



Lagoon Reserve Upgrade

Engagement Summary Report – January 2023



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Executive summary

This Engagement Report has been compiled following the conclusion of the concept phase of community engagement for the Lagoon Reserve Upgrade. The engagement process included delivery of project postcards in the local area, site signage and Have Your Say website with a survey.

The information received during the engagement period will be used to update the concept plan as the project moves toward detailed design in early 2023 with construction scheduled to commence in late 2023. The updated concept plan will be advertised on the project website.

Every effort has been made by the authors of this document to represent accurately participant feedback and insights.

Key findings

Several themes emerged consistently across the Have Your Say survey (including the question asked in the survey) community conversations and targeted stakeholder conversations. These primarily centred on liveability and concerns that the upgrades may alter the way the reserve is used and the ability of residents and park users to enjoy the Reserve into the future.

- Elements that people valued most about Lagoon Reserve were the easy access to green space for local residents for dog walking, passive recreation and sport. Following that, people expressed appreciation for the strong sense of community in the area through the dog walking and sport communities.
- When asked what they wanted to hold onto, people were clear that they did not want the use of the park to change, particularly that the reserve should remain a dog off leash area. There was some support to leave the park in its current state and not undertake any upgrades.
- Increasing amenities was the most prominent area that people felt needed change, there was strong support to have a fenced area for dogs, many respondents called for an upgrade to various aspects of the park such as lighting and drinking fountains, respondents also had concerns around safety and security.

Project background

Lagoon Reserve in Port Melbourne is located on land reclaimed from a former lagoon which is heavily used for a variety of activities including: dog walking, competitive sport (soccer and cricket), physical education classes and other passive recreation activities.

Facilities currently within the Reserve include:

- A small sports pavilion (built in 1950s), comprising a small kitchen, two change rooms with showers & toilets and public toilets;
- A sports field that is suitably sized for junior and lower grade senior cricket and soccer competition and training; The only lighting to the reserve is a single spotlight mounted on the Pavilion roof.
- Three cricket practice nets, barbeque, picnic facilities, seating and a pedestrian path;
- Extensive garden beds which contain native flora and fauna of the local area. These have been developed and maintained in partnership with local community groups over many years.

The Lagoon Reserve is experiencing on-going issues including undulation across the sports field, poor grass cover and poor drainage conditions. Due to these unsatisfactory ground conditions, Lagoon Reserve is not fit for sporting activity and does not support passive recreation activities of the community and requires renewal to bring the standard of the reserve up to a level appropriate for sporting and community use. The renewal and upgrade of the Lagoon Reserve Pavilion will provide a suitably designed facility that will provide for existing sports clubs and users as well as new community groups to utilise Lagoon Reserve.

The opportunity exists to redevelop the Pavilion, install sports ground lighting and replace the surface of Lagoon Reserve and deliver in line with the recommendations set out in the Lagoon Reserve Park Plan 2013 to provide for the current and future needs of the community.

Our proposed upgrade aims to benefit the surrounding community and minimise impact by:

- Minimising loss of trees and open space
- Protecting and enhancing the natural look and feel of the reserve
- Encouraging and supporting a diversity of community-based sports and recreation
- Recognising the reserve as a multi-purpose community space

The proposed redevelopment Includes:

- Reconstructed sports field/open space with improved levels, grass coverage, irrigation, drainage and lighting
- New pavilion including new player and umpire change rooms that are inclusive for all, first aid room, kitchen, multi-purpose community space and accessible public toilets
- New cricket nets, BBQ and picnic facilities
- Safer and better lit pathways

A concept plan was developed by Council in mid-2022. This document has been compiled following the conclusion of the first phase of community engagement for the Lagoon Reserve Upgrade (21 November – 18 December 2022). Over the engagement period, 327 responses were

Lagoon Reserve Upgrade – Engagement Summary Report

received through the City's online engagement platform - Have Your Say Port Phillip. Respondents provided recommendations and comments on what they like about the existing reserve and what they would like to see in the future. Respondents also had the opportunity to provide input on new seating and bin locations.

