



Clarence City Council

Bellerive Beach Access Mat Consultation

Community feedback

January 2024

Image Credit: Beach Party 6 January 2024

Beach Access Mat Consultation

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What the Community saw on council Your Say project page

BEACH ACCESS MAT TRIAL - BELLERIVE BEACH

Council has installed a beach access mat at Bellerive Beach as a summer six-week trial and we want to **hear what you think of it!**

Your feedback will help us with understanding how this trial went. It will also help with planning for the future as we continue to strive to make our places and spaces accessible and inclusive for all our community.

How to have your say?

- Please click our survey link below
- Email us to tell us more at yoursay@ccc.tas.gov.au
- Call any of the people and teams in the 'Who's listening' list.
- Visit us in person at 38 Bligh Street, Rosny Park, Tasmania 7018
- We will be at the trial site Saturday 6 January from 11am - 2pm during the Beach Party. Come along and share your feedback!
- We would also love to see the beach access mat being used. Please send photos to us at: yoursay@ccc.tas.gov.au

What is a beach ace

Beach access mats provide a firm, continuous access path down to the hard sand areas of a beach. They help people of all ages and abilities overcome the challenge of soft sand and assist everyone to enjoy access to the beach and water.

A beach access mat is a long, sturdy 'mat' that is placed on top of soft sand and other surfaces to allow wheeled mobility aids (such as wheelchairs and prams) and people who have difficulty walking to reach the firmer sand near the water's edge.

Due to the movement of tides and sand at the beach, it is not always guaranteed that the mat will provide access to the hard sand. Beach access mats are installed in locations and of a length that provides access to the hard sand most of the time whilst minimizing the potential impacts of wave and tidal movements on the mat.

Some photos from the test rollout on Tuesday 28 November getting ready for the summer trial:



What the Community saw on council Your Say project page

Why was Bellerive Beach selected for the trial site?

Council considered various beaches and coastal access points for the trial project. A lot of our beaches are not suitable for beach access mats as the access path are too steep, rocky or use steps to get down to the sand. A lot of our beaches are also exposed to and heavily impacted by waves and tidal movement meaning the mat would likely be damaged or washed away.

Bellerive was selected as the best site for the trial as it is one of our most popular beach destinations for residents and visitors to Clarence. This will allow us to capture a lot of data during the trial from a wide range of users. The beach is wide at low tide with plenty of hard sand allowing people to move along and enjoy the full length of the beach. Bellerive Beach also has existing infrastructure to support people to get to and stay longer at the beach such as car parking, public toilets, beach showers, shade shelters, generous footpaths, picnic facilities, an all abilities playground and nearby takeaway and cafes.

More details on the trial and answers to other questions are in the FAQ section to the right.

Other information provided:

- Planning your trip guide (see appendix)
- Extensive FAQs
- Details of who to contact for more information and for feedback



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Summary Feedback

- Good response from the community with 213 survey responses provided over the summer trial. The Beach Party event was a great way to test the mat with hundreds of users on one day without any damage or incidents.
- Strong support for the trial with 94% saying they like the mat.
- 69% tell us it has improved access with 52% saying it has greatly improved their access.
- Most people used the mat to access the beach for a wide variety of reasons
- Most comments were highly positive and in support of the mat and supporting it staying.
- Many saw no downside or negatives however there are some useful constructive critical comments to help improve this and future installations that can improve the experience for users.
- A high level of interest in seeing a beach wheelchair being made available



Consultation methodology

- **Timeframe:**
 - Six weeks from early December 2023 to 6 February 2024 throughout the full trial period
- **Key consultation approach and activities:**
 - Conversations with key groups and experts in the planning stage of the installation and to inform the overall consultation and survey design:
 - Clarence Access and Inclusion Network
 - Council Disability Access and Inclusion Working Group
 - Your Say survey online and available in hard copy
 - Pop up at the popular Arts & Events Beach Party on 6 January where hundreds attended the event and many used the beach access mat and engaged in conversations on the day
 - Aim was to reach a good mix of ages and abilities
- **Responses:**
 - 213 survey responses
- **Communication and promotion key moments:**
 - Council website and featured on council Your Say page
 - Facebook posts throughout consultation period
 - Eastern Shore Sun ad
 - Surveys in foyer of council
 - Corflute at entry point to the mat



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Key tools used in detail

Survey

The method gave the highest volume of responses and is easy and accessible for most. The survey had a focus on understanding the level of support for the trial. There were also questions to measure success of the trial in detail. The survey was available across the full consultation period. We know from other recent engagements that the many members of the community, within and surrounding the study area, are comfortable using our Your Say platform.

This survey was also available in person at Chambers and at activations.

Individuals could also call and be taken through the survey to further reduce barriers to engage.

Pop up at the Arts & Events beach party day

The Beach Party on Saturday 6 January from 11am until 7pm provided an opportunity to try out the mat and share feedback. A successful day with nearly 4000 expressing interest in attending. We observed behaviour and interactions with the mat and had many conversations on the mat and at the information desk during the day.

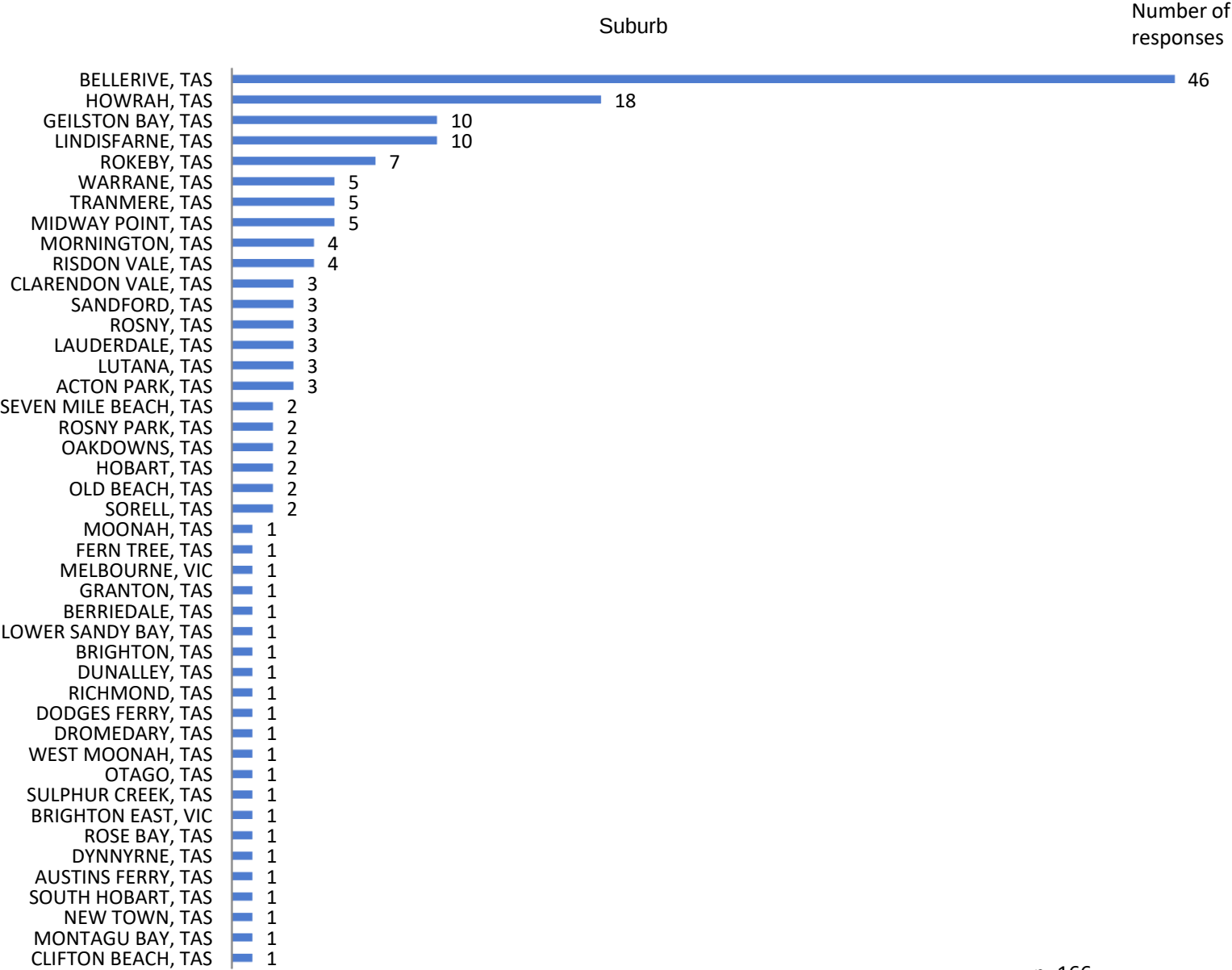
Additionally, the Beach Party gave an opportunity to assess the condition of the mat after heavy use with hundreds using the mat.



