

# 2025 Annual Community Survey

*Survey Findings  
Report*





## *Acknowledgement of Country*

In the spirit of reconciliation, Richmond Community Services Inc. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Western Sydney Regional Information and Research Service (WESTIR) Limited also acknowledges the Burramattagal People of the Dharug Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work. We express our gratitude for their ongoing care of the country.

## Information on funding

RCSI receives partial funding through the Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) program, managed by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). WESTIR Ltd is also supported through the TEI program.

# Introduction

Richmond Community Services Inc. (RCSI) is a community-based, non-profit organisation supporting the people in the Hawkesbury. It provides various supports and activities for local residents, including for children, families and senior citizens.

This report presents the findings of the 2025 Annual Survey conducted by RCSI. The RCSI conducts an annual survey to understand the growing needs of people living in the Hawkesbury Local Government Area (LGA), as well as community engagement with RCSI activities over time. The survey will support RCSI to improve its community engagement and priorities.

This report does not include demographic information of the Hawkesbury LGA from the 2021 Census, as these details were already outlined in the 2024 RCSI Annual Survey Report and remain unchanged. For this information, please refer to the 2024 Annual Survey Report, published in April 2025.<sup>1</sup>

## 2025 Annual Survey results

A total of 89 **community members** participated in the 2025 annual community survey. This is fewer than that of 110 in 2024. **Some new questions were introduced into the 2025 survey.** These questions asked about the suburbs participants live in, their preferences about the Hawkesbury LGA, their cultural identity, the languages spoken at home and whether the participants were born overseas. **Please see Appendix 1 for the complete list of 2025 survey questions.**

The following sections present the RCSI annual survey results in detail.

### Demographics

**Almost all survey participants** (89.9%, or 80 participants) **live in the Hawkesbury LGA**, with only a few not living in the LGA (7.9%, or 7 participants). Some participants did not respond to the question about where they live (2.2%, or 2 participants).

The survey included participants from different suburbs. For the first time, the survey asked the participants, **'What Suburb do you live in?'** The largest group of participants was from Richmond (21.3%, or 19 participants), followed by **North Richmond** (11.2%, or 10 participants) and **Hobartville** (11.2%, or 10 participants).

**An overwhelming majority** of participants said they like living in the Hawkesbury LGA (93.3%, or 83 participants), with only a few not like living in the LGA (2.2%, or 2 participants) and some not responding to the question (4.5%, or 4 participants). This is also the new question introduced into the 2025 survey.

1: Please see <https://www.westir.org.au/publication/richmond-community-services-inc-2024-annual-community-survey-findings-report-april-2025/> for more details.

## Living in the LGA

The word cloud below shows what the participants have shared they like about living in the LGA. Larger text size indicates the most repeated responses.

**Figure 1: What participants shared they like about living in the LGA**



Participants were asked to list up to three things they liked and what they would like to change about living in the Hawkesbury LGA. Regarding what they liked, **'Friendly people'**, **'Country feel'**, and **'Community'** were the three most recurring words used by the participants regarding their preference for living in the community.

On the other hand, the **participants would like to change the following in the LGA.** **The bigger circles indicate the most repeated responses** from the participants.

