

Kingborough

**LGBTIQA+
ENGAGEMENT
REPORT 2022**

PREPARED BY
Kingborough Council

*Endorsed by Council
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Glossary

Asexual - A lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent desire for sexual activity or relationships. Some asexual people still pursue romantic relationships with others, however, sex is not experienced as a key part of their identity and/or connection with others.

Bisexual - An individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender and people of another gender. Bisexuality does not necessarily assume there are only two genders.

Cisgender - A term describing people whose gender identity corresponds with the cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gay - An individual who identifies as a man and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as men. The term gay can also be used in relation to women who are sexually and romantically attracted to other women.

Gender - Refers to how you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being female or male. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these or neither. Gender can be expressed in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.

Gender diversity - Acknowledges that there are many different ways to identify outside of the binary of male and female. A person's gender identity refers to their deeply held internal and individual feeling of gender.

Heterosexual - An individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to the opposite gender.

Intersex - Refers to people with innate variations of sex characteristics (genetic, hormonal or physical) that do not conform with medical norms for female or male bodies. Being intersex is a naturally occurring variation in humans and there are lots of ways someone can be intersex. Not all people with such characteristics identify as intersex.

Lesbian - An individual who identifies as a woman and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as women.

LGBTIQA+ - An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual and other people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. This acronym is widely used and has been adopted by all Tasmanian Government departments, however, there are other terminologies and expressions that people use.

Non-binary - Refers to someone who does not identify as exclusively male or female.

Queer - A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Some people use queer to describe their own gender and/or sexuality if other terms do not fit. For some people, especially older people, 'queer' has negative connotations, because in the past it was used as a derogatory term.

Pansexual - A sexual orientation describing people who are sexually, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted to any people regardless of their gender identities.

Sex - The legal status that was initially determined by sex characteristics observed at birth.

Sex characteristics - A person's physical sex features such as their chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs.

Sexual orientation - Describes a person's physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person.

Transgender (trans) - An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.



Consultation Summary

During 2022, Kingborough Council consulted with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQA+) community to better understand local experiences and needs.

This consultation took into consideration years of work by members of the Kingborough/Huon Valley *Coming Out Proud Program*, which has been a longstanding partnership that commenced in 2005 with Rainbow Communities Tasmania Inc.

A working group was established that included representatives from the local LGBTIQA+ community and Council staff. The working group developed questions to be included in an online, anonymous survey to seek information from members of the LGBTIQA+ community, their family, friends, allies and organisations that support this community, as well as members of the general public.

The survey sought demographic information, perceptions of Kingborough, experiences in Kingborough, and experiences with Kingborough Council. A total of 162 people completed the survey between 12 July and 12 August 2022.



Survey respondents were offered the opportunity to participate in a follow-up, face-to-face focus group. Only one person sought to be involved in this focus group.

Through the contributions made by members of the LGBTIQA+ community, as well as their family, friends and allies, four broad themes emerged for improving services and quality of life for people who live, work, study and recreate in Kingborough.

Feedback received from the survey was used to produce the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan for Kingborough Council 2023 – 2025, which identifies actions against each theme.

Kingborough Council is extremely grateful to the members of the community and the advocacy organisations that supported Council in developing the Action Plan.

MAIN THEMES

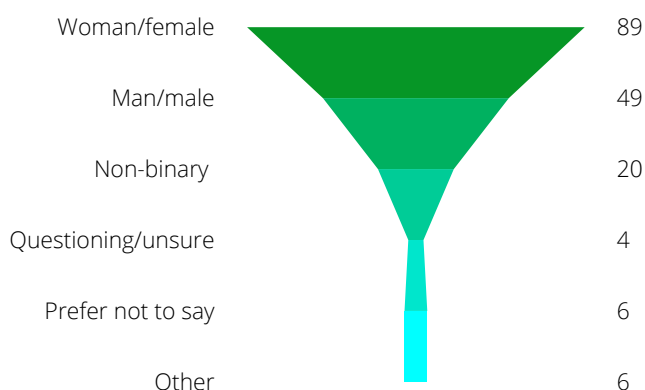
-  **Greater Understanding:** To understand the experiences and needs of our LGBTIQ+ community members and respond in a way that is inclusive and welcoming.
-  **Celebration and Visibility:** To ensure that LGBTIQ+ members of our community feel seen and valued. We can do this through celebrating special days of significance, hosting festivals, flying the rainbow flag or wearing an ally badge to provide acknowledgement, recognition, and support.
-  **Feeling Safe, Heard and Having a Supportive Place:** To create and advocate for spaces where people of all cultures, genders, backgrounds, ages and abilities can feel safe and welcome. LGBTIQ+ people, their families, friends and allies need to feel heard and represented in all areas of life in Kingborough.
-  **Equal Access:** To be mindful in the provision of services and facilities that being treated with equality, respect and dignity is a human right for any member of our community.