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Location

- Majority of responses from Bellerive and surrounding suburbs

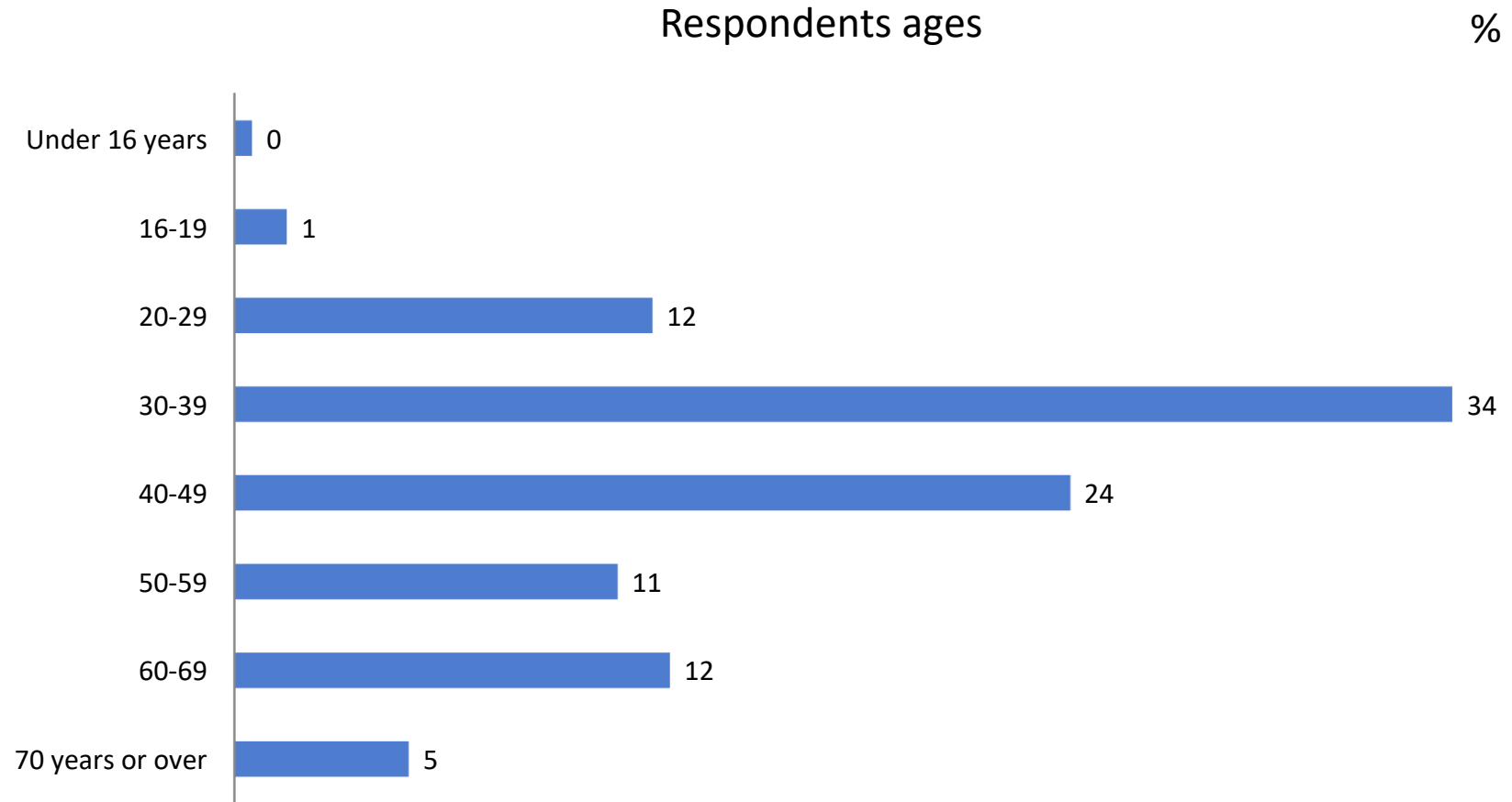


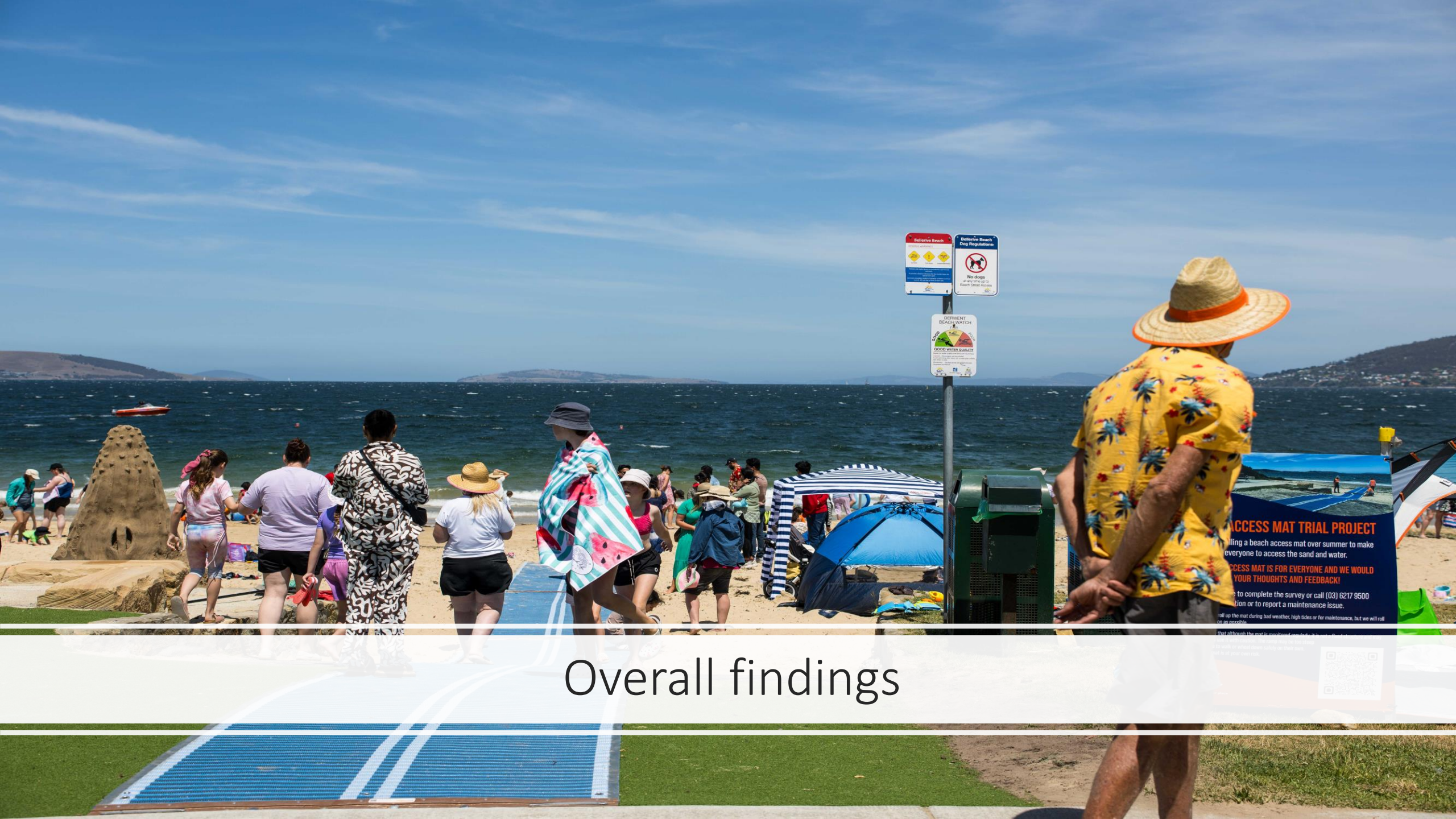
Lastly, some questions about you...Where do you live?



Age

- Age breaks broadly reflecting the diversity of people who visit Bellerive Beach





Overall findings

ACCESS MAT TRIAL PROJECT

Rolling a beach access mat over summer to make everyone to access the sand and water.

ACCESS MAT IS FOR EVERYONE AND WE WOULD LOVE YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEEDBACK!

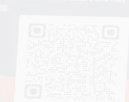
Please complete the survey or call (03) 6217 9500 or to report a maintenance issue.

roll up the mat during bad weather, high tides or for maintenance, but we will roll on as possible.

that although the mat is positioned centrally it does not cover the entire beach.

