

# SNOWY VALLEYS COUNCIL

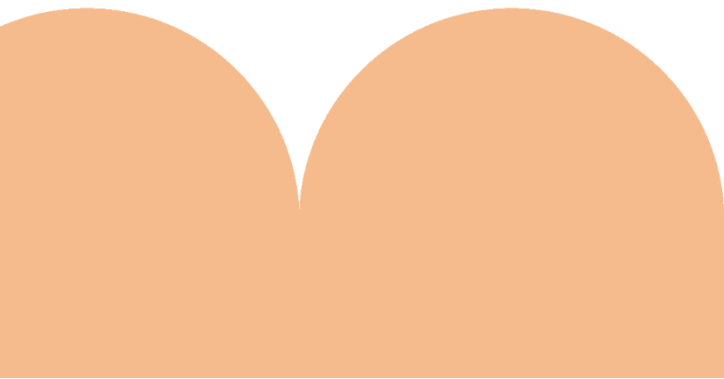
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Community Engagement  
Report, June 2024.



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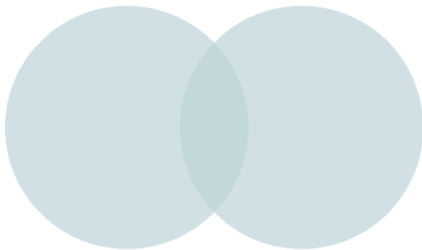
Towards 2042, Stage 1 Community Engagement Report

**Prepared for** Canberra Region Joint Organisation  
**Date** June 2024  
**Version** v1.0 FINAL

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Projectura acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and recognise their ongoing connection to the Wiradjuri and Yuin land and waterways.

We recognise the Ngunnawal People, Ngarigo People, Namadgi People, Ngarigo People, Walbanga People, Walgalu People, Murramurang People, Djiringanj People, Gandangara People, and Bemerangal People.

We also recognise the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the region who make up the vibrant communities where our organisation visits and works.

Projectura pays respect to the wisdom of Elders, past, present, and emerging and shares a commitment to engaging communities with a spirit of reconciliation and respect.

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## Summary findings

**Snowy Valleys is a rural area in the southwest slopes of New South Wales. With an estimated resident population of 14,935 the Council area covers 8,958 square kilometres. The major centres include Tumut and Tumbarumba along with the towns and villages of Adelong, Batlow, Brungle, Jingellic, Khancoban, Rosewood and Talbingo. The area is the western gateway to the Australian Alps with the primary industries being agriculture, forestry and timber processing and electricity generation.**

A total of 458 Snowy Valleys residents participated in the Towards 2042 Stage 1 engagement from 1 February and 15 March 2024. People had their say across several methods including an online survey, discussion guides, drawing sheets, pop ups, the Regional Wellbeing Survey, and submissions.

The engagement was essentially focused on four questions. Where are we now, where do we want to be, how will we get there and when will we know we have arrived.

### Engagement findings

A high level summary of findings is provided below.

- There was a good representation from people aged 35 to 84 years, with people aged 34 years and under, and over 85 years underrepresented.
- Women provided more feedback (58.4 percent) than men (37.7 percent). Urban residents were well represented accounting for 59.2 percent of participants.
- When considering the Community Vision, 31.3 percent of respondents were happy or very happy with it, while a further 42.4 percent felt neutral.
- 63.1 percent of respondents indicated they had read the Community Strategic Plan, of which 58.6 percent agreed with all the themes and a further 20.0 percent agreed with some.
- Across all the themes, 56.6 percent perceived they were either fully or partly on track to achieve the themes. 39.6 percent felt they weren't on track and 3.8 percent were unsure.

- Respondents identified the beautiful natural environment, lifestyle, sense of community, peace and quiet, and sport and recreation as aspects that made their community a great place to live.
- The main challenges facing the community were Council issues, services, housing availability and affordability, amalgamations and boundary alignment, and infrastructure.
- Respondents were asked if they had seen anything in other areas, they thought would enhance the Snowy Valleys. Ideas shared include improved infrastructure, parks and green space, more activities and events, economic growth, and town planning.
- A better Council, economic growth, sport and recreation, health services, and infrastructure are the main priorities respondents would like to see achieved over the next 10 years.
- Respondents would like Council to prioritise health services, financial sustainability, aged and disability services, housing availability and affordability, and tourism and visitors.



## Methods and participation

Stage 1 engagement activities gathered personalised views from a broad cross section of the community. The total participation level in Stage 1 was 458 people. Community members will have further opportunity to explore and prioritise strategies once the Draft Community Strategic Plan is available.

Table 53. SV - Participation summary

Total participation	Population (2023 ERP)	% of population engaged
458	14,932	3.1

As shown in the table below, Snowy Valleys Council used six different methods to engage with the community. The online survey and group discussion guides generated the largest number of participants in Stage 1 Engagement. The online survey generated the greatest volume of useable data and participant demographic details.

Table 54. SV - Participation summary by method

Method	Participation	
	Measure	Number
Online survey	Number of individual survey responses.	166
Discussion Guides	Number of people who contributed to discussions.	125
Drawing sheets	Number of drawing sheets received.	18
Pop-ups	Number of people who attended pop up sessions.	53
Regional Wellbeing Survey	Number of individual survey responses.	93
Submissions	Number of formal submissions received.	3

The following is a summary of community engagement data collected.

### 1. Online survey

- 166 individual responses were received to the Online Survey through SurveyMonkey. 84 completed responses and 82 partially completed responses were received.

### 2. Discussion Guide

- 7 Discussion Guide responses were received. 2 completed responses and 5 partially completed responses were received.
- A total of 125 people contributed to the 7 (fully and partially) completed responses.

### 3. Drawing sheets

- SVC prepared school packs and delivered them to schools within the community.
- 18 Drawing Sheets were received.