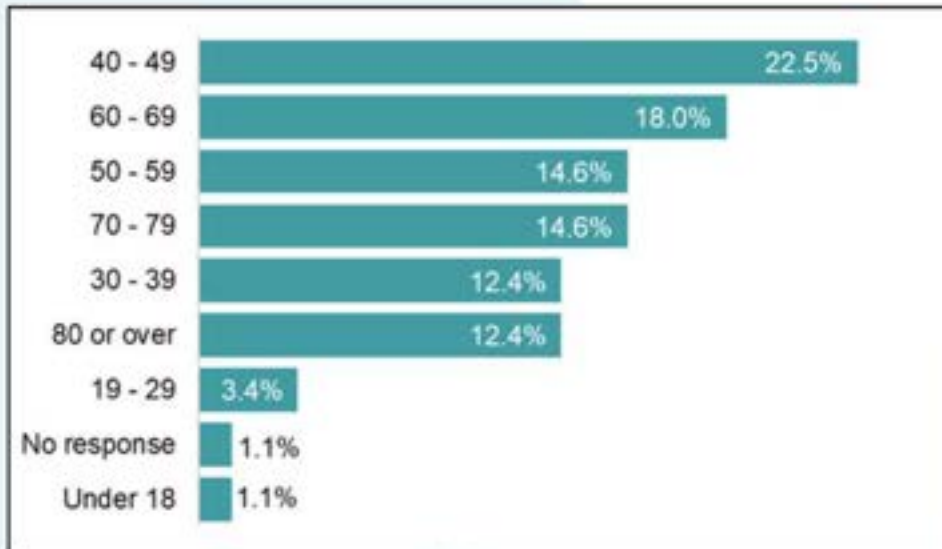
Figure 2: Changes participants would like to see in their LGA



The **top three changes** participants would like to see in the LGA are: **stopping future development, providing more support for vulnerable communities, and addressing traffic issues.**

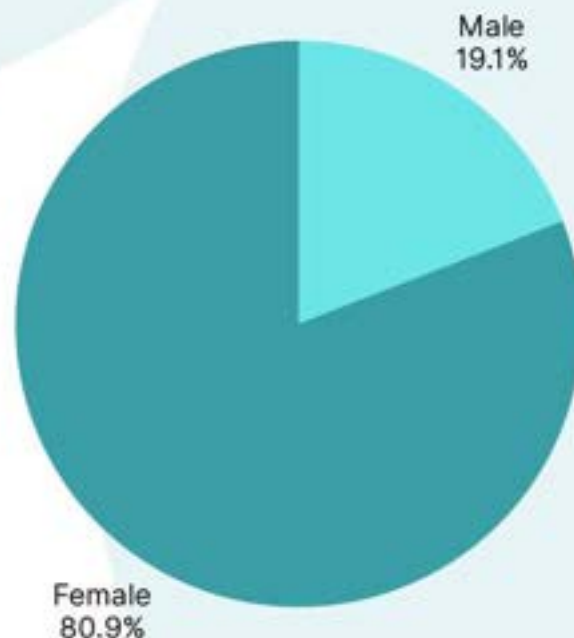
Regarding age groups, the most common age groups among participants were between **40-49** (22.5%, or 20 participants), **60-69** (18.0%, or 16 participants), and **50-59** (14.6%, or 13 participants) years of age. Youths under 30 years of age have very limited representation in the survey (4.5%, or 4 participants).

**Figure 3: Age groups of the participants**



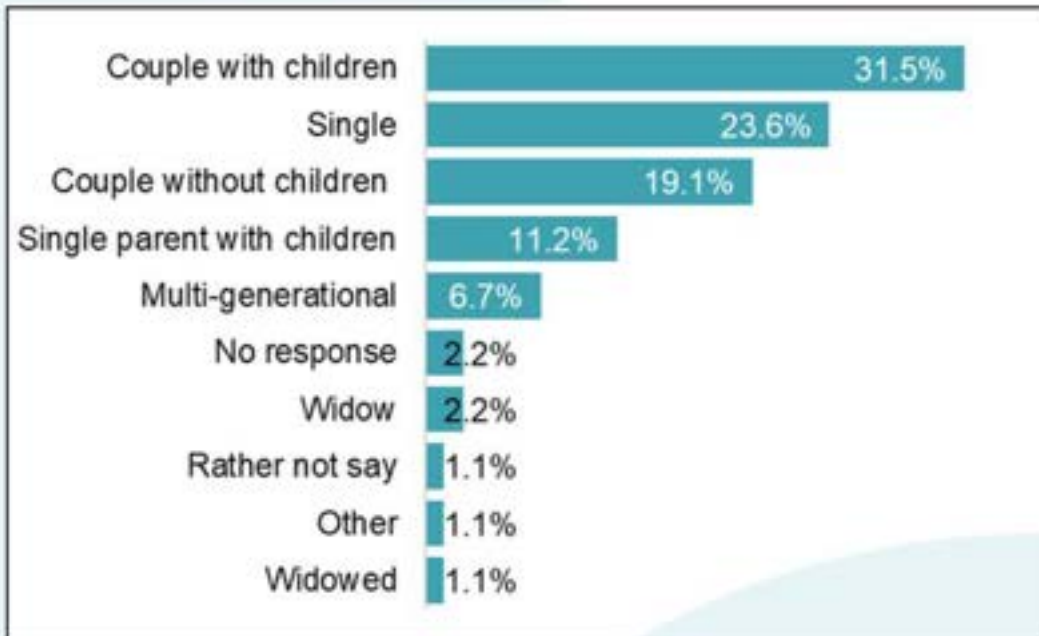
The **majority of the survey participants identified as female** (80.9%, or 72 participants), while only a **few identified as male** (19.1%, or 17 participants).