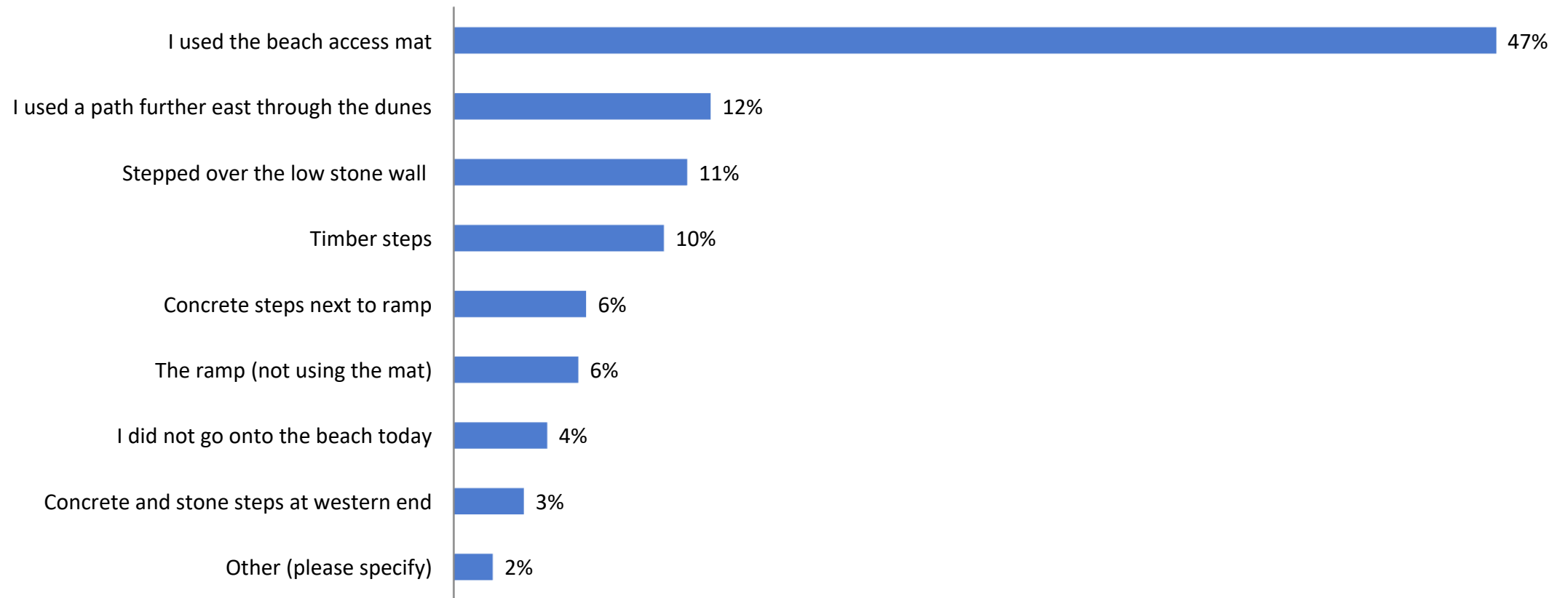
For a full survey, the survey can be found at: <https://www.bellerivebeach.co.nz/survey>

We will be happy to hear from you and we will be happy to hear from you.



A high proportion of respondents chose to access the beach using the mat on their most recent visit

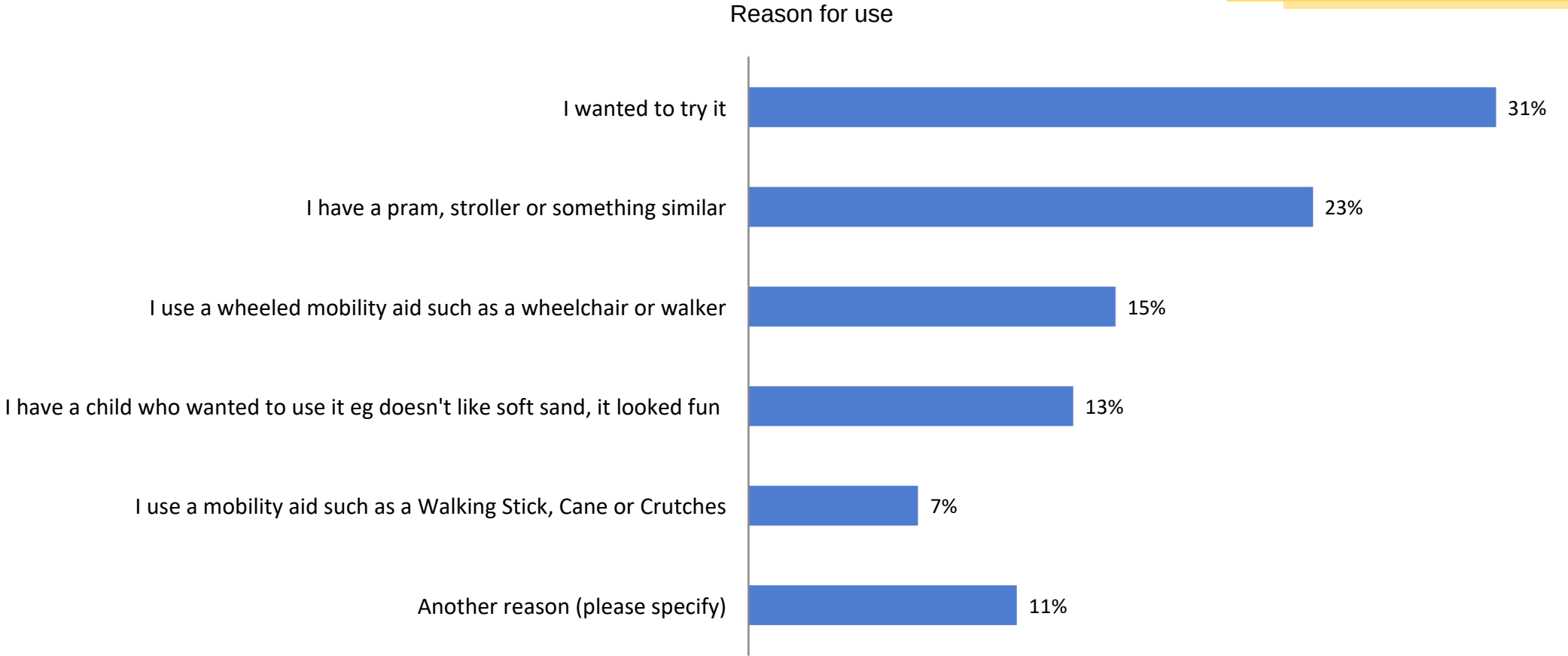
- The mat was used by most respondents as the main way of getting to the sand
- A wide range of ages and mobility used the mat



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Reasons for using the beach access mat

- Many wanted to try it out as their reason for use
- Wheeled and other mobility aids a common reason
- Access for children and prams another key reason given to use the mat
- Beach carts and children on scooters using the mat were observed during the trial



Perceived Benefit Summary

The beach access mat was in **good condition** when I visited

82%

7%

The beach access mat felt **firm and safe** to move along

79%

8%

It was **easier for me** (and/or my family) to get onto the beach

71%

10%

I **felt more welcome** at the beach

71%

8%

I **felt safer** using the ramp with the beach mat installed

63%

11%

I **will visit Bellerive Beach more** often this summer because the mat is installed

61%

12%

I was able to **enjoy an activity** at the beach that I otherwise would not have

46%

16%

I **visited Bellerive Beach because the mat** was available

45%

14%

I **stayed longer** at the beach because of the mat

43%

14%

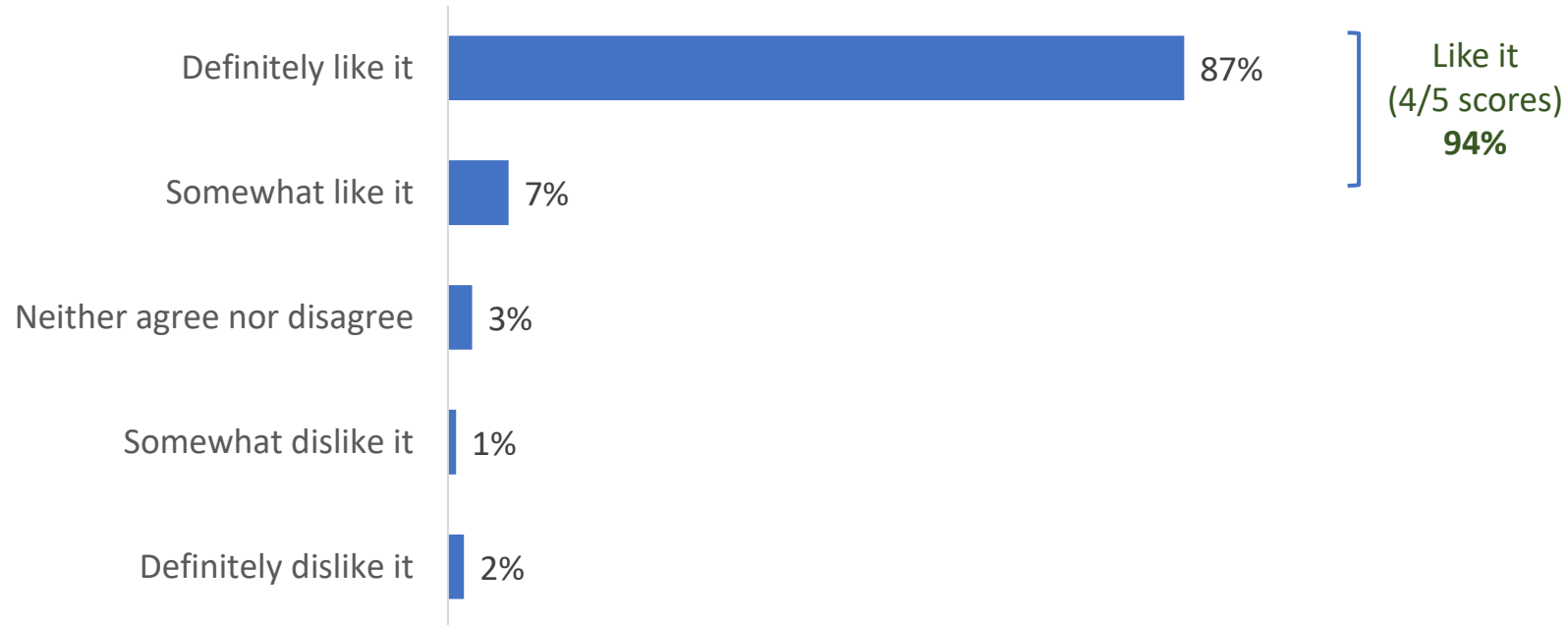


Level of support for the trial is very strong

- Very strong support with an amazing 94% of respondents saying they like the mat
- In the final thoughts question (later in the report) there are many requesting that it is kept

