

2020 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey

Swan Hill Rural City Council

Coordinated by the Department of
Environment, Land, Water and Planning
on behalf of Victorian councils





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Background and objectives

The Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) creates a vital interface between the council and their community.

Held annually, the CSS asks the opinions of local people about the place they live, work and play and provides confidence for councils in their efforts and abilities.

Now in its twenty-first year, this survey provides insight into the community's views on:

- councils' overall performance with benchmarking against State-wide and council group results
- community consultation and engagement
- advocacy and lobbying on behalf of the community
- customer service, local infrastructure, facilities and
- overall council direction.

When coupled with previous data, the survey provides a reliable historical source of the community's views since 1998. A selection of results from the last nine years shows that councils in Victoria continue to provide services that meet the public's expectations.

Serving Victoria for 21 years

Each year the CSS data is used to develop this State-wide report which contains all of the aggregated results, analysis and data. Moreover, with 21 years of results, the CSS offers councils a long-term measure of how they are performing – essential for councils that work over the long term to provide valuable services and infrastructure to their communities.

Participation in the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is optional.

Participating councils have various choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial and other considerations.



**Key findings and
recommendations**



Swan Hill Rural City Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.



Swan Hill 52



State-wide 58



Large Rural 55

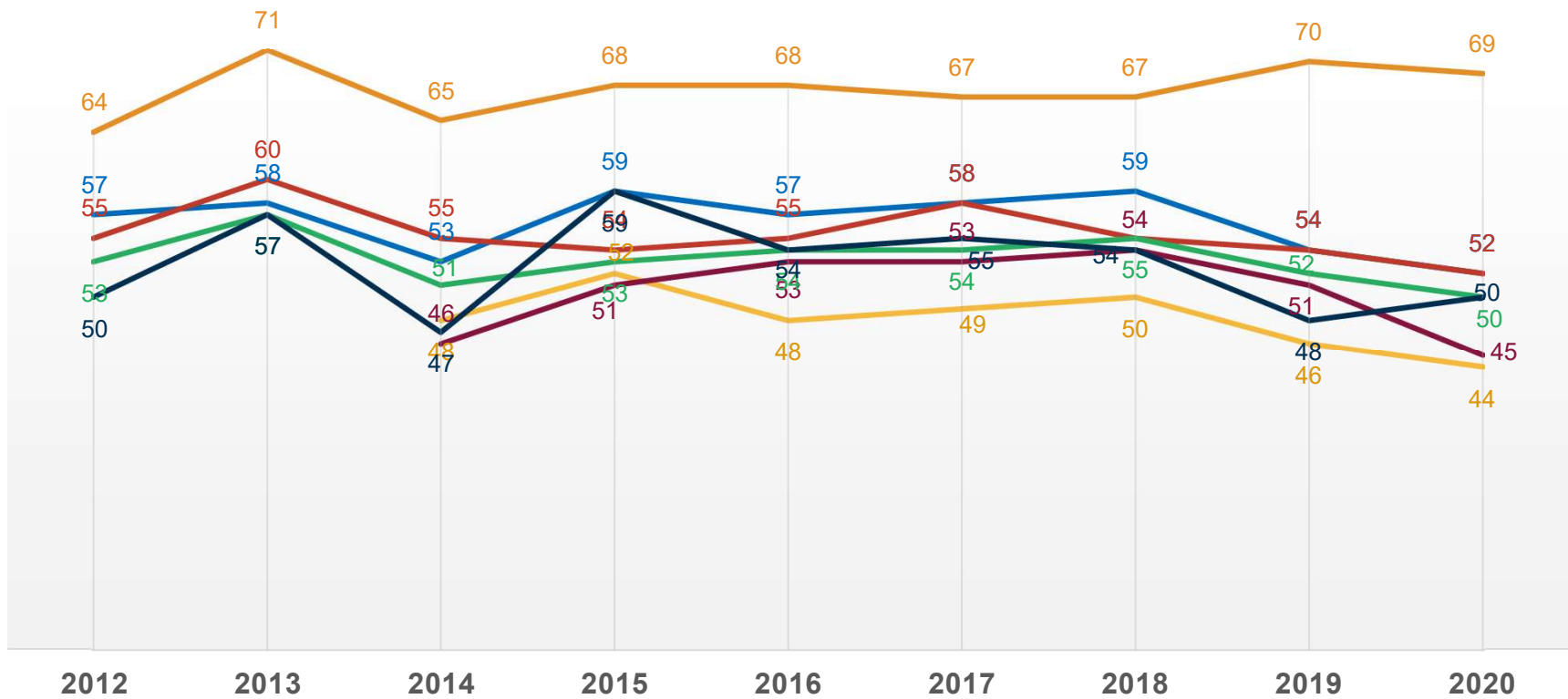
Council performance compared to State-wide and group averages

	Areas where Council performance is significantly higher	The three areas where Council performance is significantly lower by the widest margin
Compared to State-wide average	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sealed local roads Community decisions Consultation and engagement
Compared to group average	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community decisions Lobbying



Summary of core measures

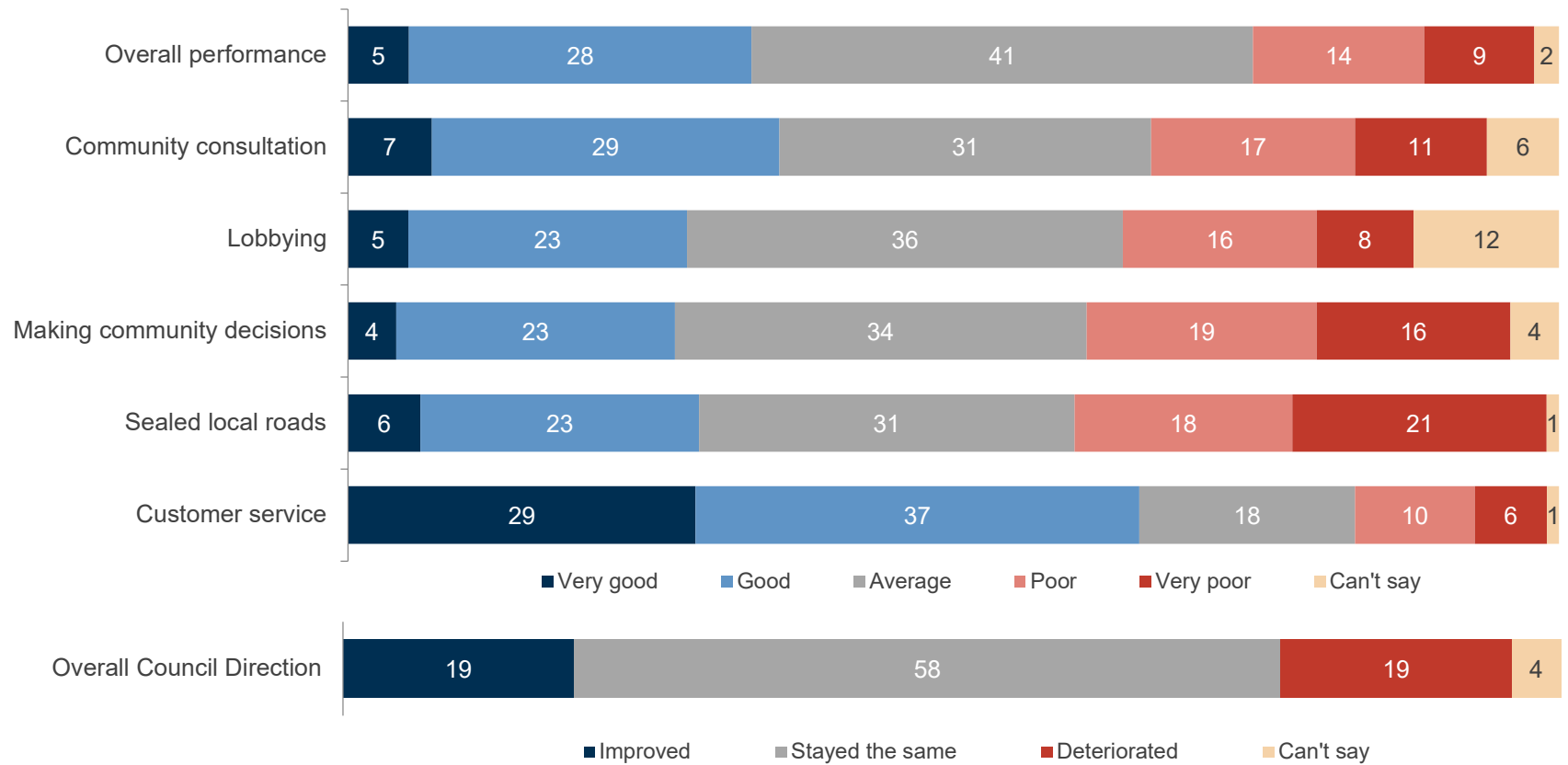
Index scores












Summary of core measures

Core measures summary results (%)





Summary of Swan Hill Rural City Council performance

Services		Swan Hill 2020	Swan Hill 2019	Large Rural 2020	State-wide 2020	Highest score	Lowest score
	Overall performance	52	54	55	58	Central residents, Aged 18-34 years	Robinvale residents
	Overall council direction	50	48	50	51	Aged 18-34 years	Aged 35-49 years
	Customer service	69	70	68	70	Robinvale residents	Aged 65+ years
	Consultation and engagement	52	54	54	55	Aged 18-34 years	Lakes residents
	Lobbying	50	52	53	53	Aged 18-34 years	Murray Mallee residents
	Community decisions	45	51	52	53	Aged 18-34 years	Robinvale residents
	Sealed local roads	44	46	47	54	Aged 65+ years	Aged 50-64 years

Significantly higher / lower than Swan Hill Rural City Council 2020 result at the 95% confidence interval. Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences and index scores.



Focus areas for the next 12 months

Overview

Council has maintained a positive rating on customer service in 2020 and made significant gains among Robinvale residents across most key performance measures since 2019. However, perceptions of Council performance on individual service areas and overall appear slightly lower. While not statistically significant decreases since last year (except on community decisions), current results continue a trend of small but steady declines since 2018 and are Council's lowest ratings since 2012.

Focus areas

Making decisions in the community interest has typically been one of Council's better performing areas, with an index score above 50 for the past five years before this year's sharp decline to its lowest ever rating (index score of 45). Over the next 12 months, a focus on good communication and transparency with residents, and demonstrating community interest in Council decisions, will be important to regaining those positive community perceptions.

Comparison to state and area grouping

Council performs in line with the Large Rural group average but below the State-wide average on consultation and sealed local roads. On lobbying and community decisions, as well as overall performance, Council is rated significantly lower than both the Large Rural group and State-wide averages and may wish to focus more efforts in these areas over the next year.

Key geographic targets

Over the next year, Council should seek to consolidate and build upon the significant gains made among Robinvale residents since 2019. Council should also focus extra attention on Central residents to arrest the significant declines among this (usually very positive) cohort. Their perceptions of overall performance have now declined significantly for the second year in a row. Lakes residents may also warrant some extra attention, particularly around lobbying and community interest in Council decisions.