**Figure 4: Gender of the participants**



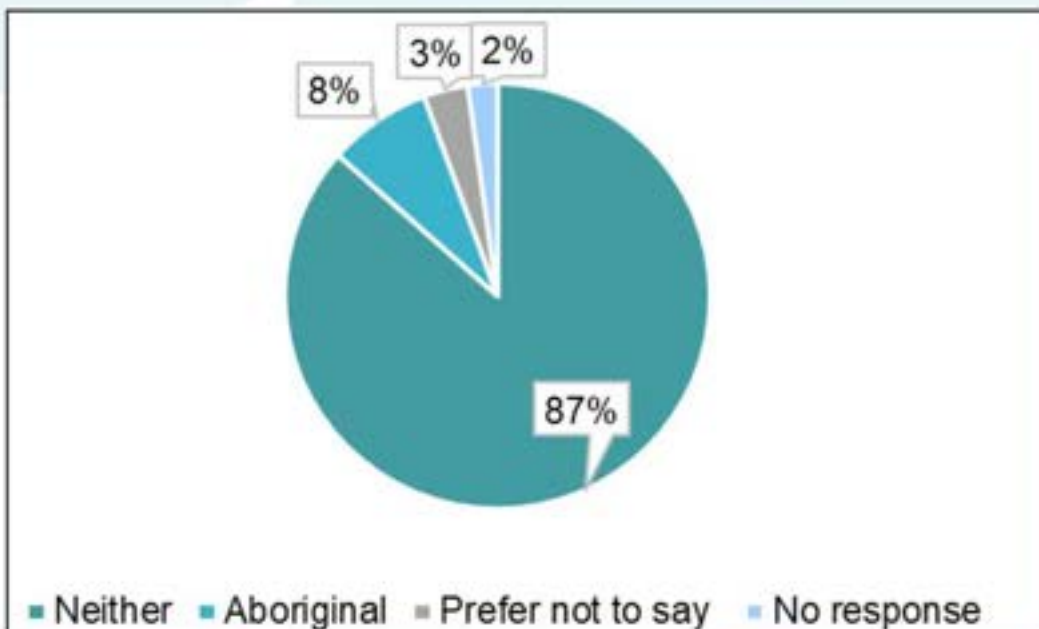
The household composition shows that **most of the participants were couples with children** (31.5%, or 28 participants). This was **followed by singles** (23.6%, or 21 participants) and **couples without children** (19.1%, or 17 participants).

**Figure 5: Household composition of participants**



**Regarding Indigenous status, 7 participants identified themselves as being Aboriginal (7.9%).** Some participants did not disclose their cultural identity (3.4%, or 3 participants) and while others left this unanswered (2.2%, or 2 participants). Therefore, 86.5% (being 77 participants) did not identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