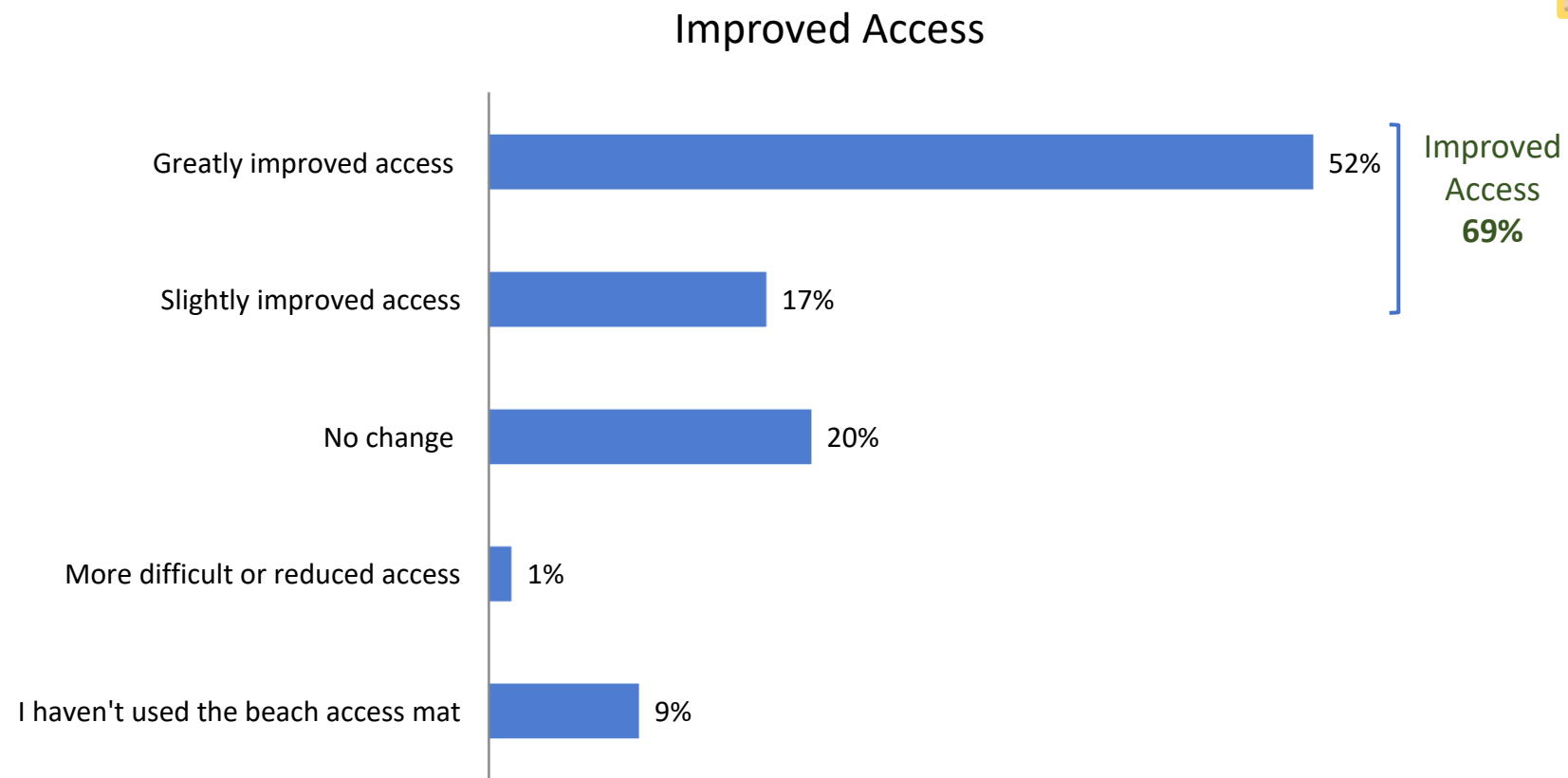


Support for trial



Improved access for many

- 7 in 10 say the mat has improved their access to the beach



Positives

What do you think are the positives of this trial? Do you think it has been good?

I don't use a wheelchair myself, but I think the mat is wonderful. The beach should be accessible by all. This is a really great incentive.

Accessibility and inclusivity is essential. Please keep this on for good

Classic example of when activities are made more accessible, everyone benefits. I'm fortunate to have no physical ailments, but the mat becomes the best choice because it is stable. I've also noticed that people of all capacities are using it because we naturally gravitate to it because of its sturdiness. It not only benefits the ailments that immediately come to mind, but those that are not as common i.e., those with a reliance on portable oxygen who would not otherwise be able to access the beach comfortably. I would strongly support the continuation of the mat.

I think it's wonderful for people who can't normally access the beach or struggle with soft sand. Brilliant.

Access for people who wouldn't be able to visit otherwise. Ease for parenta with strollers. I can't see any downside tbh, even though we don't need it yet. My partner has Parkinson's so sooner or later he will be in a wheelchair.

Beach goers with mobility issues, in wheelchairs and even families with little children would find the beach mat greatly improves access to the beach.

This is such a good sign of welcome. Build it and people will come! I loved being at the beach with families and seeing families of wheelchair users there are well. great inclusion makes it easier to get to the beach and I take a beach cart now because it is there

The positives of this trial, will help everyone walk onto the beach, especially when the sand is too HOT to walk on it when the weather is scorching Hot.

The only exercise I can engage in is swimming. Without the maT I cant get from the car park to the water.

Excellent for people with limited mobility

It was good to see a range of people choosing to use the beach access mat not just people with disability. The day I was there it seemed very popular with young families who had prams or wagons for little kids.

It's a no brainer. Increasing accessibility to ALL people, young, old, disabled. If it is generally an option and the council can support it I would be disappointed if it was not installed.

I think it's brilliant. It helped my friend get back into exercise faster and helped his recovery, and it made it easier for me to get to the beach.

It's fantastic. Any opportunity to improve access for people of all abilities is a welcome change. I have young children and it makes me feel positive that we live in a community that is looking at ways to be more inclusive.

Yes! Love to see accessibility in our community

It is a must to allow mobility aids and prams to enjoy the beach. It is very important in an inclusive society

Having the opportunity for more people and families to enjoy the beach - i.e. people with prams, small children, or mobility devices.

This is awesome well done Clarence Council! It makes the users of the beach take pride in showing visitors the area. Fantastic

I think this is a great idea to help those with a disability feel included and able to reach the water with a wheel chair or pram

Access to the beach for all abilities and shows to those with mobility issues that we are a caring, included community.

Please keep the accessibility mat so our friends and family who have a disability and use wheelchairs are able to wheel down on to the beach and even go into the water with their special wheelchairs!! It's awesome and helps them be included!

Negatives

Now, what do you think have been the negatives (if any)? Do you think that there have been issues or negative impacts?

No/none/no negatives/Can't see any/ Nil

Wheel chair access finally. But for me I need a rail so it doesn't help me. I would prefer a rail to access the beach.

I am not so sure all chairs can use this mat but other than that, no negatives.

No negatives? But it should have a longer MAT going down the beach left and right, leaving a complete LONG RECTANGLE sections where people can sit down but not where close to the water and blocking people from walking up/down the Beach.

None at all. I'm lucky I don't have to use it but am delighted for those that need it.

Can't see any. Anything that includes people has to be a good thing

I am an able bodied person, I found no negatives, but disabled visitors may well have a different opinion.

A permanent structure should have been put in (at every beach) years ago.

None. It's a wonderful initiative. I am very happy to see access improved!

Too soon to assess!

everyone (lots of able bodied people) seems to be using the ramp, so I am concerned that disabled people will not have great access to the ramp because others are using it. Also, because that ramp faces north-south, it means that any strong southerly wind (sea breeze in summer, and most winds in winter) blows sand directly up the ramp and onto the grass - making a 'mound' of sand on either side of the shared path. TO solve this, the ramp should be re-oriented east-west from the beach, with a corner whereby it turns north-south to get up onto the shared path. Also need to have improved toilet facilities for disabled people

If the mat is wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass each other

No negatives, whatever the cost of the install was is out weighed by the joy of our kids and visitors using it.

No negatives at all! Only positives!

The mat doesn't go far enough, it needs to Go right into the water to be of any help. The mat only goes a short way and there was about 3 metres of soft sand to cross before the water

The existing ramp isn't to up to standard regulations (gradient) and then tacking a beach mat to it from my point of view as a wheelchair user is very shabby.

Im not sure if I am welcome to use the mat to get my kayak (on wheels) onto the beach so didn't use it - reducing the access I normally have.

The only negative I can think of is this should've been put in years ago, especially for people in wheelchairs.

No negative impacts. The mat looks like may need to be longer to enable wheelchair users to get to the water's edge. Great work Clarence Council! Could also consider one at Little Howrah Beach as its very sheltered and has lots of parking + accessible t toilets nearby

I think a negative about only just having this trial now singles out people that have to use it because it's a new thing and others are not used to this. But I do not think that there has been an issues or that this negatively impacts the beach or other patrons at all.