Demographics of Survey Respondents

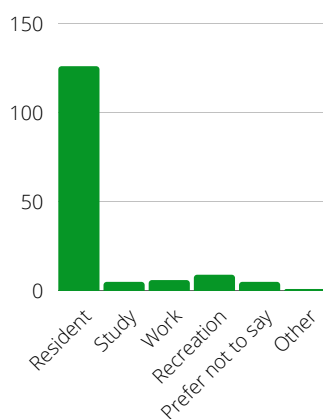
One hundred and sixty-two people completed the survey with the majority of those who responded identifying as being LGBTIQ+ (63%).

Those who contributed were mostly Kingborough residents, living in the Kingston/Kingston Beach area, describing themselves as a woman/female and aged 25 to 44 years.

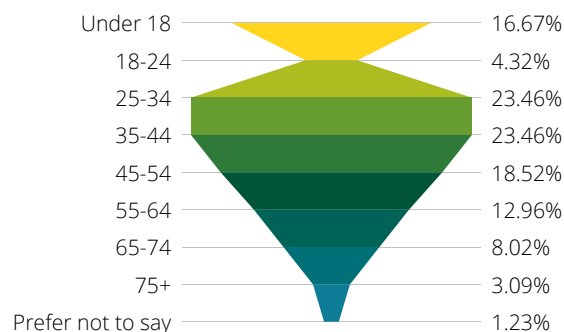
How do you describe your gender?



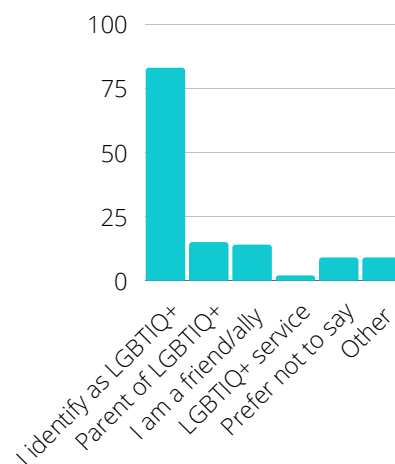
Primary Connection to Kingborough



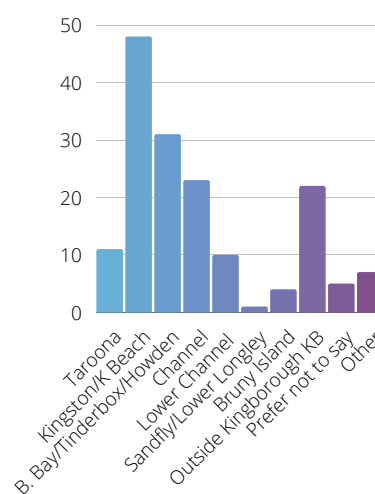
What's your age?



Which best describes you?



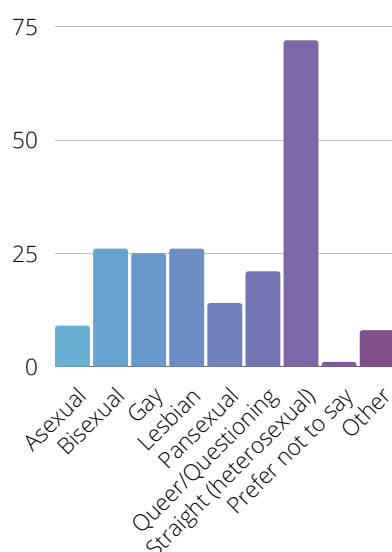
If you live in Kingborough, which area do you live in?



