Understanding the attitudes to urban green space for government and business audiences

Project leader:

Ben Peacock

Delivery partner:

Republic of Everyone

Project code:

NY18006

Project:

Understanding the attitudes to urban green space for government and business audiences NY18006

Disclaimer:

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (Hort Innovation) makes no representations and expressly disclaims all warranties (to the extent permitted by law) about the accuracy, completeness, or currency of information in this Final Report.

Users of this Final Report should take independent action to confirm any information in this Final Report before relying on that information in any way.

Reliance on any information provided by Hort Innovation is entirely at your own risk. Hort Innovation is not responsible for, and will not be liable for, any loss, damage, claim, expense, cost (including legal costs) or other liability arising in any way (including from Hort Innovation or any other person's negligence or otherwise) from your use or non-use of the Final Report or from reliance on information contained in the Final Report or that Hort Innovation provides to you by any other means.

Publishing details:

ISBN 978 0 7341 4551 2

Published and distributed by: Hort Innovation

Level 7
141 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

Telephone: (02) 8295 2300

www.horticulture.com.au

Content

Summary

This project is part of the overarching 202020 Vision strategy, and focuses on two key audiences: Government (primarily Local Government) and Business (primarily developers and property managers).

As noted in the 5 year strategy and echoed in the executed agreement for NY18006, the strategic goals for these two audiences are as follows:

Government

Increase community interest, awareness and demand for urban green space by identifying the range of attitudes towards barriers preventing more green space among residents in an urban context and identify which greening solutions are the most sought after and why.

To this end, project NY18006 included an online survey to community members, with findings analysed and supplied in a draft report by Mosaic Insights. This has been summarized and reviewed in subsequent sections.

Business

Provide insights into key stakeholder understanding of the role green space currently plays in the Green Star rating tool and the role green space could play in the future of the Green Star rating tool.

To this end, project NY18006 includes a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate stakeholder attitudes to urban greening, to better understand efficacy in regards to language and channel mix, and to inform recommendations and asset development for activation in the 202020 Vision program. Namely, this includes a survey to GBCA members and a series of interviews (up to 10) with key stakeholders in the sector.

This report recaps methodology and outlines all results and insights, highlighting learnings and recommendations for both streams.

Keywords

Introduction

The need for the community research was identified at the Green Light Tour in 2018, where the 202020 Vision team heard from local governments who were struggling to engage their local constituents with urban greening.

Although policies on urban green space had come a long way since the inception of 202020 Vision in 2013, this hadn't always translated into successful community implementation. Furthermore, there was an ongoing perception that communities are indifferent towards urban green space, and in some cases, negative towards it. Councils and local governments told us this made it difficult for them to know how to engage their communities, and to build support for new local urban green spaces.

In response to this, the five-year strategy for NY17519 (*since approved*) put forward a community engagement kit, focused on communicating the benefits of urban greening.

In order to inform the development of this kit, the team worked with Mosaic Insights to conduct a national survey into community attitudes to urban greening and develop recommendations for the marketing materials.

In conjunction with the above research, the 202020 Vision team worked with GBCA to understand how we could make green space a more significant part of the Green Star rating and therefore increase urban greening across commercial developments. Initial workshops and relationship management were conducted under NY17519; the purpose of this project was to provide qualitative findings around the views of GBCA's membership (in regards to urban green space). This would be fed back to the GBCA community, with a focus on leadership, so as to promote increased targets for urban greening in GBCA developments.

Through the development of new messaging and marketing materials, this project aims to drive higher engagement with community through local council channels, as well as developers (through retail sales teams and other community-facing teams representing the GBCA community).

Additionally, these materials will be shared with the nursery and garden industry to better inform industry conversations with all audiences impacted by this work – local councils, businesses and community.

Methodology

Government - *Community research*

Mosaic Insights ran a community research study in February 2019. The primary mode of research was a national survey, to which there were 1,684 respondents. The samples are nationally representative in NSW, VIC, SA & WA, but not NT, ACT, or TAS. These states were excluded as they do not include (statistically) significant enough urban areas – which is the focus of the program outcomes.

23 questions captured:

• Basic demographic data to facilitate comparisons across relevant categories
(age, level of formal education, gender, home ownership status and postcode)

• Ranking questions (e.g. ranking different forms of urban green space, familiarity with frequently used descriptors of benefits of urban green space etc)

• Solicited responses from participants on how they describe the benefits and issues surrounding urban green spaces in their own words.

Mosaic Insights provided initial findings, which the 202020 Vision team further analysed based on our experience of interacting with this content for over five years.

Business – *GBCA member research*

The 202020 Vision Program Director worked with GBCA to develop survey questions to be input into their national member survey. These were distributed by GBCA, which meant a much higher uptake as the audience was familiar with this channel/process.

GBCA were unable to share the data of respondents due to confidentiality, but a full list of their membership is available here: https://www.gbca.org.au/members/?_ga=2.248099975.143331182.1554962134-1017222560.1554962134

There were three questions from our program included:

1. When talking about green space and built environment, which words resonate with you?

2. What do you see as the benefits of including green space in developments?

3. To what extent do you think each of these has an influence on the decision to include green space in a new development (local government and planning controls, developers/development managers, architects, investors, landscape architects, the surrounding community, engineers, sales managers).

In order to build out findings from the above with qualitative research, the Program Director also conducted interviews with key representatives from the development community including:

1. Jack Davis, Senior Development Manager (Retail) for Frasers - Burwood Brickworks VIC

2. Sean Holmes, Sustainability Consultant, WSP - Sydney Modern/Art Gallery of NSW

3. Barney Oros, Development Manager for One Sydney Park NSW

4. Rory Martin, Sustainability Manager (Residential) for Frasers - Fairway Blacktown NSW

5. Mark Stephens, Senior Environment & Communtiites Development Manager of Stockland Residential Communities in the Sunshine Coast and Davina Rooney, General Manager of Sustainability and Corporate Procurement at Stockland - Aura Project, QLD

6. Sophie Pickett-Heaps, Co-Head of Design at Stockland National Residential, Mixed-Use and Retirement Living

7. Nadja Kampfhenkel - Sustainability Manager, WA Communities for the Akimos Black community development

Outputs

Government - *Community research*

1. Mosaic research report (attached as appendix)

2. Republic of Everyone analysis of top agree/strongly agree statements (attached as appendix)

3. Schematic and content for community engagement book, which will lead into the community engagement kit (schematic attached as an appendix, kit to be developed under NY17519)

Business – *GBCA member research*

1. Survey outcomes (attached as appendix)

2. 7 x interviews, to provide further qualitative information and inform development of narrative guide (under NY17519)

Outcomes

<u>Government</u> - *Community research*

This research provided key insights into community attitudes around urban greening. It found that people:

1. Are positive about urban green space (88% stated at least one unprompted benefit), and interested in it (Only 10% do not want to hear about it from their council), but not enough to think about who looks after it (54.5% don't know), or be actively engaged in maintenance or support (58.7% unable or unwilling to do so)

2. Do not understand urban green space terms (E.g.: Only 24% had heard the term 'urban heat island', with only 2% familiarity), they understand traditional, well known, and visual terms (E.g.: Street trees, shade, fresh air, etc)

3. Use inherently positive and benefit driven language to describe urban green space, which councils should tap into (E.g.: Aesthetics – Beautiful, clean. Relaxation – Calming, peaceful. Health and wellbeing – Air, shade.)

Further detailed findings have been captured and fed into the design of a schematic for the community engagement book – a piece which will introduce the community engagement kit (being developed under NY17519). The findings will also inform the development of messaging and collateral choices, as well as channel recommendations as part of the community engagement kit. The kit will remain a generalised piece of comms, to ensure a broad reach, but the 202020 Vision team will encourage customisation by each council through the distribution and outreach.

Detailed findings are as follows, and expanded further in the accompanying book schematic (appendix 3). In order to analyse findings and provide these insights, the 202020 Vision team also compounded 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses – seen in appendix 2.

People want to know about green space, but councils aren't engaging them enough

Over half of people (54.5%) don't know who looks after their urban green spaces.

The vast majority (72%) don't know or are unsure whether their council is actively expanding urban green space.

Despite this, only 10% of people do not want to hear about green space from the council, with email (20%), SMS - text message (15%), public events (15%), and social media (14%), the favoured methods to get in touch.

Take out: Councils need to communicate more often, and more effectively with their communities when it comes to urban green space. They should utilise digital media (email, SMS, social media) to engage more people. When contacting residents, councils should clearly and simply state their responsibilities and green space strategies to help broaden understanding.

When people think about urban green space, they are overwhelmingly positive

Aesthetics, relaxation, and health and wellbeing are the three key areas that come to people's minds. Similarly relaxation (73.7%), physical exercise (60.8%), and work/lunch breaks (50.5%) are the most common uses of urban green space.

Linked to the perception of aesthetics, 32.6% of people strongly agree that they pay close attention to the health and appearance of local green spaces.

Both physical and mental benefits are recognised strongly.

Take out: People's perceptions are linked to the most common uses and benefits of green space - councils should tap into these when they communicate.

Aesthetics and physical/mental health benefits are seen as the most important

Aesthetics and recreation were most highly rated (84.7%), but all benefits scored over 60%. Linking strongly to usage of green space for relaxation and physical exercise.

This strong perception of benefits is supported further by 88% of respondents listing at least one unprompted benefit, compared to 63.5% who listed at least one unprompted problem.

When listing benefits, the most common single word was 'good', which was incorporated in a wide range of answers across the list of benefits:

'Good for kids and family'   'Good for wildlife'

'Good for mental health'   'Looks good'

'Good for the environment'   'Trees are good for all of us'

Take out: The high value placed on each individual benefit of green space means that councils should focus language on communicating benefits, particularly the aesthetic, recreation, physical and mental benefits that come through both in people's language around green space, and their use of it.

There is not much to dislike about green space, but there are concerns over how it is looked after

Only 3.9% of respondents had a strong dislike of local trees, plants and nature.

When asked, a third of people stated no dislikes at all, and even of those who did (63.5%), 'not enough green space' was actually one of the most common answers. Similarly, the main concerns are not based on the presence of green space itself, but the management and maintenance of it.

57.7% are concerned urban green space won't be maintained

45.1% are concerned about the safety of green spaces

Take out: Communications with residents should provide a clear idea of how maintenance will be carried out, and measures taken to keep the green spaces safe. Utilising digital communications and benefit driven language will also help to ensure more people are reassured on these concerns.

The community have little familiarity with urban green space terms

Only one term (nature strip) had more than 50% familiarity, while less than 30% had even heard of the term 'urban heat island' (and only 2% were familiar with it).

Take out: Communications need to remove complex or technical language, and use simple language relating to the themes that people associate with green space:

- *Aesthetics (beautiful, clean, pretty, nature)*

- *Relaxation (Calming, peaceful, relaxing)*

- *Health and wellbeing (Healthy, oxygen, air, cool, shade, fresh)*

- *Birds/animals*

Most people appreciate and support urban greening in principle, but are unable or unwilling to devote time and energy to actively support it

Only 8.5% do not support urban greening.

But 58.7% feel unable or unwilling to devote time/energy to active support.

Despite maintenance being a major concern, 59.1% are unable, unwilling or indifferent towards volunteering in the maintenance of urban green spaces, with 67.3% unable, unwilling or indifferent to lobbying local government.

Take out: Councils need to find or have access to, easier ways for people to contribute towards urban green space (E.g.: Online volunteering information, volunteer group eDM). Keeping communities better informed about, and

feeling in contact with, those in charge of green spaces, will help guide them towards volunteering.

Private green space is seen in a similar regard to public green space

Although there is reduced emphasis on aesthetics, the relaxation and mental wellbeing benefits are similarly valued in private and public urban green spaces.

The language used to describe these spaces is also similar.

'Relaxation'   'Wildlife'

'Fresh air'   'Space'

Given that 82.1% of respondents have access to private green space – it is reasonable to presume that public green space is valued regardless of access to private space. This also suggests that while they have similar benefits, they both play different roles for the community. (E.g.: A green space close to work)

Take out: Public green space should be no less important for councils in areas with lots of private green space, and communications should presume that all communities appreciate their public green spaces.

There is no definitive 'favourite type' of urban green space, making local needs and preferences more important

Large parks (19%) and street trees (18%) are most preferred, but the gap is small between these and the remaining options: Sport/recreation fields (14%), nature strips (13%), community gardens (12%), pocket parks (12%) and wetlands (12%)

There is however, more agreement (68.3%) on having a mix of low shrubs / grassy areas, and dense vegetation such as urban forests, and on a preference for native plant species (61.6%)

Take out: Councils should ensure a mix of grass and vegetation areas, including mostly native plants. They should look to understand specific local preferences and gaps in their urban green space provision, in order to ensure they provide the right mix of green space types for their community.

Urban green space is very important to local communities

Although potentially skewed somewhat by the nature of the survey, the fact that over half of participants (57.9%, the highest score) rated urban green space as very important shows it has real value to local communities. Particularly given the equally positive perceptions shown throughout the research.

Take out: Combined with the other results, urban green space is clearly not an issue for councils to take lightly. It's a topic that should be priority for local community engagement.

OTHER FINDINGS

Education level was one of few notable demographic differences

Higher educated respondents were more aware of council plans, more likely to advocate for green space, and less likely to consider trees a nuisance.

Interestingly, those with a lower formal education level considered themselves to be more knowledgeable on the benefits and issues regarding urban green space. Their lower familiarity with technical terms suggests this may be perception rather than reality.

Take out: Where able to segment their audience, and particularly where on limited budgets - councils should focus their efforts on parts of the community with higher formal education

Age demographics also showed some minor variations

Younger people were less aware of who is responsible for urban green space in their communities, but also more aware of whether their local council was actively expanding green space.

As may be expected, younger people were keener on contact through email, SMS and social media, while older people preferred a phone call.

The older the respondents, the less likely they were to volunteer with maintenance.

Take out: Councils should strive to make younger residents aware of their role in urban green spaces, and utilise digital and SMS contacts to help them do so. This is also likely to be cheaper than contacting older residents by phone.

Business – *GBCA member research*

This research provided key insights into developer attitudes, with the aim of building the business case for a higher ranking for urban green space in the Green Star rating and therefore, in the longer-term, increasing the amount of green space in commercial developments.

The survey results suggested that among the GBCA's members, the terms with the most resonance when speaking about green space and the built environment are:

"High Performing Buildings", "Green space", "Green infrastructure", "Biodiversity" and "Trees and Canopy Cover" "Living Infrastructure", "Restorative Design", and "Landscape architecture".

These responses suggest that if you are having a conversation with those working within the built environment, then framing the conversation around how well the building performs or functions is likely to have the most resonance.

Of those working in the built environment sector 53% think that local government & planning controls have a lot of influence over decisions to include green space into new developments.

48% of respondents said that developers and development managers have a lot of influence as do investors, architects and landscape architects in similar measures.

The surrounding community is thought to have a high level of influence in terms of influencing the decision to include green space in new developments.

Sales Managers are thought to have less influence when it comes to including green space in a new development.

65% of survey respondents rate Sales Managers as having moderate to little influence on decisions to include green space in developments

71% of respondents said that engineers only have moderate to no influence when it comes to the decision to include green space in a new development.

Among the GBCA membership, the most compelling benefits (of green space) were as follows:

- Improved health and wellbeing
- Cooler cities
- Improved liveability
- Air purification
- Reduced energy use
- Providing habitat for animals and plants
- Passive storm water management

The benefits that were less readily identified (although still identified) were:

- Carbon sequestration
- Improved social cohesion
- Attraction of investment/increased property value
- Anthropogenic noise/natural sounds
- Safer neighbourhoods
- Resilience to major storms and climate events
- Improved local commerce.

Case studies from the interviews provided further context, examples and learning for the community, which will be packaged under the marketing (NY17519) outputs.

These findings were all presented back to the GBCA community as part of the Transform conference in early 2019. Please see appendix 5 for a full write up on this activity.

In summary, key learnings were gained from both audience groups and will be utilized in the development of marketing materials to promote plants and trees across urban environments – through local council channels, as well as commercial developments.

Monitoring and evaluation

All elements of this project have been delivered as per the M&E plan supplied with MS102 report.

Outcomes have been of sufficient quality to ensure progress to the deliverables, as planned under NY17519.

Recommendations

Government - *Community research*

- Communities need to be brought on the journey when it comes to urban green space

- Community feedback is that they are not receiving (or at least not seeing) council messaging, so other channels and more dynamic, accessible creative materials should be tested

- The process of engagement is just as important as the message and the channel, so a best-practice outline of this (process) should be included in the final kit

- Simple, benefit-led messaging is most engaging for community so councils should lead with this

- Councils can benefit from trying to align with the language that community is already using around green space

- Councils should try to actually involve the community as much as possible, so marketing materials should include examples of successful programs and other interactive elements to provide inspiration

Business – *GBCA member research*

- The business case for urban green space is strong but developers need to speak about it in a consistent way – something that the 202020 Vision team can assist with through the development of the upcoming narrative guide (NY17519)

- This language piece should be outcome led – focusing on performance, human benefit and livability

- People want to live in leafy, green streets but need detail on the extra value. Developers can therefore also benefit from trying to align to the messaging that community is already using around green space – as they are still an end-user of nearly all developments

- The business audience also needs to engage with council as a key stakeholder, so there is an opportunity for the 202020 Vision team to help facilitate this (e.g. through the upcoming engagement via the tour – NY18007)

- Having a hero narrative is important to bringing the developer's internal team along, as well as selling the vision to external stakeholders

Industry

- It's important for industry to take learnings from both these sectors and adjust messaging as needed. Community is ultimately a key stakeholder for both local council and developers, so this should be considered and messaging simplified where appropriate.

