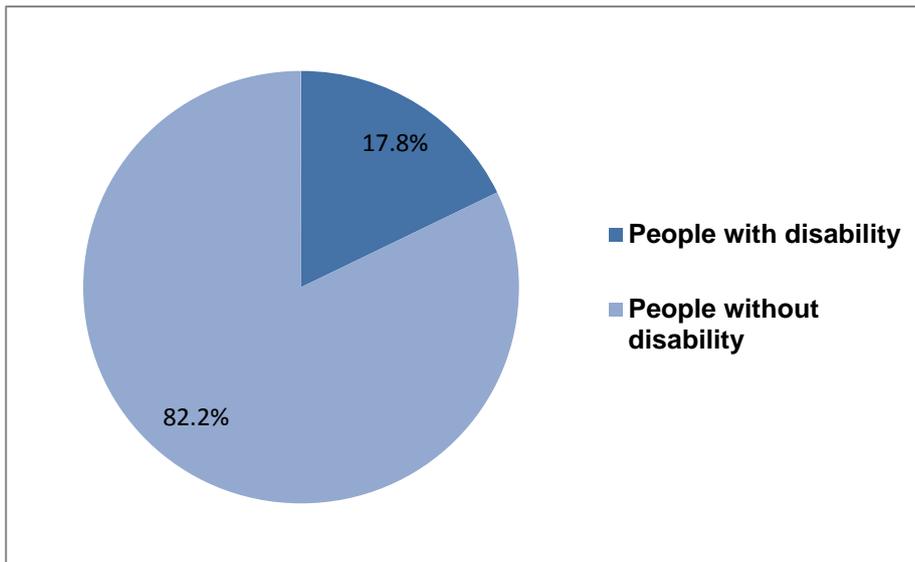
How did we develop the social profile?

The Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 is a key reference document for developing our community strategic plan. It was developed through community engagement and research. We engaged with over 2,155 people who participated in social profile surveys, focus groups, stakeholder forums and service interviews.

The target groups consulted are in line with the New South Wales Department of Local Government mandatory target groups and included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, children, men, older people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse background, women and young people.

Approximately 17.8% of survey participants reported living with disability, compared to the 20% for Blacktown City as a whole.

Figure 1: Survey participants with disability



The survey was provided on-line, used face to face interviews at key festivals and events, distributed through Blacktown City administration, libraries, community organisations, social groups and clubs and was translated into 12 community languages.

A detailed summary of findings is contained in the Community Engagement Report - Blacktown City Social Profile 2016.

We researched key social indicators for the city and were informed, in part, by research from Westir Ltd. A detailed summary of results are contained in the Social Indicator Report - Blacktown City Social Profile 2016.

Additional resources in this series include:

- The Blacktown City Social Profile 2016

The Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 can be found at

<https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/About-Council/Our-city/Blacktown-City-Social-Profile-2016>

- Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 Community Engagement Report
- Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 Social Indicator Report
- Blacktown Precinct - A Social Profile
- Mount Druitt Precinct - A Social Profile
- North West Precinct - A Social Profile
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities - A Social Profile
- Children - A Social Profile
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds - A Social Profile
- Older people - A Social Profile
- Young people - A Social Profile
- Women - A Social Profile.

2. What does the data say?

This section includes Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016 data. This data and analysis was compiled and presented by WESTIR Ltd. using data from .id, (profile.id.com.au, forecast.id.com.au and atlas.id.com.au), ABS Tablebuilder and other sources. Findings for Blacktown City have been benchmarked with Greater Sydney and/or New South Wales where this data has been available.

The report identifies Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data using Statistical level areas and precincts. Statistical level areas mostly align with the precincts identified in Table 1.

Table 1: Statistical local areas and precincts in Blacktown City

Blacktown South West Mount Druitt Precinct	Blacktown South East Blacktown Precinct	Blacktown North North-West Precinct
Bidwill, Blackett, Dean Park, Dharruk, Emerton, Glendenning, Hassall Grove, Hebersham, Lethbridge Park, Minchinbury, Mount Druitt, Oakhurst, Plumpton, Rooty Hill, Ropes Crossing, parts of St Marys, Shalvey, Tregear, Whalan and Willmot.	Arndell Park, Blacktown, Bungarabee, Doonside, Eastern Creek, Huntingwood, Kings Langley, Kings Park, Lalor Park, Marayong, Prospect, Seven Hills, Toongabbie and Woodcroft .	Acacia Gardens, Colebee, Glenwood, Kellyville Ridge, Marsden Park, Parklea, Quakers Hill, Riverstone, Rouse Hill, Schofields, Shanes Park, Stanhope Gardens, The Ponds and Vineyard.

In 2016, Blacktown City was the second largest local government area in New South Wales. It saw the largest increase in number of people between 2006-2016 (68,697) but saw the 10th highest percentage change, increasing by 24.6% behind Camden (59%), Sydney City (36.2%), and so on. There were an estimated 347,591 residents and a projected population of 521,450 by 2036. The city is growing rapidly through urban development in the North West Growth Centre and established centres such as Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Rooty Hill and Seven Hills.

NB: Data in this section compiled from both ABS Estimated Resident Population data and profile.id population forecast data.

2.1 Disability: definition and national snapshot

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible (ABS 2012).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, collects self-reported information from people living with disability. In 2015, this survey found:

- An estimated 4.3 million Australians (or 18.3% of the national population) had a disability – almost one in five. More females than males live with a disability.

- Of those with a disability, 1.4 million had a profound or severe limitation with these core activities, almost 600,000 people had a moderate limitation and 1.4 million had a mild limitation.
- The majority (78.5%) of people with disability reported a physical condition as their main long-term health conditions. The other 21.5% reported mental and behavioural disorders.
- The likelihood of living with a disability increases with age. Around half (50.7%) of older people (aged 65 years or more) had a disability in 2015.
- 2.1 million Australians of working age (15 – 64 years) have disability.
- Of the 523,200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in households in 2015, almost one-quarter (23.9%) reported living with disability. When taking differences in the age structure of the two populations into consideration, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were 1.8 times more likely than non- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be living with disability.

