



HAVE YOUR SAY

STRONGER
TOGETHER
HUON VALLEY

COVID-19

COMMUNITY ISSUES AND IDEAS SURVEY

Snapshot of responses -1 May 2020 to 13 July 2020

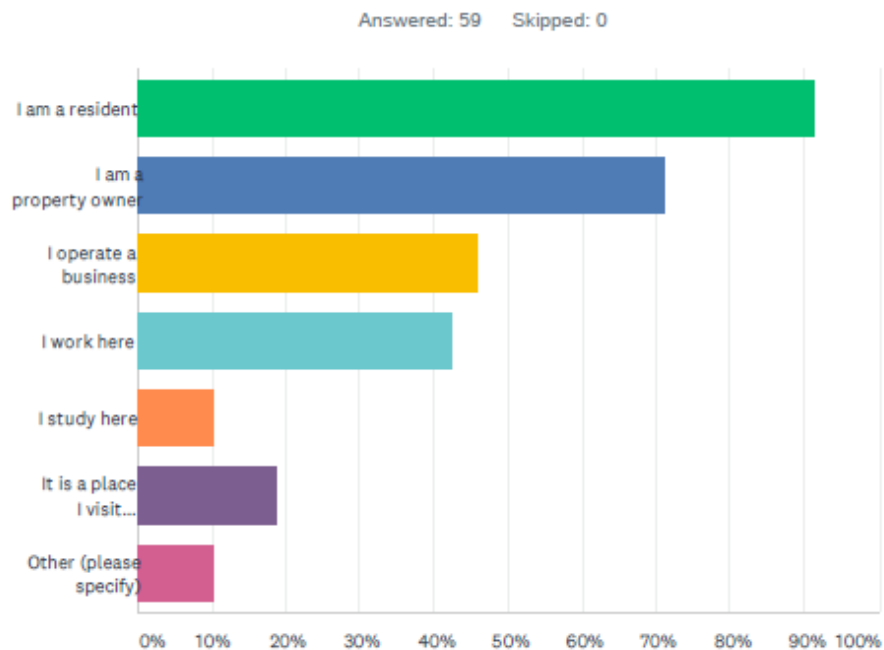


For full project details visit
www.huonvalley.tas.gov.au/haveyoursay

Contact Council on (03) 6264 0300
or email hvc@huonvalley.tas.gov.au

HOW MANY RESPONDENTS TO DATE – 59

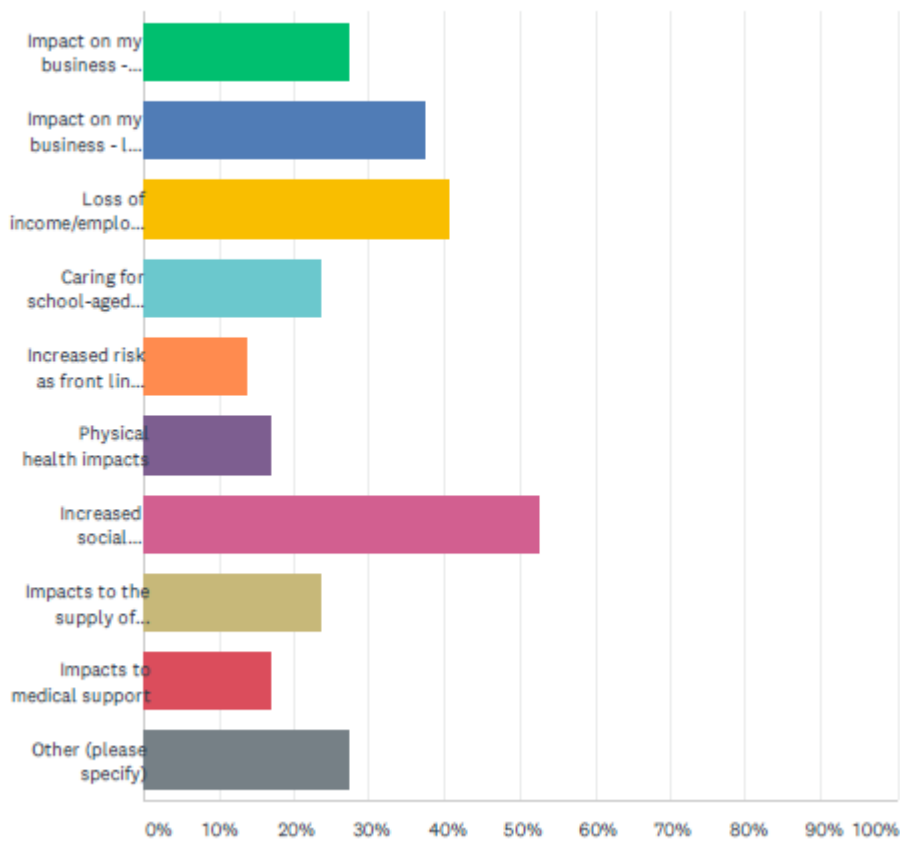
WHAT IS THEIR CONNECTION TO THE HUON VALLEY?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am a resident	91.53%	54
I am a property owner	71.19%	42
I operate a business	45.76%	27
I work here	42.37%	25
I study here	10.17%	6
It is a place I visit (shopping, parks, medical services)	18.64%	11
Other (please specify)	10.17%	6
Total Respondents: 59		