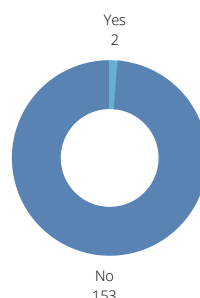
Demographics of Survey Respondents

- Almost 60% of respondents identified as either bisexual, gay, lesbian or queer.
- Approximately 1% of respondents identified that they were born with a variation of sex characteristics.
- Approximately 2% of respondents had a transgender history/experience.
- Approximately 5% of respondents were of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Island descent.
- Approximately 23% of respondents said they were born overseas.
- Almost 25% of respondents said they are living with a chronic health condition or disability.

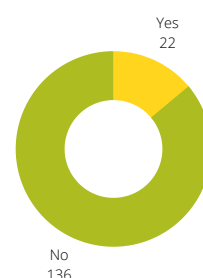
How do you identify your sexual orientation?



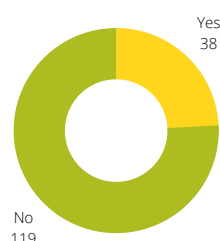
Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (Intersex)?



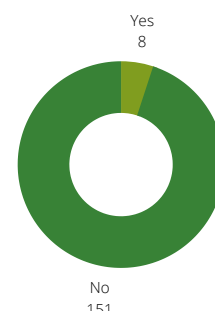
Do you have a transgender history and/or experience?



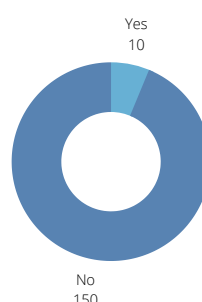
Were you born in another country?



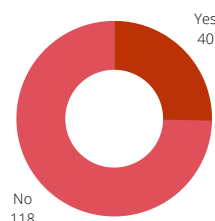
Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?



Do you speak a language other than English at home?



Are you living with a chronic illness, disability or age related condition?



Survey Findings

Experiences in Kingborough

Overwhelmingly, Kingborough was seen as a friendly, welcoming, progressive and accepting community. Many people remarked on Kingborough's natural beauty and environment, including access to beaches, coastlines, parks and walking trails. The convenience of locally-based services and facilities available including retail, cafes, restaurants, and the ease of getting around, were contributors to the lifestyle.

There were over 70 comments describing Kingborough's positive attributes as a community. Comments were also made about different organisations within Kingborough that were seen as particularly inclusive. Those mentioned included Kingston Library, Kingston High School Diversity Club, Tarremah School, Tarroona Primary School and Westwinds Community Centre. Special mention was made of some Coles and Kingston Library workers wearing 'ally' badges.

"Generally, Kingborough is an inclusive place, especially where I live. As an openly (older) gay man I feel quite supported by my local community."

"As somebody who works in a high-profile public position, I have found Kingborough to be a fairly accepting place for LGBTIQ+ people."

"Open discussion. One of my neighbours has a teenage transgender male and that parent and I felt safe in openly discussing the topic."

"The confidence I have when correcting people behind a shop counter when they presume my partner is male. Most now apologise! When I first moved to Kingborough almost 40 years ago I wouldn't have felt safe to be myself. Even my employment would've been jeopardised."

"We are lucky that our child can access Tarroona Primary School. We moved from another suburb outside of Kingborough with acceptance of our family, a key driver. I hope families at other schools (and the schools themselves), are welcoming same sex parents, their children, and children who identify as LGBTIQA."

"It is a generally accepting place and there isn't much that actively discriminates against the queer community."

"9 times out of 10, people are accepting."

"The most positive thing for me is my job. I work in a government job in Kingston that is incredibly supportive and celebrates LGBTIQ. As for all people, there is great value in the proximity to different environments (beach, bush, trails, etc.) It would be good if these places were made and promoted as inclusive places."

SURE safe spaces Schools make sure Safe within LGBTIQ people staff LGBTQA
activities welcoming identify gender shops Kingborough LGBT make
including services information events safe place awareness also
education flag community LGBTIQ community
people Promote council Nothing LGBTIQ diversity
support Gay acceptance group visibility spaces etc Educate
place Greater public sporting queer around Rainbow flags students work
venues rainbow feel visible education schools general

Most respondents (77% or 125/162) reported that they have never personally experienced harassment, discrimination or felt unsafe in Kingborough.

However, of those who identified as LGBTIQ+, almost 30% (or 24/83) of respondents stated that had felt unsafe in Kingborough sometime in the last two years.

In total, 8 people (5%) preferred to not answer the question.

