UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE OF OUTDOOR DINING PARKLETS AND POP UP PARKS

During April and May in 2022, community engagement was conducted in Banyule City Council to determine the longer-term future of outdoor dining parklets in the area, as well as the visitor experience at three pop-up parks - Greensborough Walk, Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub and Burton Crescent East Ivanhoe.

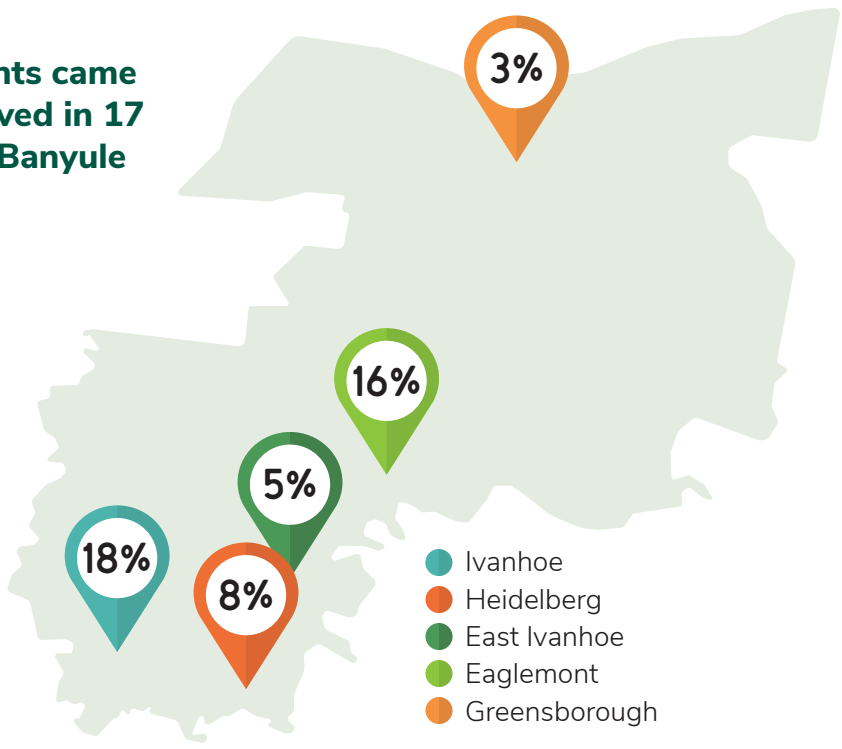
Engagement Methods

Online survey	Personal interviews	Face-to-face engagement on site	At four locations

Who participated?

307	32	25	16	9
Residents (79%	Businesses (8%)	Workers (7%)	Visitors to Banyule (4%)	Other connection to Banyule

Banyule participants came from or lived in 17 different Banyule suburbs



Participation by age group

25-44	45-64	15-25	65+
43%	39%	5%	12%

Pop-up Parks

Visitation to pop-up parks - Greensborough, Ivanhoe and East Ivanhoe

53%	13%	29%
Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub had the highest visitation	Lower visitation to Greensborough Walk and Burton Crescent (opened mid-way through the engagement period)	Just under one-third of survey respondents had not visited any of the pop-up parks.

Benefits of the pop-up park

For residents, local workers and visitors the impact of these parks has been overly positive.

200	186	185
Participants (60%) feel they are a good spot to meet with friends and family	Participants (56%) believe that it helps to create a feeling of community	Participants (55%) said that they are easy to access and park nearby

183	152
Participants (55%) felt that it encourages people to shop local	Participants (46%) believe that they attract visitors from outside Banyule

Other comments: having greenery to combat the look and heat of the surrounding concrete areas, safety benefits of having a pedestrian-friendly area and less car parking activity

Businesses

For business owners their views were mixed - both positive and negative impacts or no impact at all/too far away.

POSITIVES

Has brought people to that space, having coffee and waiting for a friend. During summer there are people sitting under the trees, families coming to return library items. supported local traders, seen people out there eating food, people reading books (Ivanhoe Library).

It creates a much nicer space visually, more people sitting out there having a chat. It has increased business and provided more space Greensborough Walk).

Can be used to bring people to the shopping precinct. More attractive amenity, a good community meeting space, seating is very cleverly done, materials used were good quality (Burton Crescent).

