

TRACKING PROGRESS:

2020 Snapshot of Council
Action on Climate Change



Acknowledgment of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation the Cities Power Partnership acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and recognise their abiding connections to land, sea and community. Sovereignty was never ceded.

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Foreword

In four years, the Cities Power Partnership has become Australia's largest network of local councils leading the way to a thriving, zero emissions future. With over 165 councils on board, we have seen tangible action and huge emissions reductions taking place all across the country.

Every year, we roll out a Reporting and Feedback Survey to our members to gain insights and help inform the future of the program, as well as receive an update on their Cities Power Partnership pledges. This report summarises the results from the 138 councils who completed this year's survey.

We hope it provides in-depth information on how councils are leveraging the benefits of the program to accelerate climate action.



Dr Portia Odell
Director, Cities Power Partnership

138
councils

Survey Respondents

138 councils, or 95% of those required to complete the survey (as of September 2021), submitted a response; including councils from every state and territory. In the months after the final deadline, and at the time of publishing this report, CPP's network has grown to include over 165 councils from all around the country.



Key Findings

1.

Councils have committed to over **700 Cities Power Partnership pledges** to reduce emissions locally.



2.

Councils said the most important factor in driving local government climate action is **having access to relevant information and expertise**.



3.

The most common barrier for councils is a lack of funds. This was also the most common barrier encountered last year.



4.

Majority of the pledge initiatives (64%) **councils have committed to are targeting community-wide emissions** compared to corporate emissions (36%).



5.

72% of councils reported that they want to utilise their membership to scale their emission reduction initiatives. That's an 8% increase compared to 2019's snapshot report.



6. The areas of action councils are most interested in engaging with CPP are **net zero communities, electric vehicles and climate communications and messaging**. Climate risk is another key interest of councils.



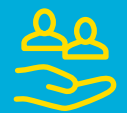
7. The biggest benefit councils said they have experienced from participating in the CPP is **more opportunities to collaborate and almost half of all councils said they are interested in joining a working group**.



8. **47% of councils have an electric vehicle in their fleet**. An increase of 6% compared to last year's report.



9. Of the 25% of councils who said they have a corporate net zero emissions target, **74% of those targets commit them to achieving it by 2030**.



10. **39% of CPP pledges focus on renewable energy**.



11. **Only 18% of councils** feel they are prepared to respond to the impacts of climate change.



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Overview of Cities Power Partnership

Member councils

Mitigating climate change requires coordinated action on a global scale, and local governments are a critical part of the solution. **As of October 2021, the Cities Power Partnership (CPP) comprises 165 local governments, representing 31% of Australian councils.** Our network includes a diverse range of members and welcomes councils of all sizes; including Australia's smallest council (the Borough of Queenscliffe, VIC) and the largest council (Brisbane City Council, QLD).

By facilitating knowledge-sharing and providing our members with access to top climate experts and climate change communication tactics, CPP is supporting our members to elevate and accelerate local climate action across the country.

Regardless of where a council is on their path towards a zero emissions future, our network provides an opportunity for our council to continue to take ambitious action.

Mitigating climate change requires collective action, and local governments are a critical part of the solution.

Population

Since our 2019 Snapshot Report was released, our network has grown to represent a further 3,613,073 people – that’s 14% more of Australia’s total population.

As of October, 2021 The Cities Power Partnership network represents 16,468,781 million Australians, or 65% of the nation’s population. The majority of our member councils represent regional and rural parts of Australia. The remaining third of our members are capital cities and metropolitan local governments, which together represent 8,999,350 million people.



Tracking Progress:
**2019 Snapshot of Climate Action
on Climate Change Report**

[Read the report](#)

**The Cities Power
Partnership network
represents 16,468,781
Australians, or 65% of
the nation’s population.**

CPP network: Proportion of Australia’s population

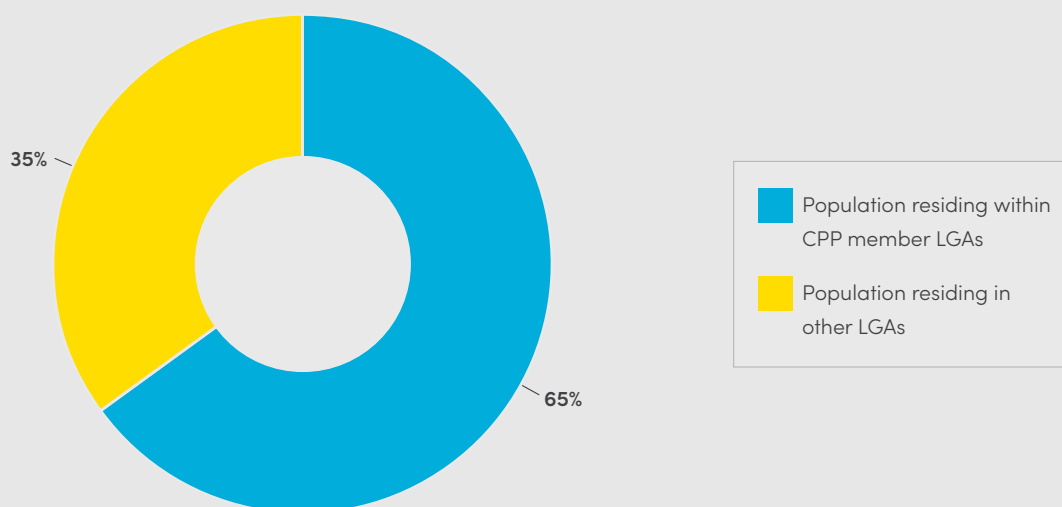


Figure 1

Geographic context

Our membership includes local governments from all of Australia's six states and two territories. New South Wales has the highest proportion of members, accounting for 36%. Victoria and Western Australia also comprise a large proportion of member councils, with 23% and 19% respectively.

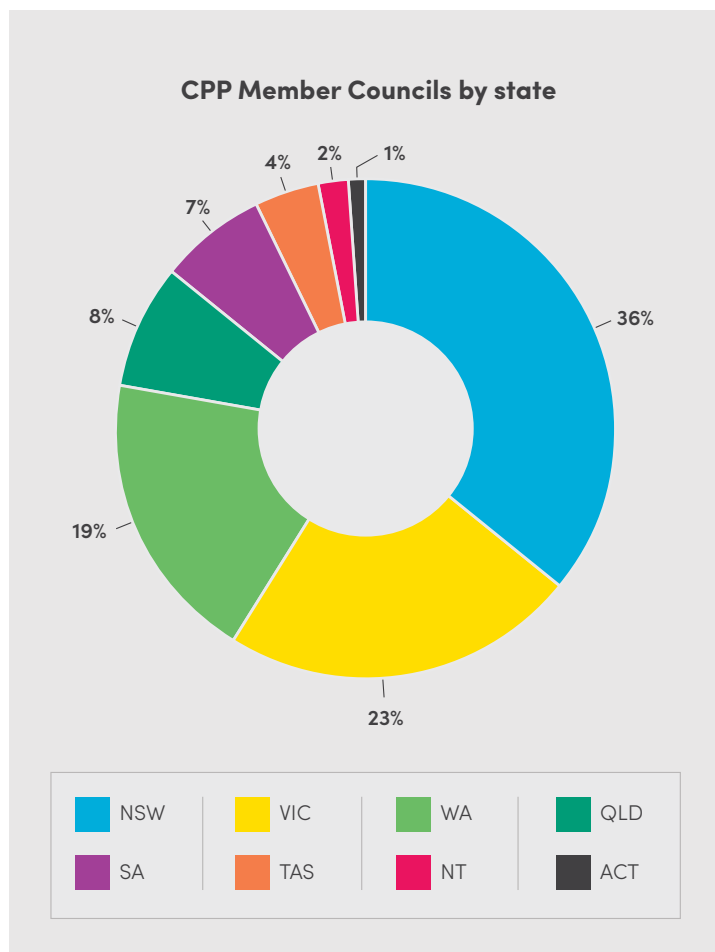


Figure 2

The distribution of Cities Power Partnership members across Australia.

State/Territory	Proportion of CPP Member Councils	Number of CPP Member Councils	Councils who are not a CPP Member	Population represented by CPP Members
NSW	36%	60	68	78%
VIC	23%	38	41	58%
WA	19%	31	107	67%
QLD	8%	13	64	62%
SA	7%	12	56	41%
TAS	4%	7	22	28%
NT	2%	3	14	55%
ACT	1%	1	N/A	100%

Table 1

The largest opportunity for growth (in terms of population) is in Tasmania and South Australia.

Interestingly, a relatively small proportion of Queensland's total number of LGAs are currently members of the Cities Power Partnership (17%), however our members represent some of the most populous parts of the state, totalling almost two-thirds of its population.

New South Wales has the highest proportion of CPP members (36%)

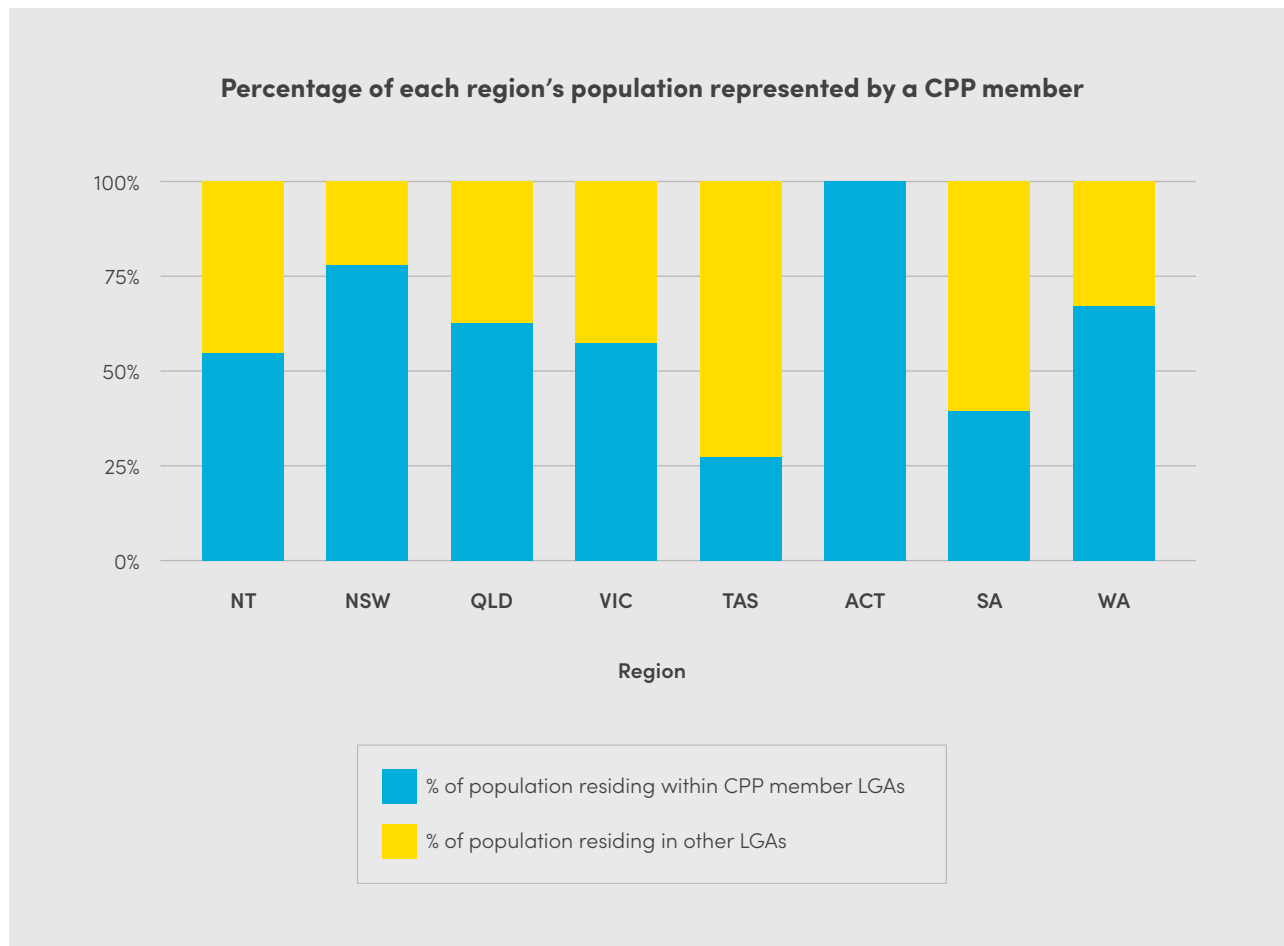


Figure 3

Classification of Local Government Areas

Local governments throughout Australia share common roles and responsibilities that are essential to acting on climate change and preparing communities for its impacts. However, each local government area (LGA) faces its own opportunities and challenges, based on the diverse range of urban forms, natural environments, communities and economies represented throughout the country.