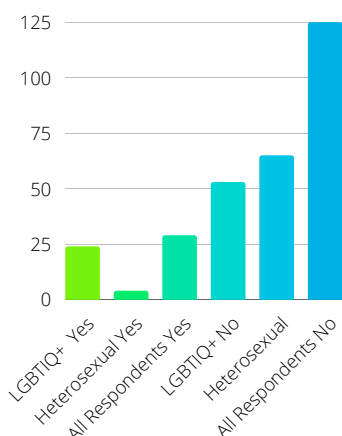
Of those who responded, the majority 55% (or 16/29) had negative experiences in the school setting.

"I have regularly been called homophobic slurs since I started at a local public high school."

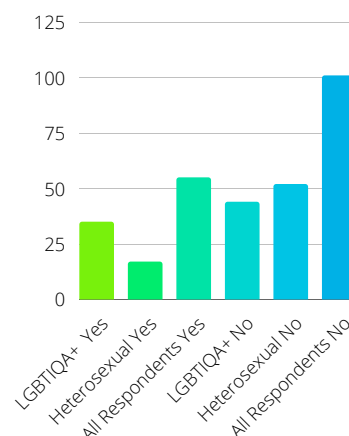
"I have been called slurs before, as well as been told other various homophobic remarks."

Other places where harassment and discrimination were experienced included shops (25%), public places including beaches, pubs and public transport (including bus stops), work and sporting venues.

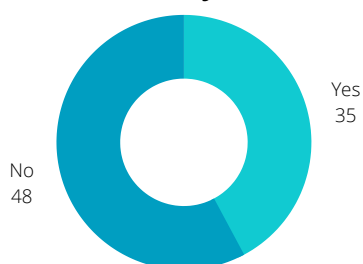
In the past 2 years, have you, or someone you know, ever personally felt harassed, discriminated against or unsafe because of LGBTIQ+ identity in Kingborough?



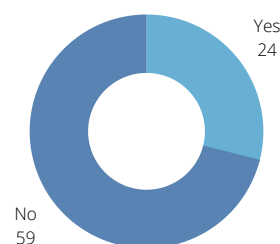
In the past 2 years, have you witnessed harassment or discrimination against other people because of their LGBTIQ+ identity in Kingborough?



People who identify as LGBTIQ+ who have witnessed harassment or discrimination in Kingborough during the last two years.



People who identify as LGBTIQ+ who have felt unsafe in Kingborough sometime in the last two years.



The majority of respondents (62% or 101/162) reported that they have not witnessed harassment or discrimination against other people because of their LGBTIQ+ identity.

However, when we looked at the data that was specifically from people who identified as LGBTIQ+, 42% (or 35/83) of respondents stated that they had witnessed harassment or discrimination in Kingborough during the last two years.

In total, 6 people preferred to not answer the question (4%).

"My same sex partner also works in Kingston for a private business ... She feels unsafe to be "out" and endures negative language towards LGBTIQ+ regularly. So, whilst my workplace in Kingston is my haven and safe place, this isn't true for most other people."