I dont believe its used for kids to walk up with their parents nor should it should be used for prams either unless they havev special needs, The sign needs to be more clearer. I dont think its used correctly and that could be a issue. kids wont move. They are using it as a playground .

That it's only a trial, I want the mat to be a permanent fixture

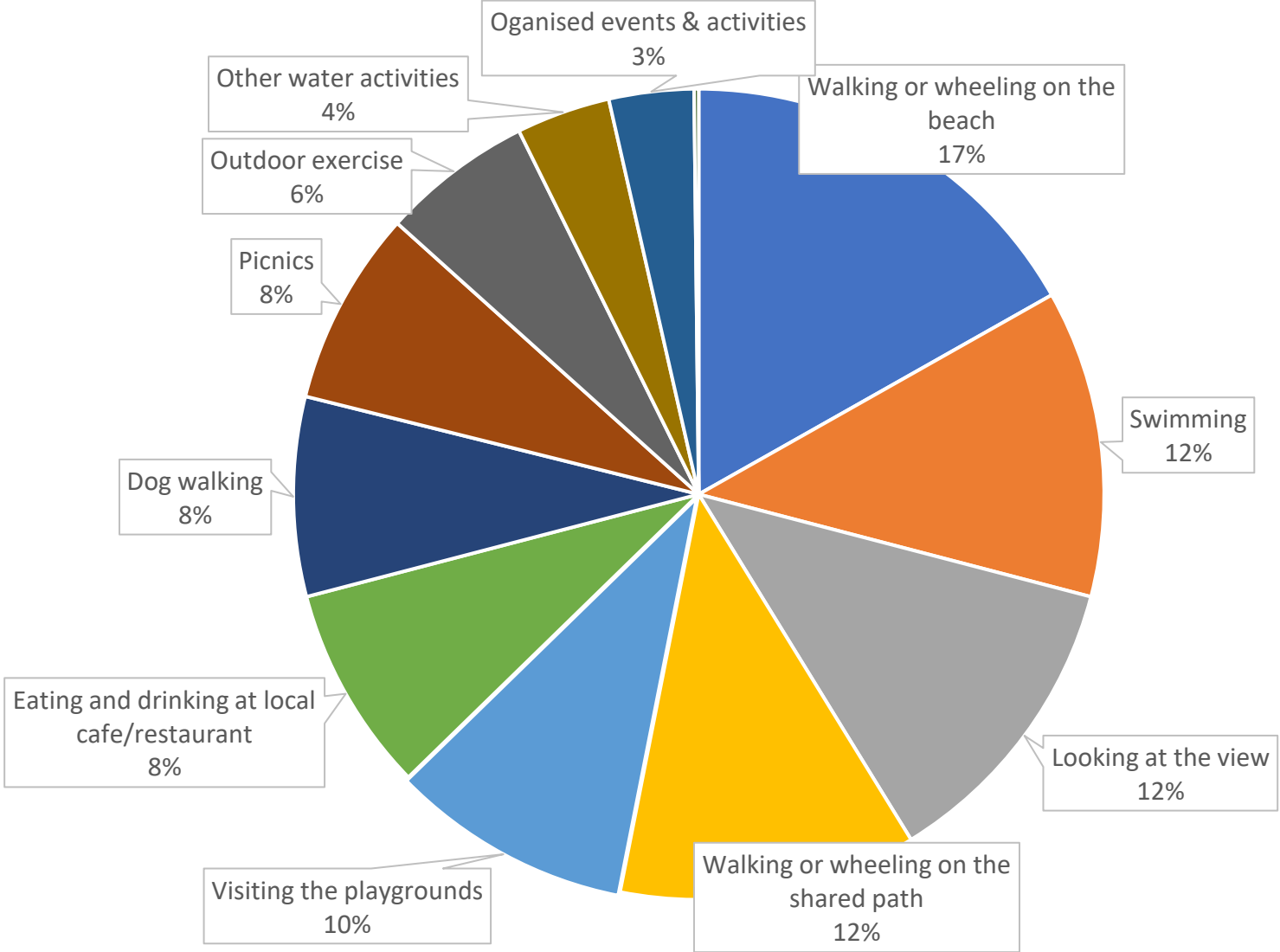
The ramp to get back up is quite steep - perhaps a combination of a built ramp with compliant slope to get to the sand and then the mat starting at the bottom of the ramp would work best.

No negatives at all, just heard positive comments while I was here filling in the survey

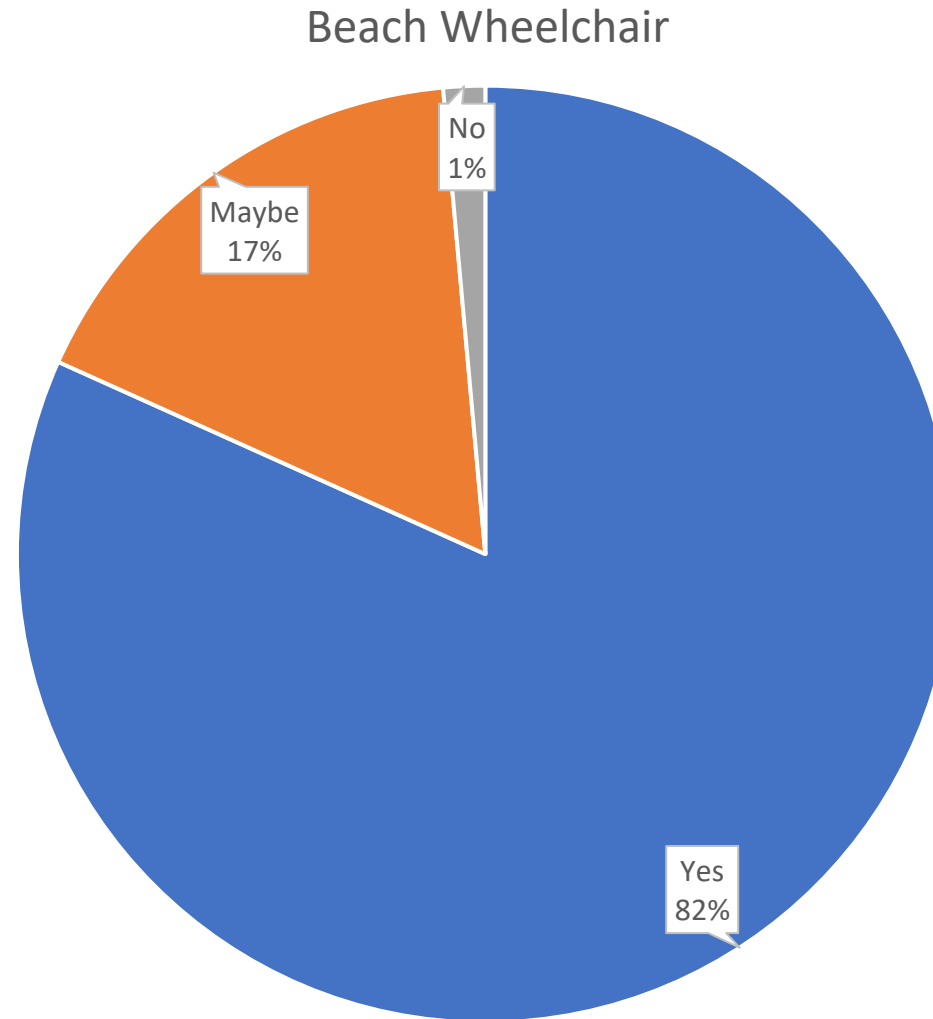
Support needs to be put under the mat. My partner uses a power motorised wheelchair. No way would we attempt this mat. You should look at Carlton Beach where they have steel girders to support the mat.. we would love to use the mat if it were better supported.

None, absolutely nothing!!!!!! You absolutely must keep this. Please!!! It can only benefit people!!