HOW HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AFFECTED RESPONDENTS?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Impact on my business - closure	27.12%	16
Impact on my business - loss of income	37.29%	22
Loss of income/employment	40.68%	24
Caring for school-aged children at home	23.73%	14
Increased risk as front line worker	13.56%	8
Physical health impacts	16.95%	10
Increased social isolation	52.54%	31
Impacts to the supply of food/pharmacy/other essentials	23.73%	14
Impacts to medical support	16.95%	10
Other (please specify)	27.12%	16
Total Respondents: 59		

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING?

Summary:

- 44% of respondents report significant financial impact through loss of employment and businesses being forced to close
- 19% describe how social isolation was extremely challenging
- 10% were concerned about the impact of COVID-19 and the associated restrictions on their health and mental health
- 20% report the pressure of adapting as a significant challenge
- Immediate financial stress was noted at the commencement of the survey with other themes emerging as the pandemic continues, which includes social isolation and disconnection from community

“high anxiety on how the bills will be paid”, “lonely”, “I had my first baby mid March and found the isolation really hard” “devastating loss of income from my business”, “Was very hard being so isolated and missing each other”, “Balancing home, work and schooling”

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS
Not being able to go to the pool.
Keeping motivated
Search for employment
Losing my job
The business I had built suffered sever loss of income
Balancing home, work and schooling
Lack of forward thinking
Mental health
adapting to change
Wrapping my head around this!
Reduced income
Financial strain
Trying to pay running costs, and the disappointment to clients not being able to provide services.
restrictions on travel
Not sure
Due to frontline husband and my health issues making me vulnerable to the virus we lived separately until last week. Was very hard being so isolated and missing each other. Also not being able to be with one son who is in Melbourne or see my elderly parents who live in SA.
Getting useful information.
Social isolation
Spending time extending on line reach, attending zoom meetings and other webinars, instead of making and developing my work.

Government prohibits us from generating any income. Yet Government (including Council) simultaneously demands that we pay commercial fees to be allowed to have a business: rates, land tax and multiple other standing costs. This equals around \$1000 per week of actual outgoings (not lost income). Government has denied us 90% of the assistance they were publicly offering. Their denials are based not on whether or not we are in hardship, but instead they just say that they have run out of money. We also have run out of money. The money is gone because one arm of Government prohibits us from operating. Meanwhile, other Government arms (council) demand commercial rates and other business fees. Government is not providing us with any commercial services, so Government should not demand commercial rates or other licence fees. Deferrals only move the harm from now till later. If Government does not allow us to operate our business, Government, (including Council) should not be charging us extra fees to operate a business.

Accepting that this insidious situation need never have happened, and the many ramifications which will result in the coming months and years ahead.

I had my first baby mid March and found the isolation really hard when we brought our baby home. Family from out of state were going to visit to help out but then the borders closed. I also could not get an emergency doctor appointment for my baby in the Huon Valley due to the medical centers not taking new patients and had to drive into Kingston. Living in Huonville I also found it hard to take the baby for walks. There are not enough foot paths and walking tracks in the area. Often cars are parked on the foot paths on Main Street when makes pushing a pram dangerous and tricky. I also run an Airbnb which hosts tourists from out of state and overseas. It was going to be a bit of income for me while on maternity leave.

Grocery shopping

Closing my business for 5 weeks

Not being able to have parents from QLD visit their first grandchild.