**Figure 6: Aboriginality of the participants**

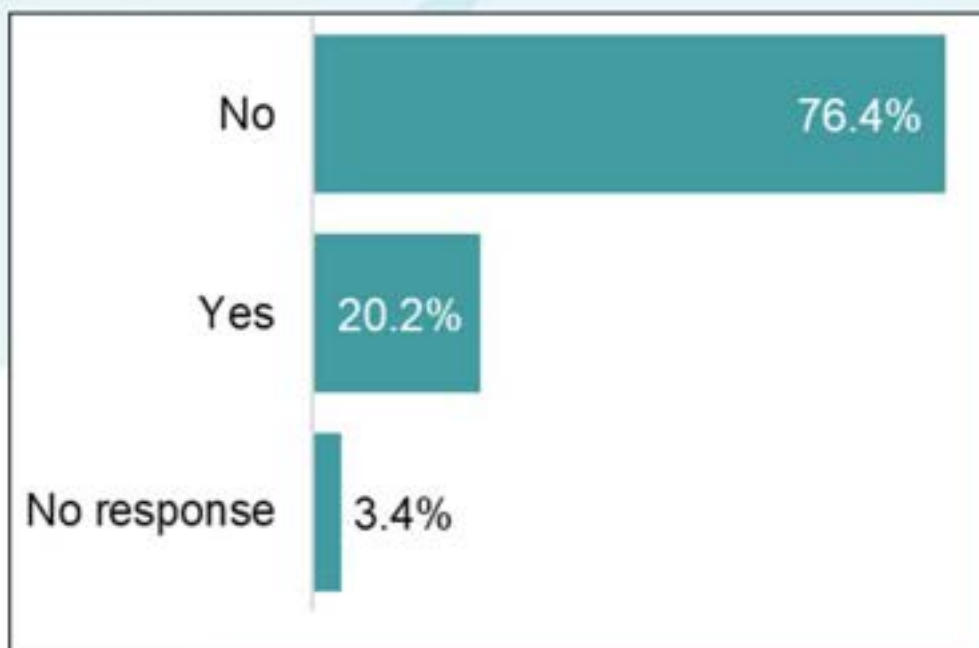


The 2025 survey asked participants about their cultural background. The **majority of the participants (73.0%, or 65 participants) did not identify as being from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background**, while only some of the participants were from a CALD background (12.4%, or 11) and some preferred not to respond (14.6%, or 13) to this question.

A **quarter of the participants said they do not speak any language other than English at home (27.0%, or 24 participants)**. **Only some of the participants (10.1%, or 9 participants) speak languages other than English**, including Australian Sign Language. This is also a newly introduced question in this survey. Half of the participants chose not to respond to this question (50.6%, or 45 participants).

**For the first time, the survey also asked participants, 'Were you born overseas?'** The majority of the participants were born in Australia (76.4%, or 68 participants), while some were born overseas (20.2%, or 18 participants). Some of the participants (3.4%, or 3 participants) chose not to answer this question.

**Figure 7: Whether participants were born overseas?**

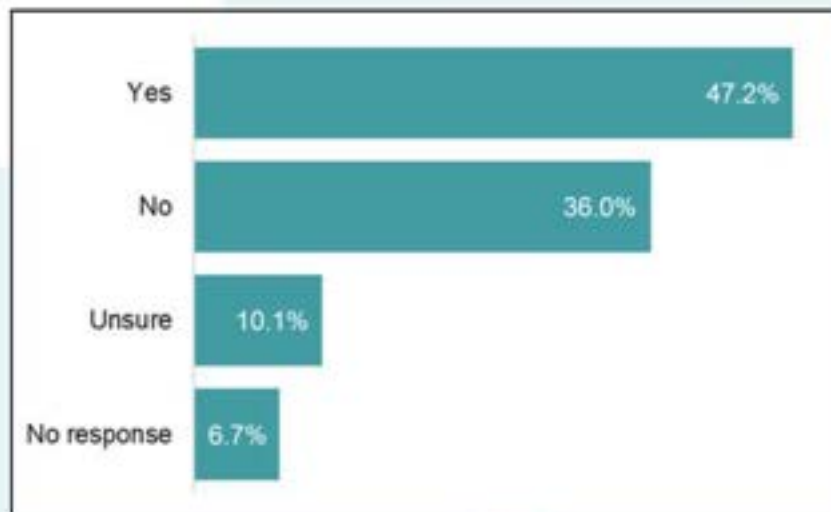


## Community participation

Almost half of the participants (46.1%, or 41 participants) **said they take part in community activities either weekly or monthly**. A further 33.7% (30 participants) participate **occasionally**, only a few times a year. Smaller groups reported rarely participating (12.4%, or 11 participants), never participating (2.2%, or 2 participants), or chose not to answer this question (5.6%, or 5 people).