- Leading with the benefits and finding ways to connect with existing programs is important for garnering support for green space projects.

- Consistent narrative and further learnings around concerns/benefits will be outlined in the materials to come under NY17519.

Refereed scientific publications

N/A

Intellectual property, commercialisation and confidentiality

No project IP, project outputs, commercialisation or confidentiality issues to report.

Appendices

1. NY18006_Appendix 1_Mosaic report.pdf
2. NY18006_Appendix 2_RoE analysis agree+strongly agree statements.pptx
3. NY18006_Appendix 3_Community engagement book.pdf
4. NY18006_Appendix 4_GBCA Member survey data.xlsx (on request)
5. NY18006_Appendix 5_Transform Report.pdf

Attitudes, Behaviour and Language
Community Attitudes to Urban Green Space survey results

Draft Final Report
March 2019

MOSAIC insights

www.mosaicinsights.com.au

Background

Background

Urban green space policy has come a long way since the 202020 Vision's inception in 2013, however these aspirational policies aren't necessarily translating into the implementation of green space. A key learning to arise from the last eighteen months of the 202020 Vision's programmatic work is that a relatively indifferent community attitude (in relation to green space) is one of the main barriers to implementation. Constituents fail to see the benefits of trees and plants and actively discourage their presence. If there is a shift in these attitudes towards community support and demand for green space, it is more likely that it will be implemented, looked after and maintained.

Local and state governments in Australia need help to engage residents and communities on the value of trees and urban greening. A lack of community support for green space has a negative impact on the nursery and garden industry. It can be a barrier to implementation and lead to a lack of support at a government level – ultimately impacting contract maintenance and growth in the sales of green life products.

This project will provide valuable data and insights, which will be used as the basis of a government toolkit designed to engage residents on the value of trees and urban greening in their local areas

Method

We designed, tested and refined an online survey to garner insight into Australian communities' *Attitudes* and *Behaviours* relating to urban green space, as well as the *Language* that people use to express their feelings about it.

The 23 questions captured basic demographic data to facilitate comparison across categories of potential relevance (age, level of formal education, gender, home ownership status and postcode). They included a variety of ranking questions (e.g. ranking different forms of urban green space, familiarity with frequently used descriptors of benefits of urban green space etc.) and solicited responses from participants that would tell us how they describe the benefits and issues surrounding urban green spaces in their own words.

The survey was distributed to a nationally representative sample across the variables of age, gender and state of residence (excluding ACT, TAS and NT residents) of respondents through a dedicated research sampling contractor. We received 1684 complete responses, 120 responses above a nationally representative sample. No nationally representative sample according to home ownership status was available, so we arranged for equal proportions of home owners and renters to capture what we considered to be a potentially important distinction.

Once the survey's quota of responses was achieved, we set out to analyse data in two stages: 1) general and 2) comparative. In the first stage, we analysed the total survey responses to discern overall patterns. In the second, we compared responses to individual questions according to the demographic categories captured to discern any statistically significant differences. For example, we analysed whether there were any major differences in responses between home owners and renters.

In reporting our findings, we have limited ourselves to (1) describing and, where appropriate, suggesting the interpretation of general findings across the entire sample, and (2) reporting statistically significant differences in responses across demographic categories. Our logic behind this decision is to present only the relevant findings that are likely to influence the design of the Community Engagement Kit.

* 9. How much do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Indifferent	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Urban green spaces create opportunities for people to improve their physical health.	○	○	○	○	○
Urban green spaces reduce stress and improve overall mental health.	○	○	○	○	○
I use urban green spaces for physical exercise.	○	○	○	○	○
Urban green spaces are important for making cities more resilient to the negative impacts of climate change.	○	○	○	○	○
I use urban green spaces for relaxation.	○	○	○	○	○
Urban green spaces increase surrounding property values.	○	○	○	○	○

MOSAIC insights

General findings

Who is responsible for urban green spaces?

The majority of people are unsure or don't know (54.5%) who looks after their local urban green spaces and 72.0% of people do not know or are unsure whether their council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green space.

These results suggest that councils need to engage more with their communities to explain their role and current activities regarding urban green space.

For a council to understand their constituent's opinion on green space, most people would prefer to be contacted by council via an email survey. However, an SMS with questions, opinions asked on social media, a hosted public event and a stall at a local community event all scored well in ways the community would like to be contacted.

It is noticeable that "I don't want council to contact me" was the lowest ranked option, regardless of age, indicating that people do want to know what is going on in their local area. The option "call me on the phone" was the lowest ranked form of contact highlighting that people prefer a more indirect engagement.

People are currently most likely to receive council information through letterbox drops and local newspapers indicating that indirect engagement is occurring, though switching to digital media may help to engage more people.

These results including the order of contact preference were consistent across all states and territories and confirm the need for a Community Engagement Kit to be used by councils when conducting outreach for their urban greenspace activities.

MOSAIC
insights

What comes to mind when you think about urban green spaces?

To increase community interest in urban green space, it is appropriate to target the most important aspects of green space.

To understand the language that resonates with them, respondents were asked what three words come to mind when thinking of urban green spaces. Most respondents emphasised the following aspects of urban green spaces:

1) aesthetics ('green', 'beautiful', 'beauty', 'clean', 'pretty', 'nature');
2) relaxation ('calming', 'calm', 'peaceful', 'peace', 'relaxing';
3) health and wellbeing ('healthy', 'oxygen', 'air', 'cool', 'shade', 'fresh').
4) birds

Generally, these findings indicate that people overwhelmingly perceive urban green spaces in a positive light and as providing a range of benefit. Words relating to aesthetics and relaxation/mental health benefits have the most penetration.

This relates to the survey results finding that the

majority of respondents use urban green spaces for relaxation (73.7%) and physical exercise (60.8%) while just over half use urban green spaces for work/lunch breaks (50.5%).

MOSAIC
insights

What do people view as the top benefits of urban green spaces?

The main response when people listed the top five perceived benefits of urban green space was 'good', which cannot be interpreted. Good in what way?

However, the other main benefits perceived by people are consistent with those when people listed the first things that come to mind when they think of green spaces (aesthetics, relaxation, health and wellbeing, birds). In this question, respondents provided further elaboration of potential habitat benefits of urban green spaces by also indicating 'wildlife' and 'animals' as important benefits. 'Animals' may refer to both wildlife and domestic pets.

'Space' also featured as a commonly identified term. It is reasonable to assume that this refers to the additional space that urban green spaces may provide urban citizens. A link to 'space' could also be made by the preference that respondents indicated for large parks over other types of green space (33.92% of respondents indicated this as a first preference).

Most respondents felt that the survey listed benefits of green space were somewhat or very important with aesthetics and recreation the most highly rated and property values the least highly rated:

- Aesthetics 84.7%
- Recreation 84.7%
- Mental health benefits 83.7%
- Physical benefits 83.4%

- Conservation 81.2%
- Cooling the city 81.0%
- Safety 79.7%
- Enhancing and protecting biodiversity 78.8%
- Mitigating climate change 72.64%
- Social interactions 71.9%
- Property values 60.3%

Respondents value the mental and physical wellbeing benefits of urban green spaces; cooling the city was similarly valued. The responses do not provide insight into whether cooling the city was valued because of its links to climate change or human comfort. Considering the high value placed on physical health and relaxation, it is reasonable to interpret cooling the city in relation to improving human comfort.

While social interactions and property values are the lowest ranked, they are still somewhat or very important to the majority of people.

In overall terms, respondents valued almost every given benefit of urban green space quite similarly. This indicates the need for a Community Engagement Kit to emphasise the multi-functionality of urban green spaces.

MOSAIC insights

What do people dislike about urban green spaces?

Respondents indicate that they take an interest in and notice how healthy the trees, nature strips, grass, plants and parks look in their local area (32.6% strongly agree and 47.9% somewhat agree – a total of 80.5%), with only 11.9% of people finding them a nuisance and would prefer fewer urban green spaces.

When asked what the top five problems with urban green spaces were, maintenance ('maintained', 'maintenance', 'rubbish', 'litter') was identified as the number 1 issue. This indicates that people are interested in their local urban green spaces and also that they notice how well maintained they are. Moreover, 57.7% of people are concerned that urban green spaces in their local area will not be maintained, though 62% are not concerned or are indifferent about the cost of maintaining urban green spaces in their area.

While most people notice their local urban greenspaces and like them to be well maintained, more than two thirds (66.9%) say they do not engage with council staff to discuss the overall health of these spaces.

These results indicate that communicating how maintenance will be undertaken in new or existing urban green spaces has a high potential impact on the perceptions of residents and could help overcome primary concerns.

Another common response to what people dislike about urban green spaces was 'enough' and 'lack' suggesting that people think there is currently a shortage of urban green spaces. However, 36% of respondents skipped this survey question regarding the top five problems suggesting that many respondents found no issues with urban green spaces at all.

The safety of green spaces was another issue with 45.1% of respondents being concerned (12.2% very concerned and 32.9% somewhat concerned). While not a majority with people either indifferent (23.1%) or not concerned (18.5% somewhat unconcerned and 13.3% not at all concerned), given almost half of all respondents are concerned about the safety of urban green spaces, a Community Engagement Kit should touch upon this concern.

MOSAIC insights

How familiar are the community with common urban green space terms?

Urban heat island: 74.0% had never heard the term, while only 3.6% were very familiar with the term. However, many respondents recognised the cooling effects of urban green spaces in response to other questions.

Urban canopy: 48.3% were unfamiliar with the term and 26.9% had heard of it but were unsure what it means.

Mitigating climate change: a close to equal split, with 56.8% indicating varying levels of unfamiliarity, while 43.2% had some level of familiarity with the term.

Street trees: overwhelming familiarity (34.8% very familiar and 34.3% somewhat familiar).

Pocket park: high level of unfamiliarity (52.7% had never heard of it and 19.0% had heard of it but were not sure what it meant – total of 71.8%).

Nature strip: general familiarity (56.1% were very familiar with it and 27.5% have heard of it and understand it – total of 83.6%).

Verge planting: a close to even split of familiarity (48.2% indicating some degree of familiarity and 51.8% indicating a lack of familiarity).

Urban forest: slightly greater lack of familiarity (32.0% had never heard of it and 27.1% were not sure what it meant – total 59.1%) – only 13.9% were very familiar with the term.

Biodiversity: slightly greater familiarity (24.2% were very familiar with it, while 29.6% had heard and felt they understood the term)

These results suggest that the community is generally unfamiliar with technical terms relating to urban green space. Effective engagement with the community will involve steering away from such technical terms and replace them with simpler language.

The language relating to aesthetics, relaxation, health and wellbeing and animals resonates most with the community.

MOSAIC
insights

Are you willing to support urban greening projects?

People support urban greening efforts in their area, with only 8.5% of respondents indicating that they (strongly or somewhat) do not support such efforts.

Most people support urban greening in principle, but are either unable or unwilling to devote their time and energy to actively supporting it (18.52% strongly agree and 40.2% somewhat agree with this sentiment).

To this end, most people are either unwilling, unable, or indifferent to volunteering in the maintenance of urban green spaces (59.1%) or in lobbying local government to increase the amount of this space (67.3%).

Despite this, 82.1% of respondents have access to some private green space including balcony boxes, garden, kitchen garden and large or small backyards. There is some overlap in the way respondents view the benefits of private and public green spaces. Private green spaces are primarily valued because of the following benefits:

- Mental wellbeing (language used: 'relaxation', 'relax', 'fresh air')
- Wildlife (language used: 'birds', 'wildlife')
- Comfort (language used: 'space', 'privacy', 'gardening')

MOSAIC insights

What should urban green space look like?

Respondents generally indicated no preference between green spaces dominated by low shrubs and grassy areas or by dense vegetation such as urban forests. However, 68.3% of respondents indicated a preference for a mix of these configurations (26.6% indicating a strong preference and 41.7% a moderate preference).

The majority of respondents (61.6%) indicated a preference for urban green spaces planted with native plant species. However, 27.5% were indifferent to this factor, while 11.0% indicated a dislike for spaces characterised by native species.

Respondents were asked to order their preference for different types of urban green space with from most important to least important. The answers were as follows:

1. Large parks (most important)
2. Street trees
3. Sports / active recreation fields
4. Nature strips
5. Wetlands
6. Community gardens
7. Pocket park (least important).

Wetlands, community gardens and pocket parks were very closely preferred. As such, they can be considered equal last preferences. Pocket parks may have been the least preferred since 52.7% of respondents had never heard of the term before.

These results indicate that the community values large parks that contain a mix of grassy areas with urban forests and mostly native vegetation.

Within the Community Engagement Kit, this information could be useful for councils when designing new parks.

MOSAIC insights
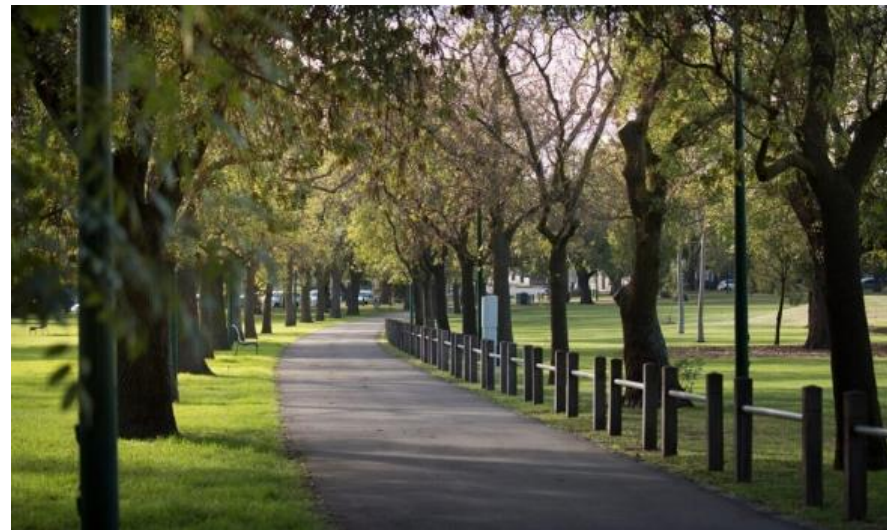
How important are different aspects of their locality and community?

Respondents were asked how important different aspects of the community were to them. Urban green space was ranked highest with 57.9% saying it is very important. However, this result may stem from respondents feeling the need to rank this aspect highly because of it being the focus of the survey. Other aspects that are important to people are:

- **Walking trails** (very important to 51.0% and somewhat important to 29.3%)
- **Cafes and restaurants** (very important to 43.1% and somewhat important to 34.1%)
- **Permanent street parking** (very important to 42.2% and somewhat important to 29.2%)
- **Shopping centres** (very important to 40.6% and somewhat important to 32.6%)
- **Farmers' markets** (very important to 37.4% and somewhat important to 37.0%)
- **Bike tracks** (very important to 33.9% and somewhat important to 31.3%)
- **Shopping strips** (very important to 30.8% and somewhat important to 39.5%)
- **School fetes** (very important to 23.0% and somewhat important to 35.3%)
- **Music events** (very important to 22.4% and

somewhat important to 34.7%)

- **Flea markets** (very important to 19.5% and somewhat important to 31.8%)

Only one aspect was ranked as primarily unimportant or indifferent to respondents:

- **Street art** (11.24% as not important at all, 11.4% as somewhat unimportant and 29.9% as indifferent – totalling 52.5%)

The two most unimportant (although not viewed as such by a majority) aspects after street art were:

- **Bars** (10.1% as not important at all, 12.6% as somewhat unimportant and 27.2% as indifferent – total of 49.9% / very important to 19.5% and somewhat important to 28.4% - totalling 47.8%)
- **Flea markets**: (10.9% as not important at all, 8.9% as somewhat unimportant and 25.9% as indifferent – total of 45.7% / very important to 19.5% and somewhat important to 31.8% - totalling 51.2%)

One way to enhance community perceptions of the value of urban green space is to consider ways to combine them with the community's highly-valued aspects, as noted in the left column.

Demographic differences

Demographic information was collected from the respondents such as gender, age, formal education, homeownership, children and postcode. Generally, the differences between the demographic groups were small, although some insights could be drawn from the survey results, as noted below.

Education

- The higher the education level, the more aware people are of whether their local council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green spaces.
- The lower the level of formal education, the less likely they are to advocate for the maintenance and/or expansion of urban green spaces.
- People with a lower formal education level consider themselves more knowledgeable about the benefits and issues regarding urban green spaces
- People with a higher formal education level are less likely to find trees a nuisance.
- People with a higher formal education level are more familiar with technical terms related to urban green space.