Losing my job as the business closed down

People generally obeying the 1.5m distancing. It isn't working as they don't believe it applies to them. Woolworths is the worst place to go. My problem is my husband's compromised immune system with heart disease and kidney disease.

Coming to grips with HOW this insidious pandemic happened!?

As a family day care educator, the government's free child care cost my business money

Getting ingredients to keep my business going!

Quietly getting in contact with people in genuine need who for various reasons do not want to declare their need due to a sense of humiliation to what is happening to them. And their loss of control. The majority of public displays of shared food is not getting to the people who need it most or for which there is cultural understanding of individual needs. These people are sitting in 'quiet out of the places and are reluctant to self identify. The amount of food resources needed are grossly underestimated and some people remain without adequate food.

Working from home and supporting learning from home

Not being able to travel, not being able to work interactively in person

Negotiating with Centrelink regarding Jobseeker. We tried for weeks trying to do as much online and trying to get through on the phone, which was impossible. In the end we had no choice but to present to Centrelink in person. It took so long to get Jobseeker set up that we actually received Jobkeeper first. So we went 6 weeks without any income which is very difficult for cash flow and bills.

The sudden closure of my classes, the challenge and long hours of work getting my yoga classes online. Not being able to serve a lot of my students at a time when they really need their yoga because of their slow internet connections at home meaning they can't access my online classes.

Lonely. My daughter is stuck on the mainland needs to come home
The total devastating loss of income from my business and the fact it will take years to rebuild.
Loss of income on top of income loss from 2019 bushfires
Loss of income and food rationing
Keeping staff focused working from home.
Not being able to visit the Huon valley and our shacks day catch up with friends
Cost of food..
Realising society is run by risk adverse cowards.
People not keeping social distancing.
The biggest challenge is the time taken with the grandchildren but it has also been an amazing opportunity to build our relationship. We are very fortunate that this relatively short period isn't financially prohibitive but a much longer term would be.
Steep learning curve when redeployed. Financial stress from partner with autoimmune disease leaving work for a month due to lack of respect for social distancing at his work place!
Loss of income. Even though we are already registered home educators, every week we socialised our children with other home schoolers, art classes, library visits, parks, beaches, environmental clean ups and so on. So this has been extremely difficult suddenly doing nothing outdoors. But clearly essential to containing covid19.
Not seeing my family in a different household
Excessive scaremongering by the media. Requests by Government officials to 'dob' on neighbours. Seeing the cost of this to the country as a whole and our State in particular. Inability to do anything about it.
Having a rent rise in the middle of a pandemic and being stood down. Financially this will cripple us.
Accepting that some people do not understand Social Distancing
Financial assistance to keep going, there is too big of a lag time to find out if you are getting job keeper payments or hardship grant. as of May 13, no word on either if they are coming or not. no income for 2 months now. high anxiety on how the bills will be paid that are coming. Every single place where we sold our products is now closed, and now find out at least 2 of them are closed permanently
lack of tourist
Nothing really, I can entertain myself and enjoy cooking and sharing the results
Loss of income no clue of grant money or job keeper coming anytime soon.
Trying to work out how I will live and care for my family on Jobseeker.
lifestyle changes happening instantly, no income, reorganising finances and direct debits and registering for centrelink without any personal help and not understanding obligations. being forced to sign up for various service providers to be able to update details online. Computer literacy had to be vastly improved.
Relying on my website to provide income as not GST reg registered no State grant available (except for the \$2,500)
No business income as forced closure

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE COMMUNITY NEEDS TO RECOVER SHORT TERM?

Summary:

- Whilst acknowledging that social and economic recovery are intertwined, 50% of responses focus on economic recovery and 33% on social recovery programs that support social capital and health and safety programs
- 20% requesting financial support, including rate/fee relief
- 30% recommending economic development programs that support and promote local businesses and tourism
- Short term recovery ideas have generally focused on economic stimulus and development to support the economy.