Distinguishing members according to characteristics – such as their population density or proximity to an urban centre – can assist with identifying appropriate emission reduction initiatives, barriers and collaborative opportunities.

CPP Members by LGA Type		
Classification	Proportion of CPP Members	Population
Capital City	4%	2,214,326
Metropolitan	32%	6,785,024
Regional Town / City	47%	7,034,732
Rural	17%	434,699
Total	100%	16,468,781

Table 2

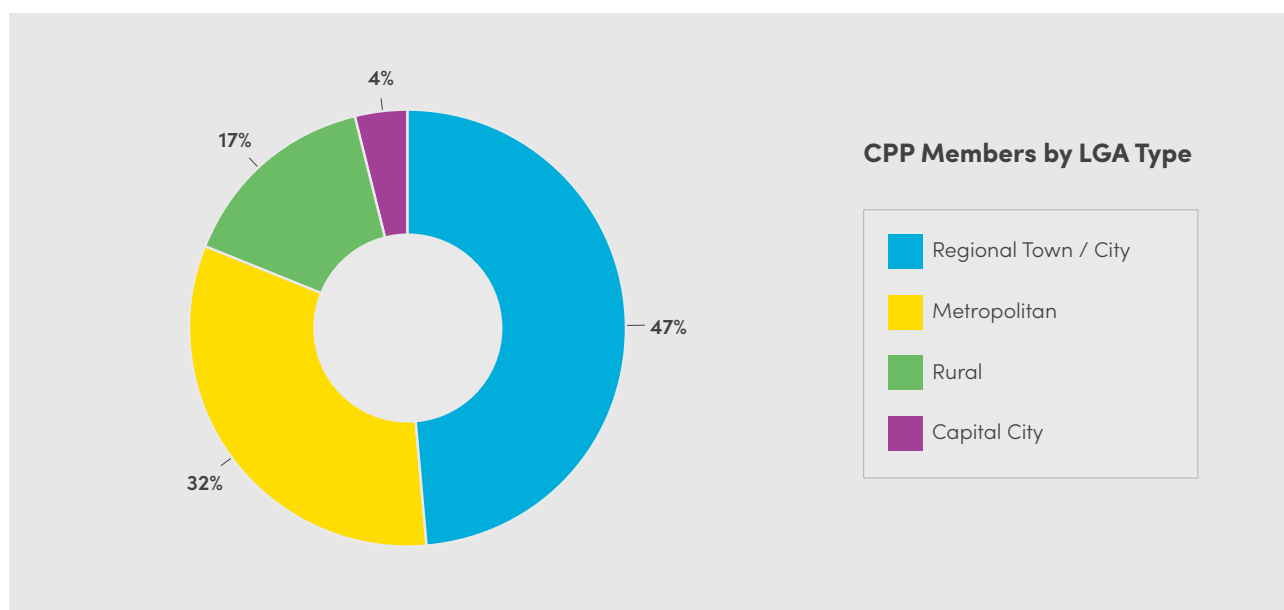
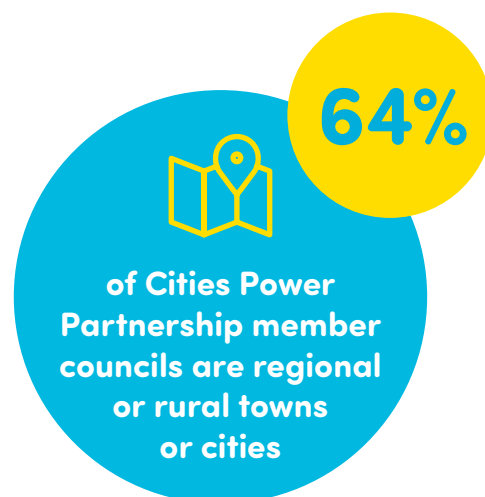
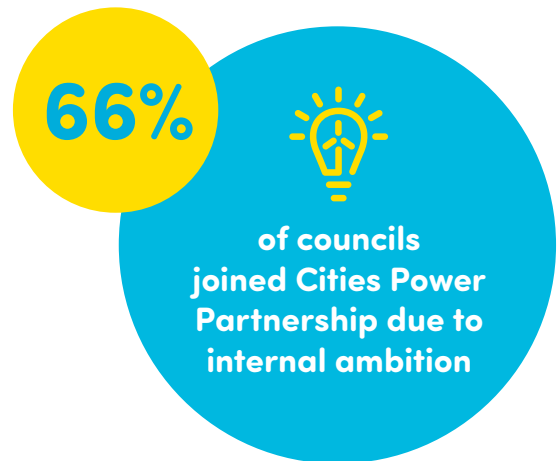


Figure 4

Motivation for joining the program

Council's primary motivation for joining the CPP can be attributed to **internal ambition**, as selected by **66% of respondents** as their impetus for signing up.



Tweed Shire Council said they joined the program “to demonstrate to our community that we are being proactive and trying to be leaders amongst other proactive councils in local government”.

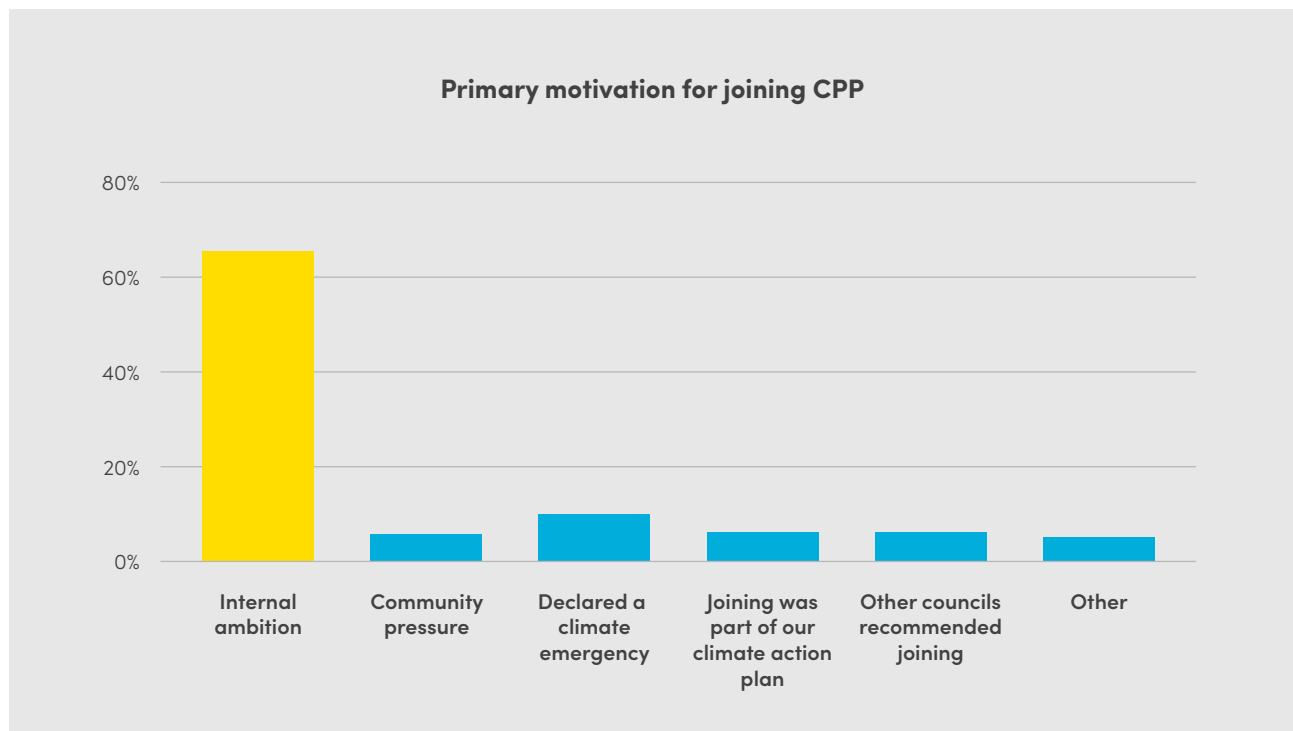


Figure 5

Why Did Councils Join Cities Power Partnership?

Addressing council needs

Important takeaway of CPP membership	% of 2020 survey respondents
Share/learn from other councils on emissions reduction successes and challenges	89%
To do more carbon emissions reduction initiatives	72%
Access experts on climate change and/or renewable energy	64%
Explore joint project opportunities with other Cities Power Partnership members	56%
Profile our success to local media and community	48%
Access the Cities Power Partnership Knowledge Hub for the Resource Library	47%
See how we compare with other councils	36%
Access the Cities Power Partnership Knowledge Hub for the Online Forum	29%
Access the Cities Power Partnership Power Analytics and/or Azility project analysis tool	20%

Table 3



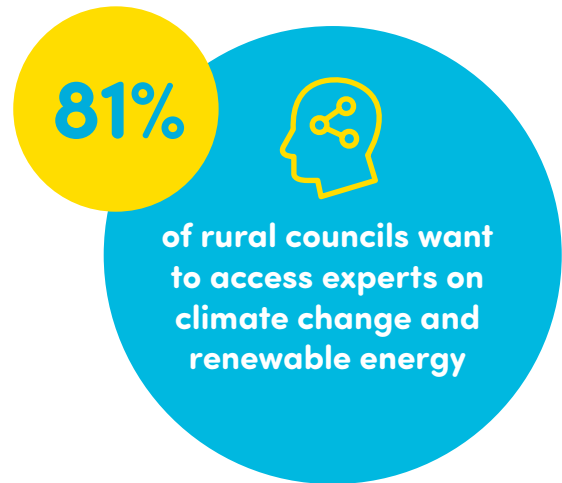
Figure 6: Cities Power Partnership visit to a renewable energy site in South Australia.

What is most important for councils to get out of their membership?

Across two years of reporting, councils have signalled that it is most important that their CPP membership enables them to share/learn from other councils on emission reduction successes and challenges.

Additionally, this year the percentage of councils who said it is important that their membership helps them to do more carbon emission reduction initiatives grew.

Rural councils were the only respondents which did not rank sharing and learning from other councils as their most important program takeaway, instead listing access to experts.



What is most important for councils to get out of their membership?							
Capital Cities		Metro		Regional		Rural	
Important takeaway	2020	Important takeaway	2020	Important takeaway	2020	Important takeaway	2020
Share/learn from other councils on emissions reduction successes and challenges	83%	Share/learn from other councils on emissions reduction successes and challenges	96%	Share/learn from other councils on emissions reduction successes and challenges	91%	Access experts on climate change and/or renewable energy	81%
See how we compare with other councils	67%	To do more carbon emissions reduction initiatives	80%	To do more carbon emissions reduction initiatives	73%	Share/learn from other councils on emissions reduction successes and challenges	76%

Table 4

Driving impact

Councils were asked to rank five factors that drive climate action by their Council. Consistent across all types of LGAs, survey responses indicated that the **most important factor driving climate action is supporting councils with relevant information and expertise.**

Top two most important factors for driving impact				
All Members	Capital Cities	Metro	Regional	Rural
Relevant information and expertise	Relevant information and expertise	Relevant information and expertise	Relevant information and expertise	Relevant information and expertise
Collaboration and learning	Collaboration and learning	Collaboration and learning	Collaboration and learning	Communicating on climate issues within the organisation

Table 5



Figure 7: Cities Power Partnership Victorian Hackathon event.

Barriers to local climate action

Pledge Barriers

71% of councils said they encountered a barrier when implementing their pledges. The most common barrier experienced was a 'lack of funds for initiatives', as reported by 37% of councils. This was closely followed by the 34% of councils who listed 'not enough staff resources' as a barrier. This same trend is consistent across all types of local governments, excluding capital cities where 50% (n=3) of responses didn't list a barrier that impacted their pledge initiatives.