Following this round of engagement, the concept plan will be updated and advertised on the project website.



Engagement approach

The community was informed about the engagement process in the following way:

- Signage displayed in the reserve
- Project postcard sent to nearby residents (approx. 4000 homes within 500m of the reserve)
- Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage
- Council's social media pages (Facebook and Instagram)
- 2 x community Q&A sessions (29 November & 2 December)

Stakeholders were informed about the engagement in the following way:

- Emails and conversations with tenant sports clubs (October/November)
- Phone call with Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre (December)
- Sport and Recreation team engaged with Albert Park Collage via email (January)

Engagement findings

Have Your Say Response

Information relating to the engagement was posted on Council's Have Your Say site. The page received **1395** views, with **254** users contributing to the post. A total of **6** users chose to follow the page. A total of **327** comments were made by contributors. The comments covered a range of topics.

These responses have been categorised into the following themes;

- Dog Use
- Sport Use
- Park design
- Pavilion/Public Toilets
- Sports Lighting
- Planting/habitat
- Council process management.

Theme	Responses	% of total	Comment
Dog Use	112	34%	<p>A range of dog issues were discussed in the comments.</p> <p>87% of the 112 responses related to leaving the reserve as a dog of leash area:</p> <p>Requests to leave as a dog off leash area/do not change use of park (79) and that not enough consideration for dogs/dog owners within concept such as obstacle course, dog bowls etc... (18)</p> <p>10% of responses related to moving dogs away from the park or making dog owners more accountable for their dogs behaviour (11).</p> <p><i>"Please consider dog owners, there is many dogs in the area and such limited space for them"</i></p> <p><i>"I'm all for the upgrades as long as it's still able to be used as a dog park outside sporting games."</i></p>



Sport	28	9%	<p>75% (21) of 28 respondents encouraged more sport and facilities upgrades. Areas of discussion included upgrade of facilities would encourage more participation particularly from juniors and females (13), requests and support to upgrade the cricket nets (4),</p> <p>(3) Responses highlighted that is a sports reserve (not a dog park) whilst 2 respondents blamed sport for driving dog owners away from the park.</p> <p><i>“The existing facilities at the lagoon reserve are in a poor condition and in need of re-development. The new proposal would vastly improve the parcel of land and would have great benefits to the community. Football participation has been growing at an unprecedented rate in Australia over the last few years and the grass roots facilities available in the Port Phillip area are not effective enough in meeting the demand.”</i></p> <p><i>“Sports and football in this local area is incredibly important for mental health.”</i></p> <p><i>“Long overdue upgrades- looking forward to seeing the end results.”</i></p>
Park Design	119	36%	<p>27% (32) of respondents suggested a fully fenced park or creating a dedicated fenced dog space at the reserve. 1 response was received to remove all park fencing.</p> <p>14% (17) of respondents fully supported the concept design that had been presented.</p> <p>12% (14) of respondents commented on the BBQ/Picnic facilities with 10 responses asking to remove the BBQ area altogether, 4 responses asked for a 2nd BBQ area to be installed at the southern end of the reserve.</p> <p>9% (11) respondents directly addressed concerns with lack of public lighting (separate from sports lighting) and asked for this to be considered in the design</p> <p>8% (9) of respondents commented directly on adding more drinking fountains/dog bowls.</p>