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS
Authentic local leadership, asset based community development and recognition of local human capital
Community events
Financial stress, joblessness
Support for small businesses
No restrictions to gatherings; financial stimulus
Lots of connection
Tourist information
This pause used constructively to reassess a whole new approach in community building. This community is fractured along long established politically ideologic lines. The same fractures exist within council which inhibits an open dialogue about the most important issues confronting not only local residents, but the residents of planet earth. Covid has given all of us new perspectives on what is important in life and a realisation that it is not wealth and economic growth that gives us wellbeing. The outcome of these reflections should be much more focus on people's wellbeing rather than getting back to business as usual. We should finally start a permanent citizens council in parallel with HVC to discuss wellbeing while HVC concerns itself with financial and services they already provide.
clear advice on covid in area. free support for ways to adapt businesses
Solidarity
Community events to enable social connectedness
Financial assistance
Less secrecy from council. Not once did anyone approach businesses on a personal level, via email, hard copy or phone call to speak with us, re a plan of attack. Rather, simply shut the doors because your protection was paramount. So was everyone else's. Big mistake in community engagement. Be open, honest, and actually respect your ratepayers. .
keep the Tasmanian borders closed until the mainland catches up
To feel listened to and valued
Virus safe community events, not online. I miss being with people but have health issues. I'd like socially distanced events of some kind. I don't feel safe to go to cafes etc yet. I'd like some community.
Clearer information on requirements.
Feelings of solidarity, maybe a public art work that is interactive but still socially distant

Activated local community economic development. An active local message to shop locally and support local businesses to grow the Huon Valley economy. It will be an extremely competitive environment as all sectors everywhere seeks the same rate of recovery.
All our standing costs not charged or reimbursed
Walking tracks.
Access to community support services
Create an online space of positivity and connection
Sensible and safe relaxation of restrictions.
Open internal Australian borders
Not become complacent
Promote business's in the area
For food vans and market stall holders, I think a big 2 day Christmas market in November to boost Christmas sales! A full weekend of food, craft and beverages!
More understanding of what's needed by a council who stepped back when needed most!
economic support for small business, and arts and culture, support for buying local, support for holidaying at home, support for retraining, upskilling and further education
a sense of optimism
We can't go through a second wave, that would be even more disasterous for businesses in the community so it needs to be very apparent to customers in every single shop, cafe, business etc... how far apart is 1.5m and 4sqm in restaurants/cafes, hand sanitiser for hands and increased disinfecting of shared touch points (eg: door handles, trolley handles etc...) Until a vaccine is available (and there's no guarantees) the entire community has to work together to minimise the spread while still being allowed out of lock-down.
An emphasis on supporting local resources and businesses, and not only restaurants and cafes, but all Huon Valley businesses even the tiny ones. Ways to connect and feel part of the community while also feeling safe.
contacts
Financial and other immediate assistance to help until people are on their feet
Financial assistance and tourism led recovery
Small businesses
Support for agriculture fish farms and forestry for local employment. Strong branding around a safe clean area to live and work from home.
Re open your visitors information Centre if even if it's the only one in Huonville. Visitors rely on this when visiting am are for the first time and make o wood bookings at different events and holiday destinations!!!
Unsure
Take a deep breath and get back to work.
Tourist information centres
Not too much needs to change in the short term as I believe we need to remain cautious for a while still.
Resources to implement advertising boost
Support with loss of incomes to those who have been faced with closing their businesses or those individuals who have lost their employment.
I have no idea
Get everyone moving. Encourage local spending and holidays. Positive stories.
Continue to highlight the place making projects you have in place. This shows you are still have a vision for developing the region and continuing investing in its future.

Advertisement to Tourists
ways to stay afloat financially
get tourists back, this requires having Visitor information centres like Geeveston
More of the same
Financial support for those who didn't get fed or state help
Support in gaining access to government assistance packages, especially small businesses.
assurance that all public facilities have been cleaned thoroughly before opening
Pretty much same as long term answer
immediate rates relief for any individual who has lost employment or business forced into closure

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE COMMUNITY NEEDS TO RECOVER LONG TERM?

Summary:

- Whilst acknowledging that social and economic recovery are intertwined, 58% of responses focus on economic recovery and 27% on social recovery programs which includes programs that support health and mental health
- Long term recovery ideas support building a resilient economy and supporting greater engagement and connections across community.

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS
Equity. Caring for all constituents regardless of income. Investment in youth and seeking their voice.
Food production
Mental health support
Support for small businesses
More job opportunities
Increased connection through new channels, ie video conferencing
Camping sites
A residents council will not be paid but consist of residents who have the genuine wish to heal the fractures and therefore provide greater long term wellbeing to all.
free support to promote businesses and build for the return of customers and tourists into the future. support and funding for multi functioning community places and interaction
Solidarity!
Targeted spending on access to community events
Local economy engagement
As above, with the exception of the COVID-19 closure.
buying Tasmanian/Australian owned goods and services instead of relying on overseas companies
Don't shut the Geeveston visitors centre
It's not all about business and money.
Less red tape, more flexibility in land use.
Ways to maintain connection, attractions for tourists to come
A rebuilding of visitation to the Huon to give confidence to our local businesses and build a healthy community. Council's support in promoting the new normal. One way to do this is for council to support projects developed independently by local producers/makers/tourist providers to draw attention to our special points of difference. These projects are special local community economic development projects achieved through strategic plans (developed by one such group) to increase visibility of businesses which will result in a more engaged community. Projects through Council generally have to focus on community inclusion and do not allow application by commercial operators. NSW Stay Govt used to financially support local community economic development grants through Mainstreet programs. These included special support for marketing and developing specific strategic plans the delivery of which was reported formally to the particular grant body, eg Council or State Govt. These project can be a diverse as Bicycle and Arts Trails that link community and attractions on an everyday basis.
Stop kicking us while we are down.
Emotional and financial issues
Foot paths. Medical services. Tourist appeal
Safe ways and places for communities to meet; valuing of local services such as Geeveston Visitor Information Centre; support for tourism; maintenance of community facilities and

services
Place support systems in place for those feeling isolated and financially crippled
Support for events and businesses hit hardest by restrictions.
A great marketing campaign for Tasmania
Believing and proving that the epidemic is over and we are safe.
Not become complacent
Promote new business's
Stable income
Insightful strategic planning for what's really happening in community.
circular economy, renewable energy, move away from reliance on tourism, taking advantage of clean, green image for production rather than visitation
as above
An economic recession and maybe even a depression is inevitable after shutting the economy down so there needs to be incentives to attract manufacturers to manufacture goods in Australia/Tassie/Huon Valley. We also need infrastructure projects. Both would assist with employment.
Again, support for local resources and networks for greater resilience. Inclusivity of all businesses and resources, not just food and tourism.
don't know
Assistance from government / council to help promote local business, not just those with shopfronts, all business working from the valley that has been impacted. A big push and campaign to support local business.
Strategic focus on new markets and business growth
Community moral
Brand Huon Marketing Injection focusing on attracting people and business to the Huon and the Building on the premium brand to mainland Australia's large cities.
Unsure
Stop being so scared.
Tourist information centre in Geeveston
Continued relaxation of public restrictions, allowing more access to parks and facilities etc while remaining cautious and maintaining moderate social distancing requirements.
Reopen Visitor Centre somewhere in Valley and run cost effectively!
Tourism back with government funding and support to feature our Huon Valley in the media regularly.
Promotion of the Valley as a destination
Huon Valley, especially Huonville suffers from a lack of reasons for travellers to stay for any length of time. Coming for a drive by isn't dropping \$. Obviously employment, but both could come from the one. Food and wine Trail? Get in decent destination bike lanes (Huonville to Cygnet for instance) when roads are redone.
Tourism is going to lead the way out of the crisis and there needs to be some form of investment to ensure the tourists know the Huon Valley exists now that the visitor centre has closed. Also investigate the bridge replacement and road widening on the Esplanade. Its only a matter of time before someone is injured or killed.
Help for Small Business
a pathway to sell products and increase tourism. now that the visitor centres are closed it might be time to set up a regional art gallery, not only helping artist, but a tourism draw card to showcase artist in the Huon Valley.
Stronger tourism models and inviting Visitor information centres
A reminder of what gains we made during this time

Strong marketing of local business. With closure of visitor centres maybe a shop of made in the Huon products including a rta.

Marketing and promoting the Huon. Job creation

stop focussing on tourist trade. the first thing to suffer in a crisis is tourism. KEEP things local and for the locals first, encourage more markets, sports, community led activities for the people that live here. sustain events and attractions that don't rely on tourism. build for the locals and it will flow on to health, education etc...

Make our towns a destination in their own right! Perfect time to change whatever needs to happen, better landscaping, colour in streets, murals whatever, encourage locals to shop locally...so much could be done with all grants available! So many ideas but frankly I know nothing will happen, we visit WA regularly & cannot believe how much happens there within 6 months parks are amazing!!

Council to spend some of the community owned council surplus