DETAILED FINDINGS





**Overall
performance**



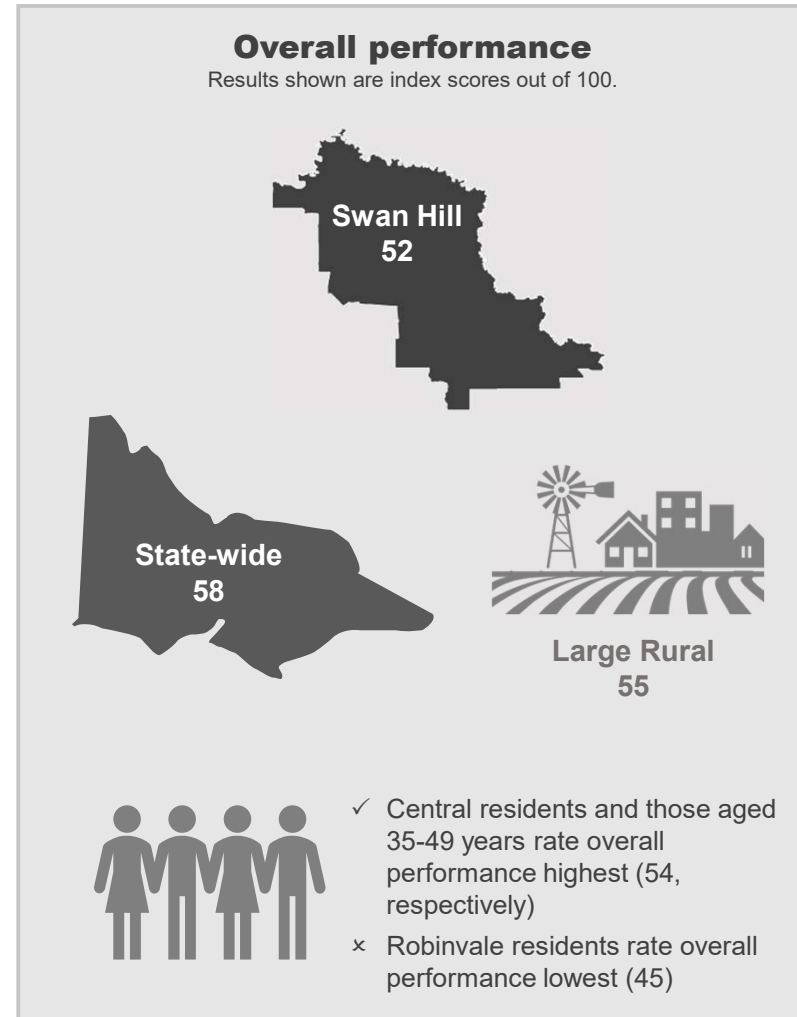
Overall performance

The overall performance index score of 52 for Swan Hill Rural City Council is broadly in line with the 2019 result (index score of 54). However, while the two-point decrease is not a statistically significant change, it extends the five-point decline recorded over 2018 to 2019 and is Council’s lowest rating to date.

Council’s overall performance is rated statistically significantly lower (at the 95% confidence interval) than the average for Councils in the Large Rural group and the State-wide council average (index scores of 55 and 58 respectively).

- Most demographic and geographic cohorts declined slightly in their perceptions of overall Council performance in the past year, in line with the overall trend.
- However, perceptions among Central residents, the most positive group, declined significantly (index score of 54, down five points).
- In contrast, Robinvale residents, the least positive group, improved their perceptions significantly (index score of 45, up 13 points).

More residents rate Swan Hill Rural City Council’s overall performance as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ (33%) than rate it as ‘very poor’ or ‘poor’ (23%). However, the largest proportion (41%) sit mid-scale, rating Council’s overall performance as ‘average’





Overall performance

2020 overall performance (index scores)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
State-wide	60	59	59	59	60	61	60	60
Large Rural	56	56	54	54	56	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central	59	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	52	55	56	54	60	51	55	61
65+	58	65	64	61	63	59	64	59
Women	56	59	58	58	60	54	58	56
Lakes	54	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Swan Hill	54	59	58	57	59	53	58	57
35-49	56	56	54	55	57	49	59	53
Men	53	58	58	55	57	52	59	57
50-64	51	58	53	57	53	52	56	52
Murray Mallee	54	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Robinvale	32	39	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Swan Hill Rural City Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17

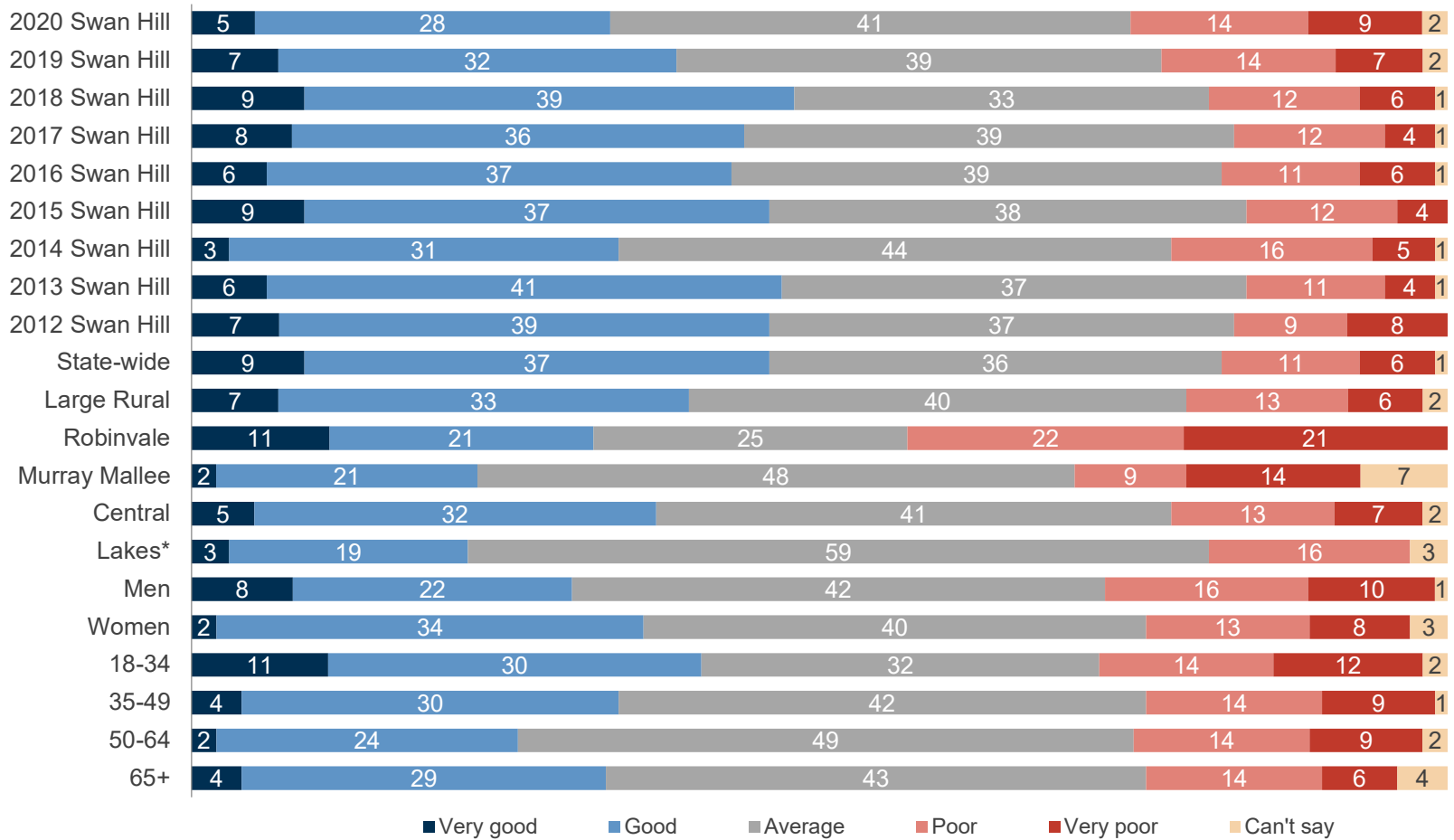
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

*Caution: small sample size < n=30



Overall performance

2020 overall performance (%)



Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Swan Hill Rural City Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
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Top performing service areas

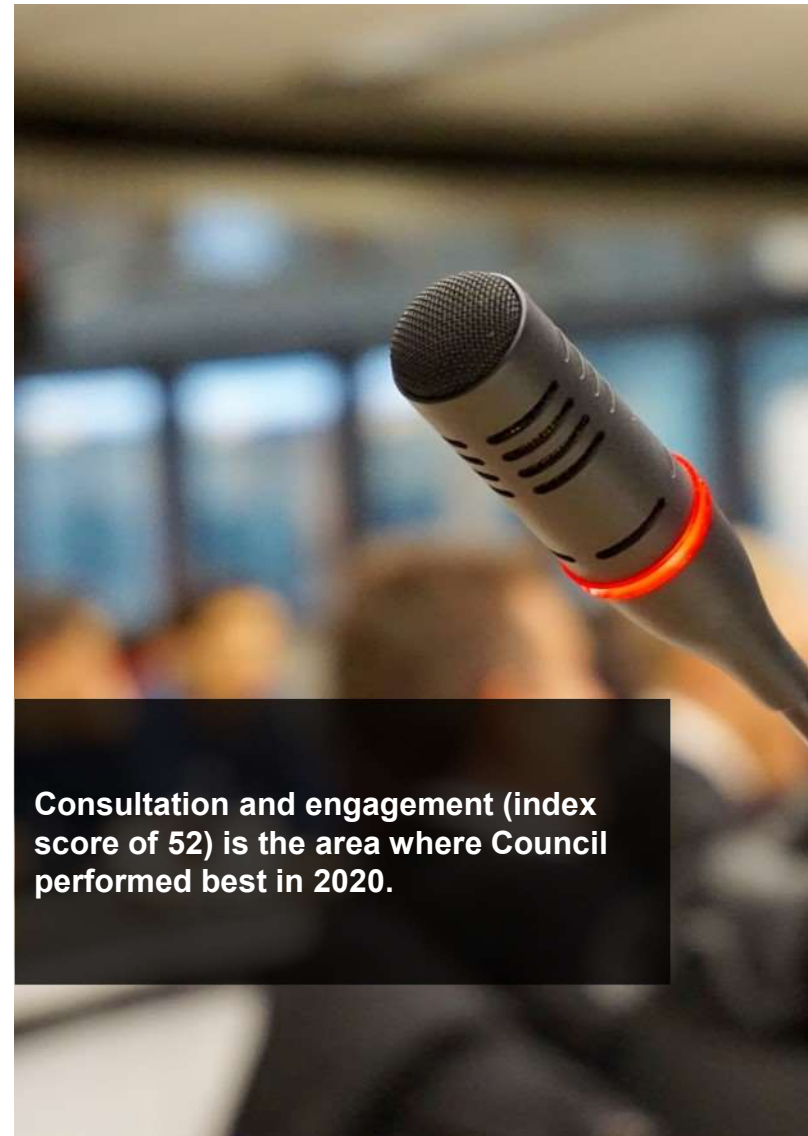
Consultation and engagement (index score of 52) continues to be Swan Hill Rural City Council's best performing area in 2020, with community perceptions significantly improved among Robinvale residents (index score of 53, up 18 points from 2019).

However, a two-point decrease overall since 2019 continues a steady decline in this area, from an index score of 58 in 2017 to Council's lowest rating to date. Contributing to this result is a significant decline among Central residents this year (index score of 51, down eight points).

Lobbying remains another of Council's better performing areas (index score of 50) and is significantly improved since 2019 among both Robinvale residents (index score of 49, up 21 points) and younger adults aged 18 to 34 years (index score of 56, up eight points).

