

Community Engagement Report

Developing a new housing strategy for Maroondah
February 2016







**Working towards an attractive,
thriving and well built community**

Prelude

Council is developing a new housing strategy to establish future policy directions and guide future residential development.

The second stage of the project has involved a range of community engagement activities to seek the views of key stakeholders and the general community on housing needs, services and facilities, housing issues and ways to address these issues. This report provides a summary of the findings from this stage of the project.

The community and stakeholder views and ideas highlighted in this report will ultimately help Council understand and plan for the housing needs of the community, informing a new strategy for housing in Maroondah that will be developed from February to April 2015.



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Why a housing strategy?

The landscape of Maroondah and the challenges we face today have changed dramatically since the last Housing Strategy was developed. The existing Maroondah Municipal Housing Strategy was adopted in 1997 and has been successful in directing the location of residential developments in the municipality over that period. It is now time for an update.

A variety of factors have led to a review and update of the strategy:

- Significant development projects have made Maroondah a more accessible and desirable place to live and work
- We are growing older and the number of people living in a household is becoming smaller
- Housing has become more expensive making it difficult for some people to remain in the municipality
- There is a need to respond to housing issues that were identified in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*, the new long-term community vision for the municipality.

Over the next 25 years, population growth and shifting demographic patterns in Maroondah are projected to require an additional 15,000 dwellings by the year 2040.

The first stage of the project from March to August 2015 involved development of a number of background studies which that provide an overview of housing in Maroondah.

Through the findings of this research Council identified three key future housing challenges in Maroondah:

- Need for greater housing choice
- Affordability of housing
- Quality of the places we live

The second stage of the project from September to December 2015 involved seeking general community and stakeholder input on housing needs, housing issues, how these issues can be addressed, and community infrastructure and services. The community were engaged through a mixture of online, face-to-face and focus group activities. This report provides a summary of the findings from this stage of the project.

The community and stakeholder views and ideas highlighted in this report will ultimately help Council understand and plan for the housing needs of the community, and inform a new strategy for housing in Maroondah as part of the third stage of the project from January to March 2015.

About Maroondah

Our location, facilities and environment

The City sits at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges and on the doorstep of the Yarra Valley wine and produce region. Maroondah has the strategic advantage of being located at the north-eastern junction of the Eastern Freeway-EastLink corridor. There are two train lines and a large number of bus routes linking the City with other regions.

The City of Maroondah covers a land area of 61.4 square kilometres in Melbourne's outer east, 22 kilometres from the central business district. The City of Maroondah includes the suburbs of Bayswater North, Croydon, Croydon Hills, Croydon North, Croydon South, Heathmont, Kilsyth South, Ringwood, Ringwood East, Ringwood North and Warranwood.

Maroondah is well known for its leafy streets, broad areas of open space, bushland reserves, parks and playgrounds. Sustainable transport links include on-road cycling paths and shared path links to the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, the EastLink Trail, Taralla Creek Trail and the Dandenong Creek Trail.

The City hosts a regional health precinct including a major public hospital and a large private hospital, educational facilities that cater from early childhood learning to tertiary level, two libraries, arts and cultural centres, an art gallery and a range of community centres.

Maroondah is also home to a range of world-class sporting facilities including Aquanation, a regional recreation and leisure facility incorporating the State Diving Centre.



Our community

The area is a substantially developed municipality, with an estimated population of 111,223 residents. The population is forecast to grow by 18% over the next 20 years to 133,526 in 2036. Maroondah's age structure (based on Census 2011) demonstrates that 22.7% of the population was aged between 0 and 17 years, and 20.3% were aged 60 years and over. The largest increase by age group over the next 20 years will be in the 70 to 74 age group. It is expected that over the period 2011-2026, there will be a 44% increase in population of retirement aged persons living in Maroondah.

Cultural diversity is increasing with the highest numbers of recent overseas immigrants arriving from Burma, India and China. There is a strong sense of community participation within Maroondah embodied by a large number of committed volunteers.

A higher number of residents in Maroondah have a tertiary qualification and a consistently lower overall level of unemployment compared with Metropolitan Melbourne. There are a smaller proportion of high income households and also a lower proportion of low income households.

Our households

There are an estimated 43,663 households in Maroondah in 2016 with this number forecast to increase to 53,045 households by 2036, although household size is expected to decrease over this period.

Couples with children are the predominant type of household in Maroondah representing a similar proportion to Metropolitan Melbourne. There are a higher proportion of lone person households and couples without children in Maroondah compared to Metropolitan Melbourne. Over the next 20 years, it is expected that lone person and couple family without children households will contribute to the majority of extra households in Maroondah.

Current population density in Maroondah stands at 18.12 persons per hectare, although this varies between suburbs from a low of 9.06 persons per hectare in Kilsyth South to a high of 21.71 persons per hectare in Croydon Hills. The overall density is expected to increase over the next 20 years with an increase in townhouse and apartment.

Our economy

Over 9,000 businesses operate within the City providing employment for almost 37,000 people. The largest industry employers are the manufacturing, retail trade and health care sectors.

The Bayswater North Employment Precinct is a regional economic hub where many national and international firms have established their headquarters. Maroondah also has major retail centres in Croydon and Ringwood, and a further 21 neighbourhood shopping centres throughout the municipality.



How did we seek input?

From October to December 2015, Council focused on creating a dialogue with the local community and key stakeholders on a range of topics including:

- Current and future housing needs
- Housing issues and how they can be addressed
- Priority community infrastructure and services
- A 'greening the greyfields' pilot project (being undertaken in conjunction with Swinburne University)

Input was sought through community open house events, stakeholder focus groups and an online survey. The purpose of these activities was to create a platform to engage and educate the broader community on housing issues impacting Maroondah; seek their input on what is important to them; and identify what options are preferred to address these issues.

Community Open House Events

Open house engagement events were run over the first two weekends in November 2015 in both Ringwood and Croydon. Community members were encouraged to 'drop-in' and have their say on: housing issues and how they can be addressed, priority community infrastructure and services, and a 'greening the greyfields' pilot project.

For the housing issues and options activity, participants were presented with a survey in the form of a letter in which they had the opportunity to prioritise their top three housing issues facing the City of Maroondah and their top three ways to address these issues. Demographic information was also collected.

For the community infrastructure and services activity, community members were also asked how far they would prefer to travel from home to access certain amenities. From a list of 24 facilities, participants were able to rank their top 3 into a travel time of 5, 10 or 20 minutes from home. Demographic information was also collected.

Community members were also encouraged to learn more about the 'greening the greyfields' pilot project being undertaken in conjunction with Swinburne University. This Federal Government funded project aims to promote sustainable housing regeneration in the middle suburbs through strategic redevelopment of identified precincts.

The Croydon open house event on Sunday 8 November formed part of Council's Cafe Consult marquee at the annual Maroondah Festival. Housing strategy activities comprised three of the eight Council-wide engagement activities in the marquee. By having their say on a range of community engagement activities, visitors to this marquee could 'earn' a free coffee or cold drink. At this event, a total of 197 community members had their say on housing issues and how they can be addressed, 104 community members had their say on community infrastructure and services, and 63 community members were engaged in discussions on the greening the greyfields' pilot project.

The Ringwood open house event was held on 13-14 November at Realm in the new Ringwood Town Square adjacent to Eastland. A 'pop-up' lounge room was setup in the Square with beanbags and coffee tables to create interest and engage community members on housing issues and how they could be addressed. Community members could 'earn' a free coffee or cold drink by participating in at least two of the three housing strategy activities. At this event, a total of 205 community members had their say on housing issues and how they can be addressed, 176 community members had their say on community infrastructure and services, and over 80 community members were engaged in discussions on the 'greening the greyfields' pilot project.



Housing Strategy engagement at the Cafe Consult tent as part of the 2015 Maroondah Festival



Housing Strategy engagement in the Ringwood Town Square in November 2015

Stakeholder Focus Groups

Three focus groups were held during October 2015 at Maroondah Federation Estate in Ringwood with developers, service providers, businesses, environmental groups and community groups involved. Held over two hours, the purpose of these focus groups was to seek stakeholder input and suggestions regarding housing issues and policy responses for Maroondah over the next 25 years. These sessions also represented an opportunity to promote the work already undertaken by Council and explore ideas for ongoing stakeholder collaboration in developing and implementing a new housing strategy. A total of 31 representatives from 24 organisations/groups attended these sessions.



Housing Strategy Focus Groups held at Maroondah Federation Estate in October 2015

Online Survey

An online survey was developed to seek community views and aspirations on current and future housing needs in Maroondah. The interactive and visual survey sought community members to rank their top five current housing needs and their top five future housing needs from a predefined list of nine options. Demographic information of participants was also collected. The interactive online survey was live from 27 October until 30 November 2015 and accessed via Council's website or a project specific website address. A total of 115 community members participated in this online survey.

What were the key findings?

Background research undertaken during the first stage of this housing strategy identified that for Maroondah to be a liveable community in the future, the Housing Strategy will need to address factors associated with affordability, diversity and infrastructure.

This report provides details on the range of community views arising from the program of engagement activities aimed at understanding community needs (current and future needs survey), amenity preferences (services and facilities survey) and policy priorities (issues and policy options survey) relating to these liveability drivers of affordability, diversity and infrastructure.

A summary of key findings arising from the community engagement process can be found below under the headings of these liveability drivers.

Affordability

Community priority issues and policy responses

The community prominently identified issues associated with affordability as key priorities as part of the issues and policy options survey. The perceived lack of both affordable and social housing in Maroondah was the third most prominent housing issue identified by respondents. Community members from younger age groups were much more likely to see this as an issue compared with residents from older age cohorts. The issue was most keenly felt by those residents who are currently renting, those living in apartments, those who identify as single and 'other lifestyles' – which includes single parents with dependents

Although less popular, a lack of crisis accommodation was an affordability issue that resonated strongly with young people aged 12-17 years and residents living in Ringwood East and Heathmont. Whilst many respondents didn't think crisis accommodation was currently an issue in Maroondah, they indicated that they would be significantly concerned if they were presented with facts illustrating an actual shortage.

In terms of dealing with these affordability issues, advocating for more affordable and social housing was considered the second most highly ranked policy response in this survey. It was a particular priority for younger survey participants aged 12 to 34, those who are single and those who are renting.

Also linked to affordability was the policy response to provide more one or two bedroom dwellings. This policy response was particularly popular with respondents living in apartments, young people aged 12-17 years, seniors aged over 70 years, those currently renting and respondents identifying as single.

The suggestion that Council could provide planning concessions for developments that address local needs, such as affordable and social housing, was most popular with middle years residents aged 35-49 years, those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years and those living in and around Croydon. It was interesting to note that this response was clearly more popular with respondents who currently live in Maroondah compared with those who live outside the municipality.

Key stakeholder priority issues and policy responses

Affordability was a prominent topic as part of the stakeholder focus group discussions. Local stakeholders identified that there is a need to promote the role and affordability of the rental sector with higher levels of Governments and consider other international models of housing where the rental sector is more viable and affordable. They felt that increasing the quantity of the community and social housing is highly important and urgent.

One option suggested was to relax housing development controls where there is a social housing gain. Local stakeholders also suggested that a register of local affordable housing solution solutions (i.e. spare room in large house) could be established for singles or people in crisis. Another suggestion was to meet the demand for transitional housing through 'non-traditional' approaches to housing provision such as locating a caravan park in Maroondah, encouraging shared facilities such as laundries and exploring the application of the 'Tiny House' movement in Maroondah.

Current and future housing needs

The current and future needs survey also confirmed that affordability is seen as a current priority by community members, as well as a future priority. Price and affordability was the third highest ranked current housing need and the third highest ranked future housing need by respondents.

Price and affordability was most expressed as a current need by respondents aged 25-34 years, those living in townhouses/units, those currently renting, youth and young adults aged 12-24, and those who have moved into Maroondah over the past year.

As a future need, price and affordability was most important to similar population cohorts - residents who have just moved into Maroondah in the past 12 months, those living in townhouses and unit, and respondents who are currently renting.

Diversity

Community priority issues and policy responses

Issues related to diversity were also strongly identified by respondents to the issues and policy options survey. A key factor related to housing diversity is the ageing of Maroondah's population, which was the fifth most prominent issue identified by community members undertaking the issue and policy options survey. Not surprisingly, the issue was most commonly identified by seniors aged 60-69 years.

Whilst the lack of one and two bedroom dwellings was not rated as prominently as other issues, it was seen as an important by community members who live in an apartment, those aged 50-59 years, those who are currently renting, and those identifying as single and young adults aged 18-24 years.

A popular policy response linked to this diversity issue was to encourage more adaptable and accessible homes. This policy response was most commonly identified by respondents living in apartments, respondents identifying as single and interestingly, by young adults aged 18-24 years. It was also important for residents aged over 50 years.

The policy response of providing more one or two bedroom dwellings was most popular with respondents that are living in apartments, young people aged 12-17 years, seniors aged over 70 years, those currently renting and respondents identifying as single.

The concept of providing planning concessions for developments that address local needs, including more diverse housing options, was clearly more popular with respondents who currently live in Maroondah compared with those who live outside the municipality.

Key stakeholder priority issues and policy responses

Issues of housing diversity were discussed as part of the stakeholder focus groups. Local stakeholders identified that housing diversity is not just about population ageing but more about a diversity of needs. As such, housing needs to be more flexible and adaptable for the different needs of families over time. It was felt that Maroondah needs a better mix of housing – low and medium density, owner occupied, private and public rental. Stakeholders also suggested that encouragement and support should be given for people to age in place as their circumstances change so they can remain in communities and environments that are familiar.

Some suggested policy responses include encouraging the building of independent accommodation for children or the elderly. It was also suggested that Council could act as a broker for temporary and portable accommodation located in backyards for aged persons, people with a temporary housing crisis or for young adults or people with a disability.

Current and future housing needs

A range of housing needs identified by community members in the current and future needs survey are linked to diversity.

Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages was ranked more highly as future need compared with a current need by a majority of respondents. As a current need, this was most expressed by respondents aged 25-34 years, those who have recently moved into Maroondah over the past year and respondents identifying as single. This perhaps reflects the needs of this age and lifestage cohort as they progress from single and couple households to couple households with dependents. It is less of an issue for those who are currently renting, perhaps illustrating that it is a greater consideration for those who own their home. In contrast as a future need, this was most highly identified by senior residents aged over 70 years and those aged 60-69 years – reflecting the challenges of ageing in place.

Whether the house has a large backyard was also seen as a less important future need by survey respondents in comparison to their current needs. This was a high priority current need for respondents aged 60-69 years and for couples with children – reflecting the importance of large blocks for seniors who enjoy gardening and open space, and those families seeking space for children to play.

The number of bedrooms and living areas was seen as a less important future need by survey respondents in comparison to their current needs. This was a particular current need for youth and young adults aged 12-24 years. It was also important for those renting and those living in a townhouse or unit. It was much less of a current need for respondents living in apartments, those who have just moved into Maroondah and those aged over 70 years. It was most highly rated as a future housing need by youth and young adults aged 12-24 years and respondents aged 25-34 years. Not surprisingly, it was a much lower priority future need for residents aged over 60 years and those identifying as single.

The age and condition of the house was moderately ranked as a priority for both current and future housing need. As a current housing need, it was most keenly felt by couple households and those aged 60-69 years. It was also a priority need for residents aged over 70 years, those living in apartments and those currently renting. As a future need, it was most important to couples and respondents aged 35-49 years. This may illustrate that this factor could represent a housing preference as distinct from a housing need.

Infrastructure

Community priority issues and policy responses

Infrastructure and amenity related issues were identified as less of a focus by respondents to the issues and policy responses activity. Encouraging housing in neighbourhood centres was only the eighth highest ranked policy response by community members, although it was considered particularly important by people aged 50-59 who represent the next generation of seniors in Maroondah.

The issue of ageing infrastructure was not a high priority, although it was clearly more important to those living in apartments and people who have recently moved into Maroondah.

Key stakeholder priority issues and policy responses

Infrastructure was identified as an issue for consideration by key stakeholders during focus group discussions. They felt that the development of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre presents significant opportunities for Maroondah. The Centre will provide a much wider range of services and potentially employment. Other activity centres with railway stations are also important for accessing services, however, it was viewed that many local shopping strips need renewal and may be suitable for some future housing development.

Stakeholders acknowledged that demand for new housing and recycling of older housing has implications for service providers, including Council and other agencies. Assets such as creeks, reserves and parks are likely to become increasingly valuable assets as densities increase. Roads, parking, drainage and utilities will all have to be improved as the population grows.

Current and future housing needs

The importance of infrastructure and amenity to housing need was very prominently expressed by the community. Access to public transport amenities including buses and trains was seen as the greatest overall priority in the survey for both current and future housing needs. Whilst expressed consistently by virtually every cohort, this priority as a current need was most expressed by renters, single persons and seniors over the age of 70. It was expressed most as a future need by those living in apartments and those who have recently moved to Maroondah.

Also important was the 'closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds' as the second highest overall priority for both current and future housing needs. This need was consistently expressed all population groups except those who have recently moved into Maroondah.

Preferences

The services and facilities engagement activity further confirmed that access to transport services and facilities was the community's highest priority with most respondents wanting these amenities within a 5-10 minute travel distance from their home. Retail amenities received the second highest number of responses with a considerable majority of respondents preferring to live within 10 minutes of local shopping strips and neighbourhood centres. Sporting and leisure facilities was the third highest priority with respondents willing to travel further to access large parks and aquatic and leisure centres compared with small parks.

Although less of a priority, the considerable majority of participants preferred a travel time of up to 10 minutes to access a medical facility with a GP, but were happy to travel up to 20 minutes to access a public hospital with an emergency department. Libraries were the most popular community facility in this survey with most respondents preferring to live within 10 minutes travel distance of this facility. Primary Schools (public) were identified as a higher community priority in comparison to Secondary Schools (public). The considerable majority of respondents preferred to live within 10 minutes of a Primary School (public) but most were willing to travel between 10 and 20 minutes to access a Secondary School (public).

Community views on housing issues and options

What did we do?

For the housing issues and options activity undertaken at the Ringwood and Croydon Open House events, participants were presented with a survey in the form of a letter in which they had the opportunity to prioritise their top three housing issues facing the City of Maroondah and their top three ways to address these issues.

A number of background studies and research papers during stage 1 of the project provided Council with the opportunity to identify some current and future housing issues and potential options to address these issues. A pre-defined list was provided to participants for both of these categories.

