

Bringing Callan Park's buildings to life

Community Survey Report



Bringing Callan Park's buildings to life

Greater Sydney Parklands has made great progress in restoring heritage buildings at Callan Park so that they can once again be enjoyed by the community. With renovations complete on Bonnyview (Gardener's Cottage) and the Repatriation Ward, and many more underway, including the Cane Room, we asked the community how they want to see these buildings brought to life – through a range of activities, events and uses.

A community survey was conducted in October and November 2021, online as well as face-to-face in Callan Park.

More than 1,000 people shared their views. This report presents the key findings from the survey.

* This summary is based on analysis of quantitative data from all 1,084 surveys and qualitative feedback from a randomly selected sample of 100 surveys.



Key findings

The survey invited people to identify their preferred uses from a series of examples from heritage precincts. The top three uses preferred by survey participants are shown below.

PRECINCT 1: HEADLAND PARK, MOSMAN

In the first example, Headland Park, Mosman, people commonly expressed a preference for Callan Park's buildings to be used for:

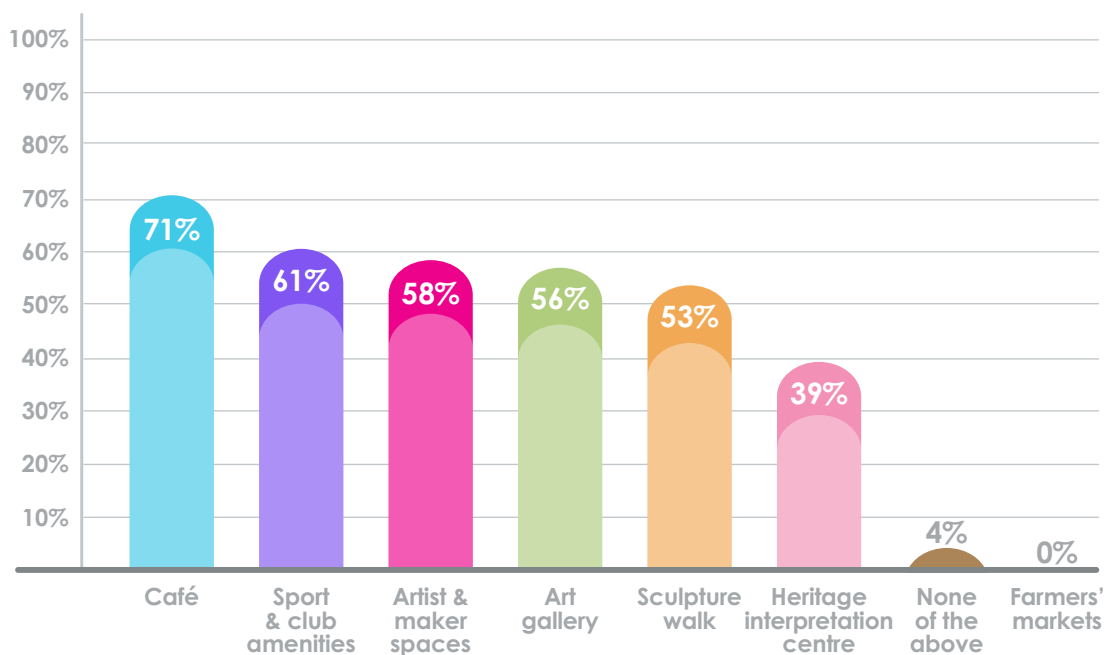


Photo: Sydney Harbour Federation Trust/
Greater Sydney Parklands

Other popular responses were an art gallery and sculpture walk.

Suggestions for Callan Park included a café or cafés with outdoor seating, a new clubhouse for use by Balmain Football Club, the community and sports organisations, improved sporting facilities including for community sport and a yoga studio, community artistic/cultural spaces and art events, a men's and women's shed and more.