### 4. Pop-up sessions

- SVC delivered structured workshops in place of unstructured pop-up sessions.
- Six workshops were held and 53 people participated:
  - In Tumut on 20 February 2024. 7 participants
  - In Tumbarumba on 22 February 2024. 10 participants
  - In Batlow on 27 February 2024. 12 participants
  - In Khancoban on 29 February 2024. 7 participants.
  - In Talbingo on 5 March 2024. 8 participants.
  - In Adelong on 7 March 2024. 9 participants.

### 5. Regional Wellbeing Survey

- 93 responses were received to the three Regional Wellbeing Survey questions posed for this project.

### 6. Submissions

- 3 submissions received:
  - 12 March 2024 – Male resident.
  - 15 March 2024 – Female resident.
  - 22 March 2024 – Male resident.



The profile of the participants shows a broad cross-section of the Snowy Valleys population were involved in terms of age, gender, location, and diversity characteristics.

Table 55. SV – Respondent profile

Characteristic	Breakdown	T2042 Engagement	GRJO Profile ID
Characteristic	Breakdown	%	2024 %
Age	Under 18 years	7.4	21.9
	18-24 years (tertiary education and independence)	2.6	6.6
	25-34 years (young workforce)	7.8	9.8
	35-49 years (parents and homebuilders)	28.3	17.4
	50-59 years (older workers and pre-retirees)	22.2	14.0
	60-69 years (empty nesters and retirees)	14.8	14.2
	70-84 years (seniors)	17.0	14.1
	85+ years (elderly)	0.0	2.0
Gender	Woman or female	58.4	49.6
	Man or male	37.7	50.4
	Non-binary	0.0	-
	Prefer not to answer	2.6	-
	I us a different term	1.3	-
Urban/Rural	Urban	59.2	-
	Rural	40.8	-
Diversity	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	3.8	6.3
	LGBTQIA+	2.7	-
	Person with a disability	4.9	5.9
	Non-English speaking background	3.2	4.4
	Lived experience of alcohol or drug use	3.8	-
	Lived experience of family violence	4.9	-
	Lived experience of housing stress or homelessness	3.8	-
	Lived experience of mental health issues	13.5	-

NOTE: Red represents underrepresentation, and green represents overrepresentation compared to the 2021 census data shown in Profile ID.

\* Source: ABS Cat 2001.0



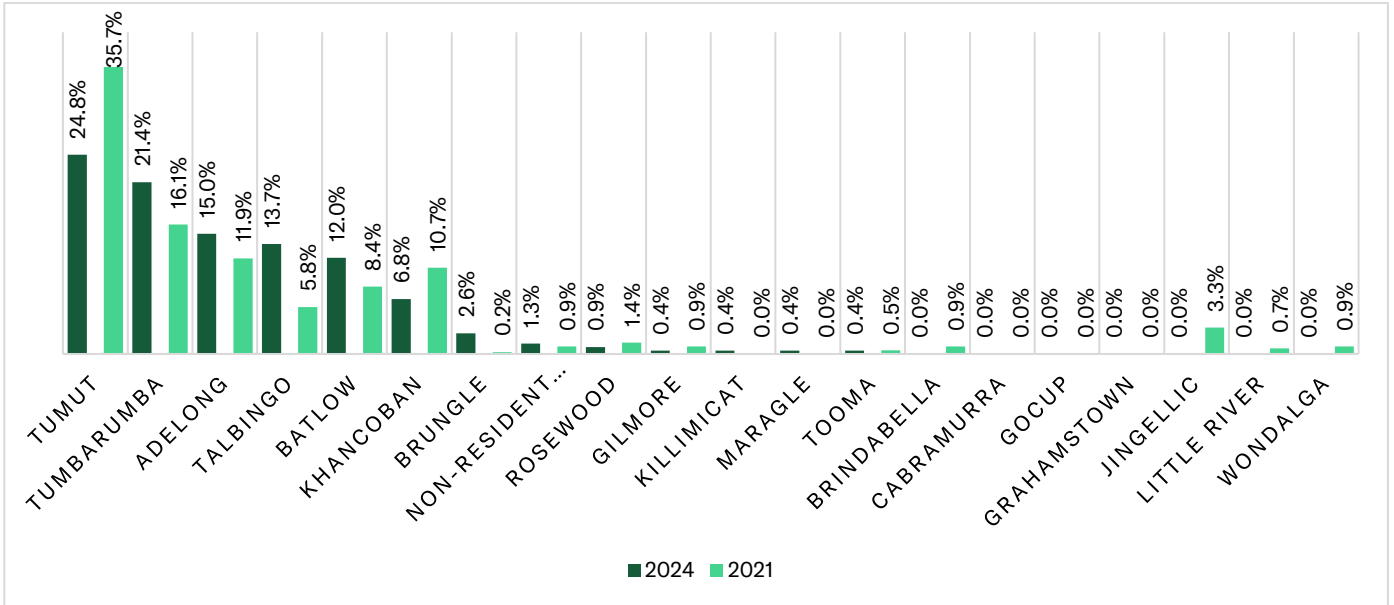


Figure 74. SV - Respondent location

Future engagement stages for the Community Strategic Plan should aim to improve representation of:

- People aged under 34 years (Pre-schoolers, Primary and secondary schoolers, tertiary education and independence, and young workforce).
- People aged over 85 years (Elderly).
- Males.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- People with a disability.
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds.



## Are we on track?

The people of the Snowy Valleys region have an existing Community Strategic Plan. As part of the review and update of this document, we asked the community if they thought the plan was tracking well and if they had any feedback.