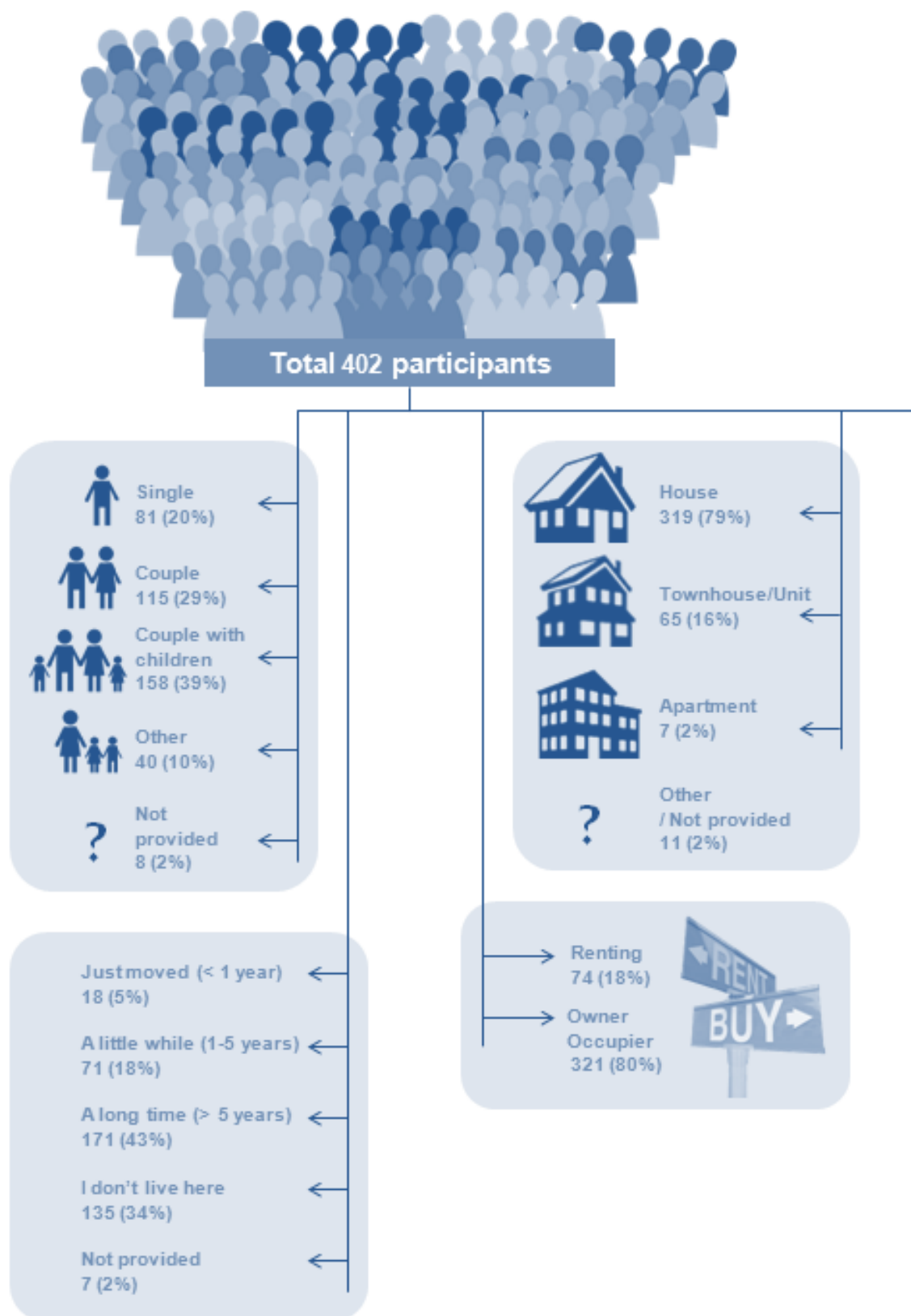
HOUSING ISSUES
Ageing population
Population growth
Lack of one and two bedroom dwellings
Lack of affordable and social housing
Balancing development and natural environment
Ageing local infrastructure
Lack of crisis accommodation
Need for more sustainable homes

WAYS TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES
Encourage more adaptable and accessible homes
Provide more one and two bedroom dwellings
Encourage high quality and innovative development
Advocate for more affordable and social housing
Encourage renewal of older housing
Encourage housing in neighbourhood centres
Planning concessions for developments that address local needs
Protect and enhance our vegetation, ridgelines and landscapes

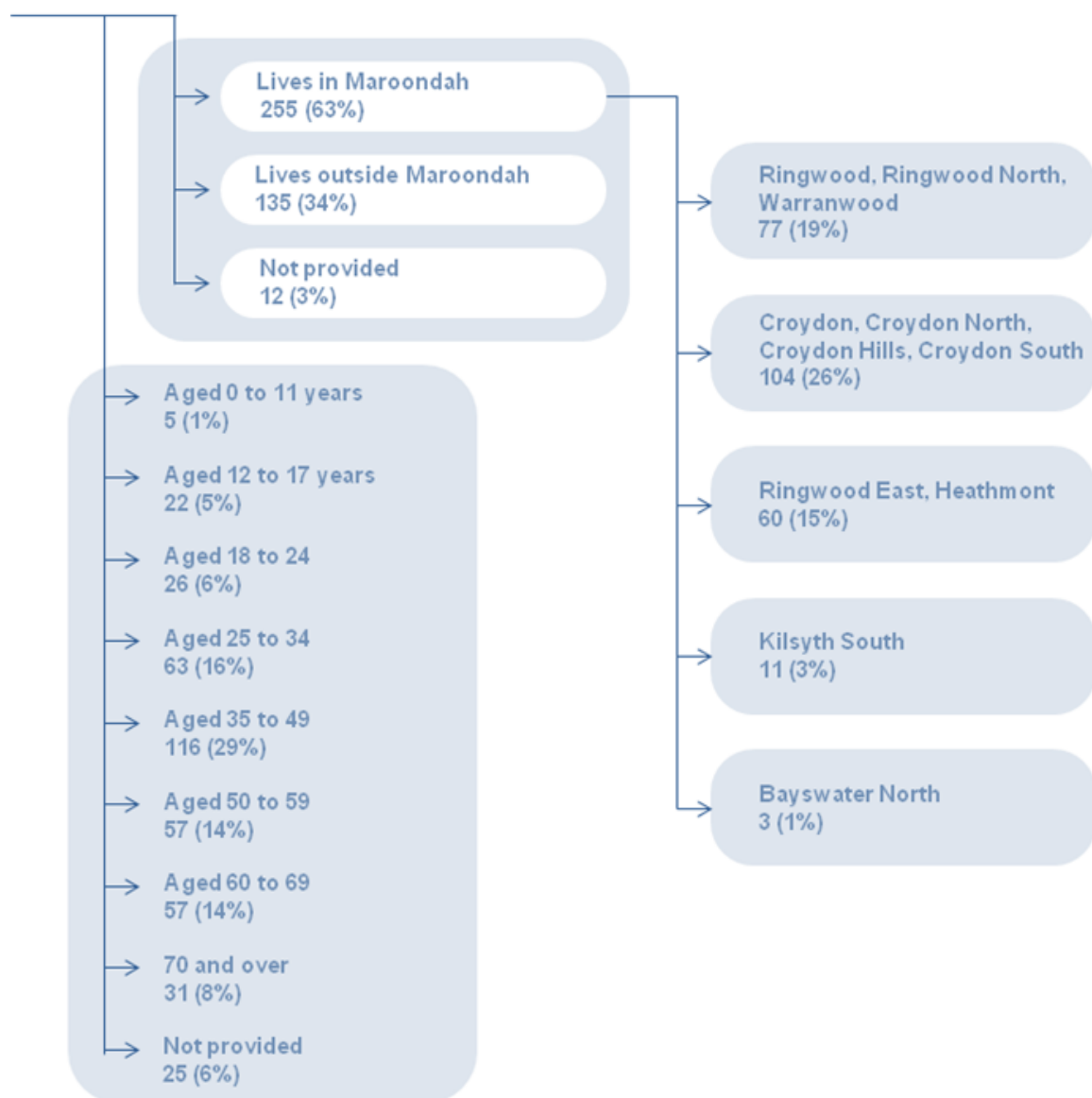
Once completed, participants were asked to post their survey response via a letterbox. Comments from participants that were not specifically related to those responses were captured on a 'fridge' noticeboard.

Who provided input?

A total of 402 community members participated in this activity. 80% of participants identified as owner occupiers, 39% were couples with children and more than 42% have lived in the municipality for more than five years.



Please note that data may not add to 100% due to rounding factors



What did people say?

Through this activity, it was identified that balancing development and the natural environment, managing population growth, and the lack of affordable and social housing are priority housing issues for Council to consider looking ahead.

Whilst the issue of balancing development and the natural environment was the highest priority issue overall, this issue was most important to participants aged 50-84 and those who have lived in Maroondah for at least 5 years. The issue of population growth was most important for participants aged between 18-49 and those over the age of 70. It was seen as much less important by those who had only recently moved into Maroondah. The lack of affordable and social housing was particularly seen as an issue for participants aged 12 to 24, those who were renting and those who identified as single.

Protecting and enhancing our vegetation, ridgelines and landscapes was identified as the highest community priority in addressing these issues. This was followed by advocacy for more affordable and social housing.

The top policy response - protecting and enhancing our vegetation, ridgelines and landscapes - was seen as a particularly important response for participants aged over 60 years, those who have lived in Maroondah for a long time and those living in either Ringwood East or Heathmont. Advocating for more affordable and social housing was considered very important for participants aged 12 to 34, those who are single and those who are renting. The concept of encourage high quality and innovative development was of strongly supported by participants aged 25 to 49, those identifying as couples with children and those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years.



Housing Strategy engagement at the Ringwood Town Square in November 2015

Tell me more...

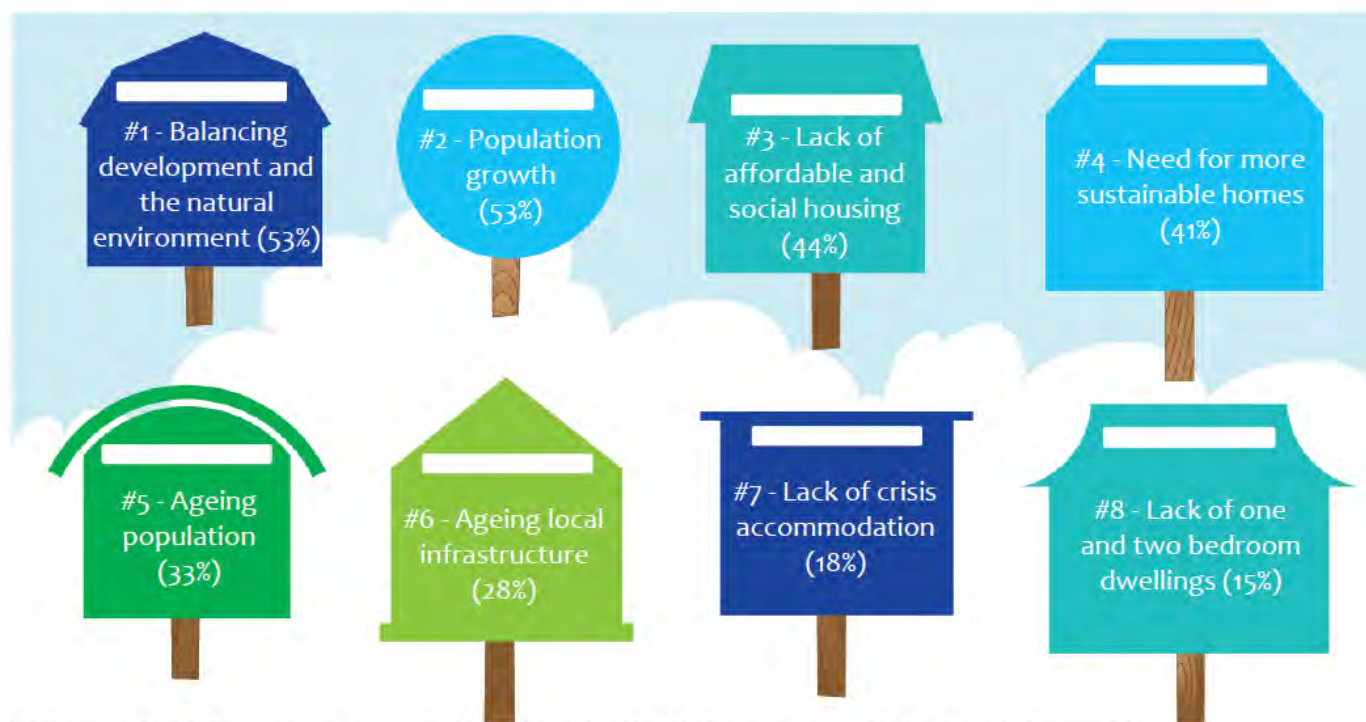
The following pages provide more detailed findings of participant input on housing issues and how they may be addressed (responses).

Understanding how information is graphically presented for each issue and response...

- At the top of each graphic in the letterbox, the average percentage of all participants who chose this issue or response as one of their top three is shown.
- Demographic groups of participants that chose this issue or response less often than the average is shown by bars to the left of the letterbox post.
- Demographic groups of participants that chose this issue or response more often than the average is shown by bars to the right of the letterbox post.

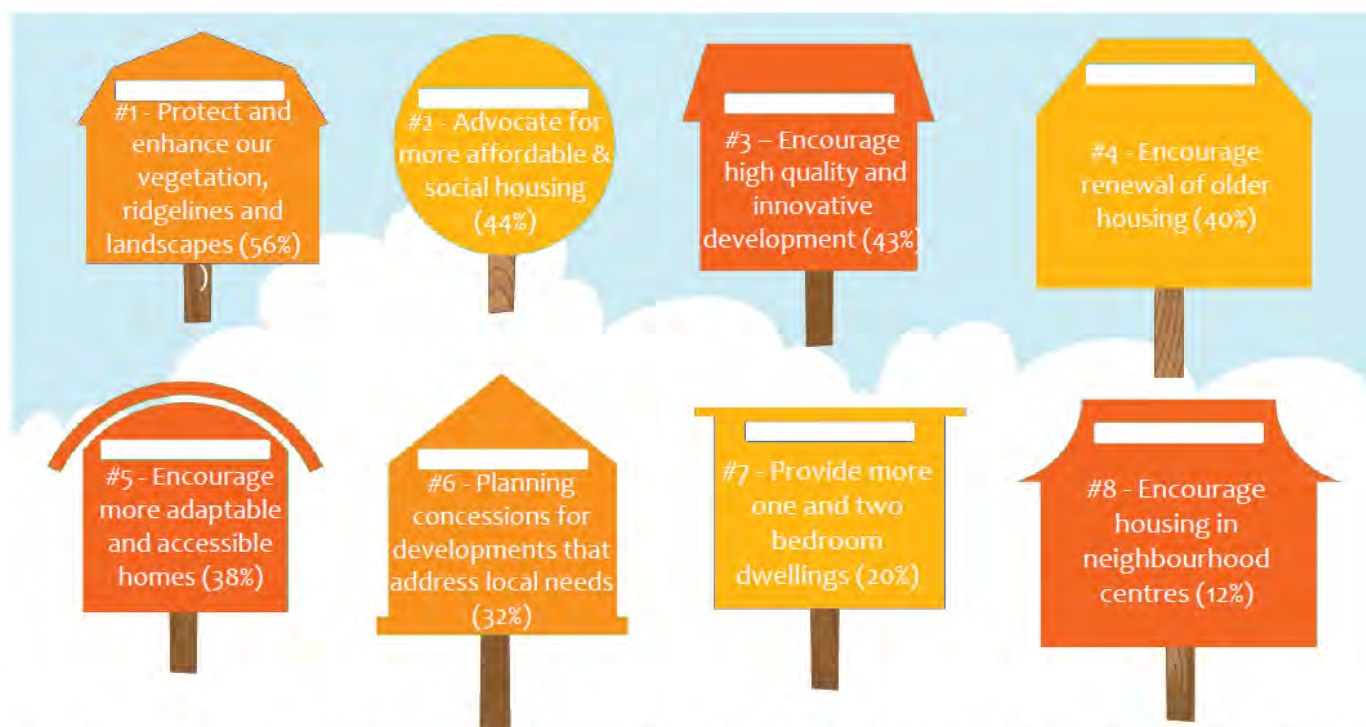
There is also a short commentary underneath explaining which demographic groups differ most significantly from the average percentage.

Summary of priority housing issues



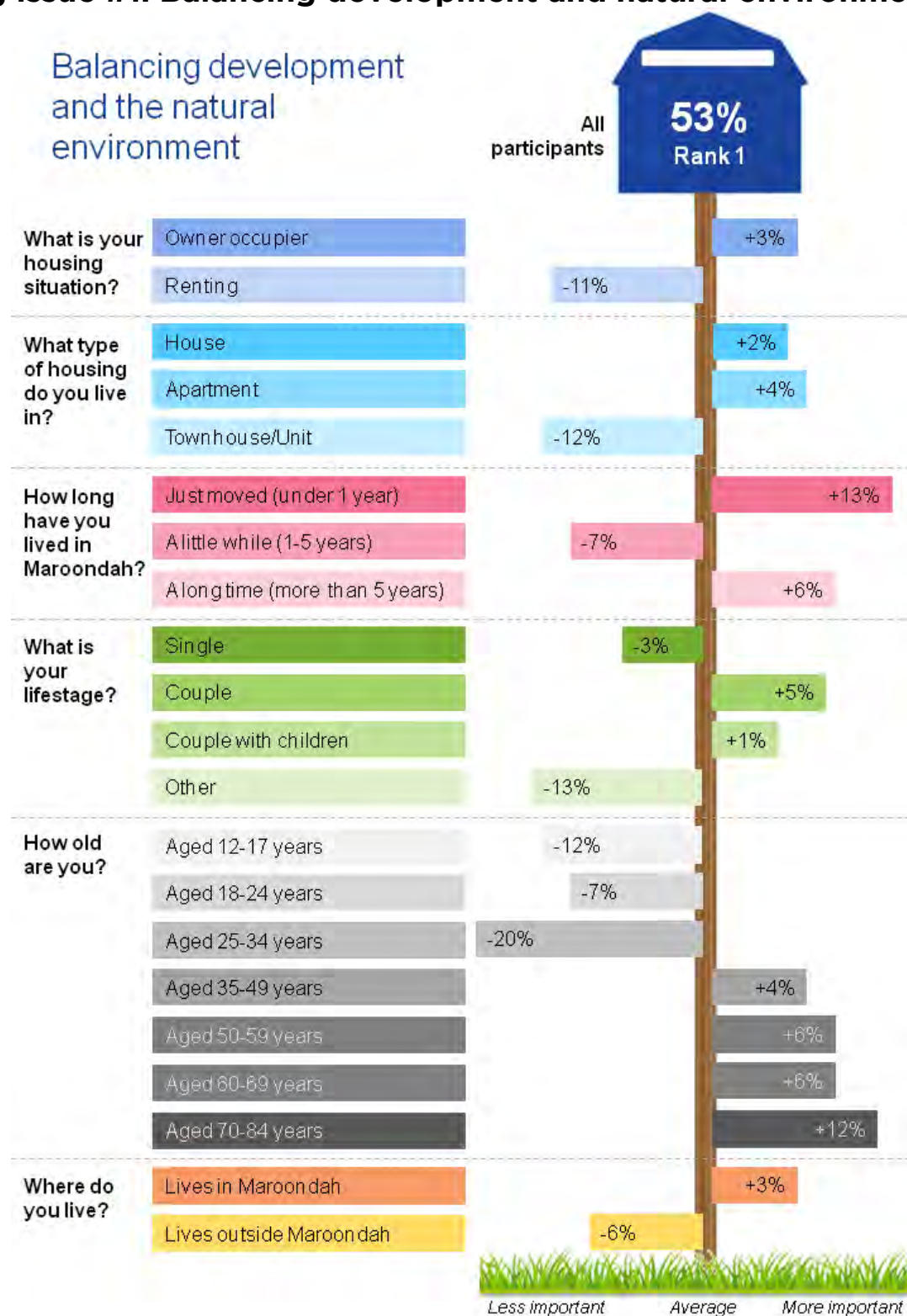
**Note percentage is the number of respondents who identified that the issue was one of the top three in Maroondah*