			<p>6% (7) commented on the need for more shelter</p> <p>5% (6) of respondents asked for informal recreation equipment to be included in the project in the form of Basketball Court (4) and Tennis Hit Up Wall (2)</p> <p>4% (5) of respondents requested that the oval be fenced while the same amount of respondents asked for the cricket net location to be changed.</p> <p>3% (4) of respondents asked for an accessible walking path around the entire park while another 3% of respondents commented on the need to improve the safety of the toilet location (make visible).</p> <p>2% (2) respondents asked for inclusion of a playground at the site.</p> <p>The was very strong support across all comments for the inclusion of dog bags at all entries to the park.</p> <p><i>“The area needs to be fenced for the safety of children and pets”</i></p> <p><i>“Lighting on the walking paths so it feels safe to walk around at night”</i></p> <p><i>“It looks nice. The current cricket nets are dangerous if you are walking in the park and ppl are having a hit. I’d love to see a protection fence preventing balls from entering the park. It’s incredibly dangerous.”</i></p>
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Pavilion/Public Toilets	13	4%	<p>(5) respondents thought the building was too big or out of character for the park, (2) comments that the building design was good, (2) comments supporting the community room being available for hire by local groups, (2) comments specifically relating to support of upgrading the toilets while there was (1) comment on each of concern about the materials being used on the building and asking for more detail of the proposed layout of</p> <p><i>“There is a significant increase in both the height and footprint of the new sports complex which is not proportional to the overall size of this small community park. The use of the ‘community space’ for functions is likely to have an impact on the peaceful amenity of nearby residents, and impossible to police given the transient nature of such bookings (compared with a permanent licensed venue for example)”</i></p> <p><i>“Love the idea of another community space to use/hire”</i></p> <p><i>“Overall great to have newer and better facilities at Lagoon Reserve. The building looks nice, needs to seamlessly blend the field to the outdoor decking area. The area behind the current building has always been quite untidy so needs some attention.”</i></p>
Sports Lighting	12	4%	<p>33% (4) of respondents were concerned about the effect the lighting would have on wildlife/homes</p> <p>25% (3) of respondents completely objected to any sports field lighting being installed</p> <p>25% (3) of respondents thought the sports lighting should be used for dog walking</p> <p>1 comment was received that the lightpoles shouldn’t obstruct resident views</p> <p>1 respondent fully supported the lighting upgrade</p>

Planting/habitat	10	3%	<p>50% (5) of respondents commented that more planting should be done as part of the project and that no trees should be lost</p> <p>20% (2) had concerns about what impact the project would have to wildlife</p> <p>20% (2) Respondents requested more information on the impact the project would have on flora/fauna</p> <p>1 comment was received about installation of a wetlands and/or raingarden.</p> <p><i>“Love to see more mature trees planted that provide shade in time, especially around the cricket nets and southern side along the path”</i></p> <p><i>“Impacts of lighting on vegetated areas within the park should be minimised to avoid disturbance of wildlife. Light spill on nearby properties is not the only concern.”</i></p>
Council process management	33	10%	<p>36% (12) of respondents said the park should be left as is/no project should proceed or thought there were better ways for Council to spend the budgeted money.</p> <p>12% (4) of respondents asked for allocated dog walking/sport hours to be published however this was a constant theme in Council officer discussions with the public at the pop-up sessions and in various comments throughout the consultation questions.</p> <p>Other common themes were concerns that (2) there would be changes to parking restrictions (2) How much use Albert Park Collage would have</p> <p>There was overwhelming support that while the park was being constructed more space (in addition to Gasworks and Port Melbourne Beach) needed to be made available to the public for off leash dog walking.</p> <p><i>“What's not articulated is the programming of sports - days and times of week the reserve is likely to be used by sports.”</i></p>

Survey Responses

Question 1 - What types of new amenities would you like to see in the BBQ area?

The majority of respondents asked for a drinking fountain to be included in the upgraded picnic area with bins and dog bags also a popular response.