However, overall performance on lobbying is two points lower than 2019, on a steady decline from an index score of 55 in 2018, and also at its lowest point to date. Again, contributing to this result is a significant decline among Central residents (index score of 52, down five points), as well as residents aged 65+ years (down seven points) and Lakes residents (down 12 points).

Council rates in line with the Large Rural group average on community consultation and significantly better on lobbying but below the State-wide average on both areas.



Consultation and engagement (index score of 52) is the area where Council performed best in 2020.



Low performing service areas



Swan Hill Rural City Council continues to rate lowest – relative to its performance in other areas – on sealed local roads (index score of 44). A two-point decrease since 2019 continues a steady decline from an index score of 50 in 2018 to Council’s lowest rating to date.

- Residents aged 50 to 64 years (index score of 36) rate Council performance significantly lower than the Council-wide average.

Council continues to perform in line with the Large Rural group average but significantly lower than the State-wide average on sealed roads.

A significant decline in performance on community decisions (index score of 45, down six points) sees it become one of Council’s lower rated areas in 2020. Council has not recorded a rating below 50 in this service area since 2014 (index score of 46).

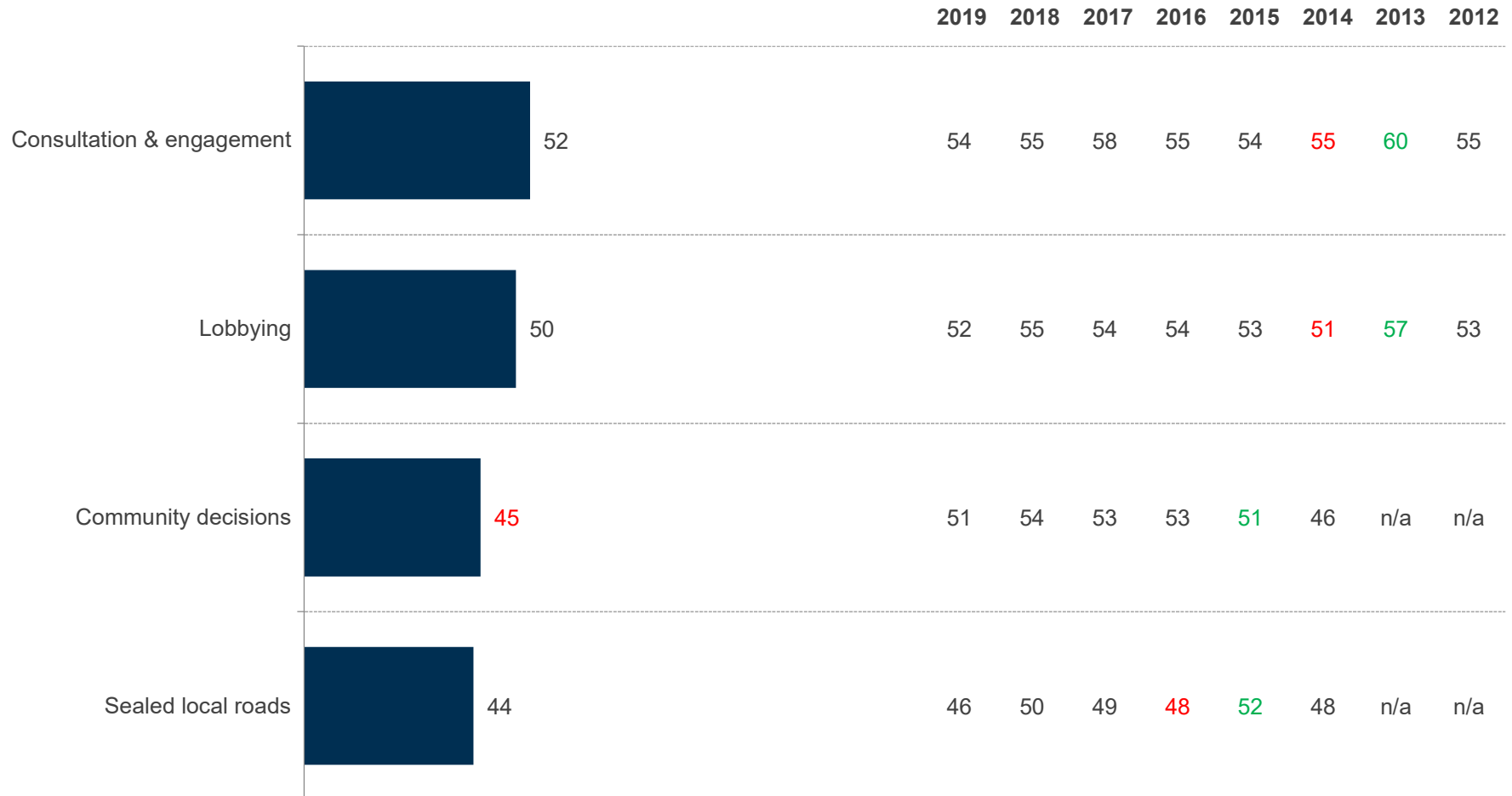
- Contributing to this result are significant declines among Central and Lakes residents (seven points and 16 points, respectively), as well as women and most age groups (all 35+ years).

Council also now performs significantly below the Large Rural group and State-wide averages on community decisions.



Individual service area performance

2020 individual service area performance (index scores)

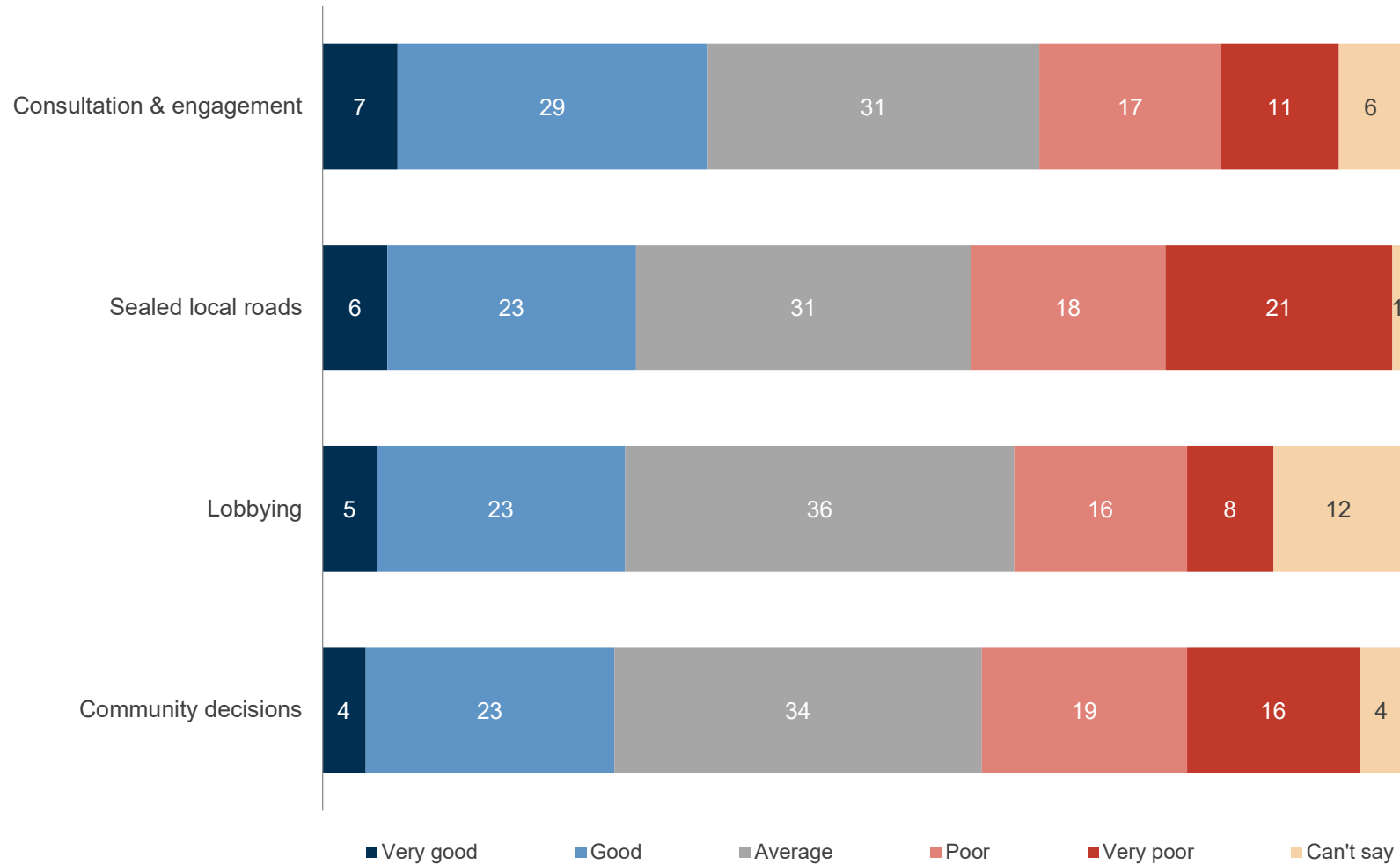


Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Individual service area performance

2020 individual service area performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17

Customer service





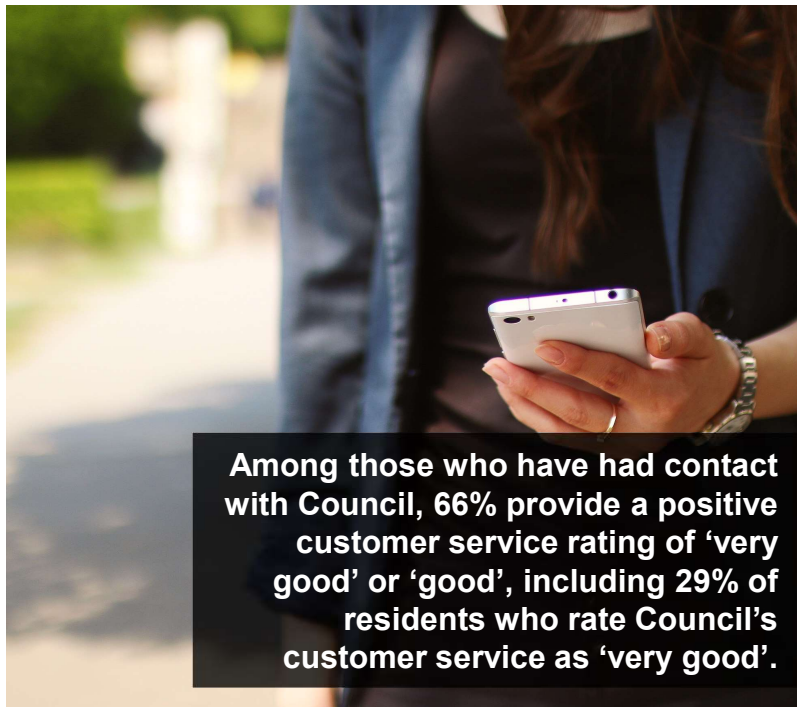
Contact with council and customer service

Contact with council

Almost six in ten Swan Hill Rural City Council residents (58%) have had contact with Council in the last 12 months, similar to 2019.

Rate of contact has decreased over the last year among residents aged 18 to 34 years (46%, down from 60%).

In person (35%) and by telephone (30%) continue to be the main methods of contacting Council.



Among those who have had contact with Council, 66% provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good', including 29% of residents who rate Council's customer service as 'very good'.

Customer service

Swan Hill Rural City Council's customer service index of 69 is in line with 2019. Positive customer service ratings have been largely maintained over the last five years, ranging between 67 and 70.

- Perceptions among Robinvale residents improved significantly over the past year (index score of 74, up 23 points and the highest among all groups).
- However, perceptions among Central residents declined (index score of 67, down seven points).

Council's customer service is rated in-line with the Large Rural group and State-wide averages (index scores of 68 and 70 respectively).

Among residents who have had contact with Council, around two thirds (66%) provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good'.

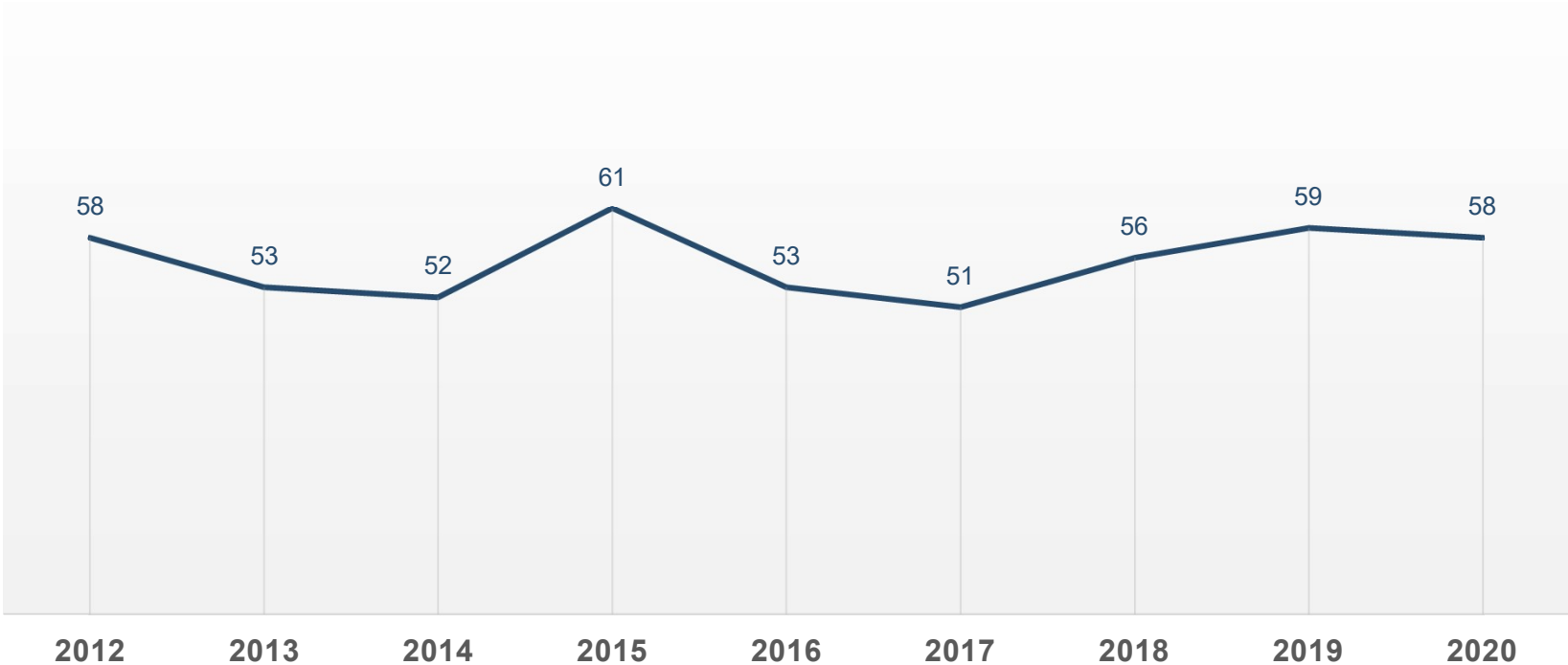
Council's customer service ratings are high for the main modes of contact, being in person and by telephone (index score of 71 and 68 respectively).

Ratings among those, who communicated most recently via email, declined nine points in the last year to an index score of 63, indicating some attention is needed here.



Contact with council

2020 contact with council (%)
Have had contact



Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Swan Hill Rural City Council in any of the following ways?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 7



Contact with council

2020 contact with council (%)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
35-49	60	60	65	54	65	57	71	63
State-wide	63	61	58	58	60	61	60	61
Large Rural	61	62	57	57	59	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	63	57	50	49	63	54	53	59
65+	57	57	43	53	57	49	43	56
Central	59	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	61	55	59	49	61	51	52	57
Swan Hill	59	56	51	53	61	52	53	58
Robinvale	71	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lakes	44	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Murray Mallee	63	71	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	55	56	52	58	58	50	54	57
18-34	60	54	44	55	60	51	47	55

Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Swan Hill Rural City Council in any of the following ways?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 7

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

*Caution: small sample size < n=30



Customer service rating

2020 customer service rating (index scores)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Robinvale	74	51	42	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lakes	72*	70	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	72	71	72	70	73	70	68	68
50-64	70	63	66	65	65	65	67	69
State-wide	70	71	70	69	69	70	72	71
Women	69	74	69	71	73	69	64	73
Murray Mallee	69*	72	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Swan Hill	69	70	67	67	68	68	65	71
Men	68	65	64	63	65	66	65	70
Large Rural	68	69	67	66	67	67	n/a	n/a
18-34	68	75	59	59	66	62	57	70
Central	67	74	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	65	70	70	71	70	75	67	81

Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Swan Hill Rural City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17

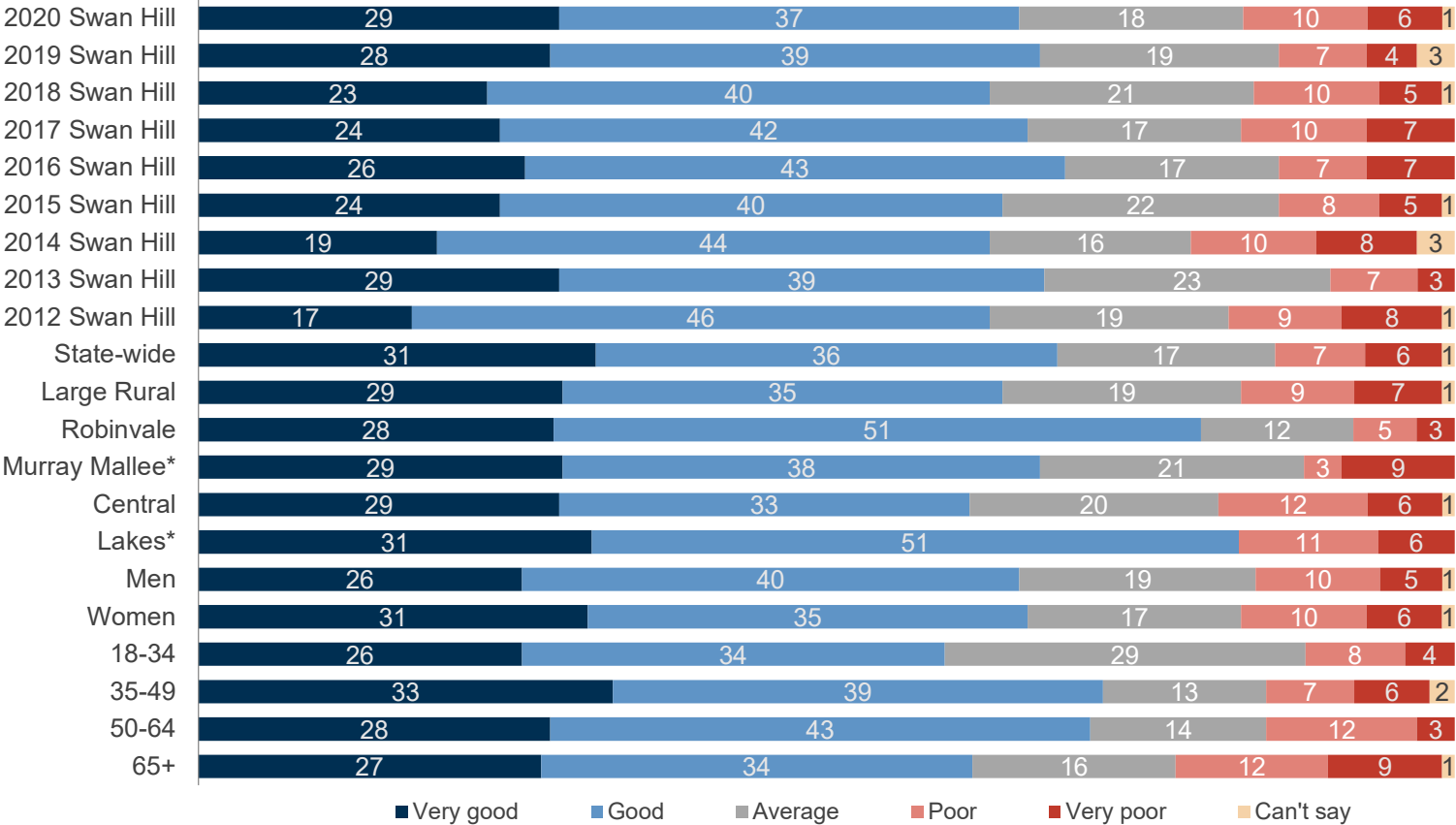
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Customer service rating

2020 customer service rating (%)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Swan Hill Rural City Council for customer service?
 Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.
 Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Method of contact with council

2020 method of contact (%)



In Person



In Writing



By Telephone



By Text Message



By Email



Via Website



By Social Media



Q5a. Have you or any member of your household had any recent contact with Swan Hill Rural City Council in any of the following ways?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 7

Note: Respondents could name multiple contacts methods so responses may add to more than 100%



Customer service rating by method of last contact

2020 customer service rating (index score by method of last contact)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Swan Hill Rural City Council for customer service?

Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked state-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 7

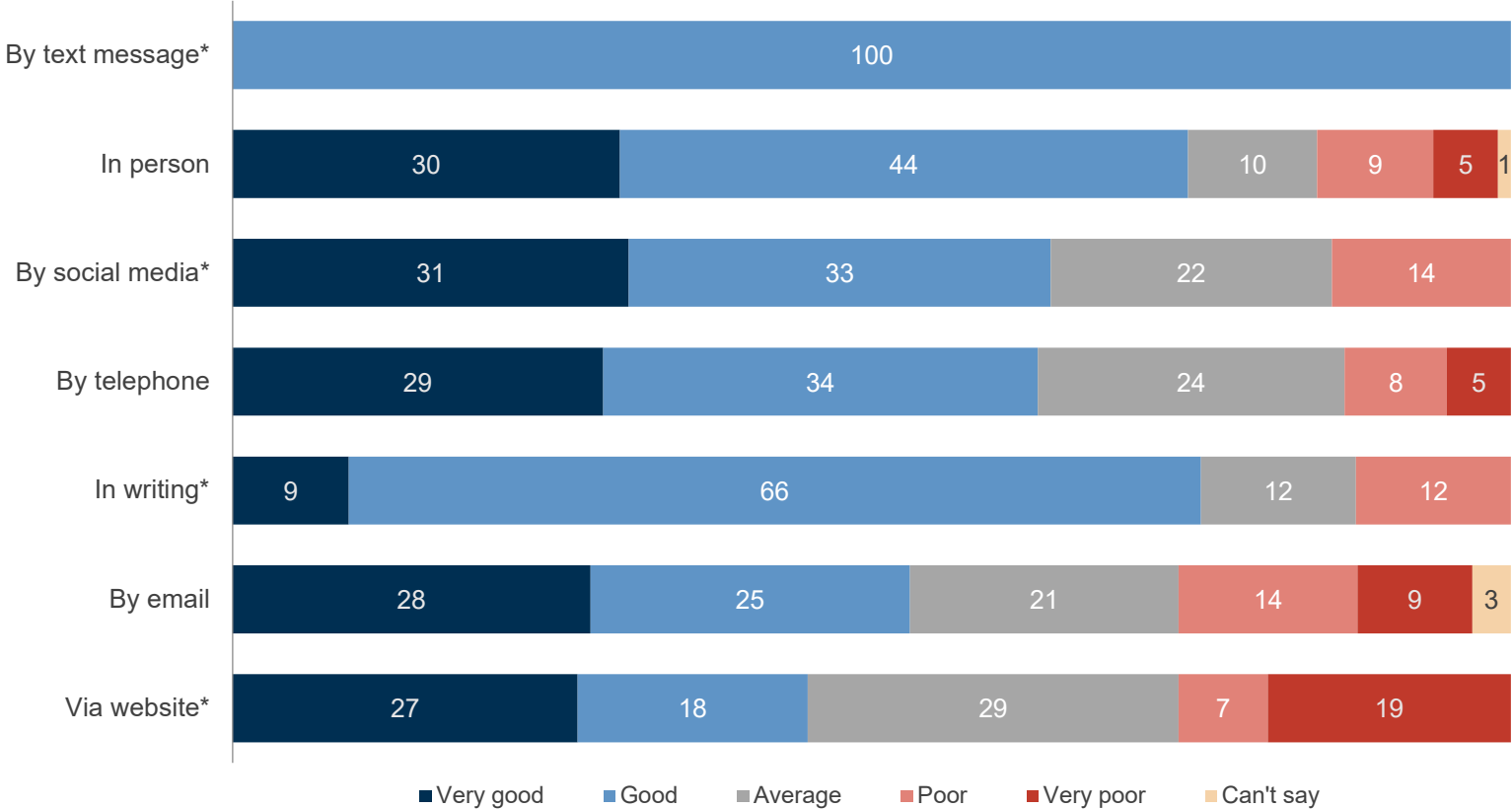
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Customer service rating by method of last contact

2020 customer service rating (% by method of last contact)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Swan Hill Rural City Council for customer service?
 Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.
 Councils asked state-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 7
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Communication

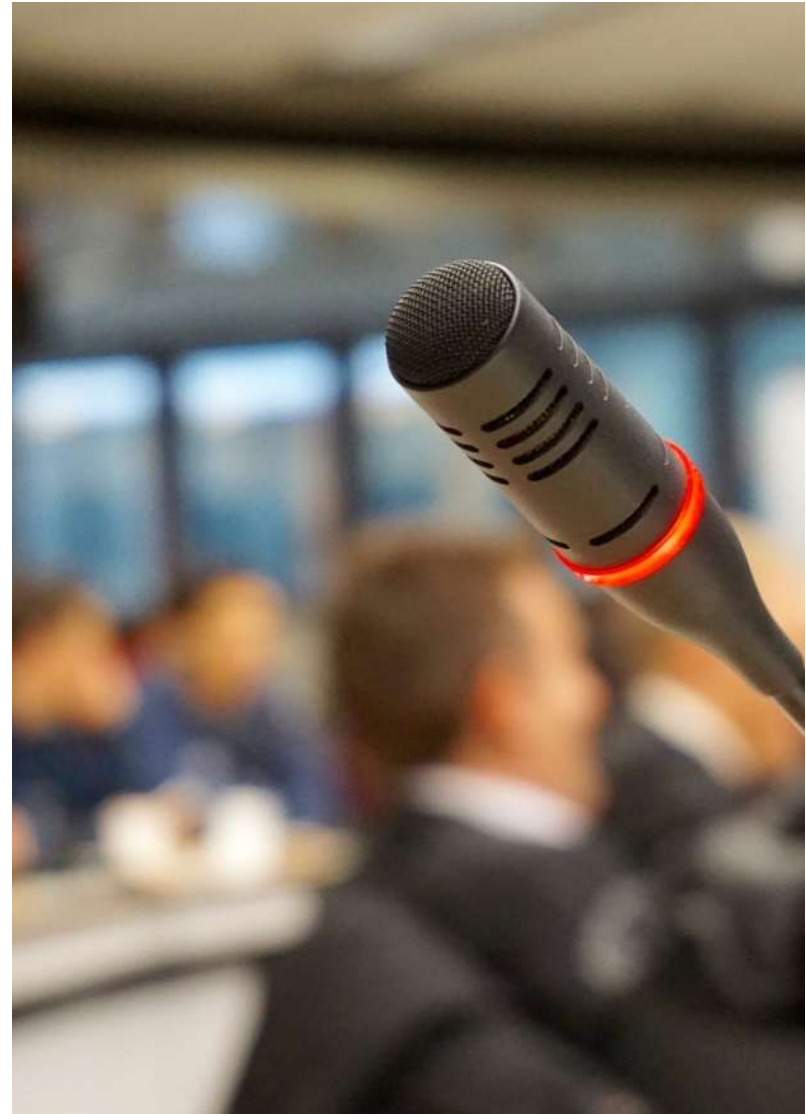


Communication

In 2020, the preferred form of communication from Swan Hill Rural City Council remains newsletters sent via mail (24%). However, almost as many residents now prefer communication via social media (23%), after a substantial seven-point increase since 2019.

Social media has overtaken interest in both emailed newsletters, which appears to be in decline, and newsletters inserted into local papers, which remains unchanged.

- The most preferred form of communication for residents aged under 50 years remains social media (33%) and this preference has strengthened since 2019.
- The most preferred forms of communication for residents aged over 50 years are Council newsletters sent via mail (26%, down points) and advertising in a local newspaper (25%, up six points).





Best form of communication

2020 best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Swan Hill Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 9
 Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Best form of communication: under 50s

2020 under 50s best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Swan Hill Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
 Base: All respondents aged under 50. Councils asked state-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 9
 Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Best form of communication: over 50s

2020 over 50s best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Swan Hill Rural City Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?
 Base: All respondents aged over 50. Councils asked state-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 9
 Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Council direction



Council direction

Perceptions of Swan Hill Rural City Council's overall direction appear slightly better than in 2019.

A smaller majority (58%, down six points) believe the direction of Council's overall performance has stayed the same over the last 12 months.

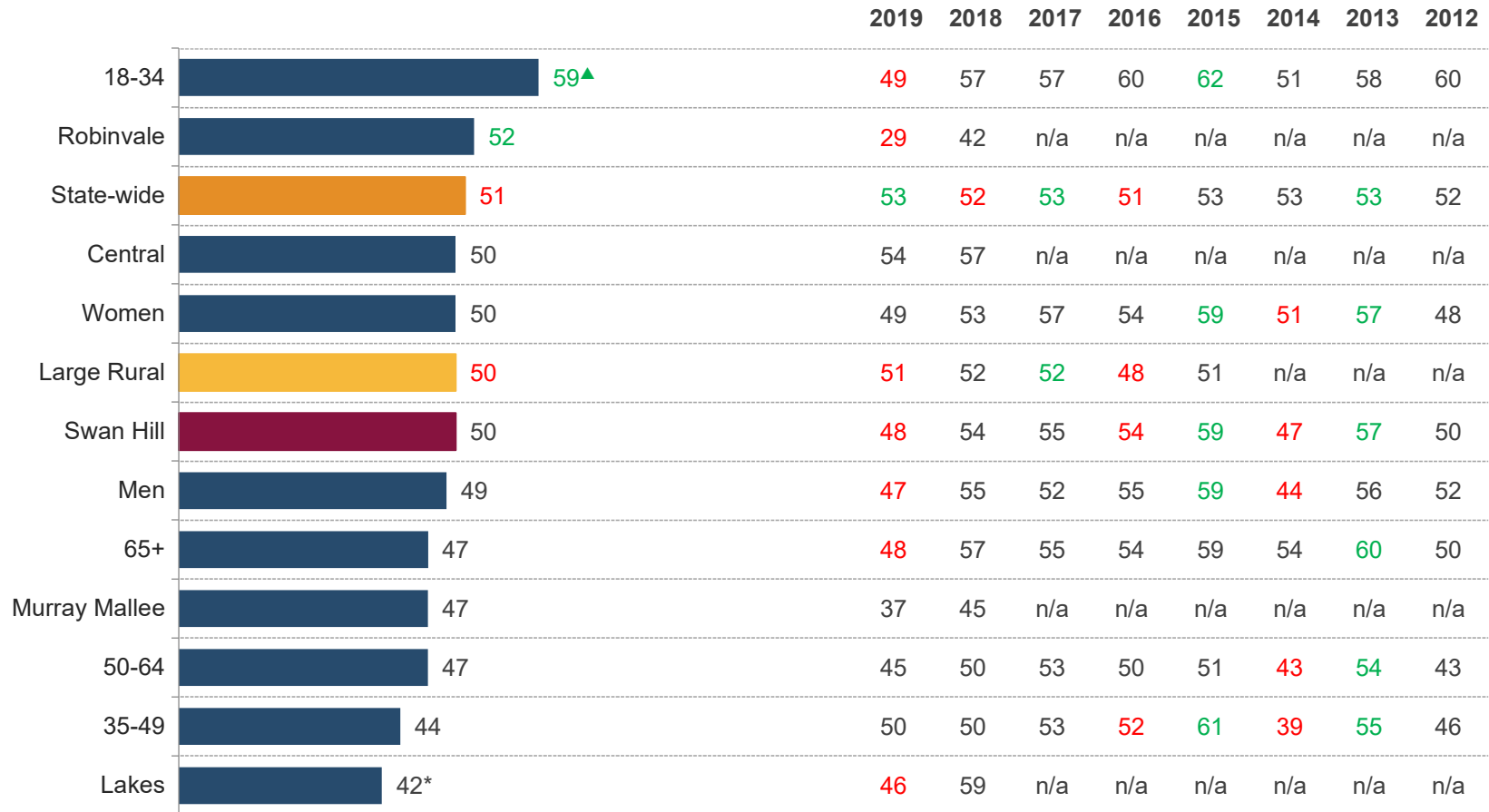
- 19% believe the direction has improved in the last 12 months (up four points from 2019).
- The same proportion (19%) believe it has deteriorated (similar to 18% in 2019).
- The most satisfied with Council direction (and most improved since 2019) are residents aged 18 to 34 years.
- The least satisfied with Council direction are Lakes residents.





Overall council direction last 12 months

2020 overall direction (index scores)

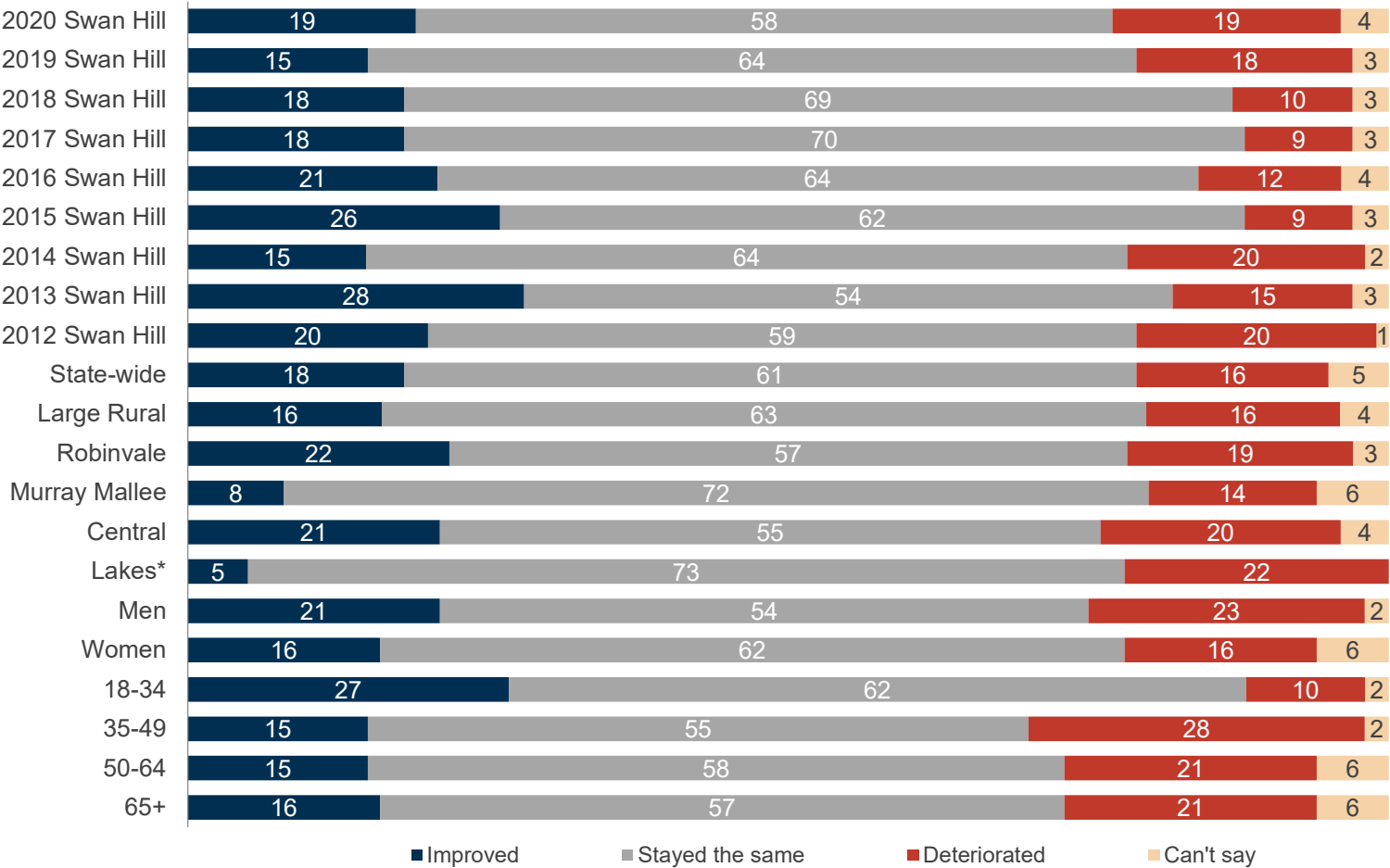


Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Swan Hill Rural City Council's overall performance?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Overall council direction last 12 months

2020 overall council direction (%)



Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Swan Hill Rural City Council's overall performance?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Individual service areas



Community consultation and engagement performance



2020 consultation and engagement performance (index scores)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
18-34	54	53	61	52	53	59	61	61
State-wide	56	55	55	54	56	57	57	57
Large Rural	54	54	52	52	54	n/a	n/a	n/a
Murray Mallee	51	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Robinvale	35	37	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	53	54	59	54	52	53	58	58
Swan Hill	54	55	58	55	54	55	60	55
Central	59	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	55	56	57	58	57	49	61	52
Women	55	57	56	56	57	56	62	53
65+	54	61	59	56	57	56	61	56
50-64	53	53	51	55	52	54	56	50
Lakes	54	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

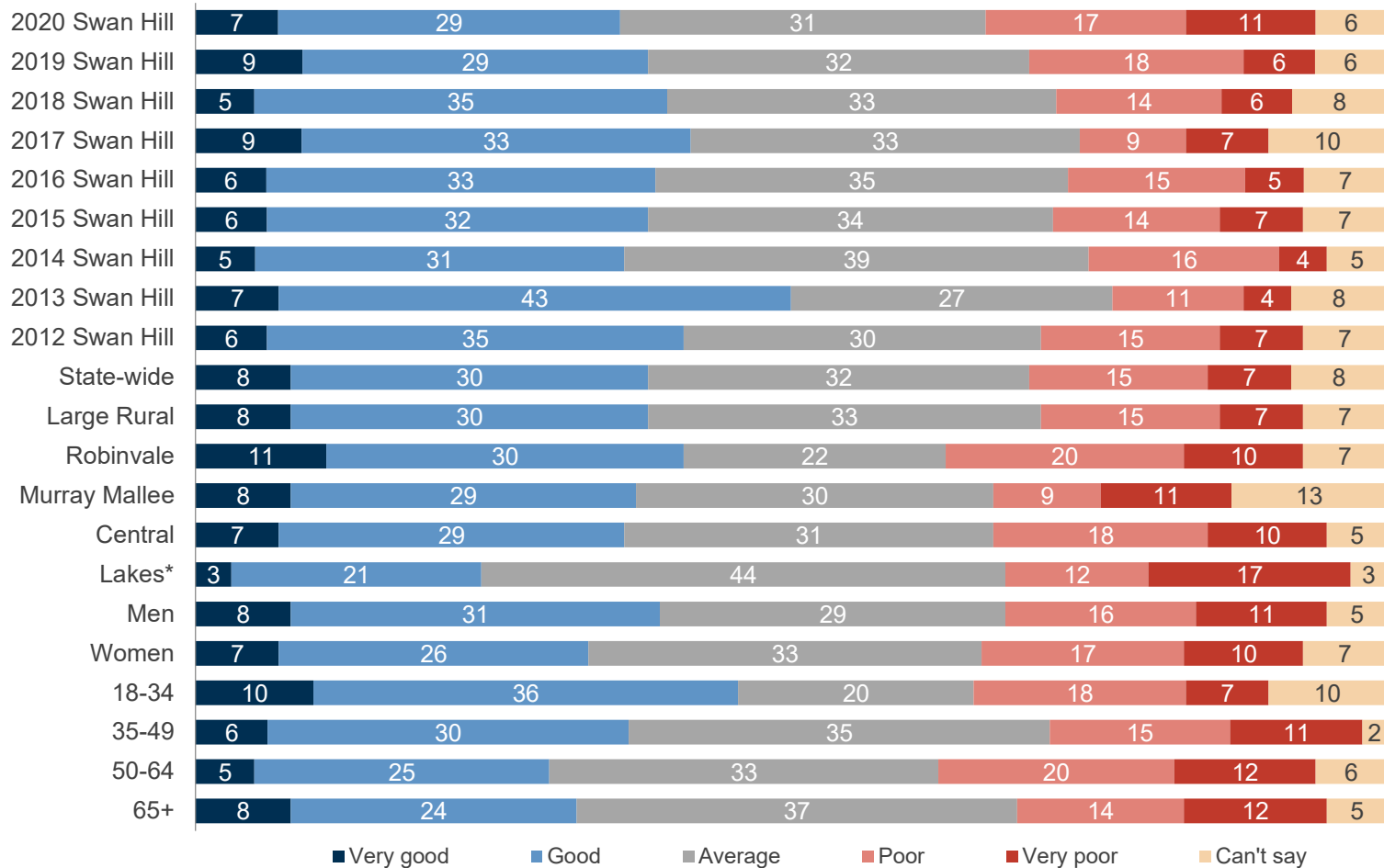
Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Community consultation and engagement performance



2020 consultation and engagement performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



2020 lobbying performance (index scores)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	
18-34	56 [▲]	48	56	54	53	52	54	57	55
State-wide	53 [▲]	54	54	54	53	55	56	55	55
Large Rural	53 [▲]	52	52	51	50	53	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central	52	57	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	50	50	55	52	50	53	50	56	54
Swan Hill	50	52	55	54	54	53	51	57	53
Women	50	54	55	55	58	53	53	59	52
65+	49	56	58	59	55	59	56	60	60
Robinvale	49	28	43	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	47	54	52	48	52	52	43	57	50
50-64	46	50	53	50	54	50	50	54	50
Lakes	44*	56	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Murray Mallee	42	49	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

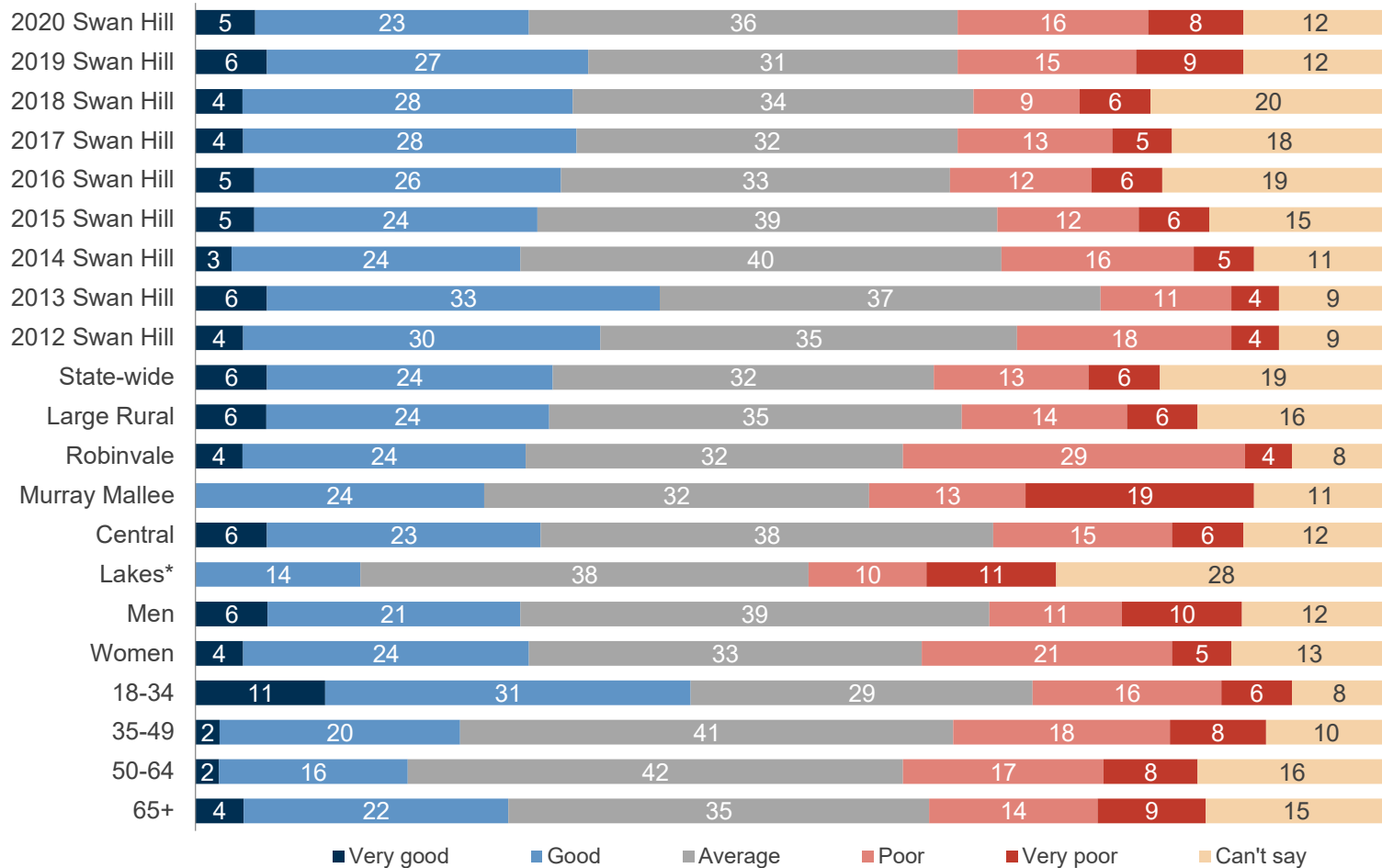
Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



2020 lobbying performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2020 community decisions made performance (index scores)

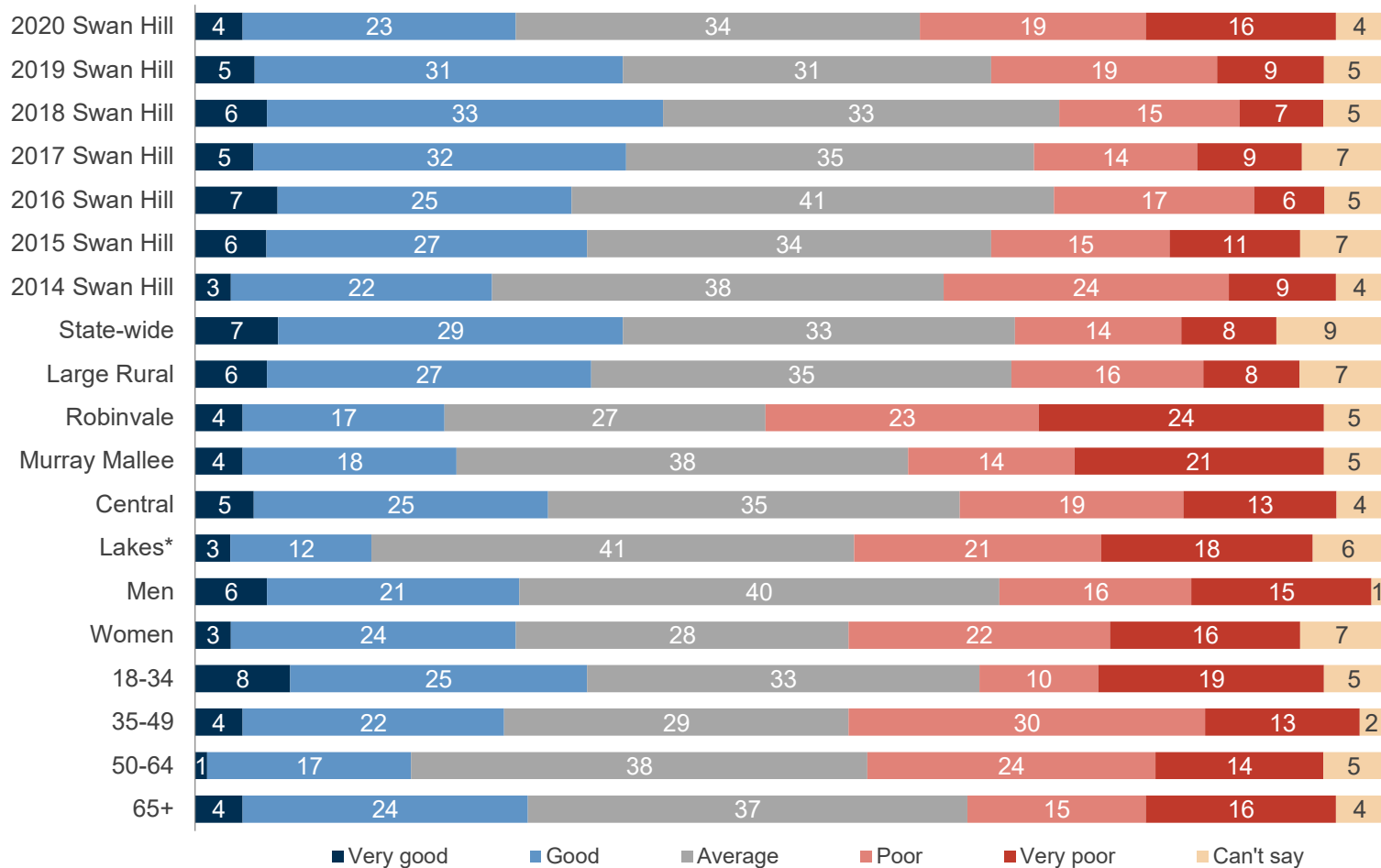
	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
State-wide	55	54	54	54	55	57	n/a	n/a
Large Rural	52	52	51	50	52	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	48	55	53	51	51	49	n/a	n/a
Central	55	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	50	54	52	53	50	45	n/a	n/a
65+	53	60	58	56	58	52	n/a	n/a
Swan Hill	51	54	53	53	51	46	n/a	n/a
Women	52	54	54	53	52	48	n/a	n/a
35-49	52	53	52	49	46	40	n/a	n/a
Murray Mallee	50	43	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	52	49	44	55	47	43	n/a	n/a
Lakes	55	57	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Robinvale	30	38	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2020 community decisions made performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2020 sealed local roads performance (index scores)

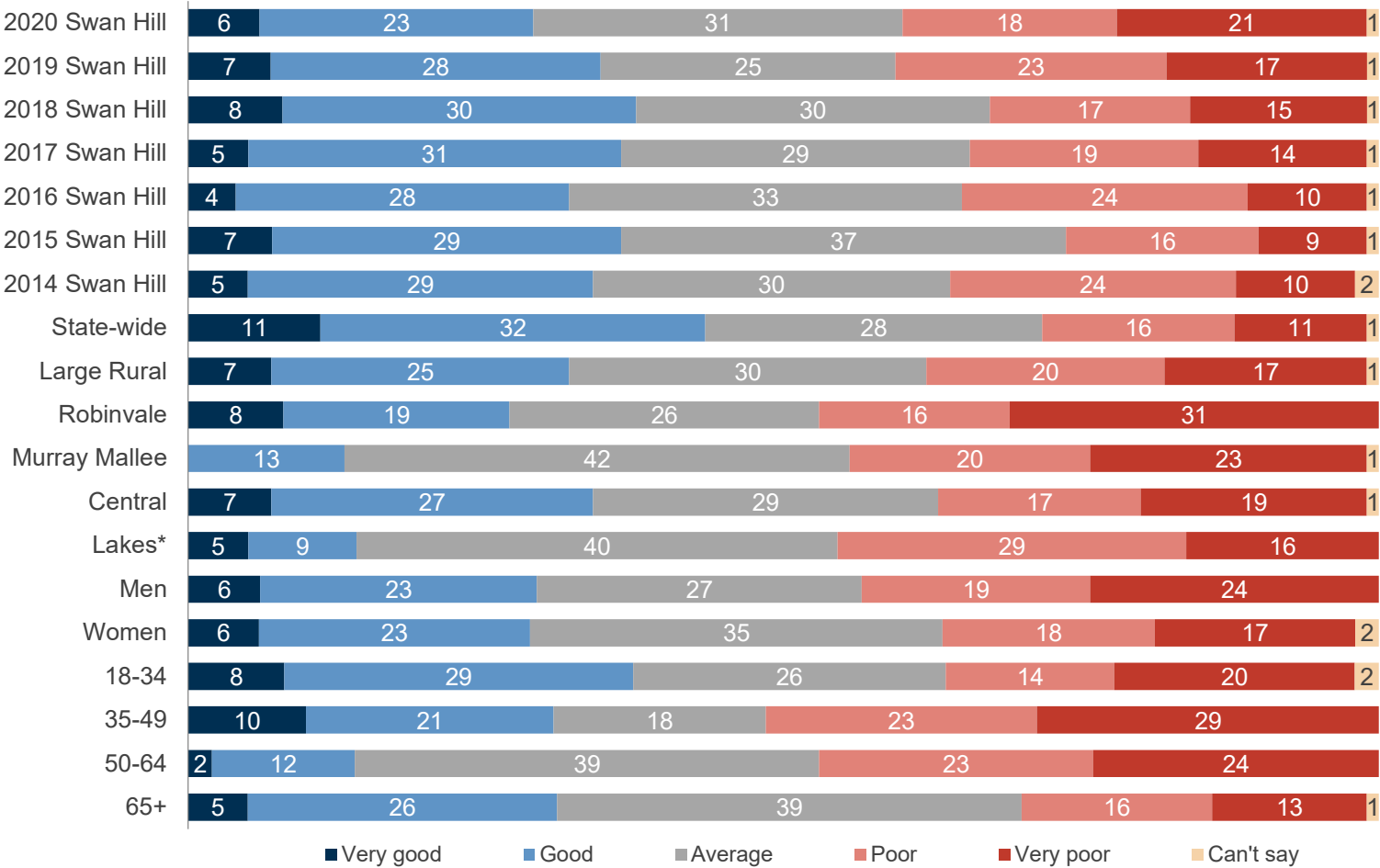
	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
State-wide	56	53	53	54	55	55	n/a	n/a
65+	53	58	57	58	60	57	n/a	n/a
18-34	43	50	47	43	50	48	n/a	n/a
Large Rural	47	45	43	44	45	n/a	n/a	n/a
Central	50	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	45	49	49	51	55	49	n/a	n/a
Swan Hill	46	50	49	48	52	48	n/a	n/a
Men	47	52	49	45	50	48	n/a	n/a
35-49	45	44	44	41	52	38	n/a	n/a
Lakes	45	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Robinvale	36	40	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Murray Mallee	37	39	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	43	47	42	49	47	49	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2020 sealed local roads performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 *Caution: small sample size < n=30



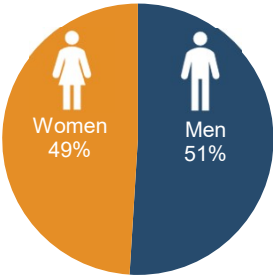
**Detailed
demographics**



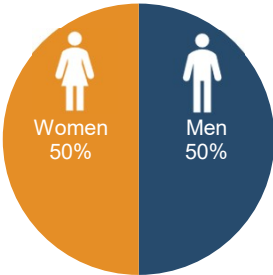
Gender and age profile

2020 gender

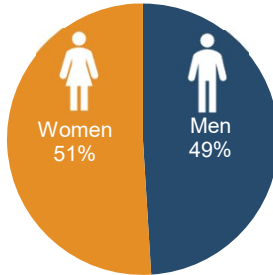
Swan Hill



Large Rural

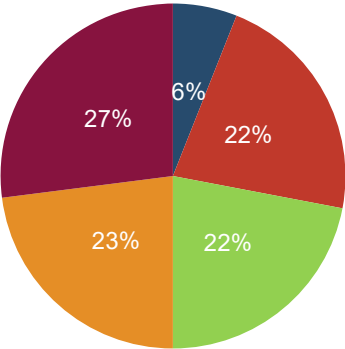


State-wide

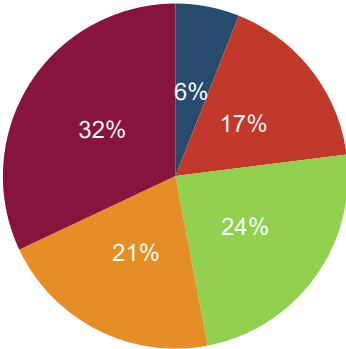


2020 age

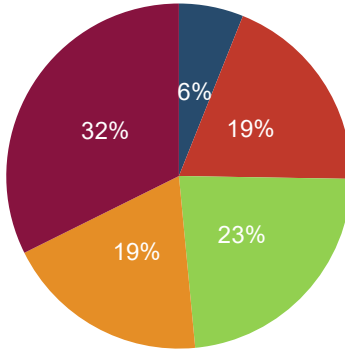
Swan Hill



Large Rural



State-wide



■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+ ■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+ ■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

S3. [Record gender] / S4. To which of the following age groups do you belong?
 Base: All respondents. Councils asked state-wide: 62 Councils asked group: 17
 Please note that for the reason of simplifying reporting, interlocking age and gender reporting has not been included in this report. Interlocking age and gender analysis is still available in the dashboard and data tables provided alongside this report.



**Appendix A:
Index scores,
margins of error
and significant
differences**



Appendix A: Index Scores

Index Scores

Many questions ask respondents to rate council performance on a five-point scale, for example, from 'very good' to 'very poor', with 'can't say' also a possible response category. To facilitate ease of reporting and comparison of results over time, starting from the 2012 survey and measured against the state-wide result and the council group, an 'Index Score' has been calculated for such measures.

The Index Score is calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale), with 'can't say' responses excluded from the analysis. The '% RESULT' for each scale category is multiplied by the 'INDEX FACTOR'. This produces an 'INDEX VALUE' for each category, which are then summed to produce the 'INDEX SCORE', equating to '60' in the following example.

Similarly, an Index Score has been calculated for the Core question 'Performance direction in the last 12 months', based on the following scale for each performance measure category, with 'Can't say' responses excluded from the calculation.

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Very good	9%	100	9
Good	40%	75	30
Average	37%	50	19
Poor	9%	25	2
Very poor	4%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 60

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Improved	36%	100	36
Stayed the same	40%	50	20
Deteriorated	23%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 56



Appendix A: Margins of error

The sample size for the 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey for Swan Hill Rural City Council was n=400. Unless otherwise noted, this is the total sample base for all reported charts and tables.

The maximum margin of error on a sample of approximately n=400 interviews is +/-4.8% at the 95% confidence level for results around 50%. Margins of error will be larger for any sub-samples. As an example, a result of 50% can be read confidently as falling midway in the range 45.2% - 54.8%.

Maximum margins of error are listed in the table below, based on a population of 15,900 people aged 18 years or over for Swan Hill Rural City Council, according to ABS estimates.

Demographic	Actual survey sample size	Weighted base	Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval
Swan Hill Rural City Council	400	400	+/-4.8
Men	174	203	+/-7.4
Women	226	197	+/-6.5
Robinvale	49	55	+/-14.1
Murray Mallee	52	49	+/-13.7
Central	268	270	+/-5.9
Lakes	31	27	+/-17.9
18-34 years	51	112	+/-13.8
35-49 years	102	89	+/-9.7
50-64 years	112	91	+/-9.3
65+ years	135	109	+/-8.4



Appendix A: Significant difference reporting notation

Within tables and index score charts throughout this report, statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level are represented by upward directing green (▲) and downward directing red arrows (▼).

Significance when noted indicates a significantly higher or lower result for the analysis group in comparison to the ‘Total’ result for the council for that survey question for that year. Therefore in the example below:

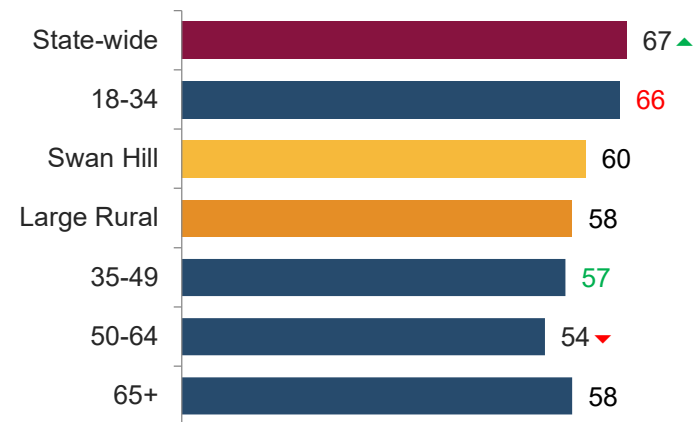
- ▲ The state-wide result is significantly higher than the overall result for the council.
- ▼ The result among 50-64 year olds is significantly lower than for the overall result for the council.

Further, results shown in green and red indicate significantly higher or lower results than in 2019.

Therefore in the example below:

- The result among 35-49 year olds in the council is **significantly higher** than the result achieved among this group in 2019.
- The result among 18-34 year olds in the council is **significantly lower** than the result achieved among this group in 2019.

**Overall Performance – Index Scores
(example extract only)**





Appendix A: Index score significant difference calculation

The test applied to the Indexes was an Independent Mean Test, as follows:

$$Z \text{ Score} = (\$1 - \$2) / \text{Sqrt} ((\$5^2 / \$3) + (\$6^2 / \$4))$$

Where:

- \$1 = Index Score 1
- \$2 = Index Score 2
- \$3 = unweighted sample count 1
- \$4 = unweighted sample count 2
- \$5 = standard deviation 1
- \$6 = standard deviation 2

All figures can be sourced from the detailed cross tabulations.

The test was applied at the 95% confidence interval, so if the Z Score was greater than +/- 1.954 the scores are significantly different.



**Appendix B:
Further project
information**



Appendix B: Further information

Further information about the report and explanations about the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey can be found in this section including:

- Background and objectives
- Analysis and reporting
- Glossary of terms

Detailed survey tabulations

Detailed survey tabulations are available in supplied Excel file.

Contacts

For further queries about the conduct and reporting of the 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey, please contact JWS Research on

(03) 8685 8555 or via email:
admin@jwsresearch.com



Appendix B: Survey methodology and sampling

The 2020 results are compared with previous years, as detailed below:

- 2020, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 30th January – 22nd March.
- 2019, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2018, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2017, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2016, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2015, n=401 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2014, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 31st January – 11th March.
- 2013, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 24th March.
- 2012, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 18th May – 30th June.

Minimum quotas of gender within age groups were applied during the fieldwork phase. Post-survey weighting was then conducted to ensure accurate representation of the age and gender profile of the Swan Hill Rural City Council area.

Any variation of +/-1% between individual results and net scores in this report or the detailed survey tabulations is due to rounding. In reporting, ‘—’ denotes not mentioned and ‘0%’ denotes mentioned by less than 1% of respondents. ‘Net’ scores refer to two or more response categories being combined into one category for simplicity of reporting.

This survey was conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18+ years in Swan Hill Rural City Council.

Survey sample matched to the demographic profile of Swan Hill Rural City Council as determined by the most recent ABS population estimates was purchased from an accredited supplier of publicly available phone records, including up to 60% mobile phone numbers to cater to the diversity of residents within Swan Hill Rural City Council, particularly younger people.

A total of n=400 completed interviews were achieved in Swan Hill Rural City Council. Survey fieldwork was conducted in the period of 30th January – 22nd March, 2020.



Appendix B: Analysis and reporting

All participating councils are listed in the State-wide report published on the DELWP website. In 2020, 62 of the 79 Councils throughout Victoria participated in this survey. For consistency of analysis and reporting across all projects, Local Government Victoria has aligned its presentation of data to use standard council groupings. Accordingly, the council reports for the community satisfaction survey provide analysis using these standard council groupings. Please note that councils participating across 2012-2020 vary slightly.

Council Groups

Swan Hill Rural City Council is classified as a Large Rural council according to the following classification list:

- Metropolitan, Interface, Regional Centres, Large Rural and Small Rural.

Councils participating in the Large Rural group are:

- Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Campaspe, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Macedon Ranges, Mitchell, Moira, Moorabool, Mount Alexander, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Swan Hill and Wellington.

Wherever appropriate, results for Swan Hill Rural City Council for this 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other participating councils in the Large Rural group and on a state-wide basis. Please note that council groupings changed for 2015, and as such comparisons to council group results before that time can not be made within the reported charts.



Appendix B: 2012 survey revision

The survey was revised in 2012. As a result:

- The survey is now conducted as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18 years or over in local councils, whereas previously it was conducted as a 'head of household' survey.
- As part of the change to a representative resident survey, results are now weighted post survey to the known population distribution of Swan Hill Rural City Council according to the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics population estimates, whereas the results were previously not weighted.
- The service responsibility area performance measures have changed significantly and the rating scale used to assess performance has also changed.

As such, the results of the 2012 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey should be considered as a benchmark. Please note that comparisons should not be made with the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey results from 2011 and prior due to the methodological and sampling changes. Comparisons in the period 2012-2020 have been made throughout this report as appropriate.



Appendix B: Core, optional and tailored questions

Core, optional and tailored questions

Over and above necessary geographic and demographic questions required to ensure sample representativeness, a base set of questions for the 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey was designated as 'Core' and therefore compulsory inclusions for all participating Councils.

These core questions comprised:

- Overall performance last 12 months (Overall performance)
- Lobbying on behalf of community (Advocacy)
- Community consultation and engagement (Consultation)
- Decisions made in the interest of the community (Making community decisions)
- Condition of sealed local roads (Sealed local roads)
- Contact in last 12 months (Contact)
- Rating of contact (Customer service)
- Overall council direction last 12 months (Council direction)

Reporting of results for these core questions can always be compared against other participating councils in the council group and against all participating councils state-wide. Alternatively, some questions in the 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey were optional. Councils also had the ability to ask tailored questions specific only to their council.



Appendix B: Analysis and reporting

Reporting

Every council that participated in the 2020 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey receives a customised report. In addition, the State government is supplied with this State-wide summary report of the aggregate results of 'Core' and 'Optional' questions asked across all council areas surveyed, which is available at:

<http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/local-government/strengthening-councils/council-community-satisfaction-survey>.

Tailored questions commissioned by individual councils are reported only to the commissioning council and not otherwise shared unless by express written approval of the commissioning council.



Appendix B: Glossary of terms

Core questions: Compulsory inclusion questions for all councils participating in the CSS.

CSS: 2020 Victorian Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

Council group: One of five classified groups, comprising: metropolitan, interface, regional centres, large rural and small rural.

Council group average: The average result for all participating councils in the council group.

Highest / lowest: The result described is the highest or lowest result across a particular demographic sub-group e.g. men, for the specific question being reported. Reference to the result for a demographic sub-group being the highest or lowest does not imply that it is significantly higher or lower, unless this is specifically mentioned.

Index score: A score calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale). This score is sometimes reported as a figure in brackets next to the category being described, e.g. men 50+ (60).

Optional questions: Questions which councils had an option to include or not.

Percentages: Also referred to as ‘detailed results’, meaning the proportion of responses, expressed as a percentage.

Sample: The number of completed interviews, e.g. for a council or within a demographic sub-group.

Significantly higher / lower: The result described is significantly higher or lower than the comparison result based on a statistical significance test at the 95% confidence limit. If the result referenced is statistically higher or lower then this will be specifically mentioned, however not all significantly higher or lower results are referenced in summary reporting.

Statewide average: The average result for all participating councils in the State.

Tailored questions: Individual questions tailored by and only reported to the commissioning council.

Weighting: Weighting factors are applied to the sample for each council based on available age and gender proportions from ABS census information to ensure reported results are proportionate to the actual population of the council, rather than the achieved survey sample.

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