Summary of priority responses to address these issues



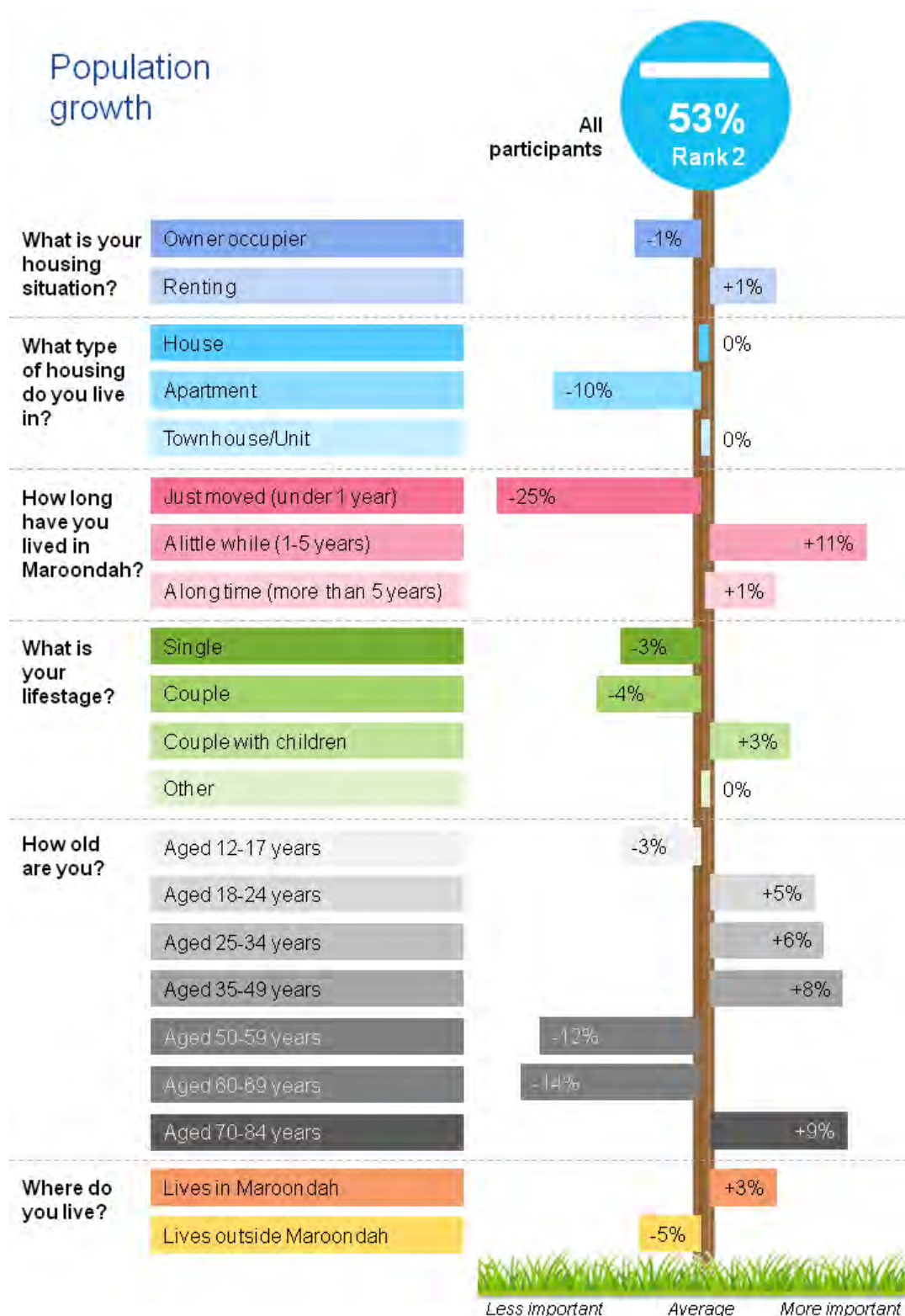
**Note percentage is the number of respondents who identified a response as one of the top three ways to address housing issues in Maroondah*

Housing issue #1: Balancing development and natural environment



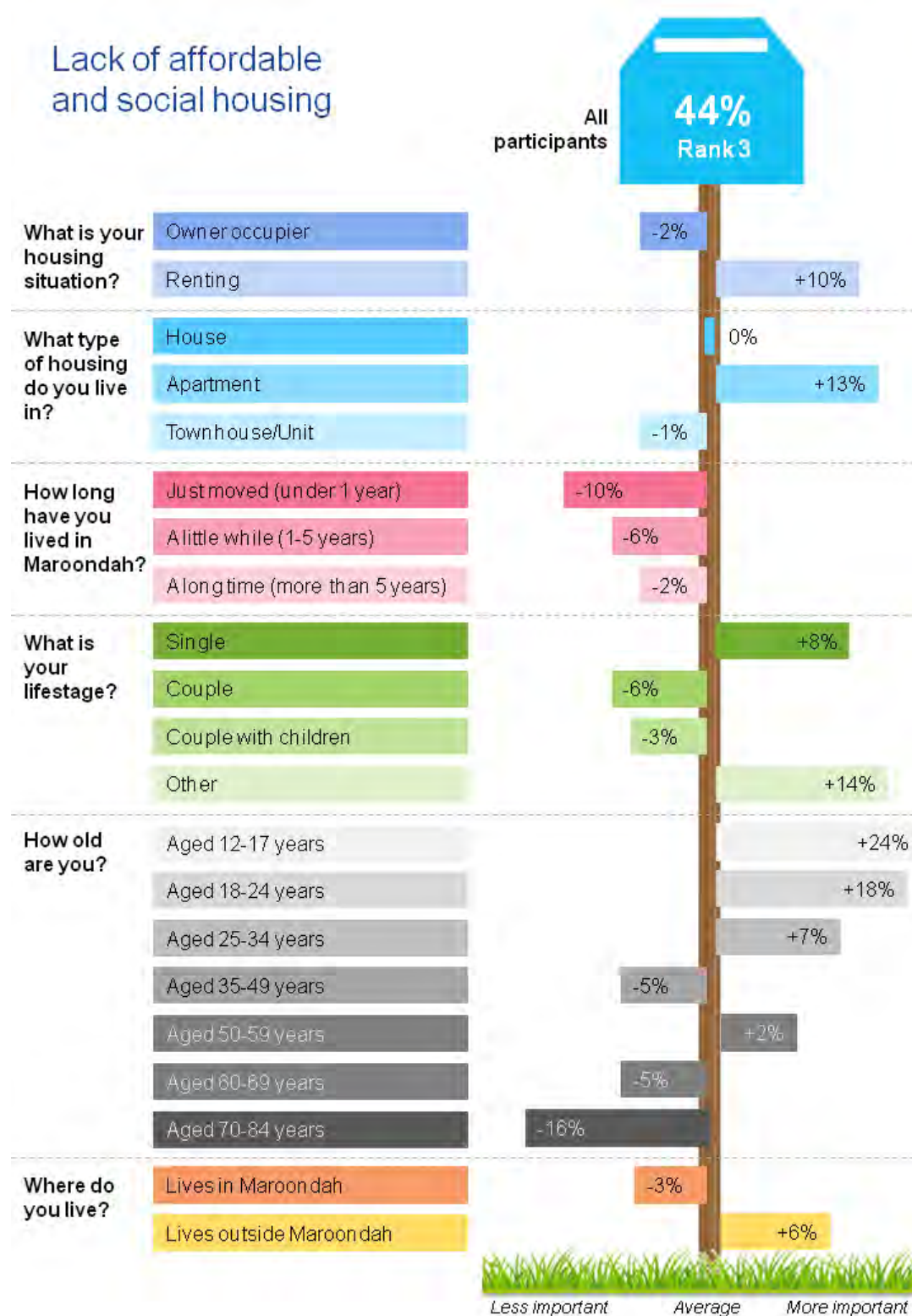
The most prominent issue identified by survey participants was the need to balance future development with protection of the natural environment. Whilst this issue was seen as highly important by most population cohorts, it was most heavily identified by mature couples and seniors aged over the age of 50 years, those who have recently moved into the municipality and residents living in either Ringwood East or Heathmont. The issue is more strongly identified by older age cohorts compared with younger age groups. This issue was seen as less of a priority for respondents aged 25-34 years, those living in townhouse/unit dwellings those currently renting, and residents living in Bayswater North.

Housing issue #2: Population growth



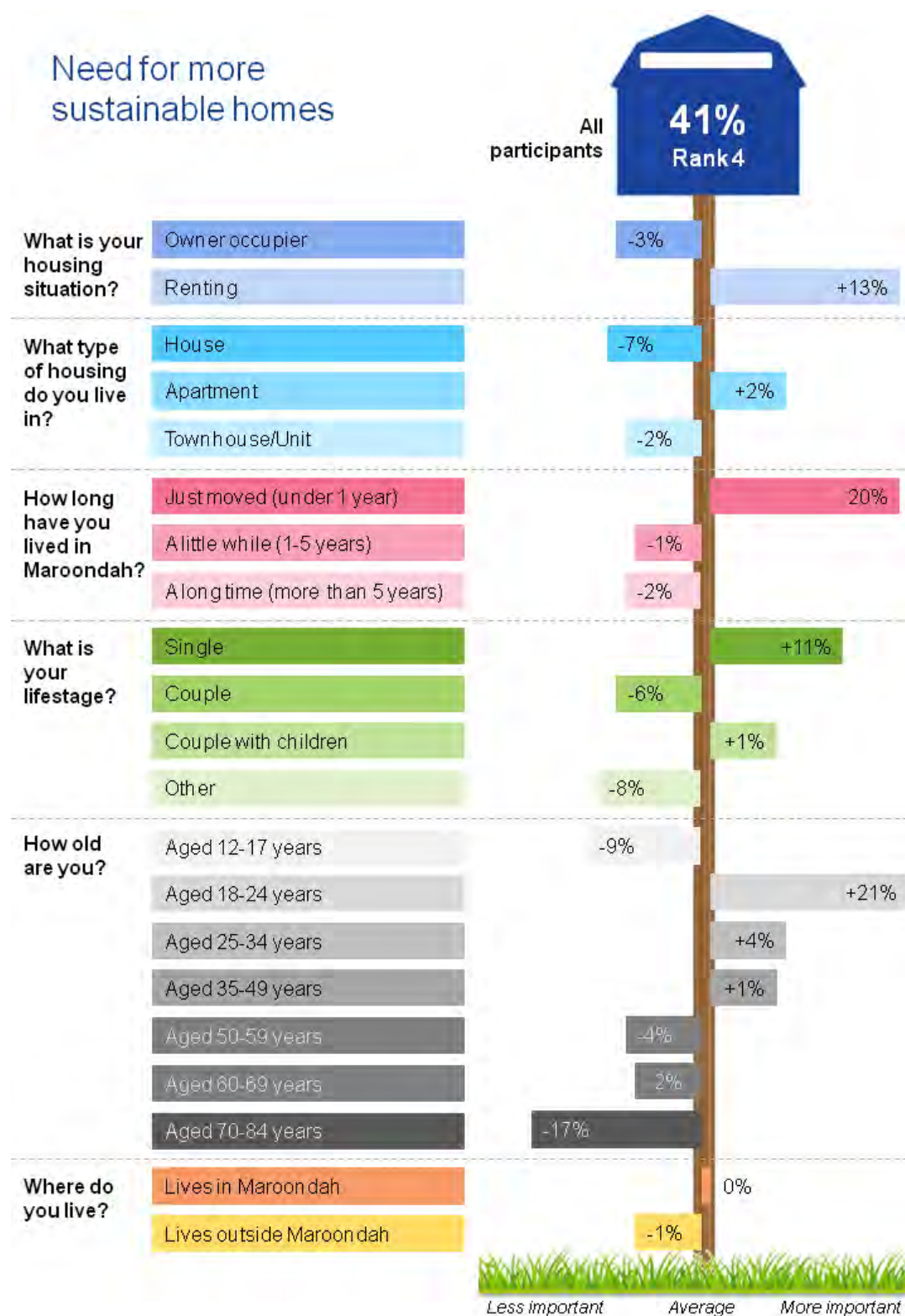
The second biggest housing issue noted by community members was the growth in population. This issue was consistently identified across all age and population groups but more prominently identified by those who have lived in Maroondah for between one and five years, those aged over 70 years and residents living in Croydon, Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Croydon South. The issue was seen as least important by recent arrivals to Maroondah who had lived in the area for less than one year, those aged between 50 and 69, and survey respondents living in Kilsyth South.

Housing issue #3: Lack of affordable and social housing



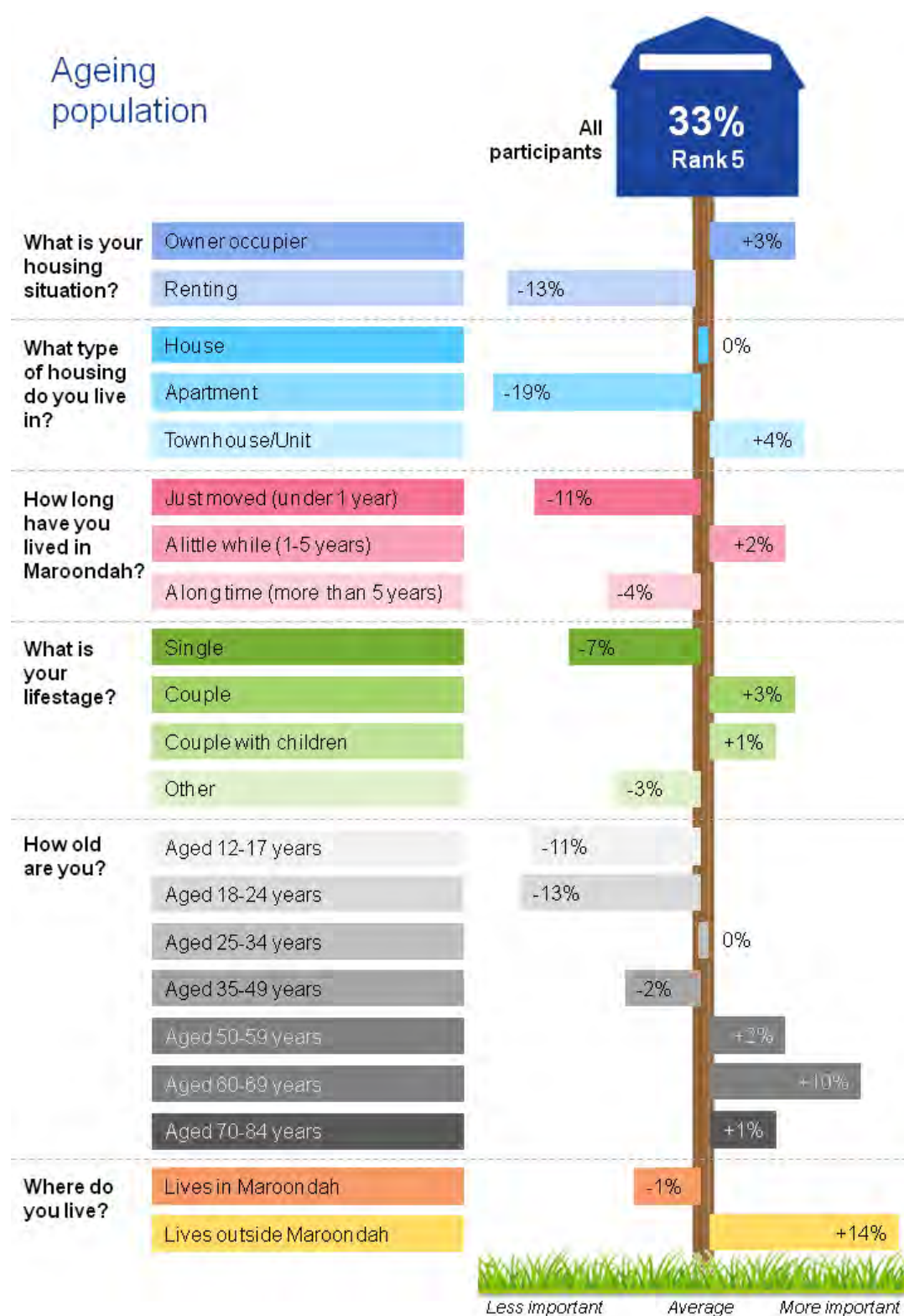
The lack of affordable and social housing was the third most prominent housing issue identified by survey respondents. Interestingly, this issue registered significant variation in terms of its perceived importance. Community members from younger age groups were much more likely to see this as an issue compared with residents from older age cohorts. The issue was most keenly felt by those residents who are currently renting, those living in apartments, those who identify as single and 'other lifestyles' – which includes single parents with dependents. It is seen as least important by those aged over 70 years, those who have just moved to Maroondah in the past year, and residents living in Ringwood, Ringwood North and Warranwood.

Housing issue #4: Need for more sustainable homes



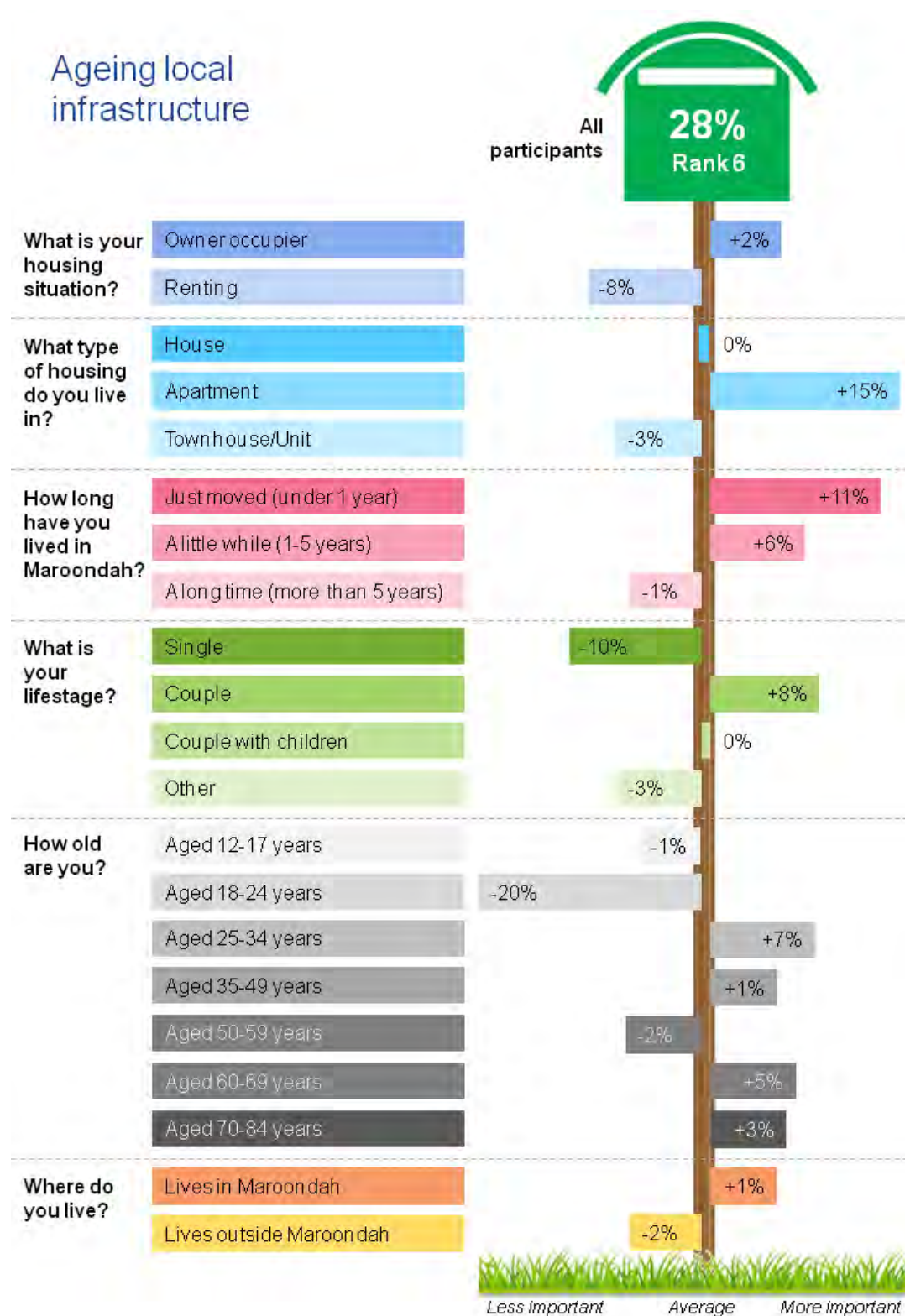
The fourth most important issue as identified by survey respondents was the need for more sustainable homes. This issue was most prominently identified by residents who were aged between 18-24 and respondents who had recently moved into Maroondah. It was also considered important by community members who are currently renting, respondents identifying as single, and residents living in Kilsyth South, Ringwood East and Heathmont. It is considered less important by residents aged over 70 years, young people aged 12-17 years and residents living in Ringwood, Ringwood North and Waranwood.