There are a number of buildings at Headland Park, Mosman that have been adapted for a range of uses. Which of the uses shown here would you like to see Callan Park's buildings used for?



PRECINCT 2: ABBOTSFORD CONVENT, MELBOURNE

When considering the example of Abbotsford Convent in Melbourne, people expressed a preference for buildings at Callan Park to be used for:

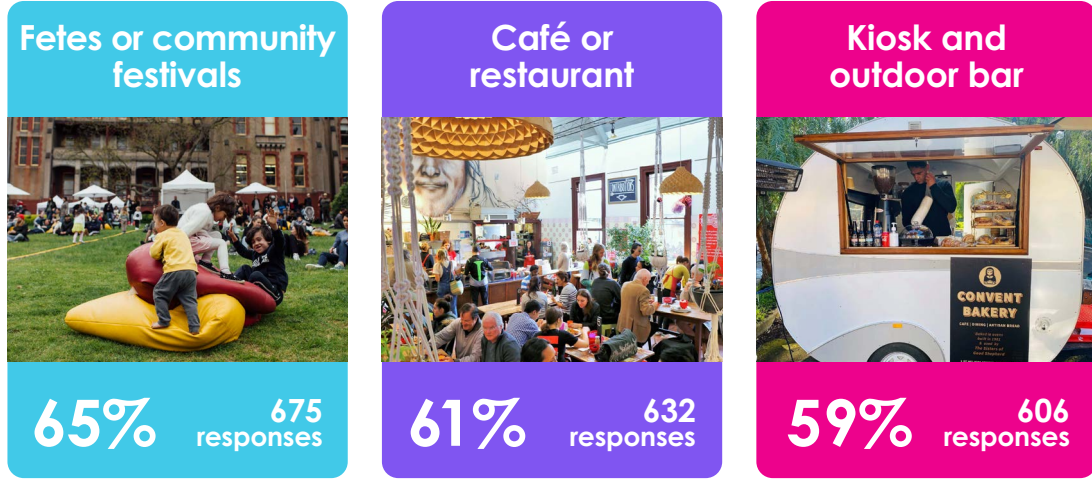
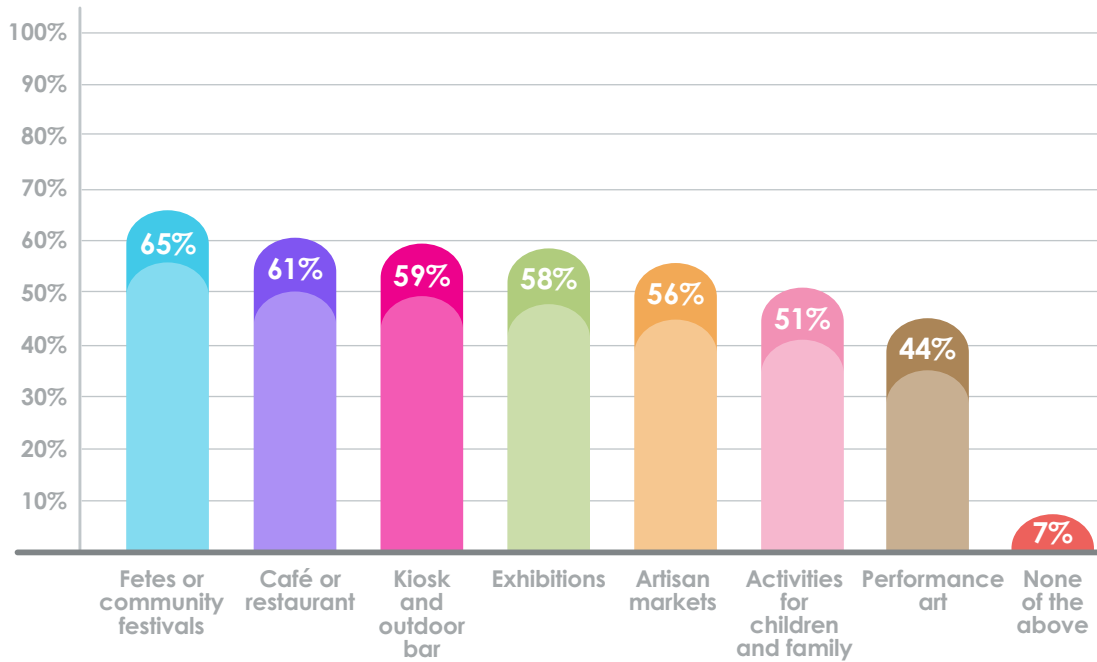