Age

- Younger people seem to be less aware of who is responsible for urban green space in their area, but they are more aware of whether their council is actively expanding urban green spaces.
- The older the respondents, the less likely they are willing to volunteer with maintenance.
- Generally, older respondents (65+) are more willing to be called on the phone than younger respondents, whereas contact from the council via an SMS service is preferred by younger respondents.
- People under the age of 44 are more likely to respond to being asked their opinion via social media.

Homeownership

There were no discernible differences between the responses from homeowners and renters, except that 67.4% of homeowners classify the relationship between property prices and urban green space as important, as opposed to 48.5% of renters.

MOSAIC
insights

Insights

Insights for the Community Engagement Kit

The survey clearly illustrates that communities across Australia overwhelmingly value urban green spaces for the multiple benefits that they provide.

However, this positive perception does not necessarily translate into the implementation of green space across cities and towns. We suggest three possible conclusions:

1. That people's appreciation for urban green spaces does not lead them to actively advocate for their inclusion and/or expansion where they live and work;

2. That the minority of residents that are opposed to the inclusion and/or expansion of green spaces where they live and work are more motivated and/or vocal than the silent majority that do support it;

3. That local councils are not effectively communicating the benefits of urban green spaces to communities and therefore not securing their constituents' enthusiasm for them.

The Community Engagement Kit should target each of these challenges. Potential ways of doing so might include:

1. Outlining simple and convenient methods for councils that will elicit their constituents' support for urban green spaces. Examples are SMS and emailed surveys.

2. Using non-technical language emphasising primarily aesthetic, relaxation and health and wellbeing benefits that will better communicate the multiple benefits that urban green spaces provide to residents.

3. Adopting language that communicates benefits rather than the concept. For example, 'urban green space can help keep cities cool and comfortable during extreme heat' instead of 'urban green spaces can help mitigate the urban heat island effect').

4. Focusing on the broad community benefits rather than personal use value that will resonate with a wide audience. For example, 'this park will provide opportunities for physical exercise' rather than 'this park will provide you a place to exercise'.
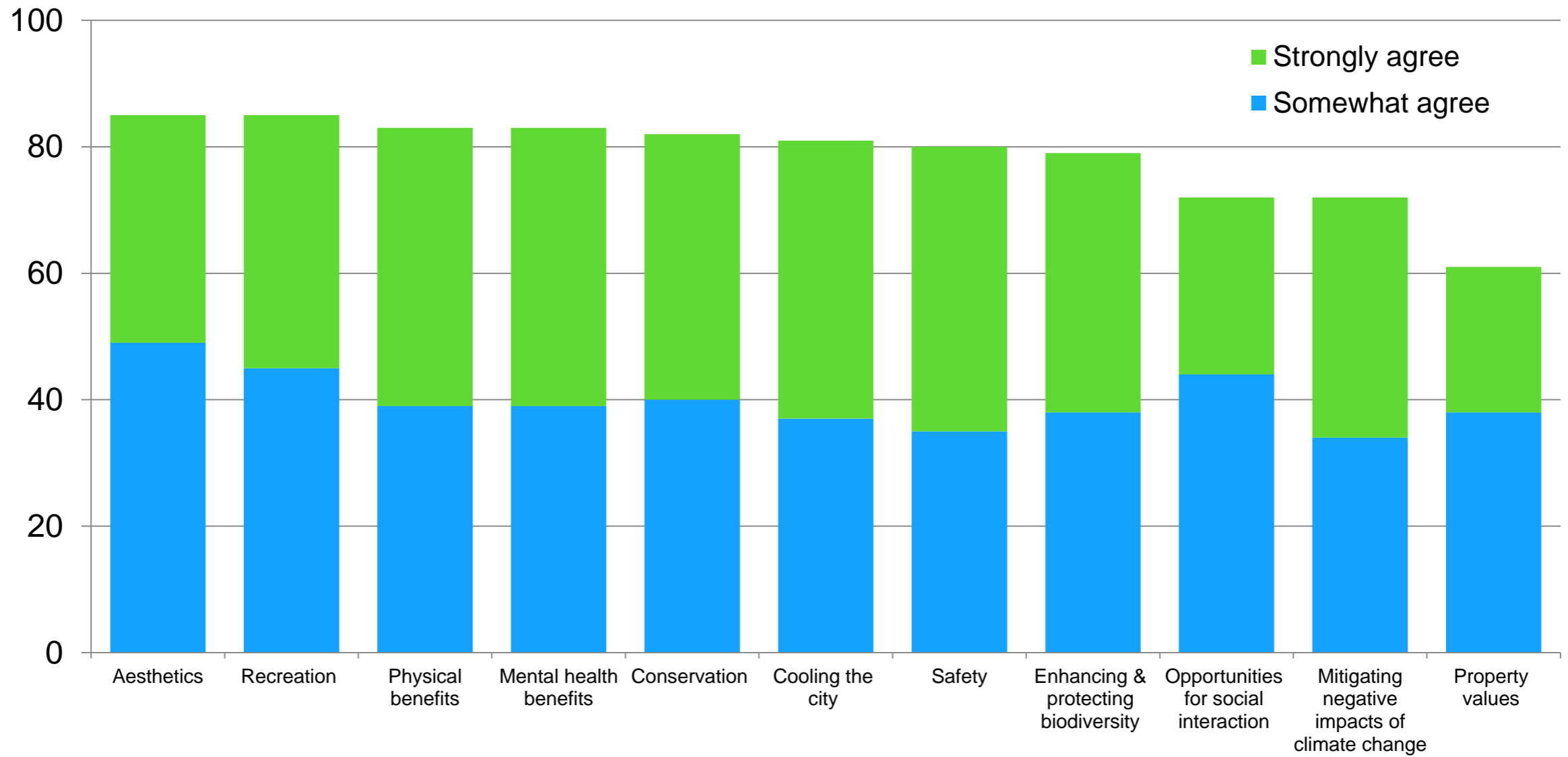
MOSAIC insights

MOSAIC insights

Contacts

Dr Peter Morison | 0431 724 913 | peter.morison@alluvium.com.au
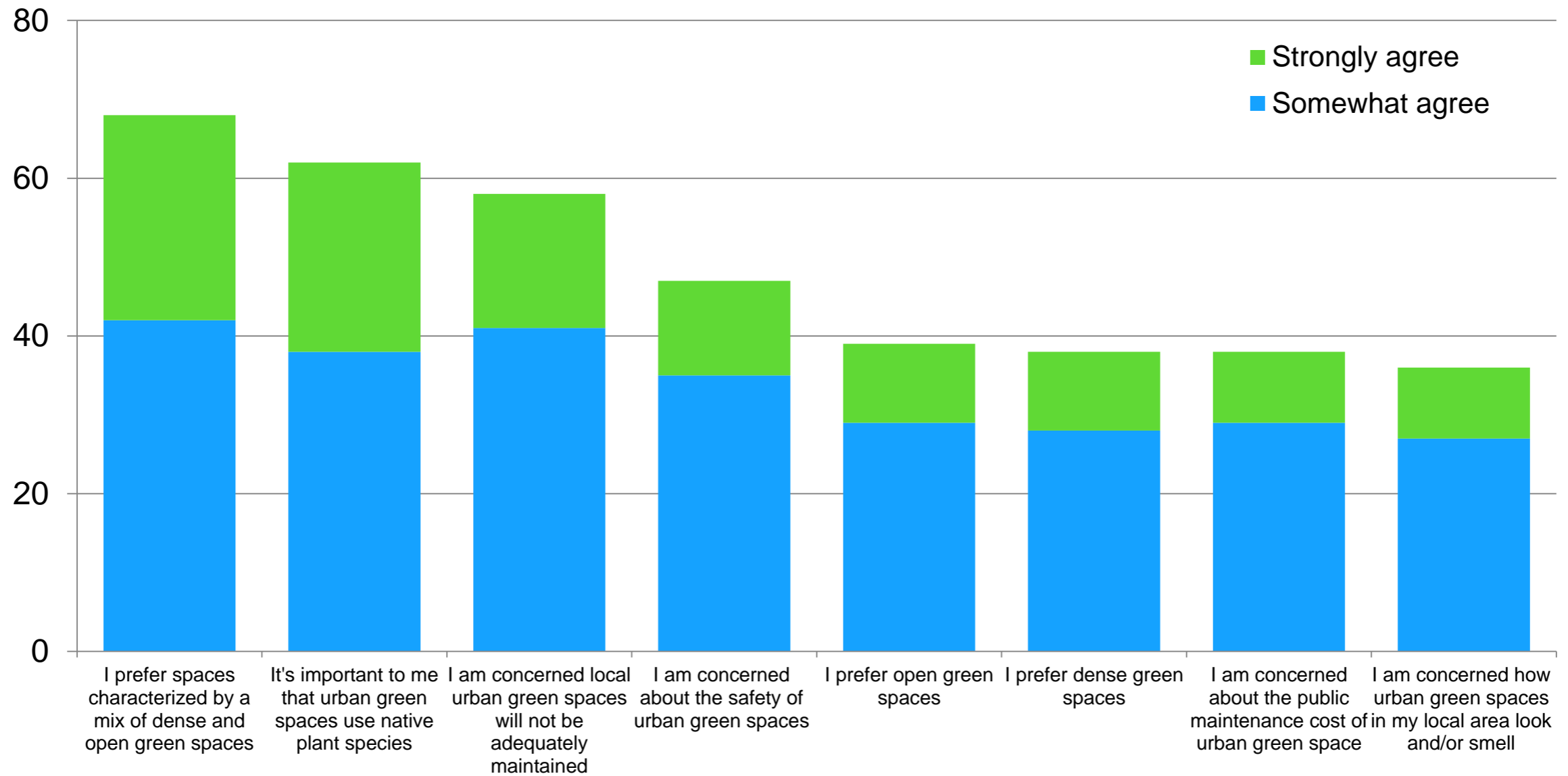
Dr Stephanie Jacobs | 0407 919 905 | stephanie.jacobs@mosaicinsights.com.au
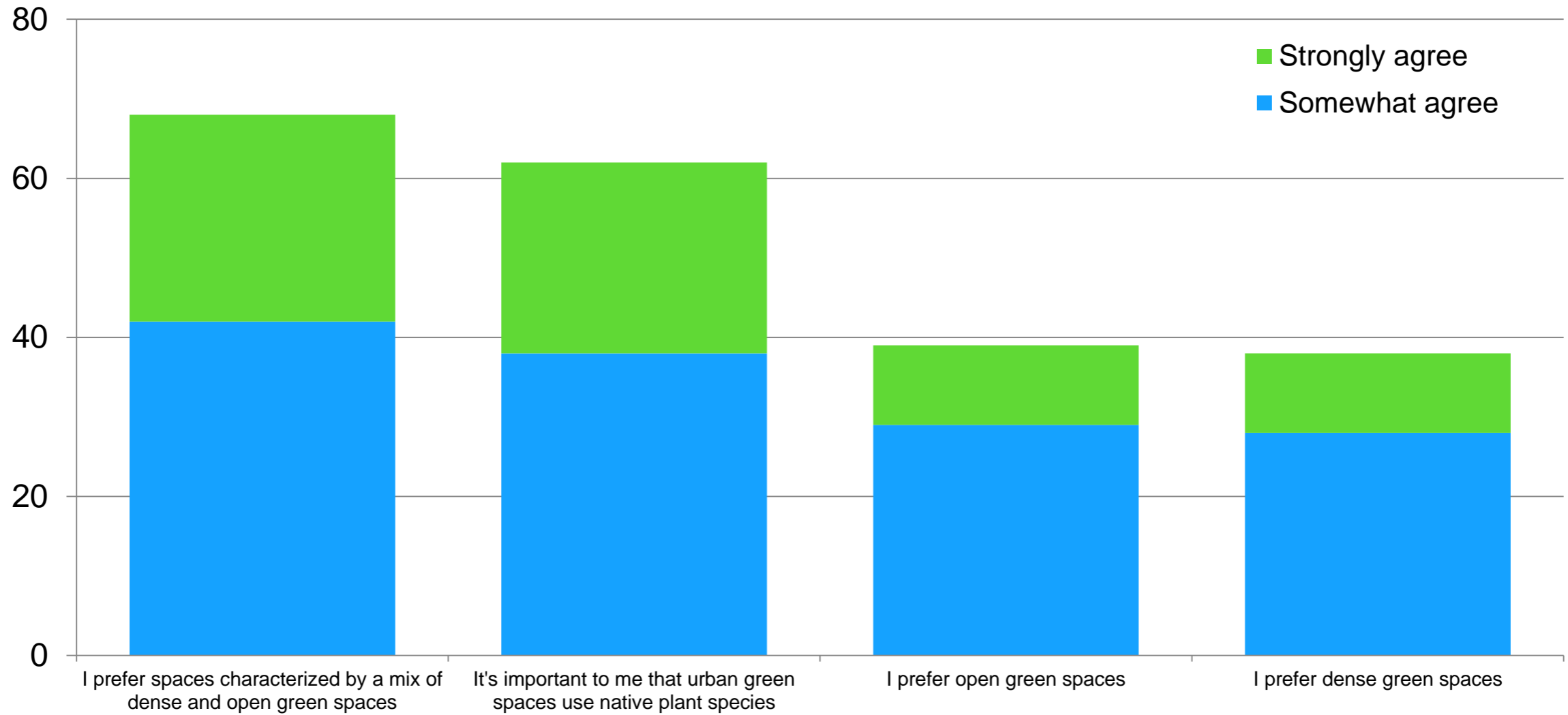
www.mosaicinsights.com.au

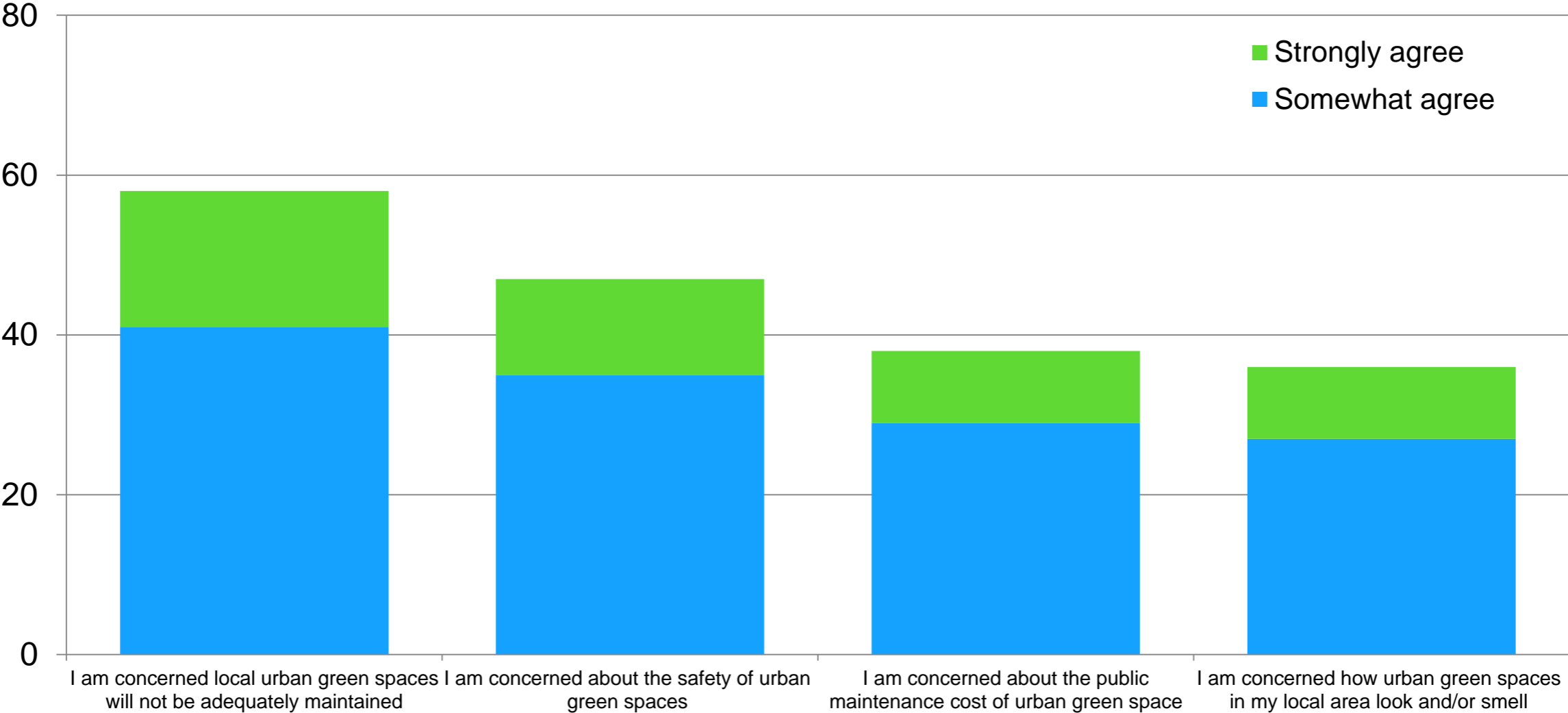**Which benefits of urban green space are important?**

