# About

Social cohesion holds communities together. It’s about people being connected and included and feeling part of their community. It refers to the sense of trust within neighbourhoods and people’s willingness to help their neighbour. Social cohesion and connection is an important aspect of creating a healthier and more liveable Cardinia Shire.

## Key statistics

* 73% residents agreed people in their neighbourhoods were willing to help each other
* 6 in 10 residents felt they live in a close-knit neighbourhood
* 69% agreed that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted (compared to 72% across Victoria)
* 38% growth area residents want to be more connected with community
* 44% felt a moderate to strong connection to community
* 61% of residents volunteered in rural areas (compared to 41% in Growth areas)
* 16% don’t have someone outside their household they can rely on to care for them or their children in an emergency

## Priority groups

* Growth areas and lone households more commonly feel completely separate from their community
* More residents volunteered in rural areas compared to growth areas
* Older adults, low-income households and vulnerable populations less often have household internet access
* Renters less often have someone outside of their household to rely on in an emergency
* Those in rural and township areas more often reported a greater sense of belonging and felt positive about community groups and neighbourhood relationships
* LGBTIQ+ people were more likely to feel isolated

## COVID-19 impact

* 80% of residents reported a big impact on spending time with family and friends during COVID-19
* 26% of residents are talking less to their neighbours during the pandemic
* A lack of internet access or access to technology impacted on the ability for some to stay connected during the pandemic
* Poor social connection was increasingly reported during COVID-19.

## Climate impact

* Communities with strong social connection are more likely to respond better to climate-related disasters
* Cumulative effects of projected climate change reduce the quality and amenity value of green spaces, resulting in a reduction of recreation space utilisation and community cohesion