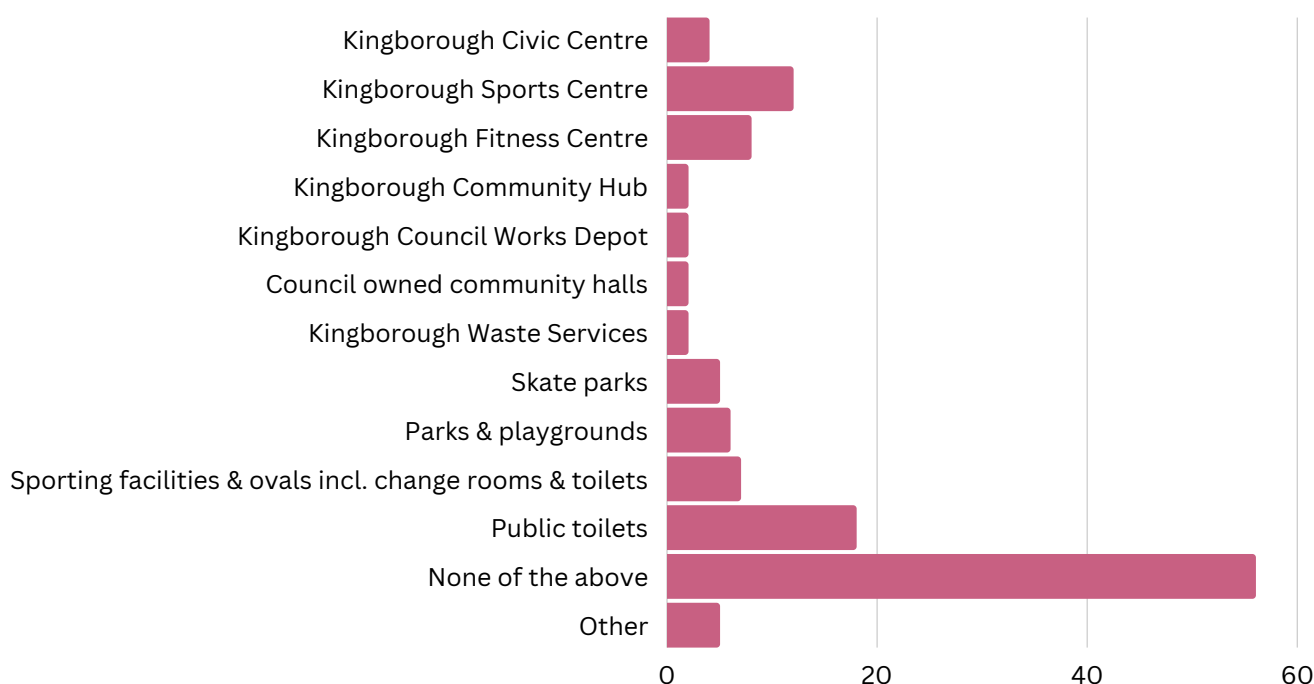
Experiences with Kingborough Council

When asked about feeling discriminated against or excluded at Kingborough Council venues, events and facilities, most respondents 71.6% (or 116/162) said that they had not experienced any of these feelings at Council venues.

Comparatively, 80% (or 67/83) of those identifying as LGBTIQ+ said that they did not feel excluded or discriminated by Council services and activities.

Public toilets were listed as the most common area of exclusion/discrimination (15.43% or 25 respondents).

This was followed by attendance at the Kingborough Sports Centre, including the Kingborough Fitness Centre (14.2%), other sporting facilities/ovals (7.4%), parks/playgrounds (6.8%) and skate parks (6.2%).



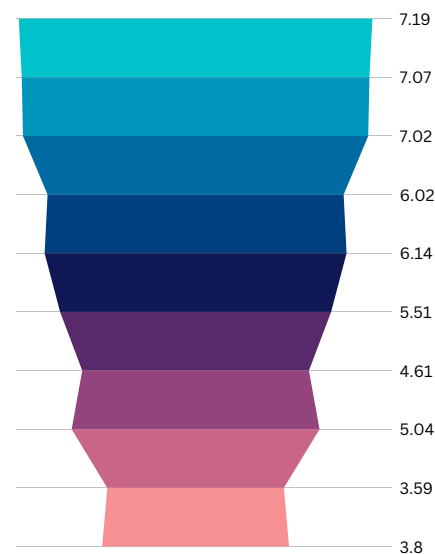
"The sports centre, sports grounds and Council buildings do not feel very LGBTQIA+ inclusive. As for attending a Council meeting or raising an issue, I would not feel safe to do so given the behaviour of some of the councillors."

Ideas for a Safer and More Welcoming Kingborough

Several clear themes emerged to make Kingborough a safer and more welcoming place for LGBTIQ+ people to live, work, play and study.

The most popular responses to the question regarding how Council could show more leadership and support for the LGBTIQ+ community included, in order of priority:

1. LGBTIQ+ inclusion training for management, staff, and elected representatives
2. LGBTIQ+ inclusion training for community members and/or business
3. Visible support for the LGBTIQ+ community (e.g., pride flag, ally badges, Rainbow Tick for LGBTIQ+ inclusion accreditation)
4. Public all gender toilets
5. List LGBTIQ+ services and supports on Council website
6. LGBTIQ+ events, activities, and celebration of days of significance for LGBTIQ+ community
7. More LGBTIQ+ engagement and consultation
8. LGBTIQ+ support for specific groups such as older people or young people
9. Funding or in-kind support to LGBTIQ+ services/organisations and advocacy groups
10. Reviewing Council Forms/processes for questions relating to gender identity



"Anywhere there's non-inclusive language used, and gendered toilets. I know it's a small thing to most people but for me it's a constant, everyday reminder of how other people perceive me regardless of who I truly am - which is why I keep bringing it up."