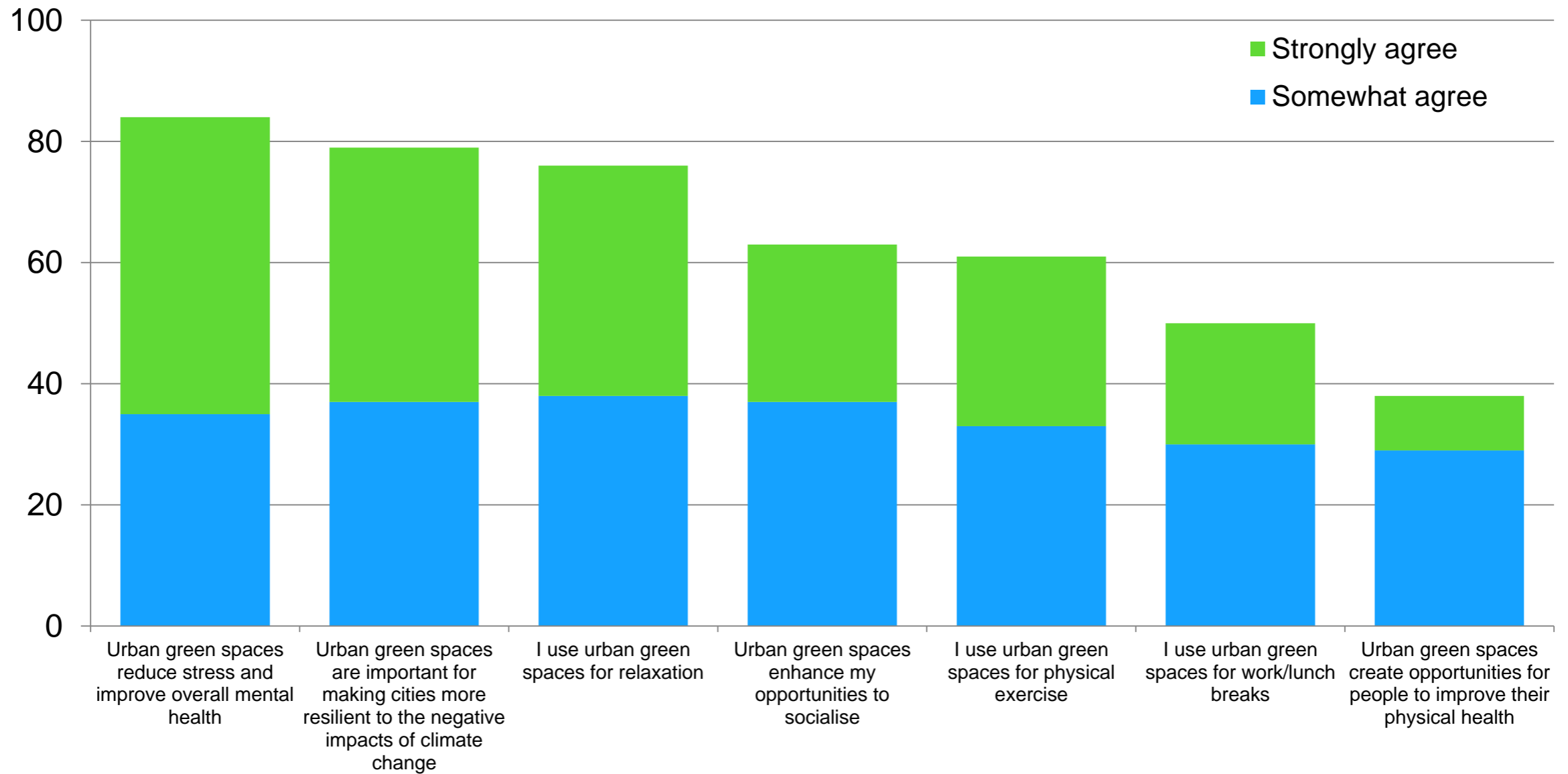# Community preferences and concerns regarding urban green space

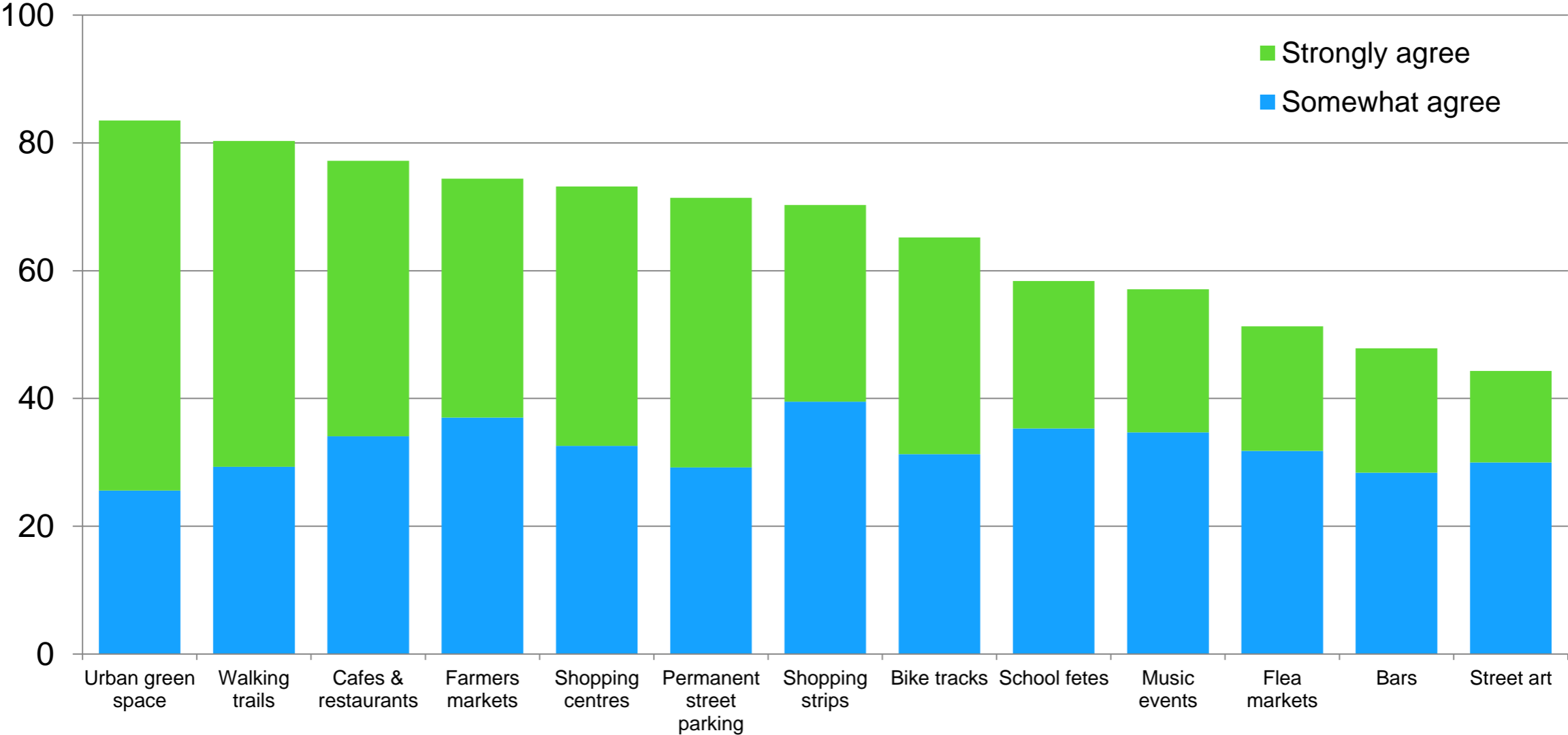# Community preferences regarding urban green space

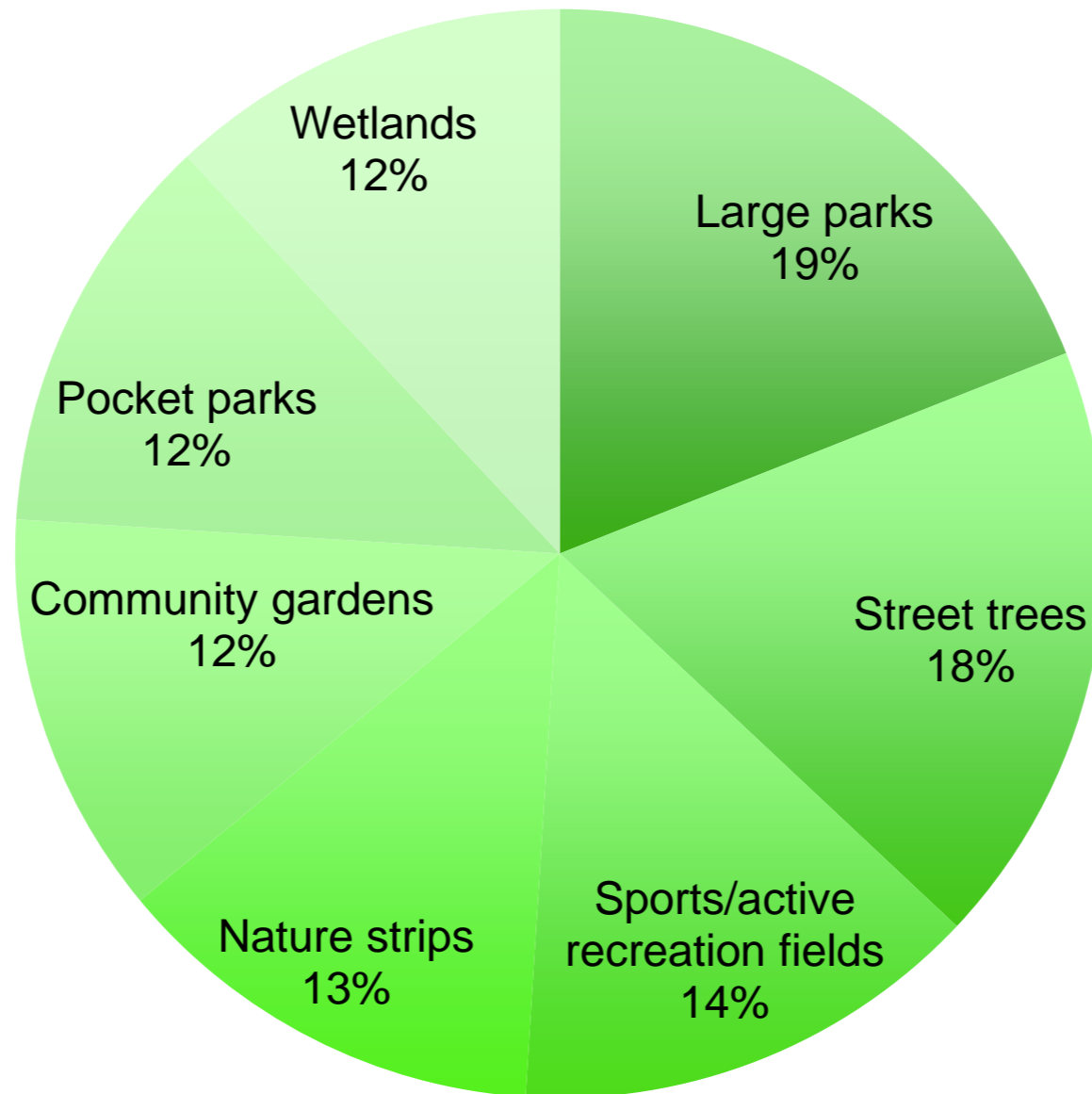**Community concerns regarding urban green space**

Legend:
- Strongly agree (green)
- Somewhat agree (blue)

Y-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80

Categories:
- I am concerned local urban green spaces will not be adequately maintained
- I am concerned about the safety of urban green spaces
- I am concerned about the public maintenance cost of urban green space
- I am concerned how urban green spaces in my local area look and/or smell

Uses of urban green space

Preferred type of urban green space

Wetlands
12%

Large parks
19%

Street trees
18%

Sports/active
recreation fields
14%

Nature strips
13%

Community gardens
12%

Pocket parks
12%

Who's with us?

Bringing community along on the green space journey

Bringing community on the green space journey

If you get the community offside, it doesn't matter what you do, it's going to be a long drawn out process.

Barney Oros, Development Director, HPG

Choose anything you want to change in this world and chances are, one thing will determine your success: how many people you can bring along with you on the journey.

Urban greening is no different.

Whether you work in council or development, one audience is always key: the local community.

Work with them and they can be one of your most useful resources. Get them offside and you could be in for a long, complicated, and drawn out process.

This guide brings together research on how community views green space, as well as how councils and developers who engage well do so.

It's designed to deliver tools and information to help you engage community in a genuine way to create green spaces that everyone has a say in and loves.

The four things

you need to bring community along for the journey

1. A good understanding of existing attitudes

How people speak, what they like, what they don't

2. A great process for working with community

A step by step approach to consultation and co-creation

3. Programs that involve the community in greening

Ways for those who want to get involved to get involved, easily

4. Communications that spread the word

Ready made videos, posters and social media posts to keep people informed

Community attitudes

Demonstrating the benefits for local community really helps get council across the line

Natalie Pelleri, Senior Planner, Inner West Council

Figures in this research have been rounded to the nearest decimal place for simplicity

Good news

Green space is seen as an essential part of local community, and is therefore a topic that should be high on the local engagement priority list

The question:
How important are different aspects of your locality and community?

■ **Very important**　　　■ **Somewhat important**
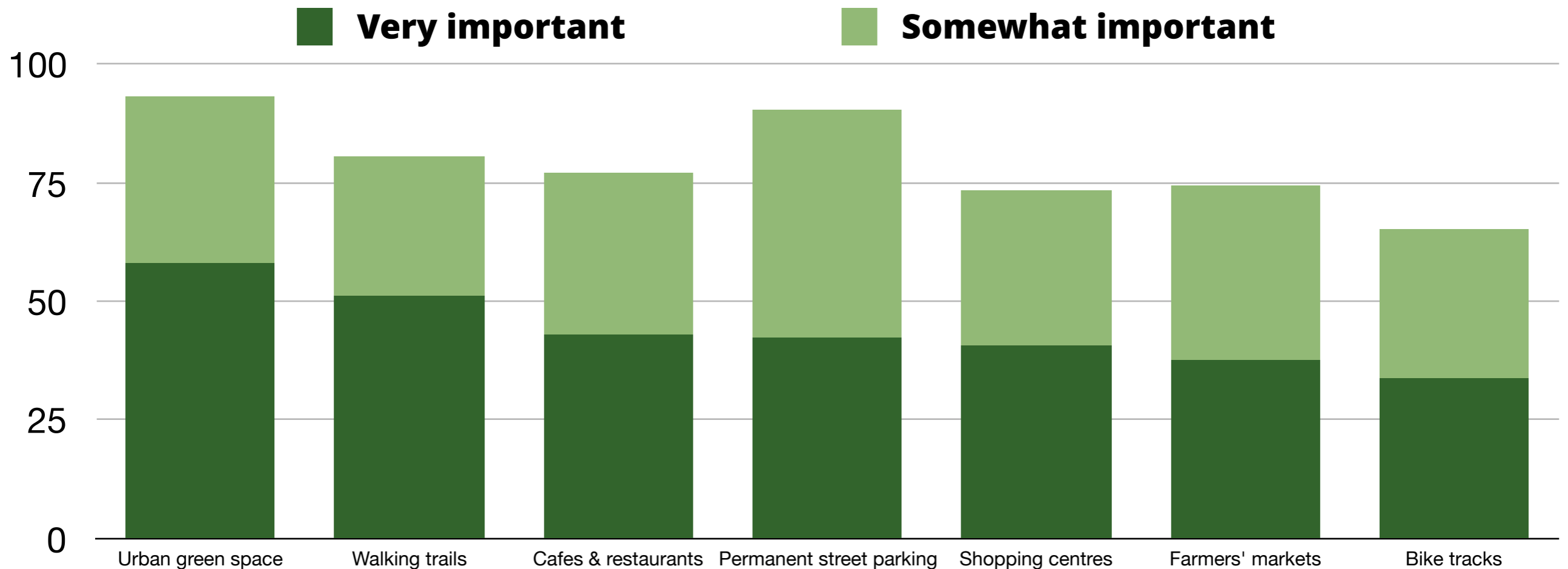
85% say one or more benefits of urban green space are somewhat or very important to them

but

12% of people find them a nuisance and would prefer fewer urban green spaces

People with higher levels of formal education are **less likely** to find trees a nuisance

So while there's always going to be some push back, it's important not to underestimate the community support that urban green space has.

Community speaks one language

When it comes to urban green space, people think of terms that relate to the benefits they experience and their observations of the areas

1. Aesthetics

Green   Clean
Beautiful   Pretty
Beauty   Nature

2. Relaxation

Calming
Peaceful
Relaxing

3. Health & Wellbeing

Healthy   Cool
Oxygen   Shade
Air   Fresh

4. Wildlife

Wildlife
Birds

The question:
Name three words that come to mind when you think about urban green spaces?

💡 **Key learning:**

Green is beautiful. People's number one association with green is that it creates a great aesthetic.

