



SNELLS BEACH COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

JUNE 26



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OVERVIEW

FROM LISTENING TO ACTION



Over recent weeks, residents of Snells Beach have participated in a series of community conversations, activities and events designed to explore what matters most to local people.

Rather than beginning with predefined issues or solutions, the process started by listening. Through conversations, informal activities, existing community networks and a community hui, residents shared what they value about Snells Beach, where they see opportunities, and what would help strengthen connection and belonging in the community.

The process culminated in a participatory budgeting event where community members pitched ideas and voted on the projects they most wanted to see supported.

336 votes (tokens) cast by attendees, who each received **15 tokens** to allocate across the project ideas and **\$15,000** was made available to support community-led action.

While individual projects received support, the voting revealed something more significant: **a clear set of shared community priorities.**



THE PROCESS



Listening to the Community

- Community conversations
- One-to-one chats
- Existing groups and networks
- Informal pop-up activities
- Stories, concerns and aspirations gathered

Emerging Themes

- Residents identified opportunities for action
- Community priorities surfaced
- Ideas developed by local residents
- Project champions stepped forward

Community Hui

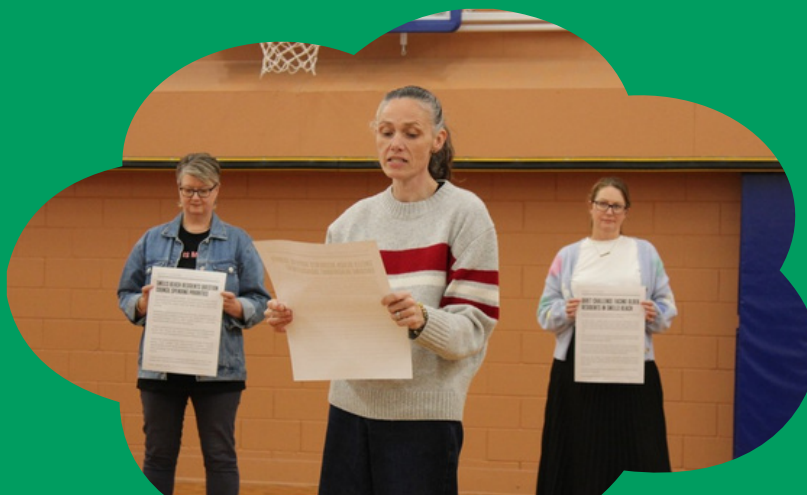
- Themes shared back with the community via Newspaper Articles
- Ideas explored together
- Community members added their voices
- Projects refined and strengthened

Participatory Budgeting Event

- Community members pitched ideas
- 336 votes (tokens) cast by attendees, who each received 15 tokens to allocate across the project ideas
- Community decided what mattered most
- \$15,000 available to support action

Moving into Action

- Four priority action areas identified
- Project champions contacted
- Collaborative opportunities explored
- Community-led implementation begins



THE COMMUNITY HUI



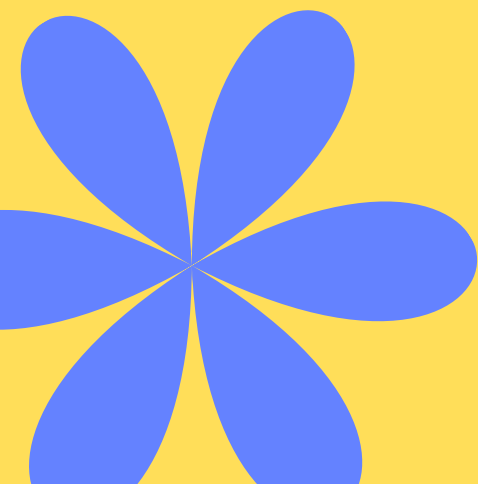
The Community Hui brought together community members to reflect on what had been heard during the earlier listening phase. Rather than presenting a formal report, the facilitation team shared the emerging themes as a series of newspaper headlines, inviting participants to stand beside the story that resonated most strongly with them.