The disability prevalence rate in Australia has remained relatively stable over time, with 18.3% of people reporting disability in 2015, and 18.5% in previous surveys conducted in 2012 and 2009. In this survey, a person has disability if they report they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities.

2.2 Measuring need for assistance in the Census

The ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers is still considered the most comprehensive measure of disability prevalence rates on national and state levels, though the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 'Core Need for Assistance' measure was developed for the 2006 Census to indicate the disability status of people in Australia in a particular area. The purpose of the Core Need for Assistance measure is to identify people with a disability who need assistance in their day to day lives with any or all of the following core activities: self-care; body movements; or communication. The Census uses a set of four questions to capture Core Need of Assistance (ABS 2012).

The Census need for assistance measure is the best indicator available to indicate disability status on a local level, but it does have its limitations and should be treated with caution. For example, a person's reported need for assistance is based on a subjective assessment. In other words, a person with a diagnosed disability may not get assistance with activities or may not see themselves as being disabled. Also, the data breakdown of those who require assistance with communication because of a diagnosed disability versus other reasons such as little or no English proficiency is not publicly available at this time. The Census measure raises an interesting question of how disability is defined in contemporary Australia, and these limitations should be kept in mind when examining the data for Blacktown City.

2.3 Need for assistance – population, age and gender, Blacktown City

In 2016, there were 17,277 people with a need for assistance in Blacktown City. This represents 5.1% of the total Blacktown City usual resident population, slightly higher than Greater Sydney (4.9%).

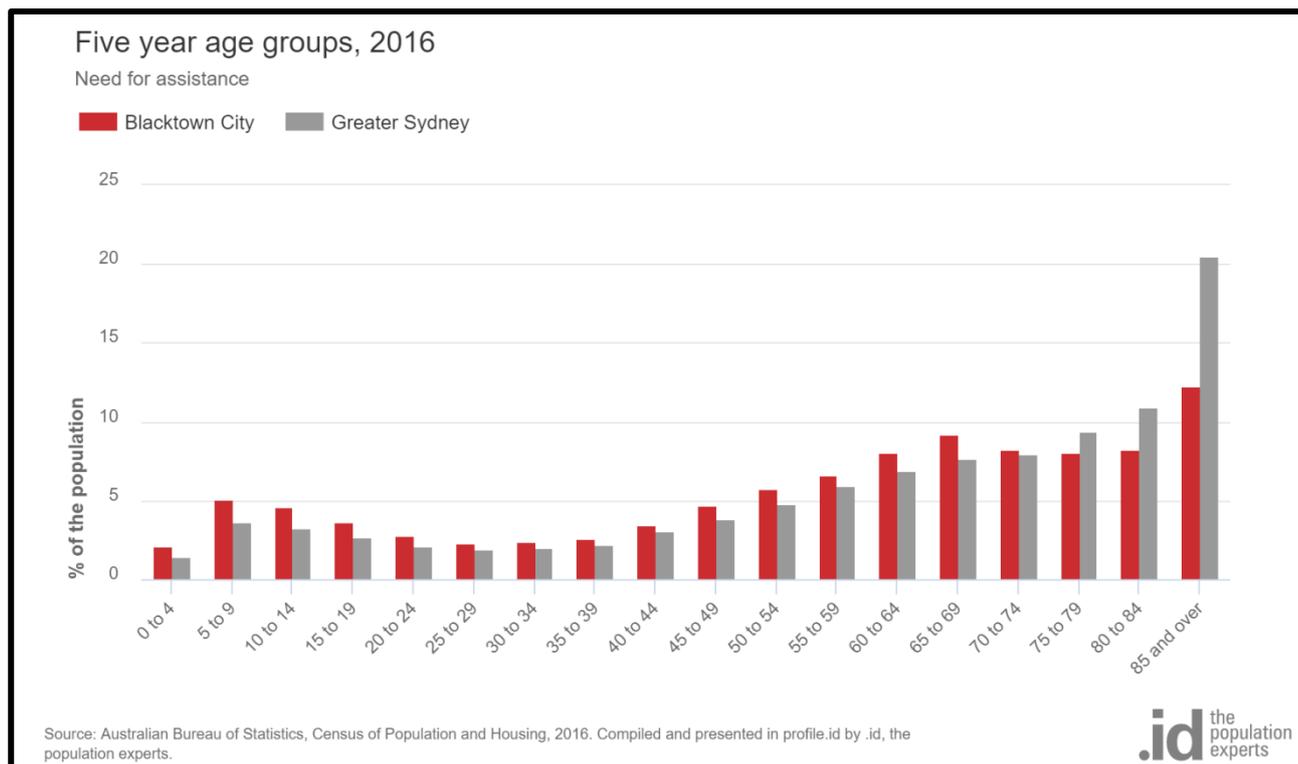
Approximately 11.8% of the population needing assistance were aged 0 to 14 and 45.9% were aged 65 years or more. The need for assistance increases with age, with those aged 85 years or more in Blacktown City making up the largest group in this category (12.3% of those requiring assistance). Overall, the number of people needing assistance in Blacktown City increased by 3,437 people between 2011 and 2016.

Analysis of the population needing assistance in Blacktown City in 2016 shows that there was a higher number of females (9,259, or 5.5% of the female population) than males (8,016, or 4.8% of males) requiring assistance. However, when looking at the age breakdown of each gender, differences appear. A higher number and percentage of males required assistance in the population aged 0-14 years (1420, or 3.6% of males aged 0-14), compared to females (639, or 1.7% of females aged 0-14). For those aged 65 years or older who required assistance, there were more females (4849, or 25.8% of females aged 65+) than males (3093, or 19.4% of males aged 65+).