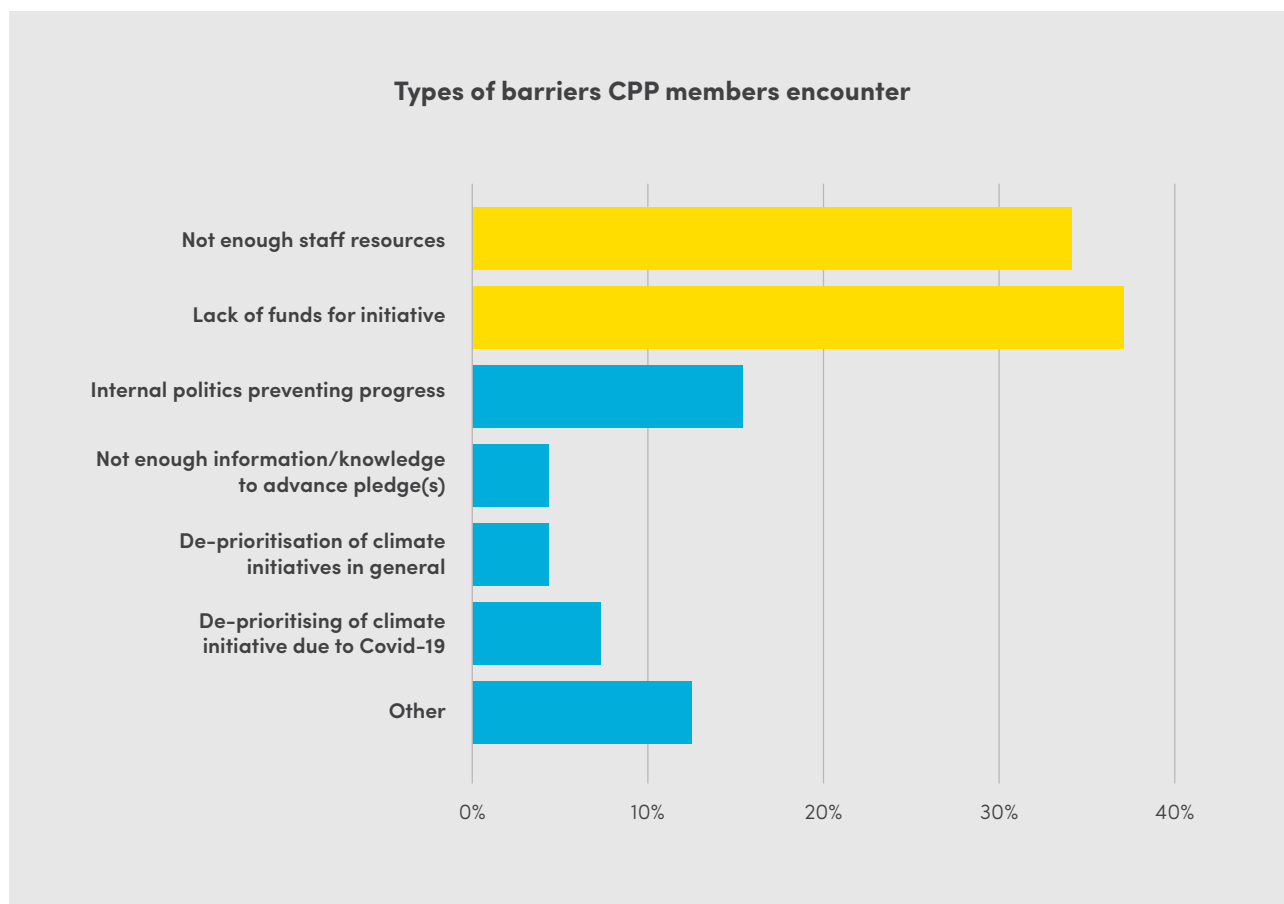
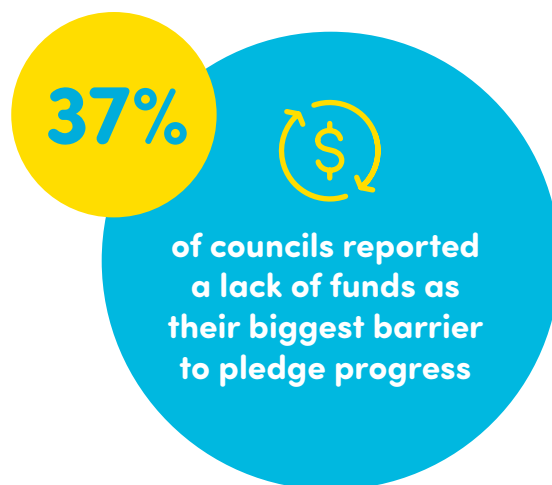


Figure 8

Barriers to setting targets

The most frequent barrier councils selected when asked about the challenges associated with setting targets for council greenhouse gas emissions was accurate data (62%).

Regarding setting community-wide greenhouse gas emission targets, over half (52%) of all survey respondents said that accurate data was a barrier.

62%



of councils reported the most frequent barrier to setting targets for council greenhouse gas emissions was accurate data

Barriers to reducing community-wide emissions

The two biggest barriers to reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions are funding (76%) and internal resourcing (68%).

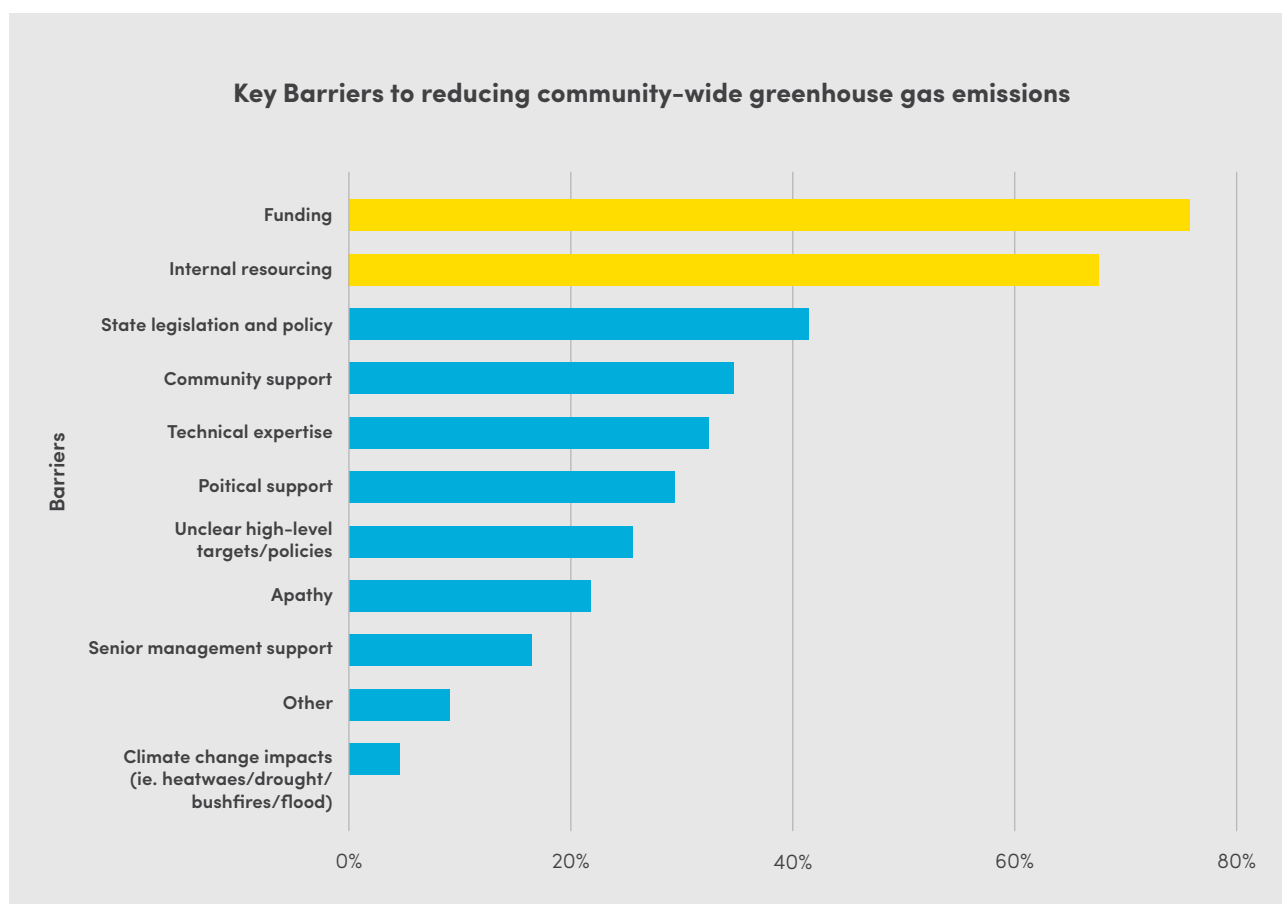


Figure 9

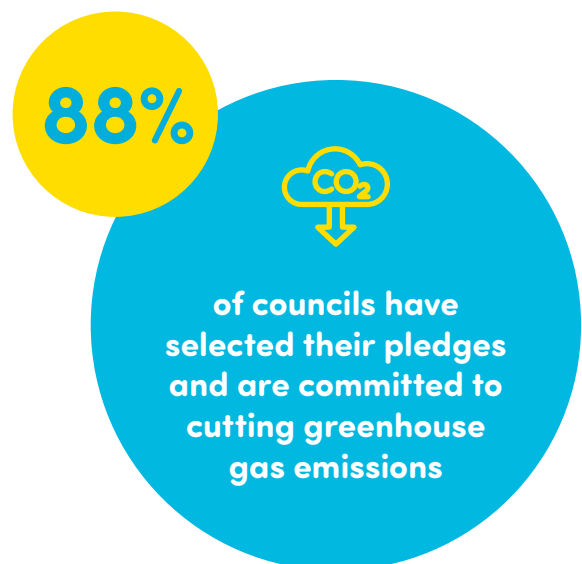
Councils Leading the Charge on Climate Action

Cities and towns are surging ahead with emissions reduction plans, switching to cleaner energy and building greener, efficient and more resilient communities. This is demonstrated by the 700+ Cities Power Partnership pledges councils have committed to in order to reduce emissions locally.

How are councils addressing emissions?

When councils first sign up to CPP, they have 6 months to commit to five different pledges across the categories of renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable transport and working together & influence.

88% of CPP councils have selected their pledges and committed to initiatives aimed at cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The outstanding pledges represented in this figure reflect the large number of councils who joined the program in the second half of 2021, and the 6 month period they have to confirm their commitments.



Pledge Categories

Councils most commonly commit to renewable energy pledges (39%). The remaining pledges are similarly distributed across the remaining categories that are available for councils to choose from.

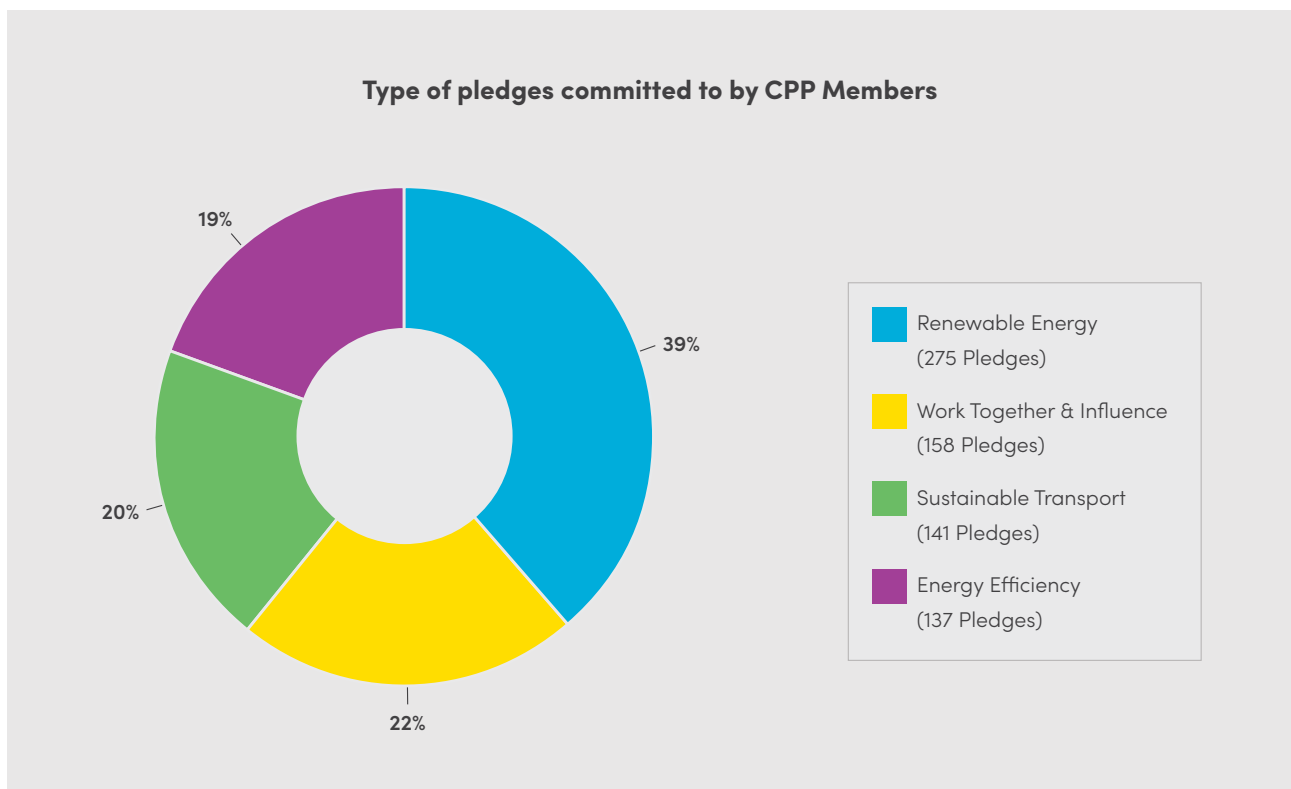
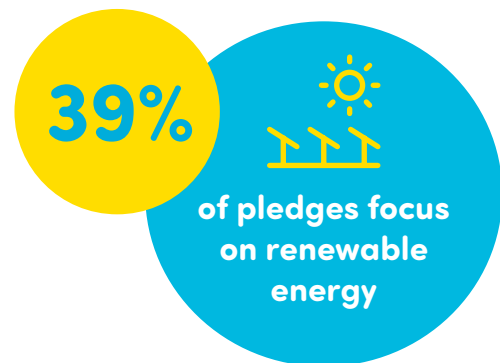
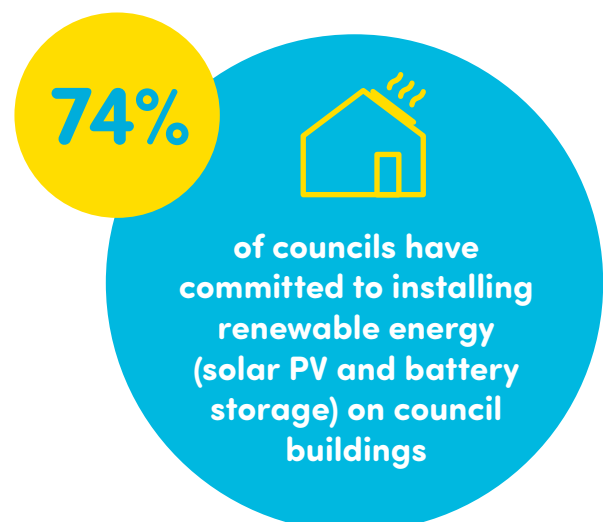


Figure 10

Tasmania has the lowest uptake of renewable energy pledges, likely because the state is already sourcing 100% renewable energy from its high penetration of hydro electricity.