What surprised many people was how evenly participants spread across the different stories. There was no single issue dominating community attention. Instead, the conversations reflected the diversity of interests, concerns and hopes within Snells Beach.

Although the intention had been to explore one priority issue in depth, participants identified two conversations they felt could not be ignored:

- Opportunities for young people in Snells Beach
- The ongoing seabird and shoreline pathway issue

Rather than asking people to choose between them, both conversations were explored.



WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT THE SHORELINE



Participants stepped into the perspectives of the many people and groups connected to the shoreline issue, exploring not simply their opinions but what mattered to them and the values underpinning those views.

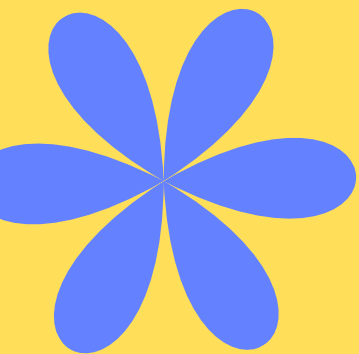
While opinions differed about the future of the pathway and picnic table, several themes emerged consistently.

Many residents expressed frustration that the issue had remained unresolved for so long and that the conflict had become exhausting. There was a strong desire to see a decision made so the community could move forward.

People discussed the wellbeing of the seabirds, including concerns about breeding success and fledgling numbers. Participants also raised questions about the costs and use of the pathway, acknowledged the generally cooperative behaviour of dog owners, and discussed the impacts of roaming cats and increasing numbers of Canadian geese.

An encouraging part of the discussion was hearing residents who support retaining the pathway express a willingness to work alongside those whose primary concern is bird welfare. Rather than seeing these as opposing positions, participants explored how education and shared responsibility might better protect wildlife while maintaining community access.

The strongest message was directed to Rodney Local Board. Participants consistently said they wanted the matter resolved, trusting elected members to make a decision, whatever that decision ultimately proved to be.



WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE



The youth conversation revealed a strong perception that there are few places where young people can gather, socialise and simply spend time together in Snells Beach.

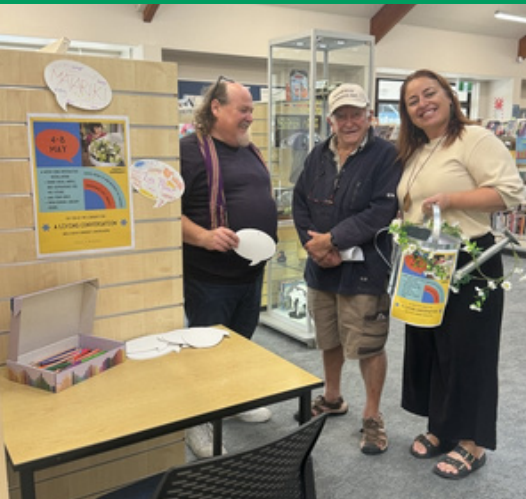
Participants also recognised that many young people attend school and activities outside the community, meaning much of their social life happens elsewhere. There was acknowledgement that adults often jump too quickly to solutions without first asking young people what they actually want. Perhaps the most significant observation was that no young people were present in the room. This became an important insight in itself, reinforcing the need to involve young people directly in shaping future initiatives.

The hui concluded with participants identifying practical project ideas they would like to support. Rather than simply discussing issues, residents volunteered to help turn ideas into action, laying the foundations for the participatory budgeting event that followed.