The Social Health Atlas of Australia (2018) also captures the number of people who have a profound or severe disability and are living in the community. For the 17,000 or more people in Blacktown City who stated they had a disability, it is estimated that 15,854 of those are living in the community.



Figure 2: Need for assistance



The major differences between the age structure of the population needing assistance Blacktown City and Greater Sydney from 2011 to 2016 were:

- a larger percentage of people aged 65 to 69 (9.2% compared to 7.7%)
- a larger percentage of people aged 5 to 9 (5.1% compared to 3.6%)
- a smaller percentage of people aged 85 and over (12.3% compared to 20.5%)
- a smaller percentage of people aged 80 to 84 (8.2% compared to 10.9%).

From 2011 to 2016, Blacktown City's population needing assistance increased by 3,437 people (24.8%). This represents an average annual population change of 4.54% per year over the period.

The largest changes in age structure of the population needing assistance in this area between 2011 and 2016 were in the age groups:

- 65 to 69 (+509 persons)
- 85 and over (+445 persons)
- 70 to 74 (+367 persons)
- 75 to 79 (+223 persons).

Table 2: People with a need for assistance, by age groups

Blacktown City - need for assistance	2016			2011			Change 2011 to 2016
	Five year age groups (years)	Number	Blacktown City %	Greater Sydney %	Number	Blacktown City %	
0 to 4	371	2.1	1.4	284	2.1	1.4	+87
5 to 9	884	5.1	3.6	690	5.0	3.3	+194
10 to 14	800	4.6	3.2	617	4.5	3.0	+183
15 to 19	627	3.6	2.7	468	3.4	2.3	+159
20 to 24	475	2.7	2.1	312	2.3	1.8	+163
25 to 29	391	2.3	1.9	280	2.0	1.8	+111
30 to 34	411	2.4	2	341	2.5	1.9	+70
35 to 39	447	2.6	2.2	359	2.6	2.4	+88
40 to 44	598	3.5	3.1	510	3.7	3.1	+88
45 to 49	817	4.7	3.8	651	4.7	4.0	+166
50 to 54	992	5.7	4.8	807	5.8	5.2	+185
55 to 59	1,137	6.6	5.9	1,006	7.3	5.9	+131
60 to 64	1,391	8.1	6.9	1,250	9.0	7.3	+141
65 to 69	1,591	9.2	7.7	1,082	7.8	6.7	+509
70 to 74	1,415	8.2	7.9	1,048	7.6	7.7	+367
75 to 79	1,382	8	9.4	1,159	8.4	9.5	+223
80 to 84	1,425	8.2	10.9	1,298	9.4	12.1	+127
85 and over	2,123	12.3	20.5	1,678	12.1	20.4	+445
Total people	17,277	100.0	100.0	13,840	100.0	100.0	+3,437

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016. Compiled and presented by .id, the population experts. Place of usual residence data.

2.4 Income

Across Australia, people with disability are twice as likely to be in the bottom 20% of gross household incomes. Past reports by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015) show that over 40% of those with disability rely on a government pension or benefit as the main source of income, with reliance on government pension or benefit increasing as the severity of disability increases.

Analysis of household income of those who need assistance in Blacktown City in 2016 shows that residents who need assistance are more likely to have a low household income (less than \$650 per week) and less likely to have a high household income (\$2,000 or more per week) than residents who do not need assistance. Specifically, 18.1% of residents that required assistance in 2016 stated that they earned a low household income (compared to 8.0% of residents who did not require assistance) and 22.9% stated that they earned a high household income (compared to 47.0% of residents who did not require assistance).

2.5 Need for assistance by household type and housing tenure

In 2016, 37.8% of people reporting a need for assistance were in couple families with children, and 21.2% were in one-parent families, compared with 30.7% and 16.4% respectively for Greater Sydney. Overall, the proportion of people with a need for assistance in lone person households was 10.2% compared to 14.0% in Greater Sydney while the proportion in couples without children was 17.6% compared to 19.4% in Greater Sydney.

Between 2011 and 2016, the largest changes in the family/household types of people reporting a need for assistance in Blacktown City were:

- couples with children (+1,638 persons)
- one parent family (+757 persons)
- couple without children (+495 persons)
- lone person household (+295 persons).



Table 3: Need for assistance by household type, 2006, 2011

Blacktown City - need for assistance	2016			2011			Change
Households by type	Number	Blacktown City (% of need for assistance population)	Greater Sydney (% of need for assistance population)	Number	Blacktown City (% of need for assistance population)	Greater Sydney (% of need for assistance population)	2011 to 2016
Couple with children	6,509	37.8%	30.7%	4,871	35.3%	28.5%	+1,638
Couple without children	3,029	17.6%	19.4%	2,534	18.3%	20.1%	+495
One parent family	3,650	21.2%	16.4%	2,893	20.9%	15.9%	+757
Other family	285	1.7%	1.4%	198	1.4%	1.2%	+87
Group household	473	2.7%	2.5%	359	2.6%	2.5%	+114
Lone person household	1,762	10.2%	14.0%	1,467	10.6%	14.4%	+295
Other non-classifiable household/visitors/not applicable	1,525	8.8%	15.5%	1,495	10.8%	17.5%	+30
Total people counted in private dwellings	17,233	100.0%	100.0%	13,817	100.0%	100.0%	+3,416