Housing issue #5: Ageing population



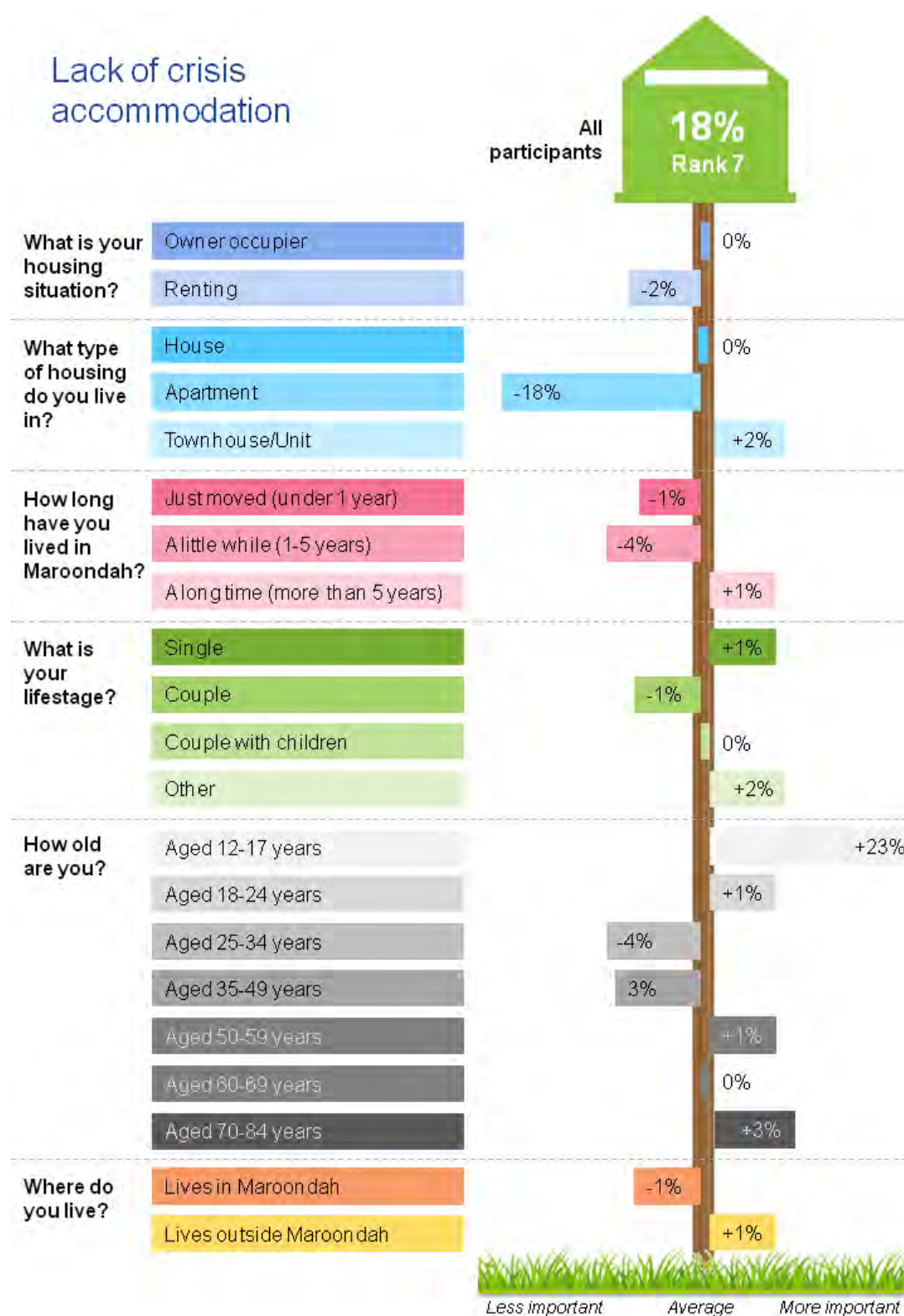
The ageing population was the fifth most prominent issue identified by community members undertaking this survey with this issue registered the significant variation in terms of its perceived importance between the various age and population groups. The issue was most commonly identified by seniors aged 60-69 years and those respondents who live outside Maroon dah. It was seen as less important by those respondents living in apartments, those aged under 24 years, residents who are renting and community members who have lived in Maroon dah for less than one year. Not surprisingly, the survey results indicate that this issue is clearly more important to community members in older age groups.

Housing issue #6: Ageing local infrastructure



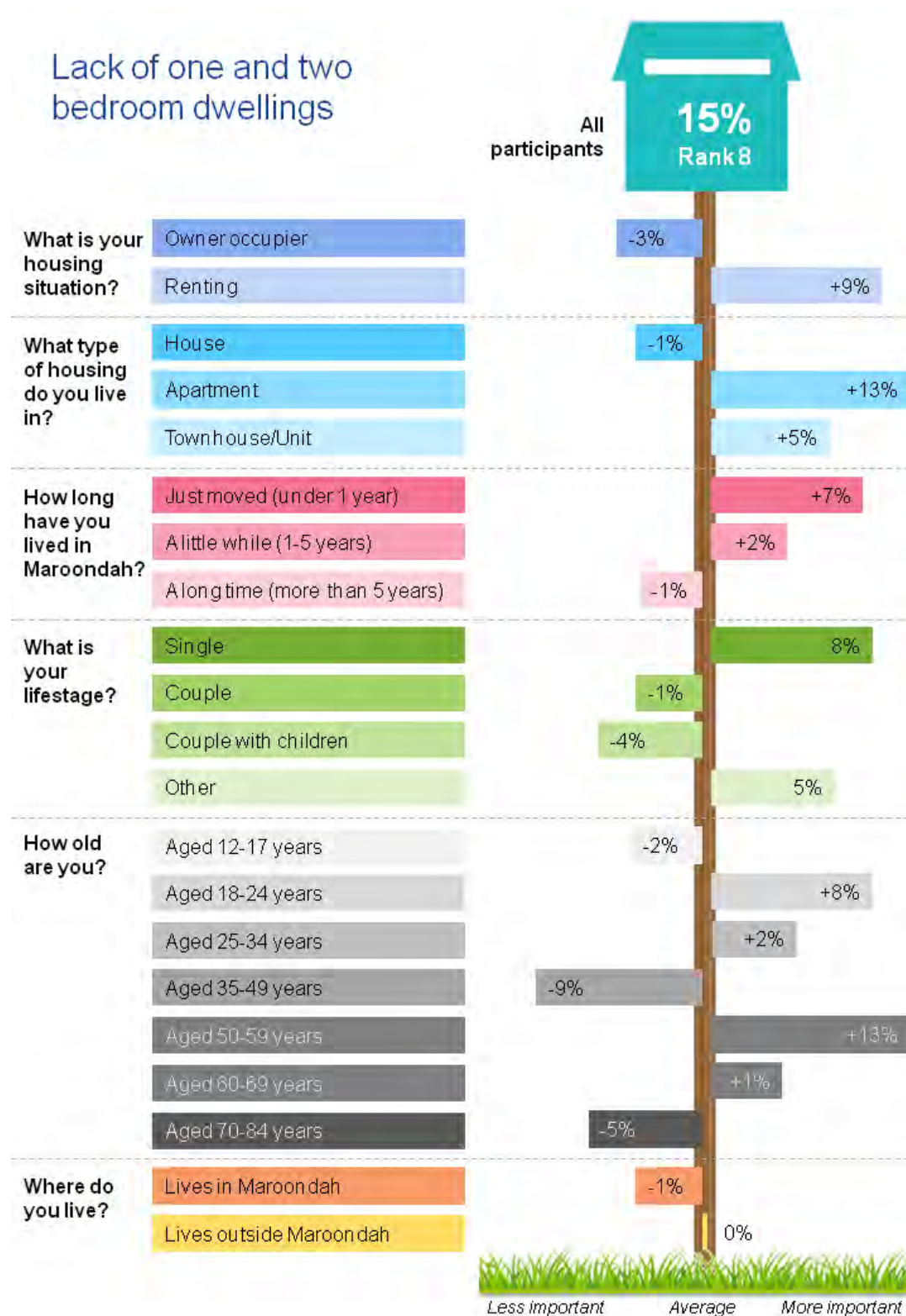
The issue of ageing local infrastructure was the sixth highest ranked issue identified by the community. The issue was seen as more important by respondents living in apartments, those who have recently moved to Maroondah, couple households without children and residents living in Ringwood, Ringwood North and Warranwood. It was seen as less important by young adults aged 18-24 years and respondents identifying as single. It is important to note that verbal feedback received by respondents indicated that the term 'infrastructure' was not necessarily well understood and this may have influenced the results.

Housing issue #7: Lack of crisis accommodation



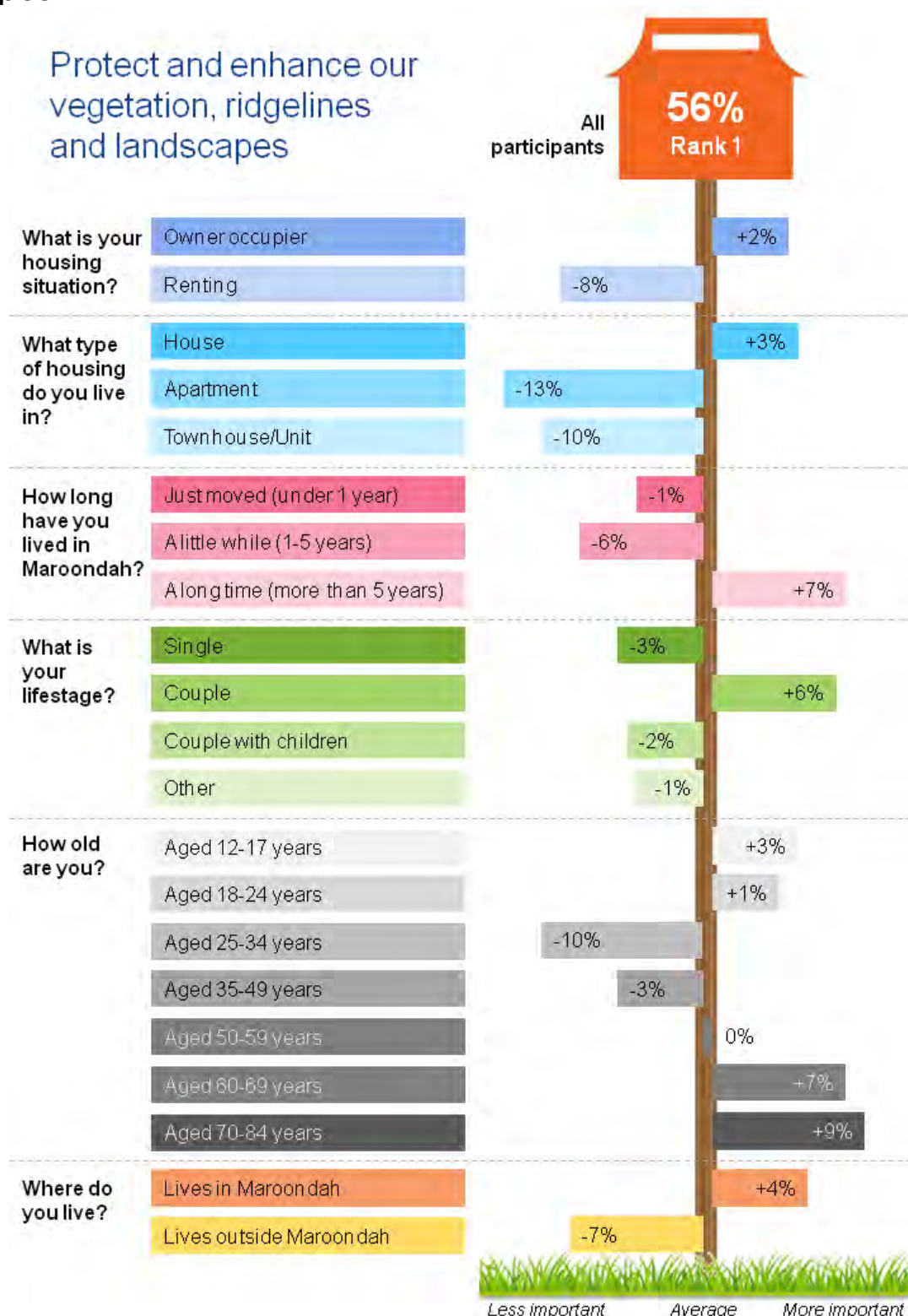
A lack of crisis accommodation was the seventh most prominent issue identified by community members undertaking this survey. It was an issue that resonated strongly with young people aged 12-17 years but not with other age cohorts. The issue was also considered important to residents living in Ringwood East and Heathmont. It was not particularly recognised as an issue by those living in apartments. A number of comments from respondents indicated that they weren't aware of this currently being an issue in Maroondah but would be significantly concerned if there was an actual shortage of this form of accommodation.

Housing issue #8: Lack of one and two bedroom dwellings



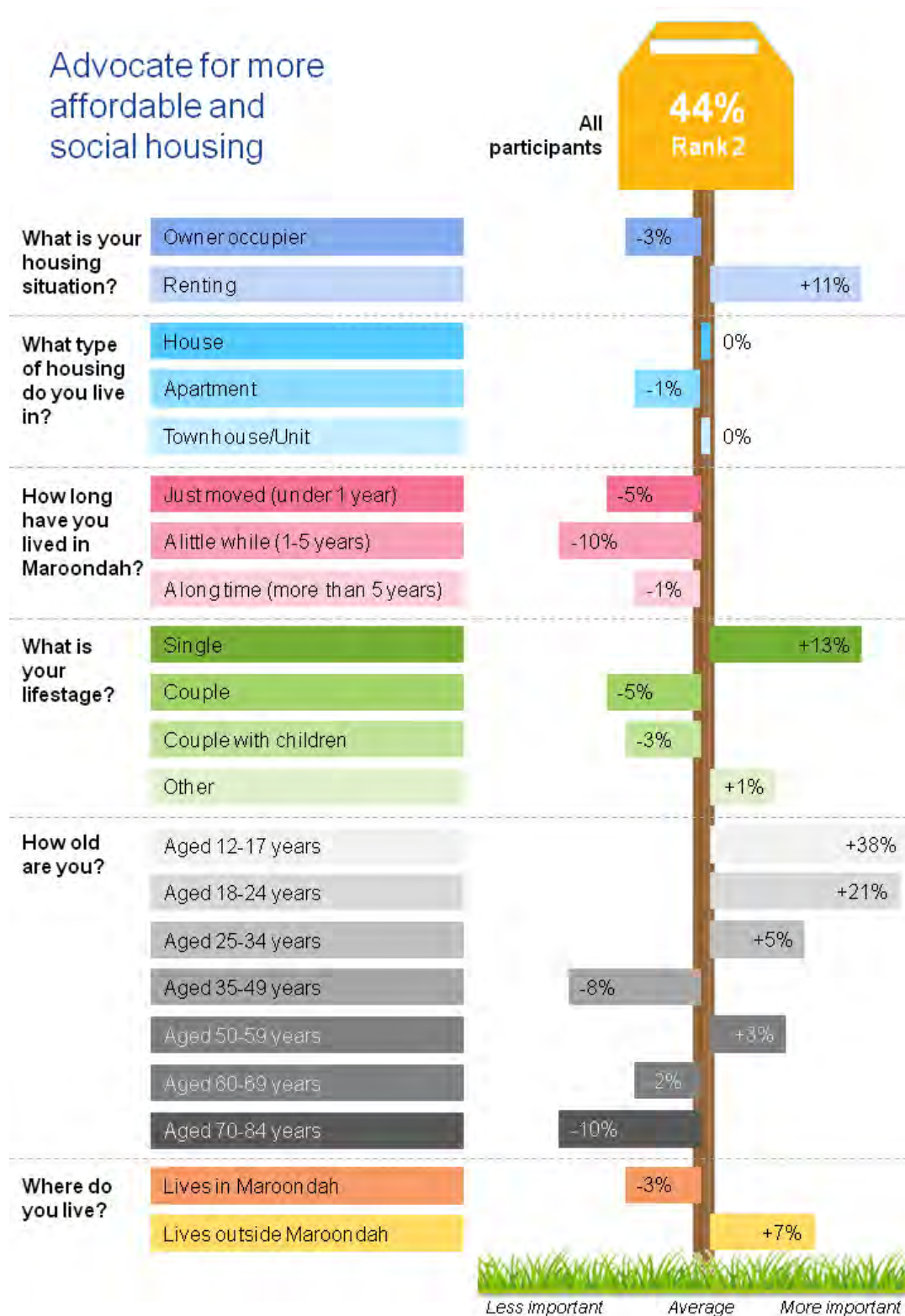
The eight ranked issue in terms of importance was the lack of one and two bedroom dwellings. Whilst not as prominent as other issues, it was seen as important by community members who live in an apartment, those aged 50-59 years, those who are currently renting, and those identifying as single and young adults aged 18-24 years. The issue was more important to residents of Ringwood, Ringwood North and Warranwood compared with other suburbs. It was seen as less important by respondents aged 35-49 years and those aged over 70 years. Despite the low overall ranking of priority, it is important to note that this issue is still particularly relevant for certain age and population groups.