The frequency of renewable energy pledges is attributable to the 74% of CPP members who have committed to installing renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings.



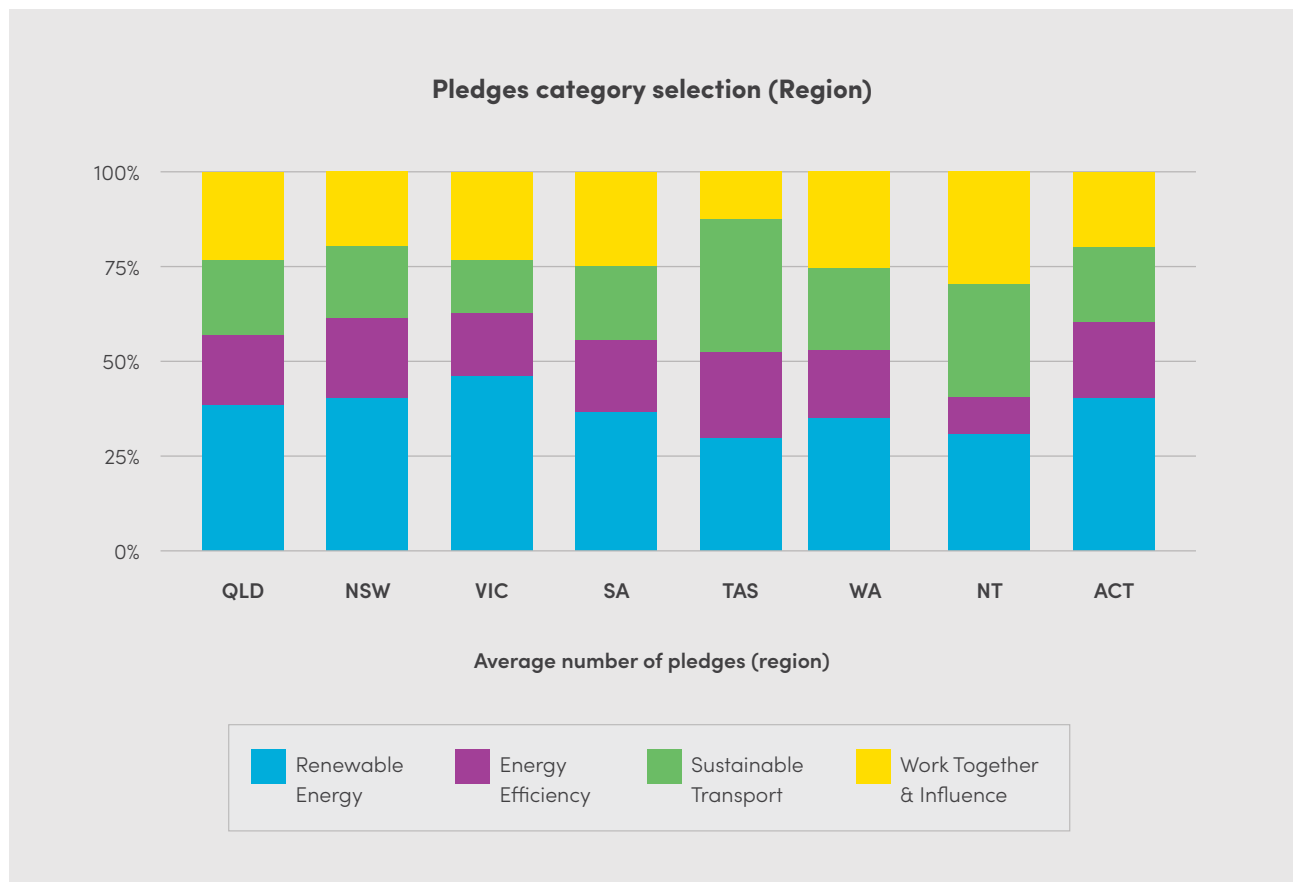


Figure 11

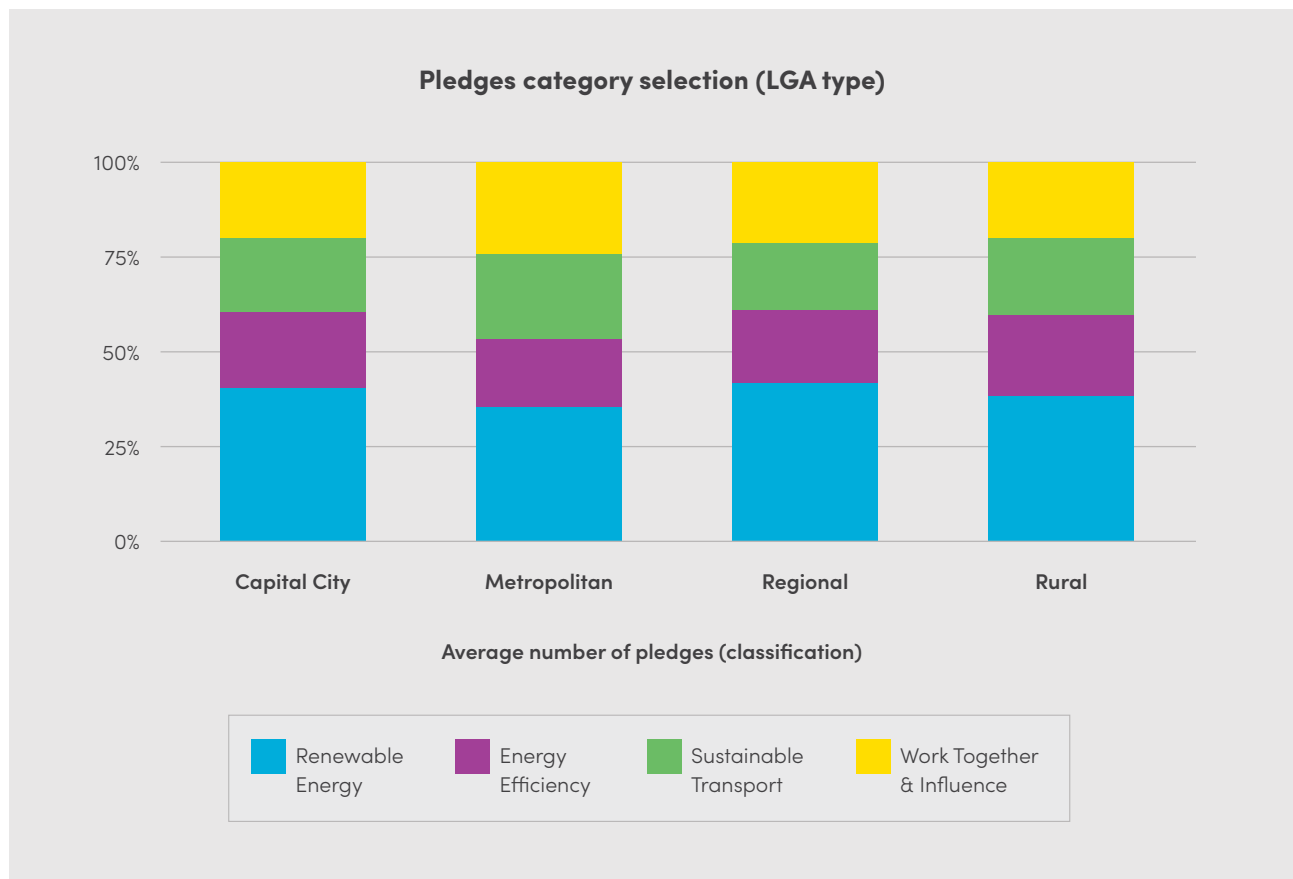


Figure 12

Pledge Initiatives

Since our last snapshot report, councils have continued to raise the bar. While the top 5 pledges selected by councils have remained the same, the commitment to each of these pledges has increased (as illustrated by Table 6).

38% of members have committed to power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time'. In correlation to this, 35% of councils said that they currently purchase renewable energy through a Power Purchase Agreement.



Tracking Progress: 2019 Snapshot of Climate Action on Climate Change Report

[Read the report](#)

35% of councils have committed to developing education and behaviour-change programs to support local residents and businesses to tackle climate change.

38% of councils have committed to power council operations by renewable energy and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time.

Top 5 pledge initiatives (all CPP members)

Pledge type	% of councils (2019)	% of councils (2020)	Change
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	64%	74%	+10%
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	46%	53%	+7%
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures	35%	40%	+5%
Power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time	29%	38%	+9%
Develop education and behaviour-change programs to support local residents and businesses to tackle climate change through clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport	28%	35%	+7%

Table 6

Installing renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings is the most popular pledge initiative (74% of councils).

Top 2 pledge initiatives from each pledge category (all CPP members)			
Renewable energy	% of councils (2019)	% of councils (2020)	Pledge Complete Rate
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	64%	74%	12%
Power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time	29%	38%	13%
Energy efficiency			
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	46%	53%	12%
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures	35%	40%	2%
Sustainable transport			
Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles	23%	30%	7%
Encourage sustainable transport use such as public transport, walking and cycling through council transport planning and design	14%	23%	3%
Work together & influence			
Develop education and behaviour-change programs to support local residents and businesses to tackle climate change through clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport	28%	35%	12%
Set city-level renewable energy or emissions reduction targets	19%	23%	31%

Table 7

'Installing renewable energy on council buildings' and *'rolling out energy efficiency lighting across the municipality'* are the top two most commonly selected pledge initiatives for all types of LGAs. However, they are most popular among regional and rural councils.

Top 4 pledge initiatives in 2020 (different types of LGAs)	
Capital City	% of councils (2020)
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	50%
Power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time	50%
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	50%
Encourage sustainable transport use such as public transport, walking and cycling through council transport planning and design	33%
Metropolitan	
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	57%
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	48%
Power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time	46%
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures	39%
Regional	
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	82%
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	55%
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures	39%
Power council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time	38%
Rural	
Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	86%
Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality	59%
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures	46%
Support cycling through provision of adequate cycle lanes, bike parking and end-of-ride facilities	36%

Table 8

Status of Pledge Initiatives

76% of pledges are 'in progress' while 11% have been completed. When specifying an 'other' response, 23 respondents noted that their pledges are 'ongoing' initiatives without a planned point of completion.

This is emphasised by the fact that 97% of councils said they have installed solar panels on a council building and just 13% of councils having reported the corresponding pledge initiative as complete.

CPP will consider opportunities to report on the progress of such ongoing initiatives in more detail in future snapshot reports.

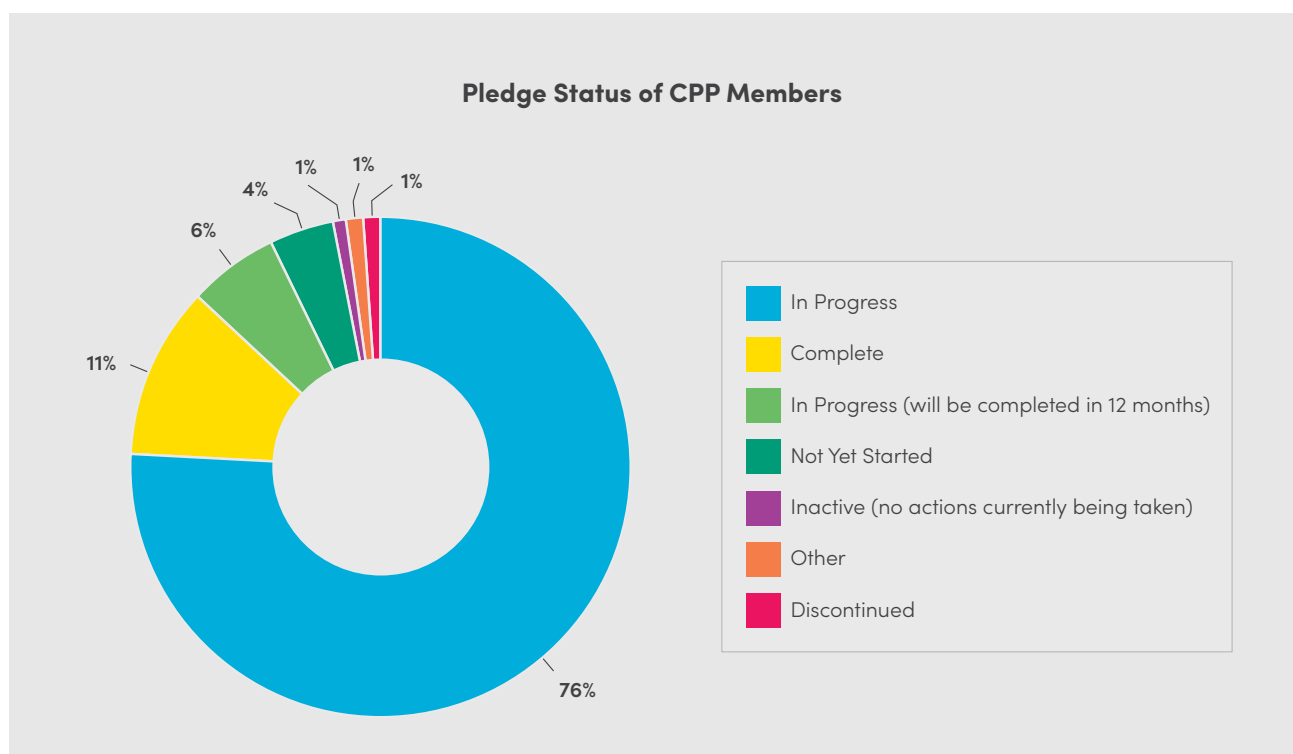


Figure 13

Capital cities have completed pledges at a higher rate than other LGA types, with 33% of all of their pledges reported as complete. This is a stark contrast to other LGA types. Additionally, when asked to select from a list of 5 different barriers that councils have encountered when implementing pledge initiatives, capital cities on average selected the most (3).



Figure 14: Brisbane (QLD).

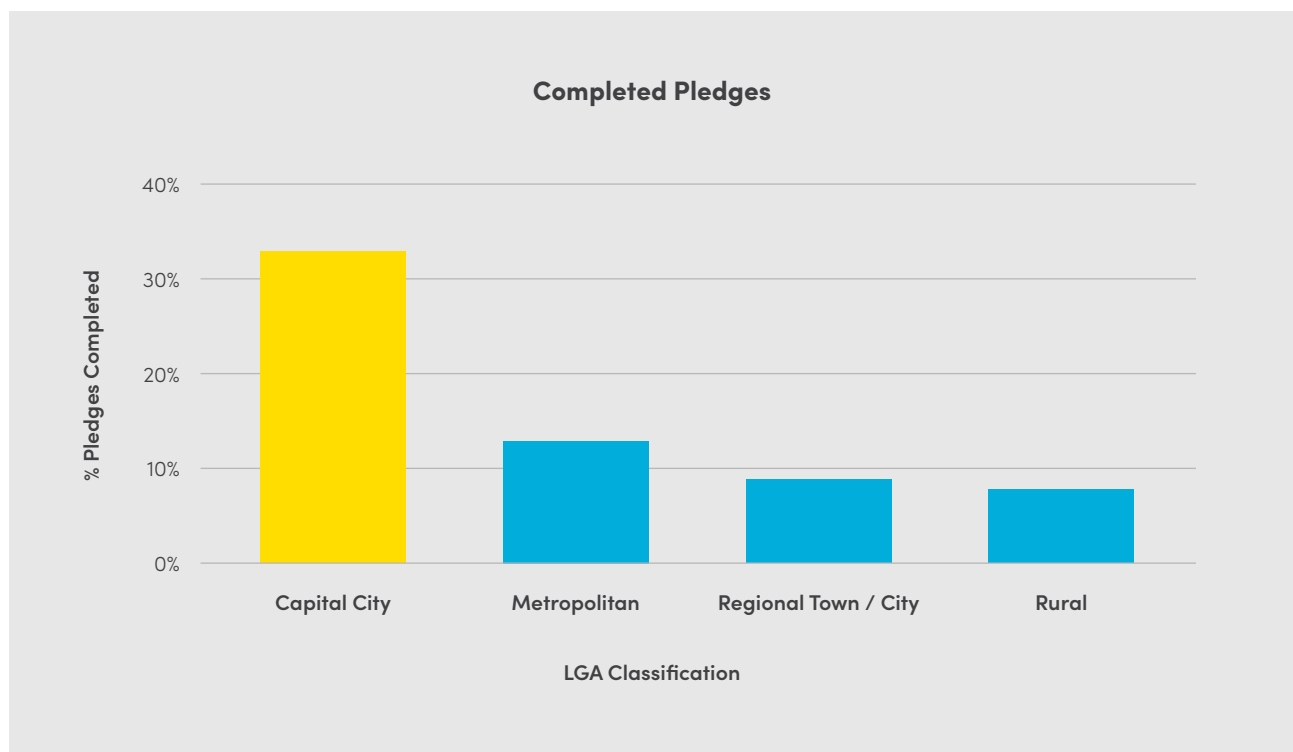


Figure 15

Council vs Community Emissions

Majority of the pledge initiatives councils have committed to are targeting community-wide emissions (64%) compared to corporate emissions (36%).

However, it is worth noting that over half of the pledges targeting community emissions can be classified as an indirect intervention, with almost a third of these focusing on behaviour change. Comparatively, almost all pledges focusing on corporate emissions are direct actions.

Table 9

Target Sector	% of Pledges (2020)
Corporate Emissions	36%
Community Emissions	64%

**Corporate emissions refer to emissions that councils have operational control over.*



Figure 16: Blacktown City Council has committed to achieving 100% renewable electricity by 2025.

Cities Power Partnership's Role in Driving Local Climate Action

To avoid the worst impact of climate change, Australia must reduce emissions by 75% below 2005 levels by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2035. All sectors of the economy, including local government and communities, have a role to play. The CPP provides councils with the tools, connections and momentum needed to ensure their response matches the scale and urgency that a rapidly warming climate requires.

83% of councils reported at least one benefit of participating in the CPP. The most common benefit reported was increased opportunities to collaborate with other councils on climate and energy initiatives.



Why emissions need to plummet this decade.

Read this report by the Climate Council, [Aim high go fast](#)

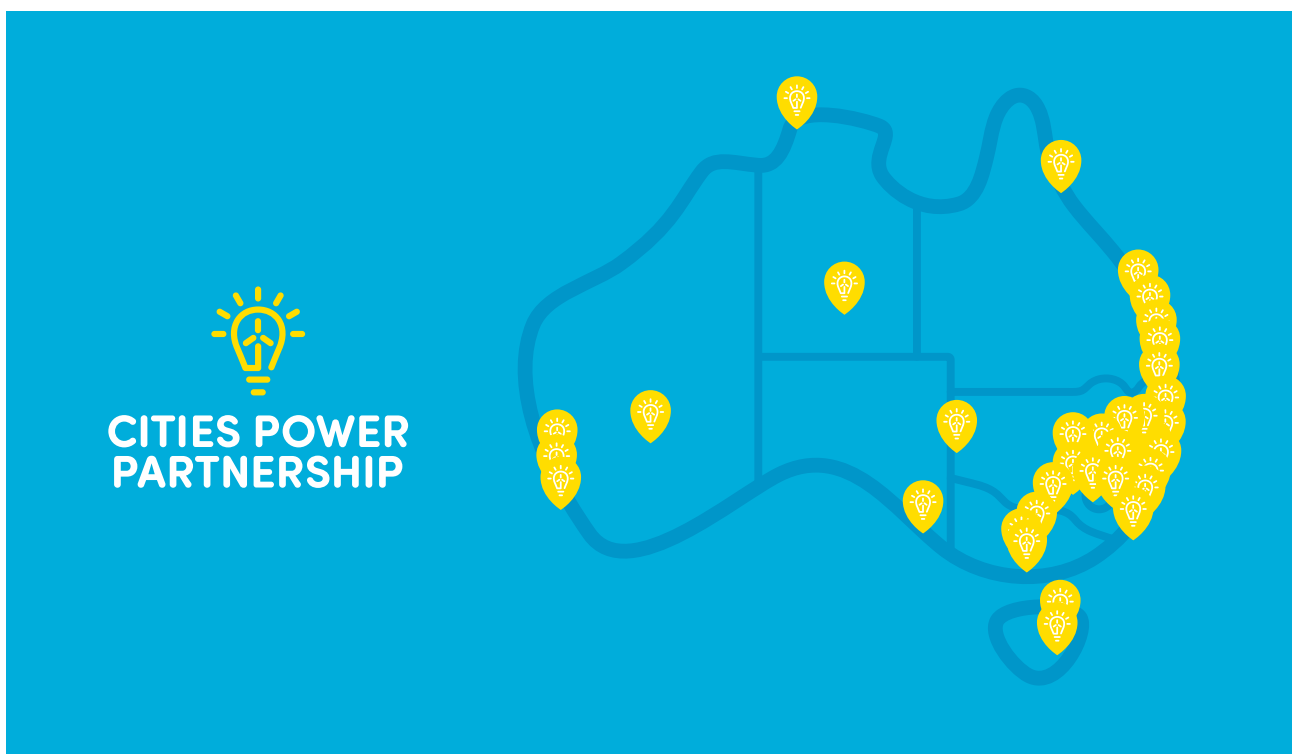


Figure 17

Fostering collaboration

Councils are showcasing an increasing willingness to connect, collaborate and share knowledge to increase scale and impact.

- > **The most common way councils collaborated was by attending an event and networking with other councils (62%).**
- > **11 more councils said that they started a project with another CPP member** compared to the previous years responses.

Type of LGA	% of CPP councils interested in joining a working group with other members
Capital Cities	17%
Metropolitan	60%
Regional Town / City	50%
Rural	19%

Table 10

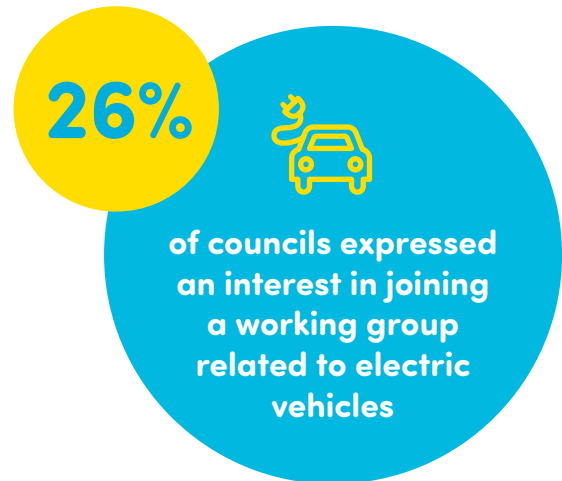


How councils collaborated or shared knowledge with other CPP councils	% respondents (2019)	% respondents (2020)
Attended an event and networked with other councils	54%	62%
Read or interacted with posts on the online forum	25%	21%
Started a project with another Cities Power Partnership council	6%	13%
Other	5%	11%
Have not collaborated or shared knowledge with other councils in the program	33%	27%

Table 11

Of the CPP members interested in joining a working group, **26% flagged an interest in joining a working group related to electric vehicles.**

While the vast majority of responses are associated with mitigation, councils continue to showcase a desire to improve their adaptation responses. **Almost one-third of CPP members interested in joining a working group indicated that they would like to join one related to adaptation.**



“ CPP is playing a very active role and providing opportunities to network and attend webinars. It’s all very informative.”

Baw Baw Shire Council

Providing access to experts and key resources

The top four topics requested by councils are:

1. Net zero community targets & approaches (65%).
2. Electric vehicles (57%).
3. Climate communications and messaging (53%).
4. Climate Risk (51%).

Despite 'adaptation' falling outside of the top three results compared to last year, 'climate risk' featured heavily and was a key topic of interest. This was the first time it was included as an option and its inclusion likely explains 'adaptations' lower result.

Understanding more about 'net zero community targets & approaches' is inside the top three most requested topics for every type of LGA in CPP's network. Capital cities were the only type of LGA which signalled a strong interest in 'just transitions'.

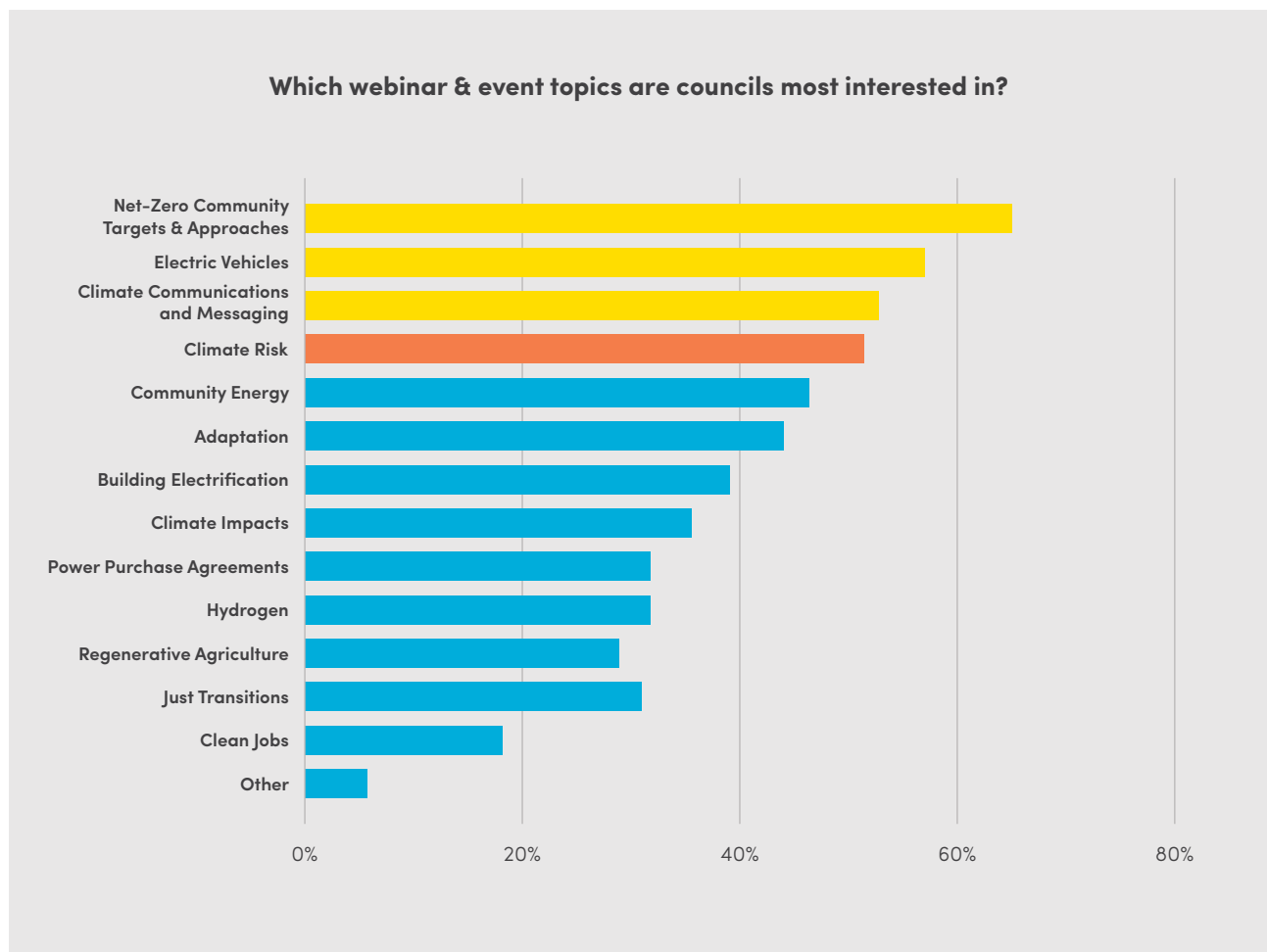


Figure 18

Media & Profiling

The top two profiling opportunities councils are interested in are:

- > Joining a roundtable discussion on a climate change topic (52%).
- > Media training for councillors and/or mayor on climate change issues (43%).

Media training for councillors and/or mayors presents a significant opportunity for CPP to help councils shift the public narrative and ensure that strong climate action is business as usual for Australian local governments.



Figure 19: Parkes mayor Ken Keith at Cities Power Partnership launch.

Summary of Climate Policies

Climate emergency declaration

- > 62 Cities Power Partnership councils have declared a climate emergency, which means that 58% of all Australian councils who have declared a climate emergency are members of CPP.
- > Of the 62 councils who said they had declared a climate emergency, 29% said they had an action plan, 23% said they will have one in the next 12 months and 48% said that they don't have an action plan.

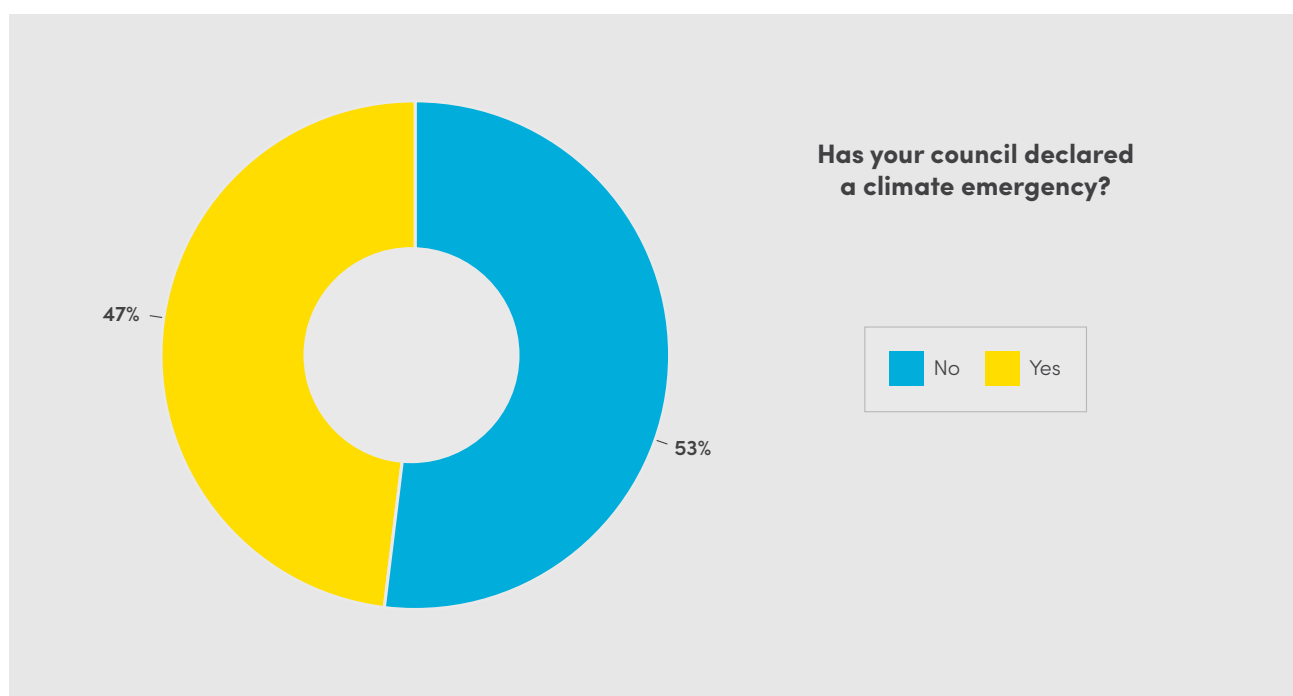
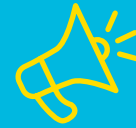


Figure 20

How has declaring a climate emergency helped councils?

- > 52% of councils said that declaring a climate emergency is likely to help make climate change a consideration for all parts of council operations.
- > In addition, 44% of councils said that declaring a climate emergency played a role in accelerating emissions reduction targets. Further, survey responses indicate that participation in CPP is assisting councils to inform their decision on declaring a climate emergency and in developing climate emergency response plans.

52%



of councils said that declaring a climate emergency is likely to help make climate change a consideration for all parts of council operations

How has declaring a climate emergency changed the way your council is responding to climate change?

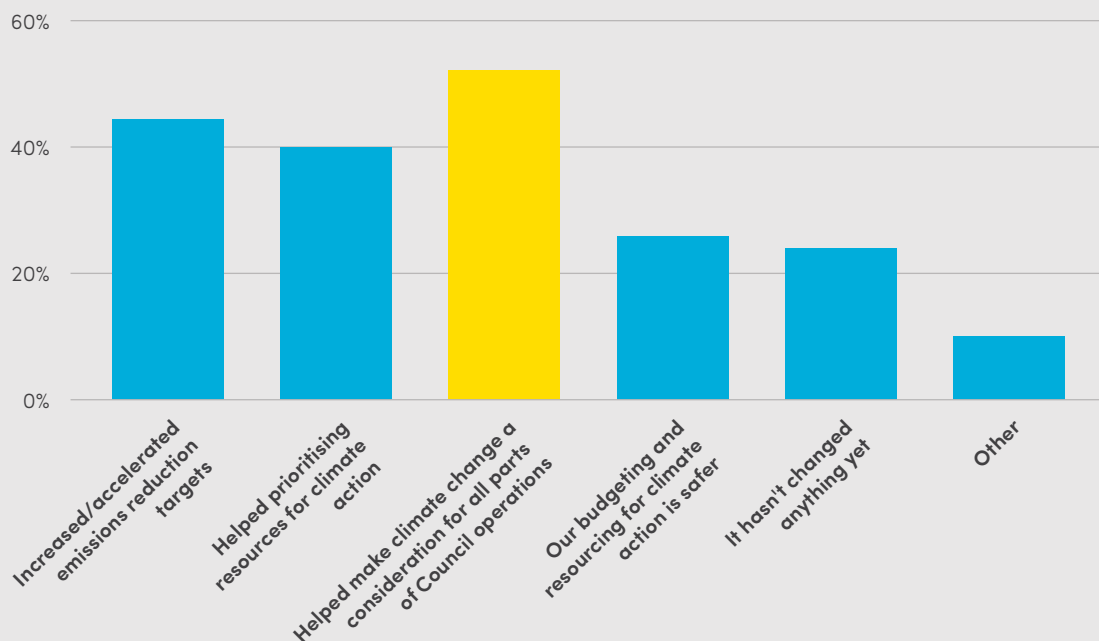
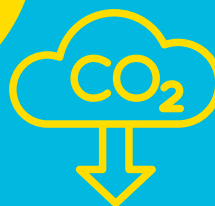


Figure 21

“ CPP helped to introduce climate related issues to council which in turn has contributed to successful endorsement of Council’s Climate Emergency Response Plan.”

Mayor Ross Ebbels, Borough of Queenscliffe

44%



**of councils said
that declaring a climate
emergency played a role
in accelerating emissions
reduction targets**

Net zero emissions

Council emissions

- > Over half (55%) of the councils who completed the survey said that they have a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for council operations.
- > Of the 25% of councils that said they have a net zero emissions target, **74% of those targets have committed council to net zero by 2030 or earlier.**
- > 71% of members have reduced their operational greenhouse gas emissions in the previous two years.
- > In order to reduce emissions, 93% of councils are focusing on improving the environmental performance of their facilities.

“ I used examples of other local governments with net zero 2030 targets to encourage our Councillors to adopt net zero 2030. It was a great way to normalise it and help them feel comfortable.”

Katie Biggs, Sustainability Planning Officer
- Augusta Margaret River

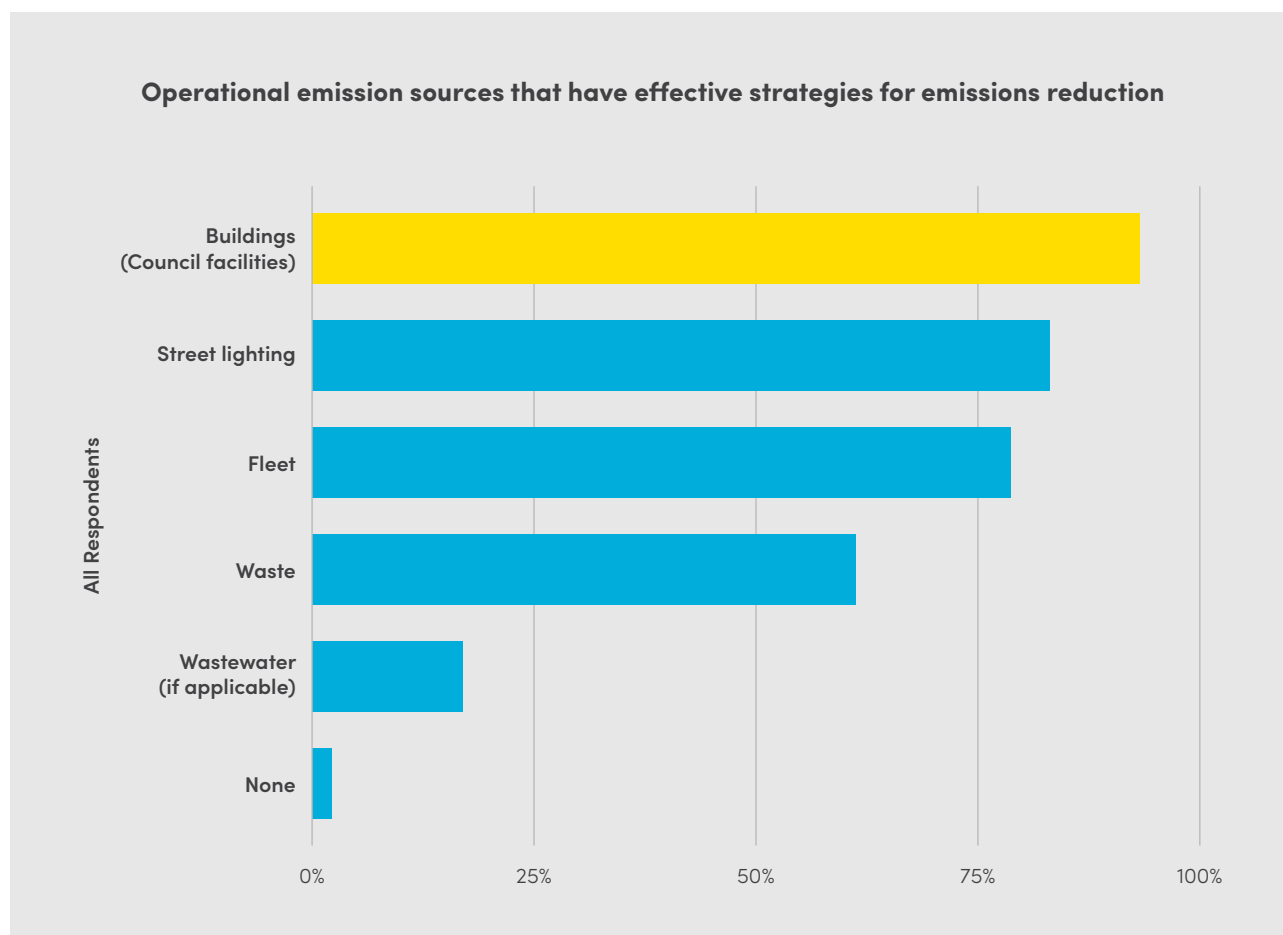


Figure 22

Community emissions

- > 27% of councils said they have a community-wide greenhouse gas target and 15% of councils said they have a net zero target. Of the councils who have a community-wide net zero target, 71% have committed to helping their community achieve it by the year 2040.
- > The specific initiatives that councils said they are most commonly undertaking to help their community reduce emissions are bike paths (73%) and organic waste diversion (58%).
- > Half of the councils who responded to this survey said they are undertaking actions to improve community access to charging infrastructure.
- > Bike paths are being undertaken as a top action across capital cities, metropolitan local governments, regional and rural councils.



Read about what Wollongong City Council is doing to promote cycling.

[Read more here](#)

73% of councils are implementing bike paths to help reduce community emissions.

Table 12

Actions councils have implemented to reduce community emissions (all respondents)			
Bike paths	73%	Facilitate Environmental Upgrade Agreements (EUA)	14%
Newsletters and social communication	60%	Add strict sustainability criteria into planning processes	13%
Organic waste diversion	58%	Car-sharing schemes	13%
Urban forest or "greening" strategy	53%	Power Purchase Agreements	11%
Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	50%	Rebates for residential or commercial solar	11%
Community climate events	45%	Preferred suppliers for energy efficiency retrofits/ upgrades	8%
Fund greenhouse alliances or regional groups of councils	31%	Community battery	7%
Ride to Work, Walk to Work and regular Green Travel events	26%	Renewable energy industrial precinct	5%
Advice and advocacy for community-owned renewable energy	18%	Virtual power plant/microgrid	2%
Facilitate solar PV "bulk buy" for residents	17%	Industrial Ecology (or Symbiosis) Networks or industrial ecology projects	1%
Training, skill building and industry briefings	17%		

Figure 23: Wollongong City Council has received [international recognition as a bike city](#).



Electric vehicles

Similar to last year, this year's findings highlight a strong interest in electric vehicles. In particular, councils are most interested in investigating how to transition their government fleet and supporting community

charging infrastructure. However, in the last 12 months interest in decarbonising council waste fleets has grown considerably.

Area of investigation	2019 Sanpshot Report	2020 Sanpshot Report
Government fleet	82%	86%
Community charging infrastructure	66%	68%
Waste fleet	25%	37%
Public transportation	9%	9%
EV incentives for residents	9%	4%

Table 13

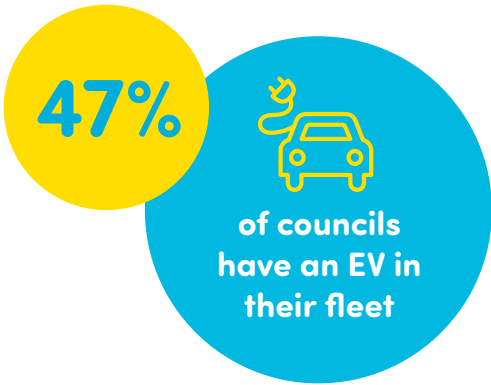
Government fleet

- > 47% of councils said they have an EV in their fleet. This is an increase from 2019's snapshot report, where 41% of councils said that they had an EV in their fleet.



The ACT Government is making giant strides in their transition to zero emission vehicles, view their 2018-2021 Action Plan here.

[Read the report](#)



Type of Local Government Area	% respondents with an EV in their corporate fleet	% respondents investigating EVs	% of respondents planning to have an EV in the next 12 months
Capital City	83%	17%	0%
Metropolitan	67%	22%	4%
Regional Town / City	39%	50%	16%
Rural	19%	62%	10%

Table 14

Waste fleet

- > **Across the board, councils are interested in reducing the emissions of their waste fleet.** 33% of capital cities, 47% of metropolitan councils, 36% of regional towns and cities and 24% of rural councils all said that they are investigating EVs in their waste fleet.
- > **6% of councils said they currently have an EV in their waste fleet.**



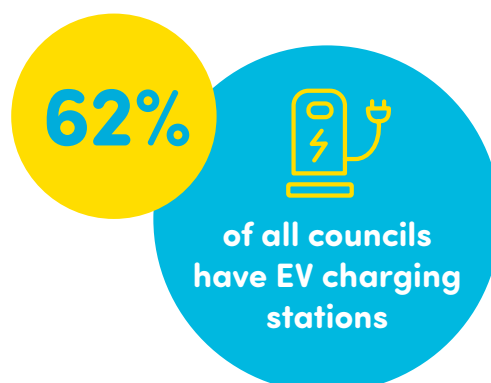
Charging infrastructure

Type of Local Government Area	Councils that have charging infrastructure
Capital City	67%
Metropolitan	76%
Regional	56%
Rural	48%

Table 15

62% of all councils said that they have charging stations for EVs. The majority of councils who do not have charging infrastructure are investigating installing it (32%).

Rural and regional councils have the lowest number of electric vehicles in their fleets and the least access to charging infrastructure. Both types of councils strongly supported the introduction of market based instruments and incentives by state and federal governments to accelerate the EV transition.



Hydrogen Vehicles

- > Only one council said that they have a hydrogen vehicle and only 7% said that they are investigating getting one.
- > 33% of councils who said they do not intend on having a hydrogen vehicle, while 59% of councils said they would like to learn more about them.

Renewable energy targets

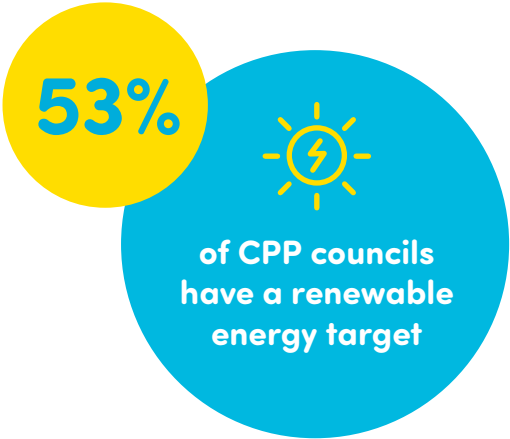
Council operations

7 CPP members have achieved 100% renewable energy and over half (53%) of CPP councils have a renewable energy target. 22% of councils said they are investigating having a renewable energy target.

One in four councils (26%) have committed to achieving 100% renewable energy and almost all of these targets (98%) are by the year 2030.

Community

17% of respondents said that their council does have a community renewable energy target and 35% of councils said they are investigating it.



Number of councils with a renewable energy target		
Target Year	Council operations	Community
2020-2030	49	6
2031-2040	1	3
2041-2050	0	1

Table 16

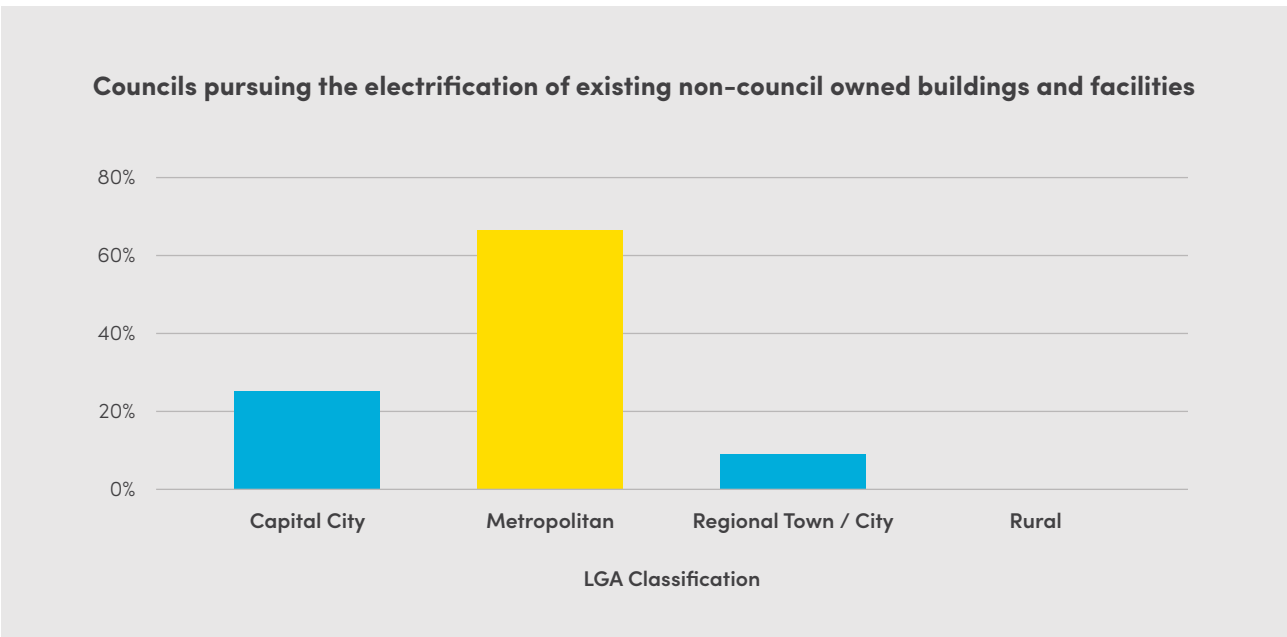


Figure 24

PPAs & Renewable Energy Zones

35% of councils who responded to the survey said that they purchase renewable energy through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

56% of CPP's members in Victoria said that they purchase renewable energy through a PPA. This is predominantly due to the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), where 46 councils across the state are working together to source renewable energy. Read more [here](#).


The proportion of CPP members who have signed up to a PPA will continue to increase rapidly over the next reporting period. A significant number of Victorian councils that are participating in VECO have joined the CPP since the 2020 feedback survey deadline. It has also since been announced that fifty-one local governments in WA could make the switch to source 100 per cent renewable energy. Read more [here](#).

57% of CPP members said they were either actively seeking a PPA or investigating options and feasibility.

Just 4% of CPP members said they are already in a designated Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) while 6% of survey respondents said that they are being considered for one. Scope exists for CPP to consider ways to assist councils in playing a role in the designation or development of a REZ, illustrated by the 65% of councils who noted they are not currently playing any role.

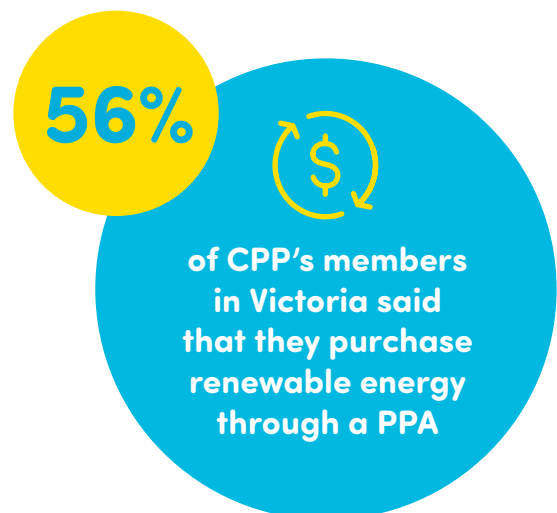
CPP Members purchasing renewable energy through a PPA (as of August 2021)		
LGA Type	Number	%
Capital City	3	50%
Metropolitan	28	64%
Regional Town / City	12	18%
Rural	5	24%
Region	Number	%
QLD	0	0%
NSW	22	39%
ACT	0	0%
VIC	14	56%
TAS	1	17%
SA	1	11%
NT	1	50%
WA	1	4%

Table 17



What are the benefits of VECO?

[Find out more here](#)



Building electrification

Council owned buildings

9% of councils said that they had developed a policy to pursue the electrification of council owned buildings, a steady increase on last year's 4% of councils. Additionally, 18% of councils said that they are in the early stages of discussing a policy.

Non-council owned buildings

Existing buildings

Only 3% of councils have developed a policy to pursue the electrification of non-council owned buildings and facilities, whilst 6% are in early discussions.

Of the councils who either already have an electrification policy or are in early discussions about having one, the vast majority are metropolitan local governments (67%). No rural councils said that they are pursuing electrification of existing buildings.

New buildings

Only 3% of respondents said that they have developed a policy to do this while 12% are in early discussions.

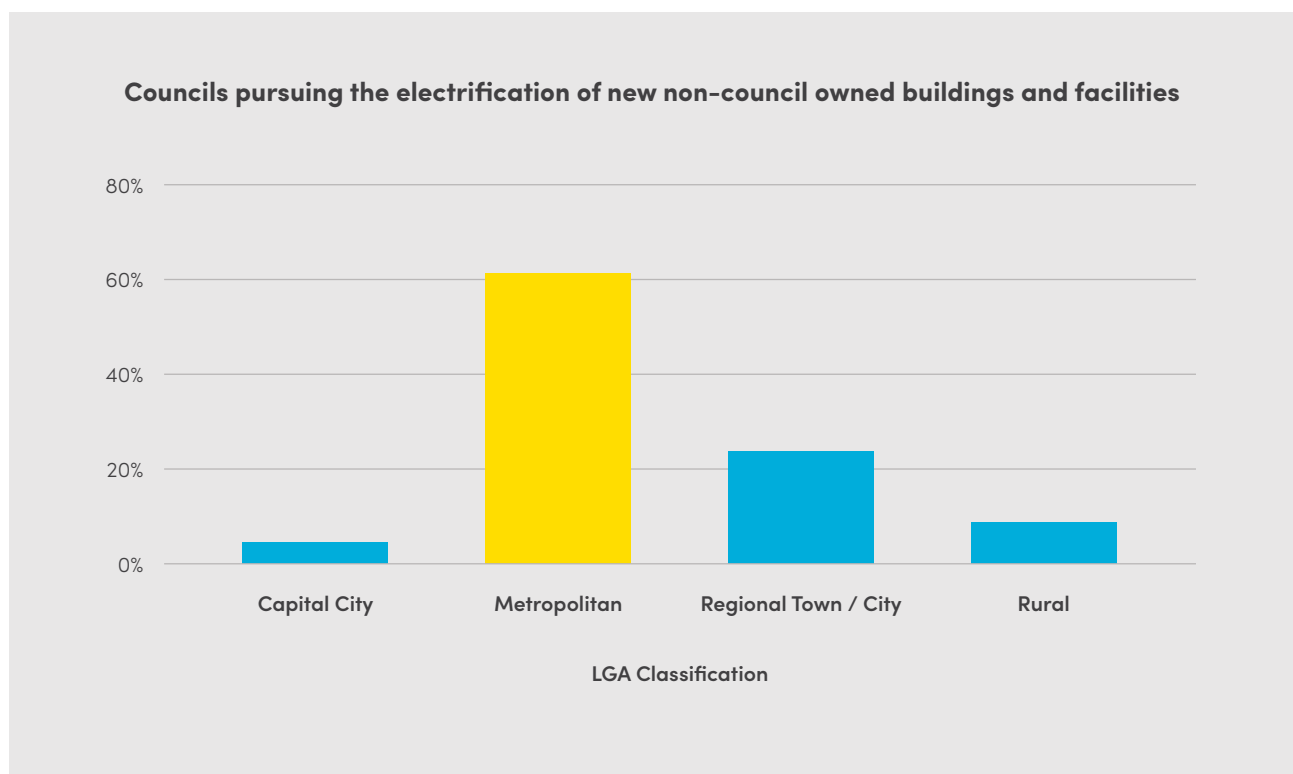


Figure 25

Adaptation

Only 18% of councils said that they are prepared to respond to the impacts of climate change.

Additionally, councils require significant support conducting climate risk assessments. This is demonstrated by the fact that **7% of councils said they have estimated the cost of climate impacts on their community in the past five years.**



Climate costs and risks to council

Read this report by the Climate Council, [Neighbourhood issue: Climate costs risks to councils](#)

Just transition

Whilst many councils are taking promising steps towards a zero emissions future, many still require support in developing plans to guide their transformation. This is illustrated by the fact that **9% of councils who responded to our survey said that they have a plan for a just transition to a low carbon local economy.**

The need for programs such as CPP, is reinforced by the amount of councils who don't yet have a plan for a just transition to a low carbon local economy.

Do CPP member councils have a just transition to a low carbon local economy?

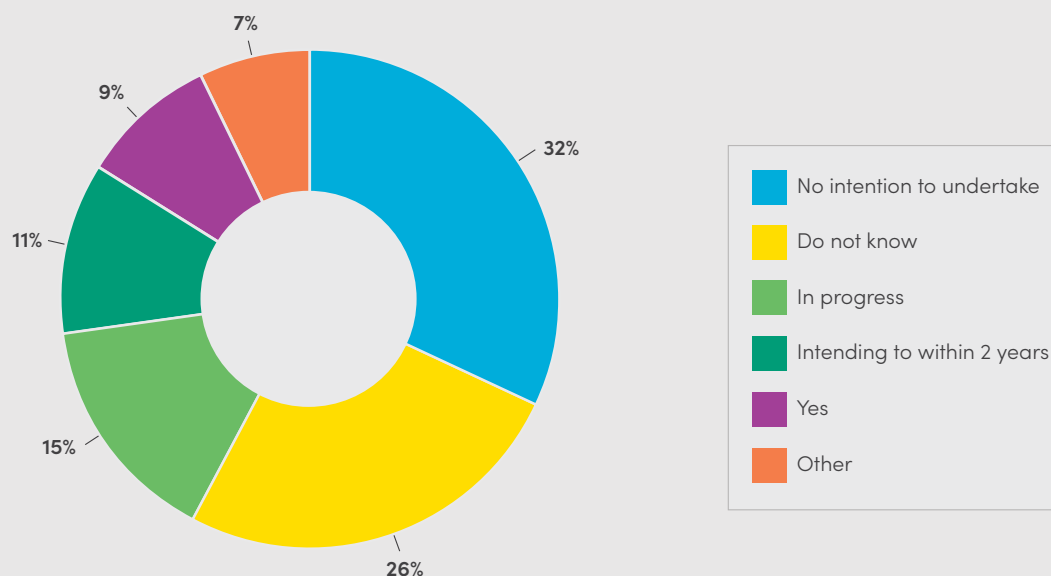


Figure 26

Pledge Initiatives: Case Studies

Category: Renewable Energy



Capitalising on Renewable Energy

The City of Cockburn has installed over 1.5 megawatts of Solar Photovoltaic infrastructure directly on its community buildings including a massive 1MW system on its Aquatic & Recreational Centre (ARC) made up of 3,592 solar panels, generating approximately 48 per cent of the ARC's annual power usage. [1.5MW of solar is enough to power around 450 homes.](#)

Read more [here](#).

Rooftop Solar Power Purchase Agreement

Blacktown City Council has committed to achieving net-zero emissions in council operations from 2021, as well as 100% renewable electricity by 2025. These aims are being pursued through projects such as the introduction of a retail Power Purchase Agreement, and the completion of a behind-the-meter rooftop Power Purchase Agreement. The rooftop PPA alone is expected to save Council almost \$190,000 in annual electricity costs and offset approximately 1GWh of electricity use per year, equating to a reduction of approximately 800 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually.



Figure 27: The City of Cockburn's Aquatic & Recreational Centre.

Category: Energy Efficiency



Energy Audit and Implementation

Northern Beaches Council has audited the energy efficiency of its 23 most energy-consuming sites. Council has implemented 19 projects based on the findings of these audits. These include 7 solar PV installations, 10 LED Lighting upgrades, 1 HVAC upgrade and 1 variable speed drive pool pump upgrade. Council is improving and promoting awareness for energy efficiency and renewable electricity by implementing these upgrades across assets with frequent visitation from the community, such as libraries, childcare centres and aquatic centres. These projects, supporting council's switch to 100% renewable energy in January 2021, have contributed to reducing Northern Beaches corporate emissions by approximately 80% each year.

LED Street Lighting

To cut emissions and save costs, Brighton Council replaced 1096 streetlights with energy efficient LED lights. It is estimated that the initiative will reduce their electricity bill by \$90,000 - \$100,000 per annum - paying for the project cost over seven years. In the years since council switched from 80W mercury vapour to more energy efficient LEDs, it has more than halved Brighton's electricity usage for street-lighting.

Read more [here](#).

Category: Sustainable Transport



Zero Emissions Transition Fleet

The ACT is taking significant strides to transition the entire ACT Government fleet to zero emission vehicles and has many leading initiatives, including investing in 20 hydrogen vehicles and the first public hydrogen refuelling station in Australia, electric truck and bus trials, a plan to transition the bus fleet to zero emissions vehicles and a plan to roll out 50 electric vehicle fast chargers by June 2022.

Read more [here](#).



Figure 28: The ACT Government's electric bus fleet.



Moreland Open Streets

Moreland City Council, in partnership with Bicycle Network and Brunswick East Primary School, recently trialled the first timed street closure to cars outside school gates in Australia, called Open Streets. Modelled off the 'School Streets' initiative in the UK, the trial involved a street closure to motorised traffic during drop-off and pick-up times over three days outside the school gates, 'opening' the street exclusively to sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, scooting and cycling. Moreland is currently conducting further trials and looking at how to encourage and normalise safe, fun and healthy travel. Moreland is currently conducting further trials and looking at how to encourage and normalise safe, fun and healthy travel.

Read more [here](#).



Figure 29: The 'Moreland Open Streets Initiative' closed off a section of road to vehicles, prioritising student safety and wellbeing.

Category: Work Together & Influence



Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO)

Darebin City Council led the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) project that coordinated 46 councils to make the switch to renewable energy under one long-term contract. It is the largest emissions reduction project ever undertaken by local government in Australia and demonstrates that large-scale collaboration is possible to transition to a renewable energy future and address climate change. As of July 1, 2021, participating councils are being powered by 100% renewable energy – procuring 240GWh of electricity. That's equivalent to powering 48,000 households.



Figure 30: Darebin City Council coordinated 46 councils to make the switch to renewable energy.



Community-Led Climate Emergency Response Plan

The Borough of Queenscliffe (VIC) committed to engaging with the Queenscliffe Climate Action Group (QCAG), collaborating intensively to co-develop council's Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP). Together, they have come up with a long term plan to transition to a Zero Carbon Community by 2031. Council and QCAG were successful in gaining the commitment of 16 community groups and organisations who will help with implementing identified actions. Collaboration with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners ensured the council could listen to and recognise the importance of indigenous knowledge whilst developing the plan. It has the support of the community because of the extensive role they played in designing it.

Read more [here](#).



Figure 31: Queenscliffe (VIC).

Going Forward

The annual survey is an essential part of our continuous program development and improvement. Using insights from our 2019 and 2020 reporting surveys, the Cities Power Partnership will work to:



Continuously adapt and grow program offerings to align with the needs of our members



Provide greater access to media training for elected officials and climate change communication support to officers



Ramp up climate ambition within local governments across Australia through celebrating successes of our members and providing access to expert knowledge



Improve member council access to resources and facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration through initiatives like Council Connect and working groups



Advocate for greater support and assistance from other tiers of government to help councils mitigate and plan for climate risks



Explore creative and innovative solutions to accelerate and scale local government climate action

Cities Power Partnership

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