### Vision 2042

*We enjoy and are proud of our beautiful scenery, clean waterways and natural landscape and recognise and respect the environment and First Nations people of the country. We value community, encourage belonging, and support one another.*

*We have an excellent standard of living with infrastructure and services that support us through all stages of life.*

*We are free to enjoy the peace and quiet regional life and remain well-connected through technology and high-quality transport accessibility.*

*Our communities enjoy diverse employment and education opportunities, and we continue to innovate and promote our area to ensure we prosper in the future.*

## Q1. How do you feel about the vision in the endorsed Snowy Valleys Community Strategic Plan 2042?

n=118

Only 31.3 percent of respondents were either happy or very happy with the current Vision. A further 42.4 percent of were indicated they felt neutral in relation to the Vision. This indicates a significant drop in happiness about the vision, compared to 2021, when over 56 percent of respondents were either happy or very happy with the Vision, and a further 25.5 percent felt neutral.

Very few of the qualitative responses to this question provided constructive suggestions for improving the vision. Most focused their feedback on general challenges and priorities, with a small sample focused on housing. Quality and affordable housing sits neatly under the vision “excellent standard of living”. No changes to the vision are recommended.

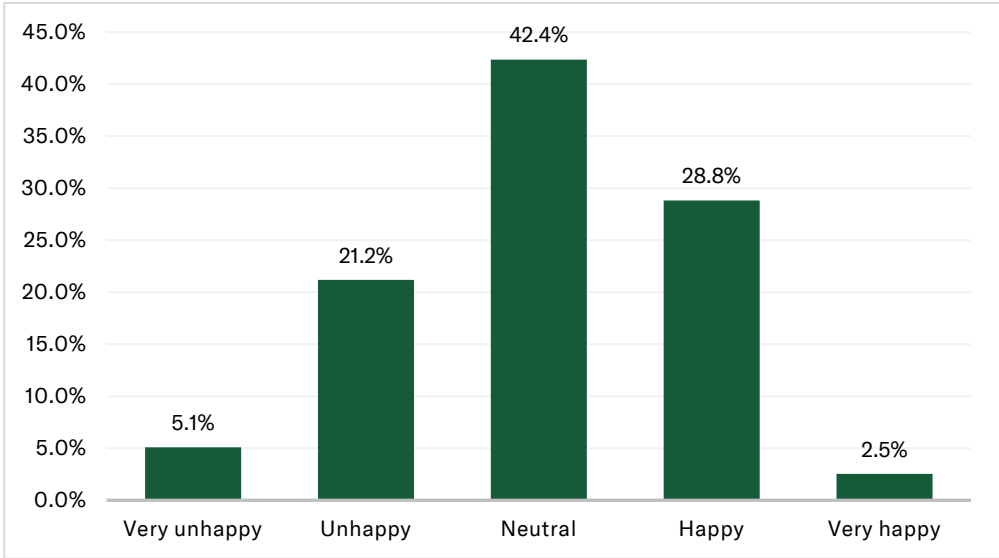


Figure 75. SV - Vision satisfaction

## Q2. Have you read the Snowy Valleys Community Strategic Plan 2042?

n=130

Across the engagement, 63.1 percent of people had read the CSP. Those that had read the CSP were asked further questions. Their responses are detailed on the following pages.

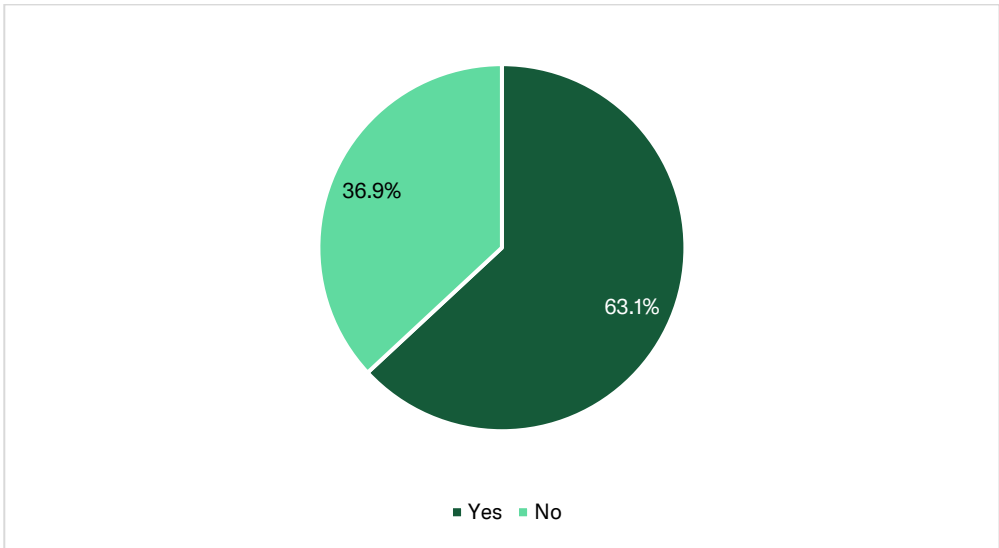


Figure 76. SV - Read CSP

Within the plan, there are 5 high level themes. The themes are:

1. Our community.
2. Our economy.
3. Our environment.
4. Our infrastructure.
5. Our civic leadership.

### Q3. Do you agree with these themes?

n=70

Of the 70 responses to this question, 78.6 percent indicated they agreed with either all or some of the five themes outlined in the Snowy Valleys Community Strategic Plan 2042. A smaller portion did not agree with the themes (7.1 percent). Compared to 2021, when 73.8 percent either agreed with all or some of the themes, the biggest shift is the increase in the number of respondents who agreed with all the themes (an additional 13.2 percent).