The beach and surrounding area is visited for both active and passive recreation



High level of interest in seeing a beach wheelchair being made available



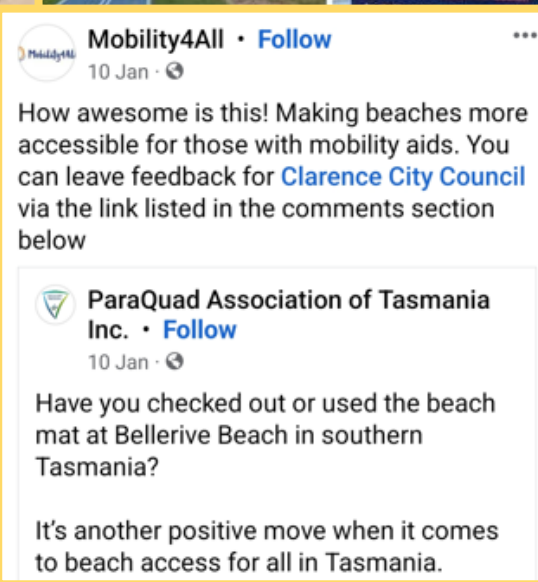
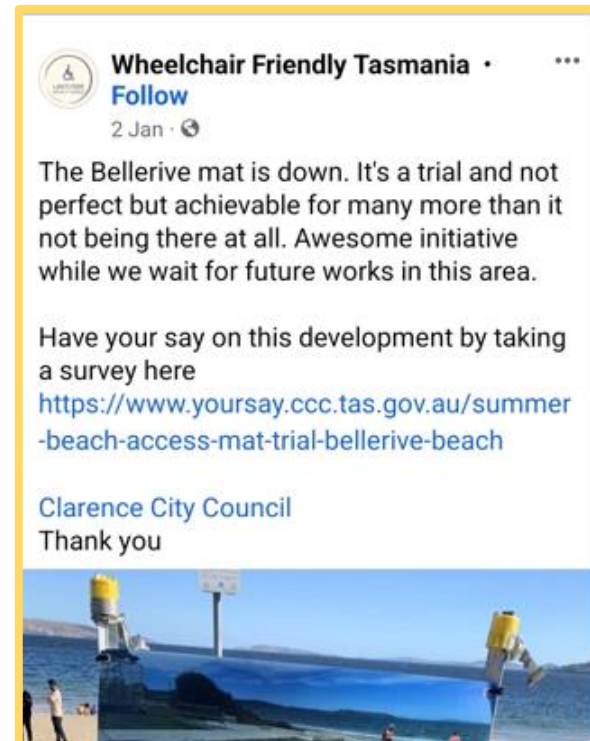
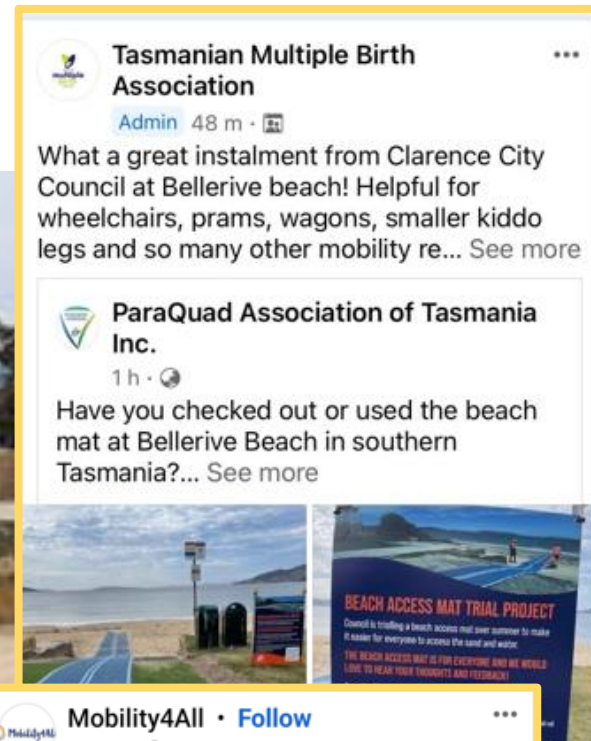
Final thoughts on the trial

General Positive	Suggestions for keeping	Changes suggested
A brilliant idea!	Great idea, hope the mat stays!	Needs more parking and longer hours.
All my friends and family were raving about as they are regular beach walkers.	Excellent initiative and would support it permanently being there - was great to see people using the beach who otherwise could not have without the mat.	This is a positive thing and a good direction you guys are heading. I know this doesn't relate to this topic but your next project should be a concreted basketball full court...
Bravo, well done, inclusive.	I hope it's not a trial! Keep it up.	Great idea. Let's see more of them.
Congratulations on doing it 🙌😊	I hope more of those mat would be installed as it is life changing for people with mobility issue!	Please put signage on the beach about dogs not being allowed on sand dunes. Sorry not really about the ramp!
I think it was a great effort from CCC to try and make the beach more inclusive for everyone in our community	Fantastic, keep the mat! I have 3 family members in wheelchairs and other friends who have kids prams and use trolleys to carry stuff for the kids on and off the beach. It's a great initiative!	There can be improvements. A purpose built ramp or modification of existing ramp would be beneficial, with mat joins the ramp. Possibly having a trail/shared pathway that joins with another suitable beach that includes another mat in the future.
It's a greatly appreciated addition to such a special spot :-)	I teach at Southern support school and I would love to see the mat available throughout the year for my students who use wheelchairs.	I applaud CCC for trying. For it to be a proper trial it needs more thought put into installation. I am up for talking about it as a wheelchair user and frequent visitor to that area.
i think this is a brilliant idea and well worth replicating elsewhere	Thank you for this trial, I hope the mat becomes permanent. I love the inclusivity of our local council	Please offer more access to Hippocampes for beach access...
It's awesome please keep it up	It is an incredible service. As a mum with a child who has physical issues, you need to realise how much this benefits my family (and other families like mine). Little kids should be able to go to a beach and enjoy themselves...	Beach wheelchair is another needed facility in our state. Surf Life Saving Tasmania has a couple that people can book, but having this equipment available at the beach will make a huge difference to many people. ..
Keep up the great work, all beaches should be accessible for all who wish to use them	I think it was a very positive thing to do and thank Council for trialling it. I hope that the beach mat will become a permanent fixture at Bellerive.	It's a bit weird that it was only one end of the beach, so anybody walking along the beach had to go back to exit it via the ramp again
Thank you for this progressive and thoughtful initiative. Please keep it going!	If you could see the joy and happiness it brings to wheelchair users you would have them at all main beaches. Credit to the council for showing the initiative now go lock them in 🙌	It's time to ban fast scooters and bikes from near the children's park. As a person with mobility issues I don't feel safe on the beach track too many people ignoring the slow down.
These low cost initiatives compliment a great walking/bike track and accessible area. Great work Clarence council	It fits perfectly with all the other wonderful infrastructure that council has done in that area. It is a joy to see parents and toddlers using the playground. All in all a very thoughtful child centered development that builds health and community	Think it's brilliant. In Adelaide they have several of these along the popular beaches and makes a huge difference to the community. This one may be a little short depending on the tides. When I was there earlier in the week there was a section of soft sand at the end

Beach party day in photos.
People of all ages came and tried
out the mat.



Social media comments and Facebook post shares



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Other classification questions

Who do you visit Bellerive Beach with? Please tick all that apply

On my own	85
Partner	92
Friends	119
Family	122
Children	88
Other (please specify)	12

How do you get to Bellerive Beach?

Walk or wheel	87
Bicycle, scooter, skateboard	15
Car	150
Bus	2
Ferry	4
Other (please specify)	2

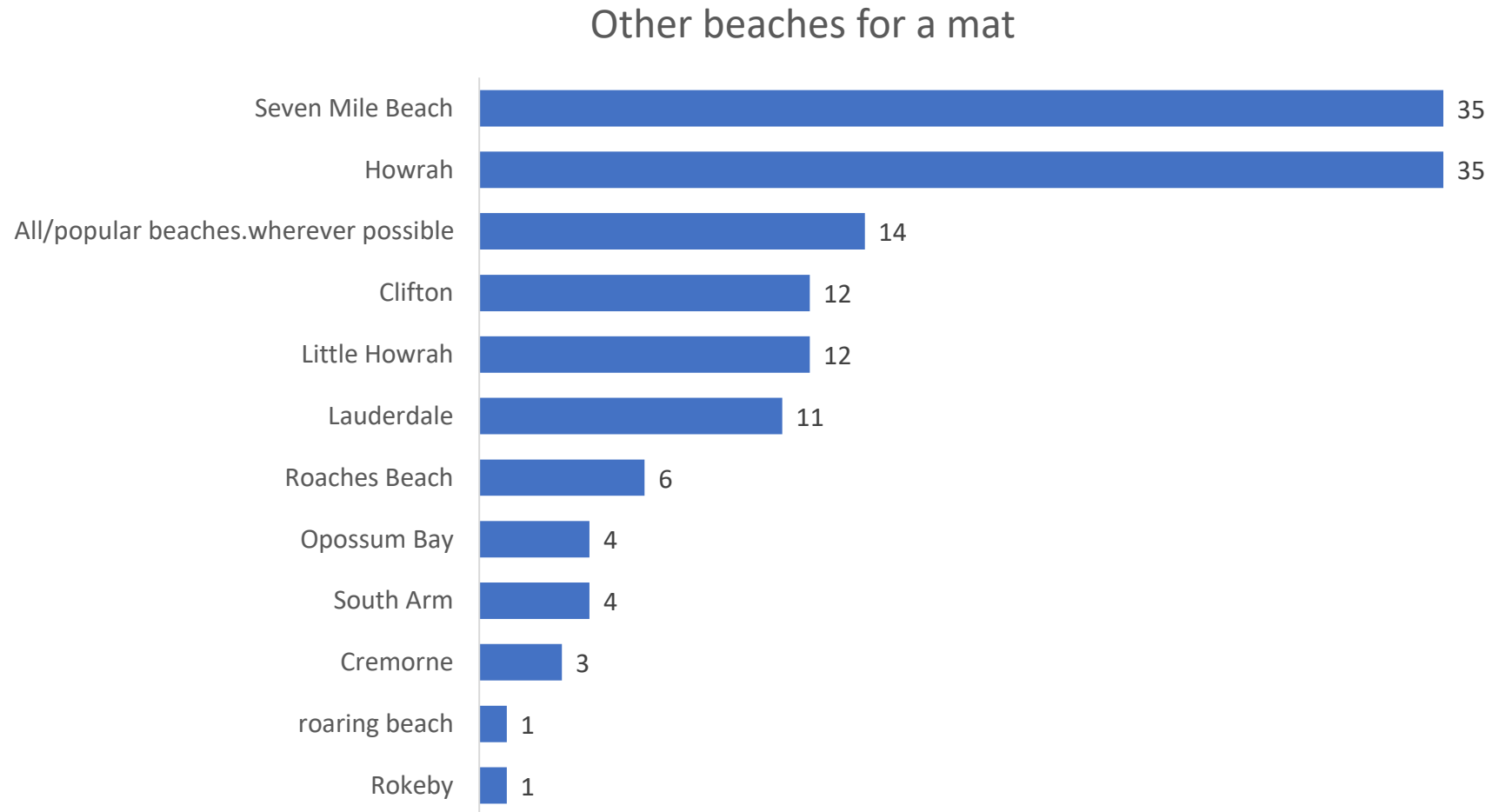
How often do you visit Bellerive Beach in summer?