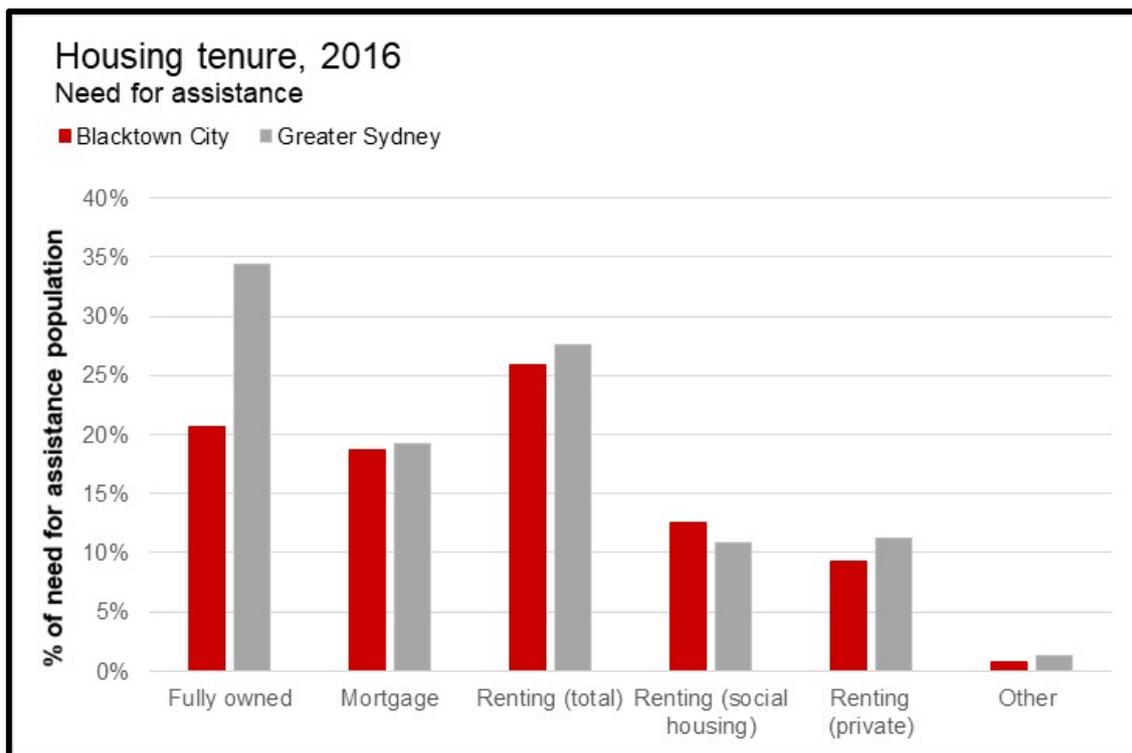
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016. Place of enumeration data.

In 2016, 39.3% of people reporting a need for assistance were in households that were fully owned or owned with a mortgage, 9.3% were renting privately and 12.5% were in social housing. This compares to 53.7%, 11.2% and 10.8% respectively for Greater Sydney. This means there was a smaller proportion of people with a need for assistance in Blacktown households who owned or were purchasing a dwelling or renting privately and a larger proportion in social housing compared to comparable Greater Sydney households.

The major changes in housing tenure categories of people reporting a need for assistance in Blacktown City between 2011 and 2016 were as follows:

- renting – social housing (+1,564 persons)
- renting – total (+867 persons)
- mortgage (+945 persons)
- fully owned (+844 persons)
- renting – private (-329 persons).

Figure 3: Changes in housing tenure



2.6 Education

People with disability often have restrictions relating to schooling or employment. In 2016, most people needing assistance in Blacktown City stated that their highest level of educational attainment was Year 10 or above (30% of the need for assistance population) followed by Year 9 or below (24.3%). Approximately 4.9% stated that they had a bachelor degree and 1.0% stated that they had a postgraduate degree. When compared to Blacktown City residents who did not need assistance, a lower proportion of those requiring assistance had post-school qualifications and a higher proportion had a secondary education qualification.

2.7 Employment of people with disability

People with disability often have a lower participation in the workforce and higher rates of unemployment compared to people without disability. In 2016, most people 15 years or more requiring assistance in Blacktown City stated that they were not in the labour force (87.5%). For those that were in the labour force, 1,393 stated that they were employed (either full time or part time) and 302 stated that they were unemployed. The unemployment rate for residents requiring assistance was 17.8%, much higher than the overall unemployment rate for Blacktown City (7.3%). The unemployment rate for those requiring assistance in Blacktown City has increased from 16.2% in 2011 to 17.8% in 2016.