**** Note**** The question responses will not equal 100% due to respondents being able to choose more than one option.

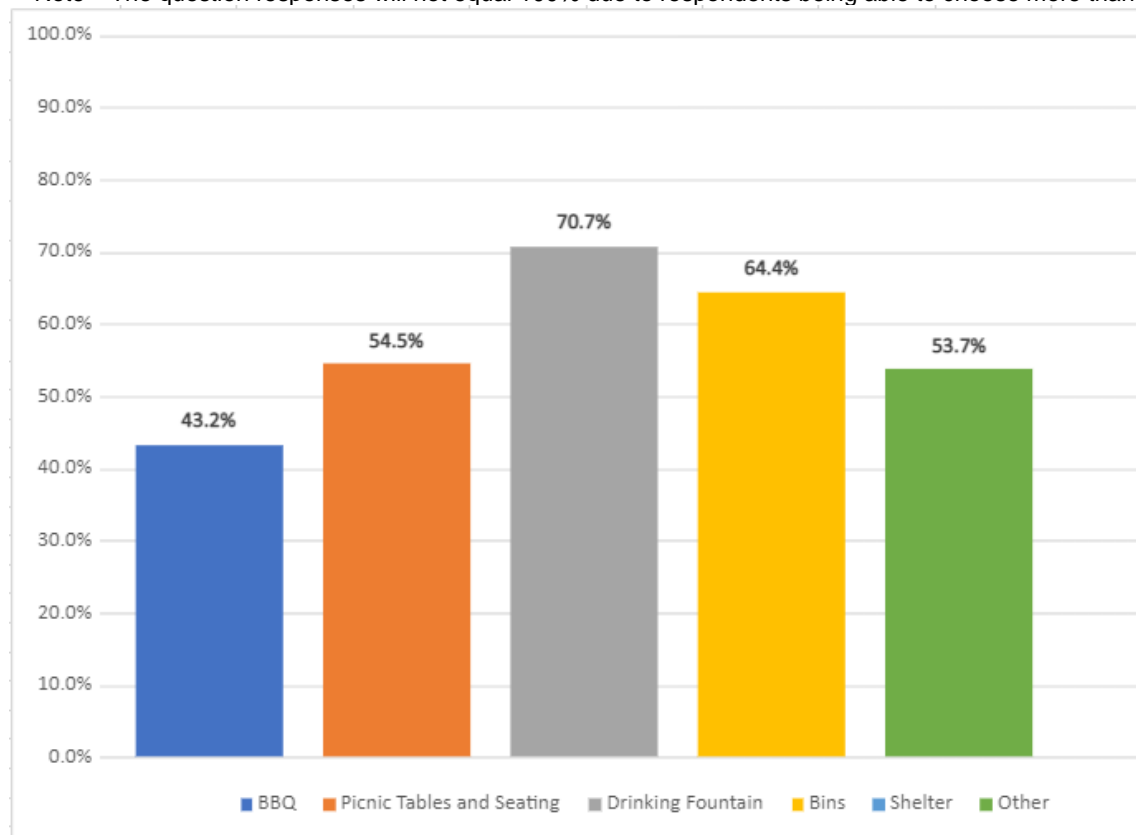


Figure 1. Preference for new amenities in the BBQ area

Respondents were also asked to map their preferred locations for new seating and rubbish bins.

(17) seating locations and (34) bin locations were mapped by a total of 35 respondents.

There was strong support to retain the compost bins in the Eastern corner of the park, increase the total amount of garbage bins (to include each entrance to the park) and increase the seating provision on both sides of the park to watch sport/dog walking.



Email Responses

In addition/separate to the Have Your Say responses the project team received (12) email submissions and held hundreds of conversations onsite at the pop-up events.

The email submissions were wide ranging and included suggestions from the Port Melbourne Historical and Preservation Society. There were various comments about lighting, increased sporting use/dog use, cricket net position/materials, environmental aspects (such as planting and wildlife) and Parking. In addition, there was a submission that was sent to the project team with a new proposed solution for the entire park which included a separate fenced dog off leash area at the Northern end of the park, a face-to-face meeting with Council officers was facilitated to hear more about the proposal.

Who we heard from

The majority of participants (55%) said they visited Lagoon Reserve every day.