Policy response #1: Protect and enhance our vegetation, ridgelines and landscapes



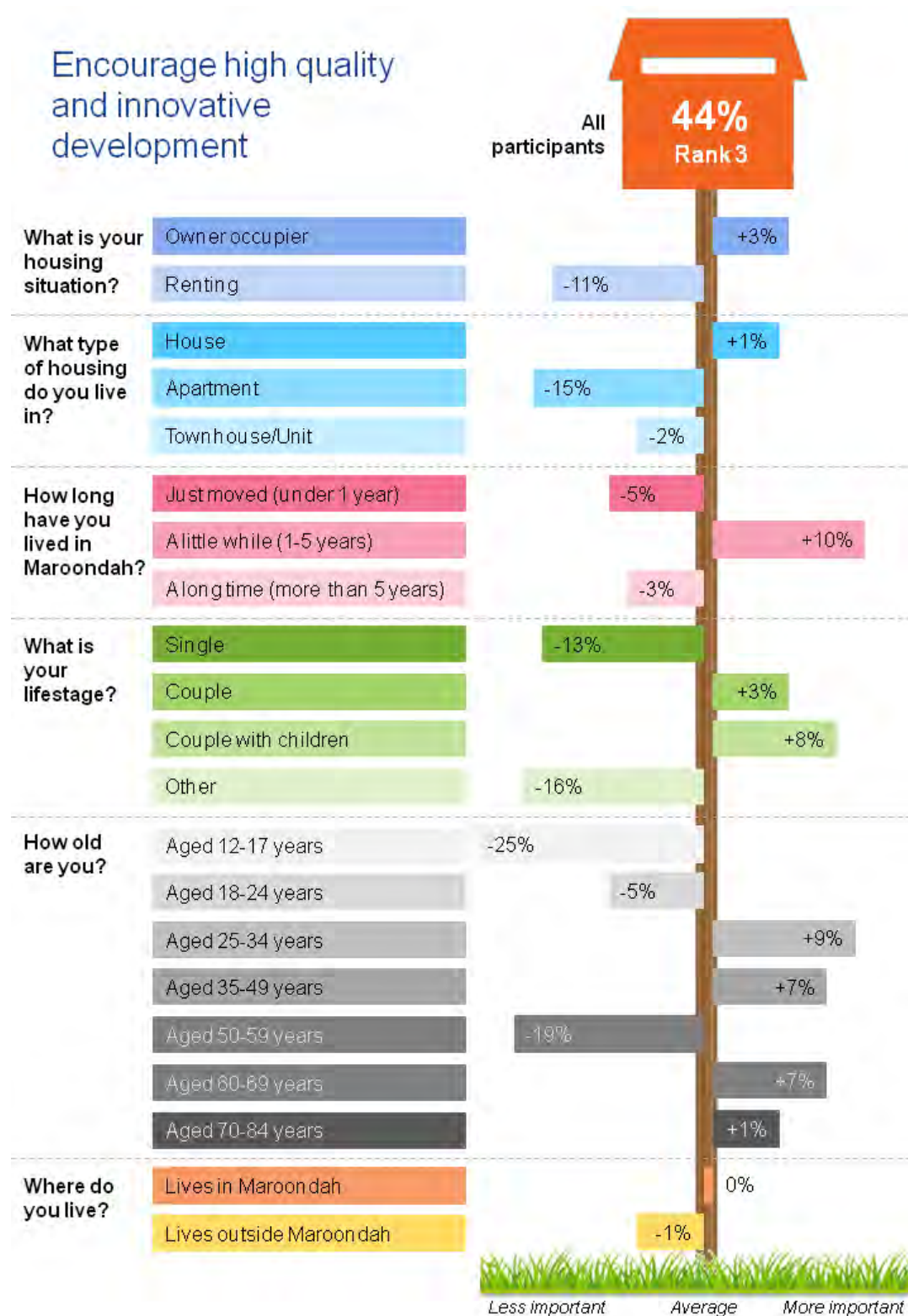
The response that was ranked highest by survey participants was to protect and enhance our vegetation, ridgelines and landscapes. This reinforces the strong attachment and importance felt by local residents regarding the natural environment and landscape features within Maroondah. It also reflects a preferred response to the most highly ranked issue in this survey - the need to balance future development with protection of the natural environment. This response was most strongly prioritised by residents aged over 60 years and those who have lived in Maroondah for a long time, and those living in Kilsyth South, Ringwood East and Heathmont. It was least prioritised by those respondents living in apartments and townhouses/units, those currently renting and those in the 25-34 year old age bracket.

Policy response #2: Advocate for more affordable and social housing



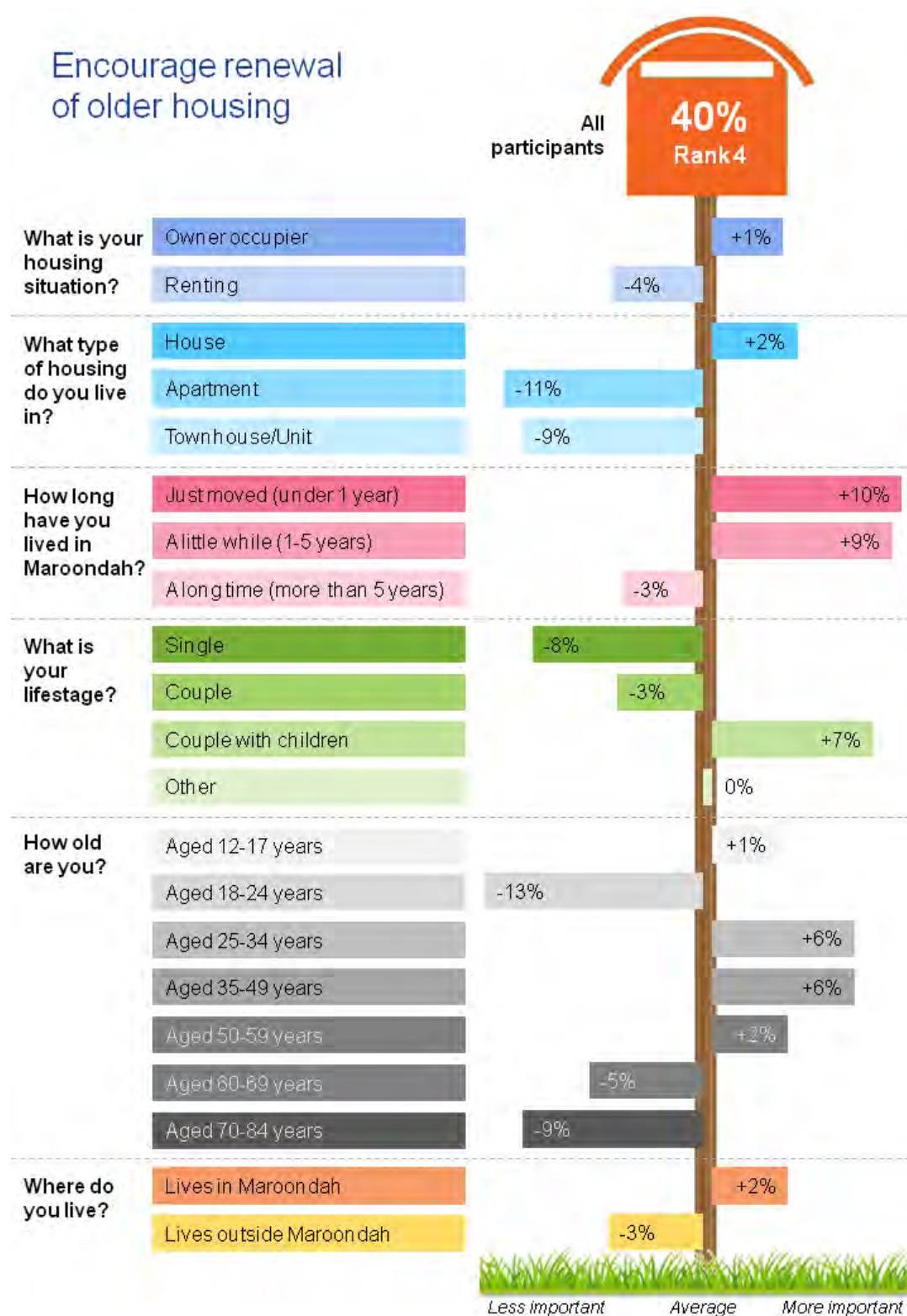
The second most highly ranked response was advocacy for more affordable and social housing, which is clearly linked to the third ranked issue identified by survey regarding a lack of affordable and social housing. This response was a particular priority for respondents who are aged between 12-24, identify as single, those currently renting, respondents living in Kilsyth South and those living outside the municipality. The issue was less of a priority for those residents aged over 70, those living in Ringwood, Ringwood North and Warranwood, residents aged between 35-49 years, and residents who have lived in Maroondah between 1 and 5 years.

Policy response #3: Encourage high quality and innovative development



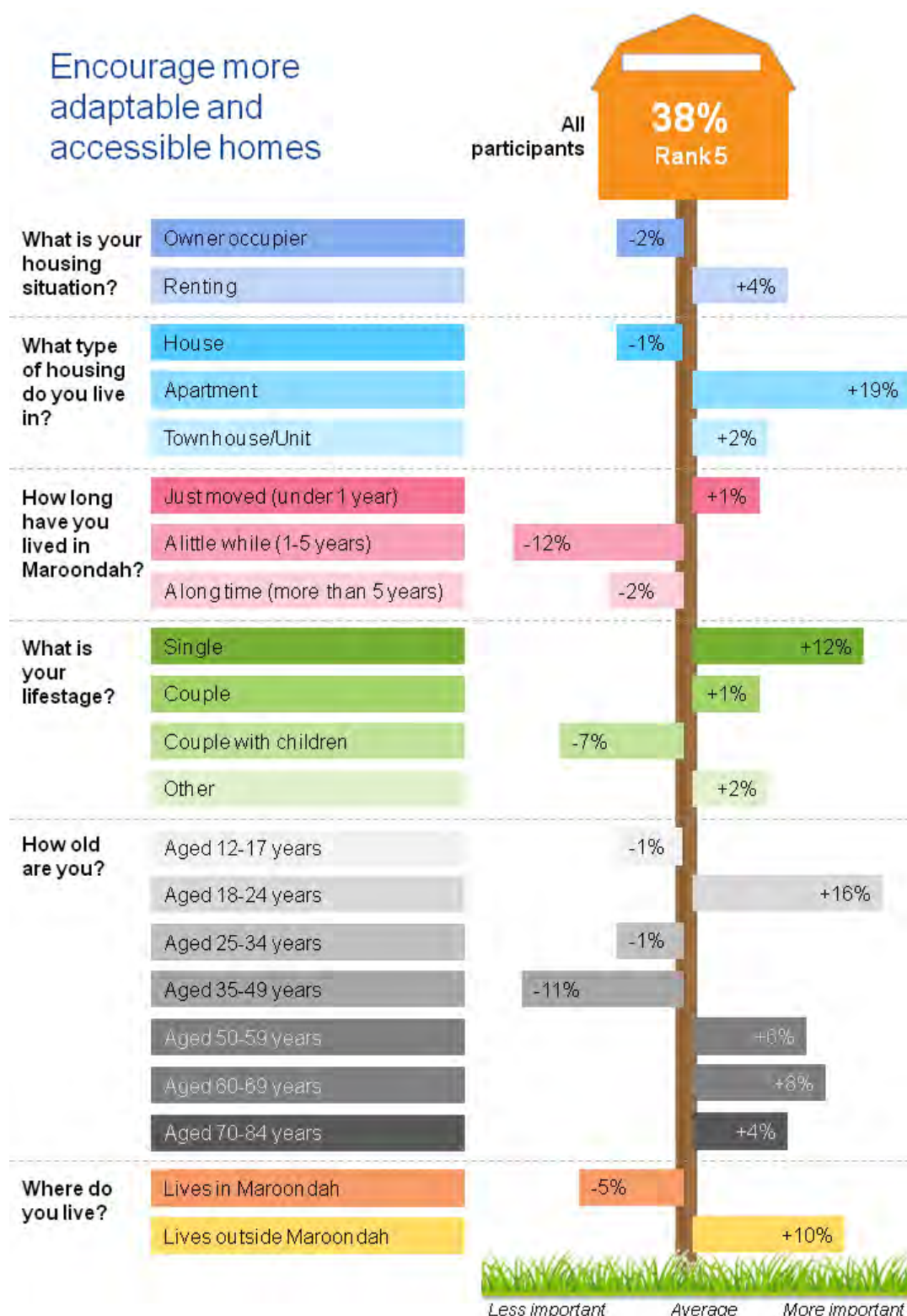
The third most highly ranked response was to encourage high quality and innovative development. This response was particularly prioritised by those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years, those aged 25-34 years, and couples with children. It was less of a priority for young people aged 12-17 years, those aged 50-59, respondents living in apartments and respondents currently renting.

Policy response #4: Encourage renewal of older housing



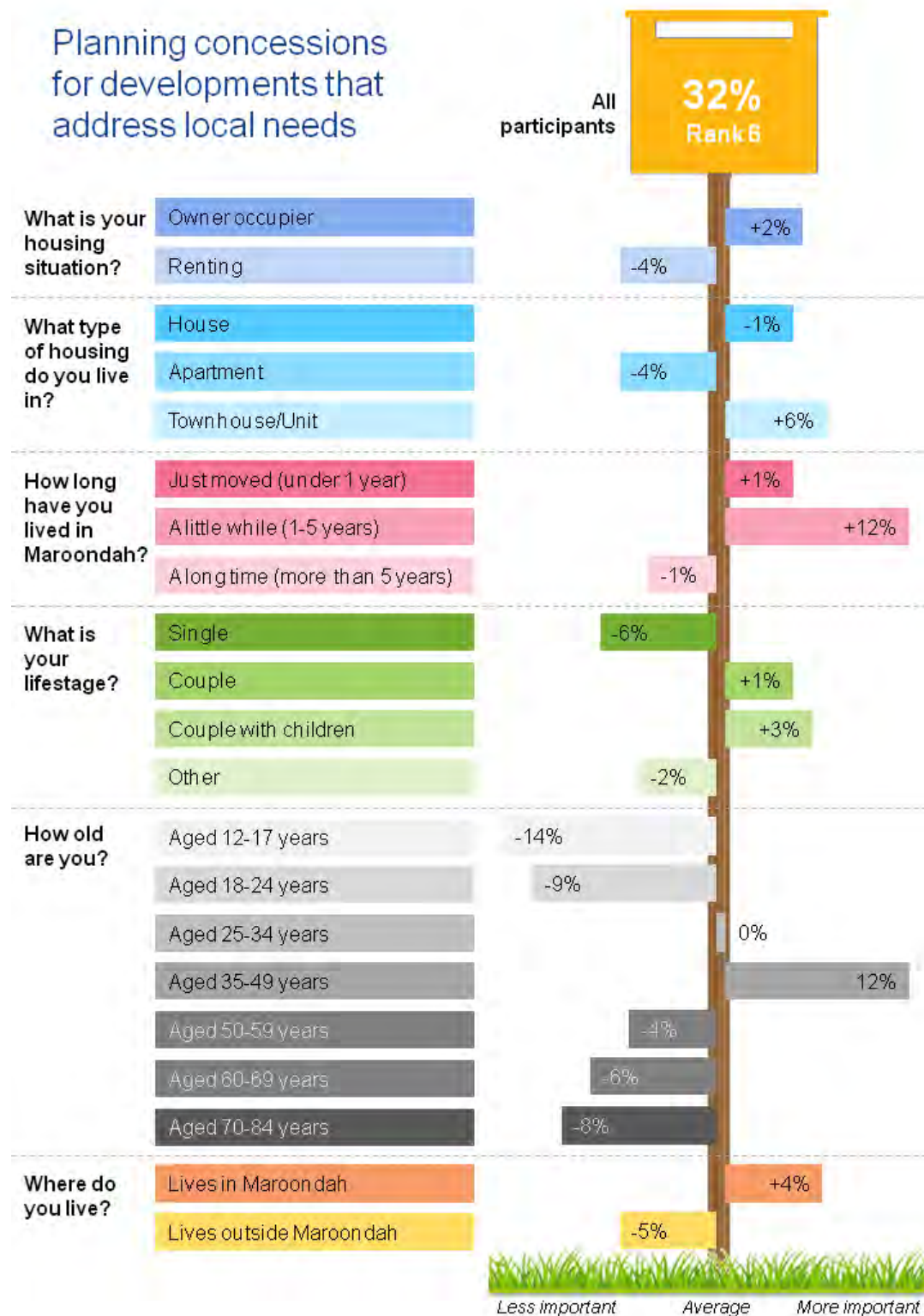
The fourth most highly ranked response was to encourage renewal of older housing. This was a much high priority for residents who have lived in the municipality for less than five years, couples with children, residents living in Ringwood East and Heathmont, and those aged between 25-49 years. It was less of a priority for respondents aged 18-24 years, those living in apartments and townhouses/units, respondents aged 70-84 years and participants identifying as single. It should be noted that anecdotal feedback and comments provided by survey respondents indicated that there was some variation in how this particular response was interpreted.

Policy response #5: Encourage more adaptable and accessible homes



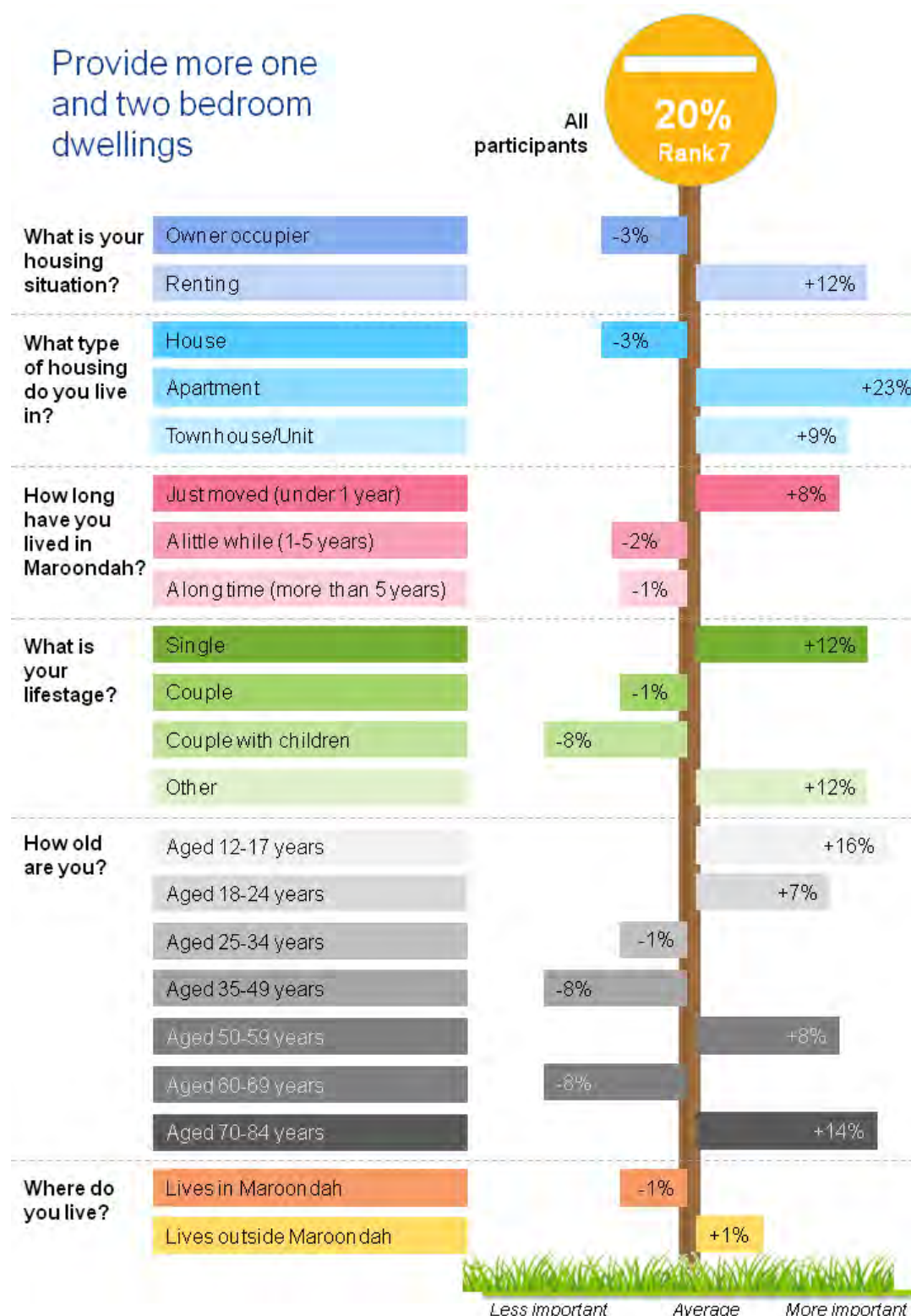
The fifth highest priority response was to encourage more adaptable and accessible homes. This response was most commonly identified by respondents living in apartments, respondents identifying as single and interestingly, by young adults aged 18-24 years. It was also seen as important for residents aged over 50 years. It was less important for residents who had lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years, those aged 35-49, couples with children, and residents living in Croydon, Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Croydon South. This response was much more prominent for respondents living outside Maroondah compared to those living within the municipality.