Photo: Abbotsford Convent

Exhibitions, artisan markets, activities for children and families were also nominated by the majority of survey respondents.

Suggestions for Callan Park included a café and or restaurant, high tea venue, function centre, markets and music.

The buildings of Abbotsford Convent have been adapted for a range of uses. Which of the uses shown here would you like to see Callan Park's buildings used for?



PRECINCT 3: COLLINGWOOD YARDS, MELBOURNE

In the third example, Collingwood Yards, Melbourne, the most commonly identified uses for Callan Park's buildings were:

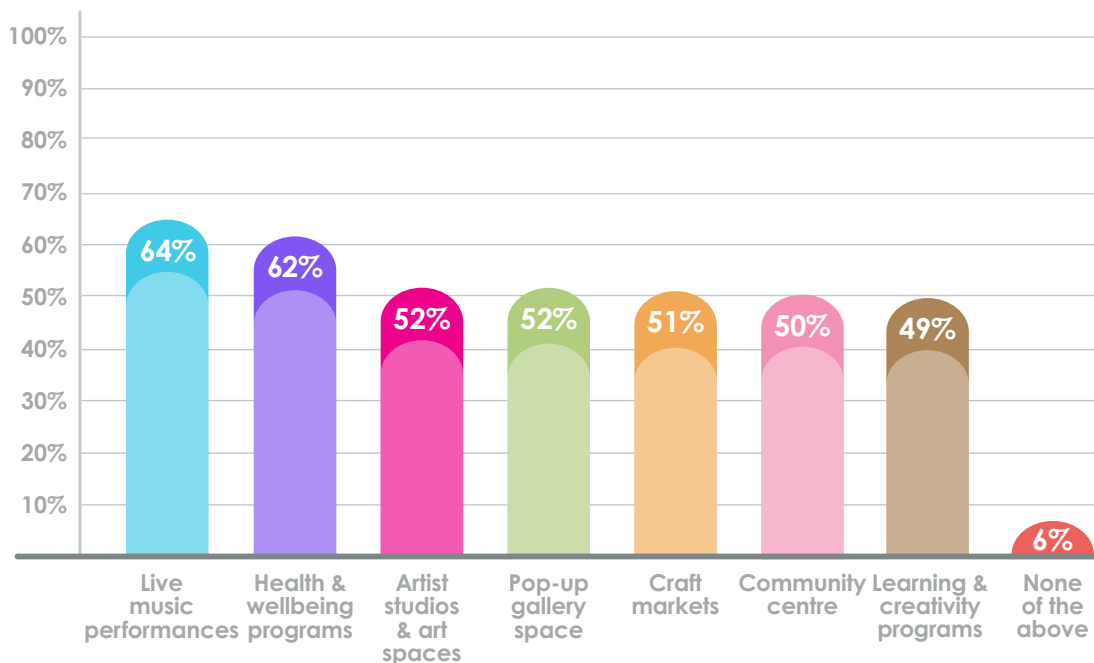


Photo: Collingwood Yards/Natalie Jurjens

A craft market was also supported by the majority of people.

Suggestions for Callan Park included a gallery, museum, artist/creative studios, community spaces for hire, a meeting space for Aboriginal community members, a First Nations cultural centre, artistic and cultural uses, mental health services, hospital, education facility and programs, library/book exchange, aged care, and more.