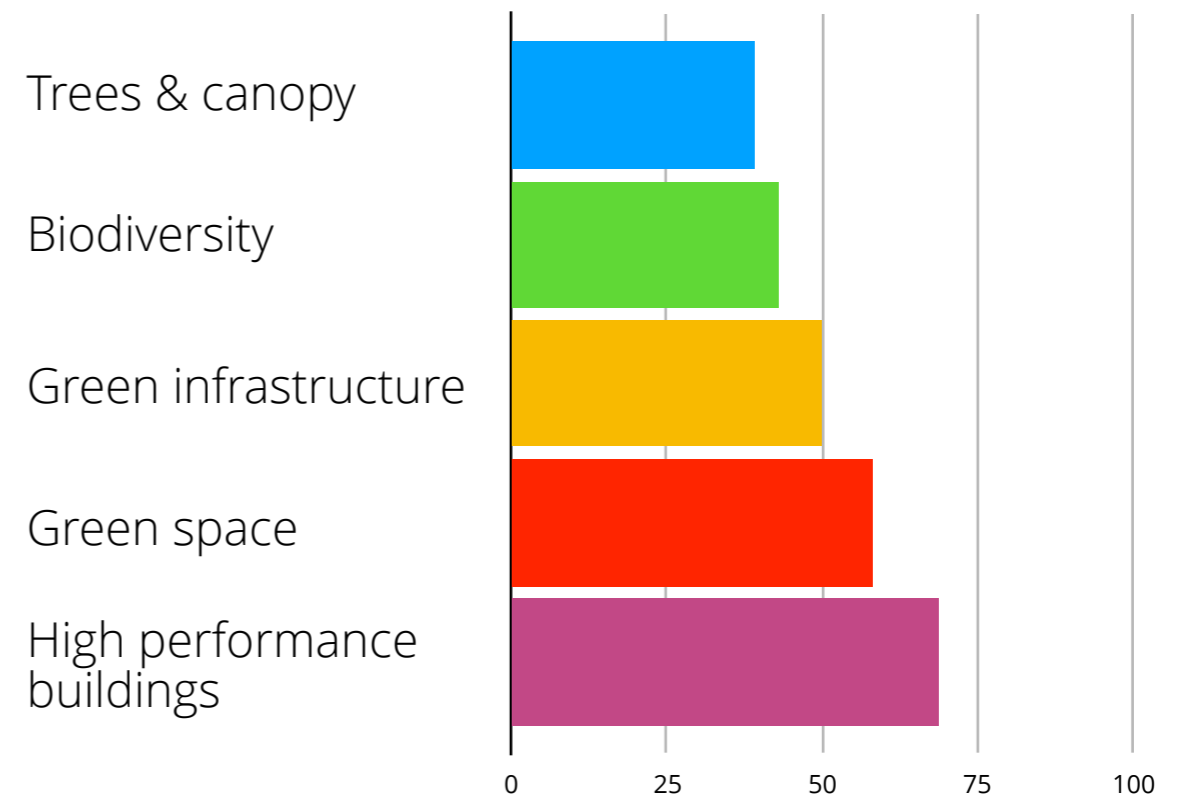# Councils and developers tend to speak differently

When you look at the words most used by councils and developers, you'll see it doesn't always match the language used by community when it comes to green space.

How councils speak

Term	Value
Green infrastructure	1.0
Street trees	2.0
Green places	2.0
Canopy	3.0
Urban forest	3.0

(x-axis: 0, 0.75, 1.5, 2.25, 3)
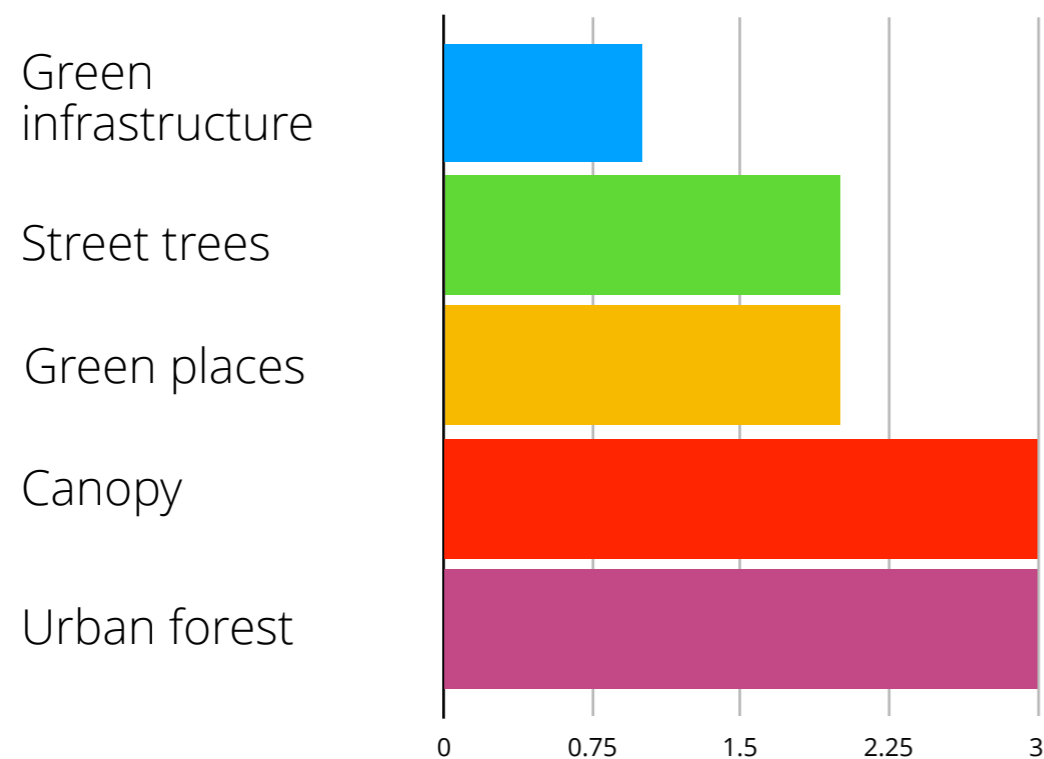
Top 5 most used words and terms based on a survey of the chosen names of 100 councils urban greening strategies

How developers speak

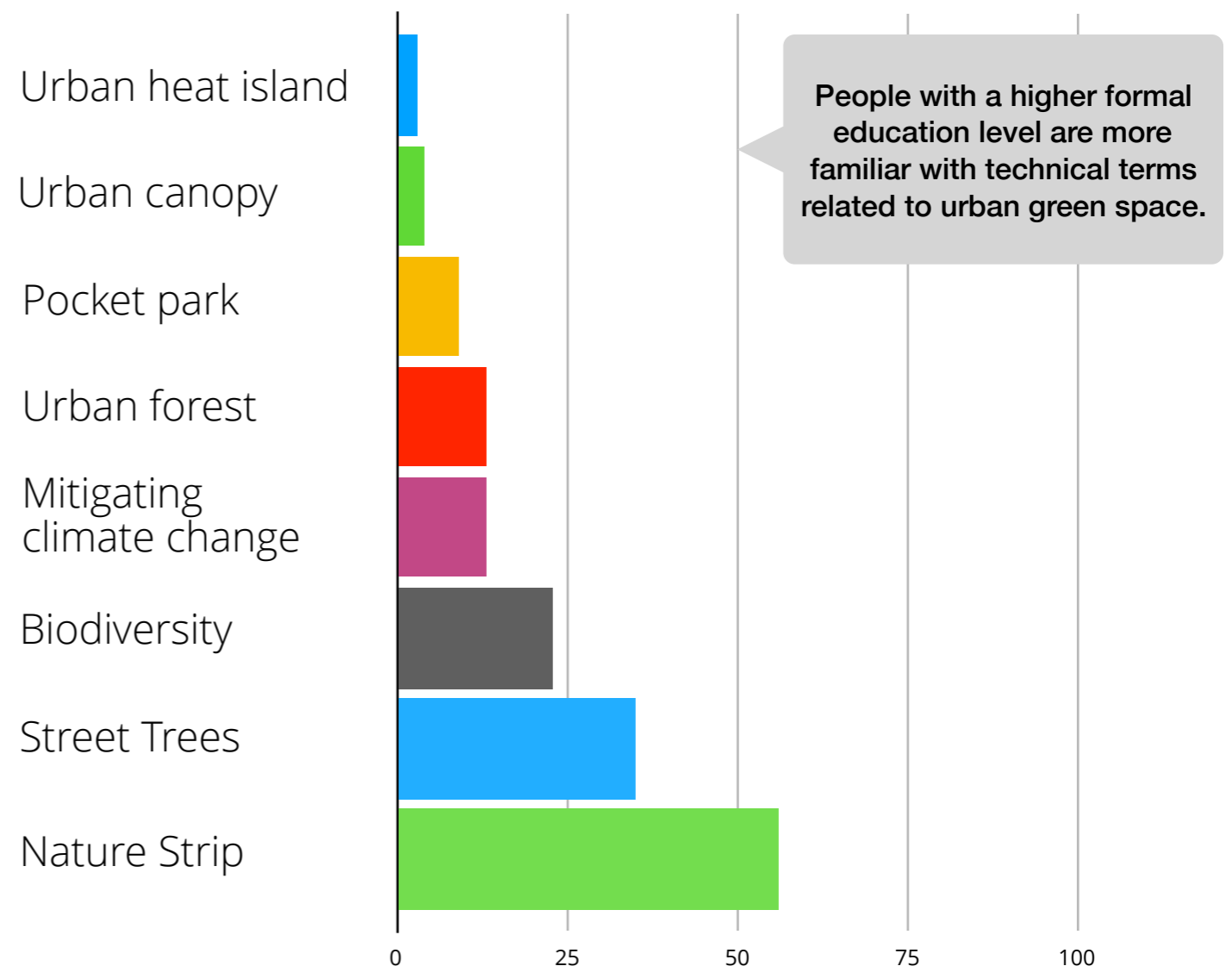| Term	Value
Trees & canopy	40
Biodiversity	43
Green infrastructure	50
Green space	58
High performance buildings	69

(x-axis: 0, 25, 50, 75, 100)

Top 5 most preferred words and terms based on a survey of 246 representatives of GBCA members

Community struggles to understand developer language

While people can understand everyday terms like nature strips and street trees.

They do not understand more technical, industry terms like urban heat island, urban canopy and pocket parks.

The question:
How familiar are you with these terms?

🔆 **Key learning:**
When talking to community, remove technical language and focus on simple terms people already identify with.

Percentage of people who are very familiar with the term

People with a higher formal education level are more familiar with technical terms related to urban green space.

Term	
Urban heat island	
Urban canopy	
Pocket park	
Urban forest	
Mitigating climate change	
Biodiversity	
Street Trees	
Nature Strip	

0   25   50   75   100

What about media?

The most used term in media to describe plants, trees and parks is **green space**

When talking **positively** about green space, the most used terms in media are:

#1 Health & wellbeing
#2 Liveability
#3 Walkability

When talking **negatively** about green space (or lack of), the most used terms in media are:

#1 Overdevelopment
#2 Urban heat
#3 Concrete jungle

Based on a study of 60 pieces of Australian media coverage across 40 consumer, 12 trade and 8 academic sources over the 12 months to Dec 2018

What do people use urban green space for?

74% Relaxation

61% Exercise

51% Work / lunch breaks

So it's important in our commercial areas too, regardless of private green space individuals may have

The most valued benefits match community usage and experience

But almost all benefits are highly valued

Bar chart showing values (0-100 scale):
- Aesthetics: ~85
- Recreation: ~85
- Mental health: ~84
- Physical health: ~83
- Conservation: ~82
- Cooling: ~81
- Nature & biodiversity: ~79
- Climate change: ~72
- Social interactions: ~72
- Property values: ~60
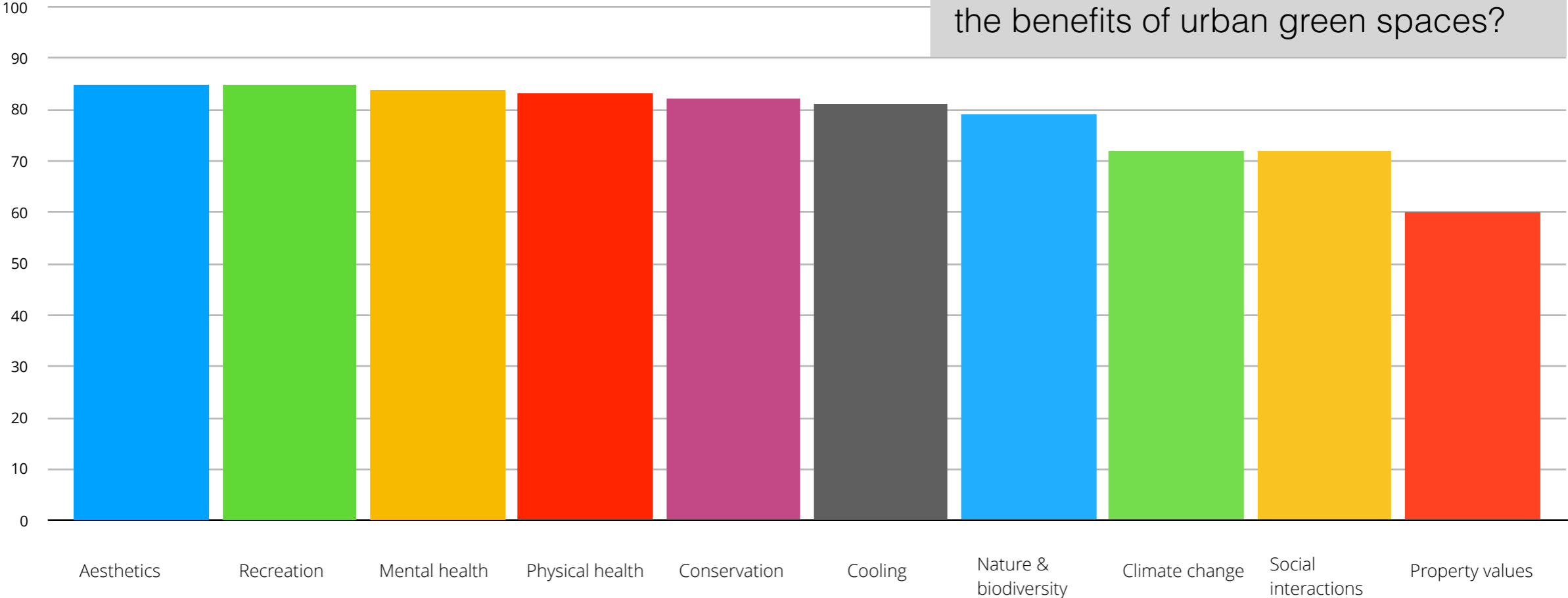
Key learning:

Use benefit focused communications.
Use a mix of benefits, including aesthetics, recreation, mental and physical health.

Responses do not confirm whether cooling the city was valued because of its links to climate change or human comfort. Considering the high value placed on physical health and relaxation, it is reasonable to expect it is more about human comfort.