"Over time, many events have targeted families and that can sometimes make me feel invisible. This has shifted recently as the Council has begun to recognise the diversity in the community—and this feels terrific!"

Theme 1: Greater Understanding

Education in Schools

Most respondents wanted to see more education and support provided in schools from primary to secondary levels.

"Kingston High School seems to have an excellent culture but more work should be done in primary schools. That is where so many kids pick up their initial ideas and teasing behaviours. It is also where I have seen teasing occur."

"Presenting LGBTIQ+ perspectives and inclusion in education settings in positive ways."

"More work in schools around sexual orientation, identity and acceptance. Peer and professional support."

"Request for all schools/education centres within Kingborough to sign a charter promising to support equal opportunity in education and employment of any and all LGBTIQ+ students, teachers or support staff."

"If government (at all levels) demonstrate LGBTIQ+ inclusiveness with events, etc. this greatly aids a young person grappling with sexuality to be open with others close to them (who will be their supports). I stress though, it needs to start in the schools as that's where the greatest positive change can be achieved."

Community Education

Actively raising awareness and understanding in the general community was seen as vital towards reducing homophobia, discrimination and harassment.

"I would like to see more education offered around the LGBTQIA+ community as a lot of people are unaware. e.g., correct use of pronouns, what each gender means, why it is important to acknowledge someone by their preferred pronouns etc. I also believe we as a community should transition to using they/them when referring to someone we are not familiar with so that we can avoid any possible offense by assuming they are he/him, she/her etc."

"Public attitudes around accepting people for who they are rather than how they identify or according to gender stereotypes could benefit from shifting."

Some parents suggested that there was a need to attend workshops or information sessions so that they had the confidence and terminology to speak with their children. It was also suggested that those in positions of power such as teachers, employers, supervisors, owners of businesses and trades team leaders, should be positive role models and call out discrimination when they see it.



"Education is crucial! Promotion of equality and the legal and moral requirements to not discriminate or harass members of the LGBTQI community."

"Education / awareness surrounding treatment of elderly LGBTIQ+ in care settings (e.g. nursing homes, retirement villages)."

"In my experience, there needs to be better education in order to combat the intergenerational homophobia and transphobia that I have witnessed in schools and community."

Education within Council

Awareness raising and inclusion training for Council staff and elected representatives was raised as the highest priority for how Council could show more leadership and support for the LGBTIQ+ community. Inclusion training was seen as important for those staff in public facing roles and management. It was also considered important for all staff to work respectfully with their LGBTIQ+ colleagues.

Councillors were seen as representatives who could set an example for the rest of the public to follow and therefore, awareness raising, and inclusion training were seen as vital.

"Educate the Councillors so they set a better example."

Using gender inclusive language in correspondence was needed, however, it had to be balanced with the need to ensure that older members of the community also felt respected.



Theme 2: Celebration and Visibility

The need for community activities, celebrations, events and workshops that encourage cultural diversity and inclusion was high on the list of responses. Respondents raised the need to create safe places and ensure that the LGBTIQ+ community was openly supported. An annual Pride Festival/Mardi Gras event in Kingborough was favoured by many respondents.

Visible symbols of support for the LGBTIQ+ community such as rainbow flags, posters, supportive signage, stickers, ally badges/emblems and pronoun pins were also raised by numerous respondents (25%).

Flying a Rainbow Flag at the Civic Centre to celebrate important celebrations on the community calendar, as well as flags at other community venues provides a visible display of support and acceptance. Council's website, social media, marketing and printed material could also include images of the diverse range of people who live, work, study and play in the municipality.

Promoting the contributions that LGBTIQ+ friends and neighbours make to the community, through articles and stories in the local media (such as the Kingborough Chronicle and Kingston Classifieds) could provide other positive avenues of recognition.

"The importance of the Kingborough Chronicle in accessing early age groups and featuring many articles and advertisements which include recognition of minority groups."

"More visible 'stories', info, relevant content in local paper every week (same for Aboriginal community, other cultural groups, people with disabilities, etc.)"

"More visible signs of 'welcome' such as rainbow flags, stickers, etc, including in service venues, that show that people have undertaken appropriate 'training' (e.g. Rainbow Tick) so we know it is more than just lip service."