NEGATIVES

Should have left the car parks (Burton Crescent).

Taken over space previously used for outdoor activities and now that area is too small (Greensborough Walk).

Improvements to pop-up parks

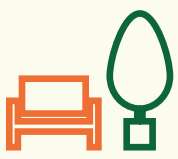
Greensborough Walk



Add food trucks and/ or coffee carts



More creative design and look



Repositioning of seating and planters

Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub



More comfortable seating



Rubbish bins and shade

Burton Crescent



More community spaces



Improved amenities e.g. public toilets



Improved pedestrian safety

Outdoor dining parklets

The outdoor dining parklets are currently clustered in the southern part of the Banyule municipality in Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe; Burgundy Street, Heidelberg; and Silverdale Road, Eaglemont.

Visitation to outdoor dining parklets



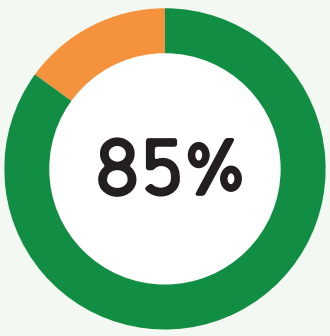
Parklets outside cafes or take-away food businesses were more frequently visited than the parklets outside restaurants and hotels.

Patrons aged 25-44 years were more likely to report regularly visiting the four parklets along Burgundy Street

Patrons aged 45-64 years were more likely to report regularly visiting the parklets in Ivanhoe and Eaglemont

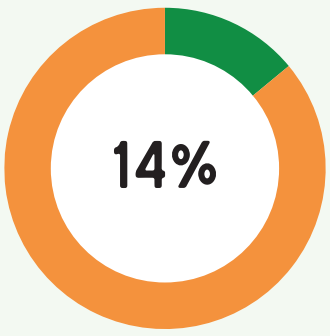
Impacts of the outdoor dining parklets

The residents, visitors or local workers were overwhelmingly positive about the outdoor dining parklets.



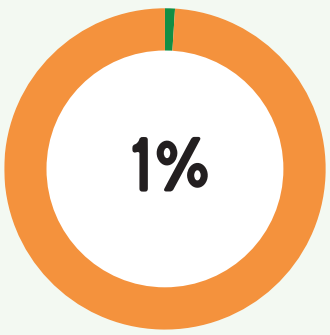
Participants gave a positive comment. Some common reasons given were:

- It adds to community vibe and atmosphere
- It was good for business and increases trade in the area
- They felt more COVID-safe while dining outdoors
- Participants enjoyed other benefits, like better use of space compared to car parks, visual addition to the area, added safety of the area, and family friendly atmosphere.



Participants gave a negative comment. Some common reasons given were:

- A loss of parking spaces
- Lack of weather resistance during colder months
- Safety concerns near roads
- Needed improvements for infrastructure
- Unfair advantages for businesses
- Blockage of footpaths



Participants gave a neutral response



Residents, visitors and workers were asked if the availability of parking had changed in any way compared to pre-COVID conditions:

64%
Reported no change in parking availability or time it takes them to find a park

17%
Were not car drivers and used other modes of transport

13%
Reported that parking availability was worse

6%
Reported that parking availability was better than pre-COVID-19 conditions

9
owners reported that the parklets had a positive impact on their business

2
owners reported that the parklets had no impact on their business

5
owners reported that the parklets had a negative impact on their business

5
owners reported that the parklets were too far away from their business

Business and Trader Association representatives

Comments from surveyed, or interviewed businesses and Trader Associations representatives:

POSITIVES

Have brought more people to the street/brings a bustling atmosphere

Brings more new customers into the area/encourages local residents to support local businesses

People like to sit outside in the fresh air and can maintain distance (COVID-safe)

Good for business during COVID/ offering outside dining as a point of difference

NEGATIVES

Less parking for customers/parking in the street has been impacted particularly during winter periods where people prefer to park closer

Take up too much of the footpath

Improvements to Outdoor Dining Parklets

Common themes:

addition of outdoor heating and covers/ enclosures for cold and wet weather

Council to grant permanency

an expansion of the parklet ‘footprint’ or new parklet locations added in Banyule

