

Report on survey data collected by Port Philip City Council in relation to resident attitudes towards trees.

Introduction

Port Philip Council conducted a paper based survey of various residents in the area – in part those attending sessions regarding trees in the council area. The data (qualitative and quantitative) was keyed into Survey Monkey. The following represents the results.

130 participants took part.

Participants were from the following postcodes (localities are identified where they are in the City of Port Philip).

Though not neatly corresponding to resident proportions across Port Philip localities (less proportional to population from Port Melbourne and South Melbourne) and including some from outside the council area and/or some who did not disclose their postcode, the sample size is still sufficient to evaluate for qualitative purposes and to provide broad indications of preference (not postcode specific) for quantitative questions.

The table below shows sample numbers from each postcode.

Postcode	Locality	Frequency	Percentage
		10	7.7%
3004		1	0.8%
3058		1	0.8%
3127		1	0.8%
3148		1	0.8%
3182	St Kilda	32	24.6%
3183	St Kilda East	7	5.4%
3184	Elwood	22	16.9%
3185		2	1.5%
3201		1	0.8%
3205	South Melbourne	7	5.4%
3206	Middle Park / Albert Park	32	24.6%
3207	Port Melbourne / Garden City	13	10.0%

Q10. Male / Female & Q11. Please indicate your age group

These two questions provide an indication of the distribution of the demographics of age and gender. The following table shows this distribution with each cell showing the number of respondents as well as the percentage that this number represents.

Please note that 1 respondent did not disclose their age or gender

Female:

Age Group	Number of Responses	Percentage
Less than 20 years of age	2	1.5%
20 – 30 years of age	2	1.5%
31 – 40 years of age	17	13.1%
41 – 50 years of age	16	12.3%
51 – 60 years of age	20	15.4%
61 – 69 years of age	7	5.4%
70 – 79 years of age	6	4.6%
80+ years of age	1	0.8%
Total Responses	71	

Male:

Age Group	Number of Responses	Percentage
20 – 30 years of age	1	0.8%
31 – 40 years of age	10	7.7%
41 – 50 years of age	18	13.8%
51 – 60 years of age	19	14.6%
61 – 69 years of age	6	4.6%
70 – 79 years of age	3	2.3%
80+ years of age	1	0.8%
Total Responses	58	

A ki squared test was carried out on each for the tables with quantitative response. Other than in the case of Q4, ‘Replacement of inappropriate trees’, the test result indicated a .05 or better level of confidence that there is a difference between the response rates in each cell.

Q2. Please select the statement that most closely reflects how you feel about the care and general appearance of trees in your local streets.

Local Streets – care & general appearance	Number of Responses	Percentage
generally well maintained with some improvements needed	67	48.2%
trees are, in most circumstances, well maintained and in good condition	46	33.1%
in poor condition and needs significant improvement	26	18.7%
Total Responses	139	

Q3. Please select a statement that which most closely reflects how you feel about the care and appearance of trees in Port Philips parks and open spaces.

Parks & Open Spaces – care & general appearance	Number of Responses	Percentage
generally well maintained with some improvements needed	63	48.8%
trees are, in most circumstances, well maintained and in good condition	50	38.8%
in poor condition and needs significant improvement	16	12.4%
Total Responses	129	

Q4 Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Replacement of dead, damaged or missing trees

Replacement of Dead, Damaged or Missing Trees	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	79	63.2%
Important	35	28.0%
Somewhat important	8	6.4%
Least Important	3	2.4%
Total Responses	125	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Protection of existing trees

Protection of Existing Trees	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	83	65.9%
Important	37	29.4%
Somewhat important	4	3.2%
Least Important	2	1.5%
Total Responses	126	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Replacement of inappropriate trees.

This is the only frequency table in which the statistical testing does not point to a difference in the response rates for the three response categories

Replacement of Inappropriate Trees	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	44	35.5%
Important	36	29.0%
Somewhat important	30	24.2%
Least Important	14	11.3%
Total Responses	124	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Increasing onsite water capture

Increasing Onsite Water Capture	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	77	60.1%
Important	43	33.6%
Somewhat important	6	4.7%
Least Important	2	1.6%
Total Responses	128	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Encouraging residents to participate in tree watering over summer

Encouraging Residents to Participate in Tree Watering Over Summer	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	46	36.2%
Important	57	44.9%
Somewhat important	13	10.2%
Least Important	11	8.7%
Total Responses	127	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Providing shade

Providing Shade	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	55	44.0%
Important	42	33.6%
Somewhat important	20	16.0%
Least Important	8	6.4%
Total Responses	125	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Planting drought tolerant trees

Planting Drought Tolerant Trees	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	73	59.9%
Important	36	29.5%
Somewhat important	11	9.0%
Least Important	2	1.6%
Total Responses	122	

Q4. Thinking about trees in your local neighborhood, please rank the following list of priorities.