Policy response #6: Planning concessions for developments that address local needs



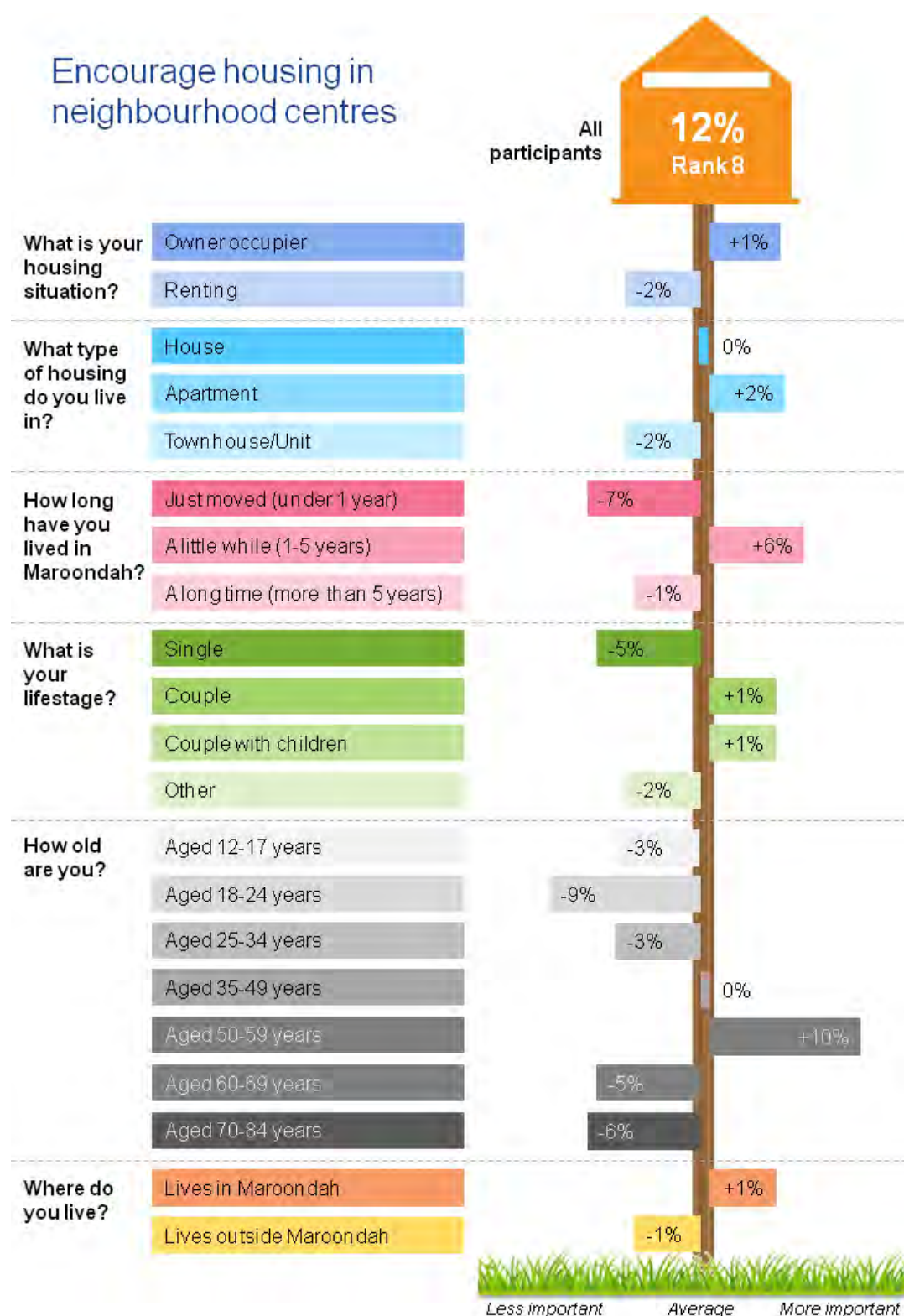
The sixth highest priority response was to provide planning concessions for developments that address local needs. This response was most popular with residents aged 35-49 years, those who had lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years and those living in Croydon, Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Croydon South. This response was a lesser priority for residents living in Kilsyth South, respondents aged under 24 years and over 50 years and respondents identifying as single. It was interesting to note that this response was clearly more popular with respondents who currently live in Maroondah compared with those who live outside the municipality.

Policy response #7: Provide more one and two bedroom dwellings



The seventh ranked response was the provision of more one or two bedroom dwellings. Despite this ranking, it is important to note that this response was particularly popular with those respondents living in apartments, young people aged 12-17 years, seniors aged over 70 years, those currently renting and respondents identifying as single. This response was less of a priority for respondents aged 35-49 and 60-69 years, and couples with children.

Policy response #8: Encourage housing in neighbourhood centres



The eighth highest response was to encourage housing in neighbourhood centres. This response was seen as particularly important for respondents aged 50-59 and residents living in Kilsyth South. It was seen as much less important by young adults aged 18-24 years and residents who have lived in Maroondah for less than one year. It should be noted that comments provided by survey respondents indicated that there was some variation in how this response was interpreted.

Stakeholder views on housing issues and options

What did we do?

Three focus groups were undertaken by Council to seek stakeholder input on housing issues and policy responses for Maroondah over the next 25 years. The groups also represented an opportunity to promote the work already undertaken by Council and to explore ideas for ongoing stakeholder collaboration in developing and implementing a new housing strategy.

Each of the three focus groups was held over a two hour period on either 21 or 22 October 2015 at Maroondah Federation Estate in Ringwood. One group was for development and real estate stakeholders; another was focused on community and service organisations; whilst the third was targeted at neighbourhood and local environment groups and held during a weekday evening.

Each focus group was conducted by independent consultants. With the agreement of the participants, each session was recorded to assist reporting. The format for each focus group was as follows:

1. Introduction and scene setting. (15 minutes)

- Participants were introduced to:
- The purpose of the focus groups;
- The key principles identified in Maroondah 2040, including the importance of community engagement and the need for development to be driven by social need and demographic change.
- The two main challenges of the new housing strategy – identifying the type and location of housing needed by Maroondah's present and future population and managing the impacts of residential development on neighbourhoods and the environment and
- Key trends affecting housing development in Maroondah over the next 25 years – (1) population and dwelling growth, (2) increasing diversity, (3) the need for access /connectivity to services and employment and, (4) the ongoing importance of liveability and sustainability.

2. Identification of issues (40 minutes):

- Participants were provided with a summary of issues identified by recent research undertaken by Council
- Key questions arising from these research papers focused on: how can growth be best managed? how development can be aligned with changing community needs? and how can housing be affordable? The consultants also raised specific themes for the three focus groups.
- Views of stakeholders were sought on these issues and other issues they felt were of high importance in Maroondah.

3. Housing development options (20 minutes):

- Some basic options about the location of future development were presented.
- Participants were also asked to identify locations where, in their view, development should not occur.
- Participants were also asked for comment about housing options for specific groups such as: Maroondah's ageing population, young adult and newly forming households, people with a long term socioeconomic disadvantage, people experiencing a short term crisis, and people with a disability.

4. *Policy responses to housing issues (15 minutes):*

- Participants were asked for their views on:
 - Actions that Council could undertake on its own initiative,
 - Policy positions that Council can advocate to other levels of government and/or with the development industry.

5. *Partnerships (15 minutes):*

- Participants were asked for their views and ideas on future opportunities for collaboration in developing an attractive, thriving and well built community.
- Council officers briefed participants and answered questions about ongoing opportunities for participation in the development of a new housing strategy.

Who provided input?

A total of 31 representatives from 25 organisations/groups attended these sessions.

These comprised:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| • Archestral Designs | • Monastery Ridge Group |
| • AusNet Services | • NBN Co |
| • Bendigo Bank Ringwood | • Raine & Horne |
| • Bendigo Bank Ringwood East | • The Salvation Army |
| • Carter Real Estate | • Small Giants |
| • Country Fire Authority | • Solar Backup/ARVIO |
| • Croydon Chamber of Commerce | • Sustainable Development Consultants |
| • Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning | • Transition Towns Maroondah |
| • Department of Health and Human Services | • VicRoads |
| • EACH | • Yarra Valley Water |
| • Green Design Solutions | • Wesley Mission Victoria |
| • Lateral Building Design | • Women's Health East |
| • Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee | |

It is important to note that these attending organisations were a subset of a much wider group of invitees. Many invited but non-attending organisations were interested in the project but for various reasons were unable to attend these focus group sessions.



Focus group discussions in October 2015

What did people say?

Key themes emerging

Participants were very aware that the key changes that will affect housing development in Maroondah over the next 25 years will be different to the changes experienced over the last 25 years. Many see that Maroondah, and the whole of Australia, is at a crossroads. The economy and new technology such as the NBN make the future of work - be it the type of jobs or their location or future work hours - uncertain. The scale of Melbourne's population growth and the extent and impacts of climate change are other notable 'big picture' issues that will impact on the future demand for housing and on the ways that demand can be best satisfied. Planning has always been challenged by uncertainty but managing it is now seen as critical.

Stakeholders acknowledged that the demand for new housing and the redevelopment of older housing has implications for service providers, including Council and other public agencies. Creeks, reserves and parks become more valuable assets as densities increase. Roads, parking facilities, the drainage system and utilities all have to be maintained and improved as the population grows. These enhancements need to be done in an environmentally sensitive way.

It was felt that the development of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre presents significant opportunities for Maroondah. The Centre will provide a much wider range of services and employment. Given the increasing importance being placed on accessible housing, Ringwood's attraction will increase. The sort of development pressures now being experienced in somewhere like Box Hill, will potentially extend to Ringwood. There will be a new level of housing development, design and planning challenges. As Ringwood develops, there may also be opportunities for more social housing. The range of services and its transport connections make it an ideal location in this regard.

Participants noted that the building and development industry is adopting new technologies to produce well-designed and potentially cheaper housing development options. Energy saving design and building is at the forefront of this change. Council needs to work with industry and the community to realise these opportunities.

Each focus group acknowledged that Maroondah's population is ageing and will have an increasing number of people aged over 70 and 80 in the next 25 years. Similarly youth, new migrants, disabled persons and other disadvantaged and vulnerable people will always be in the community. The provision of appropriate housing and caring for that ageing and vulnerable community's needs will require ongoing community consultation and partnerships.

Participants felt that many housing development issues and development options to be addressed by this housing strategy are common to other councils. Partnering and co-operating with other Councils and the particular expertise that they might possess will bring dividends.



Focus group discussions in October 2015

All of the focus groups noted that Maroondah's physical environment is highly valued by the community. It is one of the main reasons why people like living here and they clearly want Council to learn from the mistakes made in other parts of Melbourne. There was a consensus across all three groups that any new development, resulting from either population growth or the changing housing preferences of Maroondah's residents, should respect that environment. In practice, it is recognised that this will be challenging.

Apart from Ringwood, other activity centres with railway stations are important channels for accessing services. They have local shopping strips that need renewal and may be suitable for some housing development subject to further more detailed investigation. It was discussed that all stations in Maroondah have inadequate parking facilities.

Apart from the widely acknowledged potential of central Ringwood, the location of development within Maroondah brought mixed views. Some within the development industry favour a dispersed approach arguing that any restrictions come at a cost of reducing potential supply. Others see the need for a more selective approach and cite the importance of ridgelines or areas of significant natural habitat. Participants stressed the importance of an open strategic planning process where the advantages and disadvantages of alternative development approaches can be debated.

Value of networking and ongoing discussion

The focus groups successfully provided a qualitative analysis on housing issues and options within Maroondah. They complemented the largely quantitative research undertaken via other community engagement methods outlined in this report, along with research work undertaken prior to the engagement process.

The deliberations of each focus group were very respectful, with stakeholders willing to listen to the views and ideas of others. Many constructive ideas were discussed within groups. The degree of buy-in and co-operation is a good sign that this form of community consultation can be constructive although some participants would have preferred mixed groups rather than segmented interest groups.

The neighbourhood and local environment focus group was particularly strong on the concept of community resilience and people taking responsibility for their community. The community and service organisations focus group strongly expressed the view that the community want to provide better support to those in need. The developers and real estate industry group was keen to find practical solutions to local housing issues including issues of housing costs, design, location and energy efficiency.

Tell me more...

A more detailed report on these community focus groups discussions has been prepared by the independent consultants and this is available by contacting the Housing Strategy Project Team on 1300 288 22 33 or by email via housing@maroondah.vic.gov.au



Focus group discussions in October 2015

Community views on current and future housing needs

What did we do?

An online survey was developed to seek community views and aspirations on current and future housing needs in Maroondah. The interactive and visual survey asked community members to rank their top five current housing needs and their top five future housing needs from a predefined list of nine options.

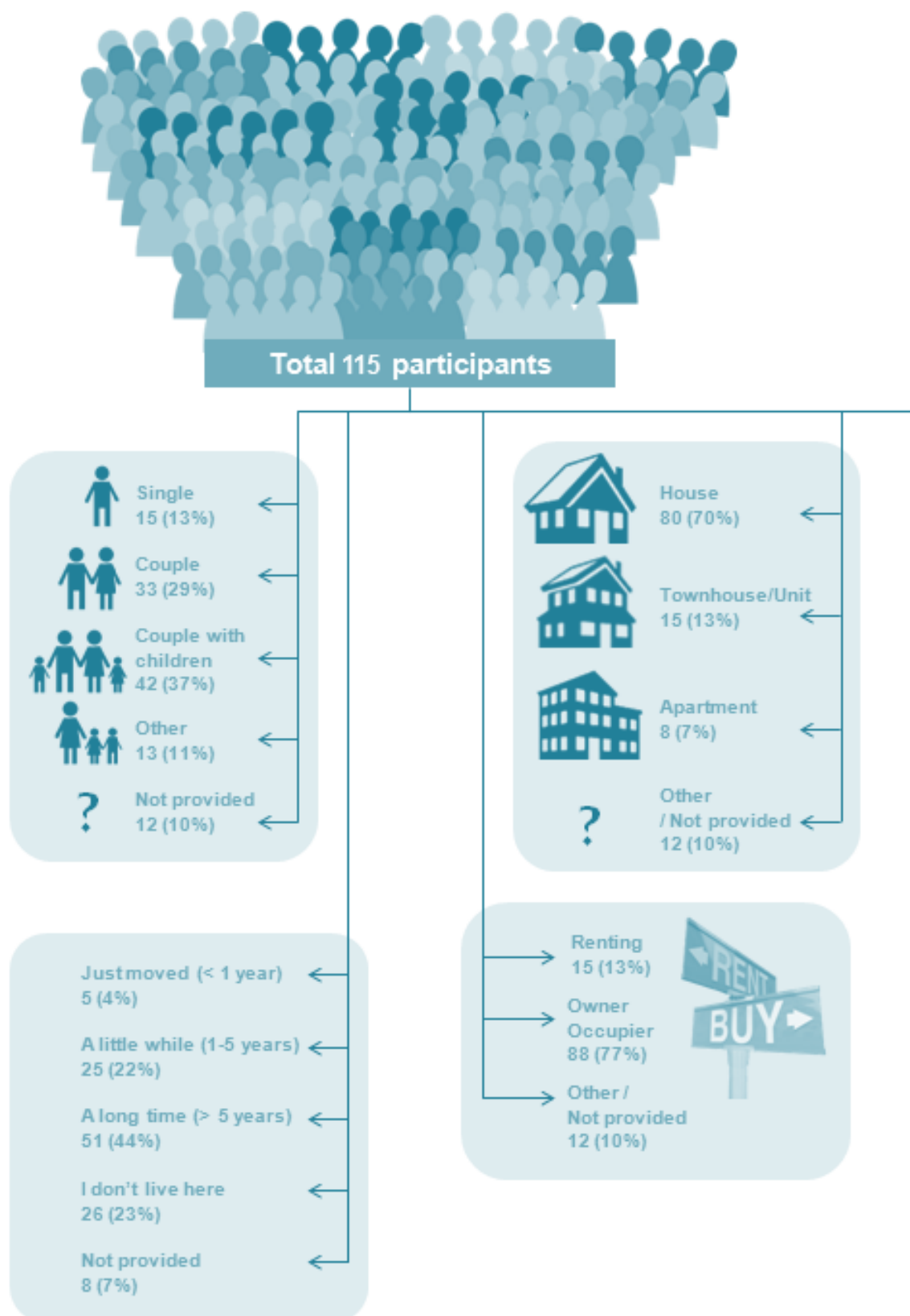
The nine housing needs people were asked to rank were:

1. The age and condition of the house
2. Whether the house has a large backyard
3. Closeness to local shops parks and playgrounds
4. The number of bedrooms and/or living areas
5. Availability of digital and technological embedded features
6. Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages
7. Closeness to public transport including buses and train stations
8. Whether the house is energy and water efficient
9. Price and affordability

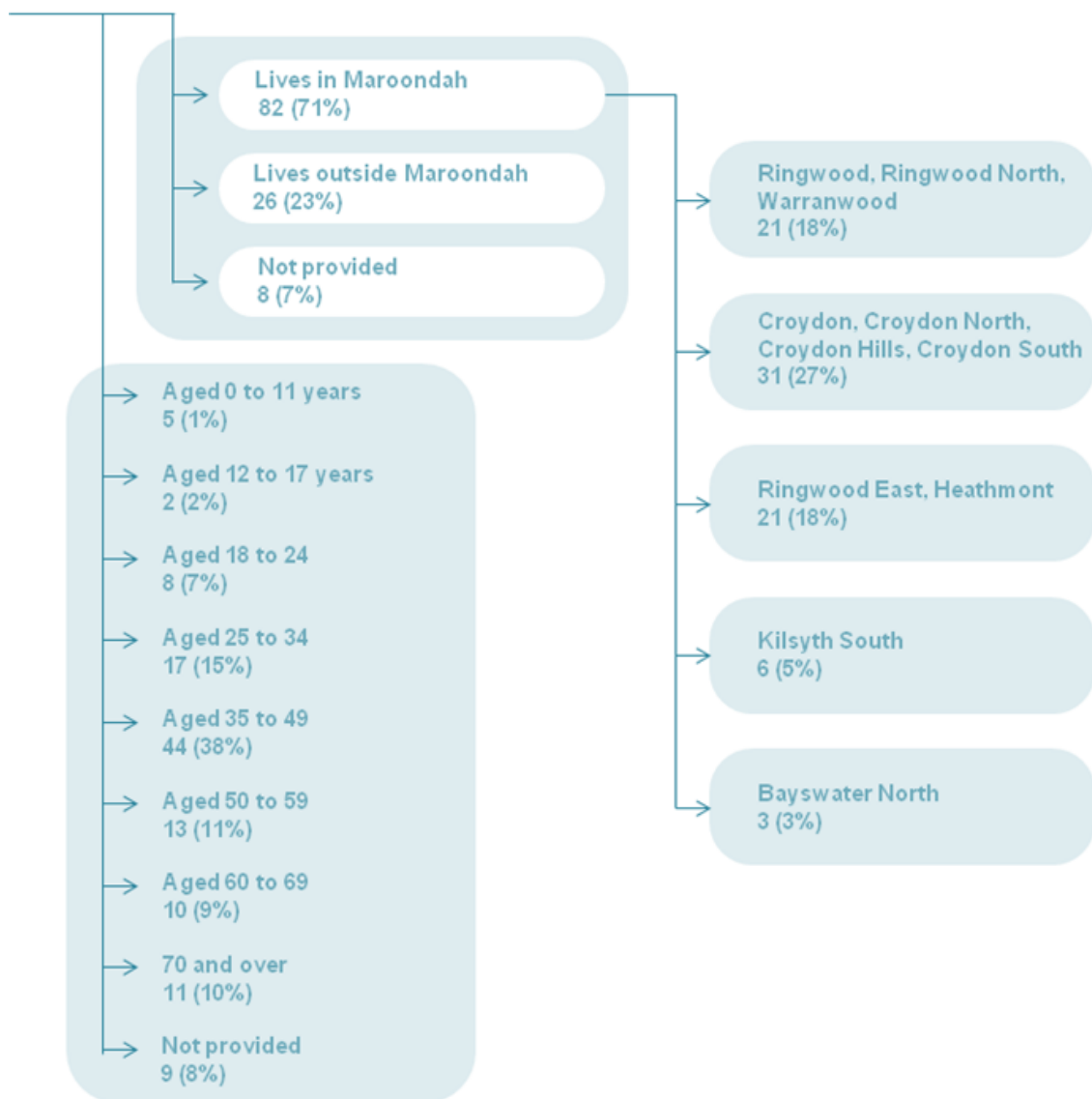
Demographic information on participants was also collected including: age, location of residence, type of housing, tenure of housing and duration of living in municipality. The interactive online survey was live from 27 October 2015 until 30 November 2015 and could be accessed via Council's website www.maroondah.vic.gov.au or directly via the project website – www.theplaceswelive.com.au

Who provided input?