Removal of the parklets was usually mentioned as the fourth or fifth most common “improvement”

Future of the Outdoor Dining Program

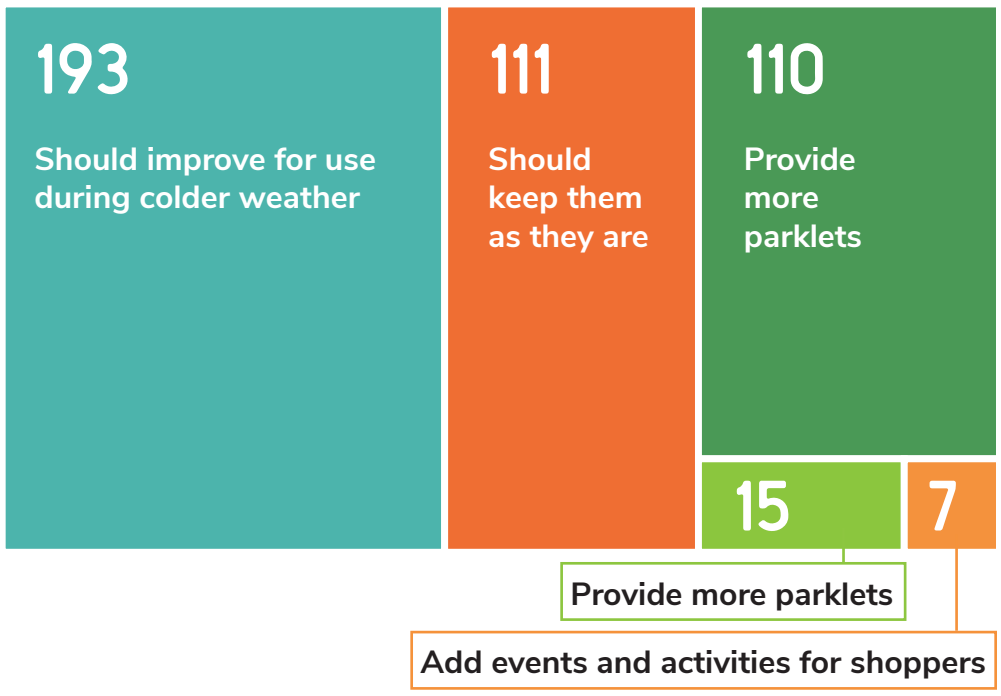
Consistent view was that Council should expand the program to other locations

Improve the parklets for use in colder weather

Keep the original parklets as they are currently (same locations, no expansion)

What we’ve heard

Residents, visitors and local workers said:



Businesses/Trader Association representatives said:



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

POP-UP PARKS

Implement a communications plan to inform residents, local workers and visitors of the purpose and features of the three pop-up parks

Prepare a year-round events program to increase awareness and visitation focusing on Greensborough Walk and Burton Crescent

Consider programming mobile food and drink vendors on event days for Greensborough Walk patrons

Liaise with the surrounding Greensborough Walk businesses regarding the issues they mentioned during the engagement (locations of seating and planters)

Ensure a high standard of infrastructure maintenance, vegetation maintenance, rubbish removal and street cleaning

Investigate options for provision of public toilets facilities and outdoor heating for Burton Crescent, East Ivanhoe

Monitor actual and perceived pedestrian safety in Burton Crescent, East Ivanhoe

OUTDOOR DINING PARKLETS

Retain an ongoing program of outdoor dining parklets for the remainder of the current Council term

Consider the preparation of a new Council policy for the outdoor dining program

Review the utilisation of specific parklets where food businesses have closed since early 2021 or where the parklet is only open for limited hours

Liaise with current parklet owners to ensure patron comfort and maximum utilisation during colder weather

Actively promote the car parking options and likely availability near to the current outdoor dining parklets and promote sustainable transport where appropriate

Implement a communications plan to inform all residents, local workers and visitors (eg case studies)

Actively program community activities, entertainment or trader promotions in the parklet spaces when not in use by food businesses

Review traffic speeds, bollards, footpath access and patron perception of safety to identify any potential changes

Benchmark other councils' funding models for sharing the ongoing costs of the outdoor dining program

Continue to monitor car parking availability across the municipality