**Regarding participation in the RCSI activities, almost half of the participants participated** (47.2%, or 42 participants). In contrast, a sizable proportion (36.0%, or 32 participants) reported not participating. Some of the participants were unsure about their participation (10.1%, or 9 participants), and a few did not respond to the question (6.7%, or 6 participants).

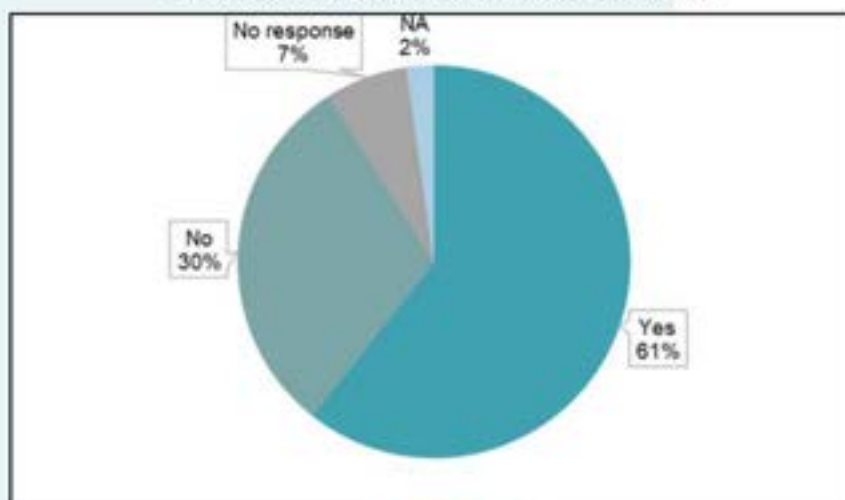
**Figure 8: Participation in the RCSI activities**



## Cost of living

Cost-of-living pressure is truly obvious among the participants. **More than half of the participants were impacted by cost-of-living pressures in their day-to-day activities** (60.7%, or 54 participants). Some of the participants said they were not affected by cost-of-living pressures (30.3%, or 27 participants), while others chose not to answer (6.7%, or 6 participants).

**Figure 9: Impacted by the cost of living**



Many participants reported that the **rising cost of living continues to affect all aspects of their daily lives, limiting their ability to afford anything beyond essential needs.** Repeated financial stressors were the **increased prices for groceries, fuel, and household bills.** The overall **impact** described by participants **reflects increasing isolation, reduced outdoor activities, and growing challenges in maintaining well-being.**

Other impacts noted by the participants were:

- Difficulties in saving money,
- Fewer social and recreational activities, including for children,
- Changes in shopping preferences,
- Unable to afford to go out for dinner,
- Reduced participation in community events due to affordability,
- Struggling to keep up with bills and essential expenses,
- Having to sell the house and relocate, and
- Relying only on essential purchases and cutting back on groceries.

## Parenting challenges and needs

Of the 89 participants, **38 participants have children** (28 were couples with children and 10 were single parents with children). The parenting challenges noted by these survey participants are,



Caring for young boys living with mental health issues (such as impulse control and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, ADHD)



Being a single mother, all income goes to care for the children.



Being unable to afford their children's needs. The cost of living has a direct impact on this.

## Participants' reflection

The following points are **participants' reflections on how RCSI could further support them** in addressing the challenges they are experiencing.



