LATE AGENDA

14th Ordinary Council Meeting

12th Council of Litchfield

Monday 19th October 2026



Stephen Hoyne

Chief Executive Officer

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14.2 Governance and Community

14.2.6 Annual Community Survey Results

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ATTACHMENTS:
1. Annual Community Survey Report.pdf
2. Open Comments.pdf

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council the results of the 2026 Litchfield Council Community Survey.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. thank the community members that provided feedback via the survey; and
2. receive and note the Litchfield Council 2026 Community Survey Report, as at Attachment A, and open responses at Attachment 2.

BACKGROUND

The Annual Community Survey is an opportunity to evaluate the sentiment and satisfaction of Litchfield community members regarding Council's service delivery, communications and amenities. It provides an opportunity to better understand the demographics, priorities and needs of the Litchfield community, establish benchmarks and identify areas for improvement to support Council in delivering services in line with community expectations where possible.

The 2026 Community Survey received 224 valid submissions, an increase of 101 submissions from the 123 received in 2025, and slightly higher than the 218 submissions received in 2024.

Unfortunately, during the survey period, a high volume of responses was identified as potentially fraudulent or generated by automated activity. Following a review of the data, these responses were excluded to maintain the integrity of the survey results. Additional survey security measures, including bot detection, will be considered for future surveys.

The 2026 Community Survey results reflect community sentiment and satisfaction, and will form part of Council's Annual Report, as well as its future priorities and service delivery.

Litchfield residents were encouraged to complete the survey over a four-week campaign from 1 July to 28 July 2026, supported by a range of online, direct and face-to-face promotional activities. Participants also had the opportunity to win one of ten $100 gift cards. Further details of the promotional and engagement activities undertaken are provided in the Community Engagement section of this report.

Council engaged True North Strategic Communication to conduct the 2026 Litchfield Community Survey and prepare the Community Survey Report provided at Attachment A. The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey and contained 25 questions based on previous surveys, with

additional questions included to better understand how the community would like to be kept informed. Selected results were compared across the five survey periods from 2022 to 2026.

Overall perceptions of Council's performance improved in 2026, with 34% of respondents rating Council's performance as good and 9% as very good. A further 33% rated Council's performance as adequate, resulting in 76% of respondents rating Council's performance as adequate or better. The combined good or very good result of 43% was the highest positive rating recorded across the five survey periods from 2022 to 2026.

Community pride also remained high, with 82% of respondents indicating they were either very proud (49%) or somewhat proud (33%) to live in the Litchfield region. The proportion of respondents who were very proud increased by 4% from 2025.

Key Findings – Importance of Council Services

The community continued to place a high level of importance on Council's core infrastructure and municipal services. The services most commonly selected as most important were:

- Maintenance of local roads – 43%
- Waste transfer stations – 38%
- Weed management on Council land – 37%
- Road drainage maintenance – 35%
- Roadside maintenance – 33%

Maintenance of local roads continued to be the highest priority, consistent with every Community Survey conducted since 2022.

Key Findings – Performance of Council Services

Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in the delivery and management of its services and facilities from very good to very poor. Council received its strongest combined good or very good ratings in:

- Community library – 59%
- Waste transfer stations – 58%
- Recreation reserves – 59% (15% very good and 44% good)

Animal management received the highest adequate rating at 54%. Weed management on Council land received the highest very poor rating at 13%, followed by maintenance of local roads at 12%.

Key Findings – Recreation Reserves

Recreation reserves continued to be widely used, with 80% of respondents reporting that they had used a reserve at least once during the year. In 2026, 17% of respondents reported not using a recreation reserve, compared with 7% of respondents in the 2025 survey. As survey participation and respondents vary from year to year, these results provide an indication of reported use rather than a measure of overall visitation across the municipality.

More than half of respondents (53%) rated recreation reserves as good or very good, comprising 39% good and 14% very good. This compares with 67% in 2025 (53% good and 14% very good). Community feedback identified opportunities for further enhancement, including improved playgrounds and facilities for older children, walking and cycling infrastructure, investment in McMinns Lagoon and ongoing maintenance.

Key Findings – Communication and Community Engagement

Council's communication with the community was most commonly rated as adequate (33%), followed by good (25%) and very good (11%). Respondents identified a desire for more frequent communication, increased use of social media, greater face-to-face engagement, a mix of communication channels, additional opportunities to provide feedback and greater visibility of Councillors within the community.

Social media was the most common existing source of information about Council activities, used by 50% of respondents, followed by word of mouth at 41%. However, when respondents were asked how they preferred Council to communicate with them, email was the most preferred method, followed by social media and mail.

Council's performance in advocacy, community support and community engagement was most commonly rated as adequate across all three areas. Community support received the most favourable overall ratings, while community engagement attracted the highest proportion of poor and very poor ratings.

Key Findings – Community Newsletter

There was strong support for the introduction of a Council community newsletter, with 68% of respondents indicating they would be interested in receiving one. Monthly was the preferred frequency (44%), followed by quarterly (29%), bi-monthly (17%) and fortnightly (10%).

Email was overwhelmingly the preferred delivery method, ranked first by 75% of respondents. The topics of greatest interest were projects that may affect residents (83%), infrastructure and scheduled works/roadworks (81%), community events (76%), other projects of interest (75%), and waste and recycling (71%). 179 survey participants provided their email address to register for the newsletter.

Key Findings – Community Feedback

Community feedback highlighted continued appreciation for Litchfield's rural lifestyle, natural environment, space, community spirit and proximity to services, while identifying opportunities for improvement in roads and drainage, waste services, recreation facilities, walking and cycling infrastructure and community facilities.

A recurring theme was the community's desire for more regular, proactive and accessible communication, delivered through a combination of email, social media and face-to-face engagement. The survey also indicates opportunities to strengthen perceptions of Council's advocacy and community engagement and to demonstrate how community feedback contributes to Council decisions and activities.

LINKS WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

People - Our Community is at the Heart of All We Do

Progress - Continuity of Services and Facilities

Performance - An Effective and Efficient Organisation

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

COR02 Community Engagement Policy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RISKS

There is a risk that decisions based solely on the survey results may not accurately reflect the views and needs of the broader community. The findings represent only a small proportion of the community and should be considered alongside other relevant information and evidence. However, this risk is

considered low, as the issues raised are not unexpected and largely align with matters already known to Council. The survey findings therefore provide further insight into existing concerns rather than identifying significant new or unforeseen issues.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The 2026 Annual Community Survey ran for four weeks, from 1 July to 28 July 2026, with True North Strategic Communication assisting Council with its delivery. A range of promotional and community engagement activities were undertaken throughout the campaign to encourage participation. Survey respondents were also eligible to enter a draw for one of ten $100 gift cards.

The survey attracted 224 valid responses and was promoted through a range of channels, including:

- Promotional materials: Posters/post cards promoting the Community Survey were displayed on community noticeboards and at local businesses across the Litchfield municipality.
- Face-to-face engagement: Three community displays were held at Freds Pass Rural Markets, Berry Springs Shopping Village and Coolalinga Central, providing opportunities for direct engagement with community members. Postcards containing a link to the survey were also available for people to take away.
- Social media: The survey was promoted through five Instagram posts and three Facebook posts during the campaign.
- Website: Information about the Community Survey and a link to participate were made available on the Litchfield Council website.
- Direct email: Council's existing community mailing list was used to encourage participation in the survey. This proved to be an effective promotional method, with the highest number of survey responses received in the first week following an email to the mailing list.
- Hard-copy surveys: Hard-copy surveys were made available at the Litchfield Council office and Taminmin Community Library, providing an alternative method of participation for community members.

The combination of digital, direct and face-to-face engagement provided multiple opportunities for community members to participate in the survey, with Council's existing community mailing list generating particularly strong engagement during the campaign.

Litchfield Council

2026 Community Survey Report

Prepared by True North Strategic Communication
August 2026

Version No.	Issue Date	Prepared by:	Approved by:	Approval Date
V1	13/8/26	Raissa Kirana	LC	21/08/2026
V2				
V3				

Recipients are responsible for eliminating all superseded documents in their possession

Consultation statement
True North Strategic Communication is guided by the principles of good community engagement, based on people's level of interest and concern as outlined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).
Our role is to provide stakeholders and the general public with objective information, so they can provide informed feedback on consultation projects. We give people the opportunity to provide input that is balanced and reflective of the range of community views to independently provide the best possible guidance to decision makers.
Our practice reflects professional standards and ethical standards for human research including anonymity, confidentiality, record storage and keeping people informed.

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Executive summary

Overview

True North Strategic Communication was engaged by Litchfield Council to conduct the 2026 Litchfield Community Survey and prepare a report based on the findings.

Litchfield Council conducts a community survey each year to capture important community feedback to evaluate community sentiment and satisfaction. The objectives of the survey are to:

- measure importance and satisfaction of Council services and facilities
- understand the demographics and priorities of the Litchfield municipality
- establish benchmarks
- guide future priorities for Council.

The survey ran for 4 weeks from 1 July to 28 July 2026. The survey attracted 224 responses and was promoted in various ways including:

- 5 Instagram posts
- 3 Facebook posts
- 3 community displays at Freds Pass Rural Markets, Berry Springs Shopping Village and Coolalinga Central with postcards with a link to the survey available for people to take
- Hard copy surveys available at the Litchfield Council office and Taminmin Community Library
- Information and link to survey available on Litchfield Council's website
- Emails to community mailing list encouraging them to participate in the survey.

The survey was also incentivised with 10 $100 vouchers available to participants to encourage responses.

This survey report analyses the findings of the 2026 Litchfield Community Survey in comparison to the last 5 survey periods.

Key findings

Community perceptions of Litchfield Council's overall performance improved in 2026, with good becoming the most common rating. The combined good or very good rating was 43%, the highest positive result recorded across the 5 survey periods from 2022 to 2026.

The key findings from the survey are summarised below.

- Participants have long standing connections to the Litchfield municipality, with 58% of participants indicating they have lived in the region for more than 15 years.
- Maintenance of roads and road drainage continued to be very important to participants, with 43% of respondents indicating road maintenance is the most important Council service. Waste transfer stations were ranked second (38%), followed closely by weed management on Council land (37%).
- The community library was Council's highest rated service, with 59% of participants rating it good or very good, followed by waste transfer stations at 58%.
- Recreation reserves were used by 80% of participants at least once during the year. They were generally considered to be well maintained by Council, rated as good or very good by over half of participants (53%).

- The proportion of participants being very proud to live in the Litchfield region increased by +4% in 2026, with a decline in not proud at all by -2%.
- Council's role in advocacy, community support and community engagement was most commonly rated as adequate.
- When asked about preferred communication methods, email was the most popular method for participants.
- The majority of participants were interested in receiving a community newsletter (68%). Email was the preferred delivery method with monthly the preferred frequency.

When asked how well Council was contributing to its strategic direction of making Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End, 34% rated it as good. Combined positive ratings improved compared to 2024 and 2025, while negative ratings declined.

Overview

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Litchfield Council conducts a community survey each year to capture important community feedback to evaluate community sentiment and satisfaction. The objectives of the survey are to:

- measure importance and satisfaction of Council services and facilities
- understand the demographics and priorities of the Litchfield municipality
- establish benchmarks
- guide future priorities for Council.

This report outlines the survey findings and provides analysis of the survey results. It also provides analysis in comparison to the last 5 survey periods from 2022 to 2026.

During the survey period, 9 hard copy surveys were completed and submitted, including 6 hard copy surveys with missing answers to some questions. Complete hard copy survey responses are included in this report's data. Incomplete hard copy survey responses are attached separately and do not form part of this data to avoid skewing the results, as the online version of the survey required a response to each question. Refer to Appendix B for the incomplete hard copy survey responses.

The survey was targeted by a 'bad actor' or AI bot and at the end of the survey period received 1959 survey responses. A thorough review of the responses determined there were a high number of fraudulent responses and the fraudulent responses were removed from the final survey data. The raw data before the data cleanse can be found in Appendix C.

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest percent.

Methodology

In collaboration with Litchfield Council, True North Strategic Communication conducted the 2026 community survey using the online platform Survey Monkey.

The survey contained 25 questions based on survey questions from previous years, with additional questions about how the community would like to be kept informed.

The survey covered the following topics:



The survey was incentivised to encourage participation from community members with the chance to win one of 10 $100 gift cards.

A range of methods were used to promote the survey including:

- 5 Instagram posts
- 3 Facebook posts
- 3 community displays at Freds Pass Rural Markets, Berry Springs Shopping Village and Coolalinga Central with postcards with a link to the survey available for people to take
- Hard copy surveys available at the Litchfield Council office and Taminmin Community Library
- Information and link to survey available on Litchfield Council's website
- Emails to existing community mailing list encouraging them to participate in the survey.

The highest number of survey responses were received in the first week following an email to an existing Litchfield Council mailing list, proving to be an effective promotional tool.

Comparison across survey periods

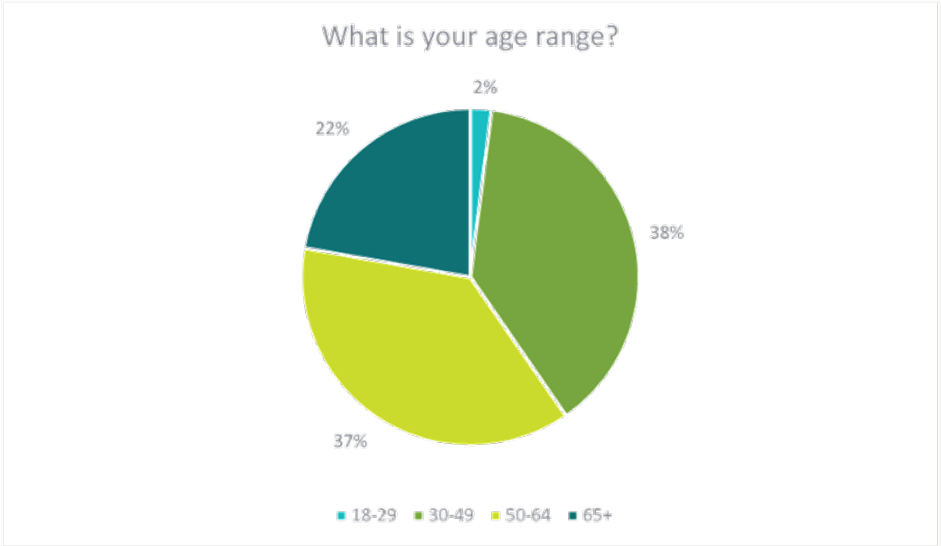
Selected results have been compared across 5 survey periods from 2022 to 2026. Results are presented as percentages to allow comparison between years, as the number of participants varied. These differences should be considered when interpreting year-to-year movements, particularly where changes are small. In 2026, there was in an increase in the number of survey participants to 224.

Survey year	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**
Number of participants	272	140	218	123	224

Findings

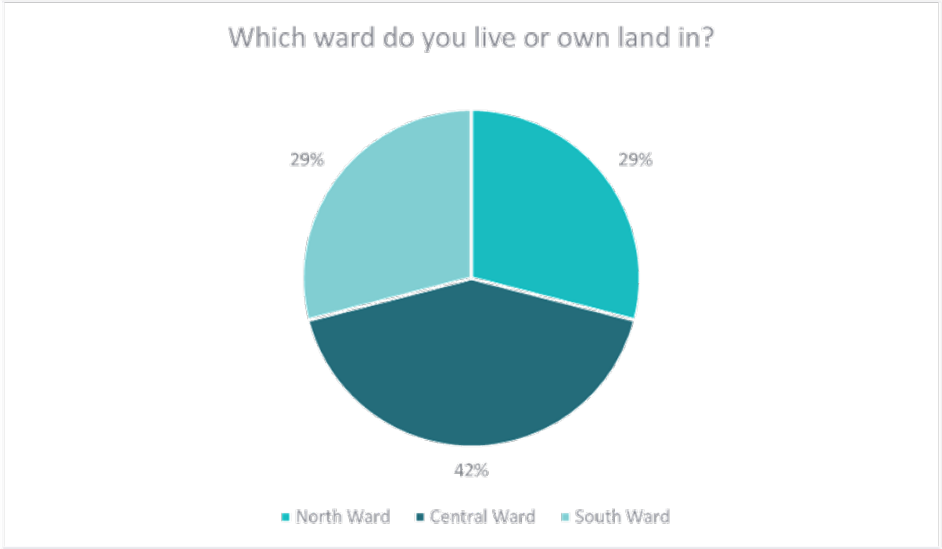
Demographics

Most participants (93%) said they were residents and landowners, while 4% of participants said they were residents, but do not own land. There were 2% who said they are not residents but own land in the Litchfield municipality.

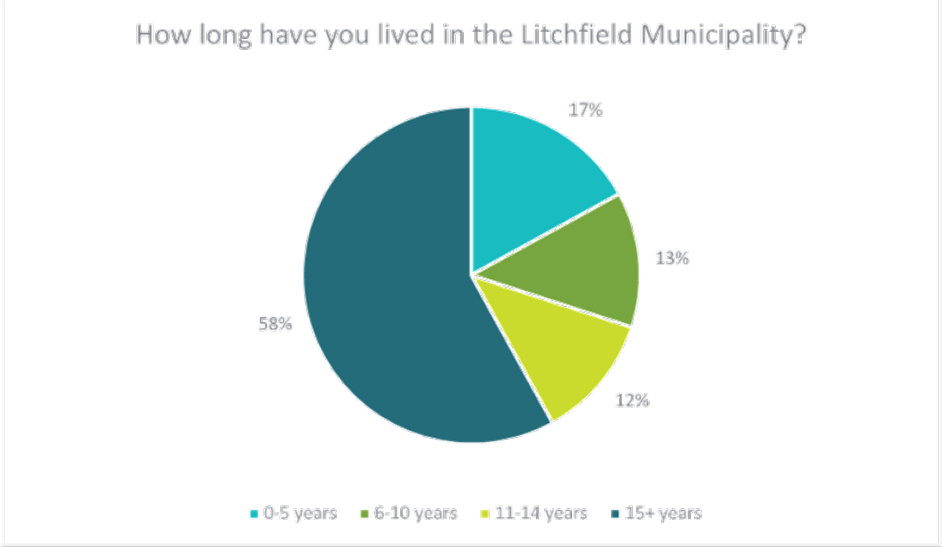


The majority of participants were aged between 30 and 64 (75%), 64% were female, 33% male and 3% preferred not to say.

Participants had a greater representation from the Central Ward (42%), while the North and South Ward were evenly represented at 29%.

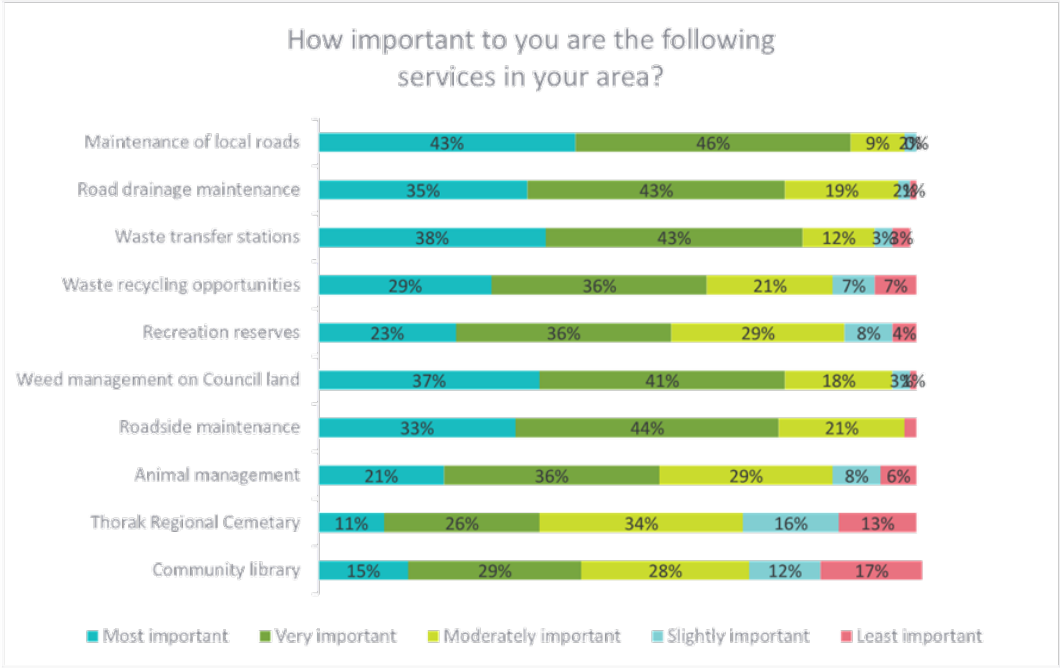


Over half of respondents said they lived in the Litchfield municipality for over 15 years (58%), followed by 17% responding 0-5 years, 13% responding 6-10 years and 12% responding 11-14 years.

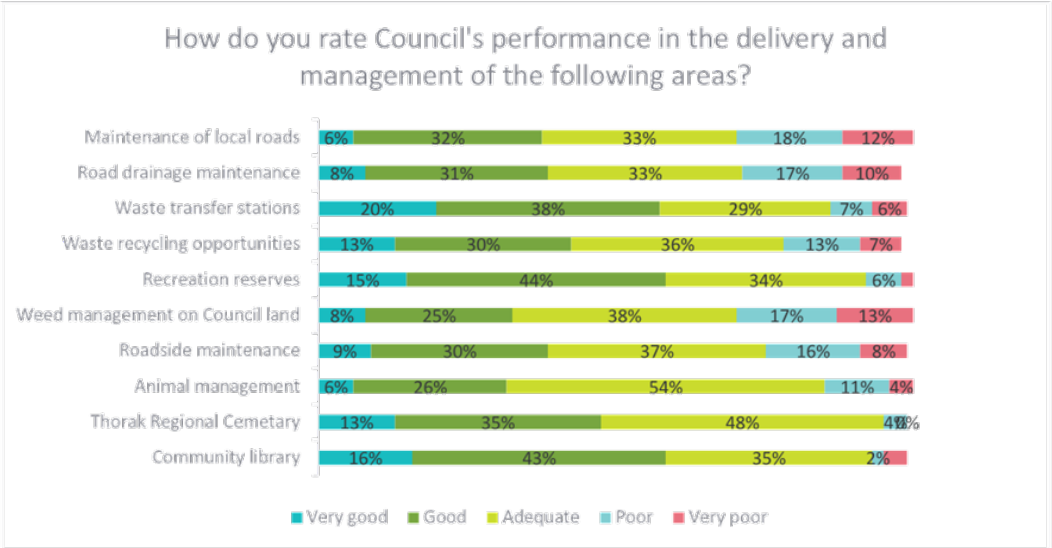


Importance of Council services

Participants were asked to rank the importance of Council services and facilities from most important to least important. Maintenance of local roads was rated the most important service (43%), continuing a trend recorded in every survey since 2022. This was followed by waste transfer stations (38%) and weed management on Council land (37%). The community library was ranked as the least important service (17%), followed by Thorak Regional Cemetery at 13%.



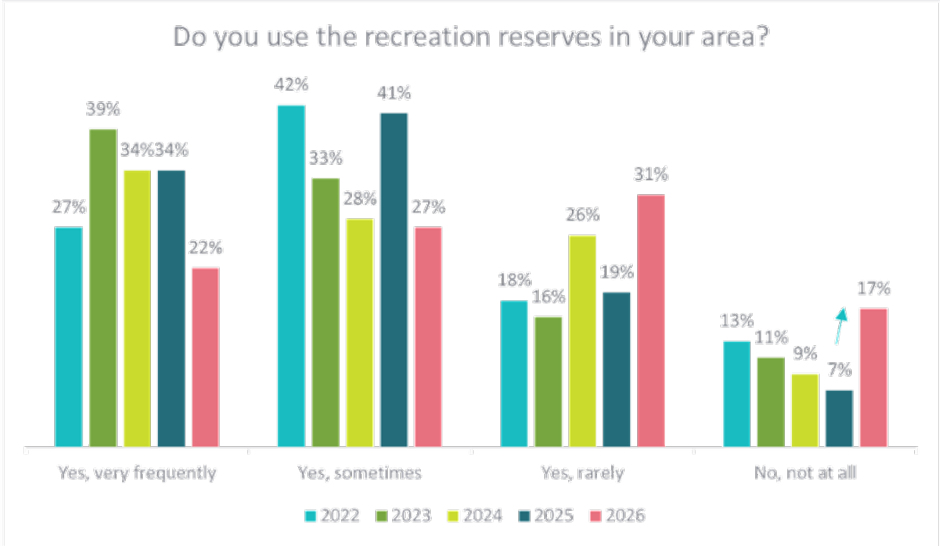
Participants were asked to rate Council's performance in delivering each service or facility on a scale from very good to very poor. The community library received the highest combined good or very good rating (59%), followed by waste transfer stations (58%). Animal management has the highest adequate rating of (54%). Weed management on Council land received the highest very poor rating (13%), followed by maintenance of local roads (12%).



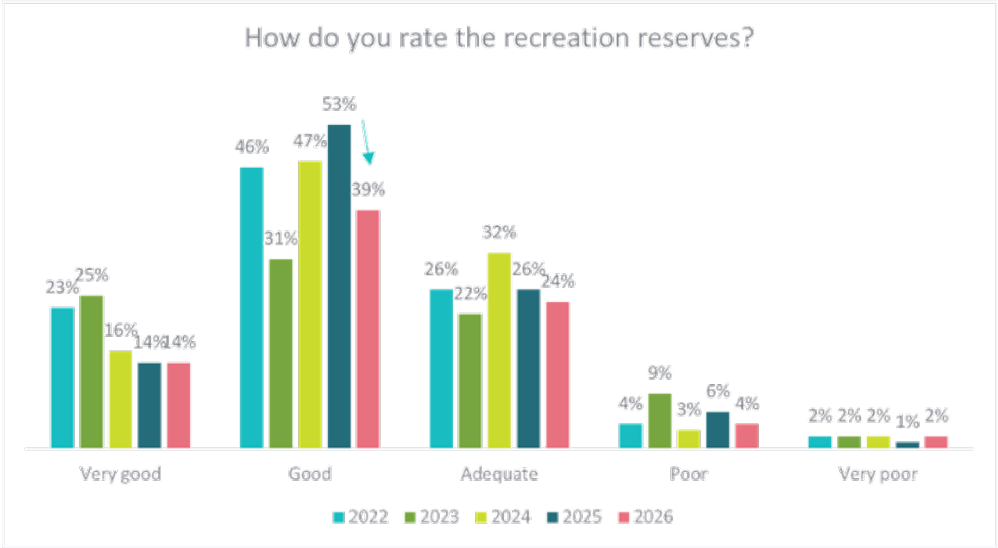
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Participants were also asked whether they used recreation reserves in the Litchfield municipality and, if so, how frequently. Overall, 80% reported using the reserves at least once a year. The most common frequency was one or more times a year (31%), followed by 27% who responded once a month and 22% visit weekly.

Use of recreation areas declined in 2026, with participants reporting that they did not use them at all increasing from 7% in 2025 to 17% in 2026 (+10%).



Participants were asked to rate the different recreation reserves, with 39% of participants rating the areas as good, this is a decline from 53% in 2025 (-14%). 6% of participants rated the recreation reserves as poor or very poor.

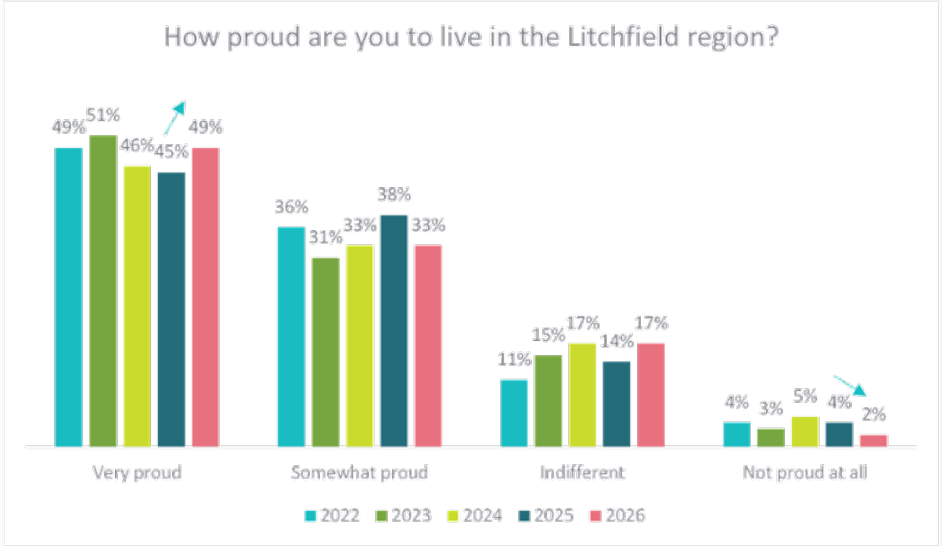


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Participants had an opportunity to provide a comment on how they think Council could improve the recreation areas. Some notable comments:

- *McMinns Lagoon could use some investment to encourage and enhance recreational use. There is only a small window in the dry season where is it currently accessible.*
- *Food trucks onsite in the dry season.*
- *Bird and native plant lists.*
- *Boardwalk around McMinns lagoon to make it accessible year-round.*
- *Needs more updated playgrounds and bike paths, something for the kids.*
- *Needs to be something more for older kids. Girraween area NEEDS a recreational area!! Playgrounds/skate park/water park/something like Leanyer Water Park!!!!!! An indoors at Coolalinga Central like Skallywags in Gateway.*
- *Improve bike lanes and access but in a simple cost effective way, do not need endless guardrails to ride a bike safely (waste of council money).*
- *More ongoing maintenance. Freds Pass needs a lot of work starting with the dirt car park and water drainage in the wet season.*
- *Make Humpty Doo hall usable during the day to anyone in area.*

Participants were asked how proud they were to live in the Litchfield region, with 49% of participants saying very proud, 33% somewhat proud, 17% indifferent and 2% said not proud at all. Compared to survey results from 2024 and 2025, these responses show a small increase in participants being very proud to live in the Litchfield region, and a decline in not proud at all.



To further understand why participants were proud or not to live in the Litchfield region, they were provided with the opportunity to comment on what makes Litchfield the best place to live and what could be improved. In total 223 participants provided a response, some notable responses are below:

- *Space to breathe. Friendly people.*

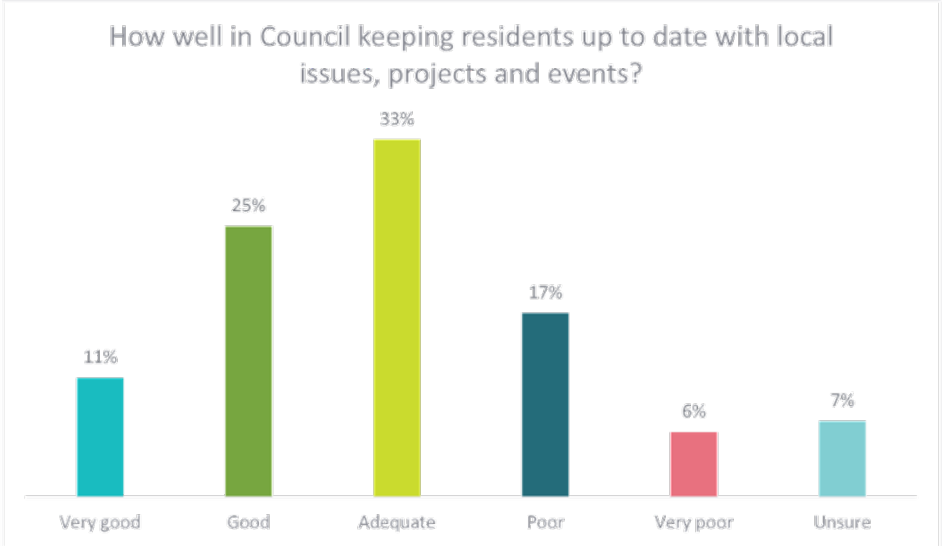
- *The parks, reserves, the cleanliness. Roads need more attention and it would be great to have a public pool*
- *The rural lifestyle that still has access to a good range of commercial businesses.*
- *Litchfield is a fantastic place to live because of its welcoming community, beautiful natural environment, and spacious properties. It offers the best of both worlds—a country feel with access to city amenities. The area also has a strong volunteer spirit and community pride. Looking ahead, I'd like to see more investment in community hubs, local markets, walking and cycling paths, and recreational facilities that encourage people to connect and stay active.*
- *Litchfield is an ideal place for families because it provides space for kids to play, a safe and friendly community, and easy access to nature. The larger properties allow people to enjoy a relaxed lifestyle without being too far from essential services. To make it even better, more playgrounds, sporting facilities, and family-friendly community events would help bring residents together. Additional childcare and healthcare services would also benefit the growing population.*
- *Rural life is a choice. We are happy to pay for peace and quiet, but when we feel we pay a fortune for nothing, it gets hard to appreciate anything the council does. Girraween Rd is FULL of potholes and poorly patched potholes. It is dry; fix it in preparation for the next wet. We need a tip. It has been 20 years, and I cannot believe the council has not resolved this yet. This needs to be addressed as i am sick of paying to just move rubbish. It needs to be disposed of within the council region. This needs to be a priority of the council.*
- *Litchfield offers spectacular waterfalls, bushland and abundant wildlife, spacious blocks and a relaxed rural lifestyle close to Darwin. Drawbacks: limited healthcare, retail and entertainment options, sparse public transport and patchy mobile/data coverage, fewer local jobs, and roads/vulnerable infrastructure during the wet season. Focused upgrades to services, connectivity and flood-resilient roads would make it even better.*
- *Good: The people Community spirit, bike tracks, Recreational reserves, our road (Edelsten) is beautifully maintained by your staff. Improvements: 1. Howard Springs waste transfer station. Having to unload a wheelie bin and force it through a spring-loaded gate is ridiculous. Council should be advocating to work safe or whoever came up with this plan and get it sorted properly. 2. All waste transfer stations should accept all rubbish otherwise it simply gets dumped in the bush. 3. More Bike tracks to Berry Springs, Adelaide River. Join Coolalinga bike track to the Humpty Doo one. I've travelled to QLD to ride bikeways. People would come here to ride SAFELY to Adelaide River/ Litchfield Park/ Mandorah 4. Waste transfer stations need to accept all waste to avoid fly tipping. 5. Rubbish pick up around Coolalinga shops needs improvement. There's Maccas and other takeaway waste along Girraween Rd and Chicken Lane in particular. 6. We NEED a council swimming pool. Palmerston have got one, Bachelor has got one. We need one at Cooley or Humpty Doo bus station or Freds Pass. Somewhere the kids can easily access. 7. More frequent bus service. Maybe smaller, coaster buses every 30 minutes. 8. The service road between Coolalinga bus station and shops is outright dangerous. It's always busy and backed up from roundabout but when the afternoon school buses drop off and 30-40 kids walk up to shops with no pathway, it's hard to watch. 9. Access to and from Coolalinga Central is dangerous. If this is not directly a council issue then it is a Council Advocacy issue.*

Council communication

Participants who had contacted Litchfield Council during the previous 6 months were asked to rate the service they received. This question was not applicable to 40% of participants. Among those who had contacted Council, 19% rated the service they received as good, 13% responded adequate, 13% responded very good, 8% responded both poor and very poor. Despite a temporary increase in

2025, these responses show an overall 27% decline in satisfaction with Council services over the past 5 years.

Council uses its website, social media channels and newsletters to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events. When asked how well Council was achieving this, 33% of participants rated Council's activity as adequate, followed by 25% responding good and 17% responding poor.



Participants were also asked how Council could improve its communication with residents and the wider community. Responses were grouped into the following common themes:

- More frequent communication, including regular newsletters and email updates
- Increase use of social media particularly Facebook to share timely information
- Greater face-to-face engagement through community events, markets, shopping centres and community meetings
- Use a mix of communication channels to reach a wider audience, rather than relying on a single platform
- More opportunities for community feedback though forums, surveys and pop-up engagement activities
- Increased visibility of Councillors within the community
- Greater use of public notices and roadside signs.

Social media was the most common source of information about Council's activities, selected by 50% of participants and followed by word of mouth (41%). Council's website and direct mail were each selected by 23%.

Participants were asked to rank 6 communication methods in order of preference. Email was the most preferred communication method, followed by social media and mail with almost identical rankings. The Council website, newsletter and noticeboards were least preferred.

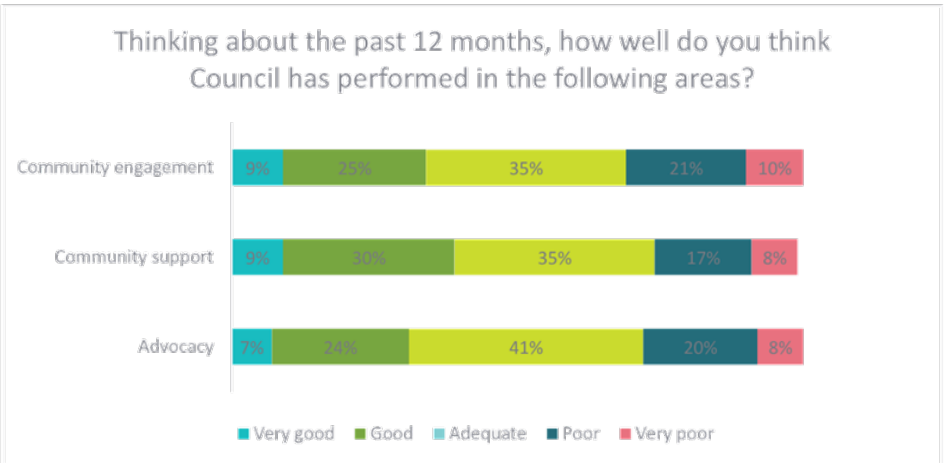
A total of 92 participants (41%) provided further comments about their preferred communication methods. Common suggestions included:

- *Home visits*
- *Phone calls for issues that will affect residents directly*
- *Face-to-face engagement at community events, markets and shopping centres*
- *SMS/ text message*

Advocacy, community support and community engagement

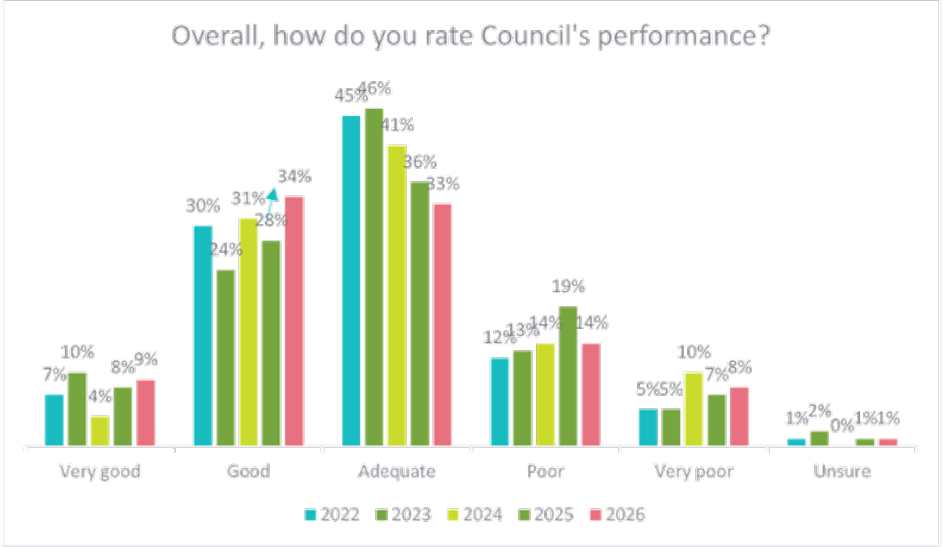
To understand community perceptions of Council's performance, respondents were asked to rate how well they believed Council had performed over the previous 12 months in the areas of advocacy, community support and community engagement.

Across all 3 areas, respondents most commonly rated Council's performance as adequate. Community support received the most favourable ratings overall, while community engagement attracted the highest proportion of poor and very poor ratings.

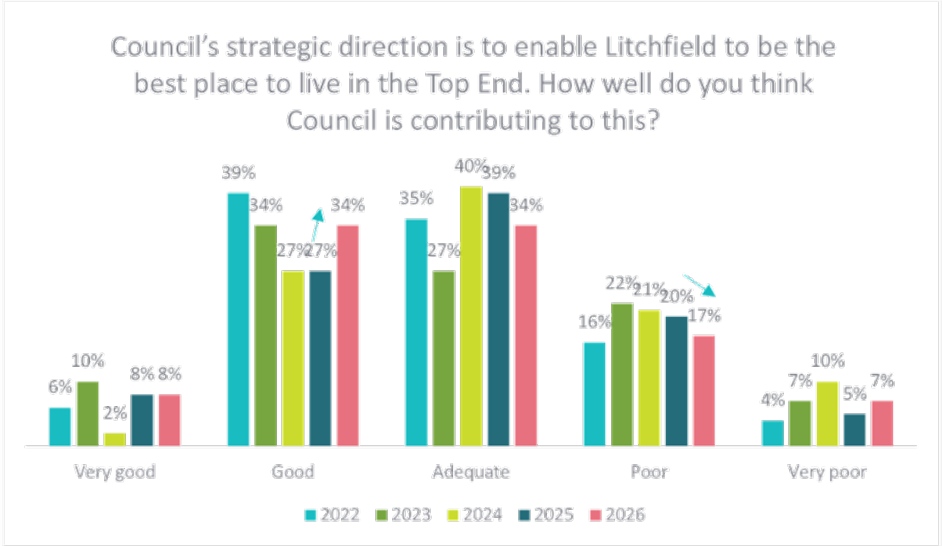


Overall Council performance

When asked about Council's overall performance, good was the most commonly selected rating in 2026 (34%), followed closely by adequate (33%). Combined, 43% of participants provided a positive rating of very good or good, representing the highest positive rating recorded in 5 years.



Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. Participants were asked to provide how well they think Council is contributing to this on a scale of very good to very poor. In 2026, 68% of respondents rated Council's contribution as good (34%) or adequate (34%), while 8% rated it very good. Positive ratings improved compared to 2024 and 2025, while negative ratings declined.



Newsletter

Majority of respondents are interested in receiving a community newsletter (68%), with 23% answering no and the remaining 9% unsure. When asked how often participants would like to receive a newsletter, 44% responded with monthly, following 29% quarterly, 17% bi-monthly and 10% fortnightly.

Email was the clear preferred method for receiving the newsletter, ranked first by 75% of respondents. Direct mail was the second most preferred option (21%), while the website was the least preferred, with 58% of respondents ranking it last.

The top 5 content areas of greatest interest to respondents, each selected by more than 70% were: projects that may affect them (83%), infrastructure – regular and scheduled work programs and road works (81%), community events (76%), projects that may not affect you but may be of interest (75%) and waste and recycling (71%).

Respondents that selected "other" suggested the following topics:

- *DCA developments in the Shire*
- *Overall general updates*
- *Road maintenance and repairs, west season repairs*
- *Positive accolade/s each newsletter for people doing good in our community – ask for submissions.*

Of the survey participants, 179 people provided their email address to register for Litchfield Council's newsletter.

Refer to Appendix A for the full survey data.

Analysis

The following key themes emerged throughout the survey and are summarised below.

Overall Council performance

- Community perceptions of Council improved in 2026, with good becoming the most common rating for Council's overall performance. Positive ratings of good or very good reached their highest level across the 5 year comparison.

Priorities consistent over time

- Road maintenance and drainage continued to be participants' highest priority. While road maintenance was identified as the most important Council service, it also received the second highest proportion of poor ratings (12%), highlighting an opportunity for improvement. Waste transfer stations and weed management also remained high priorities.

Recreation reserves

- Use of recreation reserves has declined over the 5 year comparison, with more participants reporting they had not visited a reserve in the past year. Positive ratings of reserve maintenance also declined.

Communication

- Participants indicated they want more regular communication from Council, with strong support for a community newsletter and updates delivered through multiple channels including email, social media and face-to-face engagement. Greater visibility of Councillors in the community was also a recurring comment.

Advocacy, community support and engagement

- Advocacy, community support and community engagement were most commonly rated as adequate, indicating opportunities to improve community perceptions in this area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and outcomes of the 2026 Litchfield Community Survey, the following recommendations are suggested to boost participation and ensure survey security in future community surveys:

- continue to provide hard copy surveys in all community stalls
- continue to utilise the existing Litchfield Council mailing list
- distribute survey postcards with a link to the survey during Council events
- include more youth-centred questions (i.e. interest in Council's youth events)
- consider survey security features and bot detection programs such as Recaptcha to minimise disruptions
- continue to incentivise the survey
- close the feedback loop and clearly communicate how community feedback from the survey has contributed to specific Council decisions or activities.

Appendices

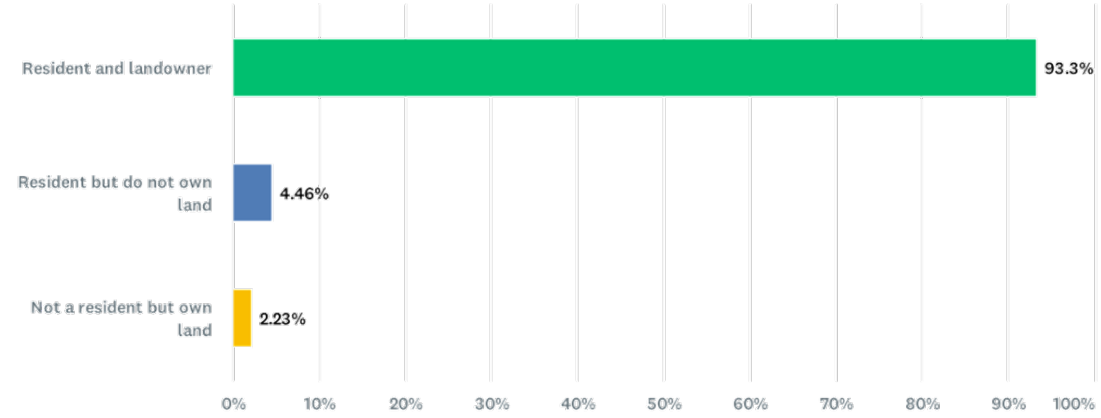
Appendix A – Raw survey data
Appendix B – Incomplete hard copy survey responses
Appendix C – Raw survey data containing fraudulent responses

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

APPENDIX A

Q1 224 responses

Please select the statement that best describes you:

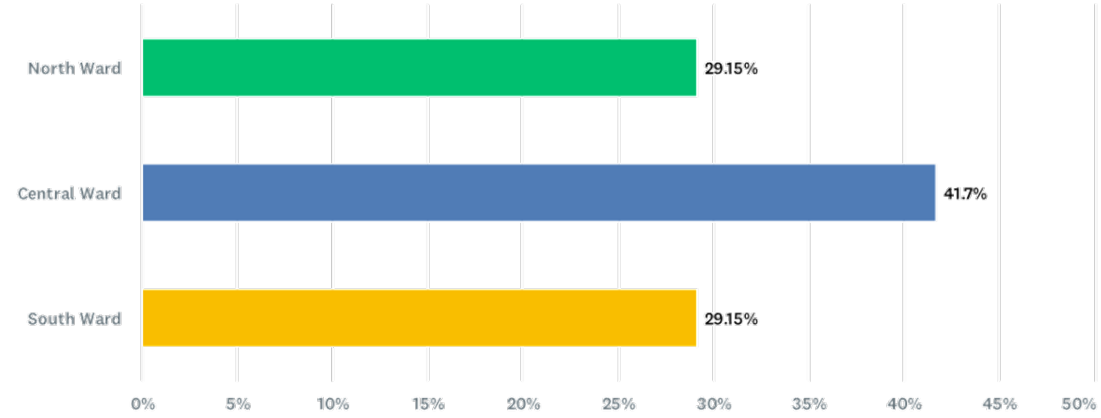


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Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q2 223 responses

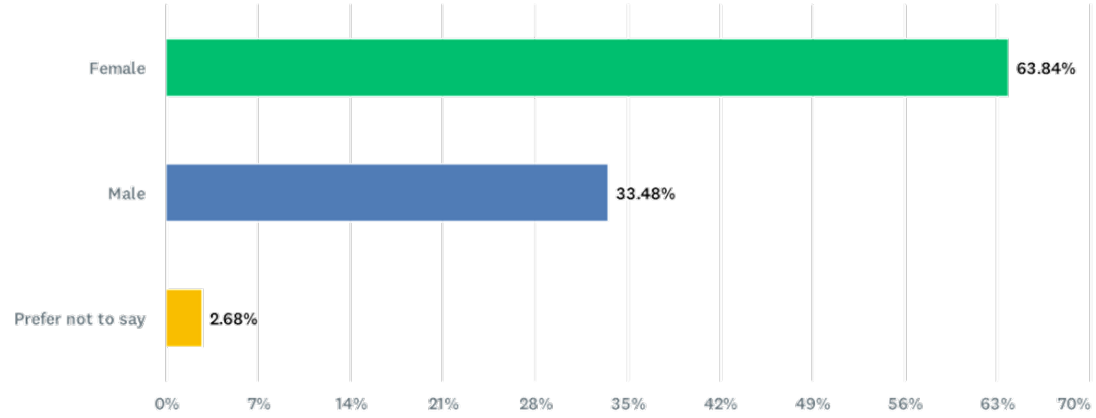
Which ward do you live or own land in? Find your ward here: Litchfield Ward Map



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q3 224 responses

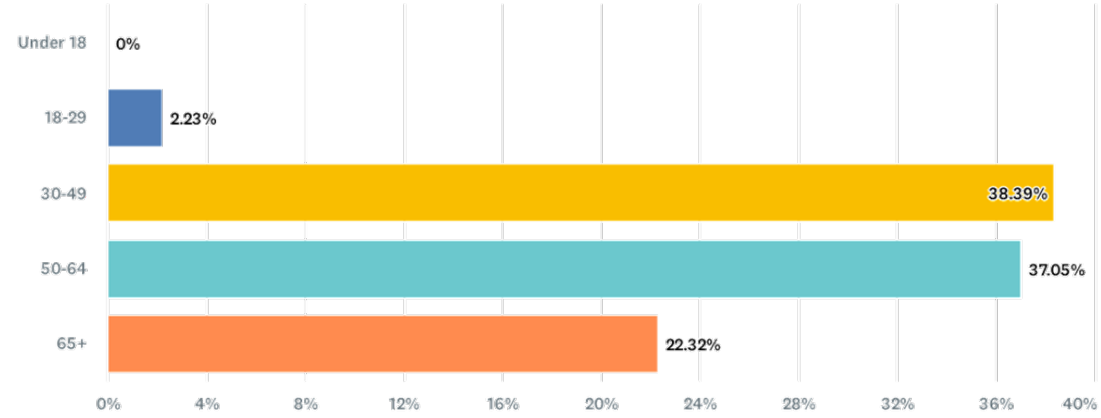
What is your gender?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q4 224 responses

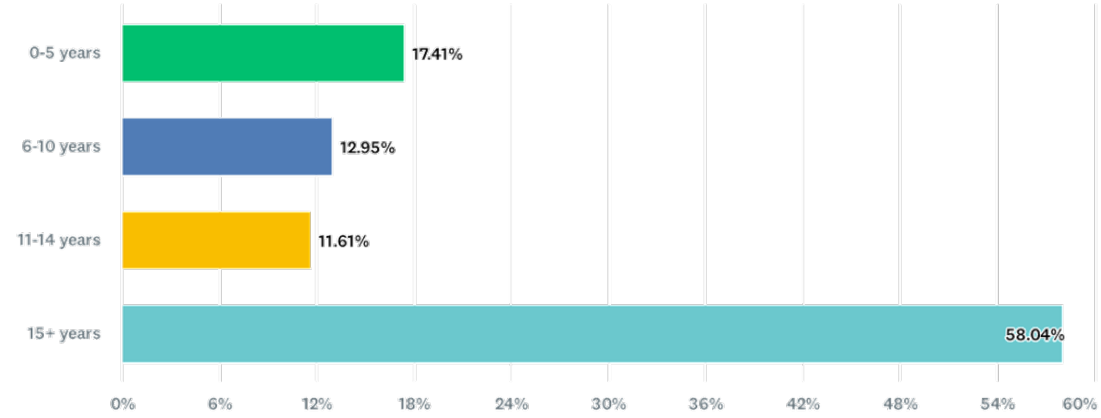
What is your age range?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q5 224 responses

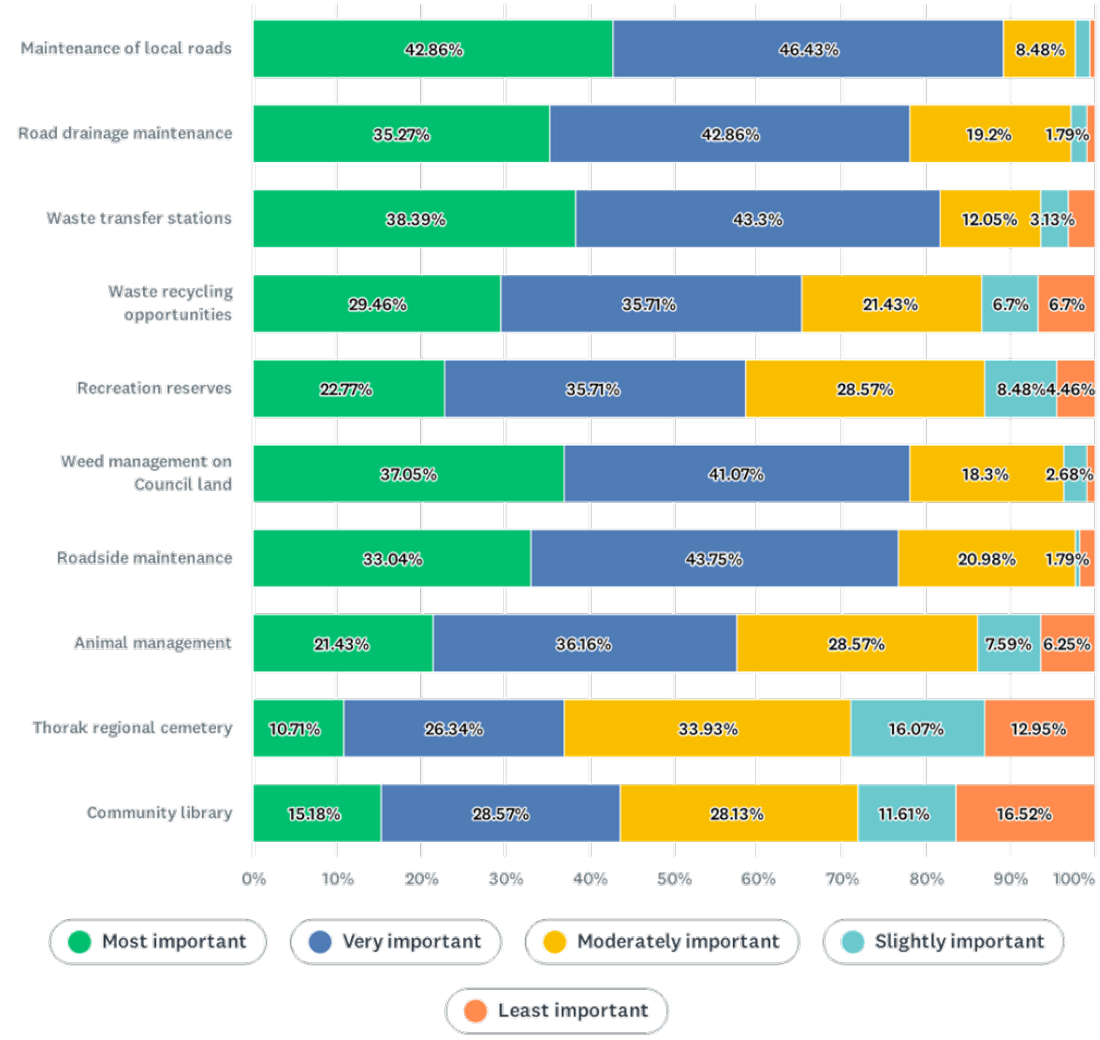
How long have you lived in the Litchfield Municipality?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q6 224 responses

How important to you are the following services in your area?



	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important	Total
Maintenance of local roads	42.86% 96	46.43% 104	8.48% 19	1.79% 4	0.45% 1	224
						2240

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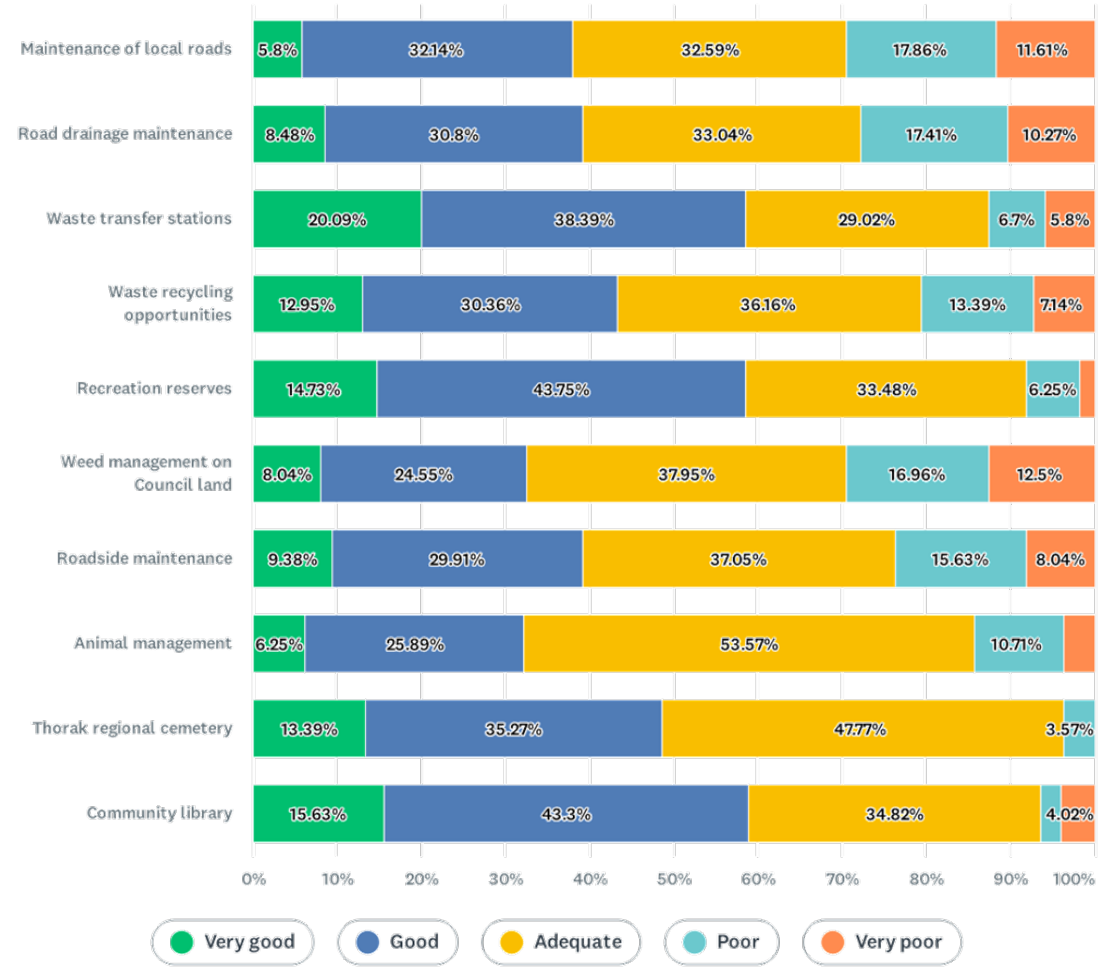
Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important	Total
Road drainage maintenance	35.27% 79	42.86% 96	19.20% 43	1.79% 4	0.89% 2	224
Waste transfer stations	38.39% 86	43.30% 97	12.05% 27	3.13% 7	3.13% 7	224
Waste recycling opportunities	29.46% 66	35.71% 80	21.43% 48	6.70% 15	6.70% 15	224
Recreation reserves	22.77% 51	35.71% 80	28.57% 64	8.48% 19	4.46% 10	224
Weed management on Council land	37.05% 83	41.07% 92	18.30% 41	2.68% 6	0.89% 2	224
Roadside maintenance	33.04% 74	43.75% 98	20.98% 47	0.45% 1	1.79% 4	224
Animal management	21.43% 48	36.16% 81	28.57% 64	7.59% 17	6.25% 14	224
Thorak regional cemetery	10.71% 24	26.34% 59	33.93% 76	16.07% 36	12.95% 29	224
Community library	15.18% 34	28.57% 64	28.13% 63	11.61% 26	16.52% 37	224
						2240

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q7 224 responses

How do you rate Council's performance in the delivery and management of the following areas?



	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Total
Maintenance of local roads	5.80% 13	32.14% 72	32.59% 73	17.86% 40	11.61% 26	224
						2240

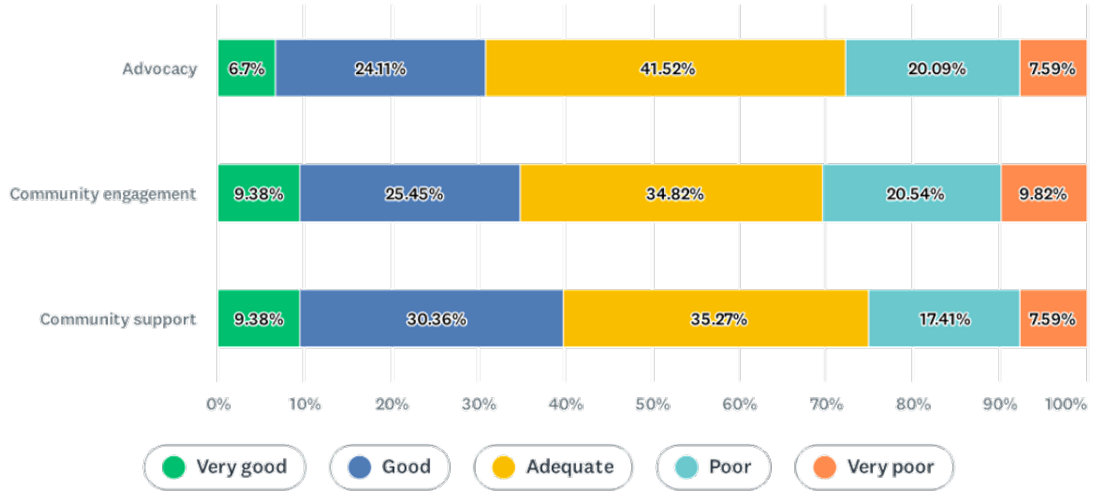
Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Total
Road drainage maintenance	8.48% 19	30.80% 69	33.04% 74	17.41% 39	10.27% 23	224
Waste transfer stations	20.09% 45	38.39% 86	29.02% 65	6.70% 15	5.80% 13	224
Waste recycling opportunities	12.95% 29	30.36% 68	36.16% 81	13.39% 30	7.14% 16	224
Recreation reserves	14.73% 33	43.75% 98	33.48% 75	6.25% 14	1.79% 4	224
Weed management on Council land	8.04% 18	24.55% 55	37.95% 85	16.96% 38	12.50% 28	224
Roadside maintenance	9.38% 21	29.91% 67	37.05% 83	15.63% 35	8.04% 18	224
Animal management	6.25% 14	25.89% 58	53.57% 120	10.71% 24	3.57% 8	224
Thorak regional cemetery	13.39% 30	35.27% 79	47.77% 107	3.57% 8	0% 0	224
Community library	15.63% 35	43.30% 97	34.82% 78	2.23% 5	4.02% 9	224
						2240

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q8 224 responses

Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

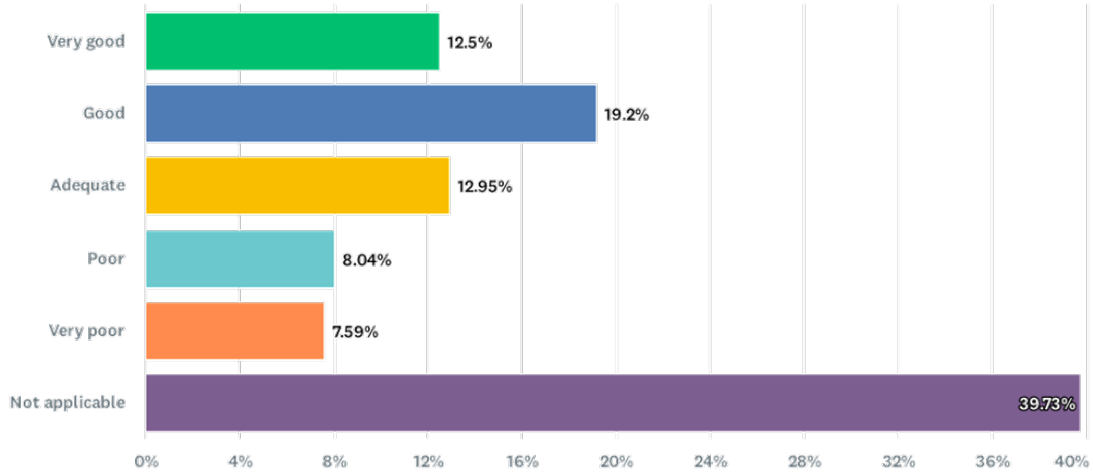


	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Total
Advocacy	6.70% 15	24.11% 54	41.52% 93	20.09% 45	7.59% 17	224
Community engagement	9.38% 21	25.45% 57	34.82% 78	20.54% 46	9.82% 22	224
Community support	9.38% 21	30.36% 68	35.27% 79	17.41% 39	7.59% 17	224
						672

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q9 224 responses

Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

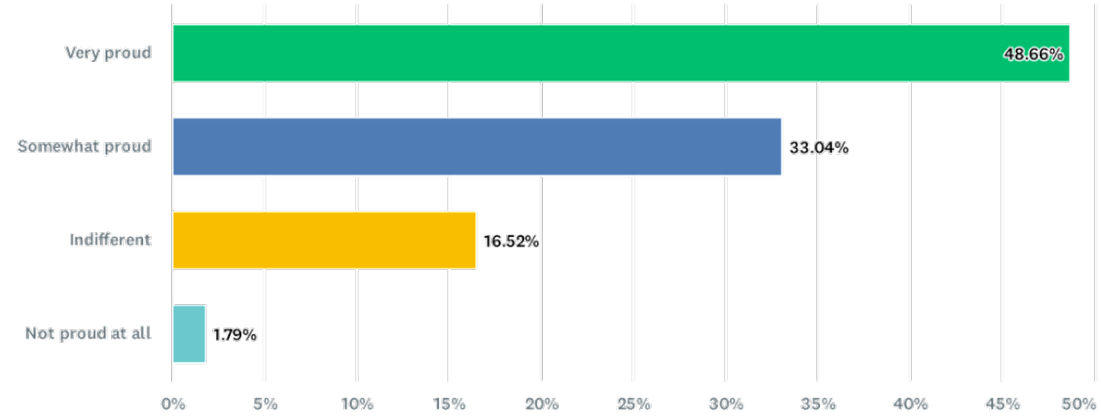


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Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q10 224 responses

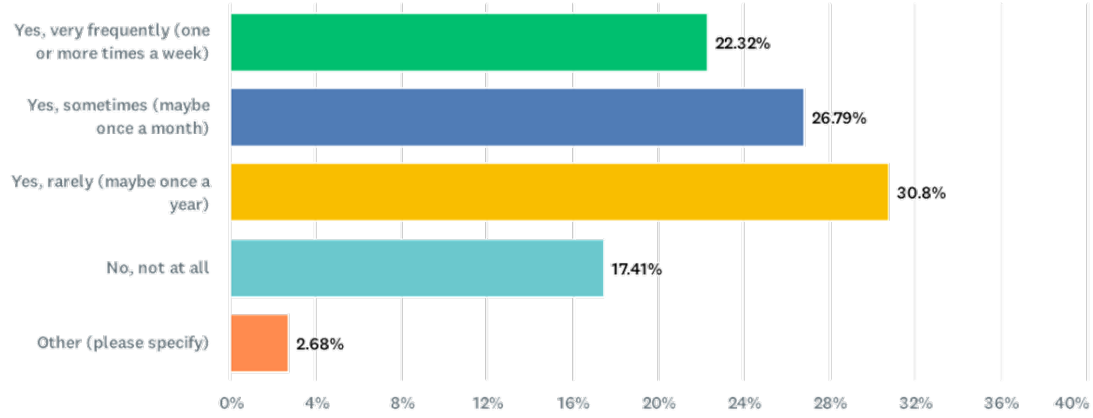
How proud are you to live in the Litchfield region?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q11 224 responses

Do you use the recreation reserves in your area and how frequently?(There are currently 9 recreation reserves in the Litchfield region with a range of facilities; Berry Springs, Freds Pass, Howard Park (not the Nature Park with the water pools), Humpty Doo, Knuckey Lagoon, Livingstone, McMinns Lagoon, Mira Square and Gregg Park)

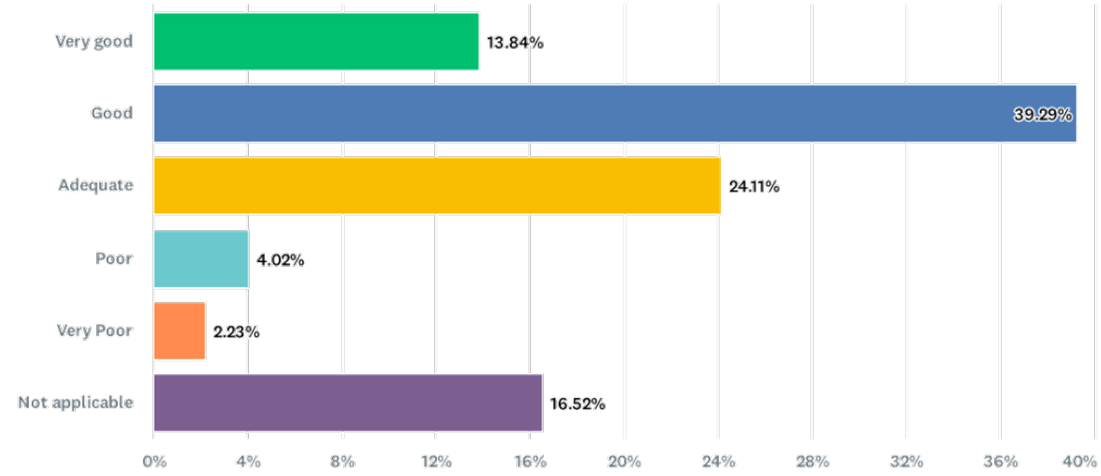


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Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q12 224 responses

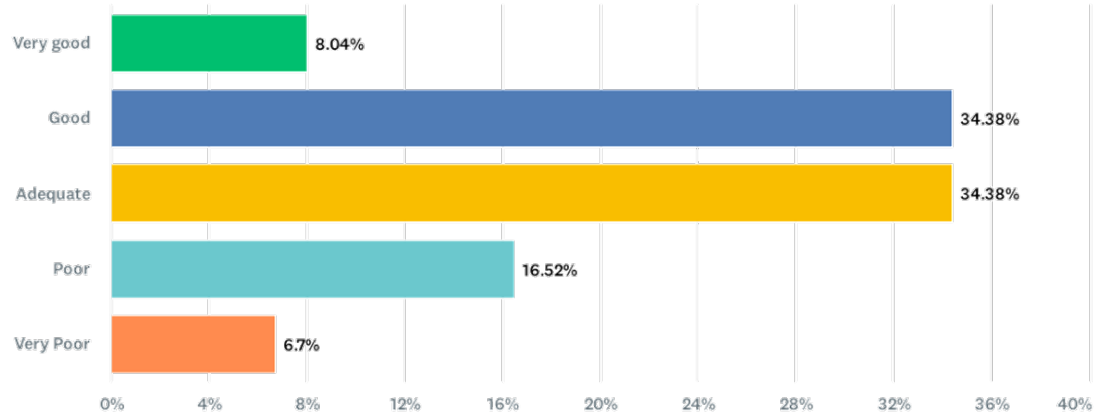
If you answered yes, how do you rate the recreation reserves?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q13 224 responses

Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. How well do you think Council is contributing to this?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

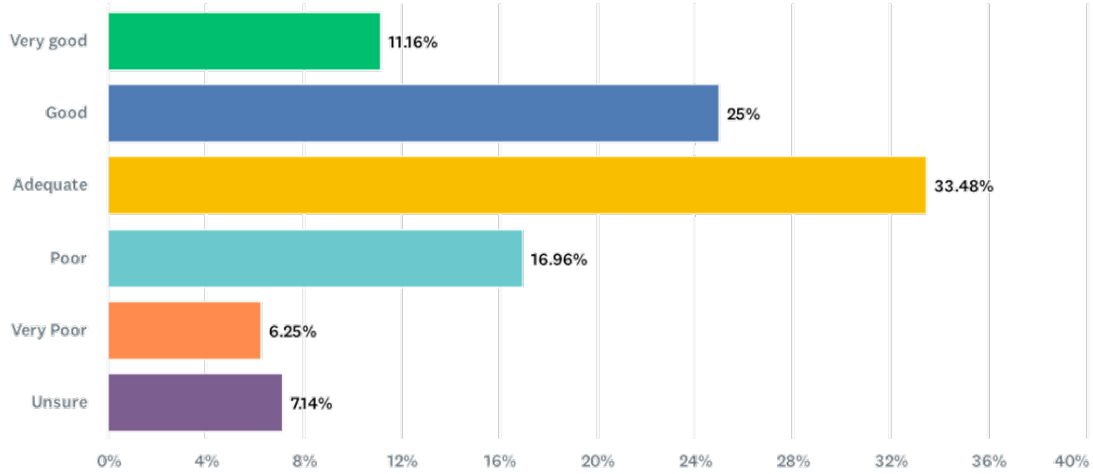
Q14 What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

Answered: 223 Skipped: 1

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q15 224 responses

Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?



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Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q16 How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

Answered: 223 Skipped: 1

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q17 224 responses

What is your preferred method of communication? (Rank your preference from 1 to 6, with 1 being most preferred and 6 being least preferred.)



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

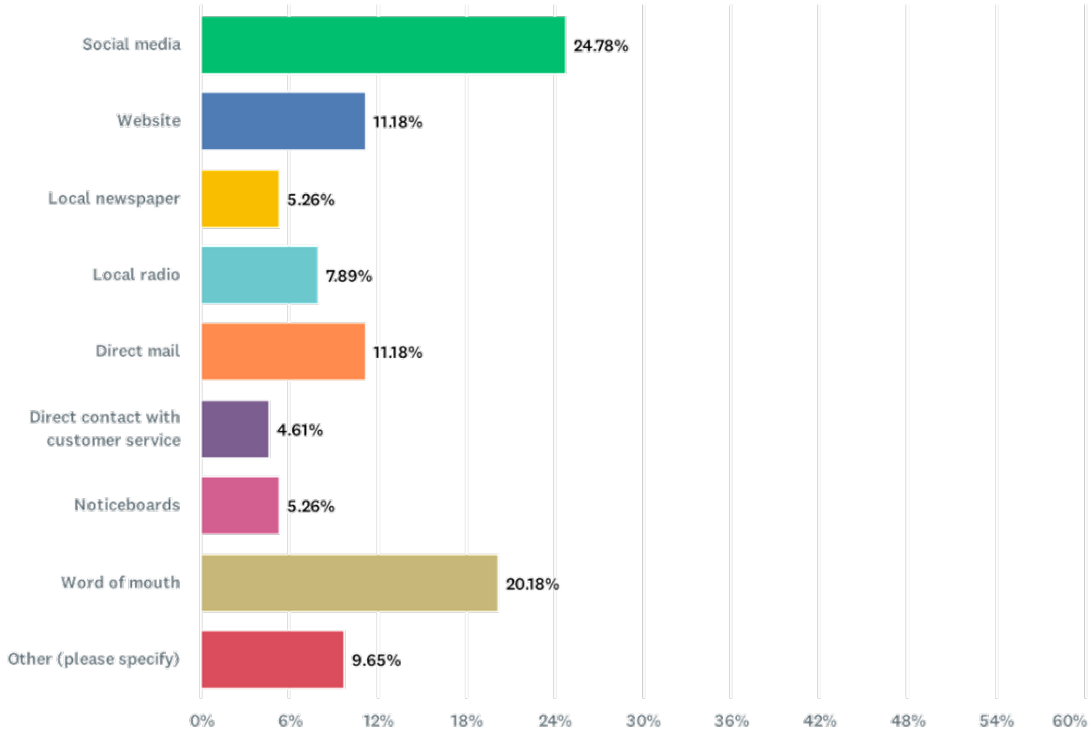
Q18 Do you have other preferred methods of communication? If you do, what are they?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 132

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q19 224 responses

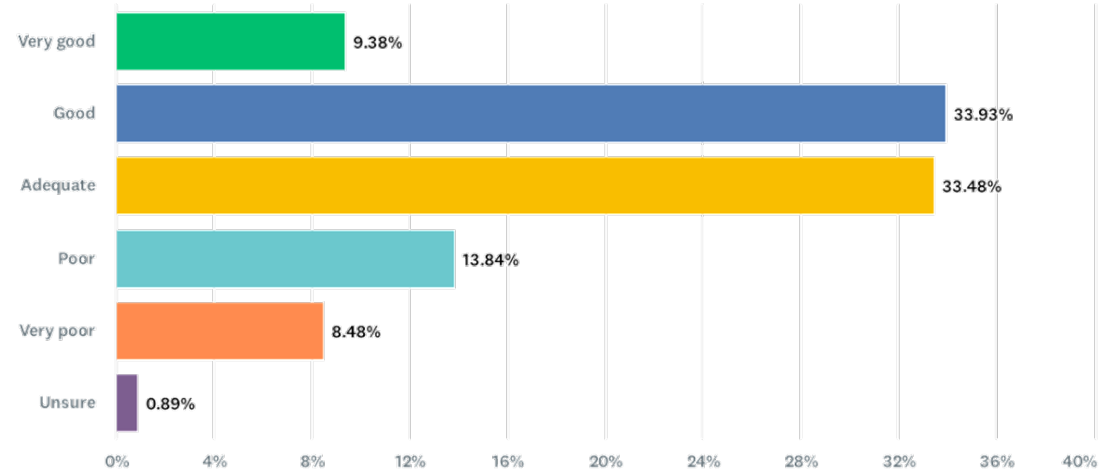
Where do you currently receive information about Council's activities? Tick all that apply:



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q20 224 responses

Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

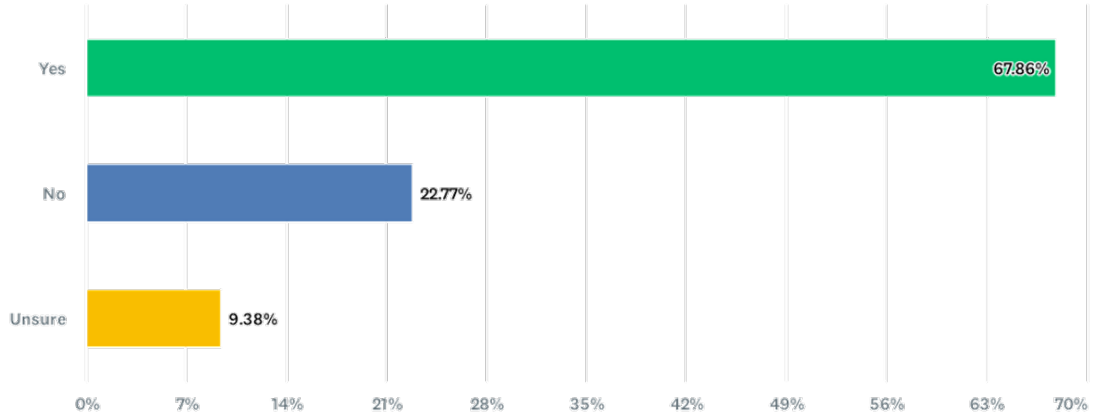


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Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q21 224 responses

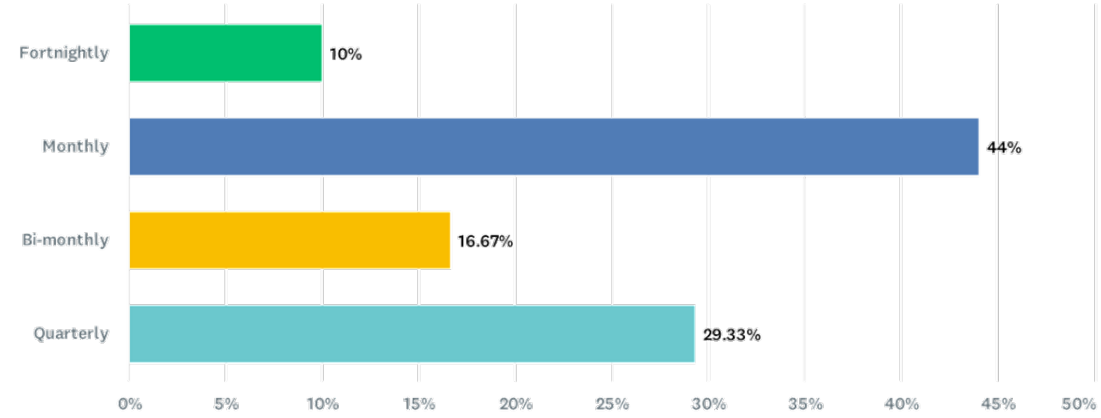
Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q22 150 responses

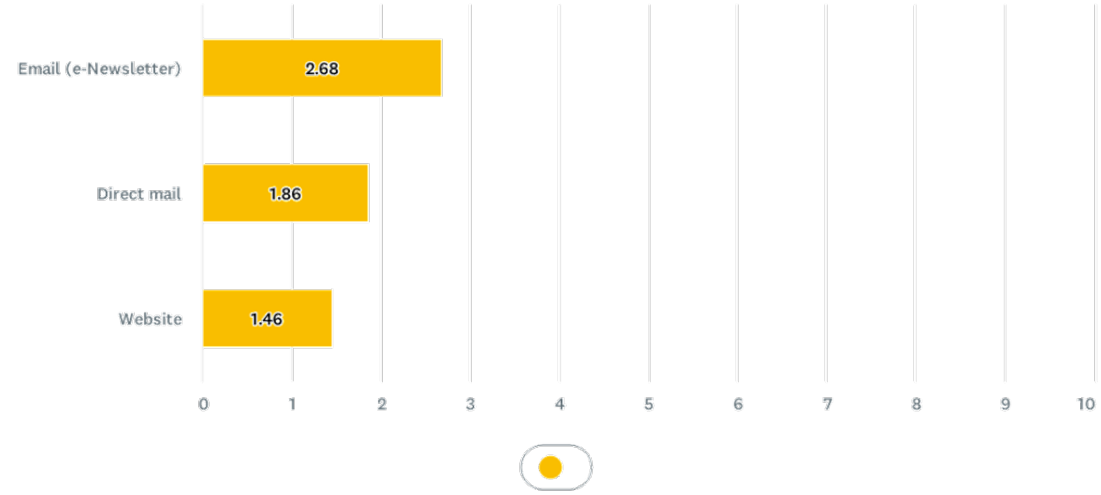
If yes, how often would you like to receive a community newsletter?



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q23 150 responses

How would you like to receive the newsletter? (Rank your preference from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least preferred option.)

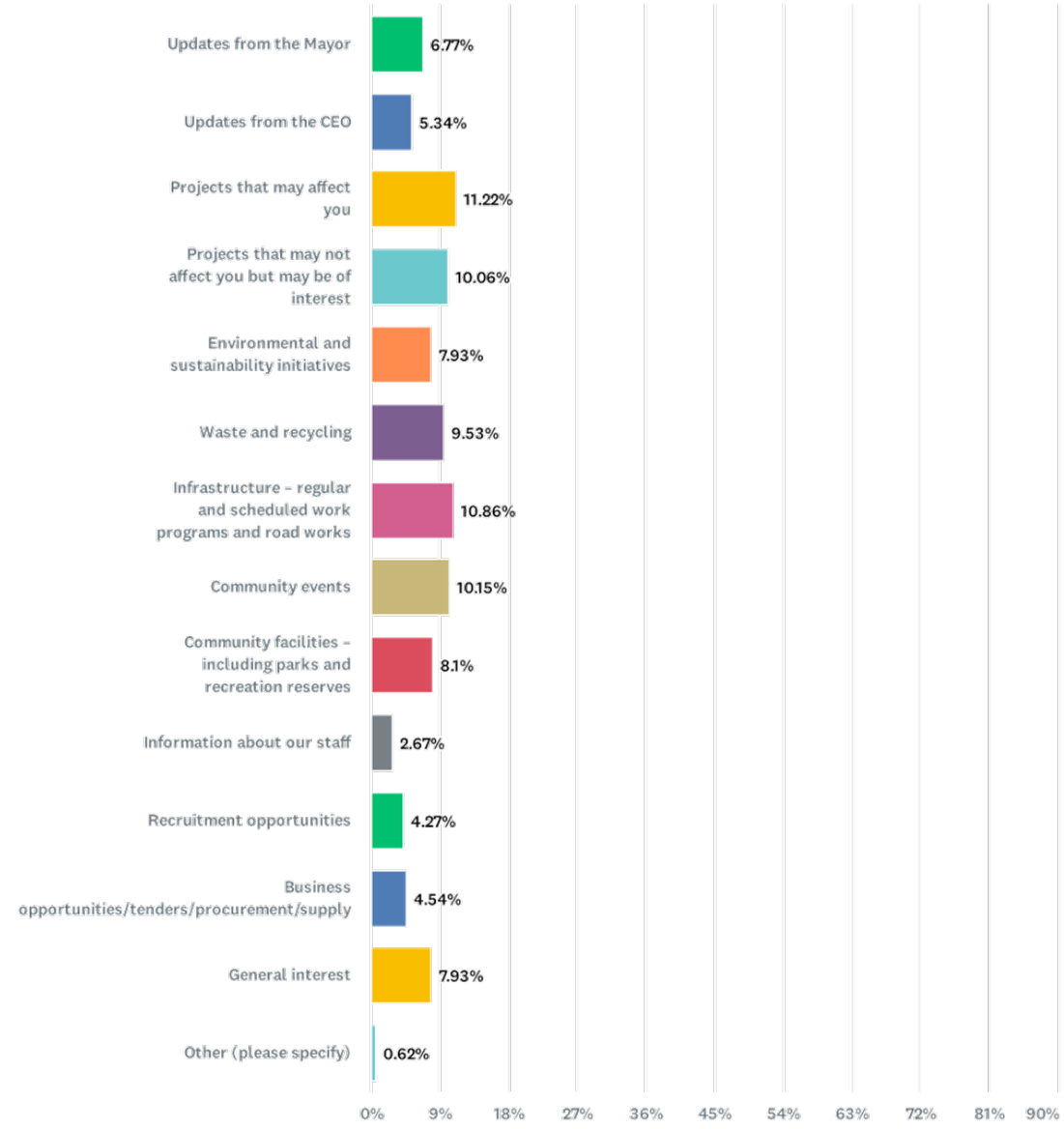


	1	2	3	Total	Weighted ...
Email (e-Newsletter)	74.67% 112	18.67% 28	6.67% 10	150	2.68
Direct mail	20.81% 31	44.30% 66	34.90% 52	149	1.86
Website	4.70% 7	36.91% 55	58.39% 87	149	1.46
				448	**2.00**

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q24 151 responses

What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.



Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Q25 Please include your contact details to register for Litchfield Council's newsletter and to go into the draw to win one of 10 $100 gift cards.

Answered: 182 Skipped: 42

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	100.00%	182
Phone	85.71%	156
Email	98.35%	179

APPENDIX B

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

Litchfield Council wants to hear from you. Each year, our Annual Community Survey gives residents the opportunity to share what they value most about living in the Litchfield region, the challenges they see and where they believe Council can improve.

Your feedback helps shape Council's future planning, services, projects and priorities to ensure we continue building a connected, vibrant and sustainable community for everyone.

All survey responses are confidential. If you would like to go into the draw to win one of 10 $100 gift cards, simply provide your contact details at the end of the survey.

We encourage all residents to take part, have their say and help shape the future of Litchfield - keeping it one of the best places to live in the Top End.

* 1. Please select the statement that best describes you:

- ◯ Resident and landowner
- ☑ Resident but do not own land
- ◯ Not a resident but own land

* 6. How important to you are the following services in your area?

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important
Maintenance of local roads	○	✓	○	○	○
Road drainage maintenance	○	○	✓	○	○
Waste transfer stations	○	○	✓	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	○	○	✓	○	○
Recreation reserves	○	✓	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	○	○	✓	○	○
Roadside maintenance	○	✓	○	○	○
Animal management	○	○	✓	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	○	✓	○	○	○
Community library	✓	○	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy	○	○	☑	○	○
Community support	○	○	☑	○	○
Community engagement	○	☑	○	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ☑ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

* 10. How proud are you to live in the Litchfield region?

- ○ Very proud
- ☑ Somewhat proud
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

* 13. Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. How well do you think Council is contributing to this?

- ◯ Very good
- ☑ Good
- ◯ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor

* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

Safe place to live
Public transport

* 15. Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?

- ◯ Very good
- ◯ Good
- ☑ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor
- ◯ Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

- [ ] Direct mail
- [x] Direct contact with customer service
- [ ] Noticeboards
- [ ] Word of mouth
- [ ] Other (please specify)

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ◉ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Unsure

Next

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

* 22. If yes, how often would you like to receive a community newsletter?

- ○ Fortnightly
- ○ Monthly
- ○ Bi-monthly
- ✓ Quarterly

* 23. How would you like to receive the newsletter? (Rank your preference from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least preferred option.)

✓	Email (e-Newsletter)
☐	Direct mail
☐	Website

* 24. What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

- ☑ Updates from the Mayor
- ☑ Updates from the CEO
- ☑ Projects that may affect you
- ☑ Projects that may not affect you but may be of interest
- ☑ Environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ☑ Waste and recycling

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

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Your feedback helps shape Council's future planning, services, projects and priorities to ensure we continue building a connected, vibrant and sustainable community for everyone.

All survey responses are confidential. If you would like to go into the draw to win one of 10 $100 gift cards, simply provide your contact details at the end of the survey.

We encourage all residents to take part, have their say and help shape the future of Litchfield - keeping it one of the best places to live in the Top End.

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- ☑ Resident and landowner
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* 6. How important to you are the following services in your area?

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important
Maintenance of local roads	✓	○	○	○	○
Road drainage maintenance	✓	○	○	○	○
Waste transfer stations	✓	○	○	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	✓	○	○	○	○
Recreation reserves	○	✓	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	✓	○	○	○	○
Roadside maintenance	✓	○	○	○	○
Animal management	○	✓	○	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	✓	○	○	○	○
Community library	✓	○	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy	○	☑	○	○	○
Community support	○	☑	○	○	○
Community engagement	☑	○	○	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ☑ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

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- ☑ Very proud
- ○ Somewhat proud
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

* 13. Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. How well do you think Council is contributing to this?

- [x] Very good
- [ ] Good
- [ ] Adequate
- [ ] Poor
- [ ] Very Poor

* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

* 15. Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?

- [ ] Very good
- [x] Good
- [ ] Adequate
- [ ] Poor
- [ ] Very Poor
- [ ] Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

- [ ] Direct mail
- [x] Direct contact with customer service
- [ ] Noticeboards
- [ ] Word of mouth
- [ ] Other (please specify)

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

- (x) Very good
- ( ) Good
- ( ) Adequate
- ( ) Poor
- ( ) Very poor
- ( ) Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

- (x) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Unsure

Next

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

* 22. If yes, how often would you like to receive a community newsletter?

- ○ Fortnightly
- ○ Monthly
- ○ Bi-monthly
- ☑ Quarterly

* 23. How would you like to receive the newsletter? (Rank your preference from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least preferred option.)

1	Email (e-Newsletter)
2	Direct mail
3	Website

* 24. What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Updates from the Mayor
- ☐ Updates from the CEO
- ☑ Projects that may affect you
- ☑ Projects that may not affect you but may be of interest
- ☑ Environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ☑ Waste and recycling

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

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* 1. Please select the statement that best describes you:

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* 6. How important to you are the following services in your area?

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important
Maintenance of local roads	○	✓	○	○	○
Road drainage maintenance	○	✓	○	○	○
Waste transfer stations	○	✓	○	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	✓	○	○	○	○
Recreation reserves	○	✓	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	✓	○	○	○	○
Roadside maintenance	○	✓	○	○	○
Animal management	○	✓	○	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	○	✓	○	○	○
Community library	✓	○	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy ?	○	○	○	○	○
Community support	very ○ little	○ evidence	⊙ seen ⊙.		○
Community engagement	○	○	✓	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

front office?
email communication?
councillors?

* 10. How proud are you to live in the Litchfield region?

- ○ Very proud
- ○ Somewhat ~~proud~~ frustrated.
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

* 13. Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. How well do you think Council is contributing to this?

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ☑ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very Poor

* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

Better connectivity between residents & local service providers.

* 15. Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very Poor
- ☑ Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community? Promote access to the ½ hour before meetings, to speak to councillors.

☐ Direct mail emailed mayoral newsletter monthly or quarterly

☐ Direct contact with customer service

☑ Noticeboards

☐ Word of mouth

☑ Other (please specify)

Councillors interact more with community

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

◯ Very good

◯ Good

◉ Adequate

◯ Poor

◯ Very poor

◯ Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

◉ Yes

◯ No

◯ Unsure

Next

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

* 22. If yes, how often would you like to receive a community newsletter?

- ○ Fortnightly
- ○ Monthly
- ○ Bi-monthly
- ✓ Quarterly

* 23. How would you like to receive the newsletter? (Rank your preference from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least preferred option.)

1 ☑	Email (e-Newsletter)
2	Direct mail
3	Website

* 24. What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

- ☑ Updates from the Mayor
- ☑ Updates from the CEO
- ☑ Projects that may affect you
- ☑ Projects that may not affect you but may be of interest
- ✓ ☑ Environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ✓ ☑ Waste and recycling

LITCHFIELD COUNCIL

Litchfield Council Community Survey 2026

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Your feedback helps shape Council's future planning, services, projects and priorities to ensure we continue building a connected, vibrant and sustainable community for everyone.

All survey responses are confidential. If you would like to go into the draw to win one of 10 $100 gift cards, simply provide your contact details at the end of the survey.

We encourage all residents to take part, have their say and help shape the future of Litchfield - keeping it one of the best places to live in the Top End.

* 1. Please select the statement that best describes you:

- ☑ Resident and landowner
- ○ Resident but do not own land
- ○ Not a resident but own land

* 6. How important to you are the following services in your area?

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important
Maintenance of local roads	☑	○	○	○	○
Road drainage maintenance	○	☑	○	○	○
Waste transfer stations	○	○	○	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	○	☑	○	○	○
Recreation reserves	○	○	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	○	○	○	○	○
Roadside maintenance	○	☑	○	○	○
Animal management	○	○	○	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	○	○	○	○	○
Community library	○	☑	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy	○	○	☑	○	○
Community support	○	○	☑	○	○
Community engagement	○	○	○	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

* 10. How proud are you to live in the Litchfield region?

- ☑ Very proud
- ○ Somewhat proud
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

* 13. Council's strategic direction is to enable Litchfield to be the best place to live in the Top End. How well do you think Council is contributing to this?

- ◯ Very good
- ◯ Good
- ◉ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor

* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

* 15. Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?

- ◯ Very good
- ◉ Good
- ◯ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor
- ◯ Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

- [x] Direct mail
- [ ] Direct contact with customer service
- [ ] Noticeboards
- [ ] Word of mouth
- [ ] Other (please specify)

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

- ○ Very good
- ◉ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Unsure

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- ◉ Monthly
- ○ Bi-monthly
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* 23. How would you like to receive the newsletter? (Rank your preference from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least preferred option.)

☐	Email (e-Newsletter)
☑	Direct mail
☐	Website

* 24. What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

- ☑ Updates from the Mayor
- ☐ Updates from the CEO
- ☑ Projects that may affect you
- ☑ Projects that may not affect you but may be of interest
- ☐ Environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ☑ Waste and recycling

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* 6. How important to you are the following services in your area?

	Most important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Least important
Maintenance of local roads	✓	○	○	○	○
Road drainage maintenance	✓	○	○	○	○
Waste transfer stations	✓	○	○	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	✓	○	○	○	○
Recreation reserves	✓	○	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	✓	○	○	○	○
Roadside maintenance	✓	○	○	○	○
Animal management	✓	○	○	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	○	✓	○	○	○
Community library	✓	○	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy	○	✓	○	○	○
Community support	○	✓	○	○	○
Community engagement	○	✓	○	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ✓ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

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- ○ Very proud
- ✓ Somewhat proud
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

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- ◯ Very good
- ⊘ Good
- ◯ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor

* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

Peace and quiet

* 15. Council aims to keep residents up to date with local issues, projects and events through our website, social media channels, and noticeboards. How well do you think Council is doing this?

- ◯ Very good
- ⊘ Good
- ◯ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor
- ◯ Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

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☐ Direct contact with customer service

☑ Noticeboards

☐ Word of mouth

☐ Other (please specify)

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

◯ Very good

⊘ Good

◯ Adequate

◯ Poor

◯ Very poor

◯ Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

⊘ Yes

◯ No

◯ Unsure

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- ☑ Updates from the CEO
- ☑ Projects that may affect you
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Waste transfer stations	○	○	○	○	○
Waste recycling opportunities	○	✓	○	○	○
Recreation reserves	○	○	○	○	○
Weed management on Council land	○	○	○	○	○
Roadside maintenance	○	✓	○	○	○
Animal management	○	○	○	○	○
Thorak regional cemetery	○	○	○	○	○
Community library	○	✓	○	○	○

* 8. Thinking about the past 12 months, how well do you think Council has performed in the following areas?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Advocacy	○	○	✓	○	○
Community support	○	○	✓	○	○
Community engagement	○	○	○	○	○

* 9. Have you contacted Council in the past 6 months? If yes, please rate your service:

- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Not applicable

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- ○ Somewhat proud
- ○ Indifferent
- ○ Not proud at all

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- ◯ Very good
- ◯ Good
- ◯ Adequate
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* 14. What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?

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- ◯ Very good
- ◯ Good
- ◯ Adequate
- ◯ Poor
- ◯ Very Poor
- ◯ Unsure

* 16. How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?

- [x] Direct mail
- [ ] Direct contact with customer service
- [ ] Noticeboards
- [ ] Word of mouth
- [ ] Other (please specify)

* 20. Overall, how do you rate Council's performance?

- ○ Very good
- ◉ Good
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor
- ○ Unsure

* 21. Would you be interested in receiving a community newsletter from Litchfield Council?

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- ○ No
- ○ Unsure

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✓	Direct mail
☐	Website

* 24. What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

- ✓ Updates from the Mayor
- ✓ Updates from the CEO
- ✓ Projects that may affect you
- ✓ Projects that may not affect you but may be of interest
- ☐ Environmental and sustainability initiatives
- ☐ Waste and recycling

Question 11	
Do you use the recreation reserves in your area and how frequently?(There are currently 9 recreation reserves in the Litchfield region with a range of facilities; Berry Springs, Freds Pass, Howard Park (not the Nature Park with the water pools), Humpty Doo, Knuckey Lagoon, Livingstone, McMinns Lagoon, Mira Square and Gregg Park)	
Open Responses	
1	Regluar during sporting seasons
2	I dont use them but i value them very highly
3	But the option is there so that's the important part
4	Not much available for older kids
5	Less than once a year

Question 12	
If you answered yes, how do you rate the recreation reserves?	
Open Responses	
1	Put rubbish bins at the recreation reserves
2	Manage the gamba on the other side of the fence of the parks in drains and neighbouring land. The village green at Humtydoo is surrounds by Gamba and Mission Grass. It is a fire hazard and looks unsightly and detracts from the standard of the maintenance of the Council Reserves
3	swimming pool plz
4	McMinns Lagoon could use some investment to encourage and enhance recreational use. There is only a small window in the dry season where is it currently accessible.
5	keeping checks and balances
6	Adequate funding
7	The Beescreek road entrance needs to be removed and started again .
8	Not sure, only been to Berry springs. Keep it clean and keep the bums out.
9	Fred's pass carpark for markets
10	Fund them properly and give them space to breathe
11	Howard and Berry Srpings - water the grass. Howard Springs try mowing and flattening ground - dangerous, opening to you to potential damges.
12	We are growing in the area but we need council pick up for our residents bins.
13	NA
14	Mowed more regularly
15	Please do not demolish Lakeview Hall.. it's a great venue
16	Improve bike lanes and access but in a simple cost effective way, do not need endless guardrails to ride a bike safely (waste of council money).
17	food trucks on site in the dry season
18	Better access at Freds Pass entrance
19	N/A
20	Fred's pass reserve internal roads and market carpark need to be sealed
21	More bins at berry springs
22	track maintenance and weed management
23	More night lights at Fred's pasd
24	Rubbish, left for days broken glass in carpark, and on paths. Drunk unruly locals
25	Bird and native plant lists
26	give freds pass more money
27	Better maintenance of facilities
28	More investment required to update/upgrade and diversity facilities.
29	Less public servants
30	Needs more updated playgrounds and bike paths, something for the kids
31	Boardwalk around McMinns lagoon to make it accessible year round
32	Rubbish removal
33	take over full management of fred's va pass reserv, the reserve management board is invisible and little or no community engagement

34	regarding q7 - as there was no space for general comments - there should have been a 'not applicable' option. I don't use with recreation reserves, library or cemetery and was forced to rate them so i could submit the survey, which is giving a false result. I would have selected not applicable for those three.
35	Consider neighbouring properties, ie lighting, noise levels, traffic dust
36	Look to upgrade Litchfield soccer club lights possible grandstand. Litchfield now sport a men's and women's team both competitive in there respective divisions. With an upgrade of facilities and promotion we could potentially see more people wishing to play for our club. Additionally come down to a night game and watch the women and men play and you will see the potential this place has
37	Give them more funds as they are mostly reliant on volunteers
38	More ongoing maintenance. Freds Pass needs a lot of work starting with the dirt car park and water drainage in the wet season
39	na
40	Weed removal
41	Needs to be something more for older kids. Girraween area NEEDS a recreational area!! Playgrounds/skate park/water park/something like Leanyer Water Park!!!!!! An indoors at Coolalinga Central like Skallywags in Gateway/
42	Communicate with NTG to fix dangerous pot holes in Fred's pass, esp during wet as this reserve is widely used every Sat by huge sporting groups & market attendees. I've asked for this to be done for past 5 years.
43	More frequent litter patrols or cleanup
44	Make Humpty Doo hall usable during the day to anyone in area.
45	Plant more native trees. Encourage wild life.
46	Perhaps make Howard Springs main pool swimmable again like it used to
47	Humpty Doo - Clean toilets and fresh supply of toilet paper
48	Clean up places like Humpty Doo Village area especially youth abuse and at skate park.
49	Less horsey stuff. A POOL at FREDS PASS
50	More shade in car parks and generally

Question 14	
What do you think makes Litchfield the best place to live in the Top End and what could be improved?	
Open Responses	
1	This has changed over the years. Was once fairly laid back and easy going. It's a lot busier now, most people are in a hurry particularly on the roads. Lots of unregistered vehicle's, bike, quads etc on the roads and on Council's land.
2	Space to breathe. Friendly people.
3	NA
4	remoteness
5	The parks, reserves, the cleanliness Roads need more attention and it would be great to have a public pool
6	The rural lifestyle
7	The rural lifestyle that still has access to a good range of commercial businesses.
8	Community rural living Moving the library was a great move Waste pickup options? Drop off items at one place
9	The lifestyle, peace and quality of life. Better recycling options.
10	I like it the way it is rural
11	Love the rural feel of space.
12	H
13	Litchfield is a fantastic place to live because of its welcoming community, beautiful natural environment, and spacious properties. It offers the best of both worlds—a country feel with access to city amenities. The area also has a strong volunteer spirit and community pride. Looking ahead, I'd like to see more investment in community hubs, local markets, walking and cycling paths, and recreational facilities that encourage people to connect and stay active
14	Litchfield is an ideal place for families because it provides space for kids to play, a safe and friendly community, and easy access to nature. The larger properties allow people to enjoy a relaxed lifestyle without being too far from essential services. To make it even better, more playgrounds, sporting facilities, and family-friendly community events would help bring residents together. Additional childcare and healthcare services would also benefit the growing population.
15	Very quite and beautiful area
16	FIX HOPEWELL ROAd and DUDDELL Rd
17	Out of the rat race, locality and freedom of acreage.
18	Not part of the cities, improvement in bicycle, pedestrian paths
19	-
20	Rural life is a choice. We are happy to pay for peace and quiet, but when we feel we pay a fortune for nothing, it gets hard to appreciate anything the council does. Girraween Rd is FULL of potholes and poorly patched potholes. It is dry; fix it in preparation for the next wet. We need a tip. It has been 20 years, and I cannot believe the council has not resolved this yet. This needs to be addressed as i am sick of paying to just move rubbish. It needs to be disposed of within the council region. This needs to be a priority of the council.

21	Nice quiet place to live. Tighter control of machinery noise.
22	Better communication
23	space and freedom
24	Cox Penninsular Road now has more trucks/traffic due to mine opening again. The road needs better maintenance, lots of potholes after wet season.
25	Not sure, I just live here. I think doing the job that you're supposed to do, providing services, upkeep of the roads, that sort of thing and staying out of people's lives. The rest of Australia and the world is over-regulated. Let me live my life. I think this part of Australia is one of the few places where you're allowed to do that.
26	It's close to amazing top end attractions that are outdoors. More facilities could be improved
27	Nice for kids in the rural area
28	Quiet rural living and a good community
29	Roads are still damaged since the floods and Gamba everywhere. Council land is full of Gamba and the roads are f***Ed.
30	Litchfield offers spectacular waterfalls, bushland and abundant wildlife, spacious blocks and a relaxed rural lifestyle close to Darwin. Drawbacks: limited healthcare, retail and entertainment options, sparse public transport and patchy mobile/data coverage, fewer local jobs, and roads/vulnerable infrastructure during the wet season. Focused upgrades to services, connectivity and flood resilient roads would make it even better.
31	The location makes it great, over all I think you are doing a decent job. One thing that would make it better especially during tourist season is the bins. I see lots of locals using the road side bins for household rubbish and when the tourists are here they over flow and rubbish ends up everywhere. It looks bad and the animals get in and spread it every where too.
32	there are still potholes everywhere humpty doo that council has done nothing about for six months. The cyclone was in November.
33	Seal some roads instead of spending all the money on the library. Get out in the community and don't hide from rate payers aka Litchfield Show.
34	The people are good, the council operations are lacking, the lack of vision from council is concerning.
35	Location
36	Living on acreage, relaxed atmosphere, rural livung
37	Roads and rubbish
38	Good reserves and facilities
39	Do stuff to improve, don't waste so much time and effort in consulting and avoiding doing things. Stop trying to keep everyone happy, do what the majority want and require.
40	Road verge mowing
41	Low population. Keep the population low
42	Rural lifestyle is important. Safety is important. Children being able to ride their bike to and from school without safety concerns. The Howard Springs School Zone needs more attention - speeding through this area is often noted by myself and many others, this needs to be addressed. Walking paths along whitewood need attention.
43	Great space and reachable to all things
44	Freedom of movement (Haven't lived here long enuf)

45	Litchfield is a great place to live because it offers a peaceful lifestyle, beautiful natural surroundings, friendly communities, and easy access to both outdoor recreation and essential services. The area has a strong sense of community and is ideal for families and people who enjoy nature. Improvements could include better road maintenance, more public transport options, expanded healthcare services, improved mobile and internet coverage in some areas, additional recreational facilities for young people, and continued investment in parks, walking trails, and community events.
46	Litchfield is a great place to live because it offers a peaceful lifestyle, beautiful natural surroundings, friendly communities, and easy access to both outdoor recreation and essential services. The area has a strong sense of community and is ideal for families and people who enjoy nature. Improvements could include better road maintenance, more public transport options, expanded healthcare services, improved mobile and internet coverage in some areas, additional recreational facilities for young people, and continued investment in parks, walking trails, and community events.
47	That a two question in one LOL just saying
48	That rural blocks are at least 2 acres
49	The rural living, no more small blocks
50	The lifestyle. And the bigger blocks. Not living on top on another. Would be good to have a Local swimming pool to teach swimming to litchfield residents, not having to go into town.
51	Low density housing. Large blocks. Keep it rural.
52	The larger block sizes. Neighbours not in your pocket.
53	N/a
54	- Improved waste collection - Improved communications about proposed changes (not just facebook)
55	Continued rural lifestyle.. rural blocks not residential size blocks. Fred's Pass reserve is an awesome place to walk … we drive there daily so we don't get attacked by dogs.
56	Rural lifestyle. Keep advocating to stop suburban development in the rural area. Also stop or try to limit private landowners completely surrounding what should be community access to critical resources like Girraween lagoon and Howard River Floodplain.
57	.
58	the peace and quiet, conservation areas
59	low rates
60	Minimal interference from council. Homeowners are able to do as they please with their properties.
61	Fix the roads when people report them. Why do we have to email 10,000 times to get a road fixed.
62	If offers the benefits of rural/remote living with proximity to services. I think the services are excellent but I think we could be more strategic about town planning to protect the benefits/characteristics of rural life
63	lifestye
64	Neighbours are not close.
65	N/A
66	A public swimming pool would be good.

67	The people Community spirit Bike tracks Recreational reserves Our road (Edelsten) is beautifully maintained by your staff. Improvements: 1. Howard Springs waste transfer station. Having to unload a wheelie bin and force it through a spring loaded gate is ridiculous. Council should be advocating to work safe or whoever came up with this plan and get it sorted properly. 2. All waste transfer stations should accept all rubbish otherwise it simply gets dumped in the bush. 3. More Bike tracks to Berry Springs, Adelaide River. Join Coolalinga bike track to the Humpty Doo one. I've travelled to QLD to ride bikeways. People would come here to ride SAFELY to Adelaide River/ Litchfield Park/ Mandorah
	4. Waste transfer stations need to accept all waste to avoid fly tipping. 5. Rubbish pick up around Coolalinga shops needs improvement. There's Maccas and other takeaway waste along Girraween Rd and Chicken Lane in particular. 6. We NEED a council swimming pool. Palmerston have got one, Bachelor has got one. We need one at Cooley or Humpty Doo bus station or Freds Pass. Somewhere the kids can easily access. 7. More frequent bus service. Maybe smaller, coaster buses every 30 minutes. 8. The service road between Coolalinga bus station and shops is outright dangerous. It's always busy and backed up from roundabout but when the afternoon school buses drop off and 30-40 kids walk up to shops with no pathway, it's hard to watch. 9. Access to and from Coolalinga Central is dangerous. If this is not directly a council issue then it is a Council Advocacy issue.
68	Litchfield gives us the best of both worlds – the space and lifestyle of a rural area with the convenience of being close to town. We enjoy having room for our family, pets and outdoor lifestyle, while still being within easy reach of schools, work and essential services. The main improvements I'd like to see are better roads, less traffic congestion during peak periods, and more local healthcare and community facilities to support the area's continued growth.

69	Allowing landowners to sub divide blocks into one acre lots
70	I have not thought about it like that. It is my home and I am happy.
71	Na
72	Well run and very friendly personnel
73	Recycling opportunities needed eg a "tip shop"
74	Location
75	nice and peaceful
76	The community along with all the incredible reserves that come with its beauty.
77	Being rural and the rural feel - apart from getting a letter from NTG three weeks after our granddaughter passed demanding gamber maintenance which we are always on top of.
78	The people
79	the rural area is the best.
80	In my opinion it's not the best place to live. There's rubbish laying on roadsides, inadequate lighting and it would be more beneficial for the local council members to be seen as in be more visible in the community.
81	We love living in the rural area in Herbert. Road and road drainage maintenance should be improved. Communication with landholders should be improved.
82	Kennedy rd ,Stuart hwy intersection upgrade to improve traffic flow and safety.
83	5-15scre blocks no street lights not to far from the shops. Opportunities for social sporting interaction
84	It's the people who have respect for their community
85	Roads and carpark repairs, and maintenance. Enforcement of fire breaks and animal control.
86	Lifestyle
87	Stop wasting money on the library in the shopping center.
88	Large spaces with good reserves. Road maintenance could be improved and less dump fees.
89	Living on acreage and not small apartments or house blocks
90	The quietness of the rural area is a strong lure. Unfortunately the road maintenance is terrible, the condition of most roads are dangerous and pot holes take months to fill.
91	more focus on wildlife native to the area. For example, partridge pigeons are easier to see here than in Kakadu. more use of native plants in landscaping.
92	Na
93	NOT the best place to live. Road Maintenance is lacking.
94	BlOcke where you dont see it r hear your neighbours. Just the bush.
95	Rural living
96	National parks and what makes in the best Improvement would be the roads and the waste disposal system also being that close to Darwin's entire water supply and not having the option for mains water seems really odd
97	I love to ride and drive, but the roads are dogshit. Ostajic has destroyed Trippe road. Its so bad that they stopped using it.

98	The rural lifestyle, not helped by council trying to be a suburb on inner Sydney.
99	Lower crime than suburbs
100	The roads could be inproved.
101	Location. Availability of utilities - water supply
102	It is no longer the best place to live with the Arnhem Highway duplication. Litchfield council is so easy to get around but you're about to make it hell and I will leave.
103	We never said it was the best place. Road, road side maintenance, drainage and weed management, power outages, internet quality could be improved.
104	Spacious housing, better bus routes
105	Safe neighbourhood, add more shops
106	Green surroundings, improve street lights
107	Friendly locals, extend opening hours
108	Fresh air, upgrade public parks
109	Tight community, more medical clinics
110	Peaceful vibe, boost waste disposal
111	Nice rural views, repair footpaths
112	Low population density, more parking
113	Low noise pollution, extra kid facilities
114	Clean environment, speed up internet
115	Close to nature, expand cycle lanes
116	Calm lifestyle, enrich community events
117	Affordable housing, tidy roadside areas
118	Quiet natural scenery, fix road conditions
119	Best place: large rural blocks. Improve: roadside waste collection where practical; road maintenance; more age care facilities.
120	I don't think Litchfield is necessarily the best place to live in the Top End.
121	It's a difficult, unpleasant place to live. My area is abandoned by council the former road and environment are degrading (unmaintained). Providing council services to all residents would improve things and maybe make me feel included in your Shire.
122	Quiet, good neighbours and as an older resident, I feel safe.
123	Good amenities, well kept waste station and good roads
124	o
125	More helpful in sorting your rate payers problems out not passing us off to other departments
126	Great community
127	Space, nature, rural setting and community. Gamba control, residents who use property as dumping ground or significant home business activity (ie huge noisy tow trucks), road maintenance (Produce Road) and dog control. Don't let Government turn Litchfield into suburbia.
128	Fix the roads
129	The community and the natural area.

130	Less Anti social behaviour and good access to parks, shops and the roads are good in my area
131	Absolutely No developments Keep it rural
132	Rural atmosphere. Wish the weekend motor bikes would disappear
133	I love the room we have on 20 acres, the peace, the best way to keep our rural living rural is stop small blocks, stop all the traffic lights
134	Fix the roads
135	Improve - provide a bin service
136	Prefer rural location not urban. road maintenance needs improvement definetly.
137	Green space
138	Open spaces and community connections. More opportunities for recreation and engagement for younger residents.
139	Rural living is a lifestyle choice. However, too many businesses being operated and not following the rules,taking advantage of weak compliance. Animal management, licence dangerous dogs, limit the number of dogs permitted per property.
140	Lower rates
141	Upgrade the humpty doo shopping complex. Needs to have a bigger shopping centre and more car parking for the increased number of people who now live in the area. Need a kmart/target/big w and a bigger woolworths.
142	Peaceful and mostly safe, More walking or bike paths would be great. Community Hall near HD shops would be great.
143	Communication, Ive written, got generic reply to say will contact in a week or so, 2 months later I followed up, still nothing to this day. Vety dissappointed.
144	the people and the rural areas
145	Prefer not to answer
146	The maintenance of a rural lifestyle with the council ensuring thoughtful development and putting its people first
147	Road maintenance could be better, tripe rd is still not fixed
148	Beautiful the environment is amazing
149	Noise and support from council. Better waste transfer lighting of roads
150	tighten planning laws to prevent development and subdivision creep from eroding rural space and vibe.
151	Good rate structure, flat rate is fair for everyone Work with stakeholders to secure a rural pool Develope the block on corner of fred's pass road and Arnhem Highway into a multi purpose community centre
152	Mail delivery service and Waste collection shall be managed by the council as part of the Rate payment. (At this stage individual residents paying). Should be like other suburbs close to us. Also worth to conduct local meetinngs to listen to the resindets issues.
153	More regulation of people dumping rubbish in bushland, more road safety too much hooning and unsafe riding for children. Skateparks are great and it would be great if there were designated motorbike tracks and more walking tracks for keeping our community safe and active. Our library is a gem! The best in the NT! The connection between seniors and the local students and the local community is highly commendable.
154	Get back to local council mandate - rates, rubbish and roads. Stop wasting money on "feel good" things that are not in your remit. Stop charging for hard rubbish removal at the transfer stations, I'm sick of seeing stuff dumped in the bush. Do more to control gamba grass on Council land.

155	Open spaces and having bush around still.
156	Space, nature
157	Remove car wrecks from the side of the road, one has been on the side of Cox peninsula road for 8 years.
158	The peace and quiet.
159	They listen to the people
160	Secure living with good access to many amenities and sporting options.
161	Lower rates as we don't get much for what we pay
162	The people not council that is in huge debt
163	Rural but has all that is needed close by
164	I love the rural life however noting how much our rates are (similar to those in Palmerston however not bin service no mail service no town water and limited street lighting in facinated to hear what these rates are going towards (don't tell me the 2 mows of the front of my block because that's a piss take (it's mainly rock).
165	Council services offered (waste collection) and weeds management.
166	Council hasn't made any significant improvements to already existing infrastructure or facilities.
167	Road maintenance clearing if drains weed control outside of properties.
168	Space and freedom - new development on Girraween Road isn't good for that
169	the people
170	Our choice to live in an environment with SPACE between our neighbours
171	Not the best place to live. Lots of talk and very little action, Road maintenance and infrastructure needs improvement. I live in east ward and it isn't even of this survey. That sums it all up. Very slap dash
172	council rubbish pick up at the moment its private operator
173	Waste dump, they are aggressive and rude and charging for stupid things like mattresses etc. Then people don't dump or dump in bushland. Also never hear from council, I didn't even know we had new mayor!!
174	great lifestyle - people are easy going. council are freiendly
175	Less people,quiet,less light pollution. Could be improved through regular cleanup of some of major roads as well as liasing with Crown Lands to reduce rubbish being dumped by locals
176	Better access for bins at waste station for elderly people
177	Its not!!! There needs to be more available in the Girraween area. Rates are far high for the lack of maintenance in the area. Road at the Creek is SHOCKING more so during the wet season!! Ive had to have my car fixed multiple times because the potholes are atrocious … and who reimburses me back for that for the lack of maintenance yet every year the rates go up & up ????
178	council needs to do more, open up more areas.
179	The people in the community. More roadside mowing not just twice a year ☹ would make area tidier.
180	The rural ambience, peaceful living & beauty of living on large properties.
181	Better economy, better roads
182	Access to sporting facilities without travelling into Marrara
183	open council and stop hiding behind the desk

184	The laidback lifestyle. No having neighbours 5 feet away from your window.
185	Options for residents to live on bushland or urban, and many grassroots clubs are available. Land area is very large with not enough staff or funding to cover area adequately. Weed expansion, roaming dogs and crime rates are worsening over time.
186	Used to be great, has deteriorated significantly. Listen when 100s of people say don't move our library, especially to an area with exorbitant cost that excludes people with certain disabilities.
187	lifestyle. Affordability
188	Remaining rural and any new developments no smaller than an acre
189	Stupid question
190	Rates are pretty high for what we get.
191	The freedom, lighting installed at Pioneer dr and Angesly rds
192	Not much crime and very quiet area. The roads are maintained well and bike paths very good. We need our chemist and news agency back. Remove Dr surgery . I would like to have kerbside clean ups of household rubbish like the rest of Darwin has.
193	n/a
194	space to move
195	Because Live here and close enough to the main the city
196	It is quiet, close to all amenities and peaceful. It could be improved through effective drainage to stop huge inundation of Howard springs blocks esp. Menaja road.
197	The community of people that live in the Litchfield
198	Litchfield is, in my view, the best place to live in the Top End because of its people, its sense of community, and the freedom, space, and lifestyle it offers. Residents choose to live here for its rural character and the opportunity to enjoy a less restrictive way of life. Keep government involvement to a minimum and preserve the unique lifestyle that makes Litchfield special. There is growing concern that increasing regulations and local government rules are slowly pushing the area towards the same level of bureaucracy seen in some southern states. Sometimes less is more.
199	More work on pot holes on roads
200	There are a lot of roads throughout the councils area which are not bitumised. The cost of grading, maintenance over the years, would easily pay for the work.General road maintenance potholes take a long time to repair. Reedbeds road needs a bridge to allow shorter access to Cox Peninsula road.
201	It's semi rural factor - having a bit of acreage gives a sense of relaxation. No longer rural - development is full steam ahead in the North Ward. Important to maintain 'community' - the Council motto 'Community effort is essential' is important and as development of the region continues, we should strive to build community and encourage involvement of community.
202	Road traffic control is terrible and no one will take responsibility.
203	Nothing is every done in the North ward, it would be nice to be able to drive a road and see the line markings, not to mention pot holes fixed
204	A new council
205	space, freedom

206	Large blocks
207	We pay rates it would be nice to have bins & for them to be picked up on a weekly basis. Would also be nice if we could drop off everything at the tip why should we have to go to shoal bay and pay.
208	Absolutely not take a look around the roads nd drinks are terrible, you can't even sweep the gutters.
209	quiet life style
210	Increase focus on safety. Develop bike paths to support cyclists, pedestrians and safety in general. Wells Creek Rd is so dangerous for both.
211	Better networking opportunities for orgs servicing the shire
212	Na
213	there is no where near enough activities for teens / young adults to do in the rural area.
214	No comments to add
215	Rural amenity is very important and a suburban development should be totally opposed.
216	Annex areas near Palmerston to their control. Cemetary NEEDS to be Darwin & Palmerston $$$ imput too.
217	It's rural and the people are friendly . Transport could be better especially to the airport
218	Rates could be changed to be sent electronically, especially considering most residents are rural and dont have a postal service, email or text msg would be great. The poisen given could be increased for smaller properties and have 2 bottles issued for properties over 20 acres instead of 40, i have 36 acres and its nowhere near enough to do the gamba grass for the property. The road trains from the core lithium mine are tearing up cox pen at all the heavy braking point ie before bridges and dips, making the road dangerous to drive along, its not the councils road but could be more proactive with getting nt roads or core lithium to maintain that main arterial better or upgrade it to be able to handle the 100+ tonne road trains that flow in a steady stream all day.
219	Fairly safe place to live. The number of unregistered bikes and quads being used, traveling at high speeds and somewhat unsafe. Noise factor from some riders is an issue. Not wanting to change our lifestyle but protect each other. Work with community to make it safe for all. Smallish charge for dumping, unlimited access to the the dump rather than 12 visits a year with tokens. When you lose the letter or proof of residency, there is an immediate cost.
220	Roads

Question 16	
How can Council improve its communication with residents and the community?	
Open Responses	
1	Make people away of out going communication.
2	-
3	NA
4	notice boards
5	Better access to Councillors. It seems like only the ones with a hidden agenda like promoting themselves for the next NTG Elections turns up.
6	actually visit people
7	Maybe e-newsletters
8	Frequency. More social media video updates
9	Include key information with rates notices.
10	they cover all areas
11	Newsletters drops
13	The council could communicate more openly about what projects are planned, where funding is being spent, and the progress of major works. Regular updates—even when projects are delayed—would help keep the community informed and reduce uncertainty
14	I'd like to see more opportunities for residents to have their say before decisions are made. Community forums, online surveys, and local information sessions would help people feel more involved and ensure their feedback is considered.
15	More social media
16	GIVE UPDATe on HOPEWELL rd Radio silence since you pu up post saying it was going to be fixed
17	Weekend popups at major shopping centres. More visibility of Representative not just a 'gimme your vote' or 'vote for me' placard. They need to be active and visible so we know who they are and who they represent.
18	More of it
19	-
20	It is fine.
21	More frequent emails.
22	Radio interviews weekly talking about the current issues and ideas. Take calls from listeners
23	continue as is
24	Communication is ok
25	Email newsletter. If someone does not pay their rates or is behind on them, contact that individual to ensure they know they are in arrears. And don't charge unreasonable interest on that amount. Ie, the interest rate that the council pays plus the current inflation. Not 17.5%. That is criminal.
26	Regular emails as opposed to once in a while gate drops
27	Keep rates down supporting cost of living and continue supporting roads and pathways for kids to ride around the area.
28	Nothing to add
29	I don't know but start fixing roads and killing gamba

30	Council should use multiple channels—local radio, website, SMS alerts, community noticeboards and face to face forums—because not everyone checks Facebook for updates. Make communication more personal by sending targeted emails and postal letters, with clear plain English summaries, translation options, and contact details for follow up. Regular newsletters, scheduled town hall sessions and a simple feedback form will boost trust, transparency and two way engagement.
31	All seems ok to me
32	Fix potholes
33	I get most my council info from Kris's Facebook
34	Would be nice to see more then Kris, Pauline and Daisy out in the community. Haven't seen the mayor all year.
35	Na
36	Utilise local noticeboards, regular email updates
37	News letter
38	more advice on website/community newsletter
39	Try talking, don't avoid criticism.
40	Information at shopping centres
41	Email. I don't do TV or Radio
42	Community Signage boards? Faceboook, direct emails
43	Emailed
44	Communication (in pen and ink, as well)
45	Council could communicate more effectively by providing regular updates through social media, email newsletters, SMS alerts, and the local website. Sharing information earlier about road works, community projects, and events would help residents plan ahead. Holding more community meetings, encouraging public feedback through surveys, and ensuring information is easy to access and understand would also strengthen communication and community engagement.
46	Keep comunicating
47	More facebook and email notices
48	Be more open to public and be out and about more
49	A newsletter that gets emailed to residents.
50	No comment
51	Monthly emails
52	I haven't seen any social media posts on the Litchfield Council at all. So perhaps up the ante there?
53	Email/direct mail to PO Boxes
54	Perhaps more content on social media
55	i don't think this is a massive issue.
56	Monthly Email
57	regular newsletter
58	pop up at markets or shopping centre
59	More transparency and information even around regularly occurring things.
60	Do what council is supposed to do
61	Perhaps hosting more events at the Council facilities to make people more engaged with their council and councilors
62	emails

63	Do you communicate only get rates notice.
64	N/A
65	more online traffic and newsletters.
66	Send emails Post on social media The ONLY time I hear from council is to send rates notice. I personally have sent the link to this survey to all my family who live in Litchfield. I was the only one who got the email.
67	Council could improve communication by providing more regular updates through multiple channels, including social media, email newsletters and community noticeboards. It would also be helpful to have clearer information on upcoming projects, roadworks, community events and service changes, along with opportunities for residents to provide feedback before decisions are made. Greater engagement with rural communities and more timely responses to enquiries would help residents feel better informed and connected to Council.
68	NA
69	Unsure
70	Use Snap Send Solve effectively like they do in Darwin
71	Not sure
72	I have not seen much communication at all so any extra can only be good.
73	Social media
74	social media present
75	I think the council is doing an incredible job especially with the newsletter drop.
76	More newsletter more of this surveys.
77	Meet face to face to discuss problems
78	Maybe an option to opt in for emails with information on what's going on.
79	Be seen!
80	we would be happy with a regular newsletter, say quarterly
81	Not sure
82	Roadside reminders that council meetings are on before the meeting
83	Email Mail
84	Attend shopping centres, field days and events
85	Rarely receive communications
86	By actually communicating
87	Not sure
88	More Post office drops
89	Continue the social media updates.
90	meet with the Berry Springs Seniors
91	Na

92	SEND OUT INVOICES FOR RATE PAYMENTS MADE. The council is studious in sending payment notices but never send out invoices acknowledging payments made.
93	-
94	More communication on fb and emails
95	Public notification at local shops
96	By mowing the verges more often and maintaining the roads. Its easy to see where council members live....Their roads are regularly mowed and they have no potholes. Try looking after the rest of us as well.
97	I've asked for emails, newsletters etc for more than 2 decades. From well before faceache existed. Not everybody loves Facebook. It keeps on falling on deaf ears. But even the info in FB is very poor
98	Email newsletter? Not a paper one
99	Years ago we used to receive email newletters. Please bring them back as I don't do social media and facebook.
100	Newsletter
101	I live on the Arnhem Highway and had no update. All community meetings make promises but never hear from again
102	Just be a better council.
103	Visit suburbs for face talks
104	Release project progress timelines
105	Post news on council website daily
106	Offer multilingual notice versions
107	Create resident official group chats
108	Use clear simple official wording
109	Share updates via local radio
110	Set up convenient hotline service
111	Run easy online feedback portals
112	Reply resident messages promptly
113	Distribute printed home leaflets
114	Send weekly email newsletters
115	Put notices on neighbourhood boards
116	Hold monthly local community meetings
117	Launch regular social media updates
118	Nil
119	I have seen very few communication in my 25 years living in Humpty Doo.
120	I don't feel part of your council
121	Regular (monthly? quarterly?) email newsletter.
122	more emails
123	0
124	Ringing them asking questions
125	more surveys
126	Do you cross post your media on local social media groups often?
127	Na

128	Acknowledging people have full time work and responsibilities, often without capacity to keep informed and updated. Website is not easy to find information on, too general. Council are not approachable, very defensive. Puts legislation before logic. More interested in punitive actions than collaborative decisions.
129	Definitely more communication is required from council on up and coming plans and projects.
130	Newsletter is fine
131	More newsletters. Post office mail
132	Professional social media
133	email newsletter
134	*
135	unsure
136	na
137	Up to date information e.g. road work posts that list commencement dates but works haven't started weeks later. Freds Pass netball courts project - location on reserve, what the project will deliver, time frames etc
138	Get social and celebrate the things that are being done well and make it special.
139	Less red tape
140	Newsletter via email
141	Its adequate
142	More info on website
143	more posts on social media about all dealing and works under taken by council
144	Prefer not to answer
145	By maintaining a truthful and open relationship with residents
146	By communicating with the people via social media and direct contact
147	can be improved by having more offices or branches in order to make it people to communicate in person in
148	Notice boards
149	Some people don't engage with social channels or notice boards. How about another way like an emailed or physical newsletter or attached to gates?
150	Better social media, better communication from the mayor, more participation in community events
151	Share through emails as well..
152	Visual notice board digital.
153	I have no interest in hearing about Council. Just get on with fixing roads, improving rubbish collection and keeping rates as low as possible by reducing waste and avoiding "warm fuzzy" projects.
154	Emails
155	Maybe some poster or flyer drop 3-4 times a year. Be more productive to encourage locals to attend or voice concerns at meetings.
156	Actually follow up on complaints like noisey dogs etc
157	More interaction
158	By sending SMS
159	Nil
160	Mail
161	Reduce the waste of money

162	More newsletters and emails
163	Come to more local events
164	E-newsletters to ratepayers. Suggest council's departments (eg. weeds particularly) actually respond to ratepayers correspondences - we have have an outstanding issue from May with no response at all.
165	I'm not sure it has.
166	Newsletter on what has been achieved or planned for our area
167	Darwin city is on the ABC once a week with councillors from each ward given opportunity to talk about what they are doing, that would be good
168	i have not herd anything from the council in a long time so any communication would be good
169	Miss the Litchfield Times which gave us all up to date info on what's happening in our area
170	More access to councillors through community events and side road contact sites and not just at election times
171	postal delivery to property
172	Do more of the above
173	NA
174	Through regular emails
175	More frequent not just at election time
176	You domt do much now so theres got to be an onward & upward approach
177	actually engage the residents and listen to what they need.
178	Social media, newsletters
179	Do more driving inspections of frequently used public areas, reserves & roads. We've noticed Bees creek is frequently used by many young children, especially during school hols. Although it is unsafe due to crocs etc. It still needs to be mowed & cleared regularly so it doesn't look unsightly & esp to keep it free of snakes etc as you can't stop children from wanting to swim, fish etc. This is also a beautiful spot in Litchfield council to stop for lunch etc. I see many people swimming here during the wet season. If it's well maintained & regularly cleared & there's more signage it would definitely increase safety for all visitors & residents who stop here.
180	Better communication via email
181	More advertising on social media about events and changes in policies
182	just be more helpful instead of hiding behind a desk
183	By being honest and open
184	Is there option to email a monthly or quarterly newsletter?
185	Listen! Pauline Cass excepted, she does excellent job making herself available at set times to listen, in person, to concerns... and she follows up.
186	emails
187	Is there a notice board at the main shopping centres cooli humpty doo berry springs?
188	I don't need to hear more from the coucil
189	Attend some events (markets, club events, etc) with a stall, speak first hand to the people that live in these areas and discuss with them what the communities need and could benefit from.
190	When there are issues pls keep the effected residents informed of the progress made to rectify any problems rather than them having to contact council for updates
191	Have local monthly/ 6 ms meetings to discuss issues with locals and an area for seniors to meet up and do craft or just talk.

192	n/a
193	monthly email
194	Put more info in the Facebook local site
195	No idea
196	dont know
197	Stop asking for feedback if you're not prepared to listen. Residents want honest conversations, not token consultation exercises. If people felt their opinions truly mattered and that Council was acting on community concerns, engagement would naturally improve. Trust is earned through actions, not surveys, social media posts, or promises. Listen to the people who live here and involve them meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives
198	Maybe fb
199	Monthly newsletter delivered via email.
200	Council members need to be more 'visible'. Haven't seen (or heard from) a council elected member since the election. The work the council does is not 'visible'
201	Mail and email
202	Not sure how you goldilocks that one.
203	Do your job
204	social media
205	I don't think they need to
206	N/A
207	Promote digital platforms, stop wasting paper the bins are full of unread flyers when you do a drop.
208	more frequent newsletters
209	Monthly on social media
210	Better interaction on local community pages with the bigger audience
211	Na
212	by being open and honest and Educating the community what their rates pay for clearly.
213	Get out more
214	Have more open community consultation.
215	More social media
216	Occasional letter box drop maybe ?
217	Changing from snail mail, which most residents dont have anyway and changing to email or txt msg.
218	Opt in newsletters sent to landowners/rate payers.
219	Communication

Question 18	
Do you have other preferred methods of communication? If you do, what are they?	
Open Response	
1	No
2	home visit, phone call
3	No just above
4	FIX HOPEWELL road
5	More visibility at 'pop up' opportunities regularly at community and local events, shopping centres, etc.
6	Email.
7	NA
8	No
9	Markets
10	More in person communication with groups and people
11	no
12	SMS
13	Posters
14	No
15	No
16	Face to face at local markets
17	Electronic newsletter emailed
18	email
19	Depends on what is being communicated
20	Have an app like cop
21	Events such as hosting speakers or workshops
22	I only received my rates notice. Otherwise what council.
23	N/A
24	email
25	Radio ads
26	No
27	Snap Send Solve. Only way
28	email
29	Facebook (social media)
30	Email
31	Meeting face to face
32	Home visit
33	Email
34	Light up signs on road sign for upcoming events
35	None
36	Public meetings at shopping centres, and events

37	Phone for important issues that affect me directly
38	I bough 20 acres so I wouldn't have to communicate. If it cant' be yelled over the fence...I don't want to hear it.
39	What's the point of repeating myself every few years?
40	Email
41	Email
42	Do not have social media, that's not a me fault, that is a responsible parent leading by example. Social media can not be the main source of communication.
43	No
44	No
45	Community meetings in centres like berry springs etc
46	short wave radio
47	Nil. Re question 20 - I rate this council as the best since I moved here in 2012.
48	Email
49	Council are not approachable, very defensive. Puts legislation before logic. More interested in punitive actions than collaborative decisions.
50	No
51	no
52	Being able to speak with relevant staff member when calling/visiting office. Provision of contact name not just broad departmental references. Phone calls! Community stalls. Agenda and minutes available within legislated time frames.
53	Email
54	Prefer not to answer
55	No
56	in person
57	no
58	Stands at community events which Council does do, however, more are needed
59	Nil
60	Face to face
61	SMS
62	Mail
63	Email
64	No
65	Face to face
66	Social media, so I can view if I want Would be good if my ward was a choice above as well (I am East Ward according to the map but it isnt a choice) Unless our voice isnt required

67	None
68	postal
69	na
70	N/A
71	email or mail.
72	NA
73	No
74	Na
75	n/a
76	Text.
77	Face to face with local member.
78	A phone call helps to show that council actually is there to help you.
79	Can't think of any at the moment
80	email
81	I prefer to call or visit in person when I need to communicate with Council. Direct, face-to-face conversations are often more productive than emails or online surveys and provide a better opportunity for genuine discussion and understanding
82	Mail
83	In person; face-to-face engagement;
84	No
85	N/A
86	As above
87	Local community pages
88	no
89	Radio
90	Email
91	Text message

Question 19

Where do you currently receive information about Council's activities? Tick all that apply:

Open Response	
1	Newsletters
2	None of the above
3	nil
4	Newsletter on front gate
5	email
6	markets
7	Pop up stall
8	Except for the rates invoice I don't get anything
9	Email
10	Flyer on the front gate
11	Email
12	Libary
13	N/A
14	I got this survey link by email but it's the only time I've been contacted by council except annual rates notice.
15	NA
16	Snap Send Solve
17	email
18	Not good enough
19	Poor communication
20	Email
21	The odd councillor's private communications
22	I don't receive information about Councils activities
23	I don't receive any
24	We don't, we have to seek the information ourselves.
25	Email
26	Rates notice mainly.
27	I don't
28	email
29	Email
30	Don't

31	facebook
32	none
33	I dont, have heard anything up till this survey and email
34	I dont cz I have no idea where to look
35	i dont hear about it at all.
36	Library
37	With my Rates Notice
38	Email... but this survey was sent from a weird email address, so ended up in junk. I then went to website to check if I was real.
39	I have to ring to find out about a particular road issue
40	do not receive any information
41	I haven't heard of any.
42	Our Councillor
43	I don't usually, more a drive past, oh, there is something on.

Question 24

What types of information are you interested in hearing about? Tick all that apply.

Open Responses	
1	DCA Developments in the Shire
2	Road maintenance and repairs, wet season repairs,
3	Overall general updates.
4	Our drains use to be dug out regularly, nothing has happened for YEAR!! We are struggling with water levels coming off Fred's Pass reserve and crown land. Eugene rd area
5	Do we have a mayor?
6	Positive accolade/s each newsletter for people doing good in our community - ask for submissions. Dodgy that to register for newsletter (Q25), no address option, only email.
7	What about the elected representatives? What have they done?

14.3 Infrastructure and Operations

14.3.2 LGANT Call for Motions - Planning and Development Decision Making

AUTHOR: Geoff Thomas, Director Infrastructure and Operations

AUTHORISER: Stephen Hoyne, Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS: 1. FORM-LGANT-Calls-for-Motions-2026-Proposed Motion.docx

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has an opportunity to submit a motion to the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) seeking reform of the Northern Territory planning and development framework to strengthen local government participation in decisions affecting matters of local significance.

The proposed motion responds to the disconnect between Territory-level planning decisions and the responsibility of local governments for managing resulting impacts on local infrastructure, services and communities. It seeks a review of the allocation of planning responsibilities, including consideration of defined local decision-making, concurrence or referral powers where appropriate, while retaining the Territory Government's responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy and specialist regulation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

a. resolve to submit the attached motion, *Strengthening Local Government Participation in Planning and Development Decision-Making*, to LGANT for consideration through its Call for Motions process.

BACKGROUND

The Northern Territory planning system places most planning and development decision-making at Territory Government level, while local governments are responsible for significant local infrastructure and services affected by development.

Council has experienced instances where development decisions have proceeded despite its objections, leaving Council to manage local consequences without commensurate decision-making authority. Examples include the extension of a development permit without addressing changed inundation requirements, and approval of an area plan limited to one development parcel despite Council advocating for broader planning to guide adjoining land.

These matters highlight the importance of aligning decision-making authority with responsibility for managing local impacts. The attached motion seeks LGANT advocacy for a review of the current framework.

LINKS WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

Places - Roads and Infrastructure

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The motion concerns the operation of the *Planning Act 1999* and NT Planning Scheme, including the statutory roles of consent and referral authorities. It does not seek a wholesale transfer of planning, environmental or regulatory functions to local government.

The proposed reform would retain Territory Government responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy, legislation, standards and specialist regulation, while considering a clearer statutory role for local government in matters of primarily local significance.

The motion is consistent with the broader objective of strengthening local government participation in decisions affecting local infrastructure, services and sustainable community outcomes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant immediate financial implications associated with submitting the motion to LGANT. Any future financial implications would depend on the nature of reforms adopted and the extent of additional statutory responsibilities allocated to local government. The motion seeks to ensure that any such responsibilities are supported by appropriate funding and resources.

RISKS

Potential risks include duplication of planning processes, uncertainty over statutory responsibilities, inconsistent approaches between councils and additional costs associated with any expanded local government role.

These risks can be addressed through a review-based approach that recognises differences in council capability and circumstances, clarifies the respective roles of each level of government, and provides appropriate funding and resources for any additional statutory responsibilities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No specific community consultation has been undertaken in preparing the motion. The proposal concerns the allocation of statutory responsibilities between levels of government and is intended to be progressed through LGANT's advocacy process. Any subsequent reform developed by the Territory Government would be subject to the applicable consultation and legislative processes.

Local Government Association Northern Territory

LGANT
CALL FOR MOTIONS

P (08) 8944 9697
E info@lgant.asn.au
W lgant.asn.au
A 21 Parap Rd, Parap NT 0820
PO Box 2075, Parap NT 0804
ABN: 35 662 805 503

We are local. We connect.

CALL FOR MOTIONS

About this document

LGANT's purpose, as per the Strategic Plan 2025-2028, is to support and represent member councils to drive sustainable economic and social development of the Northern Territory community.

The purpose of this call for motion document is to provide a template for member councils to submit motions to LGANT on issues for consideration, such as governance, capacity building, policy positions and advocacy efforts, at either the April or November General Meetings.

The motions that are resolved at LGANT General Meetings are important in guiding the priorities and work plans of LGANT, and it is important that the Association's resources are focussed on the issues that will be of the greatest benefit to councils, towns and communities.

Policy and Advocacy

Policy positions are a statement or declaration of an organisation's stance on a particular topic(s). Further, LGANT seeks to influence public policy (which is laws, guidelines and actions decided and taken by governments). Motions from councils help LGANT form its policy positions and statements that in turn, assist with advocacy efforts. LGANT's current policy statements can be found here.

Advocacy is a broad term encompassing endeavours to achieve change. For LGANT, advocacy is activity undertaken to promote and influence issues that collectively effect local government.

Timeframes

Councils do not need to wait for the call for motions from LGANT. These can be submitted at any time. However, to enable all motions to be assessed by the Board and papers prepared for the agenda, a closing date is determined for each General Meeting.

Late motions will not be accepted (unless urgent) and will instead be referred to the next General Meeting.

Motions will not be accepted at General Meetings as members do not have supporting information or the time to make an informed decision.

If the motion is urgent, councils may consider calling a Special General Meeting or request the LGANT Board address the matter through their meetings. Justification for urgency will be required.

Other important information

Member councils should consider submitting a motion if they believe there is an opportunity for LGANT to take the lead on an issue that is strategically important to local government and will benefit the sector as a whole.

There must only be ONE issue per motion. It is suggested that the council submitting the motion first discuss it with LGANT so they can outline existing activity or policy positions, if any, in the topic area and assist with developing the business case.

Motions need to be approved by resolution of the local government council **prior** to submission to LGANT.

The LGANT Board will assess the motion for completeness and appropriateness and if necessary, ask the submitting member council for more information or redrafting before including it in the General Meeting agenda. This process may require the council to re-endorse its motion.

The LGANT Board has the discretion to not accept the motion if not enough information is provided, it's not strategic in nature, or it would impact negatively on the reputation of LGANT or the sector.

By submitting a motion, your council can move and speak to the motion at the General Meeting it is going to.

The better your council's argument or case, the more likely members can make an informed decision and resolve the motion. Resolved motions are minuted following the General Meeting, allocated to LGANT staff for action, and reported on at LGANT Board and General meetings.

Motions to LGANT do not progress to the Australian Local Government Association's (ALGA) National General Assembly (NGA). Councils must submit motions for the NGA directly to ALGA.

TEMPLATE

CALL FOR MOTIONS

Member councils are invited to submit motions for debate to be included at General Meetings using this template.

Name of Council:
Litchfield Council

Contact person and title:
Councillor Plaxy Purich

Phone: 0435 027 116

Email: plaxyqf.purich@litchfield.nt.gov.au

Motion title:
Strengthening Local Government Participation in Planning and Development Decision-Making

Resolution sought (Motion)
Motions should be clear and concise and must be limited to one subject matter/ issue.

Consider the action your motion wants LGANT to do for the local government sector.

Members call on LGANT to advocate to the Northern Territory Government for a review and reform of the Territory's planning and development framework to provide local governments with a more authentic and clearly defined statutory role in decisions affecting matters of local government significance.

The review should consider mechanisms that:

- provide local governments with necessary statutory decision-making, concurrence, referral or other defined powers in relation to development matters that have significant local impacts;
- establish a clear distinction between matters of Territory-wide or regional significance and matters that are primarily local in nature;
- ensure that local impacts, including roads and traffic, drainage and stormwater, local infrastructure capacity, community amenity, local environmental and cumulative impacts, and relevant cultural and heritage considerations, are appropriately assessed and addressed in all development decisions;
- recognise, where appropriate, the relationship between development and locally significant water and groundwater resources;

- provide transparent and effective mechanisms for resolving differences between the Territory authorities and local government councils where their respective statutory responsibilities or legitimate interests are affected;
- recognise that local governments differ in size, capacity, geographic circumstances and available technical expertise, and provide flexibility in the allocation of functions accordingly;
- consider appropriate arrangements for areas of the Northern Territory that are not within a local government area; and
- ensure that any additional statutory responsibilities allocated to local government are accompanied by the funding, resources, technical expertise and capability necessary to discharge those responsibilities effectively.

Members consider that planning and development decisions need to be strengthened should provide an appropriate balance between Territory-wide objectives and council objectives, with decision-making responsibilities allocated to the level of government best placed to assess and manage the impacts of a development.

LGANT should advocate for a planning and development framework that provides meaningful local government participation, accountability and decision-making powers and authority while maintaining consistent Territory-wide planning policy, standards and specialist regulatory functions.

Supporting information:

1. Define the problem/opportunity and its impact on local government or council services and operations.
2. Provide information on any relevant legislation, policy settings and research reports and papers where available.
3. Include a statement on how the motion aligns with LGANT's Policy Statements and Strategic Plan.
4. Provide attachment/s if required.

1. Define the problem/opportunity and its impact on local government or council services and operations.

The Northern Territory planning and development framework places significant planning, development and regulatory functions at Territory Government level, while local governments are responsible for managing and maintaining much of the local infrastructure and services affected by development.

This can create a disconnect between development decision-making and responsibility for managing local consequences. Councils have significant local knowledge and technical expertise in areas such as roads, drainage, stormwater, infrastructure capacity, community amenity and local environmental conditions, but their statutory influence over development decisions is not commensurate with their responsibilities for managing those impacts.

The issue is not that planning, and development functions should simply be transferred to local government. Rather, there is an opportunity to improve the planning framework, so that decision-making occurs at the level of government best placed to assess and manage the relevant impacts, while retaining appropriate Territory-wide and regional planning, environmental and regulatory functions.

Recent matters involving significant groundwater and development proposals, including Singleton Station and the Holtze Development Area, illustrate the complexity of development decisions and the importance of effective assessment, transparency and consideration of local and community interests. They also demonstrate the interaction between planning, environmental assessment, water resource management and local infrastructure responsibilities.

For local government, the opportunity is to strengthen the connection between development decision-making and responsibility for managing its local impacts. This could include meaningful statutory participation and, where appropriate, defined decision-making or concurrence powers in relation to matters of primarily local significance, while retaining the Territory Government's responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy, legislation, standards and specialist regulation.

Any reform should recognise the differing size, capability and circumstances of Northern Territory councils and consider appropriate arrangements for areas outside local government boundaries. Where additional statutory responsibilities are allocated to local government, they should be accompanied by appropriate funding, resources and technical expertise.

Such reform would provide clearer accountability and more effective checks and balances while avoiding unnecessary duplication of Territory planning and regulatory functions within local government areas.

2. Relevant legislation, policy settings and research

The Northern Territory planning system is principally established under the *Planning Act 1999* and NT Planning Scheme, with planning policy, development assessment and statutory decision-making primarily administered at Territory Government level. Local governments are responsible for significant local infrastructure and services affected by development, including roads, drainage, stormwater, community facilities and amenity, and may act as referral authorities for particular

development applications. However, councils are not generally consent authorities and have limited statutory decision-making authority in planning matters. This can leave councils responsible for managing local consequences while having negligible influence over the decisions that create them, including where development may affect locally significant water or groundwater resources. Water resource allocation and licensing remain Territory Government responsibilities.

This provides an opportunity to consider whether the current allocation of planning responsibilities appropriately reflects the role, capability and local knowledge of contemporary local government. Since the 2008 local government reforms, the Territory has operated through fewer, larger councils with broader geographic responsibilities and, in many cases, significant organisational, engineering and infrastructure capability. This provides a basis for considering a greater local government role in defined aspects of planning and development decision-making, subject to individual council capability and circumstances.

Development decisions also intersect with statutory and regulatory frameworks governing water, environmental protection, roads, drainage, stormwater, waste and infrastructure. The proposed reform seeks to improve coordination and accountability by providing local government with meaningful statutory participation and, where appropriate, defined decision-making or concurrence powers on matters of primarily local significance, while retaining Territory Government responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy, legislation, standards and specialist regulation and enforcement.

Examples include the extension of a development permit without addressing changed inundation requirements, and approval of an area plan limited to one development parcel despite Council advocating for broader planning to guide adjoining land. In both cases, Council's concerns were not reflected in the final decisions, leaving Council to manage local consequences without commensurate decision-making authority. These examples support giving local government defined decision-making or concurrence powers over matters of primarily local significance.

Relevant governance principles support clear allocation of responsibilities, transparency, accountability, consistency and appropriate independence in decision-making. These principles are reflected in work by organisations including the OECD and Australian Productivity Commission and provide a policy basis for considering whether the current framework appropriately balances Territory-wide objectives with local government interests. They do not, however, prescribe any particular planning model.

LGANT's *Local Government 2030 Strategy* identifies the limited role of local government in land planning and development as an issue affecting councils' ability to influence development and sustainable outcomes. This provides a relevant policy basis for considering whether the statutory role of local government should be strengthened.

Any reform should recognise the significant differences between councils in size, geography, population, development activity and organisational capability, rather than assume a single model is appropriate. Consideration should also be given to planning and development arrangements in areas outside local government boundaries.

Where additional statutory responsibilities are allocated to local government, they should be accompanied by appropriate funding, staffing, technical expertise and capacity to enable councils to discharge those responsibilities effectively and consistently.

3. Alignment with LGANT Policy Statements and Strategic Plan

The proposed motion aligns with LGANT's strategic objective of strengthening local government, advocating for the interests of councils and their communities, and ensuring that local government has an appropriate role in decisions affecting local communities and infrastructure.

LGANT's *Local Government 2030 Strategy* identifies the limited involvement of Northern Territory councils in land planning and development as an issue that can constrain councils' ability to influence sustainable development and outcomes for their communities. The proposed advocacy would provide an opportunity to further consider this identified issue through a review of the allocation of planning and development responsibilities between the Northern Territory Government and local government.

The motion aligns with LGANT's strategic direction in the following areas:

- **Advocacy and representation**

Strengthens LGANT's role in advocating for planning and development arrangements that appropriately recognise the interests, responsibilities, local knowledge and capability of local governments and their communities.

- **Local decision-making**

Supports greater local government participation and, where appropriate, defined statutory decision-making or concurrence powers in relation to matters that are primarily local in significance, rather than relying solely on consultation.

- **Partnership between levels of government**

Supports a clearer and more balanced allocation of responsibilities between the Northern Territory Government and local government, recognising that each level of government has different roles, capabilities and responsibilities.

- **Sustainable development**

Supports planning and development processes that appropriately consider local infrastructure capacity, roads and traffic, drainage and stormwater, environmental and cumulative impacts, community amenity, relevant cultural and heritage considerations, and locally significant water resources.

- **Financial sustainability**

Supports the principle that where additional statutory responsibilities are allocated to local government, the associated funding, staffing, technical expertise and other resources necessary to discharge those responsibilities should also be provided.

- **Accountability and governance**

Supports clear allocation of statutory responsibilities, transparent decision-making and appropriate checks and balances where development decisions have significant local consequences. It seeks to improve accountability without unnecessarily duplicating Territory-wide planning, environmental or specialist regulatory functions.

Conclusion

The motion gives effect to LGANT's existing strategic interest in strengthening the role of local government in land planning and development and provides an opportunity to advocate for a more effective allocation of planning responsibilities.

It does not propose that planning responsibility should simply be transferred from the Northern Territory Government to local government, nor does it prescribe a single approval model for all councils. Instead, it seeks a review of the current framework to determine where greater local government statutory participation, decision-making or concurrence would improve planning outcomes and accountability.

Any reform should recognise the differing size, capability and circumstances of Northern Territory councils, while also considering appropriate arrangements for areas outside local government boundaries. The Northern Territory Government would retain responsibility for Territory-wide and regional planning policy, legislation, standards and specialist regulatory functions, while local governments would have defined authority in matters where they are best placed to assess and manage local impacts.

Council confirmation:

I, Click or tap here to enter your full name., the Chief Executive Officer, hereby confirm that this motion was approved by resolution of council on Click or tap to enter a date. for presentation at the next LGANT General Meeting.

Resolution number: _____

In submitting this motion, I acknowledge that (please tick):

☐ the LGANT Board has the discretion to not accept the motion.

Signature: _____ Date: _____