"Recognition of the diversity of our population, the increasing visibility of pride flags. Only LGBTIQ+ people and supportive friends and relatives can fully appreciate the tangible support that flag provides."

"It's nice to see stores with pride flags and/or signs saying LGBTIQ+ people are welcome."

"The use of ally badges and LGBTIQ+ welcome posters and signage also helps."

"Council should have a diversity and inclusion reference group that helps advise Council (if it doesn't already have one) and this should include representation from the LGBTIQ+ community."

"Some of these suggestions should just be done immediately (i.e., website). Don't waste time consulting on that, be proactive. Kids are killing themselves because of these issues."



Theme 3: Feeling Safe, Heard, and Having a Supportive Place

Respondents commented on the importance of feeling safe and accepted regardless of differences. This recognition, along with feeling heard and listened to, contributed to improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

Having a place that is considered safe, supportive and accepting for LGBTIQ+ people was raised by a number of respondents. Some followed up by saying that a venue with 'after hours access' and 'safe' people to talk to would also be beneficial.

"Probably the most important thing would be making sure there is an easily accessible, visible safe place or mixed community to which vulnerable LGBTIQ+ people have easy access."

"Maybe a little hub where LGBTIQ+ identifying people or people who want to know more can access for information and help with what they want to know"

"Promote support services and LGBTIQ+ community groups within greater Hobart area that are available."

"Provision of a safe place. A place like Working It Out would be perfect! "

"As a place... Honestly knowing that there are safe spaces and the people who work there are safe people."



A small number of comments were made suggesting that there needs to be LGBTIQ+ representation on Council. This was seen as another way for the LGBTIQ+ community to have a voice and to be heard. The act of consulting and engaging with members of the LGBTIQ+ community was seen as a great first step by Council.

"The survey I'm filling in makes me feel welcome and safe."

"Just gratitude for giving us a voice - your survey will open many wounds but also provides the bandages-:) a means to share."

"Thank you for taking the time to do this work!"

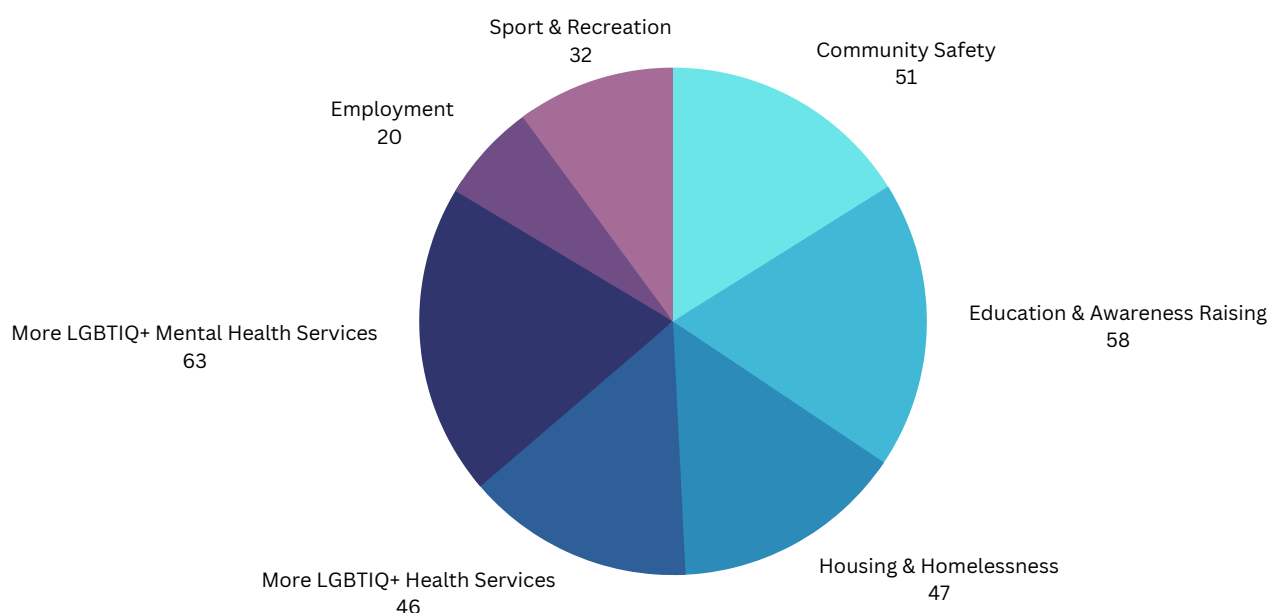
Having a place where information and support services are available was also requested by respondents to the survey. This ranged from having youth groups and youth initiatives that were specifically for people who identify as LGBTIQ+ or are still questioning. There were also several young people who expressed the need for a 'youth group' and safe place where they could 'hang out' outside of school hours and meet with friends. This place could also offer them access to information and support when required.