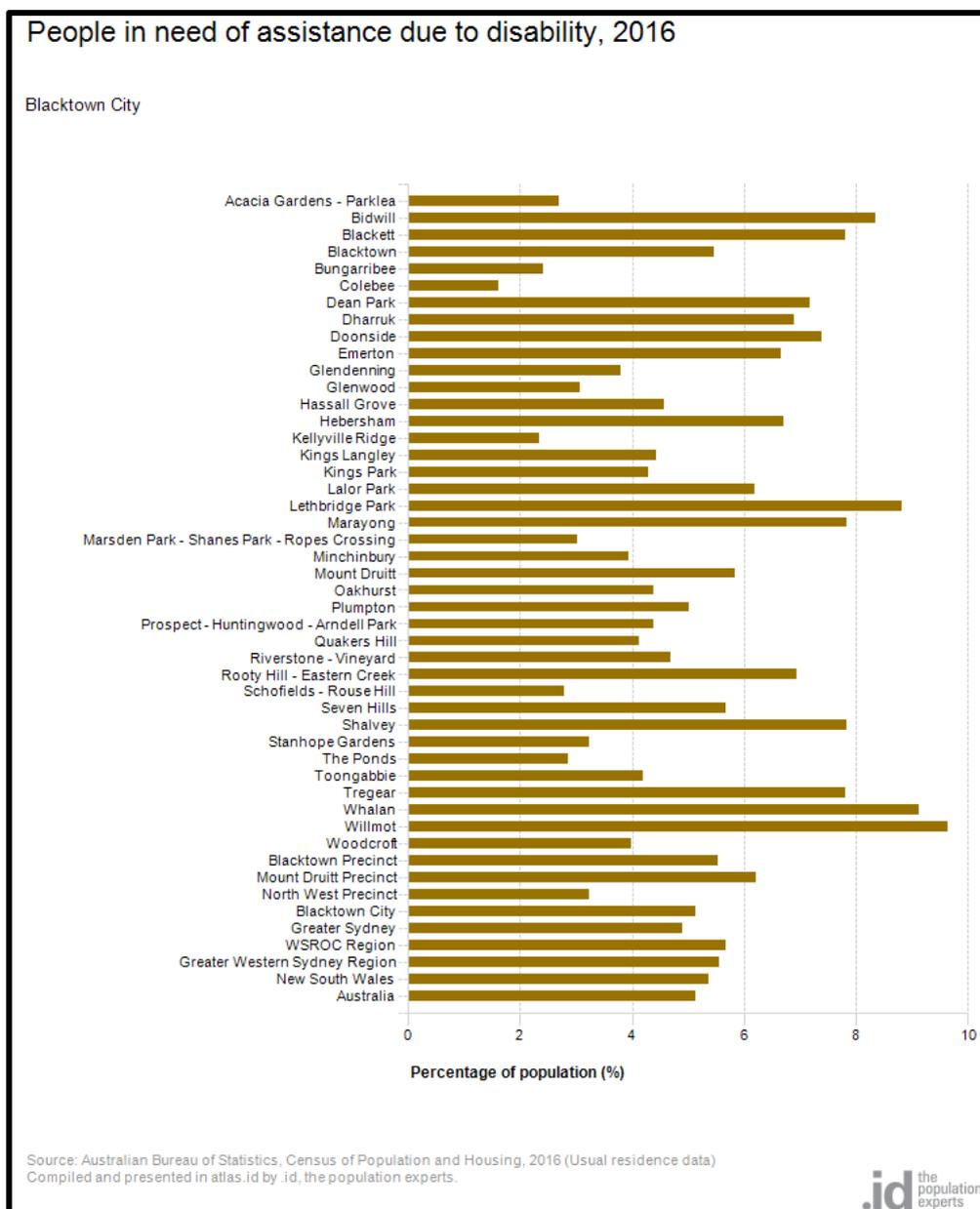
2.8 Where do people with a disability live?

The proportion of people needing assistance in Blacktown City is higher than those needing assistance in Greater Sydney (5.1% and 4.9% respectively). While Blacktown City had a higher proportion of persons in need of assistance, it is important to note that this varied across the City.

Proportions ranged from a low of 1.6% in Colebee to a high of 9.6% in Willmot. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Willmot (9.6%)
- Whalan (9.1%)
- Lethbridge Park (8.8%)
- Bidwill (8.4%)
- Marayong (7.8%).

Figure 4: People in need of assistance due to disability, by suburb



2.9 Income support

Social support is also provided by government which has a responsibility for income support to people who for reasons of age, disability or caring responsibilities, are unable to provide for themselves (either wholly or in part). A look at selected government pensions in September 2016 shows that 7.5% of Blacktown City's estimated resident population received an age pension, 1.6% received a carer payment and 3.5% received a disability support pension. The number and proportion of Blacktown City residents that received aged pensions and carer payments from September 2013 to September 2016 increased, while the number and proportion of those who received disability support pensions decreased slightly.

Table 4: Selected government pensions, number and % of estimated resident population
Selected government pensions, September 2013, September 2016

September 2013			September 2016		
No.	% of estimated resident population (URP)	ERP	No.	% of estimated resident population (URP)	ERP
Age pension					
23,757	7.3%	324,729	26,234	7.5%	347,591
Carer payment					
4,873	1.5%	324,729	5,393	1.6%	347,591
Disability support pension					
11,263	3.5%	324,729	10,283	3.0%	347,591

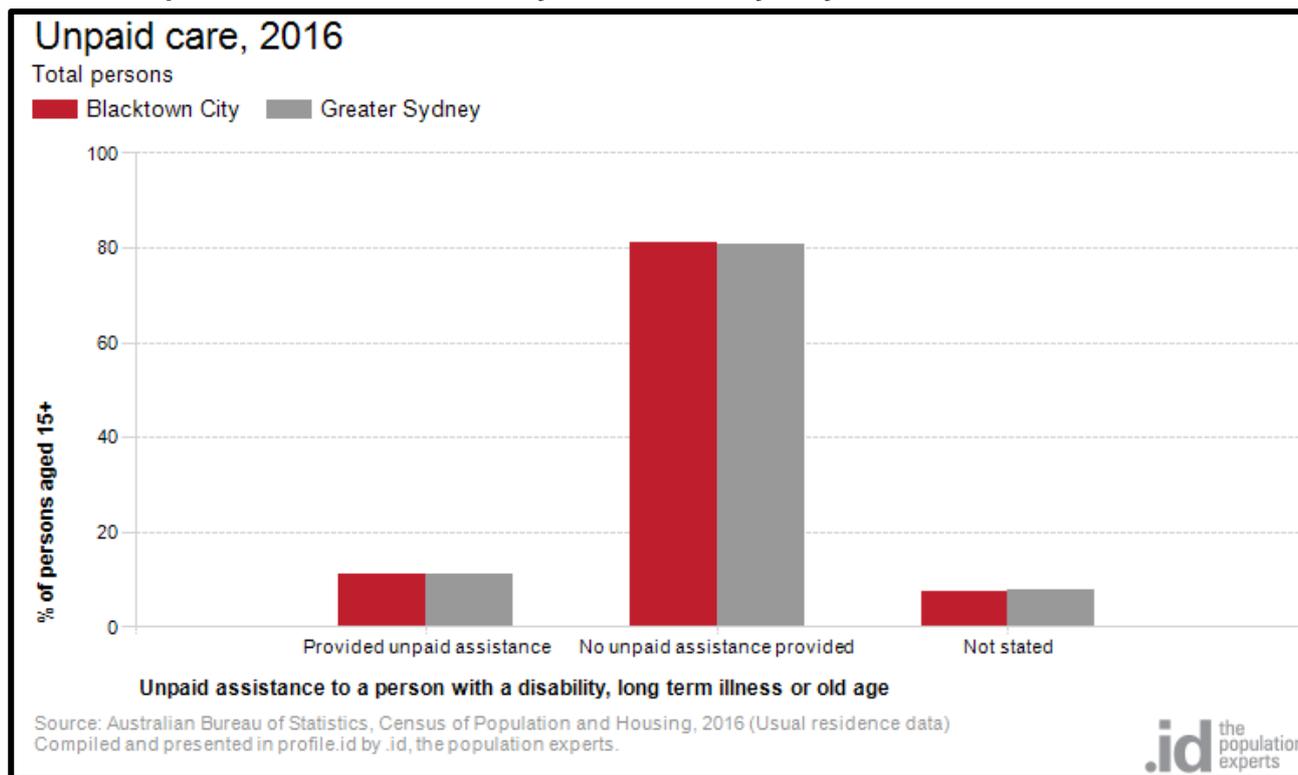
Source: Department of Social Services, Payment Demographic Data, Payment recipients by 2016 Local Government Area and payment type, September 2016 <https://data.gov.au/dataset/dsspayment-demographic-data>