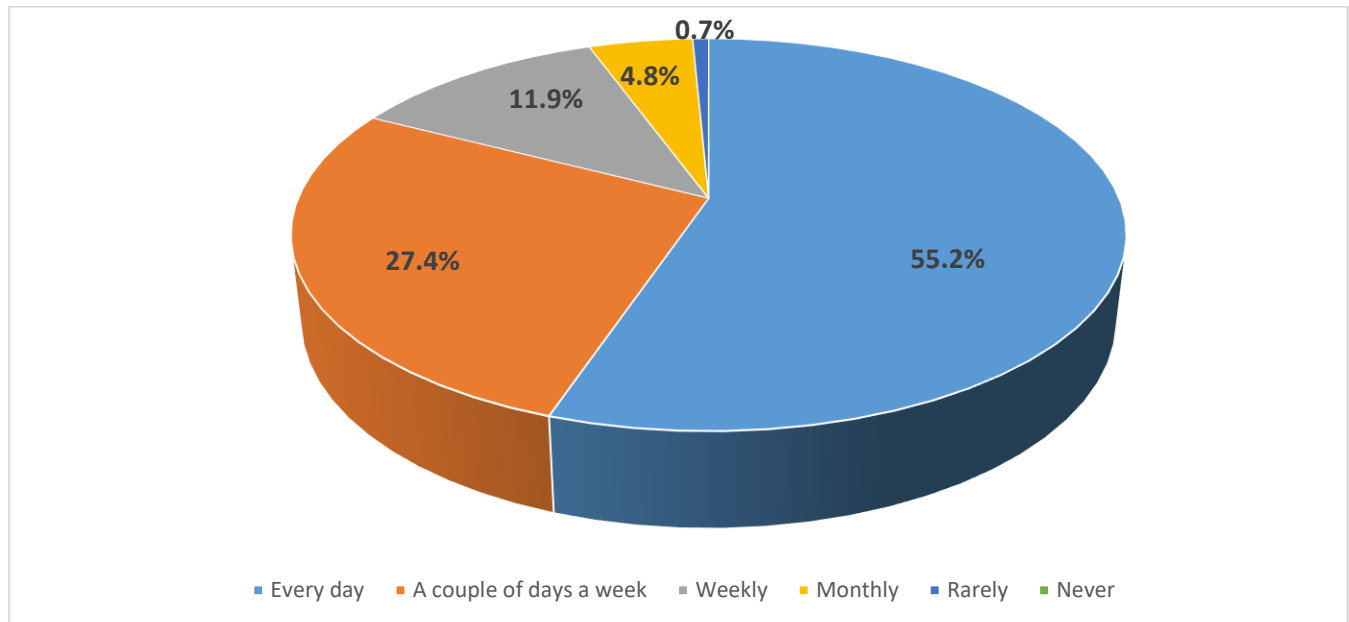


Figure 2. Frequency of Visits to Lagoon Reserve

The majority of participants (63%) said they walk their dog at the reserve.