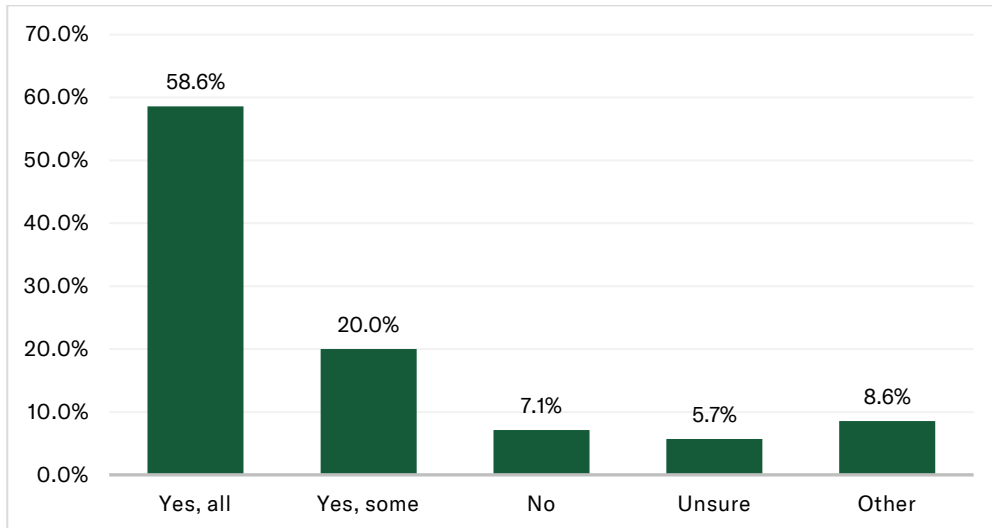


Figure 77. SV - Theme support

## Q4. Do you think we're on track with delivering the 5 high-level themes?

n=68  
 Across all strategic pillars, 56.6 percent believed they were either fully or partly on track to achieve the themes. 39.6 percent felt they weren't on track and 3.8 percent were unsure.

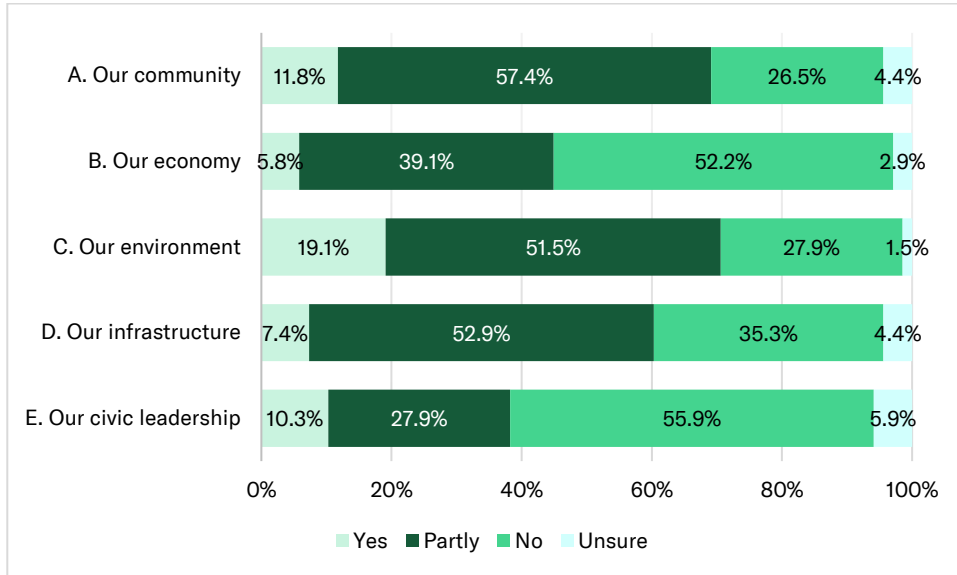


Figure 78. SV - On track with themes

## Q5. Is anything missing in the Snowy Valleys Community Strategic Plan 2042?

n=36  
 Engagement participants were asked to review the current strategic objectives and provide feedback on anything that was missing. Their feedback is summarised in the following table.

Table 56. SV - Missing from the CSP

Themes				
1. Our community	2. Our economy	3. Our environment	4. Our infrastructure	5. Our civic leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood.</li> <li>• Health services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversification.</li> <li>• Tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate adaptation.</li> <li>• Weed and pest management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation.</li> </ul>
Other				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real actions.</li> <li>• Accountability.</li> </ul>				

## Where are we now?

### Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?

n=267

Snowy Valley residents were asked to identify what made their community a great place to live. 887 insights were provided by 267 people across five engagement methods including online survey, discussion guides, drawing sheets, workshops and the Regional Wellbeing Survey.

The top 5 strengths identified across all methods include the beautiful natural environment, lifestyle, sense of community, peace and quiet, and sport and recreation. Comments relating to these strengths include:

- **Beautiful natural environment (15.3 percent):** The picturesque surroundings and beauty of the environment were valued, along with the fresh air, open sky and spaces, and access to the mountains and high country.
- **Lifestyle (9.9 percent):** Affordable lifestyle with a good quality of life. A balance of being rural while having easy access to larger towns.
- **Sense of community (6.3 percent):** The community is close-knit with a sense of belonging and care. People working together for the greater good.
- **Peace and quiet (6.1 percent):** The region is peaceful, tranquil, and the pace is quiet and calming.
- **Sport and recreation (5.2 percent):** Sport is very important to the community. There was strong mention about biking and the rail trail, football, gyms and tennis.