Unsurprisingly this differs between home owners at 67% and renters at 49%

Councils and developers prioritise benefits differently

Councils

Broadly, councils see the same benefits as community…but in a different order

The #1 benefit for communities comes up in only 8% of council strategies
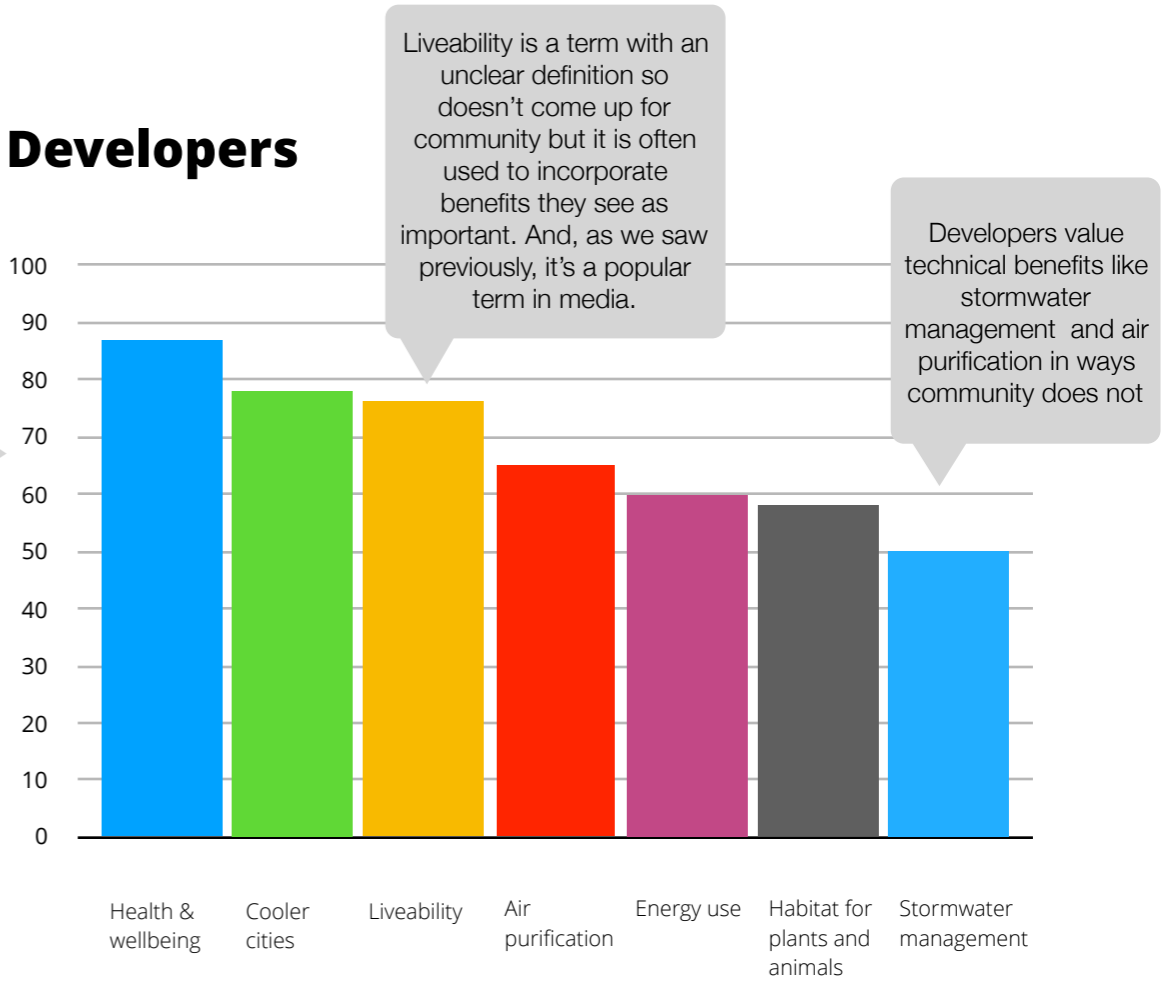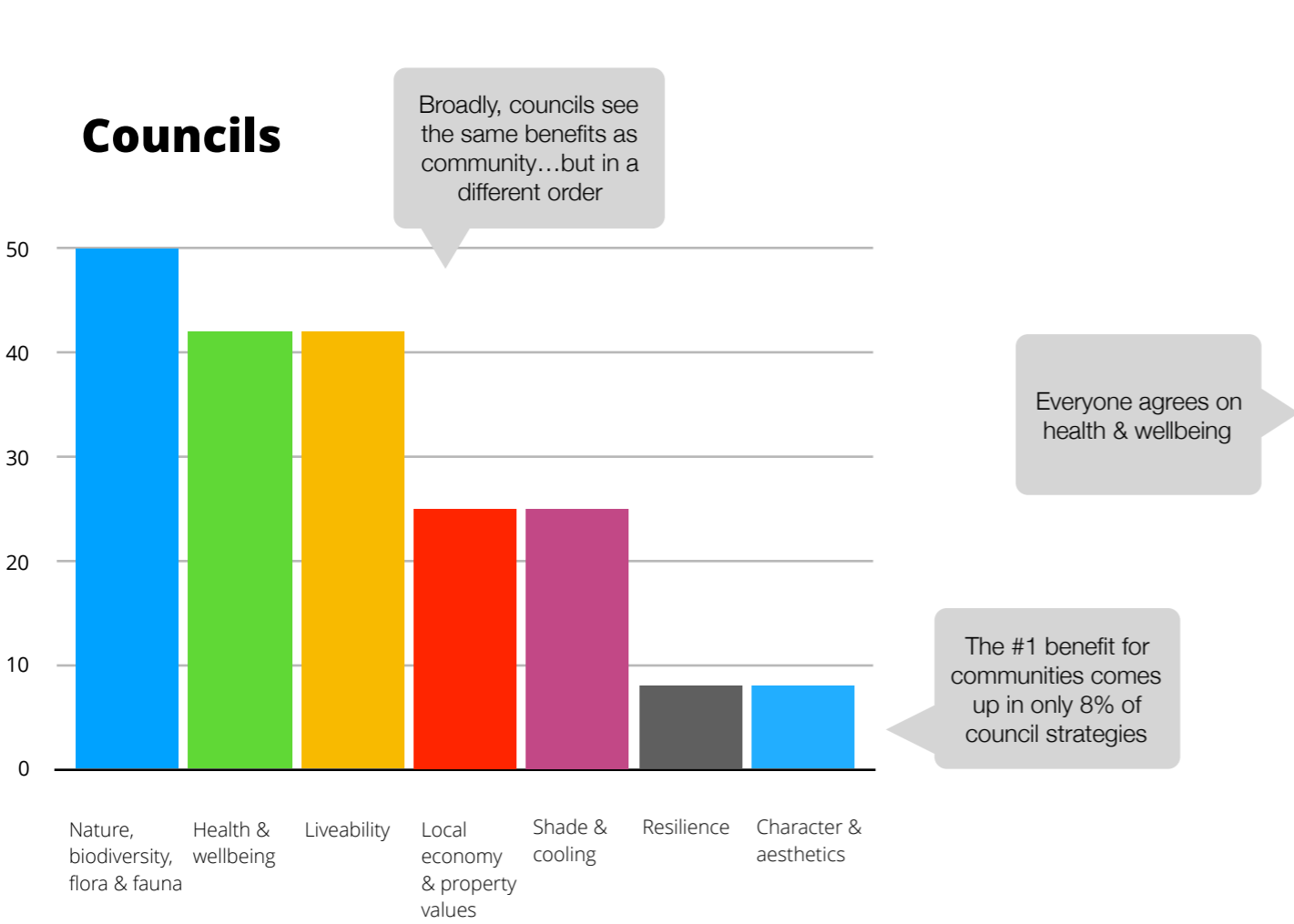
Percentage of urban council greening strategies that highlight which benefits based on a sample of 20/130 urban councils

Councils chart categories: Nature, biodiversity, flora & fauna; Health & wellbeing; Liveability; Local economy & property values; Shade & cooling; Resilience; Character & aesthetics

Developers

Liveability is a term with an unclear definition so doesn't come up for community but it is often used to incorporate benefits they see as important. And, as we saw previously, it's a popular term in media.

Developers value technical benefits like stormwater management and air purification in ways community does not

Everyone agrees on health & wellbeing

Answers to the questions ' What do you see as the benefits of including green space in developments?' as asked of 246 GBCA members

Developers chart categories: Health & wellbeing; Cooler cities; Liveability; Air purification; Energy use; Habitat for plants and animals; Stormwater management

Maintenance is community's main concern

When asked what the top problems with urban green spaces are, respondents stated:

#1 Maintenance

58% of people are concerned that urban green spaces in their local area will not be maintained - including problems with litter

#2 Safety

45% of people are somewhat or very concerned about the safety of green spaces

In good news

36% of respondents stated no dislikes at all with urban green space, and even of those who did - 'not enough green space' was one of the most common answers!

It's also worth noting

81% of people agree or strongly agree that they take an interest in and notice how healthy the trees, nature strips, grass, plants and parks look in their local area

62% are not concerned or are indifferent about the cost of maintaining urban green spaces in their area.

💡 **Key learning:**

Communications should give a clear idea of how maintenance of green spaces will be carried out, and what measures are taken to keep them safe.

The community lack knowledge on who's responsible

55%
of people don't know who looks after their local green spaces

72%
don't know if their local council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green space

> The higher a person's education level, the more aware people are of whether their local council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green spaces.

But they would like to know. Here's how:
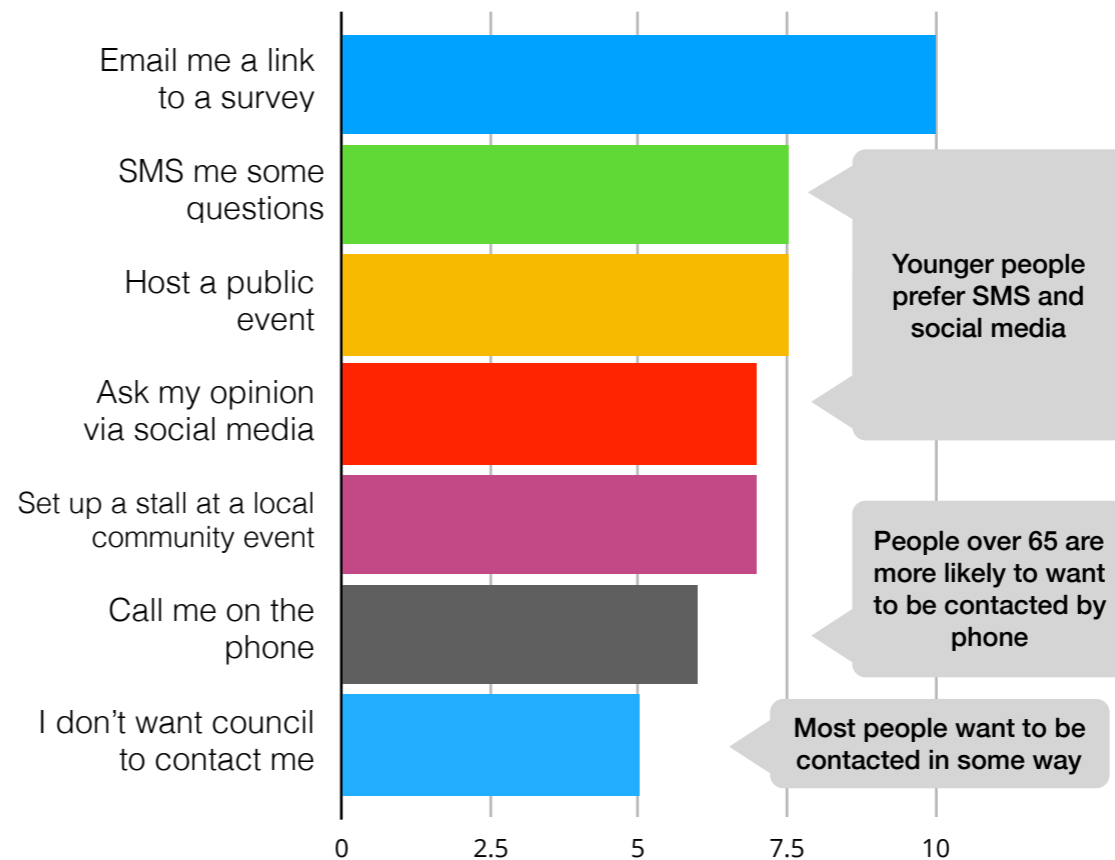
Email me a link to a survey

SMS me some questions

Host a public event

Ask my opinion via social media

Set up a stall at a local community event

Call me on the phone

I don't want council to contact me

0   2.5   5   7.5   10

> Younger people prefer SMS and social media

> People over 65 are more likely to want to be contacted by phone

> Most people want to be contacted in some way

Key learning:

Councils could do more when it comes to communicating. Digital channels (including SMS) will engage more people, especially younger people. Communications that ask people's opinion rather than just tell them are preferred.

Support is strong in appreciation, but weak in action

92% support urban greening

but

59% of people are either unable or unwilling to devote time to volunteering in the maintenance of urban green spaces

The older the respondent, the **less likely** they are willing to volunteer with maintenance.

67% are unwilling to help petition government to increase local urban green space

There is no definitive 'favourite type' of urban green space

When asked to order the kinds of green space they prefer in their area they stated:

#1 Large parks

#2 Street trees

#3 Sport & recreation fields

#4 Nature strips

#5 Wetlands

#6 Community gardens

#7 Pocket park

> The gap between the most popular and least popular options was comparatively small - which means opinions are likely to vary depending on the local area

> But keep in mind most people don't know what a pocket park is

68%
agree a mix of low lying grasslands and shrubs and thicker bushland is good

62%
of people prefer urban green spaces to be planted with natives

11% dislike spaces planted with natives

28% don't care either way

What about at home?

Private green space is viewed in a similar manner to public green space, but with less focus on aesthetics.

82%

of people have access to some private green space including balcony boxes, garden, kitchen garden and large or small backyards

Key benefits

- **Mental wellbeing** ('relaxation', 'relax', 'fresh air')
- **Wildlife** ('birds', 'wildlife')
- **Comfort** ('space', 'privacy', 'gardening')

Want to learn more?

This article offers excellent, more qualitative, insights into how and Perth residents value trees on both public and private land: https://bit.ly/2FC7GVn

Its findings are broadly in keeping with the research above.

WAtoday.com.au

NATIONAL WA BIODIVERSITY

Perth punters want more tree canopy, but they feel helpless: Study

By **Emma Young**
March 3, 2019 — 12.08pm

4 View all comments

Perth people know about our city's diminishing urban tree canopy. And they care. But when it comes to deciding whether to plant or remove trees on their own property, all that can pretty easily fly out the window.
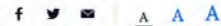
These are among the findings of a new study, part of an Honours program for Edith Cowan University, in which Nicole Farrington has surveyed more than 800 homeowners across 29 Perth councils to examine their reactions to policies protecting trees on public and private land, and their personal decisions to plant or remove trees.
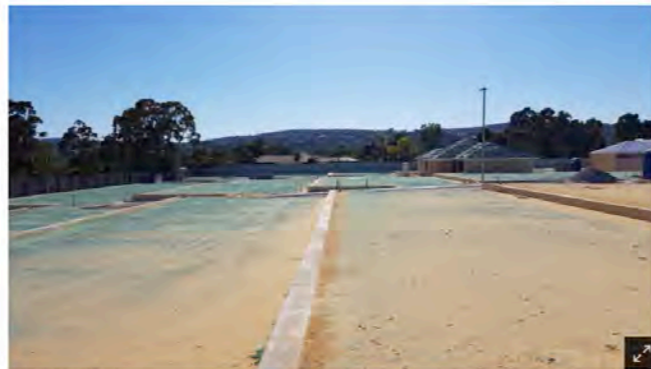
One of the things we measured was egoistic values – caring because it might affect your own health or prosperity…But actually … values didn't play a very big role. People's environmental values, their awareness of consequences to the environment, or their level of social responsibility … weren't connected to private behaviours or policies.

People's motivations were more pragmatic…People actually planted trees because of a direct impact on their personal space and lives – the biggest reasons to plant trees were shade, aesthetics , wanting to attract birds and wildlife and fruit production.

80 per cent "strongly agreed" that neighbourhood trees made a major contribution to local identity and character, and 80 per cent "strongly agreed" that neighbourhoods without trees were unattractive and sterile

While they were highly in favour of council actions on public land, they didn't want to be told what to do in their own backyards.

This article offers a uniquely US perspective, however its key out take - that residents declined urban greening efforts not because they disliked trees but because they distrust the motivations and actions of their local government - is still an insightful cautionary tale: https://bit.ly/2AQoyos

DESIGN / TRANSPORTATION / ENVIRONMENT / EQUITY / LIFE

John Kost, left, and Barry Johnson, citizen foresters for the nonprofit group The Greening of Detroit, plant a tree in the Osborn neighborhood in Detroit in 2016. // Carlos Osorio/AP

Why Detroit Residents Pushed Back Against Tree-Planting

BRENTIN MOCK   JAN 11, 2019

Roughly a quarter of the 7,500 residents they approached declined offers to have new trees planted in front of their homes.

...the rejections had more to do with how the tree-planters presented themselves and residents' distrust of city government than it did with how residents felt about trees.

It's not that they didn't trust the trees; they didn't trust the city.

Have you seen PlaceScore?

It shows how each community in Australia values nature, trees and greenery compared to 50 other different place attributes - both the soft and hard infrastructure as well as social, physical, cultural or economic aspects.

Click: www.placescore.org

Your place will be more appealing to more people by delivering:

UNIQUE

Unique and respected landscape features including street trees, vegetation, water, views or topography

Across all our research the community values places that integrate nature as a point of difference, something that makes the area unique or special - and it is equally important that these natural features are cared for and respected.

Don't underestimate the power of GREEN!

• Consider how you can use landscape or vegetation as a unique point of difference in your project

• Create a landscape landmark with a mature ficus or a row of unique trees such as jacarandas or pine trees

• Retain view corridors or highlight with a look out

#2 In Meadowbrook 56% of respondents chose 'Elements of the natural environment ' as being important to them in their ideal Town Centre (62% Australia-wide)

CARE

Cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces and infrastructure

With centrally managed shopping centres providing the competitive advantage of a highly controlled environments, more people, especially the young see cleanliness as an important place attribute. Balancing cleanliness with your town centre's inherent diversity and interest is key.

Don't underestimate the power of CLEAN!

• Plan for the ongoing care, cleaning and maintenance of shared or public spaces and amentities

• Consider materials that look clean (not grey) and are easy to maintain over time

• Ensure rubbish bins are accessible but not overwhelming or dominant

#1 In Meadowbrook 66% of respondents chose 'Cleanliness of public space ' as being important to them in their ideal Town Centre (67% Australia-wide)

Meadowbrook Oct 2018 | Place Score©2018 | www.placescore.org

The process of engagement

Breakthrough moments happen when you stop and listen to the community

Davina Rooney, CEO, GBCA

What is engagement? Good question. In our experience it gets mixed up with communication.

We define engagement as the process of listening, understanding and co-creation, while communication is providing a clear explanation of what you're doing, why, and how you'd like your audience to play a role.

Ten Steps

We spoke to leading councils around Australia and collated their successes to come up with the ultimate 10 step process. It is equally relevant for developers too.

1 Set the stage

Before you start consultation, it's important everyone in your team is clear on the parameters of what is possible and what is not.

Are you looking for input into a major strategic planing process that determines land use across your whole LGA or is this about tree canopy targets or street level plans? How will community input inform policies and decisions?