Daily	29
A few times a week	69
Once a week	50
Fortnightly	32
Monthly	13
A few times a year or less often	14
This is my first time	1



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Suggestions for other beaches





Appendix

Appendix

- Survey demographics and categorisation questions
- Survey (available both online and as a hard copy on request)
- What else was shown – Plan your day information
- Channels
- Submissions



Plan your day information sheet was provided (1 of 4)



Beach access
mat location

Distances to beach access mat (approximate)

- ← From Beach Street car park - 280m
- From Derwent Street car park - 70m
- To public toilets - 150m

Plan your day information sheet was provided (2 of 4)

Derwent Street Car Park
4 accessible parking spaces
52 parking spaces
2 hour parking limit



Plan your day information sheet was provided (3 of 4)

Beach Street Car Park

2 accessible parking spaces

42 parking spaces



Please note: Construction works are underway at Beach Street from December 2023 to mid 2024. Beach Street car park may be closed, partially closed or accessed via road works during the trial period. Contact Council for up to date advice.

Plan your day information sheet was provided (4 of 4)

FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT BELLERIVE BEACH PARK

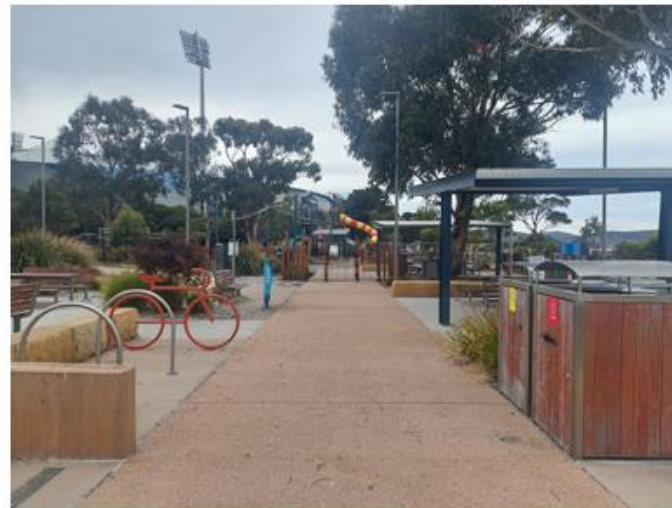
Public Toilets

Accessible toilet
Outdoor shower



Bellerive Playground and Picnic Plaza

All ages/abilities playground
Public Barbeques
Shade shelters
Picnic tables
Rubbish Bins
Bottle fill station
Beach shower/footwash
Outdoor exercise equipment



Corflute was located at key entry point.



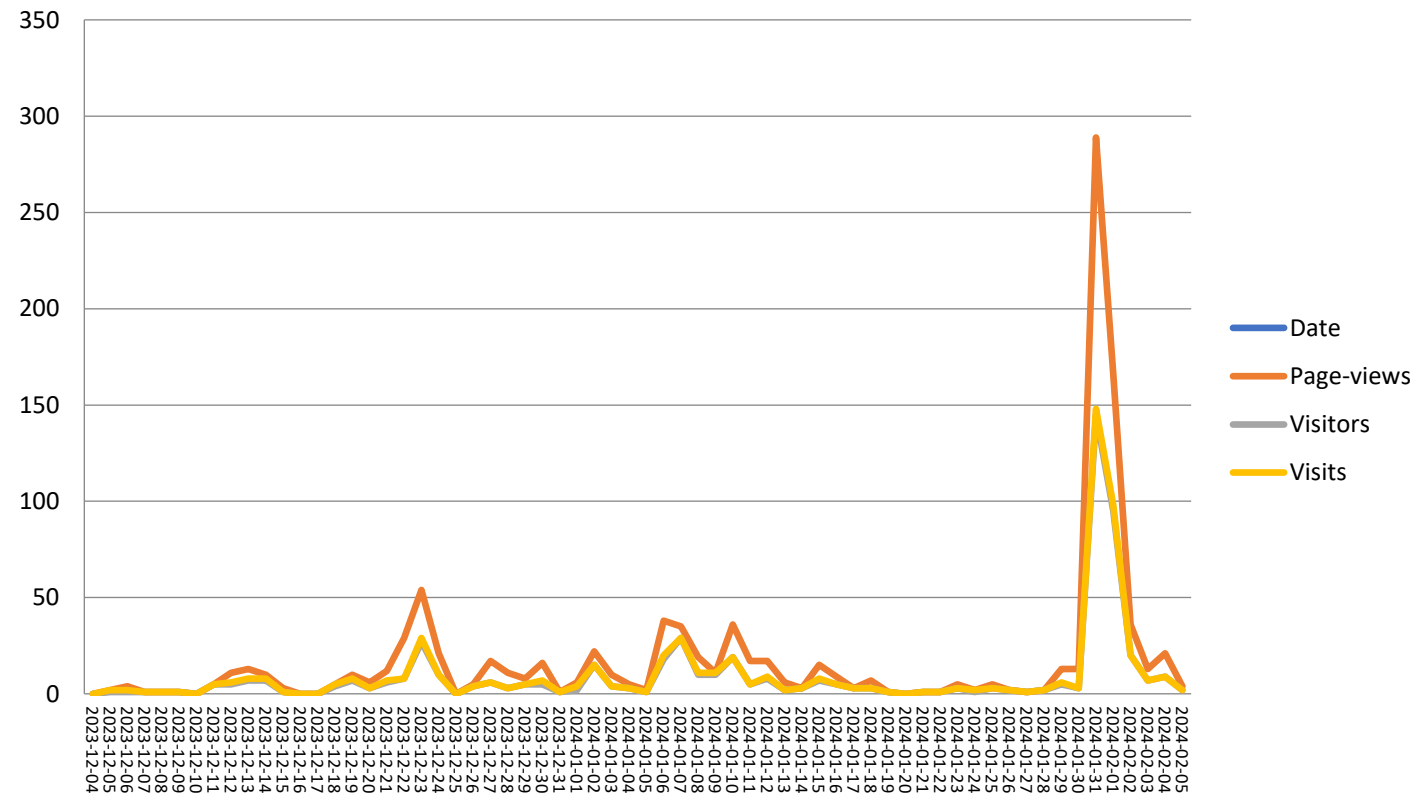
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Digital engagement summary

High levels of digital engagement:

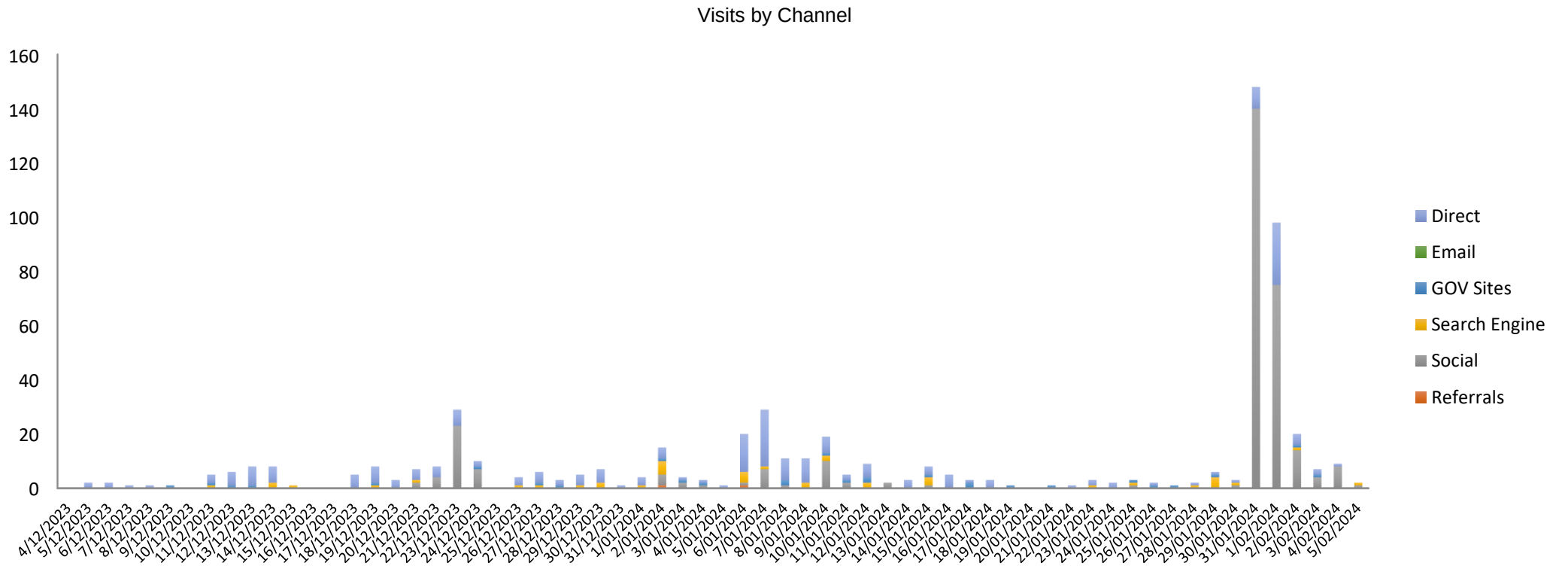
- Total page visits was 595
- Aware visitors was 521
- Informed visitors was 306
- Completed the surveys was 213

Visitors Summary



Key channels for website engagement

- Strong response from social media
- Far higher response post School holiday portion of the trial



Key communications

- Print, Facebook and website presence
- Facebook post re-shared by many

Standard Eastern Shore Sun ad:

CONSULTATIONS



Clarence,
have your say
on the issues that
impact you.