2.10 Carers

In 2016, there were 29,131 carers in Blacktown City that provided unpaid assistance to a person with disability, long term illness or old age. This represented 11.2% of the Blacktown City population (Greater Sydney: 11.1%).

The number of people who provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long-term illness or old age in Blacktown City increased by 4,468 between 2011 and 2016. More females than males provided unpaid assistance in 2016.

Table 5: Unpaid Care in Blacktown City and Greater Sydney



There were 2,195 carers aged 18 to 24 years in Blacktown City providing unpaid assistance in 2016, increasing by 385 carers since 2011. Overall, 6.8% of the 18-24 population of Blacktown City provided unpaid care, higher than the 18-24 year population for NSW as a whole (5.7%).

2.11 Lifestyle

Being active can provide a huge range of positive experiences, make a person feel good, improve their health, and is a great way to relax and socialise. Many people participate in sport to enhance a healthy lifestyle and for the social opportunities it provides. People with disability show they are also keen to participate even though they may experience constraints (Australian Sports Commission 2012).

The most recent ABS General Social Survey (2014) shows that 60.7% of Australians with disability participated in sport or recreation in the last twelve months, lower than the 75.5% of Australians who did not live with a disability.

Compared with the whole population, people with disability participate less than those without a disability. However, the data show that roughly six in ten people with a disability participated in sport and physical recreation activities in the 12 months prior to interview. These results are an encouraging sign that the majority of people with a disability are active.

Leisure describes a wide variety of free time activities including sport, hobbies or simply a walk in the park. People who engage in regular exercise as a form of leisure, experience reduced stress, improved sleeping patterns, improved concentration and a better outlook on life.

Linked to this is the overall access to open space areas that can be used for recreation, exercise and socializing, as well as having environmental and health benefits by providing a contrasting environment for humans, plant and animal life. Access to open space can be impacted by location, proximity, management and design. (Australian Sports Commission 2012)

Residents of Blacktown City value the availability of a wide range of leisure opportunities with the city (Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 - Social Profile Community Engagement Survey 2015).

Having affordable and accessible leisure services in the community increases the opportunities for vulnerable and special need groups to take part. Blacktown City's leisure centres are affordable and accessible for older people, people with a disability, people living on low incomes, young people and families with small children who usually face a number of barriers to taking part in leisure and community activities. (Blacktown City Social Profile 2016 - Social Profile Community Engagement Survey 2015)

2.12 Access to transport

Mobility and transport play an essential role in social, educational and work-related activities and have a direct impact on the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Across our city, there is significant inequity in people's ability to access public transport networks. Transport disadvantage prevents individuals from accessing essential and other services and may lead to social isolation.

Older people, people with disability, families with small children and people on lower incomes all experience transport disadvantage due to factors including affordability, service coverage and physical and geographic barriers. People living in rural and fringe areas face longer distances when using transport services (ABS General Social Survey 2014).

2.13 Social capital for people with disability

Social capital is a term used to describe particular social relationships within a group or community. This includes levels of trust between people; whether they have a shared understanding of how they should behave towards, and care for one another and participation in civic organisations, such as sporting clubs and school councils. It is also used to describe the resources available within communities that are built from networks of mutual support, reciprocity, trust and obligation. It can be accumulated when people interact with each other in families, workplaces, neighbourhoods, local associations and a range of informal and formal meeting places. (ABS, 2000) It can be measured by surveying residents about levels of community belonging, trust, safety, participation and harmony.

Regular community surveys across the city provide a snapshot of community belonging and see how community perceptions vary for each community and target group over time. In previous surveys (2006, 2011), residents from across the city have reported positive levels of 'feeling that they belong to their community'.

During March-May 2015, Blacktown City engaged 2155 residents from across the city in a Social Plan 2016 "Have Your Say" survey. The survey included the following social capital questions:

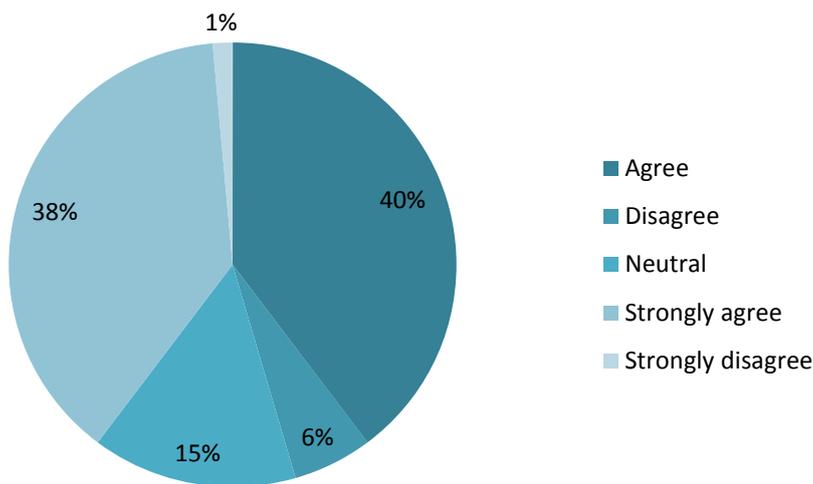
- I feel like I belong in this neighbourhood.
- If you had a problem, could you rely on one of your neighbours to help you?
- I feel safe walking down my street.
- I speak with my neighbours – frequently, sometimes, never.
- How satisfied are you with your local area as a place to live, work and spend time?