One example of a well defined question is, 'how do we ensure new green spaces are safe?' Another is, 'how do we create a feedback loop for community to tell council if maintenance is needed?'

Giving your engagement clear purpose will create a pathway to using it solve real problems rather than engaging for the sake of it.

By setting the limits on what is and isn't on the table, you help manage expectations and ensure you get feedback that is workable rather than too blue sky.

Typically, councils make big planning decisions every 10 years, with smaller decisions cascading from there.

If community understands that, they can provide more useful input and are less likely to be disappointed if their big blue sky ideas aren't met.

IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner.	To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions.	To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE	"We will keep you informed."	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns."	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible."	"We will implement what you decide."

(c) International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org (Source: Place Speak)

Have you seen the IAP2 Spectrum? This internationally recognised measure of public participation is designed to help understand the level of participation that defines the public's role in a community engagement process or program. It clearly outlines goals and the associated promise to the public that applies to different levels of engagement. Read more at: www.iap2.org.au

2 Create the conversation

You needn't dive headlong into surveys and dedicated green space forums.

Simply opening up the channels between your organisation and the local community is a big leap in many cases.

Begin with an open conversation. Discuss the role of trees, plants and green space within the community in broad terms and grow the conversation from there.

The earlier you open the channels and create a broad conversation, the easier it will be to create a genuinely democratic process.

Opening the conversation means opening it with other people within your council too.

Too often, planners and technical experts are left out of these opening forums.

They can help explain where the role of council ends and the role of the State Government begins. And what the potential unforeseen risks are. For example, residents might wildly advocate for street trees and get them, only to have the land on which they are planted resumed for a major infrastructure project - like light rail.

If you, a broad group of experts from your team and a good cross section of community are all part of the first engagement then you have an excellent platform to build upon.

One place to begin a conversation is via your council's guest speaker program, if you have one.

Invite an urban greening professional, academic or health professional to share their knowledge. An outsider can be a great person to begin these conversations and a good neutral way to open the conversation around benefits in preparation for a new process of consultation.

3 Share the science

Provide the data and science on why urban greening is important and the ways it can benefit the area suburbs. Community members are able to take this information, process it and begin thinking of localised solutions.

Sharing the data at the beginning and exploring it together will make sure everyone is starting the conversation with the same information and help you to walk the journey of increasing urban green space together.

Do you have local data?

We've shared our national data above, now we encourage you to build on this with local data to better understand the attitudes and behaviours of your residents.

Comparing national with local data is a great way to open up conversation with community as it helps them understand you are seeking a truly local solution.

We've provided a survey template based on our own research questions that you can use.

It's also worth looking at existing tools like Place Score to see where green space fits in with other priorities for your community.

4 Plan your pathways

Establish which ways you want to connect with your community. There isn't going to be a one size fits all conversation for you to have with your community, so you will need to have a variety of engagement processes in place to engage with the motivations of different people.

By offering a variety of points to listen, you will hear from diverse voices in your community.

It really is a case of different strokes for different folks.

Make sure you include some simple and convenient methods such as SMS and emailed surveys. The easier it is, the more likely people are to take the time to show their support for your green space project.

5 Choose your champions

Having community champions on your side gives you a well informed group of helpers who can both help you spread the word and also bring back responses that may not otherwise reach your ears.

Champions can be made up of community group members, dedicated individuals, enthusiastic businesses and council staff.

Ensure a cross section of your community is represented and look beyond the usual suspects (though you will want some of them too).

You can do this by using a number of outreach methods, including randomised emails or letter box drops.

You can take this a step further and establish a Community Reference Group. Such a group provides continual consultation group throughout your urban greening process.

Councils that have used this method have referenced it as a successful step to increasing support for greening amongst the community and creating both an efficient and effective process.

This option helps ensure that councils efforts are created alongside community without the need to re-start the consultation processes from the very beginning at each step.

6 Let them do the first design

Your first design should be a community created design - with support from technical experts to help guide what is possible. Draw on the collective knowledge that exists in your community and make this the first draft.

From there, sense check your draft with them (or your newly formed Advisory Group) and ask if it represents what they want to see. From there you can start to add council expertise and adapt it. What this ensures is that all the key ingredients the community wants are included.

This not only creates a smoother process and a more engaged community, it also help make sure new green spaces are the right kind for your community, Resulting in well loved spaces and inspiring more people to increase and protect the greening on their private property. After all, it's their plan now, not yours.

7 Don't hide behind email

Sure, it's easier to sit behind a desk all day. But, when it comes to engagement, that just won't cut it. You can't develop real rapport with a screen and a contact form.

Provide a direct phone line to your team, get out in the community or have frequent face to face catch up opportunities. Deal with questions or complaints as soon as possible and in person where possible. This ensures that individuals feel respected and included in what happens in their community - and no gripes are left to grow and turn toxic.

Digital communication is completely different from in-person, face-to-face conversations. One will give you surface insights, and the other really gives you depth.

Joe Gebbia, Co-founder, AirBnB

8 Make it easy for people to get their hands dirty

Not everyone in your community will want to get involved in planting, but there is a significant group that will - and they can ultimately become your best advocates.

Those who are most successful in this space are not only holding community workshops and 'have your say' surveys but are also providing community planting days, creating backyard fauna programs or are establishing cooling neighbourhood programs.

Utilising digital channels to make volunteering easier will help convert those who are interested.

Even if only a small part of the community get involved, it displays positive community support to everyone else

Again, this is about offering a variety of options, as different people like to join in in different ways. There are some ideas for this on the page XX.

9 Provide practical advice

People are very practical when it comes to their own properties. So, if you want them to start greening their own land, it helps to provide practical advice that helps overcome everyday barriers.

This can include tree maintenance and selection guides, gardening principles or localised advice regarding insurance and utilities. Helping people address their fears or reservations with knowledge and skills is an important step in increasing their confidence and getting on the front foot with regard to fears such as falling tree limbs.

This is backed up y the findings of the study referenced on p18:

'Homeowners also mentioned that they would like to receive education on how to plant and retain trees in a way that limited any real or perceived practical drawbacks. This included species selection to determine best plant size and water requirements as well as advice regarding potentially problematic roots.'

10 Do it all again

Engagement is an ongoing conversation.

Evaluate, iterate and prototype again. Where has your engagement been effective and where do you see possible improvements? Continue to keep the communication lines open with your stakeholders, share the wins of your process so far and also any changes that might be introduced moving forward.

This is also your opportunity to share any insights or data with your council or organisation on the outcomes of your process, to unpack the ROI such as less complaints and increased canopy cover and celebrate the creation of better greening outcomes.

This process may need to repeated many times. Remember, the end destination is a greener suburb or a new green space project, not simply reaching step 10.

Ways to involve

Tell me and I'll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I'll understand.

Xun Kuang

In this section you will find a collection of programs that have been successfully used to create ownership of and engagement with environmental programs within the community.

Programs such as these also create great bump-points with your community to share updates, launch new collateral, hear feedback and continue to build rapport.

1 SMS Opinion Poll & Email Survey

An easy way to engage with your residents and meet them where they are. Town hall meetings and weekend events are fantastic but there is a subsection of your community who will never be able to make it to these events (the shift worker or the working parent).

Creating easy to roll out and effective technology engagement processes are designed to catch these hard to catch community members.

Using randomised texts or email surveys, you can track your communities attitudes towards urban greening as well as their behaviours. This data can also offer an alternative to face to face engagement as people can feel it is less confrontational.

From our research, councils tend to do this late in process, to get validation and feedback on policy.

Why not be a leader by starting this style of engagement right up front, in conjunction with face to face meetings, for those who cannot make it.

You can also run live research during an event and even crowdsource the questions using tools like Slido.
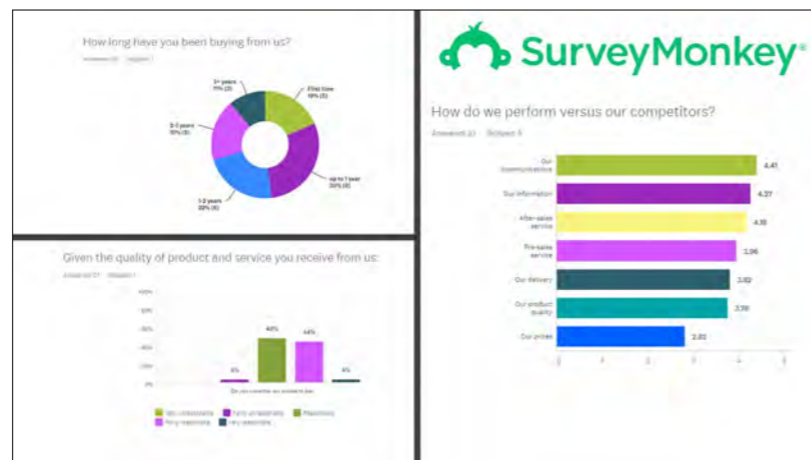
Tools like Survey Monkey make it fast and easy to poll opinions
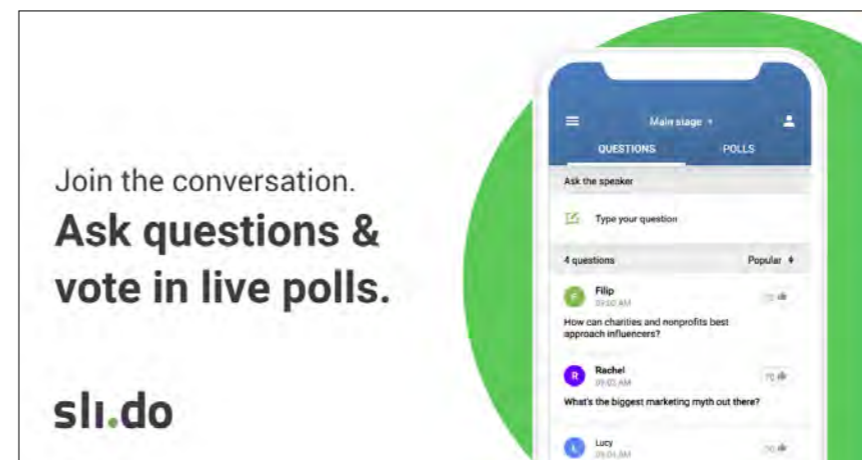
Tools like Slide make it easy to create interaction at live events

2 Free plant programs

A giveaway program is an approachable way to get people thinking about the value of trees and plants, and consider how they can play a role in greening their suburb.

A free plant can help green a yard, verge, school, church or other space, and it all adds up.

By providing council approved plants, this program also helps ensure residents are planting the correct species and will, ideally, be motivated to continue greening beyond their first plant.

Photo thanks to City of Brisbane

Believed to be the longest running tree giveaway program in Australia, the City of Brisbane giveaways program kicked off in the late 1960's and continues to thrive.

Over the last 10 years alone, the program has provided their residents, schools and community groups with over 600,000 plants and trees.

Click:
https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/environment-waste/be-clean-green-brisbane/green-homes/sustainable-gardening/free-native-plants-program

3 Adopt-a-tree (or verge) program

In this kind of program, community members sign up to care for a specific tree or verge within the community.

Generally the council or developer puts in the tree or verge and a community member signs up to water and maintain it.

This provides ownership over public spaces, allows individuals to get involved with greening without having to invest in or change their own space. Also great for people for whom home greening isn't an easy option, such as apartment dwellers and renters.

City of Vincent's 'Adopt-a-Verge' program includes provision of any necessary earthworks (boxing out and levelling) as well as 20 native tube stock plants to approved participants.

The major benefits in the council area have not only been greener streets but also increased community engagement, the establishment of new biodiversity corridors throughout the City and increased retention of rain where it falls.

Click:

https://www.wdrc.qld.gov.au/living-here/facilities-and-services/parks-and-gardens/adopt-a-street-tree-program

https://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/residents/environment-health/environmental-sustainability/news-events/adopt-a-verge.aspx

Photos thanks to Western Down Regional Council and City of Vincent

4

Exceptional/significant tree register

A significant tree register is a common tool that is used to protect and promote significant trees on both public and private land.

These can be created by council or can be built up through submissions from the public. If you decide to use the latter process, the gathering process can ultimately create great user generated content on what your local residents love about the green spaces around them.
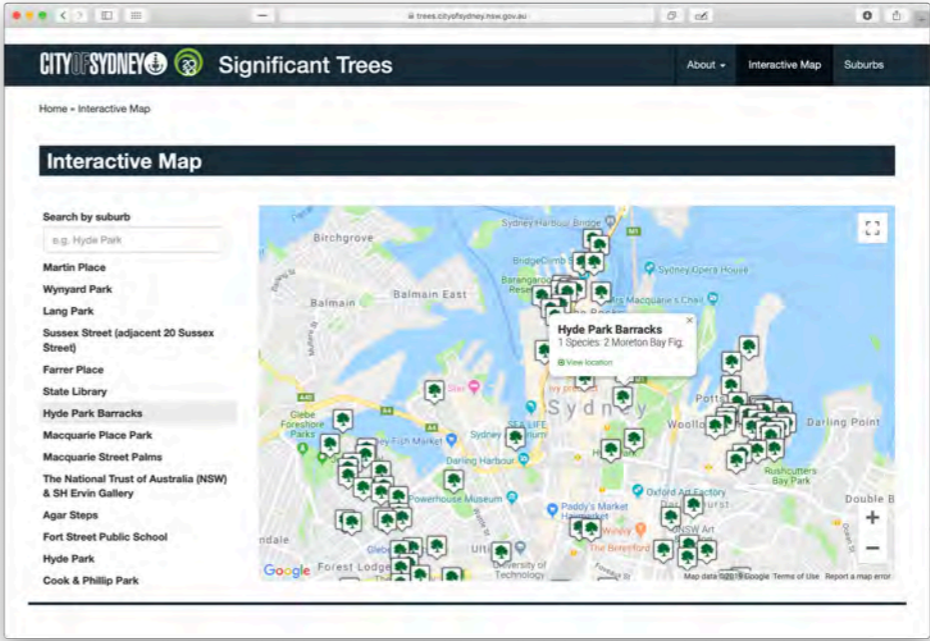
In some local councils, significant tree registers have also gained statutory protection.

This information can be communicated through a simple list with images or turned into an interactive map, if your budget allows.

Click:

https://trees.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

https://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/environment-and-sustainability/trees/significant-tree-register

5 Citizen Forester program

Similar to the door knocking program, Citizen Forester Programs enrol community members getting involved in non-planting parts of your urban greening program.

Examples include helping with monitoring flora and fauna species and undertaking research.

Click:

https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/parks-open-spaces/urban-forest/pages/become-a-citizen-forester.aspx

Photo thanks to City of Melbourne

6 Urban forest art and design competition

Employed by both New York City and the City of Melbourne, this is a way to celebrate and support urban greening, as well as create a visually stimulating community engagement tool.

Art and design competitions can bring together a broad demographic of unlikely community members and engage with them in the topic in a fresh way.

In 2011, as part of the consultation process for Melbourne's Urban Forest Strategy, the city ran an Urban Forest Art and Design competition to share the messages and imagery of why trees are important to their residents.

The competition received 419 entries from over 71 Melbourne suburbs. Winning entries were displayed throughout the city to promote the strategy and the consultation process.

Incorporating messaging and imagery from people of all walks of lives was a successful step in engaging with all members of the community. It also took a strategy, that can feel removed from day to day life and handed the microphone to individuals to share why greening was important to them.

*Design from the City of Melbourne's
2011 Urban Forest Art and Design Competition*

Image from https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/urban-forest-strategy.pdf

7 Collaborative planting programs

Utilising your eager community members (schools, universities or local environment groups) to help with planting, promotion of planting days and ongoing maintenance is a simple solution to overcoming a number of barriers faced when trying to increase urban green space.

Sufficient notice, promotion, accessibility and on the day communication will ensure your event is a success.

Click for examples:

https://www.cbcity.nsw.gov.au/environment/environmental-programs/community-tree-planting

http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/community/community-planting-days-24527.html

Photo thanks to City of Canterbury Bankstown

8 Cooling the suburbs program

Your conversation around green spaces needn't always be about green spaces.

One way to start the conversation is around heat - especially in parts of Australia that are away from the coast.

Starting a calling the suburbs program instantly attaches green space to one if its key benefits and starts the conversation with tangible, practical benefits from greening.

Penrith City Council launched their 'Cooling the City Strategy' in 2015 and have continued to have success with bringing their community along the cooling journey.

The council supports the strategy each year with targeted summer communications campaigns. This annual touch point updates community on what council has been up to throughout the year to alleviate the upcoming heat stress that summer brings and to provide practical tips to cool neighbourhoods.

The 2018/2019 summer campaign focused on energy efficiency tips to help people stay cool without skyrocketing electricity bills. Tips included planting trees along western facing walls.

The City tells us two pieces of communications have been particularly successful in supporting the campaign. One is 'before and 'after' images of streets using artists impressions to show the activities community members will be able to do, such as walking/bike riding, in greener streets.

Another is creating folding fans to give out at events. These are practical, provide a space for councils messaging and, at events on hot days, everybody wants one. A good reminder that a useful piece of collateral gets your message into more hands.

Programs can work together. City of Penrith gives out
free plants at their Cooling the City event

9 Green grid program

Another way to introduce the benefits of urban greening is through a green grid program.