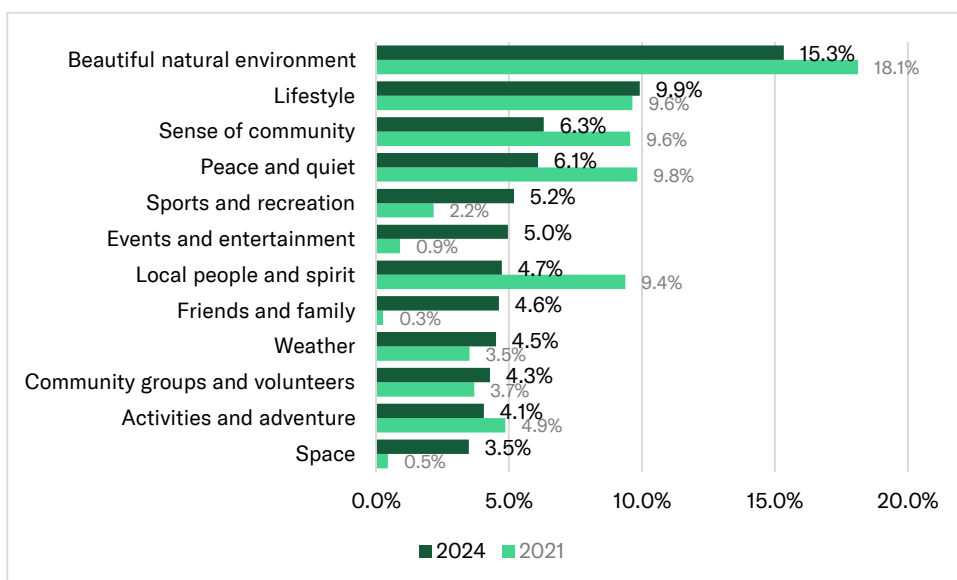


Figure 79. SV - Strength attributes

The main differences exhibited since 2021 are:

- Rise in the value of sport and recreation (from 2.2 percent in 2021 to 5.2 percent in 2024), events and entertainment (from 0.9 percent to 5.0 percent), friends and family (from 0.3 percent to 4.6 percent), and space (from 0.5percent to 3.5 percent). These changes highlight a shift towards valuing recreational activities, social gatherings, family connections and physical space in the community.
- Beautiful natural environment shows a decrease, but it remains highly values, dropping only slightly from 18.1 percent in 2021 to 15.3 percent in 2024.
- Sense of community declined more notably from 9.6 percent to 6.3 percent.
- Peace and quiet saw a decrease from 9.18 percent to 6.1 percent, and Local people and spirit also experienced a decrease from 9.4 percent to 4.7 percent.

Table 57. SV - Strength attributes by method

LGA/ method	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
<b>Snowy Valleys</b> <i>n=267</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle	Sense of community	Peace and quiet	Sports and recreation
<i>Online survey</i> <i>n=100</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle	Peace and quiet	Friends and family	Community groups and volunteers/ Sense of community
Discussion guides <i>n=3</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle/ Community groups and volunteers	Sports and recreation/ Safety/ Location and convenience		
Drawing sheets <i>n=18</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Sports and recreation	Education and training/ Character and amenity		Activities and adventure/ Our towns and places/ Services
Workshops <i>n=53</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Sense of community	Lifestyle/ Facilities		Space/ Peace and quiet
Regional Wellbeing Survey <i>n=93</i>	Events and entertainment	Sports and recreation	Activities and adventure	Businesses	Beautiful natural environment

## Q7. What do you think are the main challenges facing our community?

n=249

The Snowy Valleys community considered the main challenges facing their community. 898 insights were provided by 249 people across four engagement methods. The methods included an online survey, discussion guides, workshops and the Regional Wellbeing Survey.

The top five challenges identified by participants across the engagement methods were Council issues, services, housing availability and affordability, amalgamations and boundary alignment, and infrastructure. A summary of comments raised by participants is provided below.

- **Council (17.3 percent):** Financial sustainability focused on rates and ability to receive funding, poor community engagement and communications, and a lack of vision.
- **Services (9.8 percent):** Poor access to health and medical care, with the main concerns being difficulty accessing doctors and specialists, having to travel for health care, poor access to aged care and no residential care options.
- **Housing availability and affordability (7.7 percent):** Housing affordability is becoming worse with interest rate increases, and there is a lack of rentals available.
- **Amalgamations and boundary alignment (7.0 percent):** Concern about amalgamation impacts, and an urgent desire to demerge.
- **Infrastructure (6.9 percent):** Condition and quality of the road network is poor, internet and telecommunications are inadequate, and there is no library service.

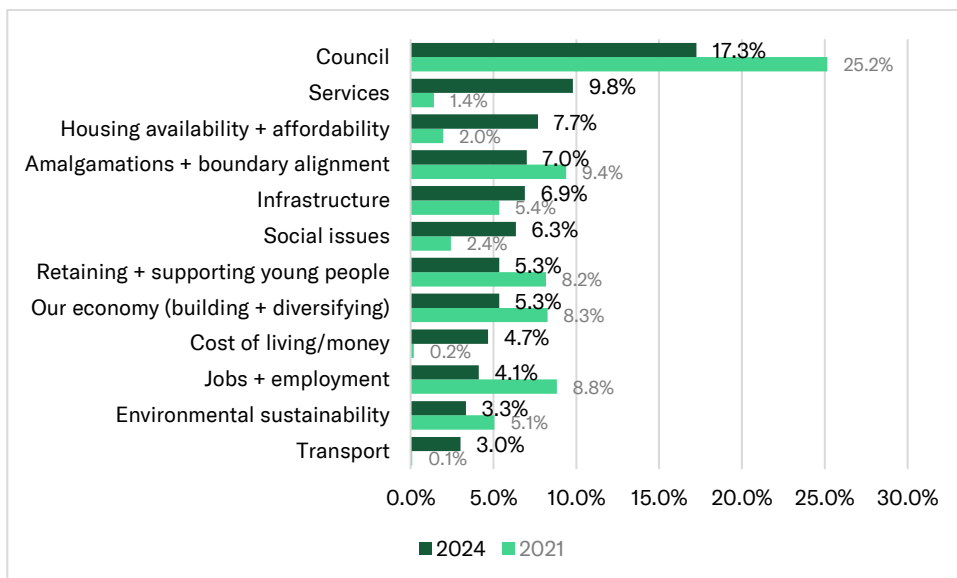


Figure 80. SV- Challenge attributes

The main changes since 2021 include:

- While Council is the greatest challenge attribute identified in 2024 at 17.3 percent, this isn't a significant drop from 2021, when council was split across two separate attributes Governance and Leadership (13.3 percent) and Financial Sustainability (9.9 percent), representing a 5.9 percent decrease.
- Jobs and employment are perceived as less of a challenge dropping from 8.8 percent in 2021 to 4.1 percent in 2024.
- Social issues have increased, from not appearing in the top 12 in 2021, to becoming the 6<sup>th</sup> place attribute (6.3 percent) in 2024.

Table 58. SV - Challenge attributes by method

LGA/ method	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
<b>Snowy Valleys</b> <i>n=249</i>	Council	Services	Housing availability and affordability	Amalgamations and boundary alignment	Infrastructure
<i>Online survey</i> <i>n=100</i>	Council	Services	Housing availability and affordability	Amalgamations and boundary alignment	Retaining and supporting young people
<i>Discussion guides</i> <i>n=3</i>	Council	Retaining and supporting young people	Social issues/ Jobs and employment		Services
<i>Workshops</i> <i>n=53</i>	Infrastructure	Cost of living/money	Services	Housing availability and affordability	Social issues
<i>Regional Wellbeing Survey</i> <i>n=93</i>	Services	Council	Amalgamations and boundary alignment/ Social issues		Our economy



## Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?

### Q8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?

n=100

The Snowy Valleys community were asked if they had seen anything in another area or shire that would be good in their community. Of the 100 respondents, 63.0 percent answered 'yes', resulting in 56 people providing feedback.

The top five categories of things the community would like to see include improved infrastructure, parks and green space, more activities and events, economic growth, and town planning. Comments relating to these categories include:

- **Improved infrastructure (25.1 percent):** Better waste management (tip shops, public FOGO bins), good roads, year-round swimming pool.
- **Parks and green space (15.3 percent):** Completed walking trails, trails with amenities (shade, fitness equipment, BBQ facilities), community gardens, fenced dog parks, MTB facilities.
- **More activities and events (12.0 percent):** Arts centre, access to arts and craft endeavours, cinema and outdoor movies, events (bush care weekends, car shows, cultural celebrations), longer library hours, family attractions (go karting, native/indigenous walks, tree walks).
- **Economic growth (8.7 percent):** Attracting new residents, better tourism offering (lookouts), free camping for RVs and caravans, diverse and vibrant shopping centres.
- **Town planning (6.6 percent):** Footpaths in towns, reduced red tape on planning, heritage protection.

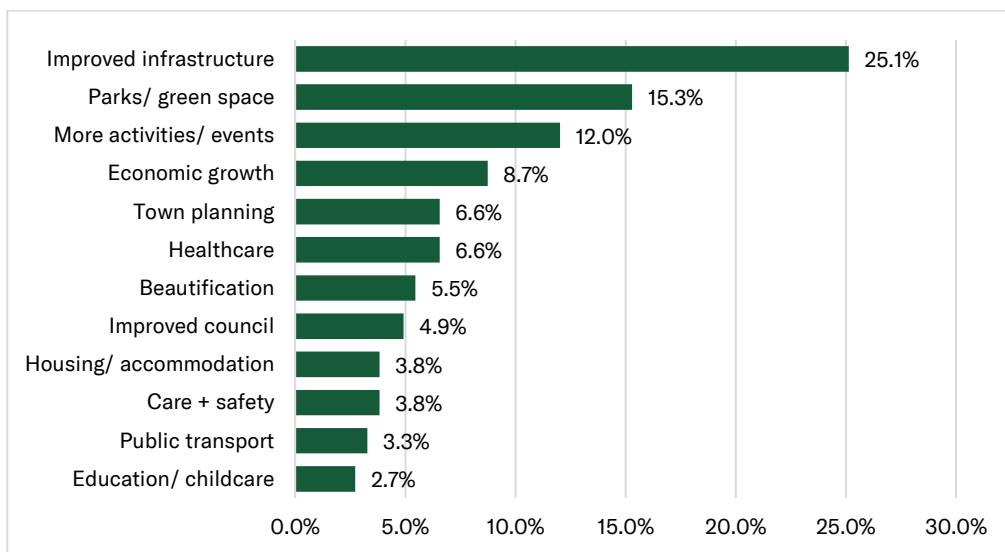


Figure 81. SV - Suggestions from other areas

# Q9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?

n=247

Snowy Valleys residents were asked what one thing they would like to see achieved in the next 10 years. Feedback was received across four engagement methods, including the online survey, discussion guides, drawing sheets, and the Regional Wellbeing Survey.

The top five categories of things the community would like to see achieved in the next 10 years across all methods of engagement include better Council, economic growth, sport and recreation, health services, and infrastructure. A summary of priorities is provided below:

- **Better council (18.0 percent):** Council demerger, enhanced community engagement, better governance and leadership, financial sustainability, structural improvements to bolster local decision-making and service provision, improved advocacy for policing and healthcare.
- **Economic growth (14.2 percent):** Promoting agriculture, attracting new residents, increasing business and tourism activities, enhancing financial stability, and improving public amenities and infrastructure.
- **Sports and recreation (10.5 percent):** Development and promotion of cycling trails, including a regional rail trail and mountain biking destinations, upgraded local trails and parks, enhanced pool facilities, and varied sporting opportunities.
- **Health services (6.7 percent):** Better access to doctors and mental health services.
- **Infrastructure (6.0 percent):** Upgraded car parking, enhanced park facilities, improved lighting, strategic drainage upgrades, consistent internet services, established public toilets in Brungle, comprehensive road maintenance, and development of a large water supply dam to bolster Tumbarumba's resilience against natural disasters.