Open now!

- The Richmond Village Draft Master Plan
- Summer Beach Access Mat Trial - Bellerive Beach
- Youth Centre Needs Analysis

Survey results

- AFL/AFLW High Performance Centre
- Clarence Mountain Bike Park and Meehan Range
- Dogs on-leash proposal - Bellerive Boardwalk
- Greyhound Off-leash Declared Area Changes - Bellerive
- Disc Golf Trial Consultation -Community Survey

For further details and to have your say please visit
www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au



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Wheelchair Friendly Tasmania • Follow

2 Jan · 🌐

The Bellerive mat is down. It's a trial and not perfect but achievable for many more than it not being there at all. Awesome initiative while we wait for future works in this area.

Have your say on this development by taking a survey here
<https://www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au/summer-beach-access-mat-trial-bellerive-beach>



Clarence City Council

Thank you



Tasmanian Multiple Birth Association

Admin · 48 m · 🌐

What a great instalment from Clarence City Council at Bellerive beach! Helpful for wheelchairs, prams, wagons, smaller kiddo legs and so many other mobility re... See more

ParaQuad Association of Tasmania Inc.



Mobility4All • Follow

10 Jan · 🌐

How awesome is this! Making beaches more accessible for those with mobility aids. You can leave feedback for [Clarence City Council](#) via the link listed in the comments section below



ParaQuad Association of Tasmania Inc. • Follow

10 Jan · 🌐

Have you checked out or used the beach mat at Bellerive Beach in southern Tasmania?

It's another positive move when it comes to beach access for all in Tasmania.



Allison Ritchie, Deputy Mayor of Clarence City Council • Follow

3d · 🌐

Today's inaugural Bellerive Beach Party proved to be a massive success with thousands of people coming along to enjoy the great weather, music, dancing, craft, circus, sports activities, swimming, sand sculptures and the great food and beverages on offer! 🌞🌊🎨🍷

Today was a wonderful showcase event for Clarence and a huge thank must go out to the wonderful [Clarence Arts & Events](#) staff for their hard work to organise the event and to [Brendan Blomeley, Mayor of Clarence City Council](#) in conducting the official opening. 🙌

Also, great to see the beach access mat being so well used. Don't forget to have your say about the six-week trial so we can hear what you think of it! See:
<https://www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au/summer-beach-access-mat-trial-bellerive-beach>



Physical Disability Sports Tasmania • Follow

4m · 🌐

Is getting to the beach something you love to do?... See more



BEACH ACCESS MAT TRIAL PROJECT

Committed to trialling a beach access mat over summer to make it easier for everyone to access the sand and water.

THE BEACH ACCESS MAT IS FOR EVERYONE AND WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEEDBACK!

Scan the QR code to complete the survey or call (08) 6237 8888 for more information or to report a maintenance issue.

Beach access mats will be in the sand during summer months. They will be in the sand from 10am to 6pm.

Beach access mats will be in the sand during summer months. They will be in the sand from 10am to 6pm.



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What was asked

Beach Access Mat Trial - Community Survey

The beach access mat summer trial at Bellerive Beach is to help people of all ages and abilities enjoy access to the beach and water.

We appreciate you taking part in this short survey to let us know what you think of the trial. We will ask a few questions and also give you spaces to share your reasons. At the end, we will ask a few general questions about you.

Bellerive beach and surrounding area

1. What do you like to do when you visit Bellerive Beach?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ Walking or wheeling on the beach
- ☐ Walking or wheeling on the shared path
- ☐ Looking at the view
- ☐ Swimming
- ☐ Other water activities (kayaks, snorkelling, boating etc)
- ☐ Visiting the playgrounds
- ☐ Picnics
- ☐ Outdoor exercise (running, gym equipment etc)
- ☐ Participating in organised events and activities (Park Run, Fitness in the Park etc)
- ☐ Dog walking
- ☐ Eating and drinking at local cafe/restaurant
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Summer beach access mat

Now some questions about the summer trial of our beach access mat

2. How did you get onto the beach today (or a recent visit)?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ I used the beach access mat
- ☐ The ramp (not using the mat)
- ☐ Stepped over the low stone wall
- ☐ Concrete steps next to ramp
- ☐ Concrete and stone steps at western end
- ☐ Timber steps
- ☐ I used a path further east through the dunes
- ☐ I did not go onto the beach today
- ☐ Other (please specify)



Clarence... a brighter place

What was asked

3. Thinking about using the beach access mat...

Please tell us how much you disagree or agree with the following statements

I visited Bellerive Beach because the mat was available

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

I will visit Bellerive Beach more often this summer because the mat is installed

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

It was easier for me (and/or my family) to get onto the beach

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

I felt safer using the ramp with the beach mat installed

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

I felt more welcome at the beach

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

I stayed longer at the beach because of the mat

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

I was able to enjoy an activity at the beach that I otherwise would not have

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

The beach access mat was in good condition when I visited

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

The beach access mat felt firm and safe to move along

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Somewhat disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat agree ☐ Strongly agree

4. Has the mat **improved access** to the beach for you?

☐ Greatly improved access

☐ Slightly improved access

☐ No change

☐ More difficult or reduced access

☐ I haven't used the beach access mat

5. How much do you like having the mat at Bellerive Beach?

Please answer on a scale from definitely dislike to definitely like it

Beach access mat

☐ Definitely dislike it ☐ Somewhat dislike it ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Somewhat like it ☐ Definitely like it

6. What do you think are the **positives of this trial**? Do you think it has been good?

7. Now, what do you think have been the **negatives** (if any)? Do you think that there have been issues or negative impacts?

What was asked

8. Lastly, some questions about you...

Where do you live?

Select option

9. What is your age?

☐ Under 16 years

☐ 16-19

☐ 20-29

☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 50-59

☐ 60-69

☐ 70 years or over

☐ Prefer not to say

10. How often do you visit Bellerive Beach in summer?

☐ Daily

☐ A few times a week

☐ Once a week

☐ Fortnightly

☐ Monthly

☐ A few times a year or less often

☐ This is my first time

11. How do you get to Bellerive Beach?

☐ Walk or wheel

☐ Bicycle, scooter, skateboard

☐ Car

☐ Bus

☐ Ferry

☐ Other (please specify)

12. Who do you visit Bellerive Beach with?

Please tick all that apply

☐ On my own

☐ Partner

☐ Friends

☐ Family

☐ Children

☐ Other (please specify)

13. Would you like to see a beach wheelchair available to use?

☐ Yes

☐ Maybe

☐ No

14. Is there another beach in Clarence that you would like to suggest as a potential location for a beach mat to improve accessibility?

15. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the summer trial?

Submissions

It is an excellent solution for strollers and especially mobility scooters, aids and wheelchairs.
I have been impressed with how this is being used for folk who could not access the shore without it
Well done council!

(name and address supplied)

To Whom it May Concern,

I was asked by one of the staff to complete the online survey for the beach mat at Bellerive Beach. I have tried to complete the survey but the wording of the questions does not allow me to give proper feedback. While I think the mat is a wonderful initiative for various reasons, I believe it has been placed in the wrong location.

The mat is a wonderful idea for helping those with sensory issues, particularly for those on the Autism spectrum, however, it has been placed on the busiest section of the beach. For a lot of children and adults who are neuro divergent, they find social hotspots difficult to manage. For this reason I cannot accurately provide feedback based on the questions in the survey as I have been unable to use the mat for my children purely due to its location.

I grew up on Bellerive beach and still visit it on an almost daily basis. I have children on the spectrum. It is important to note that no two people on the spectrum are the same so what is difficult for one might not be for another. Sand can be a trigger for sensory overload, particularly soft sand. Having the beach mat enables easier access to the lower part of the beach where the sand is firmer. It also provides an avenue for leaving the beach that is less sandy. On the other hand, some people with autism are sensory seekers and the mat in this case wouldn't be as helpful for them.

I would suggest placing a second mat further along the beach where it is generally quieter. This way it can be used by those who find social interaction difficult, noisy environments difficult and just generally cope better where it is quieter. This would be a more inclusive approach.

Regards,
(name supplied)