- Other

Other	Number of Responses	Percentage
Most important	20	83.3%
Important	2	8.3%
Somewhat important	1	4.2%
Least Important	1	4.2%
Total Responses	24	

Q5. What type of trees do you think would enhance the look and feel of your local neighborhood?

Negative or Positive	Explanation	Number of Responses	Percentage
Positive	Deciduous - Plane, Elm, Oak	13	12.9%
Negative	Deciduous - Plane, Elm, Oak	1	1.0%
Positive	Evergreen	7	6.9%
Positive	Food trees - Fruit / Nut	7	6.9%
Positive	Keep / Maintain as is	2	2.0%
Positive	Native & Drought Tolerant	39	38.6%
Negative	Native & Drought Tolerant	2	2.0%
Positive	Palm Trees	3	3.0%
Negative	Palm Trees	2	2.0%
Positive	Shade and flowering	8	7.9%
Positive	Suitable for Neighbourhood - appropriate & uniform	12	11.9%
Positive	Miscellaneous or irrelevant	2	2.0%
	Miscellaneous or irrelevant	3	3.0%
Total Responses		101	

Q6. Thinking about trees in your local area please select any issues concerning you:

Tree Issues in Local Area	Number of Responses	Percentage
Vandalism	41	10.6%
Water and drought	104	26.8%
Allergies	21	5.4%
General appearance	48	12.4%
Damage caused by roots	38	9.8%
Power lines	35	9.0%
Damage caused by animals	11	2.8%
Habitat for animals	35	9.0%
Types of trees	38	9.8%
Other	14	3.6%
None of the above	3	0.8%
Total Responses	388	

Comments:

Respondents commented on a number of themes in relation the issues concerning trees in their local area. Some of the comments included themes such as animals, shade, maintenance, hazards and appropriate plantings.

A majority of the comments were cantered around animals and their habitat. Respondents expressed the need to maintain and even increase the habitat in which the animals live. Attracting new animals to the area was seen as a priority as a decreasing animal population (cockatoos were identified) is of concern. Possums were also identified as an area of concern along with cats and dogs and the issues that surround them.

The need for more trees was raised as an important issue on numerous occasions. The need for more shade was also identified as an area of concern. Playgrounds were raised as an area in particular need of more shade bearing trees.

Maintenance was an issue raised in regards to the severe pruning of Plane trees, the need for trees near power lines to be pruned, the lack of care of new plantings, the replacement of dead trees and the lack of maintenance of street trees. Native and drought tolerant plants were suggested as plants to replace high maintenance trees.

Hazards relating to trees in the local area were also a major area of concern. The danger of raised tree roots, oversized limbs, falling branches, seeds and allergy causing plants were issues of particular worry to the respondents.

Q7. Do you currently water any street trees using grey water?

Water Street Trees Using Grey Water	Number of Responses	Percentage
Yes	32	24.6%
No	97	74.6%
No response	1	0.8%

Total Responses	130	
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Comments:

Respondents wrote a variety of comments mostly in regards to how they currently water their street trees or why they don't water the street trees. Comments in regards to how street trees are watered are centred around the use of tank water and recycled water and collected rain water to water trees on nature strips, young trees, street trees and new replacement trees. Reasons for not watering street trees included living in flats and apartments blocks where there are too many stairs or not street trees. A couple of respondents suggested that they would be happy to use grey water the street trees.

Q8. Is there anything that would encourage or help you to use grey water on street trees and in parks?

Comments from respondents related to why they would or wouldn't be willing to use or encourage the use of grey water. Many comments related to the need for more information or advertising in regards to the use of grey water to give residents more information on the issue and how it affects trees, in which case they may be more willing to use grey water.

Guidance from council was a reoccurring theme throughout the comments also. Many respondents also comment on implementations to make using grey water easier and more desirable – such as reduced rates for users, water bins near trees, containers to transport grey water and subsidies for grey water system installations.

Respondents also commented on their concern regarding the use of grey water in the community due to pollutions. Other respondents simply said that they would not use grey water.

Q9. Do you think council should regulate or restrict what individual residents are allowed to plant on their nature strips?

Regulate Nature Strip Planting	Number of Responses	Percentage
Yes	53	41.1%
No	76	58.9%
Total Responses	129	

Respondents commented on a variety of issues in regards to the use of nature strips. Many encouraged diverse uses of the local nature strips whilst many were against it. Respondents encouraging various uses of the nature strip commented on how a variety of planting and uses were seen as a positive and enhanced the area. Respondents commented positively on getting the community involved in looking after their own nature strips and how using the strips for plants and gardens was great for the neighbourhood as they are currently over governed. Making use of nature strips individually was seen by some respondents as a resolution to the lack of trees on some nature strips.

Those respondents adverse to the idea of the utilization of nature strips commented on the concerns in regards to issues such as; suitability, inappropriate plantings, vegetable gardens and whether or not the planting would be in keeping with the neighbourhood. It was suggested by many respondents that guidelines and restrictions would be needed if residents were allowed to plant their own nature strips. Council guidance and recommendations was also suggested.