The following results are from respondents to the survey who identified as people with disability.

I feel like I belong in this neighbourhood

The majority of participants with disability reported feeling “they belonged in their neighbourhood” (78%), compared to 79% for all participants. This response was higher than in 2011, when 72.2% of people with disability reported feeling “they belonged in their neighbourhood”.

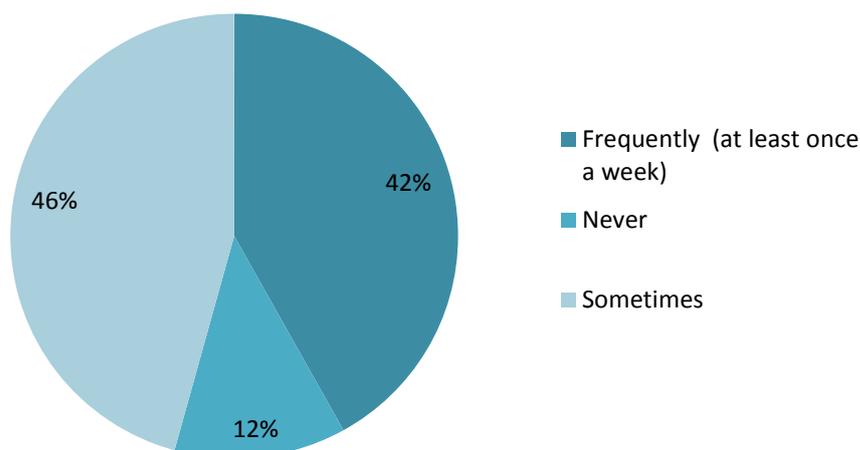
Figure 5: Belonging



Speaking with neighbours

This was the first time this question was included in the survey and it provides a baseline for comparison for future surveys. People with disability were only marginally less likely to speak to a neighbor at least once a week (42%) when compared to all participants (43.1%).

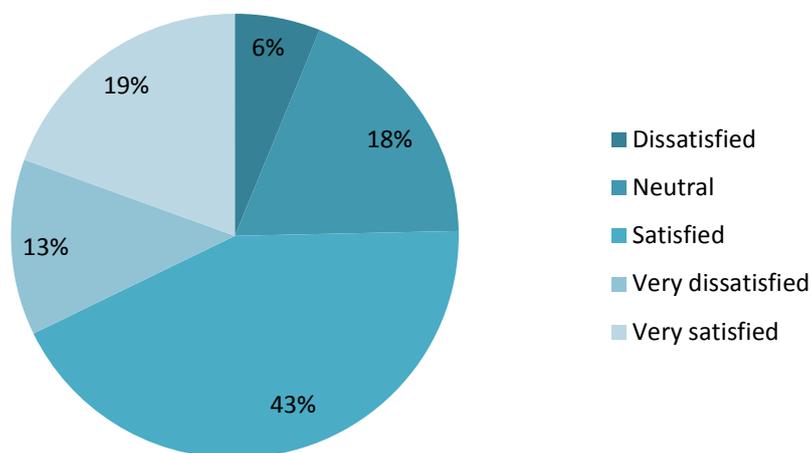
Figure 6: Speaking with neighbours



Satisfaction with neighbourhood

The majority of people with disability were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live work and spend their time (43%) compared to 49.2% for all participants. 19% were very satisfied compared with 18.4% of all participants. In 2011, 41.7% were satisfied and 28.3% were very satisfied.

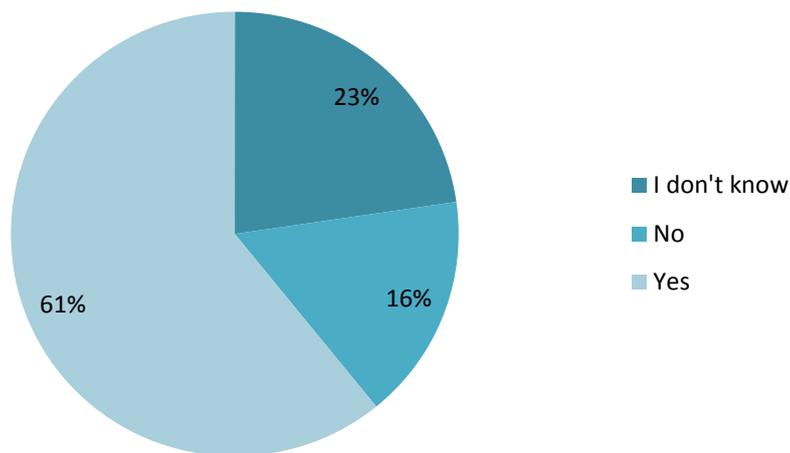
Figure 7: Satisfied with their local neighbourhood



If you had a problem, could you rely on a neighbour for help?

The majority (61%) reported being able to “rely on a neighbour for help with a problem”. This compared to 64.1 % for all participants. In 2011, 70.6% said they could rely on a neighbour.