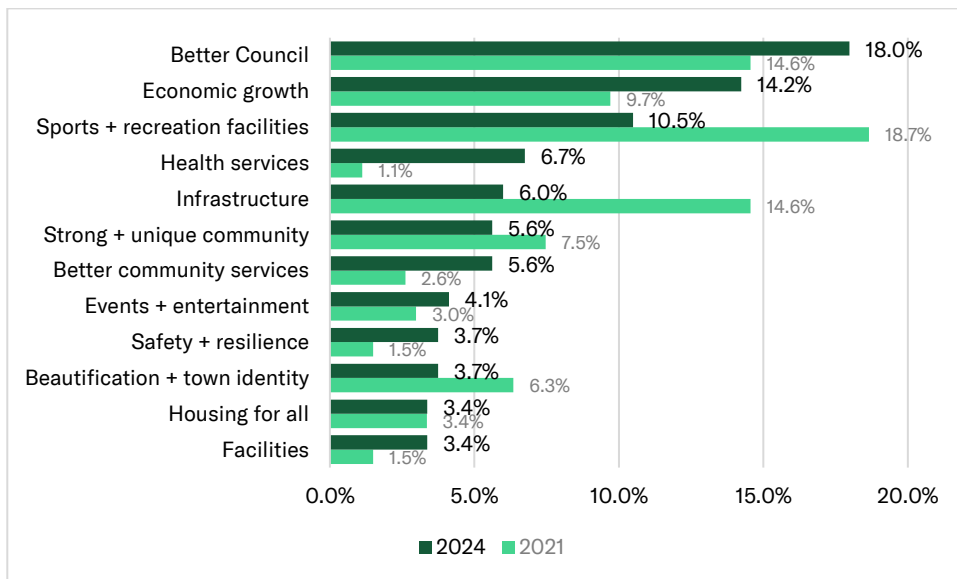
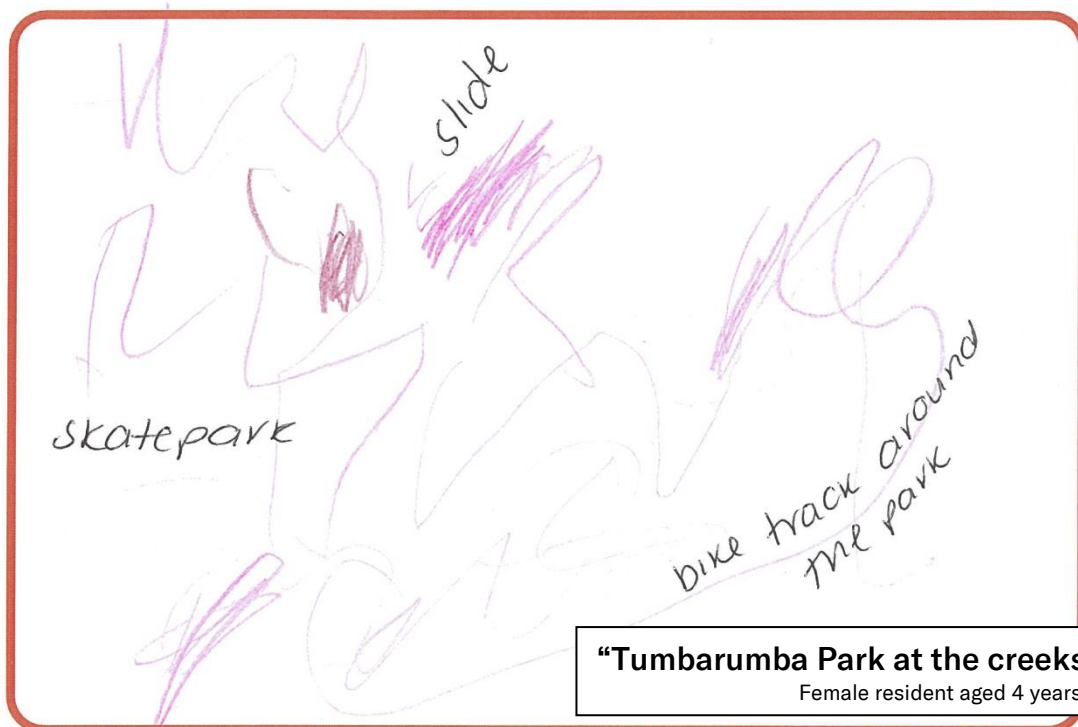


Figure 82. SV - Priorities

Table 59. SV - Priorities by method

LGA/ method	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
<b>Snowy Valleys</b> <i>n=247</i>	Better Council	Economic growth	Sport and recreation	Health services	Infrastructure
Online survey <i>n=81</i>	Better Council	Economic growth	Sport and recreation	Infrastructure	Health services/ Better community services/ Beautification and town identity
Discussion guides <i>n=2</i>	More for young people to do/ Strong and unique community/ Economic growth			-	-
Drawing sheets <i>n=18</i>	Sport and recreation	Economic growth	Beautification and town identity	Housing for all	Events and entertainment
Workshops <i>n=53</i>	Economic growth	Better Council	Sport and recreation	Better community services	Infrastructure/ Strong and unique community
Regional Wellbeing Survey <i>n=93</i>	Better Council/ Health services		Economic growth/ Infrastructure/ Strong and unique community/ Events and entertainment/ Safety and resilience		

**Right now what is the best thing about your community (other than your family and pets)?** Draw a picture to illustrate your thoughts.