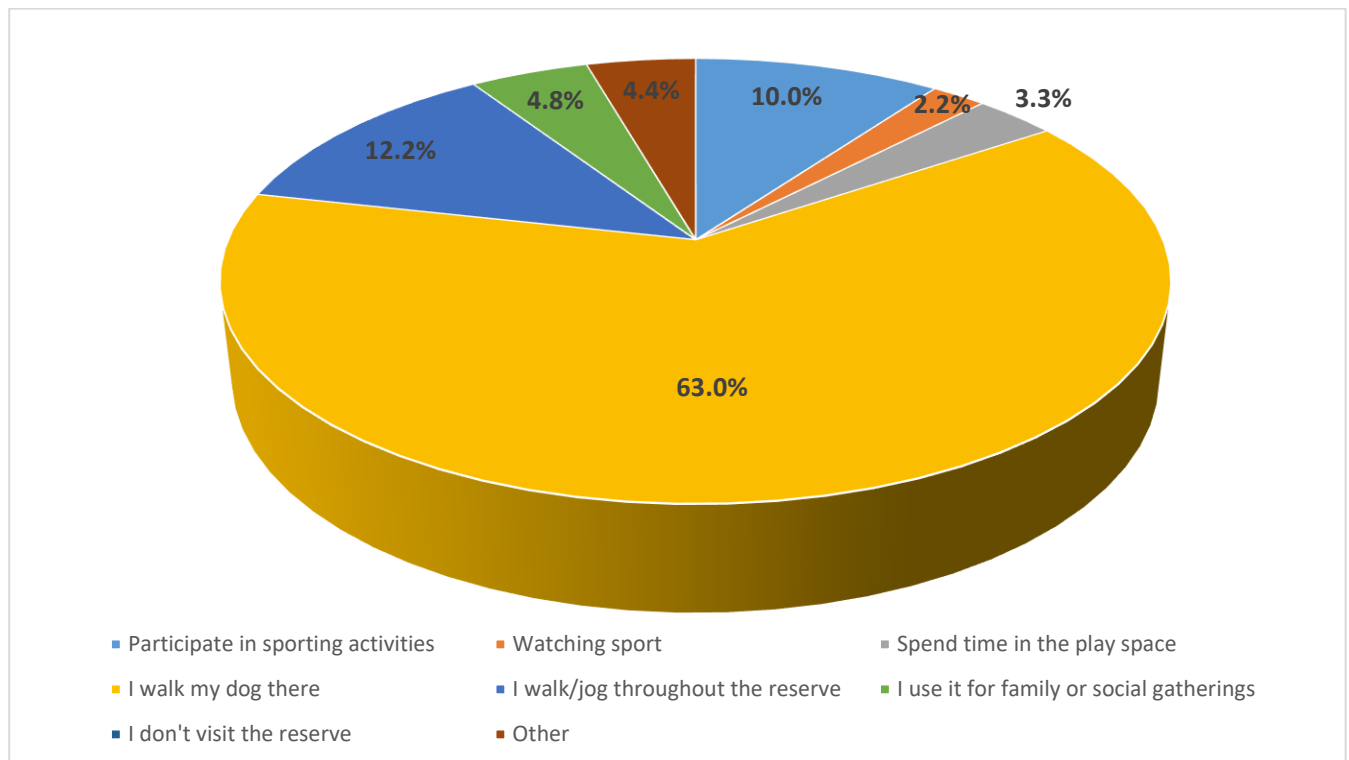


Figure 3. How do you use Lagoon Reserve

The overwhelming majority of participants said they live in Port Phillip. Of these, the majority of respondents are from Port Melbourne.