A total of 115 respondents participated in the online survey. A high proportion of survey participants live in detached houses (70%) and were owner occupiers (77%). 37% were couples with dependent children.



Please note that data may not add to 100% due to rounding factors



What did people say?

This engagement activity illustrated the importance of local transport and amenities to resident housing needs. For current and future housing needs, the highest overall housing priority was 'closeness to public transport including buses and train stations'. This was closely followed by 'closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds'.

The third highest overall priority for was 'price and affordability' although this was clearly much more important to specific population cohorts.

The need relating to 'whether the house has a large backyard' was seen as relatively important as a current priority (equal fourth highest) but this dropped to eighth highest (second lowest) for future priorities. This illustrates that the requirement for large backyards may be less of a housing priority in the future, particularly for certain population cohorts.

Similarly, the number of bedrooms and living areas is the sixth highest overall current housing priority but only the seventh overall future housing priority. This illustrates that larger sized housing, whilst important for current community needs, may be less of a priority in the future.

The consideration of 'whether the house is energy and water efficient' is a relatively low eighth overall priority in terms of current housing needs but this need increases to be ranked sixth for future housing need. This could reflect future consideration of more self-sustaining homes, a desire for decreased utility bills along with a greater awareness of climate change and environment responsibility.

The age and condition of the house appears to be a stable moderate priority for both current and future housing need, perhaps reflecting the need for ongoing phased renewal of Maroondah's existing housing stock into the future.

Population cohorts had differences in how certain priorities were ranked. For example, people aged 12-24 felt that 'the number of bedrooms and/or living areas' was considerably more important as a current priority compared to other population groups; respondents aged 25-34 felt 'price and affordability' was considerably more important as a current priority compared with other cohorts. People living in apartments were very keen to live close to local shops, parks and playgrounds but also saw 'the age and condition of the house' along with 'price and affordability' as key current priorities. Both respondents currently renting and those living in townhouse/unit dwellings saw 'price and affordability' as a very high priority relating to future housing need.

Tell me more...

The following pages explain the detailed findings of current and future housing needs.

Understanding how information is graphically presented for housing need...

- At the top of each graphic, the weighted percentage of all participants who chose this current or future housing need as one of their top five is shown in a box.
- Demographic groups of participants that chose this current or future housing need less often than the average is shown by bars to the left of an upright post.
- Demographic groups of participants that chose this current or future housing need more often than the average is shown by bars to the right of an upright post.
- There is also a short commentary underneath explaining which demographic groups differ most significantly from the average percentage.

It is important to note that the percentages shown are weighted based on the ranking apportioned to each housing need. The greatest influence on this percentage is reflected by the number of respondents who identified a need as their highest priority, then those who ranked the need as the second highest priority and so on. Please note that not every possible demographic category is shown and that there were some categories with very few responses. Please also note that the infographics are intended for illustrative purposes only.

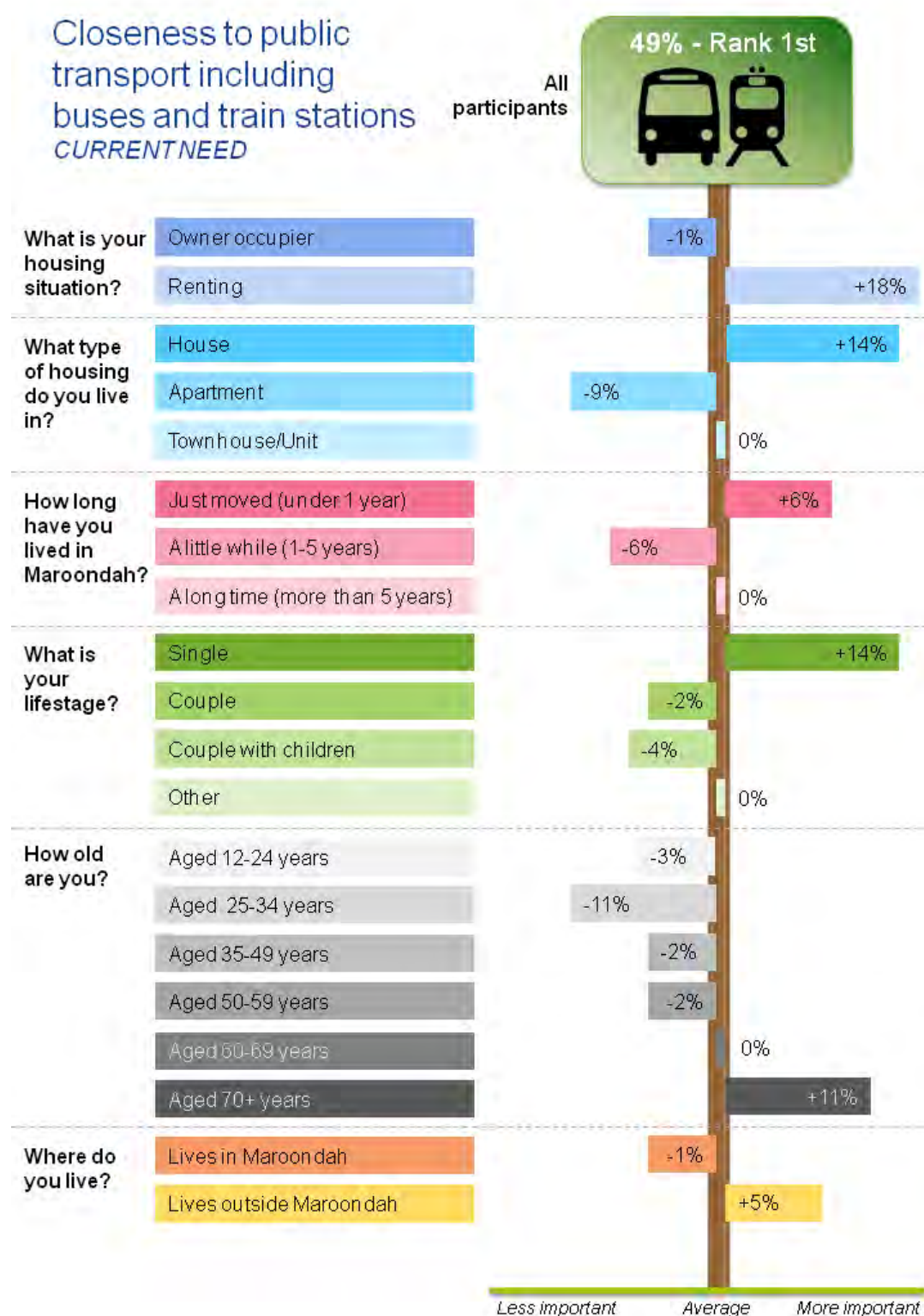
Summary of priority current housing needs

	1st	Closeness to public transport including buses and train stations
	2nd	Closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds
	3rd	Price and affordability
	4th (Equal)	The age and condition of the house
	4th (Equal)	Whether the house has a large backyard
	6th	The number of bedrooms and/or living areas
	7th	Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages
	8th	Whether the house is energy and water efficient
	9th	Availability of digital and technological embedded features

Summary of priority future housing needs

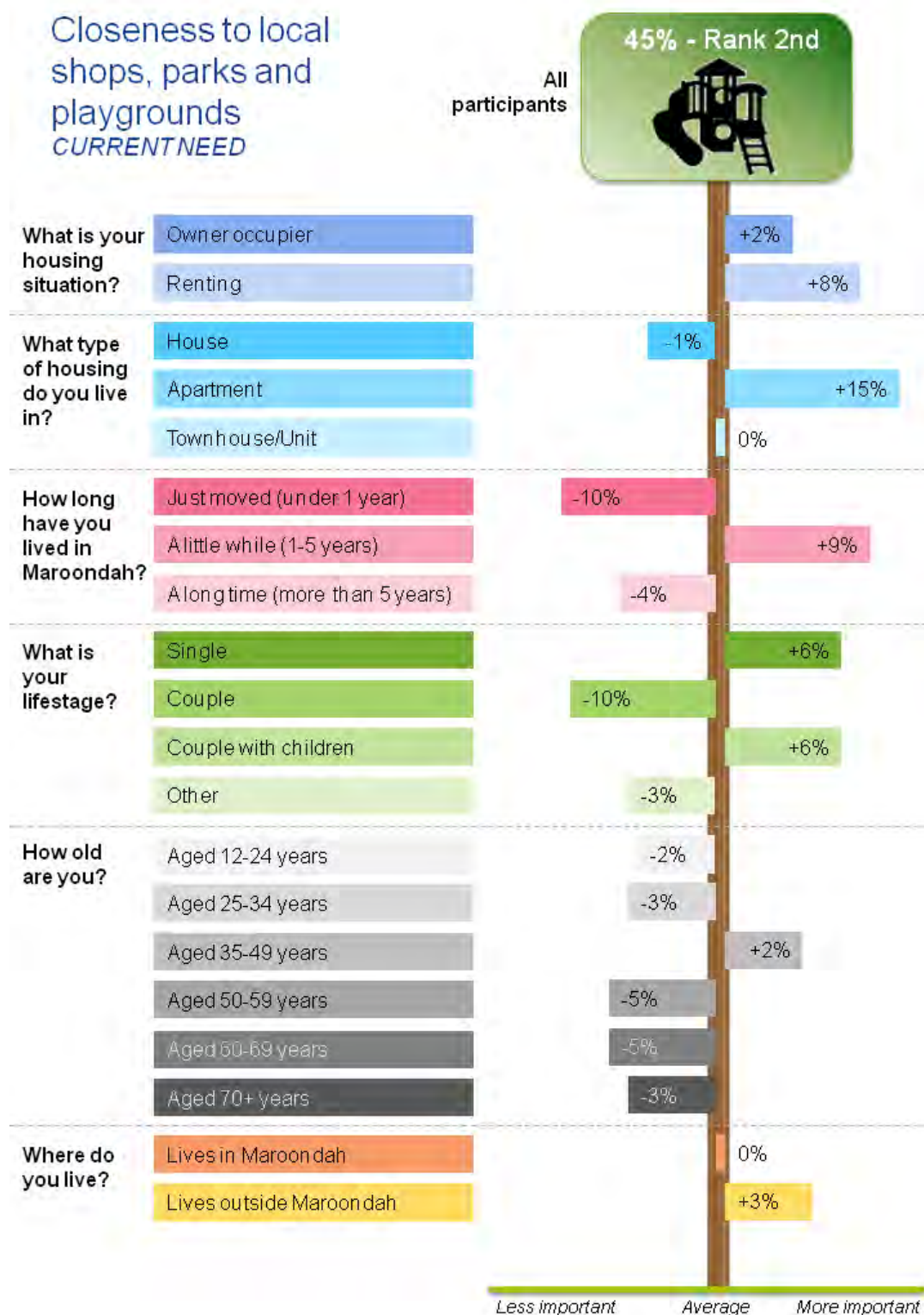
	1st	Closeness to public transport including buses and train stations
	2nd	Closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds
	3rd	Price and affordability
	4th	The age and condition of the house
	5th ↑	Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages
	6th ↑	Whether the house is energy and water efficient
	7th ↓	The number of bedrooms and/or living areas
	8th ↓	Whether the house has a large backyard
	9th	Availability of digital and technological embedded features

Current Need #1: Closeness to public transport including buses and train stations



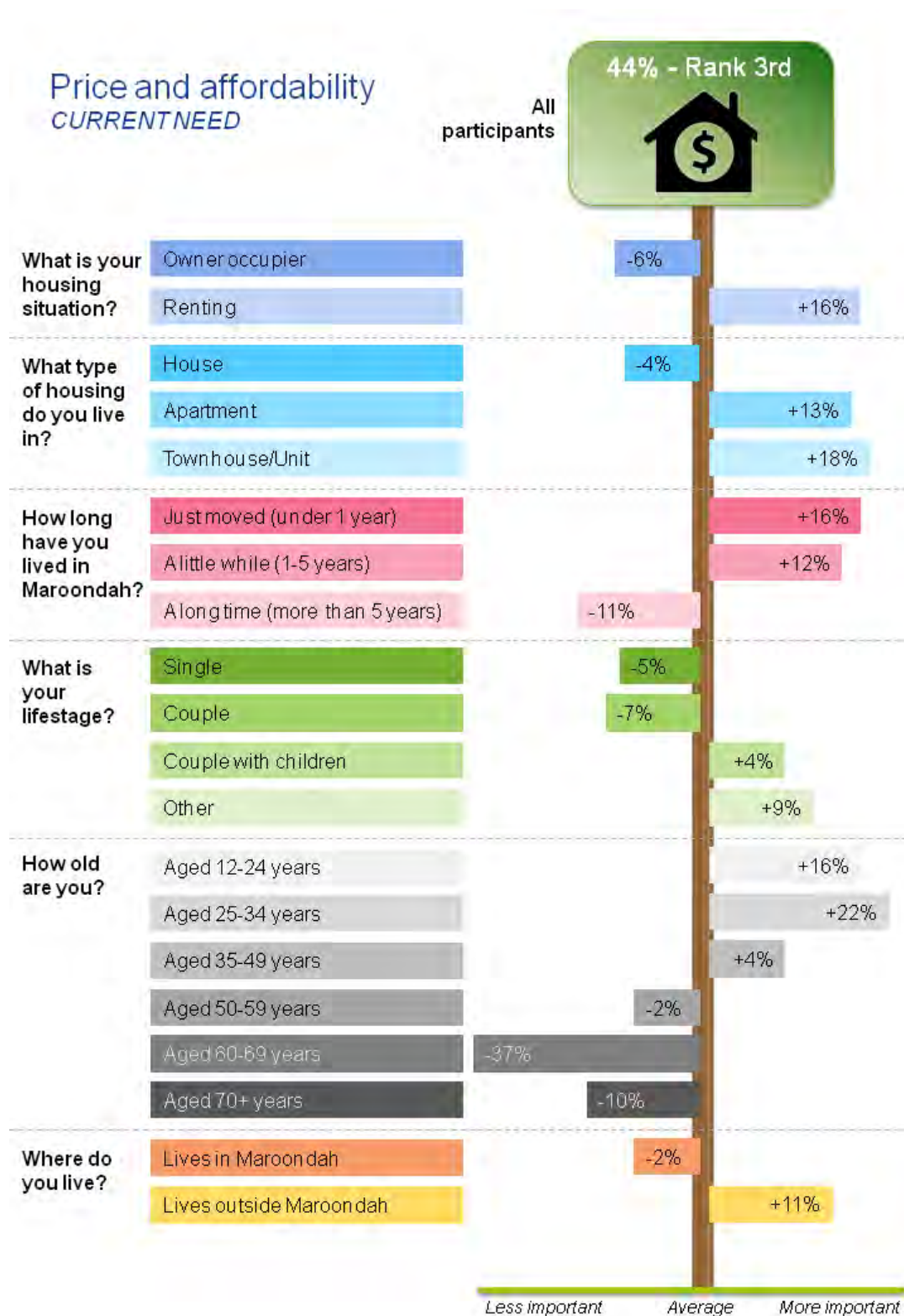
Closeness to public transport including buses and train station was the highest ranked current housing need identified by survey participants. Whilst identified as a key current need by all population groups, the need was most highly expressed by those renting, living in a house (rather than a townhouse or apartment), identifying as single, and seniors aged over 70 years. It was less of a need for survey respondents aged between 25-34 years and those living in an apartment.