**“Tumbarumba Park at the creekscape”**  
Female resident aged 4 years, Tumbarumba

## How will we get there?

### Q10. What services or projects do you think Snowy Valleys Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?

n=147

When asked which services and projects, they would like Council to prioritise participants selected from a multiple-choice list of Council services and projects. In all, 144 respondents shared their views on Council direction to inform the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. Feedback was received across three engagement methods: the online survey (n=92), discussion guides (n=2), and workshops (n=53).

Changes in field choice since 2021 include the removal of demerger and Council communications and the addition of Drought preparedness and Natural risk reduction.

Health services and financial sustainability grew in priority, moving from 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> position in 2021 respectively to top priority and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in 2024. Aged and disability services remained an ongoing priority, as did housing availability and affordability which moved from ninth position to fourth. Entering the top twelve issues was business and industry attraction (6<sup>th</sup> position), Communications- IT, Internet and Mobile (8<sup>th</sup> position), community buildings and facilities (10<sup>th</sup> position), family services (11<sup>th</sup> position) and early childhood and children’s services (12<sup>th</sup> position). Subsiding in priority were roads and parking, tourism and visitors, and cycle, shared pathways and footpaths.

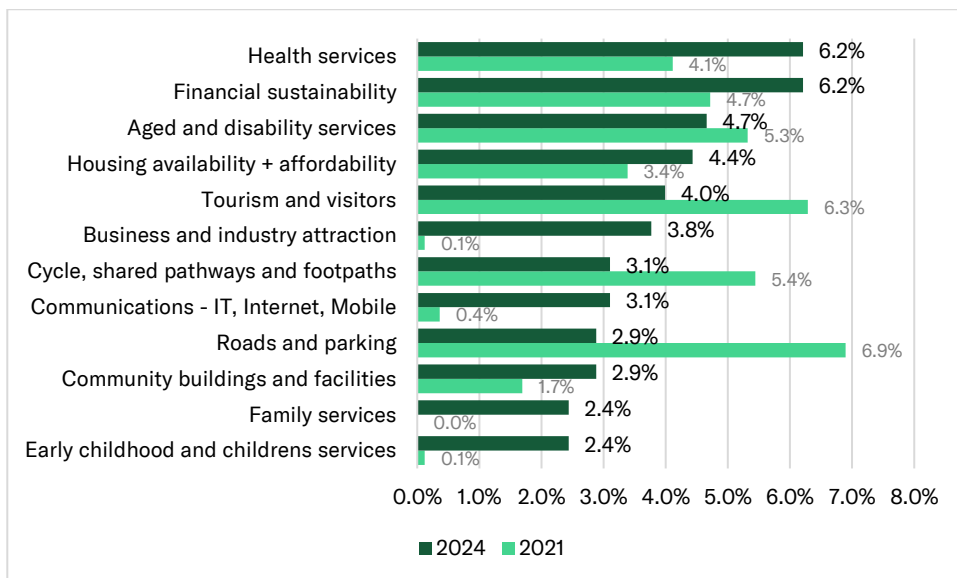
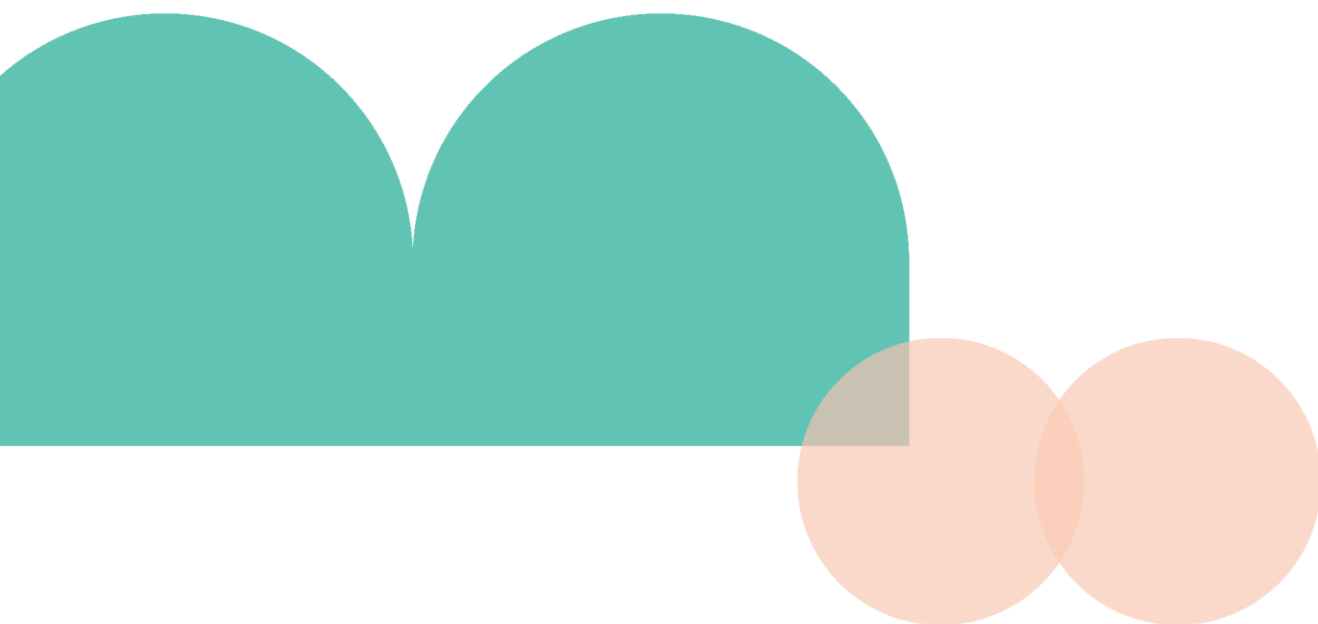


Figure 83. SV - Services & projects



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