Conducting parenting courses, young parental workshops and school holiday activities



Be aware of the need for support for parents of adolescents



Food and financial support



After-school programs for parents and kids



Supporting children with ADHD through education and entering the workforce



Music lessons, art, and writing

## Community vision

As in the previous year, this year's survey also asked participants what kind of community they envisioned living in. The word cloud below shows the **kind of community participants are envisioning**. The bigger words represent the most repeated responses by the participants.

**Figure 10: Kind of community the participants are envisioning**



**'Connected', 'Caring', 'Kind', 'Inclusive' and 'Friendly'** were the five most common words that appeared in the responses about what participants shared on envisioning their community.

## The role of RCSI

The survey asked how RCSI could support the participants and their families in bringing their vision to life. Survey responses showed that community members want RCSI to continue its strong community presence but suggest they could benefit more through social connections, youth and family support, inclusive activities, and local advocacy. **Most of the participants expressed high satisfaction with current RCSI services** and encouraged RCSI to maintain and build on its existing strengths.

### Key suggestions from participants included:

- **More social connection opportunities:** mothers' groups, training, art activities, volunteering, after-hour activities, movies in the park, and local community events that bring people together.
- **Family-centred support:** parent education on adolescents dealing with mental health challenges, suitable housing, helping older parents, supporting multiple families, knowledge about women's health, free courses, family events, and more kids' events on holidays.
- **Inclusive activities:** environmental education, support for older residents, and provision of Auslan interpreters where needed.
- **Local advocacy:** lower council rates, cost-of-living pressures, and support for smaller communities.
- **Continuation of valued services:** many participants praised current programs and encouraged RCSI to keep delivering events, partnerships, and community engagement activities.

## Feedback

Overall, participants expressed strong appreciation for Richmond Community Services Inc., valuing the friendliness of staff, the quality of current programs, and the organisation's community presence, while offering a few suggestions.

The key suggestions are:

Continue or expand events such as morning tea activities at no or minimal costs to the community, chair yoga, and school holiday workshops

Offer more opportunities to learn about local history, housing and property in the Hawkesbury

Encourage collaboration between local groups (e.g., RCSI, HNA, CWA, RSL Sub-Branch)

And provide options for people who wish to join or be more involved in community initiatives

## Conclusion

The 2025 RCSI annual survey highlights the strong connection participants have with their local community and their continued value towards the RCSI's programs and services. Most participants expressed satisfaction with their local area, appreciating the community spirit, rural lifestyle, and available amenities. Meanwhile, challenges such as cost-of-living pressures, parenting demands, and accessibility issues were evident, particularly among younger families and single parents.

The survey participants envision a community that is inclusive, supportive, and connected, and they see RCSI as a gateway to achieving this vision. Key suggestions outlined included expanding social connections, family-centred support, accessible programs, advocacy for local issues, and continuing valued services. These insights provide clear guidance for RCSI to maintain its strong community presence while addressing the community's growing needs.

## 2026 RCSI Annual Survey

Our 2026 annual survey will be announced mid-next year. Keep an eye on our websites and social media pages. Your participation helps us hear your reflections on how we can better serve you each year.

# Appendix 1: RCSI 2025 Annual Survey Questions

1. Do you live in the Hawkesbury LGA?
2. What Suburb do you live in? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
3. Do you like living in the Hawkesbury LGA? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
4. What are the things you like and what would you like to change? (list up to three) **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
5. How old are you?
6. How do you identify?
7. Household Composition
8. Do you identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?
9. Do you identify as having a CALD background? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
10. Do you speak another language at home? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
11. Were you born overseas? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
- 11.1. If yes, what country? **(new question introduced in 2025 survey)**
12. How often do you participate in community events or activities?
13. Have you participated in an activity at Richmond Community Services?
14. Has the rising cost of living impacted you or your family's day-to-day activities?
- 14.1 If yes, please explain how?
15. Are there any parenting challenges you are experiencing that Richmond Community Services could support you with?
16. What is your vision for the kind of community you want to live in?'
17. How could Richmond Community Services support you and your family to bring your vision to life?
18. Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. Any further comments or feedback?

**Making a  
*difference***



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