PARTICIPATORY BUDGET EVENT

THE NUMBERS



336

votes (tokens) cast by attendees,
each given 15 tokens to allocate
across project ideas



12

community ideas
generated



\$15K

available for community
action



4

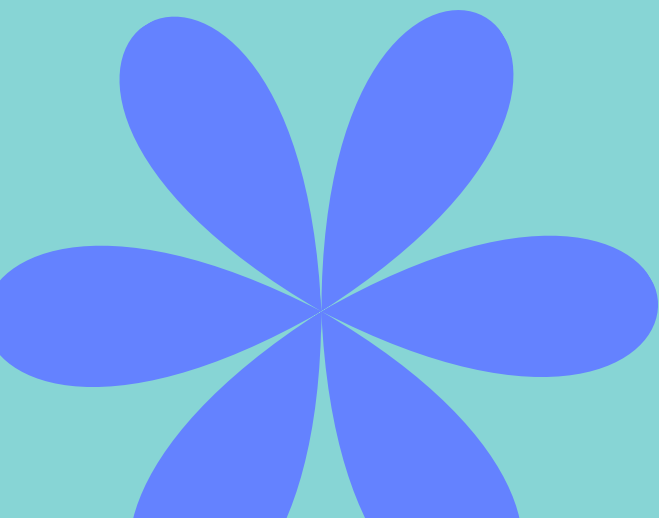
priority action areas
identified



WHAT THE COMMUNITY PRIORITISED



At the Participatory budget event, attendees were each given 15 tokens to allocate across the project ideas, allowing them to support more than one initiative. The combined results show the areas that participants collectively identified as their highest priorities. These are summarised over the following pages.



YOUNG PEOPLE BELONG HERE

216

votes

\$9553

funding signal



Ideas Contributing to this Theme

- Facilitated Youth Event
- Youth Hub Repairs and Maintenance
- Consultation with College-Age Youth
- Youth Hui
- Volleyball Nights

What We Heard

The conversations showed strong support for investing in young people, but also revealed a desire for young people to have a greater voice in community life.

Participants talked about:

- Creating spaces where young people feel welcome and can express themselves
- Supporting youth-led events and activities
- Consulting young people in creative ways rather than relying on surveys
- Building stronger connections between schools, community organisations and young people
- Opportunities for practical skills, mentoring and intergenerational learning through initiatives such as Men's Shed involvement

Residents appeared less interested in individual events and more interested in creating an ongoing ecosystem of support, connection and opportunity for young people. This might include spaces where young people can gather, connect, contribute, and be heard.

Next Step

Need to find a mechanism that centres the voice of young people.



CONNECTING PEOPLE

109

votes

\$3080

funding signal



Ideas Contributing to this Theme

- Computer Classes
- She Connects
- Community Newsletter
- Chatter Table
- Potluck Nights

What We Heard

Many of the ideas focused on helping people meet one another in simple and informal ways.

Participants talked about:

- Monthly potluck dinners
- Chatter tables and café conversations
- Women's connection events
- Computer and technology support for adults
- Activities specifically designed to help newcomers build social connections
- Walking groups, volunteering and "have-a-go" community activities

The underlying theme was not activities themselves, but creating opportunities for belonging, friendship and participation.

Next Step

Fund the people who are wanting to lead these projects.



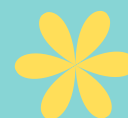
ACTIVE AND HEALTHY SNELLS

39

votes

\$1741

funding signal



Ideas Contributing to this Theme

- Outdoor Exercise Equipment

What We Heard

While outdoor exercise equipment attracted support, the discussion quickly broadened into a wider conversation about recreation and healthy lifestyles.

Participants discussed:

- Outdoor exercise equipment for all ages
- Skate park improvements
- Pump track opportunities
- Accessible recreation spaces
- Encouraging people to be active and connected outdoors

This suggests a broader community interest in health, recreation and shared public spaces.

Next Step

Undertake feasibility work and explore possible locations, partnerships and implementation options.



PLACES THAT BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

14

votes

\$625

funding signal



Ideas Contributing to this Theme

- Police Station Hub
- Four Square Hub

What We Heard

The hub discussions highlighted the importance of having visible and accessible places where community life can happen.

Participants imagined hubs as places that could:

- Host community groups
- Share information and advice
- Offer practical workshops and classes
- Provide arts, crafts and wellbeing activities
- Act as informal gathering places

The conversations suggested that people are looking for places that make community participation easier and more visible.