The buildings of Collingwood Yards have been adapted for a range of uses. Which of the uses shown here would you like to see Callan Park's buildings used for?



What we heard

Six key themes were raised in feedback from the Callan Park community.

1

The community values Callan Park



2

People want to see buildings brought to life



3

Heritage conservation of buildings is important



4

People would like more opportunities for the community to come together



5

People want increased amenities



6

Callan Park must be green and open to all

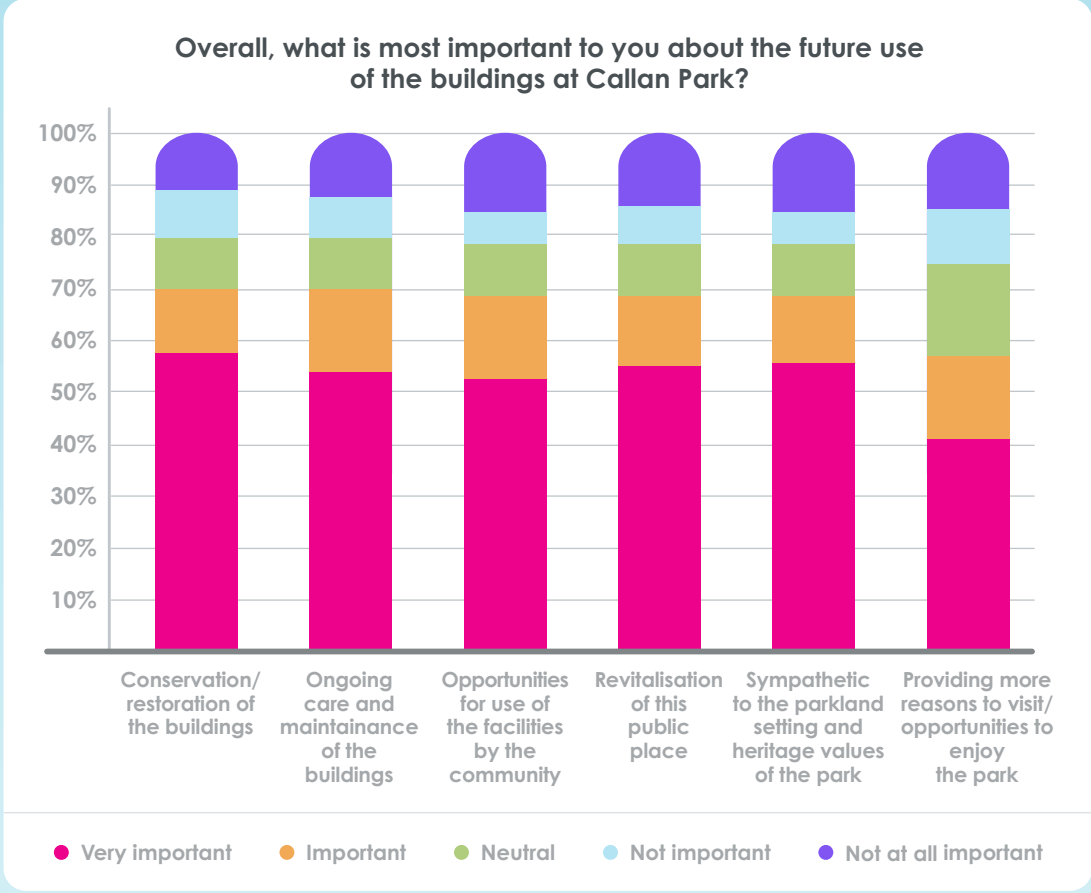


1 The community values Callan Park



People expressed a strong preference for future uses of the buildings to reflect what they already love about Callan Park – that it's open to all, the park's heritage and history are protected and that it is a celebrated and welcoming space.

67% of respondents rated the parkland setting and heritage values of the park as being very important or important.



Respondents suggested that future uses need to reflect community values, and that the park should not be overly planned or commercialised and contribute to positive social outcomes.

Commercial uses were seen as appropriate only where there is a direct benefit for the community. Callan Park must remain a place that reflects its past and provides for the future – with a mix of uses such as education, social enterprises, not-for-profits, accommodation to support people with disability or those experiencing homelessness, mental health support, and activities and facilities that are low or no cost.

Shorter leases were preferred to ensure that the buildings would be able to provide services that the community needs at any given time.

2 People want to see buildings brought to life



People want to see Callan Park and its buildings brought to life for the enjoyment of the whole community.

67% Over two-thirds of respondents (67%) rated revitalisation of this public space as very important or important.

As shown on the previous page, other aspects of future use that are important to the community included conservation and restoration of the buildings and uses that are sympathetic to the parkland setting and heritage values of the park.

Various uses were identified in responses – from community, cultural, arts and creative uses, to those with a sporting and wellness focus.



...I think it's sad to watch so many buildings fall into disrepair. It would be amazing to have them re-invented and filled with life once again.

Community focused, not-for-profit and free events to be a focus point.

Use should be accessible, with all groups from the surrounding community given space.



Parkland views from Bonnyview (Gardener's Cottage)

3

Heritage conservation of buildings is important

Future use of buildings at Callan Park should involve important restoration and maintenance work – both to ensure heritage buildings are fit for purpose and to continue to care for them over time.

69% of survey respondents rated conservation/restoration of the buildings as very important or important.



69% rated ongoing care and maintenance of the buildings as very important or important.

The newly restored Summerhouse at Callan Park



4

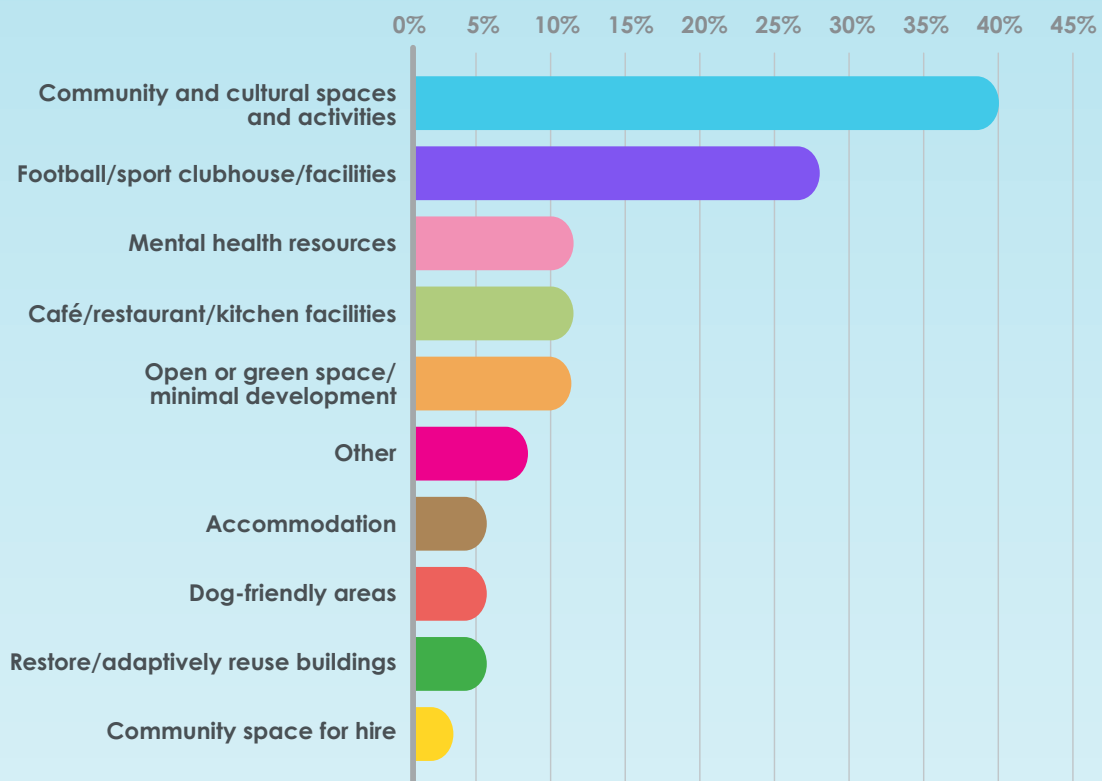
People want more opportunities for the community to come together

People want to be able to do a range of things when they are visiting Callan Park, with a strong preference for community and culture, food and sporting activities.

When asked 'Do you have any further ideas for future use of buildings in Callan Park or other thoughts about how the precinct could be used?', more than half of all survey participants (57%) responded.

Do you have any further ideas for future use of buildings in Callan Park or other thoughts about how the precinct could be used?

(10% of qualitative responses, randomly selected n=82)



A mix of uses was seen as being beneficial to meet the needs of a wide range of community members. The majority of feedback focused on community and cultural spaces, events and activities (40%); and football/sport clubhouse/facilities (27%), as shown above.

Educational initiatives (for schools and the broader community), arts and culture (spaces and events), sports (clubhouse and amenities – including for Balmain Football Club), mental health-focused suggestions (services and wellness) and a café or restaurant (permanent or pop-up style) were all suggested by respondents.



5

People want increased amenities

Better amenities are important to contribute to people's experience and enjoyment of Callan Park.

Suggested amenity improvements included new and more accessible facilities, a new sporting clubhouse, café, extra rubbish bins, pathways, seating and shade, as well as more sporting, cultural, health and educational facilities and programs.

“

Use should be accessible [with]... good seating, railings, ramps and steps, wide pathways and single stall gender inclusive bathroom and change/parenting room on site.

Balmain Football Club needs a better clubhouse facility and a nice spot you can enjoy a drink or coffee and watch your kids play sport.

”



Waterfront Drive Sporting Ground with the newly restored Repatriation Ward building



6

Callan Park must be green and open to all

Above all, people want Callan Park to be green and open to all.

Callan Park must continue to be a welcoming green and open space with room to move and opportunities to connect with nature. A place to escape city life, relax, connect and explore. A place for locals, as well as visitors from further afield. People of all ages, Aboriginal community members, those with a disability – whoever you are, you are welcome at Callan Park.

Suggestions for improvement included enhanced green spaces, a community garden, social enterprises, not-for-profit uses, and other activities that deliver a broader community benefit (such as aged care, healthcare, accommodation for people experiencing homelessness, mental health services, a group home, activities for people with disability and more).

“
Whatever happens, I'd like the grounds maintained as a peaceful public space.

”
The use of buildings, needs to not interfere with the park's tranquility. There are not enough calm, green and natural places. There is value in that for society.

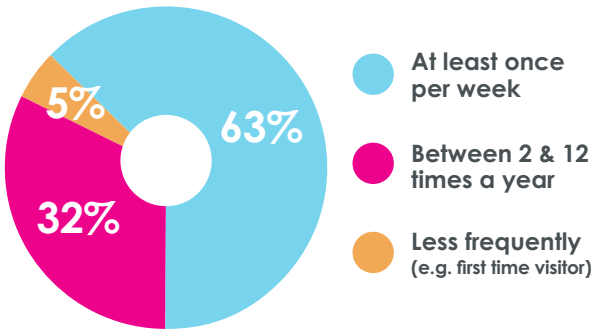


Thanks for being part of our survey

 **1,023** surveys were completed online

 **61** surveys were completed face-to-face

How often do you visit Callan Park?



52% of respondents live locally in three postcodes



Rozelle



Leichhardt/
Lilyfield



Balmain/
Balmain East/
Birchgrove