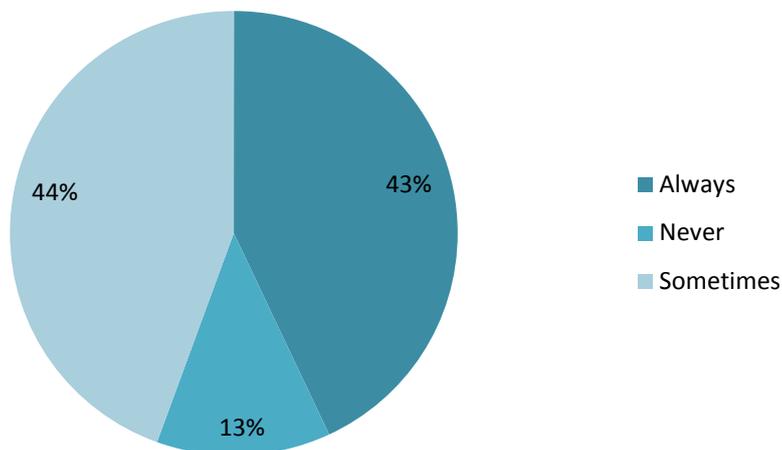
Figure 8: Could you rely on neighbours?



Feeling safe walking down their street

This was the first time this question was included in the survey and it provides a baseline for comparison for future surveys. Less people with disability (44%) reported always feeling safe walking down their street compared to 48.8% for all participants. People with disability had a higher rate of “never” feeling safe (13%) when compared to all participants (6%)

Figure 9: Perceptions of safety



3. What do the community and service providers say?

The results of our community engagement (with residents, workers and service providers) are presented using the World Health Organisation Social Determinants of Health (Wilkinson & Marmot 2003). The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between communities.

The key aspects of social and economic circumstances affecting social wellbeing and health: The social gradient, stress, early life, social exclusion, work, unemployment, social support, addiction food and transport. As a result of the community engagement, we have included an eleventh priority area focussing on how services can be enhanced or supported to improve outcomes for the community: service development.

3.1 Social gradient

- Residents with a disability say accommodation, having a home, living close to work, supported accommodation and having carers that provide support are all important.
- Residents say there are cost barriers when living on a disability pension, for example, “paying bills, buying things you need”, this often means people go without the things they need or want.

3.2 Stress

- There are a high number of residents who identify that the convenience and availability of shops and services is the thing they like best about living in the city.
- Many residents say there are plenty of recreational, sporting, social, religious or cultural activities, with lots of things for different age groups and backgrounds.
- Many residents report that they like where they live because it is quiet but this is matched equally by residents who dislike the noises in their neighbourhoods.
- Residents are concerned about antisocial behaviour in their neighbourhoods, around property, drinking alcohol, drug-taking and swearing).
- There is wide spread concern that many of our streets are untidy and dirty with rubbish and litter.
- There are community perceptions of high crime levels which makes community safety a real concern.
- People are concerned about the maintenance of our parks, equipment, roads, footpaths, trees and waterways.
- Services are concerned about social isolation and mental illness for those with disability.

3.3 Early life

- Services note the importance of children to have opportunities to be involved in recreational activities.

3.4 Social exclusion

- Residents report access for people with limited mobility and in wheelchairs is still challenging in many areas of the city.
- Discrimination continues to be an issue for some of our residents with a disability.
- Services note a lack of understanding of the issues surrounding vision impairment.
- Young people with a disability want to be included into mainstream services.
- Services note social exclusion can be more than just physical access and needs. It also includes involving and employing people with a disability across all spectrums of activities and community consultations.

3.5 Work

- Residents report access for people with limited mobility and in wheelchairs is still a barrier to getting a job.
- Residents and services note work provides an opportunity to be occupied, have job satisfaction and a social outlet. It also provides money and income.

3.6 Unemployment

- Employment services say there is a double disadvantage experienced by unemployed people with a disability.

3.7 Social support

- Many residents report that their neighbourhood is a friendly place with community spirit.
- Services say there are great disability services that respond to needs, provide a network of support, teach people with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities, safety in the community and in the home.

3.8 Addiction

- Not reported in community engagement.

3.9 Food

- Not reported in community engagement.

3.10 Transport

- People with disability say they have great difficulties getting around as either pedestrians or public transport users because the physical environment is often full of obstacles and directional signage is not useful for the vision impaired.
- There are an equal number of residents who report that they like the access to public transport and those who report the lack of reliable, accessible and affordable public transport (not enough services, access to bus, trains).
- Some residents say they lack the confidence to use public transport and need support
- There is wide spread concern about speeding vehicles on local roads and what is perceived as a 'hoon' culture amongst some drivers in our community.
- There is widespread concern about traffic especially issues with congestion.

3.11 Service development

- Most services say that they are at capacity and do not have the resources to meet residents' needs.
- Many services report facing uncertainty in regards of funding. This is impacting on service provision, clients and staff.
- There is some apprehension from disability services that new funding models will reduce client focus (National Disability Insurance Scheme).
- Services are concerned that the competitive tender funding model is seeing organisations working against each other and reducing partnership approaches.
- The changes in funding models particularly impacts smaller not for profit organisations.
- Services for older people provided by Home and Community Care say there needs to be greater funding in the city for aged day care centres, dementia support and community aged care packages.
- Service interviews with local organisations shows a high staff turn-over in community services due to both the aging workforce and uncertainty of the sector.
- Job certainty is a real concern with many staff on contracts until changes in funding models is completed by the state government.

- Many organisations are concerned about the stress on staff having to 'do more with less', an impact of funding changes and the uncertainty in the sector.
- There continue to be challenges on sharing information with the community about the services available to them. This particularly impacts those who are disengaged and isolated.
- The need for information in community languages.
- The sector is seeing big changes, particularly in the models of care. While these will improve service to clients the changes are challenging to manage.
- It is challenging for services to keep up with sector changes and changing government priorities. This is made more difficult as there is very little information available from funding departments.
- The challenges of engaging clients when there are system changes that will affect them and workers is unaware of what the future holds.