Next Step

Work with local champions and stakeholders to identify possible spaces and how these might become stronger connection points for the community.



INSIGHTS BEYOND THE VOTING



The participatory budgeting event generated more than votes. It created opportunities for residents to build on each other's ideas, identify connections between projects and imagine larger possibilities.

Several themes emerged repeatedly:

- Young people want to be involved, not just consulted.
- Community connection happens through small, regular interactions.
- People value welcoming spaces where newcomers can participate.
- Residents want visible places where community life can happen.
- Many projects become stronger when linked with other projects rather than operating in isolation.

The Community Hui demonstrated that people with differing views were able to have respectful conversations about difficult issues, particularly around the shoreline. Several participants commented afterwards that they had spoken with people they had not previously engaged with, and others noted that the process felt very different from traditional public meetings. These insights will be valuable as the community moves from ideas into action.



ISSUES BEYOND PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

While the participatory budgeting process focused on community-led projects, residents also highlighted broader issues requiring action from others. The shoreline/seabird issue and the shopping centre both emerged as significant concerns. Although they were not suitable for community funding, they remain important messages from the listening process and should be shared with the relevant decision-makers.



LOOKING AHEAD



The participatory budgeting process was never simply about allocating funding. It was about identifying where community energy exists and creating opportunities for local people to shape the future of their community.

The next phase will involve:

- Contacting project champions
- Bringing related projects together
- Establishing action groups
- Confirming project leads
- Allocating available funding
- Supporting implementation

"The strongest message from the community wasn't about individual projects. It was about creating opportunities for people to connect, belong, contribute and shape the future of Snells Beach together."



APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY IDEAS PRESENTED FOR VOTING

This is the formal list of ideas that people voted on at the participatory budgeting event.

Young People

- Facilitated event for young people
- Consultation process with college-age youth
- Youth hui with college and primary kids
- Youth hub for repairs and maintenance
- Youth shed at the old Four Square
- Volleyball nights

Connection and Belonging

- Chatter table at a local café
- She Connects Snells Beach
- Monthly community potluck night
- Computer classes for adults
- Activities aimed at helping newcomers build social connections

Community Hubs

- Police Station as a community hub
- Four Square as a community hub

Health and Recreation

- Outdoor exercise machines for everyone

Community Events

- Some sort of event for 20–45 year olds (e.g. muso nights)

Community Environment and Place

- Better transport connections between Snells Beach and neighbouring communities
- Addressing the vacant shops and look of the shopping centre

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS GENERATED DURING DISCUSSIONS

Young People

- Youth-led festivals
- Creative arts opportunities
- TikTok/social media-based consultation
- Skills sharing with Men's Shed
- Trade and practical skills mentoring
- Stronger school-community partnerships

Connection and Belonging

- Walking groups
- Volunteer opportunities
- "Have a Go" days
- Local music events
- Open mic nights
- Community choir
- Community music in the park
- Women's networking and support events

Community Hubs

- Community noticeboards
- Meeting spaces
- Arts and crafts activities
- Cooking classes
- Budgeting workshops
- Citizens advice sessions
- Yoga and meditation
- Shared community services

Recreation and Wellbeing

- Skate park improvements
- Pump track
- Outdoor exercise equipment
- Recreation facilities for all ages

Supporting Newcomers

- Welcome activities
- Potluck dinners
- Beach-front social events
- Skill-sharing opportunities
- Volunteer matching
- Community information sharing



APPENDIX C

IDEAS IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT BUT BEYOND THE SCOPE OF CURRENT FUNDING

- Better transport connections between Snells Beach and neighbouring communities
- Addressing vacant shops and the appearance of the shopping centre

While these ideas fell outside the scope of the participatory budgeting fund, participants identified them as important issues affecting quality of life in Snells Beach. These themes may warrant further exploration through future community, council or business-led initiatives.



APPENDIX D

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Link to newspaper articles shared at the community hui, highlighting themes from the community conversations: <https://canva.link/snellsbeachnewspaper>