"Places for youth to hang out outside of school hours."

"Queer youth group please."

"Community and sporting facilities should have more visible LGBTIQ+ information."

"Safety/freedom from harassment & bullying and mental health are the biggest issues I have concerns around with respect to my LGBTIQ+ family member."



A total of 143 people responded to the question on how Kingborough Council should advocate to improve health and wellbeing on behalf of LGBTIQ+ community, at a State and Federal level. Of those who responded, 101 (70.6%) nominated improved mental health services (including for children, young people and adults) as a priority. Improved education and awareness raising (67.1% or 96 respondents) and community safety (59.4% or 85 respondents) were also considered important.

"Providing more support for older people who maybe starting to lose some of their support networks as they age. Access to health services, counselling, and promotion of the services that are already available in greater Hobart area."

"Offer a counselling services program purely for LGBTIQ+ people and their families."



Theme 4: Equal Access

Public toilets were reported as the most likely Council venue/facility to cause feelings of discrimination or exclusion.

When asked what needed to be improved in Kingborough, just under 10% of respondents commented that non gendered public toilets were an important improvement. Of those who identified as LGBTIQ+, 21.7% (or 18/83) felt excluded by Council's public toilets.

The Kingborough Sports Centre and Kingborough Fitness Centre were mentioned by 24% (20/83 respondents) as places where people who identify as LGBTIQ+ felt excluded. This would require further investigation to understand if it is due to the toilets and change rooms or the way that sports teams are divided by gender (or a combination of both).

One respondent stated that all gender bathrooms would be the "number one thing" to make their life easier and needs understood which included sporting venues that were "just as easily accessible as male and female".

Improved street lighting and safer public transport hubs were also mentioned along with better policing of anti-social behaviour. Some members of the community felt that Council should focus on infrastructure, roads and footpaths instead of consulting with specific communities.



A Balanced Response

In general, people felt that acceptance and inclusion went beyond LGBTIQ+ identity and should be extended to the diversity within the community without singling out specific groups.

"When gender inclusive language is used such as using terms referring to 'everybody' or 'students' rather than 'ladies and gentlemen', it makes people feel welcome."

"I think it's a balance. In my opinion, our generation is responsible for trying to improve acceptance in the community but at the same time we need to be respectful of others ... sometimes small incremental changes, like getting the language right, can improve acceptance. I personally don't think we need to go overboard, or we risk being counterproductive."

There was a fear from a small number of respondents (6 responses) that any work done, that was primarily focused on improving the conditions for members of the LGBTIQ+ community, would negatively impact on the rights of other members of the community.

For example, two of these respondents commented that all gender bathrooms would be less safe to use.

Council will need to be mindful that any future planning considers equality and access for all members of the community and fears such as these are allayed.

Concluding Comments

This project has been the first major engagement with the Kingborough LGBTIQ+ community since the establishment of the Kingborough/Huon Valley Coming Out Proud Program Liaison Committee and appointment of a Liaison Councillor.

Council is committed to implementing the *LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2023-2025*, as well as continuing to engage and consult with the LGBTIQ+ community.

Special thanks to all the members of the Kingborough LGBTIQ+ Working Group who willingly and voluntarily gave their time and support to the engagement project.

Thank you to Working it Out, Rainbow Communities Tasmania Inc and all the other advocacy organisations who helped to circulate the survey to ensure their members voices were heard.



Glossary Terminology References:

Dwyer, A., Grant, R., Mason, R., and Barnes, A. (2021) 'Just listen properly, like with intent': LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians: Telling us the story - Final Report, December 2021.

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Australian Institute of Family Studies LGBTIQ+ Glossary of Common Terms

www.aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/22-02_rs_lgbtiqa_glossary_of_common_terms_0.pdf