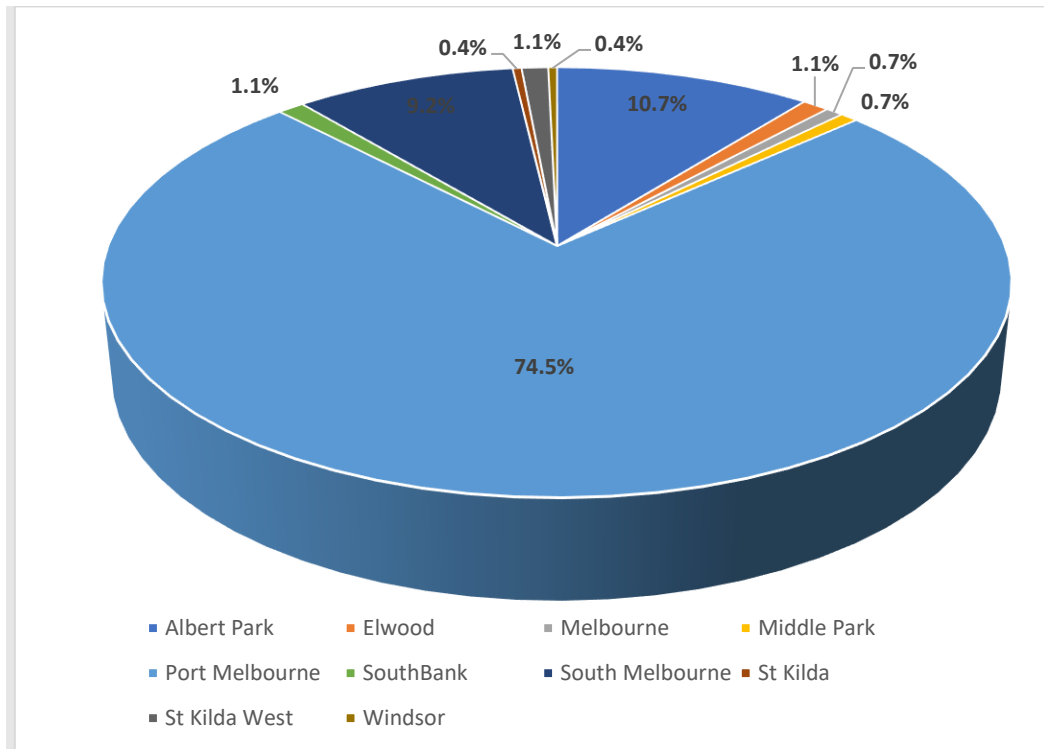


Figure 4. Residential suburb

The largest representative age group was respondents aged 35 to 49 followed by respondents aged 50 to 59.

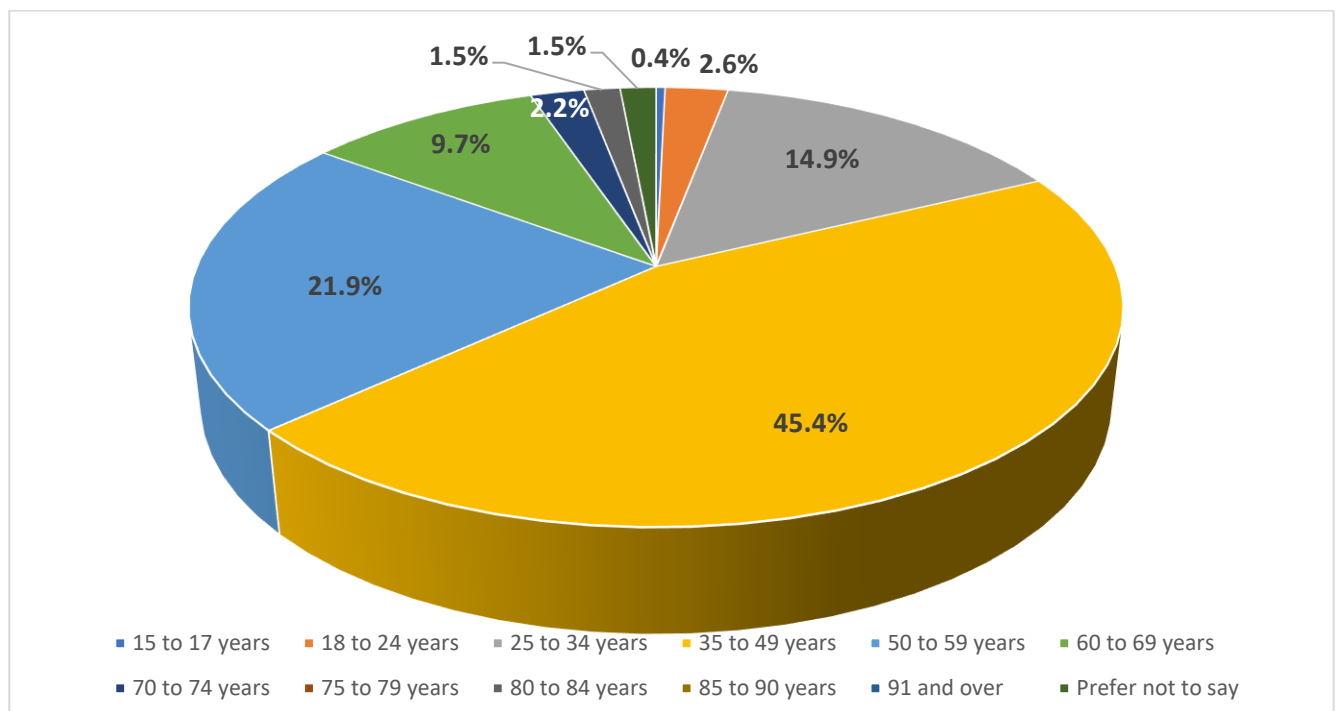


Figure 5 . Age group