Green grids connect places for both people and wildlife.

Bring together community members to consider the ways that both people and fauna travel throughout their city, map where greenery is needed the most and get to work creating a blueprint for a green grid for everyone.

This is a particularly useful approach for encouraging community members to green their own back yards.

Once wildlife is brought into the conversation, you could be surprised how many people are happy to green their private land in order to provide wildlife corridors.

WaverleyCouncil has begun work on their Living Connections program with the end goal of connecting habitat corridors throughout the LGA. The current habitat corridors in the area are extremely fragmented which makes the journey for local wildlife a fraught one.

By creating fauna friendly gardens in much needed neighbourhoods, the program aims to reconnect the coastal habitat for the Superb fairy-wren and the New Holland honeyeater.

The bird friendly gardens are being planted out with plants specifically chosen for their ability to thrive in the area, to provide food and shelter for small birds, for their ease of maintenance and suitability for residential gardens.

The pilot program currently includes five properties who have collectively planted over 60 plants. Residents have conducted bird count surveys prior to planting and are in charge of maintenance. For those who had a lot of scope for planting, residents were able to consults with a local landscape architect.

Click:

http://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/environment/bushland_and_wildlife/living_connections

https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/inline-files/Parramatta%20Ways%20Report_0.pdf

https://gardensforwildlifevictoria.com

http://www.knox.vic.gov.au/g4w

https://www.darwin.nt.gov.au/live/pets-wildlife/gardens-for-wildlife/overview

Your pathway to Living Connections

Living Connections
CREATING GARDENS FOR LIFE

1. **REGISTER YOUR INTEREST**
   * Bronte and Tamarama residents only.
   Receive your Living Connections info pack
2. Complete a short survey of your gardening knowledge.
3. Receive a garden assessment
4. Conduct simple 20 minute bird count in your garden – instructions provided
5. Receive advice and a garden plan from a landscape gardener – if your garden is considered suitable
6. Receive free plants to help create a thriving garden to enjoy
7. Plant your plants within 4 weeks and care for them – instruction provided
8. Attend a free workshop to 'grow' your knowledge
9. Add other habitat elements to your garden
10. Receive a check-in call or visit from a Living Connections Officer to see how your plants are going
11. Complete end of project survey
12. Complete end of project bird count in your garden

Contact: vicky.bachelard@waverley.nsw.gov.au

JOIN NOW!

NSW GOVERNMENT   Habitat   Landcare   202020 VISION

This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.

10 Gardening Guides

Gardening isn't something that everyone in your community necessarily feels comfortable doing. To help foster these skills, some councils have created gardening guides to help increase skills and confidence.

They are also a helpful way to share updated policies and practices about species selection or water management that your keen gardeners might not have heard about.

A practical guide can help your residents to address fears they might have about greening with best management principles and builds their capacity to green their own spaces.

You can also take these guides and turn the content into workshops if there is demand in your area. This has been particularly successful with compositing and worm farm workshops.
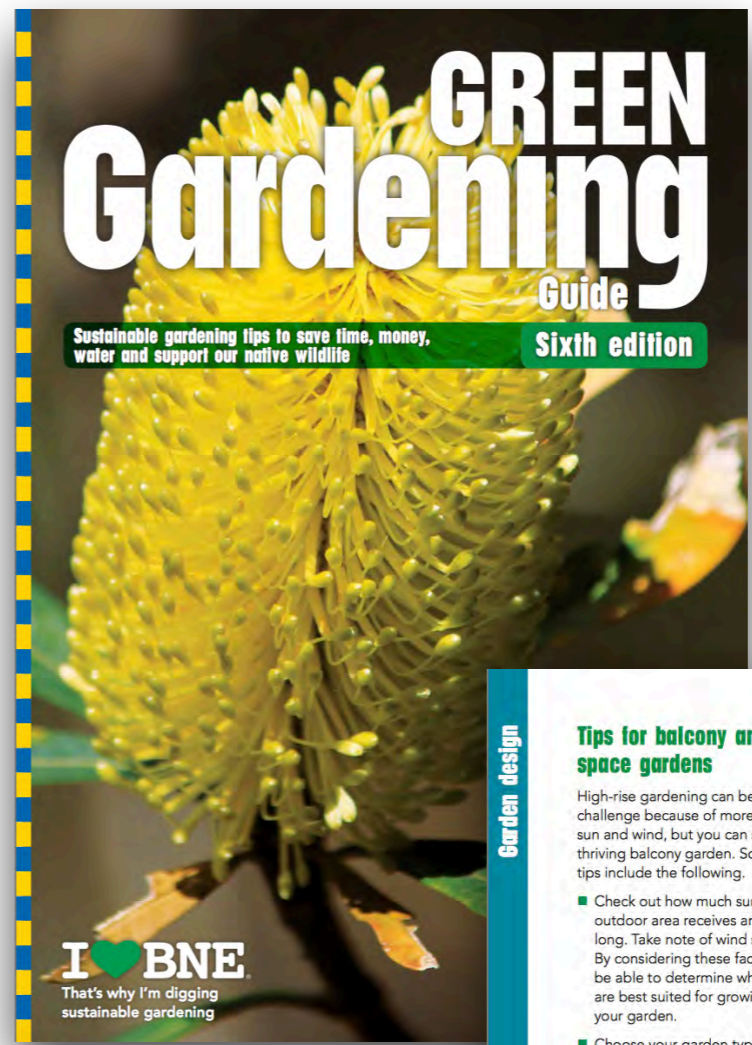
Click for examples:

Brisbane City Council: https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/20141111_-_green_gardening_guide.pdf

Campbelltown City Council: https://www.campbelltown.nsw.gov.au/LocalEnvironment/Trees

City of Cockburn: https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Waste-and-Environment/Sustainability-and-Conservation/My-Garden

GREEN Gardening Guide
Sixth edition

Sustainable gardening tips to save time, money, water and support our native wildlife

I ♥ BNE
That's why I'm digging sustainable gardening

Tips for balcony and small space gardens

High-rise gardening can be an extra challenge because of more exposure to sun and wind, but you can still create a thriving balcony garden. Some design tips include the following.

- Check out how much sun your outdoor area receives and for how long. Take note of wind strength. By considering these factors, you will be able to determine which plants are best suited for growing in your garden.

- Choose your garden type based on what you are trying to achieve. Would you like lots of colour, foliage, texture, edible or statement plants?

- Incorporate the design – consider the view from inside before deciding on your design. Sometimes a large feature plant, trellis or water feature as the focal point is enough to draw the eye. Consider hanging baskets or vertical growing plants to utilise small space.

- Invest in a vertical garden. This is a versatile way to make use of a blank wall in a small space. Your plants grow naturally upwards, mimicking how they would grow in a ground garden bed. Many of the styles available in the market come as DIY kits, which make home installation easy. This style of garden is perfect for herbs, vegies and flowering plants and is removable, should you ever change address.

- Weigh it up – pots are heavy when they are full of soil, water and plants. To ensure stability of your deck, always ensure that you use lightweight pots and regularly check wooden decking for signs of rot or termite damage.

- If your balcony gets battered by strong wind, consider planting a windbreak by growing climbers or shrubs on a trellis. Compact screening plants such as smaller lillypillies are a good option.

- Think about the logistics of carrying pots, plants, mulch and potting mix to the balcony if you live in a multistorey apartment. Planter boxes would be a better choice than lots of small pots which tend to dry out quicker and blow over more easily.

- Consider the balcony balustrade of your outdoor area. A balcony with glass balustrades will conduct a considerable amount of reflective heat to your plants should this area face the hot western summer sun. Choose your plants according to these conditions. Decks that have slat-style balcony balustrades will allow air movement around your pots and plants.

- Consider fragrant plants so you can enjoy their scents inside and outside your home, but be mindful of your neighbours as highly-scented plants can affect asthma or other allergies.

- There are many pot options specifically designed for use in small areas such as balconies or courtyards. Plant towers and stackable containers are a great way to grow a variety of flowers, herbs and vegies. Many planters have wheels so you can move them around to suit the conditions and sun intensity.

RESIDENT'S TIP
*Container planting is great for small spaces and for rental properties –
Megan*

12

Thanks

Need more information?
Email hello@202020vision.com.au

Appendix

Where did all this information come from?

This document bring together four pieces of research

1. Community attitudes

Working with Mosaic Insights, we looked at community understanding of and attitudes to urban green space, including most valued benefits and understanding of often used terms.

See the research document at: <link>

2. Council language

We looked at 100 council urban greening policies to understand the words and benefits they use to describe urban greening.

We also spoke to a number of leading councils to understand the approach they have taken and tools they have used.

3. Council experience

We spoke to a range of councils, from different sizes and locations, to understand what has worked well for them.

4. Media research

We looked at over 60 articles from across national, local, mainstream and specialised media to understand what media talks about when talking green space and the language used.

GBCA Transform Event Report

**"New Stories for Liveable Cities" – 202020 Vision Workshop
at the GBCA's *Transform* conference**

When: Wednesday March 20, 8.30 – 9.15am

What: Interactive workshop presentation highlighting preliminary research findings from the community attitudinal study (NY18006) and GBCA media scan, interviews and survey (NY17519 & NY18006), with a specific focus on how those working in the built environment can better 'pitch' more plants and trees as important aspects throughout a range of developments.

Who:

Presentation by 20V by Ben Peacock.

The Panel of Experts included:
- Current General Manager of Sustainability and Corporate Procurement at Stockland (and newly appointed GBCA CEO) Davina Rooney
- Development Manager of One Sydney Park, Barney Oros
- Senior Planner and Landscape Architect at Inner West Council, Natalie Pelleri

Attendees:

GBCA workshops are open to all GBCA attendees, and there is no pre-registration required. Given that this was the early morning session the day after the GBCA networking night, it was highly encouraging to have a full room (of around 50 people).

These included a broad range of built environment professionals from Federal and State Government as well as developers such as Lendlease, Mirvac and Stockland and other private developers and local government representatives.

Program:

The audience was provided with a preview of the community attitudinal research outcomes (findings from a national survey) and the outcomes of the GBCA quantitative research (survey and interviews). Both of these were developed via R&D project NY18006.

Given the audience was made up of GBCA members, we focussed on the development perspective and only took what was relevant from the community research. The main resource for our programming was the GBCA survey and interviews.

The team put together four scenarios based on case studies (real world developments) from the research.

Groups were created and each was briefed to work as a developer, looking for approval for 'out-of-the-box' greening. They workshopped approaches together and presented back approaches.

Each group only dealt with getting one stakeholder group onside:
- Internal Development team
- Community
- Local council
- Media

The groups presented to four judges - including Davina Rooney, the incoming CEO of the GBCA. Following a response and discussion, the groups were then given the 'correct' answers based on how, in reality, each of the developments had gotten across the line.

Outcomes:

- Trained (circa) 50 people from the development industry on how to customise their pitch to different audiences, to get their green space project approved
- Trialled method for a workshop that can be run at the *Growing Together* events
- Received questions and feedback on first report back for the community kit
- Engaged the new CEO of GBCA in this project and further developed a relationship that will be of key importance in upcoming projects

Feedback:

Anecdotally, the feedback on the day was overwhelmingly positive. The session highlighted the value of engaging communities from the outset to ensure that green space is an important part of a range of developments – from Shopping Centres, Greenfield, high density apartments and public works.

Development Manager, Barney Oros remarked that the group he was in achieved as much in 20 minutes as his team of ten did over an 18-month period.

The preliminary results of the research were well-received and a source of great interest among attendees.

Next steps:

Finalise the narrative pack and supply back to GBCA, incorporating all learnings from research and workshop testing.
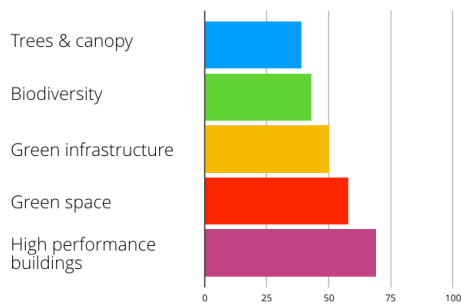
APPENDIX
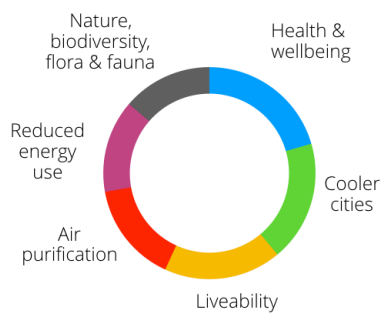
Sample slides:
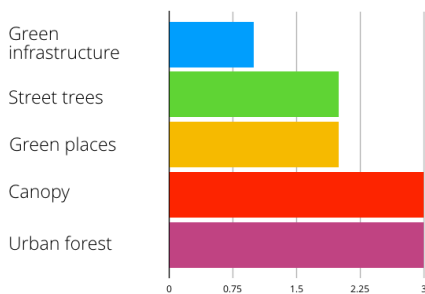
Research outcomes

Developers

Preferred words
(Top 5)

Trees & canopy	
Biodiversity	
Green infrastructure	
Green space	
High performance buildings	

0   25   50   75   100

Most important benefits

Nature, biodiversity, flora & fauna — Health & wellbeing — Reduced energy use — Cooler cities — Air purification — Liveability

Councils

Most used words
(Top 5)

Green infrastructure	
Street trees	
Green places	
Canopy	
Urban forest	

0   0.75   1.5   2.25   3

Most talked about benefits

Character & aesthetics — Resilience — Shade & cooling — Nature, biodiversity, flora & fauna — Local economy & housing prices — Health & wellbeing — Liveability
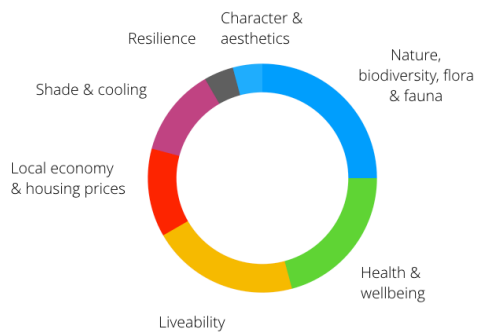
Community

Most understood words

Heat Island	
Urban Forest	
Mitigation	
Urban Canopy	
Biodiversity	
Street Trees	
Nature Strip	

0   25   50   75   100

Most valued benefits
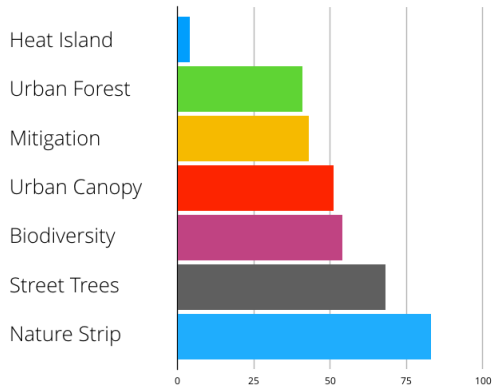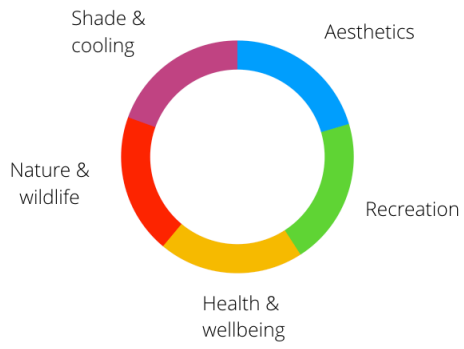
Shade & cooling
Aesthetics
Nature & wildlife
Recreation
Health & wellbeing

Scenario Two - The Art Gallery

- Located among one of the most famous botanical gardens in the country
- Extremely high expectations that your development is of an exceedingly high quality.

Challenges

- High levels of community buy-on needed for this development - so you need to manage expectations
- Protecting the existing biodiversity is something you need to think about
- Also a need to pitch a project that increases pedestrian access through the site and results in a big increase in permeable surfaces
- While the design features have to be top rate, you also need to ensure that the species and design are extremely rough tolerant and that maintenance costs can be kept low
- This has to achieve a 6-Star Green GBCA rating

Audience

Janet Dandy-Ward, a member of a local community group who is very concerned about how this redevelopment will impact on the local flora and fauna.

So, what's the story?

Solution

Challenge	Solution	What's the story?
Ensure the highest level of design excellence and aesthetic value - there are high expectations	Integration of landscape to become a prominent design feature	Determining from the outset of the project that green space was a core feature of the design through the briefing and design concept stages

We are setting a new standard for art museums becoming the first in the nation to achieve the highest environmental standard for design with a 6-star Green Star design rating. |
| The development is located within a Botanic Garden therefore biodiversity protection is critical | Biodiversity studies prior to the commencement of the project

Engagement with the Botanic Gardens team | Awarding points more points to developers that address biodiversity needs in the local area, but also looks beyond the immediate envelope and beyond the site boundaries. |
| Ensuring that the design does not result in green space that cannot be maintained in a cost effective way in perpetuity | Native species prioritised

Water tanks incorporated into the design to collect and use rainwater from the roof | More points should be offered to give greater weight to design aspects that are not green star rated, incentives could include: a reduction developer contributions, a reduction in approval times, improved developer yield. |

Photos from the session: