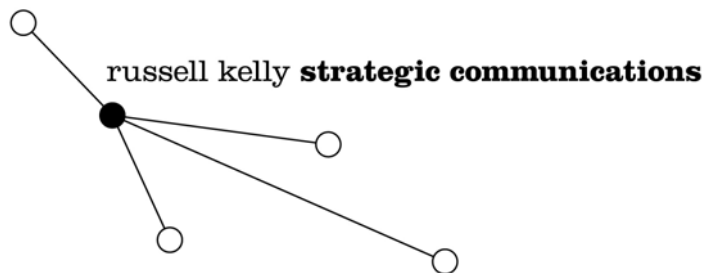


# Kyogle Local Government Area Resident Survey 2007

Prepared by  
Russell Kelly Strategic Communications



Prepared by Russell Kelly Strategic Communications for Kyogle Council

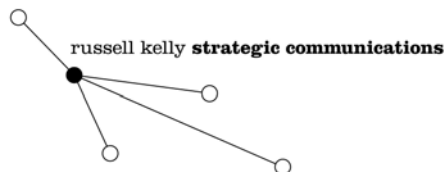
All enquiries concerning information contained in this report should, in the first instance, be directed to:

Mr Arthur Piggott  
General Manager  
Kyogle Shire Council  
PO Box 11,  
Kyogle, NSW 2474

©Copyright 2006 Russell Kelly Strategic Communications, PO Box 56 Tintenbar,  
New South Wales. Phone: 0448878066.

**Disclaimer:** While every care has been taken in the preparation of this document to ensure accuracy and reliability, no responsibility will be accepted for errors or omissions. Russell Kelly Strategic Communications shall not be liable for any damage or loss resulting from the use of the information in this document.

Filename: 20061219-rep-kyogle resident survey 2006-fa.doc



## **CONTENTS**

---

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>9</b>
Sampling method	9
Sample size	10
Data analysis	11
Context of Survey	11
<b>PART A – COUNCIL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>COUNCIL SCORECARD</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>15</b>
Differences between Groups	16
<b>QUALITY OF LIFE</b>	<b>19</b>
Differences between Groups	20
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>21</b>
Differences between Groups	22
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>23</b>
Differences between Groups	24
<b>MANAGING KYOGLE COUNCIL</b>	<b>25</b>
Differences between Groups	26
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	<b>27</b>
Telephone contact	27

<b>Written Contact</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Council's website and Internet access</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Access to Media</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>PART B – FUTURE PRIORITIES FOR KYOGLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Additional rates</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Amalgamation</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Reducing Councillors Numbers</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>PART C – QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>DETAIL OF COMMENTS</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Roads</b>	<b>37</b>
Rural Roads	37
Gravel Roads	37
Sealed Roads	38
Secondary Bitumen Roads	38
Urban Streets	38
Bridges	38
Causeways	38
Tourism	38
Safety	39
Amenity	39
Roadsides	39
Tidiness	39
Standard of Work	40
After Rain	40
Road Planning	40
Kyogle Bypass	41
Handling Service Requests	41
Specific Requests for Service	41
Positive Comments	42
<b>Main Street</b>	<b>42</b>
Suggestions for Improvement	42
Suggestions for Main Street	43
Value for Money	43
Link with Tourism	43
Improving Amenity	44
Facilities	44
<b>Tourism</b>	<b>44</b>
Strategic Direction	44
Kyogle's Tourism Assets	45

Facilities	45
Encouragement of Business	45
Link with Better Roads	45
Link with Environment	46
Developing Tourism	46
<b>Waste</b>	<b>46</b>
Support for more Recycling	47
<b>Rates</b>	<b>47</b>
Link with Administration	47
Link with Services	48
Equity	48
Better Management	48
<b>Footpaths</b>	<b>49</b>
Safety	49
<b>Employment</b>	<b>49</b>
Local needs	50
Jobs for Youth	50
<b>Parking</b>	<b>50</b>
Regulation of Parking	51
Disability Considerations	51
Positive Suggestions	51
<b>Business Development</b>	<b>52</b>
Council Support for Business	52
Opportunities for Young People	52
Positive Suggestions	53
Communication with Business	53
<b>Council Management</b>	<b>53</b>
Financial Management	54
Equity	54
Positive comments	54
<b>Management - Staff</b>	<b>55</b>
Staff 'Perks'	55
Workforce Structure	55
Customer Service	56
Positive Comments	56
<b>Natural Environment - Protection</b>	<b>56</b>
Managing Environmental Issues	57
Control of Weeds	57
<b>Water</b>	<b>57</b>
Watertanks and Pollution	58
<b>Animal Control</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Parks</b>	<b>58</b>

<b>Natural Environment - Policy</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Pools</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Youth</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Informing of Activities</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Art Gallery</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Flooding</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Lighting</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Sports</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>63</b>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

---

This survey has been commissioned by Kyogle Council to enable Councillors and staff to better understand the needs of the residents in Kyogle local government area.

The survey was conducted at a time when the Council was being investigated by the Department of Local Government on a number of management issues, with a resultant negative context.

A total of 1014 questionnaires were received from a base of approximately 4500 households. Respondents could skip questions meaning a variable number of responses were received for individual questions.

### **Overall:**

The overall level of satisfaction with Council was not above the middle value, with 19% of respondents being either satisfied or very satisfied. A large proportion of respondents (39%) had a neutral response, being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. A total of 43% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Council's three electoral wards were similar in terms of their overall positive satisfaction with Council, however Ward C displayed a noticeable difference in the number of respondents who were very dissatisfied with Council.

Respondents who have lived in Kyogle Shire for more than twenty years were generally more positive about the activities of Kyogle Shire Council than respondents who had lived in the Shire for less than five years.

- ▶ Items with the greatest level of satisfaction included provision of library services, cemeteries, swimming pools, waste collection services, effectiveness of landfill operations and provision of water services.
- ▶ Unsealed Rural Roads scored the highest dissatisfaction level, followed by rural roads (sealed) and urban roads.
- ▶ The impact of the recent fire at Norply may have been a contributing factor to the high concern about a perceived lack of 'job creation' throughout the LGA.
- ▶ Council's monthly newsletter is by far the most effective communications tool currently employed by Council – regularly read by over 80% of residents.
- ▶ Respondents expressed concern about how Council staff deliver customer service - indicating that discussion of this issue at a staff level may lead to improvements.
- ▶ Kyogle will soon have an Internet penetration of over 50% of residents, and there is feedback that that Council's website could be enhanced.
- ▶ Of the 913 responses received on the issue of amalgamation with one or more other Councils, 71% of respondents were not in favour.

- ▶ Residents in the Shire are evenly split on whether the number of Councillors should be reduced (49% in favour), with the least support for this proposition coming from Ward C.

### **Feedback comments**

The number of positive comments was high for a survey of this sort, where it is common for residents to bring an item of discontent to the attention of Council.

Issues of importance to most residents were local roads (especially rural roads), Promoting Employment, Customer Service, Council Management and Community Consultation.

- ▶ Roads - ratepayers saw provision and maintenance of roads as a basic right, and a direct responsibility of the Council. Respondents were very particular about the types of roads, with most criticism directed at the state of rural roads, both sealed and unsealed.
- ▶ Main Street - most respondents offered comments about improving the main street, with most comments generally offering encouragement for it to proceed and positive ideas.
- ▶ Tourism - there was support for continuing efforts to increase the value of tourism to the Kyogle LGA, but criticism of how it was being done. Many suggestions were made about tourism assets, and some respondents saw encouragement of business, maintenance of roads and the environment as key issues for improving tourism.
- ▶ Waste services - respondents generally happy with the services available at Council's waste facility. However, many suggestions were made for improvements, including introducing more recycling services.
- ▶ Rates -the level of rates charged proved to be unpopular with most respondents who chose to comment. Some saw little return in their local area for the amount paid, while others wondered whether wiser use of the existing funds was warranted.



## **INTRODUCTION**

---

This survey has been commissioned by Kyogle Council to enable Councillors and staff to better understand the needs of the residents in Kyogle local government area.

By clearly understanding the needs of the community, decision makers can frame the strategic plan, Council budget and the associated management plan to reflect these needs and aspirations.

The survey is structured to provide three types of information:

- Satisfaction with strategic policy areas;
- Future Priorities for Kyogle local government area; and
- Qualitative feedback from residents.

The survey has asked questions across the following broad areas of Council activities throughout the whole of the Kyogle local government area:

- Infrastructure and core services
- Quality of life in Kyogle LGA
- Economic development in Kyogle LGA
- Natural environment
- Managing Council
- Customer service
- Communication preferences.
- A 'report card', in which residents were asked to make an assessment of key activities, including overall.
- A qualitative section in which residents' comments were recorded.

## **Methodology**

The survey involved the mailing out of one survey per household in the Kyogle LGA. The survey form included a return envelope with a 'reply paid' stamp on the envelope.

### ***Sampling method***

The survey population was defined as all resident households of Kyogle. One questionnaire was delivered to each household, and occupants were allowed to determine for themselves who would fill in the survey. The survey was anonymous.

Checks were made to ensure that the sample size reflected the population between Council's three wards, using Council's rating data.

Responses were collected to a questionnaire containing both fixed and open-ended questions.

### **Sample size**

A total of 4500 questionnaires were mailed. After taking into account returns and blank responses, a total of 1014 useable responses were obtained for an effective response rate of 22.5% - a high level of responses for a survey of this type.

As a general rule in polling, it is not necessary to have received a response from every individual in order to obtain an accurate indication of opinions from the whole population. A good example of this is election opinion polling in which as little as 1000 responses can accurately forecast the result of a national election.

There was no control over who responded, but the gender balance was relatively even with 49% of respondents male.

There was a skew towards older respondents, perhaps reflecting that that time taken to complete the survey (about 15 minutes) may have been more convenient for older people, who may have more time to spare.

**Table 1: Age of Respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<20 years old	0
20-29	4
30-39	10
40-49	21
50-59	27
60+	38

The data from Council residential data has a break down of population between the three wards as roughly 33%. While around 40% of the respondents reported that they did not know what ward they were in, the remaining distribution of answers is split in roughly thirds.

**Table 2: Responses by Ward**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>No. of responses (n=1014)</b>	<b>% of responses</b>
Ward A	194	22
Ward B	178	20
Ward C	165	19
Respondent not sure	356	40
Respondent skipped question	121	

**Data analysis**

Data was collected and collated using *Select Survey Asp advanced*, web-based software. Data was further investigated using *Microsoft Excel*.

The main form of analysis was for frequency.

Readers should note that the number of responses to each question can vary, as respondents were able to skip questions they did not wish to answer.

**Context of Survey**

The survey was conducted at a time when the Council was being investigated by the Department of Local Government on a number of political and management issues. The publicity surrounding these investigations was widespread, as was negative criticism of the Council from a number of sources. This context appears to be a factor to be bourn in mind when interpreting the results.

## **PART A – COUNCIL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

The overall level of satisfaction with Council was below the middle value, with 19% of respondents being either satisfied or very satisfied. A large proportion of respondents (39%) had a neutral response, being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. A total of 43% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The mean score was 2.6.

The three wards were similar in terms of their overall positive satisfaction with council, however Ward C displayed a noticeable difference in the number of respondents who were very dissatisfied with Council.

A large number of respondents were not sure of the Council ward in which they resided, but the results for this group of respondents was not statistically different from the overall responses.

Respondents who have lived in Kyogle Shire for more than twenty years were generally more positive about the activities of Kyogle Shire Council than respondents who had lived in the Shire for less than five years.

Males were more dissatisfied than females with the activities of Council.

There were no significant differences between renters and home/owners/buyers in terms of their overall satisfaction with Council's activities.

**Table 3: Overall Satisfaction in Percentages (Question 59)**

	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>N</b>
All	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>875</b>
Ward A	16	26	34	18	6	168
Ward B	16	23	44	13	4	164
Ward C	23	17	39	17	4	148
Ward – not sure	19	23	41	14	3	316
Male	25	23	36	12	4	380
Female	16	23	41	16	3	375
New residents (<5yrs)	25	23	38	9	5	130
Long-time residents (>20yrs)	19	20	39	18	4	371

## COUNCIL SCORECARD

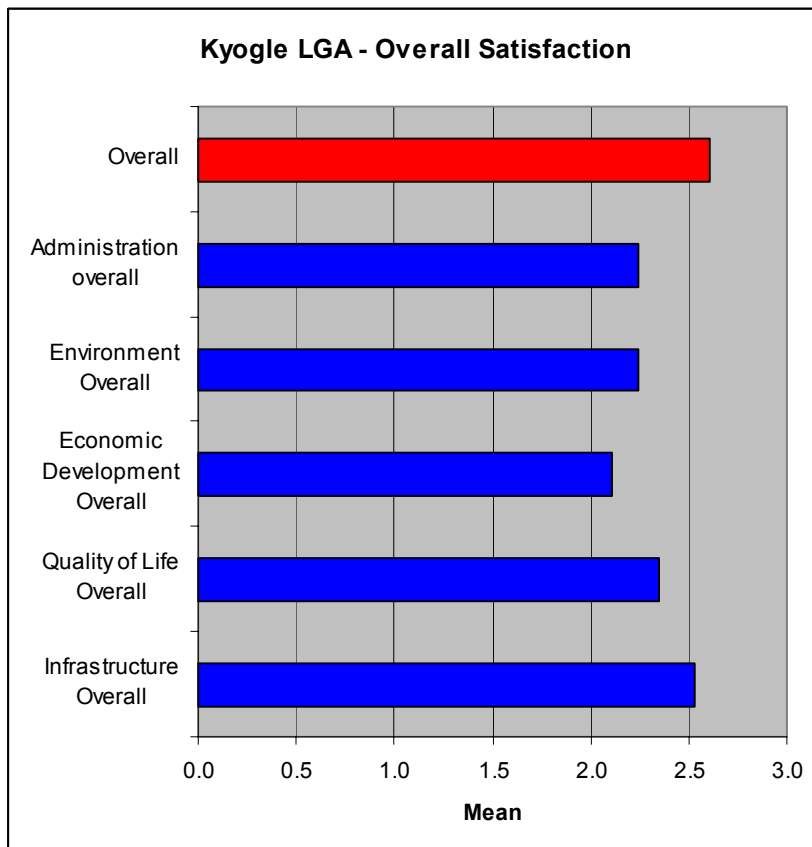
Residents were asked, through a number of 'catch-all' questions, to give an overall impression of how they viewed Kyogle and the activities of Council.

Below is the summary of the 'scorecard questions' in the survey.

**Table 4: Kyogle Scorecard**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Mean	N
Infrastructure Overall	20.1	25.2	38.9	12.9	2.9	2.5	782
Quality of Life Overall	19.8	22.1	40.4	14.1	3.6	2.3	861
Economic Development Overall	28.1	26.0	34.2	8.8	2.9	2.1	911
Environment Overall	21.8	24.8	40.0	10.5	2.9	2.2	890
Administration overall	27.7	21.5	33.7	13.3	3.8	2.2	915

**Figure 1: Kyogle LGA - Overall Satisfaction**

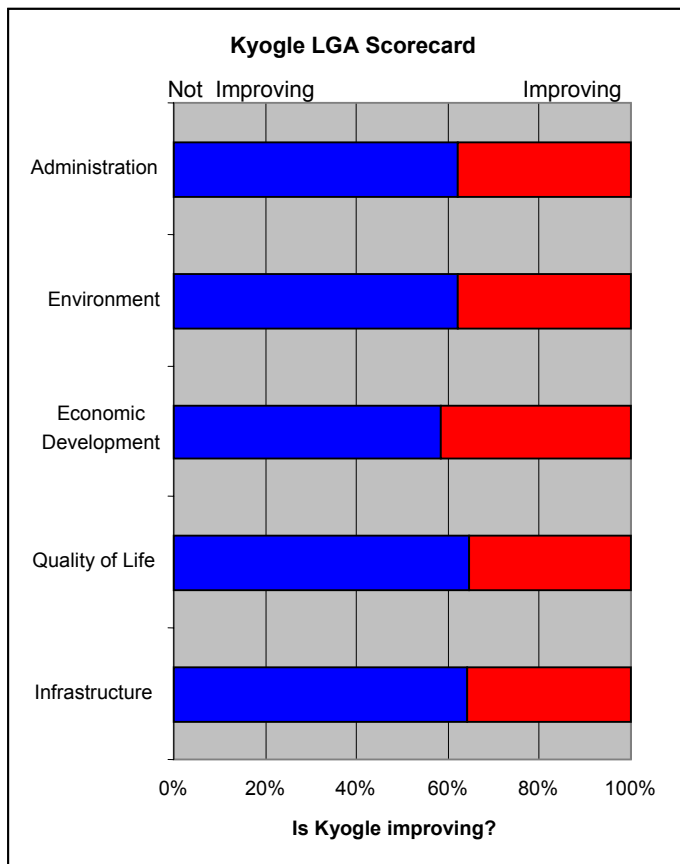


In a number of places, residents were asked whether they felt services were 'not improving', 'staying the same' or 'improving'.

**Table 5: Is Kyogle Improving - Percentage responses**

	Not improving %	Staying the Same %	Improving %
Infrastructure	30	48	22
Quality of Life	26	51	23
Economic Development	40	45	15
Environment	32	50	18
Administration	37	40	23

**Figure 2: Is Kyogle improving?**



The graph above shows the weighted average of these responses (Not Improving = 1 point; Staying the Same=2 points and Improving=3 points, with the result averaged). The data was investigated as to whether there was a significant difference between residents who had lived in the shire for more than 20 years and recent arrivals. No statistically significant difference was found.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

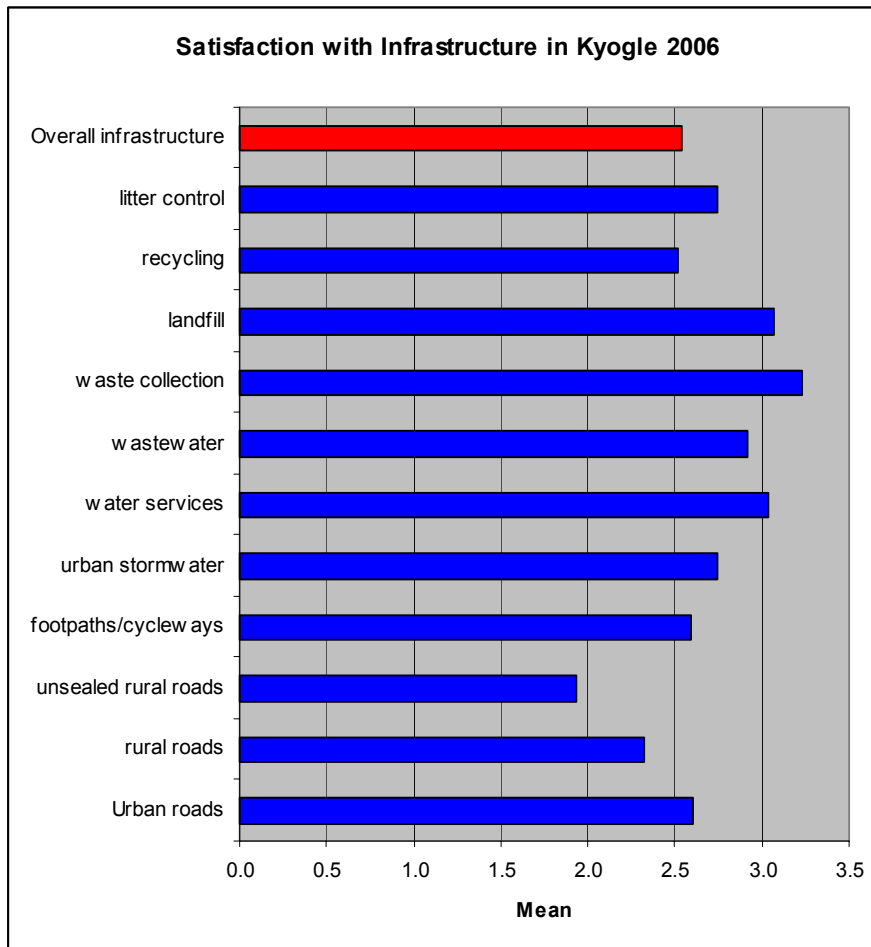
There were eleven areas measured under the heading of infrastructure. The results are presented in the table below.

**Table 6**

<b>Infrastructure Summary</b>							
	Very Dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	neither satisfied nor Dis-satisfied	satisfied	very satisfied	Mean	N
Urban Roads	20.9	21.1	39.2	14.2	4.5	2.6	864
Rural Roads	27.4	27.3	33.8	9.2	2.4	2.3	877
Unsealed Rural Roads	42.0	29.5	22.6	4.6	1.4	1.9	869
Footpaths/Cycleways	19.5	20.5	42.3	17.3	0.5	2.6	811
Urban Stormwater	14.8	16.8	48.3	19.7	0.5	2.7	752
Water Services	15.0	12.6	36.5	25.6	10.3	3.0	778
Wastewater	14.5	14.4	43.2	20.3	7.5	2.9	743
Waste Collection	15.1	11.2	28.7	25.4	19.5	3.2	794
Landfill	11.3	11.1	46.4	22.3	9.0	3.1	759
Recycling	28.9	20.5	28.4	15.0	7.3	2.5	849
Litter Control	17.9	20.3	38.3	16.4	7.1	2.7	822
<b>Overall infrastructure</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>782</b>

Items with the greatest level of satisfaction included provision of waste collection service, effectiveness of landfill operations and provision of water services. These services had a combined Satisfied and Very Satisfied score of over 36%. Items where there was a split opinion in the community included provision of recycling services, where there was both strong Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction. Reflecting the results of many Council areas, Unsealed Rural Roads scored the highest dissatisfaction level, followed by rural roads (sealed) and urban roads. The remaining items of Footpaths/cycleways, urban stormwater, wastewater and litter control were all viewed by the community below the middle value of 3.

**Figure 3**



***Differences between Groups***

The data was investigated to see whether there was a difference between the three wards in the LGA.

The data reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between the three council wards, in relation to some issues.

Ward A – Respondents were more happy overall with the condition of infrastructure in general. In particular, the condition of footpaths and cycleways, and landfill operations are significant pluses.

Ward B – Are more satisfied with the condition of unsealed rural roads, but are less satisfied overall than Ward A residents with Infrastructure in general.

Ward C – Residents are generally dissatisfied with the areas of Footpaths and Cycleways, waste collection, landfill operations, and Infrastructure Overall.



**Table 7: Top issues compared to other Wards**

<b>Ward A</b>		<b>Ward B</b>		<b>Ward C</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Footpaths and Cycleways	Unsealed Rural Roads	Unsealed Rural Roads	Footpaths and Cycleways		Footpaths and Cycleways
Landfill operations			Landfill Operations		Waste Collection
Waste Collection					Landfill Operations
Infrastructure Overall					Infrastructure Overall

**Table 8: Satisfaction ranking between Council Wards**

<b>Ward A</b>	<b>Ward B</b>	<b>Ward C</b>	<b>All responses</b>
Water Services	Water Services	Water Services	Waste Collection
Waste Collection	Waste Collection	Waste Collection	Landfill
Landfill Operations	Landfill Operations	Landfill Operations	Water Services
Wastewater Services	Wastewater Services	Wastewater Services	Wastewater
Urban Stormwater	Urban Stormwater	Urban Stormwater	Urban Stormwater
Urban Roads	Urban Roads	Urban Roads	Litter Control
Litter Control	Litter Control	Litter Control	Urban Roads
Infrastructure Overall	Infrastructure Overall	Infrastructure Overall	Footpaths/Cycleways
Footpaths and Cycleways	Footpaths and Cycleways	Footpaths and Cycleways	Overall Infrastructure
Rural Roads	Rural Roads	Rural Roads	Recycling
Recycling	Recycling	Recycling	Rural Roads
Unsealed Rural Roads	Unsealed Rural Roads	Unsealed Rural Roads	Unsealed Rural Roads

*\* Ranked from most satisfied to most dissatisfied.*

The mean scores below show a comparison of satisfaction on issues between Council wards.

The 'average' value is 3 – results below this are tending towards 'Dissatisfied', while results above are tending towards 'Satisfied'.

**Table 9: Comparison of Mean scores between Wards**

	Ward A	Ward B	Ward C	All responses
Urban Roads	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.6
Rural Roads	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.3
Unsealed Rural Roads	2.1	2.8	2.6	1.9
Footpaths and Cycleways	2.6	1.9	2.0	2.6
Urban Stormwater	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.7
Water Services	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.0
Wastewater Services	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.9
Waste Collection	3.4	3.0	2.7	3.2
Landfill Operations	3.2	2.6	2.4	3.1
Recycling	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.5
Litter Control	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.7
<b>Infrastructure Overall</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>

## QUALITY OF LIFE

There were eleven areas measured under the heading of quality of life. The results are presented in the table below.

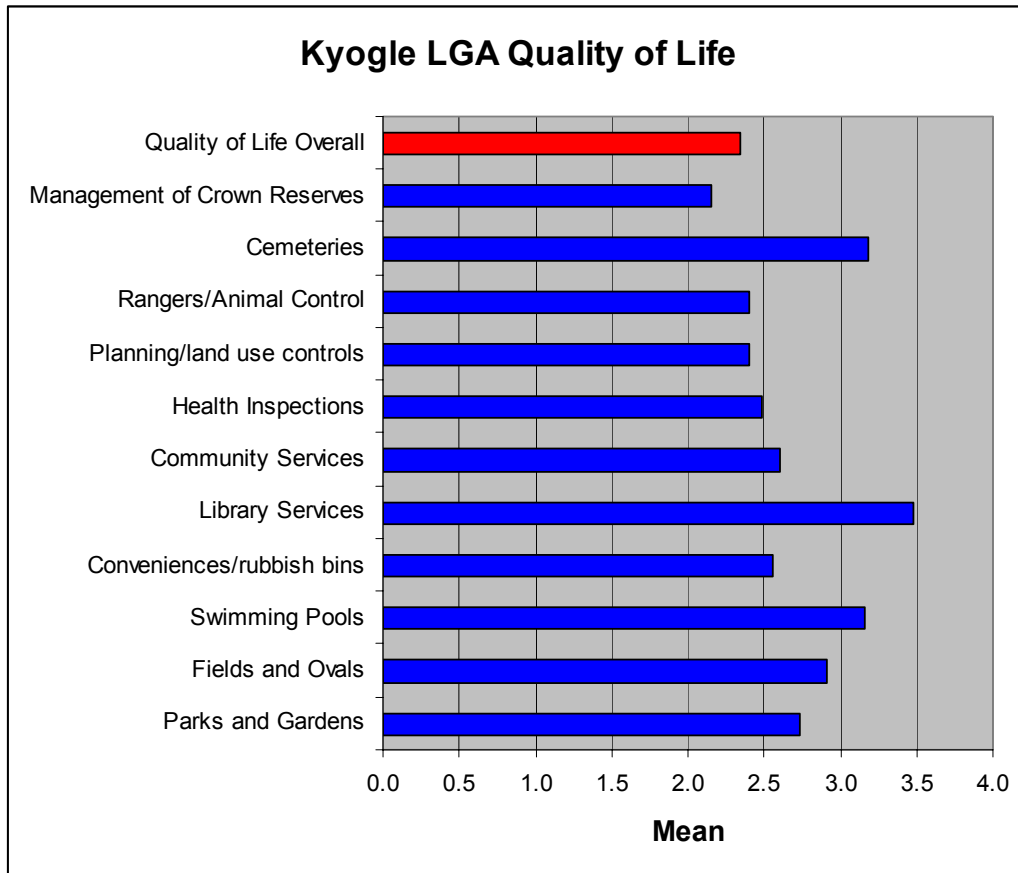
A number of items in this section scored the highest satisfaction levels in the entire survey.

**Table 10: Quality of Life**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied	satisfied	very satisfied	Mean	N
Parks and Gardens	10.7	16.4	42.9	22.4	7.5	2.7	864
Fields and Ovals	6.6	13.3	43.1	27.4	9.7	2.9	877
Swimming Pools	6.8	10.4	32.9	29.5	20.5	3.2	869
Conveniences/rubbish bins	17.6	21.4	30.6	21.6	8.7	2.6	811
Library Services	3.5	6.6	27.4	28.7	33.7	3.5	752
Community Services	10.9	17.5	47.5	18.0	6.1	2.6	778
Health Inspections	12.5	17.6	47.9	16.9	5.2	2.5	743
Planning/land use controls	14.5	21.5	46.8	13.7	3.4	2.4	794
Rangers/Animal Control	19.2	17.8	39.2	17.9	6.0	2.4	759
Cemeteries	3.8	7.1	39.0	30.3	19.9	3.2	849
Management of Crown Reserves	26.9	21.3	38.9	9.3	3.7	2.2	822
<b>Quality of Life Overall</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>782</b>

Items with the greatest level of satisfaction included provision of library services, cemeteries and swimming pools. Library services had a combined satisfied/very satisfied rating of over 62% with only 10.1% very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. Among areas of improvement highlighted in the survey are Management of Crown Reserves, where there appeared to be community concern at how this issue had been dealt with by Council. Planning/land use issues and Rangers/Animal control were seen as areas that could be improved. The remaining issues of Parks and Gardens, Public conveniences/Rubbish Bins, community services, and health inspections were all viewed below the middle value of 3.

**Figure 4**



***Differences between Groups***

The data was investigated to see whether there was a difference between the three wards in the LGA. The results were relatively uniform across the LGA, with no statistically significant differences between the Council wards.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

---

Economic Development activities included four areas covering activities from Tourism Promotion, Attracting and Supporting Business, Handling of Development Applications and Job Creation, as well as an 'overall' rating.

In the main, Kyogle Shire residents appear to be calling for greater activity on the part of Council for job creation and economic development, with most areas scoring below the middle value of 3.

**Figure 5: Economic Development**

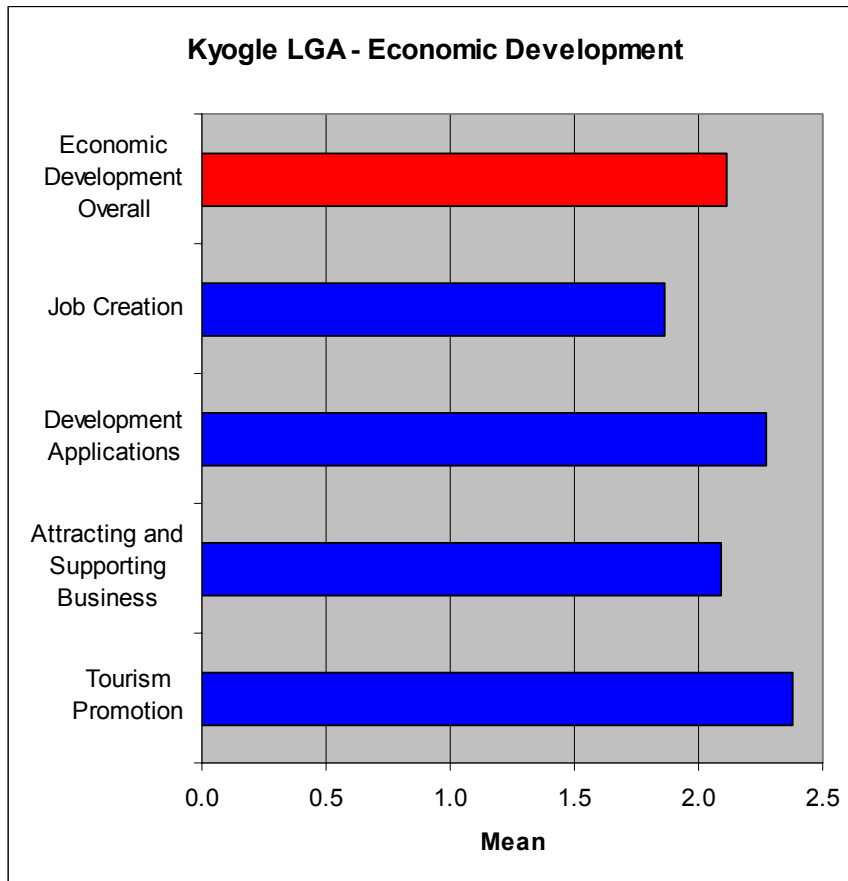
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	satisfied	very satisfied	Mean	N
Tourism Promotion	20.0	23.7	36.1	14.9	5.2	2.4	864
Attracting and Supporting Business	28.7	26.0	32.9	9.4	3.1	2.1	877
Development Applications	24.0	22.2	37.3	11.4	5.0	2.3	869
Job Creation	35.4	27.3	30.8	5.0	1.5	1.9	811
<b>Economic Development Overall</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>752</b>

The impact of the recent fire at Norply may have been a contributing factor to the high dissatisfaction in 'job creation' throughout the LGA – which, with a mean of 1.9, is one of the lowest recorded in the survey.

A total of 19% of respondents said they were employed full-time, while a further 14% were employed part-time. A further 35% were retired and 24% self-employed, leaving 5% looking for work.

Many of the areas in this section are not the direct responsibility of Council to provide, however the response from the survey shows that the issues are very important to residents.

**Figure 6**



***Differences between Groups***

No statistically significant differences were found in the responses between the three Council wards.

## ENVIRONMENT

---

Generally the environment was an area that respondents considered could be improved.

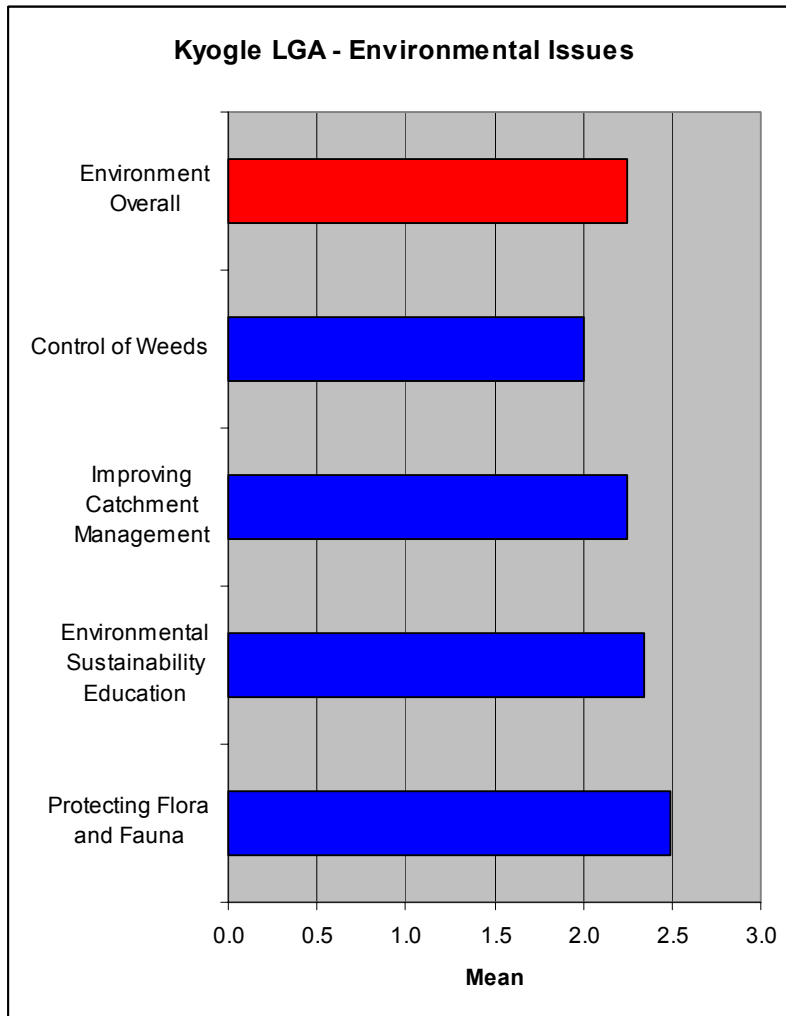
Residents were generally positive about the work being done on catchment management, but saw room for improvement in the areas of control of weeds, environmental sustainability education and protecting fauna and flora.

**Table 11: Environment**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied	satisfied	very satisfied	Mean	N
Protecting Flora and Fauna	14.2	17.8	46.7	17.3	4.1	2.5	864
Environmental Sustainability Education	16.4	23.4	45.0	12.1	3.2	2.3	877
Improving Catchment Management	20.3	22.0	44.0	11.3	2.4	2.3	869
Control of Weeds	32.7	24.5	32.1	7.4	3.3	2.0	811
<b>Environment Overall</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>752</b>

The control of weeds stood out as an issue which residents considered required more work.

**Figure 7**



***Differences between Groups***

No significant differences were found in the responses between the three Council wards.



## MANAGING KYOGLE COUNCIL

---

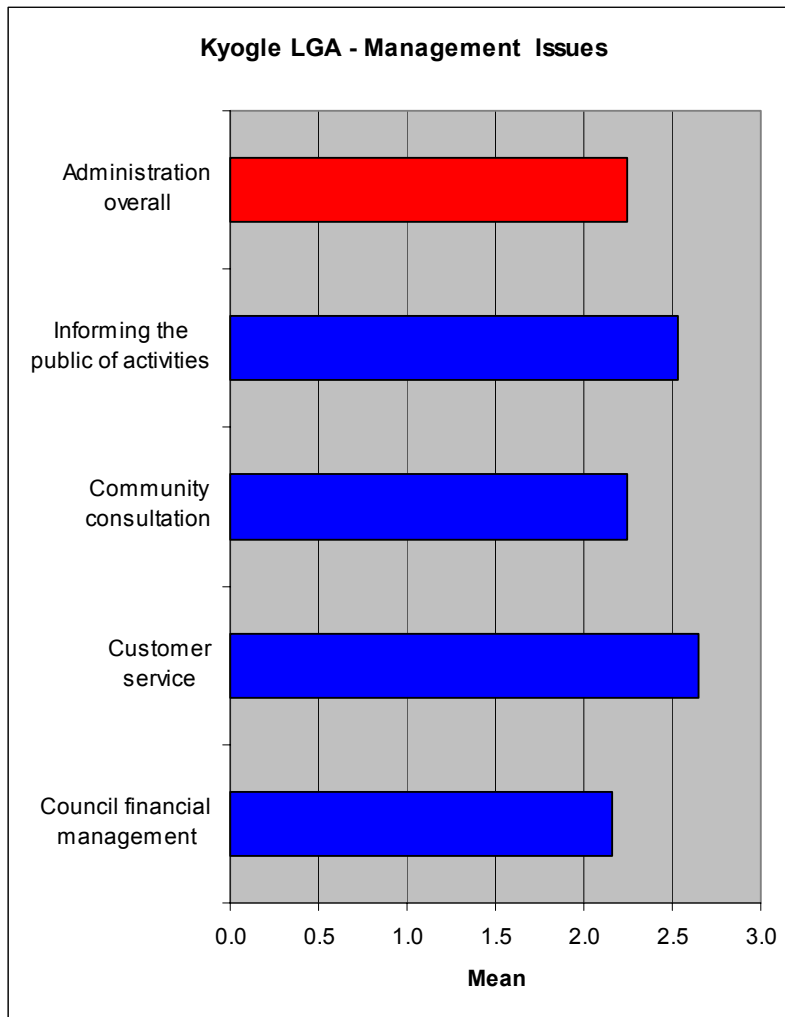
This area of activity included Council financial management, Customer Service, Community Consultation and Informing the Public of Activities, as well as an overall satisfaction of Council activities.

**Table 12: Managing Kyogle Council**

	Very Dissatisfied	Ddis-satisfied	neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied	satisfied	very satisfied	Mean
Council financial management	29.8	22.0	28.9	15.0	4.2	2.2
Customer service	16.8	18.2	33.1	21.8	10.1	2.7
Community consultation	28.2	22.6	30.3	13.7	5.2	2.2
Informing the public of activities	19.7	18.8	33.5	19.3	8.7	2.5
<b>Administration overall</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2.2</b>

Customer Service attracted the most favourable response from residents, with an appreciation of Council's activities to inform the public. This was re-inforced in other sections of the survey which showed that the Council's monthly newsletter is by far the most effective communications tool currently employed by Council.

**Figure 8**



***Differences between Groups***

No significant differences were found in the responses between the three Council wards.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

---

In keeping with Council's management plan direction to provide excellent service, three areas of customer service were investigated - face-to-face, written contact and telephone contact.

All respondents were asked the level of agreement with a number of statements about the customer contact on a five-point scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

### Face-to-Face Contact

A relatively high proportion of respondents (72%) said they'd had contact with council staff over the last year.

The three positive statements accounted for 75% of the responses, while the neutral statement 'Neither Good nor Bad' accounted for 10% of responses. The three negative statements accounted for 15% of responses.

**Table 13: Customer Service - Face-to-Face Contact**

	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Staff were professional	147		
Courteous	319		
Helpful	279		
Neither good nor bad		110	
Uninterested			101
Rude			42
Aggressive			13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>156</b>

In this question, it was possible for respondents to tick more than one box, to account for multiple staff interactions.

### Telephone contact

As with face-to-face contact, telephone contact had high levels of satisfaction. A total of 72% of survey respondents said they'd had some contact with Council staff in the last 12 months.

The three positive statements had high levels of responses, while the negative responses accounted for less than 15% of the responses.

**Table 14: Telephone Contact**

	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Negative</i>
Staff were professional	110		
Courteous	231		
Helpful	249		
Neither good nor bad		73	
Uninterested			83
Rude			29
Aggressive			12
<b>Totals</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>124</b>

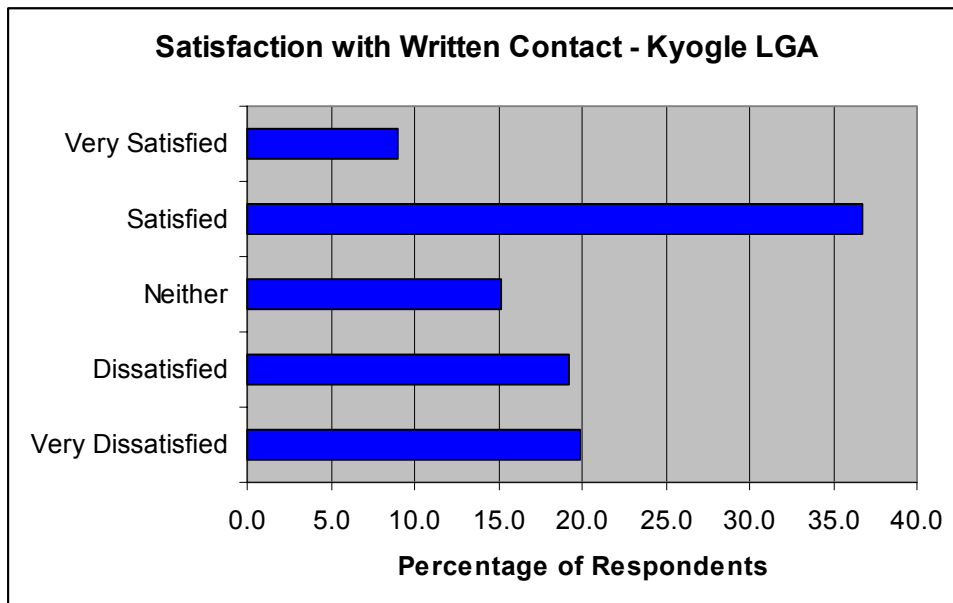
Comparing the responses from face-to-face contact, with those on the telephone, the level of customer response is not statistically significant, meaning that it is not possible to say that the public perceive a difference in how customer service is delivered on the telephone with how it is delivered face-to-face.

Positive comments amount to 75% of responses, neutral 9% and negative comments 16%.

**Written Contact**

Respondents were asked if they'd had any written correspondence with Council over the last year, and a total of 29% indicated they had. They were then asked to rate their satisfaction with the contact on a five-point scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied.

**Figure 9**



Respondents were asked if their correspondence was answered promptly – 55% agreed that it was.

This area shows that Council may profit from staff discussion about expectations for customer service – and the recent adoption of a Customer Service Policy is a step in the right direction.

## **COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL**

---

Information about the most effective way that Council can communicate with residents was collected through a number of questions.

### ***Council's website and Internet access***

The survey asked whether residents visited Council's website, how often and how important it was, and how satisfied they were with it. Council also was interested to ascertain the penetration of the Internet in the LGA, and how important it would be in the future.

A total of 22% of respondents said they had visited the website, with 9% indicating they did so weekly, and 22% doing so monthly. The bulk of respondents (69%) indicated they visited 'less frequently', while no respondents said they visited daily.

A total of 61.4% of respondents indicated the website was important or very important, while only 14.1% of respondents said the website was unimportant or very unimportant.

Satisfaction with the website was not as great, with 23.2% of respondents indicating they were satisfied or very satisfied, while 30% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This seems to suggest that Council's website could be improved.

Kyogle has had a long-running campaign to improve broadband internet services available to residents. The survey responses indicate that 47% of respondents have access to the Internet, with most of this through the much slower dial-up (34.1%). A total of (13.9%) have access to broadband Internet. Of respondents who did not have the Internet at home, (17%) are considering getting the internet in the next year, indicating that Kyogle will soon have an Internet penetration of over 50% of residents.

### ***Access to Media***

Understanding the sources of information residents rely upon for information can assist Council to better target and distribute information to residents.

The survey responses indicated that the most widely access media for information is Council's monthly newsletter, with 80.8% of respondents indicating they used it to obtain information about Council.

The *Express Examiner* (56%) and the *Northern Star* (33%) were the next most important.

Newspapers were more important than television or radio in obtaining information about Council activities.

**Table 15: Access to media**

<b>Media</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Share %</b>
Kyogle Council newsletter	760	80.8
Express Examiner Newspaper	527	56.0
Word of mouth	319	33.9
Northern Star Newspaper	311	33.0
ABC Radio	137	14.6
NBN TV	133	14.1
Prime TV	131	13.9
2LM	76	8.1
Kyogle Council website	56	6.0
Other	48	5.1
ZZZ	12	1.3

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they received the Council's newsletter, with the highest response of (78%) indicating they read it always.

This level of response indicates that the newsletter is an excellent avenue for keeping residents informed, although it was not proved statistically correct that receiving the newsletter lead to a more positive view of council activities.

## PART B – FUTURE PRIORITIES FOR KYOGLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

---

The survey enabled respondents to rank issues of importance for Kyogle LGA in the future, as well as indicate their level of agreement with issues such as potential amalgamation, any reduction in the number of councillors, and the best number of councillors should the number be reduced.

Question 60 proved problematical for many respondents who did not rank the items referred to, from 1 to 11. This has resulted in a lower level of return for this question, however, the responses obtained are still sufficiently high to be of some indicative value.

**Table 16: Ranking of Issues**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Improving local roads	2.6
Promoting local employment	3.9
Improving/upgrading water and sewer infrastructure	5.5
Promoting tourism	5.7
Improving catchment management	6.1
Vibrant, active town/village centres	6.3
Improving waste management	6.3
Protecting natural bushland	6.7
Improving stormwater and drainage infrastructure	6.8
Promotion of fitness and sporting activities	7.7
Promoting cultural activities	8.3

*\* Lower scores indicate more important to respondents*

The above list can be compared with the items asked in the first part of the survey, where respondents were asked to indicate how important they considered each service and activity to be.

The following list records the number of respondents who indicated an issue was of 'High' or 'Very High' importance.



**Table 17: importance of issues – High or Very High**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>n</b>
Rural Roads	797
Customer service	788
Council financial management	785
Unsealed Rural Roads	769
Informing the public of activities	751
Community consultation	740
Attracting and Supporting Business	723
Urban Roads	704
Recycling	704
Conveniences/rubbish bins	700
Job Creation	700
Control of Weeds	694
Library Services	645
Litter Control	642
Waste Collection	628
Development Applications	627
Swimming Pools	620
Water Services	617
Protecting Flora and Fauna	613
Improving Catchment Management	612
Tourism Promotion	606
Fields and Ovals	586
Parks and Gardens	570
Footpaths and Cycleways	569
Cemeteries	564
Urban Stormwater	559
Environmental Sustainability Education	550
Wastewater Services	546
Health Inspections	534
Community Services	533
Rangers/Animal Control	519
Landfill Operations	518
Planning/land use controls	514
Management of Crown Reserves	492

Comparing the two lists indicates that local roads (especially rural roads), Promoting Employment, Customer Service, Council Management and Community Consultation are important issues for residents.

### ***Additional rates***

Respondents were asked whether they would be prepared to pay additional rates if it meant delivery of additional services in specific areas.

**Table 18: Willingness to pay additional rates**

	%yes	n
Improving local roads	38.4	862
Improving waste management	24.4	811
Vibrant, active town/village centres	23.6	801
Promoting cultural activities	23.3	808
Improving/upgrading water and sewer infrastructure	22.0	804
Promoting tourism	20.6	804
Improving catchment management	20.6	804
Protecting natural bushland	19.8	808
Improving stormwater and drainage infrastructure	17.8	799
Promotion of fitness and sporting activities	14.8	797
Promoting local employment	12.7	795

### ***Amalgamation***

Respondents were asked whether they were in favour of Kyogle shire being amalgamated with one or more neighbouring local government areas. Of the 913 responses received to this question, 71% were not in favour of an amalgamation. Of residents who had lived in Kyogle longer than 20 years, (76%) were not in favour of amalgamation, while for new residents who have lived in Kyogle for less than 5 years, (65%) were not in favour of amalgamation.

Residents of Ward B were most in favour of Kyogle remaining a Shire in its own right (78%), while support was also strong in Ward A (75%). Residents of Ward C were still largely in favour (65%).

### ***Reducing Councillors Numbers***

On the question of Councillor numbers, a total of 49% of respondents were in favour of reducing the number of Councillors. However, there was no agreement on what the new level of Councillors should be with the status quo of nine being supported by (31%) of respondents, while six (21%) and five (23%) were also popular options.

Across the wards, support for a reduction in Councillors was significantly different. Support for reducing numbers of Councillors was strongest in Ward A (51%), and weakest in Ward C (39%), while Ward B recorded 42% in favour of reducing Councillor numbers.

## **PART C – QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

---

The survey enabled respondents to answer open-ended questions about various aspects of Kyogle LGA and its Council.

Respondents were asked to identify the main theme of their comment, and to indicate whether it was positive or negative, both positive and negative or neither/neutral.

The number of responses received was over 50%, and is considered high for this kind of question.

Overall, the responses were self-selected by residents into the following categories:

- Positive 31%
- Negative 27%
- Both positive and negative 34%
- Neither/neutral 10%

The number of positive comments is high for a survey of this sort, where it is common for residents to take the avenue of a survey to bring an item of discontent to the attention of council.

**Table 19: No. of written responses received by issue**

Issue	N	% of all responses
Roads	246	46
Main Street	145	27
Tourism	109	20
Waste	108	20
Rates	107	20
Footpaths	101	19
Employment	93	17
Parking	91	17
Business Development	89	17
Management - Service	89	17
Staff	89	17
Natural Environment - Protection	76	14
Water	72	13
Animal Control	69	13
Parks	69	13
Natural Environment - Policy	56	10
Drains	53	10
Pools	50	9
Youth	48	9
Library	43	8
Informing of activities	45	8
Traffic	35	7
Disability	37	7
Art Gallery	31	6
Flooding	30	6
Lighting	30	6
Sports	24	4
Other	5	1

When the comments are further categorised by area of strategic interest, the results are as follows:

Infrastructure	40%
Quality of life	10%
Environment	5%
Economic Development	15%
Managing Council	30%

## **Detail of comments**

### **Roads**

***Roads were the most-mentioned item in the open-comment section, with 246 responses received. The most common general comment was that ratepayers saw provision and maintenance of roads as a basic right, and a direct responsibility of the local council.***

- ▶ *Fix the roads, they are wrecking our cars.*
- ▶ *Roads - need a lot of work, also town streets.*
- ▶ *EVERY activity mentioned in this survey, and more, requires the use of roads. The safer the better.*
- ▶ *Kyogle's roads are falling to pieces.*
- ▶ *Fix the roads and bridges. Don't care about anything else...*

***Respondents were very particular about the types of roads, with most criticism directed at the state of rural roads, both sealed and unsealed.***

### **Rural Roads**

- ▶ *Rural roads are disgraceful and cost the ratepayers money in maintaining vehicles due to potholes. Just grading the roads with no proper road base or drainage is just a waste of time and money.*
- ▶ *Rural roads should be maintained by larger contributions by rural rate payers (user pays).*
- ▶ *Rural roads are treacherous and deteriorating more rapidly. Drainage and road structure needs to be addressed.*
- ▶ *Kyogle rural roads are very bad, the gravel used is too big and sharp. Regularly damage to tyres and under vehicle are very costly to repair.*
- ▶ *Rural sealed roads are a disgrace. Pot holes are left in sections that are working on are left until damage by water and use falls into flood damage so council can obtain grant funding to repair roads that should have been maintained with maintenance funding a lot earlier.*

### **Gravel Roads**

- ▶ *I think gravel roads should be maintained more often especially grading and cleaning of drains.*
- ▶ *Grade roads more often - think about planning for bitumen.*

- ▶ *Rural gravel roads should be graded at least annually.*
- ▶ *As a regular user of the Council roads, I am very dissatisfied with Council's routine maintenance program of gravel roads. The roads are almost impassable and dangerous before roads are graded. I would like to see grader operators flexi-days and holidays be staggered in order to keep graders working like other Council's or purchase another good second hand grader.*
- ▶ *There should be more effort put into keeping roads properly maintained. Instead of grading dirt roads, what about sealing them? I'm sure that it can't be good economic management to continually grade dirt roads.*

### **Sealed Roads**

- ▶ *Rural sealed roads are a disgrace. Pot holes are left in sections that are working on are left until damage by water and use falls into flood damage so council can obtain grant funding to repair roads that should have been maintained with maintenance funding a lot earlier.*

### **Secondary Bitumen Roads**

- ▶ *Secondary bitumen roads have had potholes for sometime and are only filled in after complaints are filed in council. Follow up action has been slow and if not none at all. Would like any improvement in this area.*

### **Urban Streets**

- ▶ *Roads - local residential streets have large potholes*

### **Bridges**

- ▶ *The replacement of wood bridges with more permanent long life bridges is a really good idea.*
- ▶ *State government should pay for replacing the old bridges and better maintenance for main roads and let Council get on with rural and unsealed roads. If we had better main roads, we could attract more business to Kyogle.*

### **Causeways**

- ▶ *The roads are leaving a lot to be desired, although the recent 'patch-up' jobs were appreciated. Where causeways are concerned - it would be good to know that Council could/ would fix (perhaps raise?) one that floods- preventing residents from going to and from work.*

***Respondents outlined many reasons why they felt roads should be of a higher standard, including to improve safety, to encourage tourism and economic development, for environmental and for aesthetic reasons.***

### **Tourism**

- ▶ *Rural roads and bridges need more attention, these will only promote tourism as Kyogle town would retain it's individuality and not become a Lismore look alike.*

- ▶ *You can't promote tourism with the roads in bad condition.*
- ▶ *If the Council wishes to attract tourism more care should be taken to maintain rural roads and a fully sealed road to Toonumbar Dam (for example) would encourage more visitors to these areas*

### **Safety**

- ▶ *I think less money could be spent on useless guide posts on already narrow country roads, they are a hazard and make it harder to get off the edge of the road when you meet a vehicle coming in the opposite direction, also a little more thought as to their placement would be helpful. Putting them in the middle of farm gateways is certainly not the best management practice.*
- ▶ *Well maintained roads improve safety and reduce driver stress. Also encourage travel which increases businesses. I won't drive the Bonalbo road at night - few reflector posts, no white lines on edges, insufficient speed advisory signs and badly broken edges. Mallanganee lookout turnoff to Hogarth - poor visibility and narrowness is too dangerous.*
- ▶ *If you don't start to maintain unsealed roads more frequently then people will be injured or killed - perhaps leading to Council being sued.*
- ▶ *Unfenced bitumen roads - black cattle on them at night - you cannot see them*
- ▶ *Roads are a disgrace. More money should be spent on upgrading & bitumen sealing of rural gravel roads on school bus routes*

### **Amenity**

- ▶ *Rural roads are a disgrace and need maintaining more often. The dust from the road is an extreme health hazard as well as a house cleaning hazard.*

### **Roadsides**

- ▶ *I think there should be more mowing of road edges.*
- ▶ *Road edges slashed better e.g banks and edges. Road signage kept clear of rubbish*
- ▶ *There has been a deal of very poor quality work resulting in severe damage to significant amounts of roadside veg. near old Bonalbo and Bonalbo. Please implement the standards, enforce them and train staff.*
- ▶ *Keep trees that hang over roads cut back and rubbish etc.*
- ▶ *More wildlife signs along the rural roads*

### **Tidiness**

- ▶ *The weeds and rubbish along the roads are an eyesore and becoming dangerous by blocking view of traffic.*

***There were several comments about the standard of Council work activities.***

### **Standard of Work**

- ▶ *Why are newly tarred road deteriorating faster than older ones?*
- ▶ *Council workers are allowed to use round-up without masks and gloves. This is horrific - absolutely appalling. They might be stupid but council should know better.*
- ▶ *The paths and roads are a disgrace. If the Council learnt to patch the holes by packing the repairs with a whacker instead of the back of a shovel, the patch would last for years, as it is, the first truck or storm pulls the patch out.*
- ▶ *Outside Kyogle Council verges and road surfaces appear to be maintained to a higher standard than within the Shire. Generally we travel widely and the difference between Kyogle Shire roads and others is highly noticeable. If contractors must be used for these works, then Council needs to monitor the efficiency more diligently, especially the repair of potholes and sealed surfaces both new and older. Repair work and patching is generally very shoddy and short lived.*
- ▶ *I'd like to see less men sent out to a work site. There are always some just standing around watching.*
- ▶ *Limited dollars for roads are not wisely spent. Roads should be inspected prior to allocation money to roads. The actual work should be more closely supervised including inspecting the final job.*
- ▶ *When Council builds a road the job is to often poorly done from what I've seen. We wait for a long time to get road works and when it does happen it starts crumbling very quickly.*

***Many respondents wanted Council to prioritise road works after rain.***

### **After Rain**

- ▶ *Prompt road repairs after heavy rain.*
- ▶ *Edges of sealed surfaces need attention, especially after rain on hilly streets.*
- ▶ *All local roads need better rain run-off - shape of the roads too flat for high rainfall area*

***A few comments urged a more long-term view of the road system in the Shire.***

### **Road Planning**

- ▶ *The road situation in Kyogle is an absolute disgrace and it is quite obvious that nothing gets done on road maintenance until the complaints box gets to overflowing. After talking with Council staff there seems to be no Council long-term plan to upgrade the road network. The sealed roads are rough with large drop off on the edges but when you get to our gravel roads, it is shocking.*



▶ *If we want tourists to come to our town, you need to work closely with National Parks in improving access to areas such as Eden Ck Falls, sealing roads to Sheep Station Ck.*

**The need to manage traffic through Kyogle township was mentioned by some respondents.**

### **Kyogle Bypass**

▶ *Kyogle needs a bypass ASAP!*

▶ *A heavy vehicle bypass of the CBD at least in one direction but preferably both - urgently necessary as a safety issue and noise and air pollution*

**A number of responses suggested improvements for Council's handling of Service Requests, as well as a number of specific service requests, of which a sample are reproduced below. All specific requests have been passed on to Council staff.**

### **Handling Service Requests**

▶ *Living just out of Ettrock the roads become undrivable in a standard car before anything is done. We have found that the Council takes little interest when a road complaint is made. Also road complaints do not get passed through to the road workers.*

▶ *Rural roads - once every two years does not work when raining, complaints are not handled properly.*

### **Specific Requests for Service**

▶ *Sextonville Road at Woolners Arm is slowly corroding with each rise of Doubtfull Creek - council disregards maintenance of the dirt/gravel section of this road. Repair of guideposts was requested months ago - before a passing tourist crashes into the unmarked 6' concrete drain.*

▶ *I would like to see the road to the National Park fully sealed. It is an insult to the tourists to expect them to travel on the unsealed road at Lynch's Creek to the park. We have a wonderful tourist attraction in the park but a horrible road to it. We pay more than enough and more than most other Council's with better facilities and guttering on roads.*

▶ *I am extremely dissatisfied with the lack of maintenance of my road (Runnymede). The last grading occurred 2 years ago and before that 3 years with no maintenance at all in the intervening period. The road is now quite dangerous not to mention the damage it is doing to my car. Until someone gets seriously hurt or God forbid someone else dies, nothing seems to be done as is the case in these issues.*

▶ *The roads surrounding Bonalbo are a disgrace as well as especially the entrance to the Bonalbo Show Grounds which is a major drawing point for visitors from the out of area.*

▶ *Please finish sealing Williams & Link Roads. We have 3 children and often travel the roads 2-3 times a day.*

- ▶ *Roads- Pathetic. Collins Creek Road top dressing needed.*
- ▶ *West of the Range Roads in general are in a bad state, but if council could at least fill the pot holes in the gravel roads more than once between gradings, would be very beneficial to regular road users.*
- ▶ *Bonalbo/Tabulam roads are dreadful and dangerous. The Bruxner Hwy is a goat track with pot holes, sunken spots, raised bumps, no side lines (white lines). We have the worst roads I have seen in NSW.*

**On a positive note, some respondents praised Council's activities.**

#### **Positive Comments**

- ▶ *Roadside mowing is very good.*
- ▶ *The Council has done a good job maintaining roads whilst keeping rates at a reasonable level.*
- ▶ *Thanks for starting to radically improve rural roads - this actually helps residents feel they are part of the shire. Whether this is staff or councillors initiating it, it is to be commended.*
- ▶ *Our family has lived in Kyogle Shire for approx. 20 years. Over that period, I believe roads have improved about 10%. Let's get back to sealing 1klm of unsealed roads per year. This way residents will see an improvement.*
- ▶ *My major concern is the condition of the dirt roads as I travel on them daily in the Dyrabba area (Dyrabba, Old Dyrabba Rd). These roads have been maintained this year to a very high standard, although I have found they are used far more once this is done. Twice yearly would be great as once it rains, the roads deteriorate greatly. Thankyou.*

#### **Main Street**

**Most respondents offered comments about improving the mainstreet, with most comments generally offering encouragement and ideas.**

#### **Suggestions for Improvement**

- ▶ *The main street needs to be made more vibrant. Paint the facades of the old buildings. Awnings go up to shade shoppers.*
- ▶ *Lets modernise the main streetscape and expand our bustling shopping centre to promote jobs and reduce escape spending.*
- ▶ *Main street looks bad, we need to get on with the job and fix it up. Kyogle's Main Street is bad, when you start to look around at other towns.*
- ▶ *Lots of people who travel around would love Kyogle but Kyogle needs the main street fixed so people want to stop. I think we have more people who travel, and stop in Wangaree than in Kyogle.*

- ▶ *It's time for Council to bite the bullet and upgrade the main street of Kyogle.*
- ▶ *The Main Street needs a make over with regard to footpaths in particular. The new rubbish bins in the street are excellent.*

### **Many respondents had positive suggestions for improving Main Street...**

#### **Suggestions for Main Street**

- ▶ *Main Street - needs tropical plants.*
- ▶ *Remove CBD - Main Street off Summerland Way.*
- ▶ *CBD and associated back lanes need an overall plan to, as I see it, to allow business to expand for a massive growth in our area.*
- ▶ *Main Street - needs shade/shelter.*
- ▶ *The Main Street needs a big clean up e.g trees, flowers, footpaths and we need parks for our children to play in that are safe. The parks with swings are near roads and small children can run out.*
- ▶ *We are the Gateway to the Rainforest and our main street should represent this. Currently boring and congested with local cars, more outside eateries should be encouraged especially on weekends when tourist traffic is at its highest.*

***There were some respondents who questioned the value of money of the proposed improvements.***

#### **Value for Money**

- ▶ *Please do not waste money on the main street upgrade plans - improve, yes, but forget the reduction in parking spaces, forget the bollards, forget the outdoor cafes (one long time cafe has recently closed and another has reduced its opening hours and is closed Sundays).*
- ▶ *In my opinion the beautification of main street is of no use. The plans, I recall would turn the area into an obstacle course. Main street is too narrow for trucks.*
- ▶ *Character of Main Street should remain the same.*

**The link with tourism was noted by several respondents...**

#### **Link with Tourism**

- ▶ *The entry to either end of town is not anything to encourage visitors. The gullies near Fawcett Street look disgraceful. The other end of town is no better.*

**As part of any upgrade, some respondents saw an opportunity to improve the beauty of Main Street...**

### **Improving Amenity**

- ▶ *Create better parks and gardens around town using local native plants. Doing this will attract tourists and show some pride without local environment. Plants in main street need to be selected more carefully to suit our weather conditions.*
- ▶ *I think the Council should work more positively with business owners in the main street to apply for heritage funding for protection and upgrading of the main street building facade.*
- ▶ *Need to keep Main Street tidy and clean. I had a friend visit (part of motorcycle tour) and said "nice part of the world but town looks shabby and tired".*

**The facilities in the Main Street such as toilets, access for the disabled, and the town clock were also mentioned...**

### **Facilities**

- ▶ *The public toilets are something the council should feel ashamed of. Nothing in close proximity to shops or easy to access for the elderly and disabled.*
- ▶ *Public toilets need urgent attention - locked at night*
- ▶ *The beautification of main street, when??? Footpaths - disaster waiting to happen. No access for disabled especially to banks and toilet.*
- ▶ *Please fix the town clock.*

### **Tourism**

***There was support for continuing efforts to increase the value of tourism to the Kyogle LGA, but criticism of how it was being done. Many suggestions were made about what constituted Kyogle's tourism assets, and some respondents saw encouragement of business, maintenance of roads and the environment as key issues for improving tourism.***

### **Strategic Direction**

- ▶ *Council should provide free/cheap water land rates, electricity to develop enviro/tourism.*
- ▶ *Council needs to promote Kyogle and the surrounding areas - Kyogle has the potential to become a huge tourist area - which will lead to more employment etc.*
- ▶ *Council should be working harder to attract more business development helping to find suitable land, helping with less stringent restrictions, helping instead of hindering. We need employment & tourists as this little town of ours has great potential.*
- ▶ *Everyone already trading will ultimately benefit from additional trading initiatives like wine bars, alfresco cafes, weekend markets, outdoor entertainment and other weekend or mainstreet activities. These will attract local customers and patrons as well as out-of-towners. We are not offering enough to tourists or locals and so people take their custom elsewhere in the Northern Rivers. I'm one of them.*

### ***Although there was one dissenting voice...***

- ▶ *We do not want more tourists, more employment or more development.*

### **Kyogle's Tourism Assets**

- ▶ *Border Ranges and tourism underdeveloped - almost non-developed.*
- ▶ *Promote day tour activities in both the town and surrounding country area. Promote the founding district history ie. timber industry and identities. Dairy and cattle industry. The railway construction and history. Promote and provide signage for Kyogle parklands, botanical gardens and area lookout.*
- ▶ *I think our business houses building could be made more interesting if the year of construction could be displayed on the top. The only places are memorial institute 1932 and Exchange Hotel 1928. There are many buildings build in the 20s and 30s which are typical of that period. Even a plaque on the wall with name, built by and date would make our town very interesting for tourists.*

### **Facilities**

- ▶ *The new tourist information centre and park is a credit to Kyogle Council, now we need more tourists.*
- ▶ *Signage - The signs on the outskirts of Kyogle are amateurish and inadequate...the logo "Gateway to the Rainforest" is a fantastic one. Signs should be larger and reflect this logo in a professional manner. There are many examples in other towns....toilet signs - signs should be on the Main Street indicating the direction of public toilets. Toilets at the Memorial Institute are a disgrace ...*

### ***Some respondents urged Council to support business more, but also asked business to play their part...***

### **Encouragement of Business**

- ▶ *Promotion of towns businesses and as a tourist attraction is urgent - several shops have closed down and new businesses are facing so much red tape that they are not encouraged to proceed.*
- ▶ *It should be made easier to develop businesses outside of town for tourism without putting extra financial burdens as in high DA fees and unreasonable requests for paying for widening of roads etc.*
- ▶ *Business to be encouraged to move more and trade to suit the growth of tourism. Town goes to sleep at noon Saturday.*

### ***Several comments drew a link with better roads...***

### **Link with Better Roads**

- ▶ *The road linking Summerland Way to Rathdowney should be a priority from both Beaudesert and Kyogle Shire Council using the old highway which can be transversed east of Mt Lindsay. Kyogle would grow and flourish because the road would increase the number of tourists.*

**...And with the environment...**

### **Link with Environment**

- ▶ *Too many large gum trees are being removed from the Geneva area. Koalas are frequently sighted in these trees...These animals bring tourism and are in need of protection.*
- ▶ *Create better parks and gardens around town using local native plants.*
- ▶ *Keeping the natural environment intact not under continuous destruction ... the natural character of this area will attract tourists because of that unique characteristic.*

**Some respondents made suggestions for developing Kyogle LGA's tourism...**

### **Developing Tourism**

- ▶ *bus trips accommodation/tour guides. Music festivals could be staged here. Plenty of room.*
- ▶ *Council should fund (possibly in partnership with business) Kyogle Sundays - unrestricted markets, live entertainment, medieval tourney's etc. Put Kyogle on the map.*
- ▶ *more markets with locals selling their bric-a-brac, tourists love "antiques".*
- ▶ *Caravan Park - this could be such a great asset for attracting tourism...*

### **Waste**

***Waste services attracted a high number of comments, with respondents generally happy with the services available at Council's waste facility. However, many suggestions were made for improvements, including introducing more recycling services.***

- ▶ *Fairer tip fees for rural residents to encourage people to dispose of waste properly.*
- ▶ *At the tip, I think it's absurd that we pay to dispose of green waste, when council mulch it and resell to the public (talk about having the cake and eating it too!).*
- ▶ *Some decent rubbish bins locally, preferably vandal-proof that can't be moved, tipped over, run over and otherwise vandalised, particularly in Bonalbo.*
- ▶ *Need for extra services to pick up excess household waste eg. tree limbs, old furniture etc.*
- ▶ *The non-covering or inefficient covering of rubbish loads should be policed and heavy penalties should be effected against offenders.*
- ▶ *No rubbish service to Cawongla.*

### **Support for more Recycling**

- ▶ *Many residents do not have the transport means to recycle at the tip.*
- ▶ *Better recycling facilities would be a good idea. I'm not sure exactly of what recycling facilities currently exist so maybe some education/advertising to let Kyogle people know about existing recycling facilities. I like the idea of the separate bin for paper and cardboard, food scraps etc. but not sure if people of Kyogle would be willing to pay extra for that facility.*
- ▶ *Would love recycle collection service in Mallanganee and elsewhere. Far too much goes into landfill.*
- ▶ *Whilst all other council areas are increasing recycling facilities, Kyogle Council makes recycling difficult for residents. Too much recyclable material ends up in landfill because it is just too hard to manage for residents.*
- ▶ *Recycling system and tip is very user unfriendly and discourages active recycling e.g P.E.T not accepted. No recycling outside tip hours.*
- ▶ *We would really love to be able to recycle plastic i.e milk, drink bottles etc. We live out of town and go to the dump to recycle all paper, glass and metal that we can. We left Brisbane approx. 11yrs ago and have found it extremely frustrating that we cannot recycle plastic. We realise that it's more expensive for council to take the plastic items to a suitable facility, but couldn't we do something in conjunction with Richmond Valley Council to address this issue? We would be ecstatic if we could save all of the landfill space used by plastic.*

### **Rates**

***The level of Rates charged proved to be unpopular with most respondents who chose to comment. Some saw little return in their local area for the amount paid, while others wondered whether wiser use of the existing funds was warranted.***

- ▶ *Rates are too high for the lack of services provided and for land value.*
- ▶ *Why are our rates more than Coastal area's and these town's are going ahead, main streets, footpaths, lighting etc..?*

### **Link with Administration**

- ▶ *If you don't have enough funds to cover debts and provide services, then petition the minister for local government for additional assistance rather than drive residents into poverty and out of Kyogle Shire.*
- ▶ *I object highly to having my rates increased to repay councils debts due to overspending. Council doesn't pay for me if I personally overspend, so why should ratepayers pay for council mistakes. Get your act together PLEASE.*

▶ *Rates in Kyogle are excessive for a small country town. Up-market town houses in Sydney suburbs are 50% to 70% less. Perhaps better management of the rates is the answer.*

▶ *In the years that we have lived in Kyogle Council - the council financial management i.e lost money, has been very poor. Ratepayers have a paid a high price for this - higher rates and less community benefits. Work not done due to monies being lost.*

### **Link with Services**

▶ *Extremely high rates, extremely low service.*

▶ *We pay large rates, we have no sealed road, no waste collection, no sewage, no water, no bus pickup. What are we paying for?*

*What do I get for my \$1200 year in rates when I don't have kerb & gutter, I don't have town water, I don't have a garbage service and I have to travel long distances to dispose of my waste and I can't even recycle all of my goods when I get there!*

▶ *I think that it's disgraceful that although full rates are paid in Woodenbong, we still don't have portable water. How can we you justify that in today's day and age? If we pay the same rates as Kyogle, why don't we receive the services. let alone water that we can drink from the tap? With rates as high as Brisbane suburbs we should be getting far better service here.*

▶ *In the 27 years that I have lived here rates have increased substantially with no improvement at all on the road that I live on.*

### **Equity**

▶ *Be mindful when you keep putting the water and rates that the majority of pensioners live here in the town.*

▶ *I am a single pensioner if the rates get any higher, I won't be able to stay in my house..`*

▶ *Rates - I am tired and upset with Council applying every year being approved for that. I like to help the local community but we of the Kyogle Area are not made of money and with fuel increases and other price increases, it makes it harder to pay the rates. Help the community by not putting the rates up so much each year.*

### **Two comments asked Council to tighten its spending and eliminate waste...**

#### **Better Management**

▶ *Reduce office staff, put on more people on the outside work then they might not have to raise rates to cover their high paid jobs.*

▶ *I also believe that our rates are extremely high (some of the highest in the area) maybe council should reduce expenses with a lesser fleet of vehicles for staff & possibly consider less office staff - surely some positions could become multi-tasked positions, while this may cause overheads.*



## **Footpaths**

**Footpaths was the infrastructure issue most commented upon after roads. In general, respondents want more attention paid to footpaths, with the Main Street of Kyogle in particular seen as an area that needs to have uneven surfaces repaired, and generally cleaned. Bonalbo, Woodenbong and New Park were also mentioned as areas needing attention to footpaths.**

- ▶ *Fix the footpaths so we don't break our necks getting to the cafes/shops we already have.*
- ▶ *About the Main Street footpaths. I understand it was said the footpaths in the shopping area would be attended to last year and then in a newsletter earlier this year it was also mentioned but still nothing done.*
- ▶ *Main St is OK, but the footpaths have a lot of problems with being uneven and the filth of the footpaths especially around the Express Examiner corner and also the main street its self.*
- ▶ *Footpaths - dangerous around Catholic Church & school.*

**The main reasons for fixing footpaths was to make them safer, especially for the elderly and disabled, and for the general amenity.**

## **Safety**

- ▶ *The deep gutters make stepping into the road dangerous for elderly people. The footpaths on the eastside of mainstreet uneven. The footpath on Wyndham St is none existent. The cars move quickly and the prams and strollers going to preschool are at great risk.*
- ▶ *... shops that have so much on the footpaths such as Mitre 10 with half the footpath taken up, it is very dangerous especially when you have a disability as I have myself.*

## **Employment**

**Respondents in the main encouraged Council to take a lead in attracting businesses and jobs to the Shire, and to also actively develop it sown role as a significant employer. Some comments also asked Council to support new and existing businesses as much as possible, including through the Development Application process.**

- ▶ *Council needs to promote Kyogle and areas - Seek new industry to the town area - not enough is being done to attract new industry to Kyogle. This will lead to more employment.*

- ▶ *Be more helpful by participating in encouraging people to stay and find jobs in this area instead of having to leave the district and take whole families with them.*
- ▶ *Council is not very interested in promoting more employment for the area. That is obvious by the way they handled the last couple of development opportunities that would have caused many jobs.*
- ▶ *Rural residential should not be encouraged unless employment is available.*
- ▶ *Employment - Why isn't council training school learners? Office traineeships, scholarships etc for succession planning.*
- ▶ *Reconciliation - affirmative action employment for young aboriginals.*

***Several comments urged that local job-seekers and local people be given positive discrimination...***

#### **Local needs**

- ▶ *Employment initiatives needed - give local first preference.*
- ▶ *Create employment in the town using local tradesmen not outsiders to save a buck, at least locals will spend money here.*
- ▶ *Jobs are needed for locals - looking after the towns business community, consultation with them is urgent. Council work should be done by locals.*

***Several comments were received suggesting that the future mix of jobs should have variety – seen as especially important for retaining the Shire's youth in the area.***

#### **Jobs for Youth**

- ▶ *I have recently moved to Kyogle (Shire). I am saddened to see the lower end of town becoming emptier with talk of buildings going to be demolished to build a larger IGA. A lot of good comes from many small shops/family businesses compared to a single employer. Need more employment and variety.*
- ▶ *I think that if the Council did more community activities to save the environment (e.g waste minimisation education) the follow effects would promote community cohesion, employment and tourism.*

#### **Parking**

***Parking attracted a high number of comments, with many respondents keen to see the availability of parking in Kyogle improved, especially for shoppers. There was mixed comment about the future of centre parking with both support for its retention, and for it to be removed for safety reasons. Compared to other***

**major issues, comments were more positive and recognised that Council had recently taken steps to improve parking availability.**

▶ *Parking has improved but I think a lot of people still go out of town because of the limited time. It was good to get the workers cars of the street.*

▶ *Parking problem especially at Supermarket.*

▶ *Parking in Kyogle on a Thursday or Friday is poor. I have 3 young children and usually find a park behind the Exchange Hotel and hike up the street with 3 children to get the groceries. I now go to Lismore or Casino to grocery shop as it is more convenient to me. We need more parking. Thank god for the boys who carry the bags.*

▶ *I hope central parking is never taken away, as it is a safe way to park - drive in then drive out - no reversing where you can't see.*

**Some respondents wanted parking regulated more so that laws were enforced, as well as making available long-term car parking...**

### **Regulation of Parking**

▶ *(Dislike) having to drive round and round to find a park and cars with no disabled sticker displayed parked in these spaces....*

▶ *Inadequate parking for shoppers. Those working in CBD should not be taring up precious carpark area.*

▶ *2hrs is not enough time for we senior country people as you can be held up for long lengths of time at the supermarket store and doctors etc.*

**There was support for more disabled parking spaces, and shaded car parks...**

### **Disability Considerations**

▶ *Parking- More disability parking either side of clock.*

▶ *The only place to park in shade was lost with the removal of a large camphor laurel tree on corner of Geneva and Bloore Streets with nothing planted to replace it.*

**Several respondents had positive suggestions for parking...**

### **Positive Suggestions**

▶ *Parking - all line marking need painted - centre rank should be out in direction facing.*

▶ *Retaining the centre parking and turnarounds. No angle parking. No roundabouts.*

▶ *What about a car park at rail station?*

## **Business Development**

***Following on from the high importance placed on business development in the earlier parts of the survey, respondents were keen to offer suggestions to Council for developing businesses. Overwhelmingly, comments encouraged Council to take a role in attracting new businesses and also increasing support for existing businesses.***

- ▶ *Council need to encourage industry and business to come to Kyogle to create full-time employment for people and assist in developing industry and housing.*
- ▶ *Encourage businesses to move to Kyogle (offer a package).*
- ▶ *A strong focus on sustainable economic development is essential. Triple bottom line outcomes required. \$ and jobs create wealth, provide opportunities, allow for investment in the natural & social environment.*
- ▶ *Council should be working harder to attract more business development left helping to find suitable land, helping with less stringent restrictions, helping instead of hindering.*
- ▶ *Council should promote small business - wave fees where possible*
- ▶ *As a community, we need to grow. We have a lovely town. The most important thing we can do is to promote land development.*

***Council was generally encouraged to support businesses wherever possible...***

### **Council Support for Business**

- ▶ *The council needs to assist business more and fast track D's.*
- ▶ *It should be made easier to develop businesses outside of town for tourism without putting extra financial burdens as in high DA fees and unreasonable requests for paying for widening of roads etc.*
- ▶ *Kyogle Council should do everything in its power to assist business and residential expansion, especially in having areas re-zoned.*

***Some comments were directed at making opportunities for young people...***

### **Opportunities for Young People**

- ▶ *Surely there is a way to encourage more business development in Kyogle and therefore hopefully help our huge unemployment problems. Maybe some of our kids might actually be able to stay and live and work in Kyogle if that's what they choose instead of it being a forgone conclusion that if they want a decent job then they'll have to move away from the area.*

### **Positive Suggestions**

- ▶ *What about council run projects/businesses - must be profit able and what about arts/crafts galleries. Artist co-op's, aboriginal arts/crafts.*
- ▶ *Try to develop/promote "eco-friendly" businesses.*
- ▶ *Tip shop could be set up effectively for Kyogle/Woodenbong/Bonalbo ...*
- ▶ *Economic diversification - promotion of home based businesses, telecommuting "tree changers", media & creative industry.*
- ▶ *The Kyogle Council should take responsibility for opening the road between Old Bonalbo and Afterlee Rd. It needs to purchase the section of this road that runs through private property so this important road can be re-opened creating increased tourism and business for Old Bonalbo and for local residents to access Kyogle and its surrounding areas.*

***Some comments asked Council to communicate with existing businesses better, but also emphasized the need for existing businesses to play their part in Kyogle's economic development...***

### **Communication with Business**

- ▶ *Improvement in Kyogle business area due, I believe to new innovative business owners in town, making shopping and socialising more attractive.*
- ▶ *Business to be encouraged to move more and trade to suit the growth of tourism. Town goes to sleep at noon Saturday.*

### **Council Management**

***The recent Inquiry by the Department of Local Government concluded during the survey period, and this was reflected in some of the comments received. Respondents generally were in favour of more rigorous management of Council's strategic direction by Councillors, and a more definitive and visible direction from the operations side of Council.***

- ▶ *Management - very disappointed that there continues to be mismanagement stories. Please learn from mistakes instead of repeating them.*
- ▶ *Council financial management - needs reviewing ... It would seem from the ever-increasing council rates that residents are required to foot the bill for Council's financial mismanagement*
- ▶ *Council should be more watchful of the General Manager, Mayor or any Councillors not doing their jobs.*
- ▶ *During the 8 years I have lived in this town, Council appears to have operated apart from the community.*
- ▶ *Council's decision to code responsibility for the crown reserves illustrates its lack of commitment to the social and cultural well being of its ratepayers. of affairs that the Hanging Rock Hall should be subject to such stringent noise and time*

- ▶ *Need better trained/informed councillors.*
- ▶ *Listen to the community. Don't switch off when being informed of problems or issues. Some Council officers are not willing to listen and change their opinions, their mind is already made up.*
- ▶ *Reduce Councillors numbers, increase wages and increase the likelihood of new faces and attitudes in Council.*

***Several respondents praised the appointment of a new General Manager, and generally urged that Council's financial management be sound, including eliminating waste or extravagance by Council and its staff.***

### **Financial Management**

- ▶ *If approximately 40% of the population of Kyogle Shire lives out of town of Kyogle and the Council is prepared to spend about \$3 million on the main street, presumably that means Council has approximately \$7.5 million to spend upgrading the environments where the remaining 60% of ratepayers live?*
- ▶ *Kyogle financial management is of concern to me...what is all this social, cultural, promotional activities about? Are these not State and Federal government responsibilities?*
- ▶ *Council should limit use of cars of council staff for private use...*

***Some responses asked Council to consider equity across the whole LGA, and to prioritise communication with the community...***

### **Equity**

- ▶ *Management - almost totally orientated to Kyogle town.*
- ▶ *Council needs a dedicated self-promotion budget to optimise community perspective of Council.*
- ▶ *Councillors should meet with members of public - other than Council meetings on a regular basis - give encouragement to our town.*
- ▶ *I would like Council offices/senior staff to come to our area say once or twice a year and discuss what has happened to say what is planned for the next 12 months.*

### **Positive comments**

- ▶ *The demographics of the Kyogle Shire and its small rate payer base mean to me the Council is doing a good job.*
- ▶ *The Mayor and Councillors have done a good job bringing Kyogle Shire out of debt and the dark ages. Things have improved slowly, we don't need rapid change. Keep up the good work.*

## **Management - Staff**

***The need for creative and active leadership in planning Council's workforce, cutting perceived waste of ratepayer's funds, and delivering excellent customer service through interactions with staff were highlighted as important by survey respondents.***

- ▶ *Glad to see new G.M is a local man we can trust.*
- ▶ *New General Manager has the willingness to get the job done. Listens to the community.*
- ▶ *All council staff especially Mayor & G.M and all senior staff should have regular checks by independent body.*
- ▶ *Council must work with the people of the Shire and also outside staff have to take more interest and skill in their work to keep everyone happy and remember outside the town area like the little villages must have some input from administration.*

***There appears to be a widespread perception that Council staff enjoy perks that are not value-for-money for ratepayers, of which the following comment is typical:***

### **Staff 'Perks'**

- ▶ *Staff should not be taking home council motor vehicles as this leads to abuse of the system of staff during themselves and families etc. to beaches, shopping etc at great costs to us, the ratepayers, e.g extra mileage on vehicles, repairs, accidents. Also fuel, the take home motor vehicle only benefits the staff at a great cost to us, it should be immediately stopped.*

***Other comments suggested that Council actively plan its staff succession policies and investigate the most efficient way to structure the workforce.***

### **Workforce Structure**

- ▶ *Perhaps an efficiency review in Council Chambers would be a good idea...*
- ▶ *Reduce office staff, put on more people on the outside work then they might not have to raise rates to cover their high paid jobs.*
- ▶ *Work gangs should be at the job site by 7.00am like some Beadesert & Boohan Shire and not arrive at Depot at 7.00am or after.*

***Many suggestions were made about the delivery of customer service, illustrating that one bad customer experience can be more important than many good encounters....***

### **Customer Service**

▶ *My face to face and over the telephone dealings with the Council employees have all been positive. However, negative response to question 51 on the survey is prompted by a total lack of response to an email I sent to the Council engineer regarding work on the Sextonville Rd. Is it council policy to ignore questions from ratepayers?*

▶ *When you need a ranger can't contact one.*

▶ *Went to Council to ask which ward and staff at Council were unable to tell me. Still don't know which ward.*

▶ *All counter staff should be retrained in how to deal with general public and learn some manners, smile and say thank you.*

▶ *Management - Staff at council need to complete a PR course many rude and uninterested they apparently have forgotten we pay their wages.*

▶ *Staff employed in Council reception area are excellent, polite, respectful and help in anyway they can.*

▶ *Staff are very slow to respond/get back to you.*

### **Positive Comments**

▶ *Staff - very obliging.*

▶ *Congratulations to the Mayor on how he has handled all the carry on over the previous months. I like how our Mayor is "out there" doing things.*

▶ *Would just like to say that I have found all council staff that I have come in contact with to be most helpful.*

▶ *I also have found staff at the Kyogle Library only too willing to help with any inquiries I have made with regards to books, research etc.*

### **Natural Environment - Protection**

***The environment was underlined as an important asset for Kyogle Shire – with several comments urging Council to find a way to promote both employment and the environment.***

▶ *Keeping the natural environment intact not under continuous destruction with priorities of also restoration a factor that is/was the character of this area.*

▶ *Create industry which isn't environmental damaging or polluting in anyway with locals running it and working in it.*

▶ *Some of the natural environment is disgracefully neglected. Are policies and protection in place?*



▶ Council needs to be proactive in accessing available grants and funding to improve economic development and environmental protection. As gateway to the rainforest, the Council should ensure weeds don't destroy it.

### **Managing Environmental Issues**

▶ Planning - Natural environment which is the local landscape and also what attracts many people to Kyogle District (together with farming landscape) has no planned management strategy or resources to manage it.

▶ Employ qualified Environmental Officer to address environmental issues, promote environmental sustainability in the community, monitor natural resources and indicators, liaise with environmental planner/consultant.

▶ The LGA needs different planning and zoning to encourage farmers into better land use practices i.e riparian zones, erosion control and weeds.

### **Control of Weeds**

▶ Please focus on environmentally friendly spraying for other environmentally conscious options in the ways you advertising weed control.

▶ assistance to land holders actively involved with regeneration works (e.g rate rebates); access to relevant young rainforest plants at subsidised rates; assistance with protection of young plantings against pademelon damage.

▶ More weed control along creeks and assistance for landholders to do the same.

### **Water**

**Water attracted comments that showed residents wants access to a safe, clean, reliable and quality supply of water. The residents of Woodenbong, Bonalbo and Muli Muli registered their dissatisfaction with the standard of water and asked for Council action.**

▶ the water supply in Woodenbong is appalling in this day and age. The water is a ghostly yellow, it stinks to high heaven and stains sink, bath and toilet badly.

▶ Water is a major issue at Woodenbong and has been for decades. It's about time Council got it's act together to fix it. Palatable water is essential for living.

▶ Woodbong and Mulli Mulli water filtration has been delayed for too long. Promises have been broken, delays are unreasonable and residents are very disappointed...

▶ Kyogle Council needs to look into building a second dam in the area of Findon Ck or Rukenvale or Grevillia to supply Kyogle Town and district with a permanent water supply.

**Residents were supportive of incentives to encourage the use of rainwater tanks, and some comments were received asking for waterways to be protected from polluting farming practices...**

### **Watertanks and Pollution**

- ▶ Council should seek State/Federal funding for water tanks for town and village residences.
- ▶ Changing climate, I believe necessitates every household having rainwater tanks.
- ▶ Rural water polluters e.g piggeries, chemical sprayers (including council) livestock graziers and council sewerage disposal should be investigated and fines issued to offenders.
- ▶ The deterioration of the Richmond River due to the run off from agriculture is a disgrace.

### **Animal Control**

**The control of dogs, cats and feral animals was the biggest issue highlighted in the survey. A number of responses came from people who'd had contact with Council staff. The comments received underlined that impounding of animals ought be handled sensitively by Council staff.**

- ▶ ...poor animal control i.e dogs roaming the street not under control. Dogs barking day and night, dogs not registered, some houses having more than 2 dogs.
- ▶ Need to get on to animal control - amount of dogs on Kyogle streets, especially dangerous dogs like American Pit Bulls not chained up and in the back of work utes unchained. Worrying for parents with children, I've been unable to get into a shop because of unchained pit bull.
- ▶ Proactive approach to feral animal control e.g cat, foxes, Indian myna, cane toad, should be implemented.
- ▶ Wild dogs knock of my bin at night and feral diseased cats roam around killing native animals and birds. The Ranger needs to trap and kill wild/feral cats and dogs.

### **Parks**

**Parks and gardens were seen as a positive for Kyogle LGA, with suggestions underlining how important they are for families with young children especially. Several respondents noted how parks generally had improved recently, but some suggestions also highlighted the need for regular maintenance and provision of facilities, such as waste collection and toilets.**

- ▶ We need to have an area so as families, can have lunch and children can play safe. Children love to have parties at parks but the parks need to be safe.

- ▶ *Need a good park with equipment for small children in town where families can go and picnic...Park in town too close to where teenage children all hanging, no good for young families...*
- ▶ *Maintain picnic tables etc in parks.*
- ▶ *When is Council going to do something about locked toilets in Anzac Park ...*
- ▶ *A water tap at all parks would be appreciated especially for the hygiene of young children.*
- ▶ *Perhaps its time Kyogle Council put Kyogle into the 21st century by installing gas or electric BBQ's similar to the new one at the visitor info centre.*
- ▶ *Most parks and gardens in Kyogle are maintained satisfactorily although waste bins could be emptied more regularly.*
- ▶ *More maintenance on local parks and gardens. Parks & streets to be planted with local native plantings.*
- ▶ *Parks - Congratulations on the wonderful tree planting round the amphitheatre.*

### **Natural Environment - Policy**

***Environmental policy was seen as important by a number of respondents, especially protecting natural areas from deforestation and weeds.***

- ▶ *Policies are inadequate and often favouring farmers or loggers. I would like to see more reserves, forests and protection measures.*
- ▶ *We need clever development policies not just letting big developers come in and do as they please. Doesn't it matter how much we, the people, object they seem to happen anyway. We need protection from being developed along over creeks.*
- ▶ *Council should become actively and intimately involved in assisting land management agencies in finding a workable solution to exponential Bellbird-associated dieback in surrounding wet and dry sclerophyll Forests*

### **Pools**

***Responses were mixed about whether pool entry should be subsidised or completely user-pays. For those who used the pools, the cost was seen as significant, especially for families. Several suggestions were received about amending the opening times.***

- ▶ *All three pools run at a loss...Charges are a misfit for our citizens...Privileged families are favoured with reasonable season ticket charges but those unable to afford these are shut out by the steep entry charges.*

- ▶ *Kyogle swimming pool is excellent- I would like to see more swimming lessons.*
- ▶ *Keep baths open between 8am -10am. I have been swimming for over 15 years at 8am for an hour - not as easy at 10am when schools and swimming lessons on - early morning lap swimmers and elderly people are slower.*
- ▶ *Pools - why not open before the spring school holiday period.*
- ▶ *Swimming pool which is one of the best in a country town, open for a longer period and longer hours with classes for citizens other than just school children.*
- ▶ *Year round pool facilities for activities (heated pool).*
- ▶ *Youth - Need to have more organised evenings for our youth e.g movies at the pool (night), BBQ at the pool (evening), Water Polo at the pool (evening) late night swimming/family evenings.*
- ▶ *Pool - how about a crèche 3 mornings a week?*

**Several respondents simply wanted to congratulate Council for the Kyogle pool.**

- ▶ *Kyogle people plus visitors should be proud of our pool.*
- ▶ *The Kyogle pool is a beautiful facility, always clean and staff always polite and helpful - keep up the good work!*

## **Youth**

**Concern was expressed about how to incorporate young people into a positive role in the future of Kyogle Shire. The most common comment was that more beneficial activities should be organised for young people, which would help develop positive attitudes and lead to young people becoming more integrated with the future of the Shire.**

- ▶ *And for the youth, the town is dying, no entertainment and job-wise for the youth in Kyogle. It's really coming an elderly person town and when they die it will become a ghost town and it's almost there.*
- ▶ *There are not enough supervised activities for youth.*
- ▶ *It would be great if Council appointed a designated Youth Officer who in cooperation with other organisations in the town, organised monthly activities for young people e.g disco for young teenagers who can't go into pubs etc.*
- ▶ *Youth in Kyogle are mind-numbingly bored with the lack of activities available to them. At the moment their options seem to be a) stay at home or b) go out walking the streets with mates and get up to mischief. This in turn leads to a huge proportion of the youth in Kyogle partaking in under age drinking and vandalism and a lot of other unsavoury activities.*
- ▶ *Sports and youth go together more promotion.*

▶ *A youth club should be built where young people can drop in, listen to music, play games, learn to dance, talk, buy healthy food and suitable for 13 years -18yrs. Back in the 1940s in the UK, schools were used at night for this purpose.*

## **Library**

***The library received one of the highest positive response counts of any issue in the survey. Most comments praised the library and its staff, although several suggestions were received about improving and modernising the collection, and even expanding the library to a larger building.***

▶ *Kyogle library is wonderful the staff are friendly & always helpful. A fantastic service!*

▶ *lovely library but getting too cluttered.*

▶ *Come on Kyogle library is housing nothing to be proud of. Why don't books donated to our community by our community stay in our library.*

▶ *The library could consider introducing more books which would reflect the fact that we live in a rural environment e.g books on horticulture, animal husbandry, D.I.Y power structures and other such as self help topics.*

▶ *Library needs lots of new books.*

▶ *Library - books way too old. Need modern books.*

## **Informing of Activities**

***Respondents urged the Council to continue to inform the community of activities, which was seen as a basic activity of Council. As noted previously, Councils newsletter was widely welcomed. Council was urged to be positive about the future of the Shire and to communicate this to residents. The initiative of the survey was generally welcomed.***

▶ *Like the newsletter but seldom receive one.*

▶ *It was difficult answering this survey with the whole LGA in mind when some of the questions asked are important but don't directly affect me as I live out of town.*

## **Traffic**

***The main issue was perceived safety issues of the Summerland Way running through the Main Street of Kyogle. One comment pointed out that the Highway also brought business to Kyogle.***

- ▶ *Traffic in shopping area is getting too busy and there is not enough parking spaces*

## **Disability**

***Access was the biggest issue for people with a disability. Several areas of towns and villages were seen as being difficult for people with a disability to negotiate, while Kyogle township was seen as needing more user-friendly toilets.***

- ▶ *The toilets at the library are great - but not in a central location and not always available. The solution I'm not sure of due to the dollars side of it - but to be wheelchair bound in Kyogle and to have to access amenities after business hours or on weekends is not easy. Does the visitor centre at the bottom of town provide these facilities? That would be an ideal place.*
- ▶ *Disability parking in the centre of town would be good...My brother has MS and has to access the street from the pedestrian crossings (Mitre 10 or stationery shop) long walk for someone with a disability to go to IGA and chemist. He has fallen on many occasions.*
- ▶ *There are no ramps into shops for disabled, electric scooters to enter shops & video store, banks.*

## **Art Gallery**

***The Art Gallery received many supportive comments, and was generally seen as an asset for the Shire.***

- ▶ *Art Gallery good - visit often.*
- ▶ *Art Gallery - wonderful community based resource.*
- ▶ *Art Gallery - I congratulate the Kyogle Council for its financial support of the Roxy Gallery. It is our great benefit to our community*
- ▶ *Why hasn't the damage to Roxy Gallery after a robbery been repaired? - valuable art works are unsecured.*

## **Flooding**

***Concern was expressed about allowing buildings to be built in flood-prone areas, as well as ensuring drains and causeways were maintained regularly so that they did not become blocked before a flood.***

▶ *When are you going to do something about flooding in Kyogle as looks like that anything built in the flood plain has to be 2 and a half metres above 100 year flood....Skate park in worst flooding area, information building on contaminated ground, also in heavy flood area. Industrial area at Newpark in heavy flood area.*

## **Lighting**

***Lighting was generally seen as reasonable by survey respondents who comments, with some specific areas mentioned for improvement.***

- ▶ *Lighting - Morphett Street needs more lighting.*
- ▶ *...not one light from the Sawmill turn-off to Bonalbo.*
- ▶ *Lighting in Geneva is very bad. Lights are too far apart.*
- ▶ *Council needs to provide more lighting in public parks to stop vandals and drinking in public.*

## **Sports**

***Sporting facilities were generally seen as good, although some suggestions were receiving for major sporting facilities in the Shire.***

- ▶ *Council could develop vacant land near B.P Standfield for sport centre (eg indoor cricket, volleyball, indoor hockey).*
- ▶ *Sport - Need for a combined well resourced sporting facility and fields that can be used by a number of sports. Dirty and unmaintained facilities in different parts of town is costly and not a good use of resources (i.e a combined sporting club for Kyogle).*
- ▶ *I love playing sport and being fit. Kyogle has a great number of sports to play but I would like to see a Gym in Kyogle.*
- ▶ *Sports - need more sheltered areas at our sports grounds.*

## **Other**

***The main 'other' issue not included in other parts of the survey was the need to attract doctors to the Shire and improve medical services.***

- ▶ *Is Council doing anything about encouraging doctors to the area?*