Current Need #2: Closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds



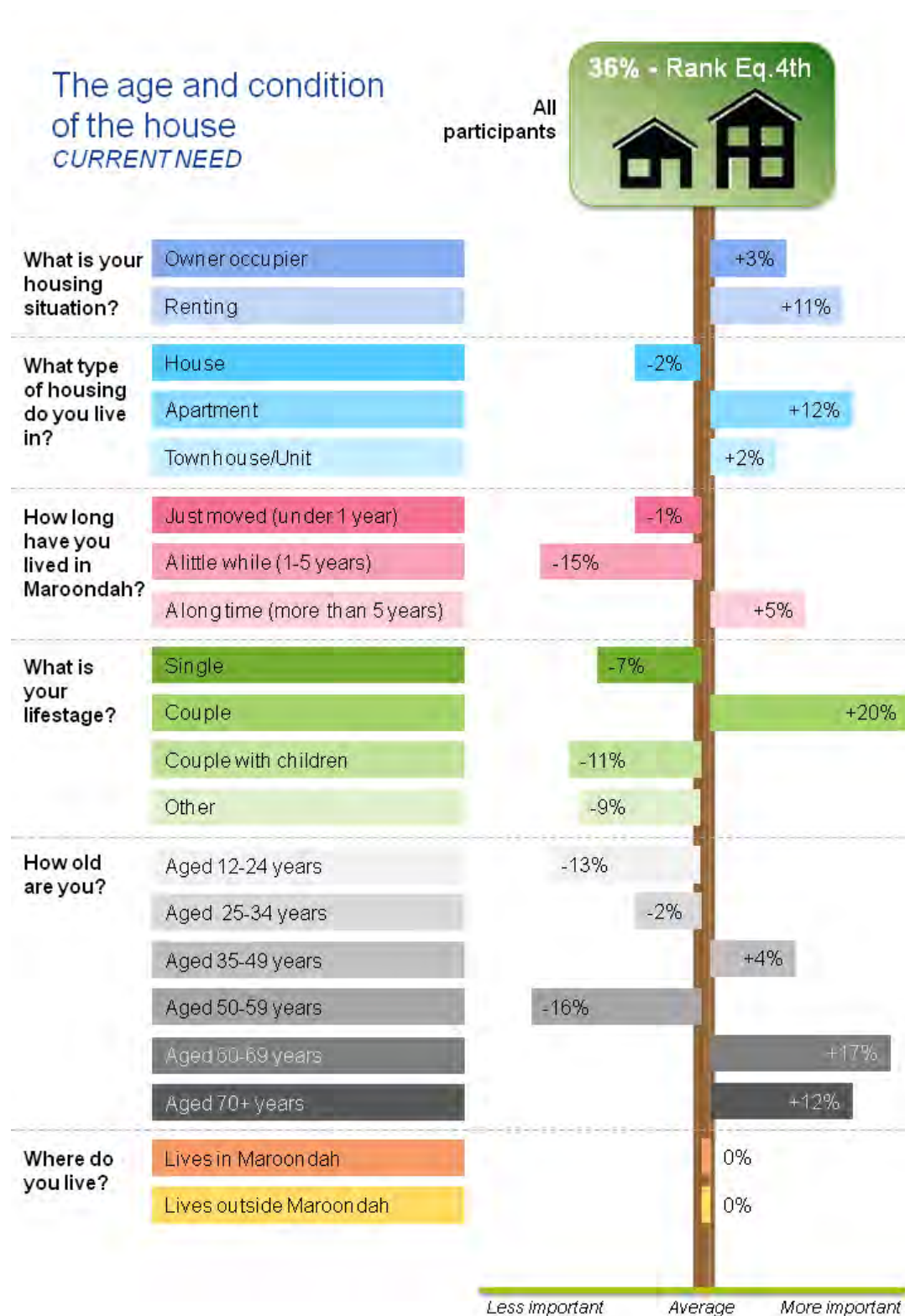
Closeness to local shops, parks and playgrounds was the second ranked current housing need identified by survey participants. Again, this current housing need was consistently expressed across all demographic groups but of particular importance to respondents living in apartments, those who have lived in Maroondah between 1 and 5 years and those currently renting. It was less of a priority for residents who had moved into the municipality over the past 12 months and those identifying as a couple without dependent children.

Current Need #3: Price and affordability



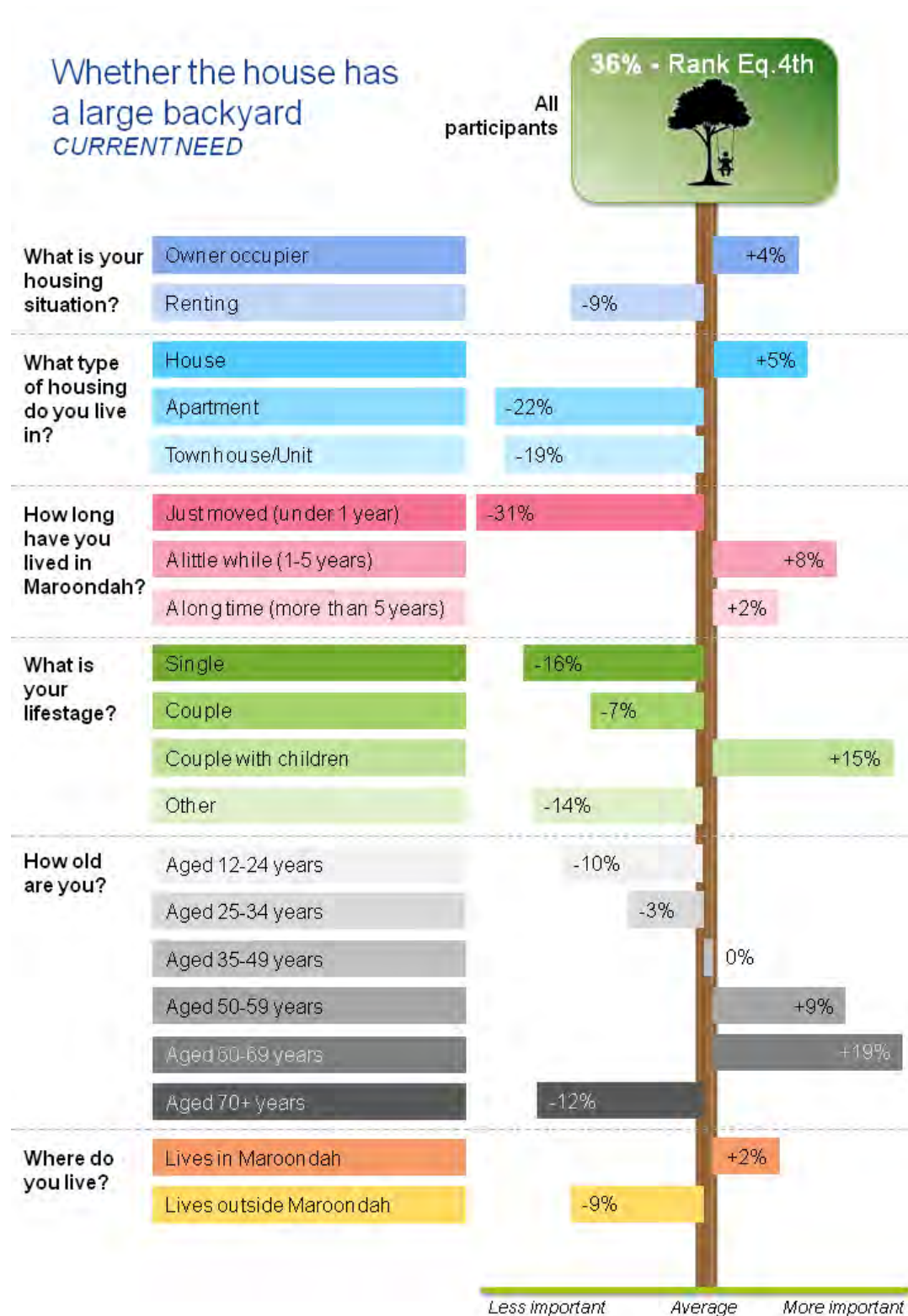
The third ranked current housing need was price and affordability. This need was most highly expressed by respondents aged 25-34 years, those living in townhouses/units, those currently renting, youth and young adults aged 12-24, and those who have moved into Maroondah over the past year. It was significantly less of a priority housing need for respondents aged 60-69, those who have lived in Maroondah for more than five years and people aged over 70 years.

Current Need #4 (Equal): The age and condition of the house



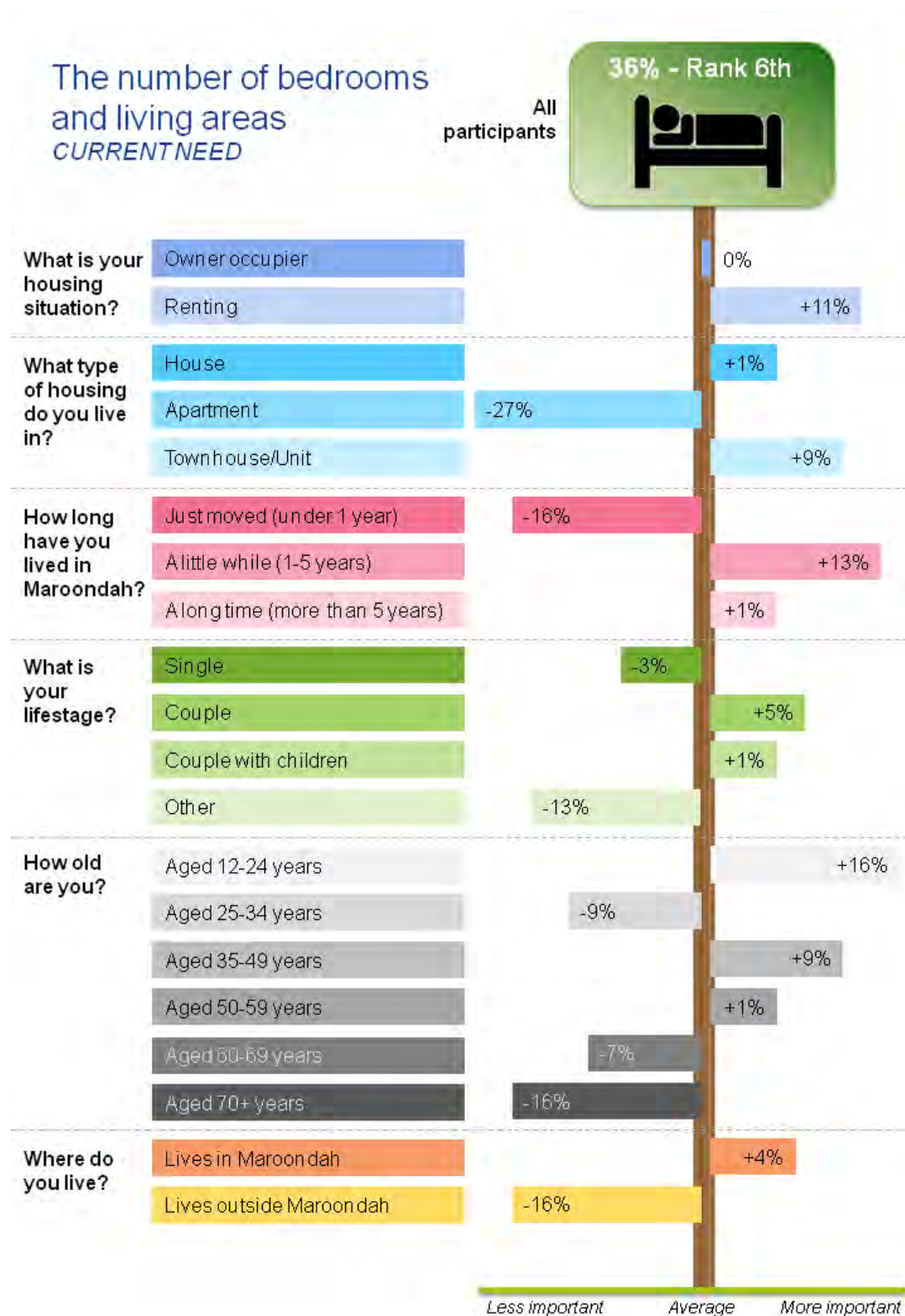
The equal fourth ranked need was the age and condition of the house. This was most keenly felt by couple households and those aged 60-69 years. It was also a priority need for residents aged over 70 years, those living in apartments and those currently renting. It was much less of a priority for survey participants aged 50-59 years and those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years.

Current Need #4 (Equal): Whether the house has a large backyard



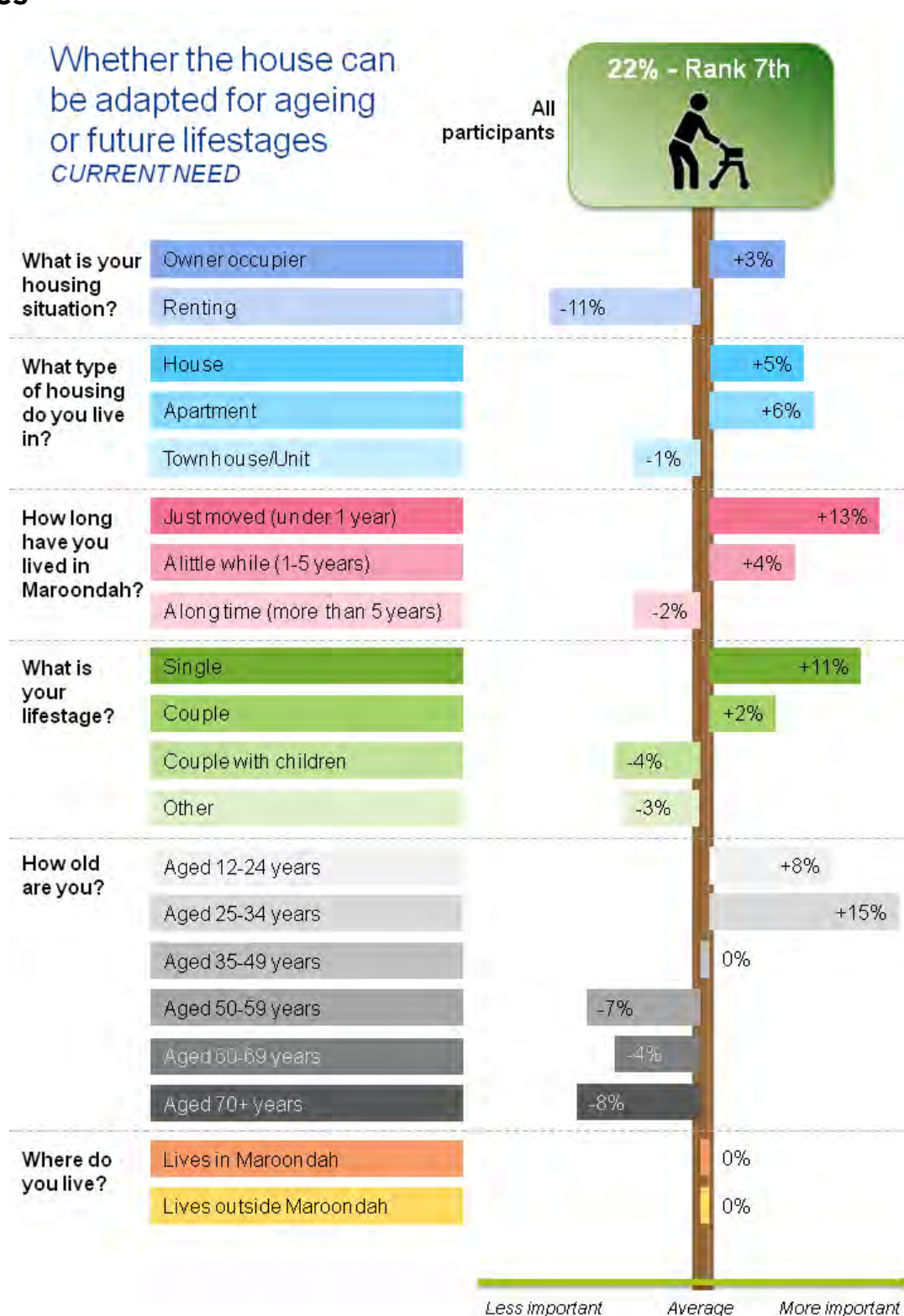
The other equal fourth ranked current housing need was whether the house has a large backyard. This was a high priority current need for respondents aged 60-69 years and for couples with children. It was much lower priority for residents who have just moved into Maroondah, and those living in apartments, townhouses or units.

Current Need #6: The number of bedrooms and living areas



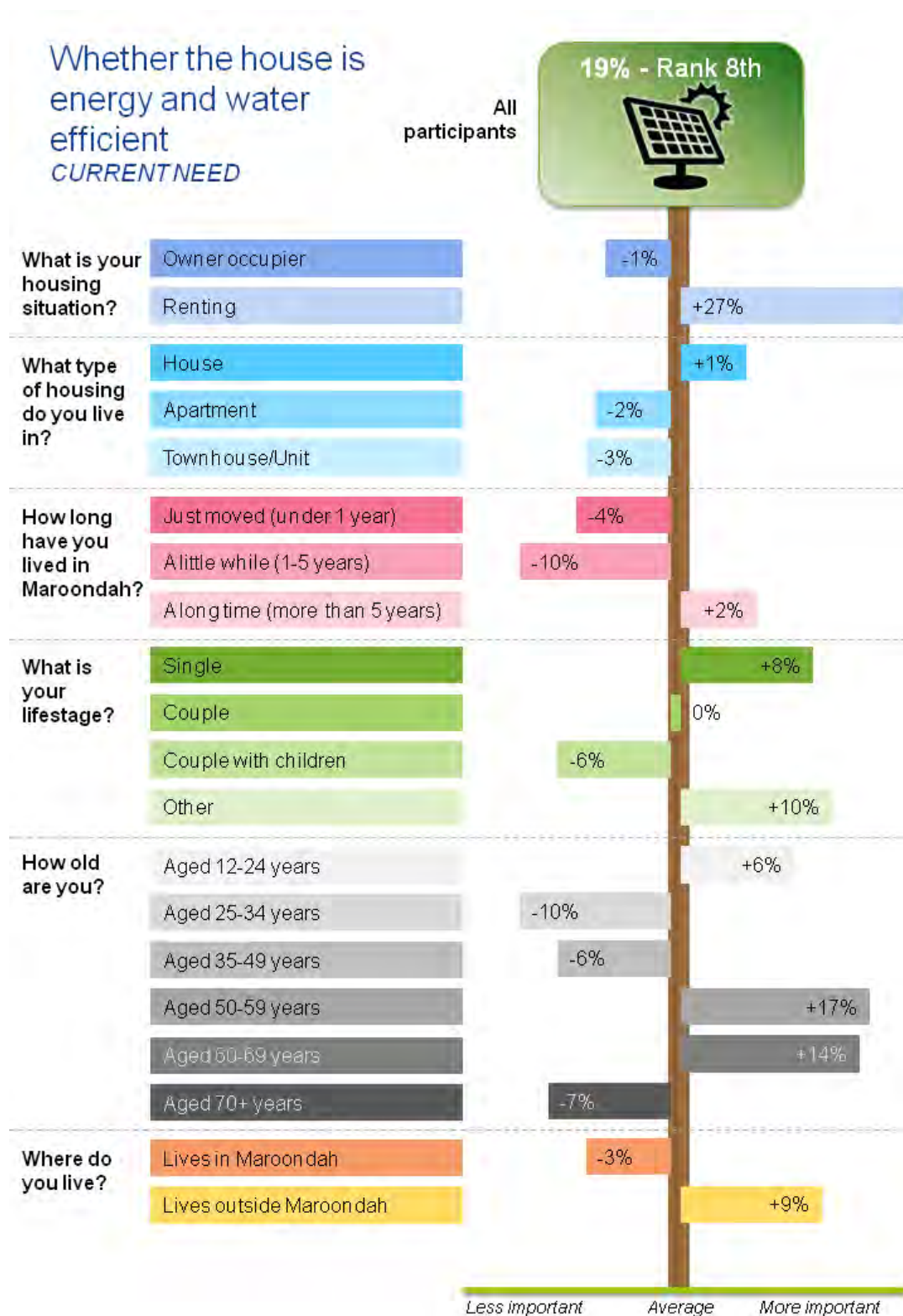
The sixth ranked current housing need was the number of bedrooms and living areas. This was a particular need for youth and young adults aged 12-24 years. It was also important for those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years, those renting and those living in a townhouse or unit. It was much less of a need for respondents living in apartments, those who have just moved into Maroondah and those aged over 70 years.

Current Need #7: Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestyles



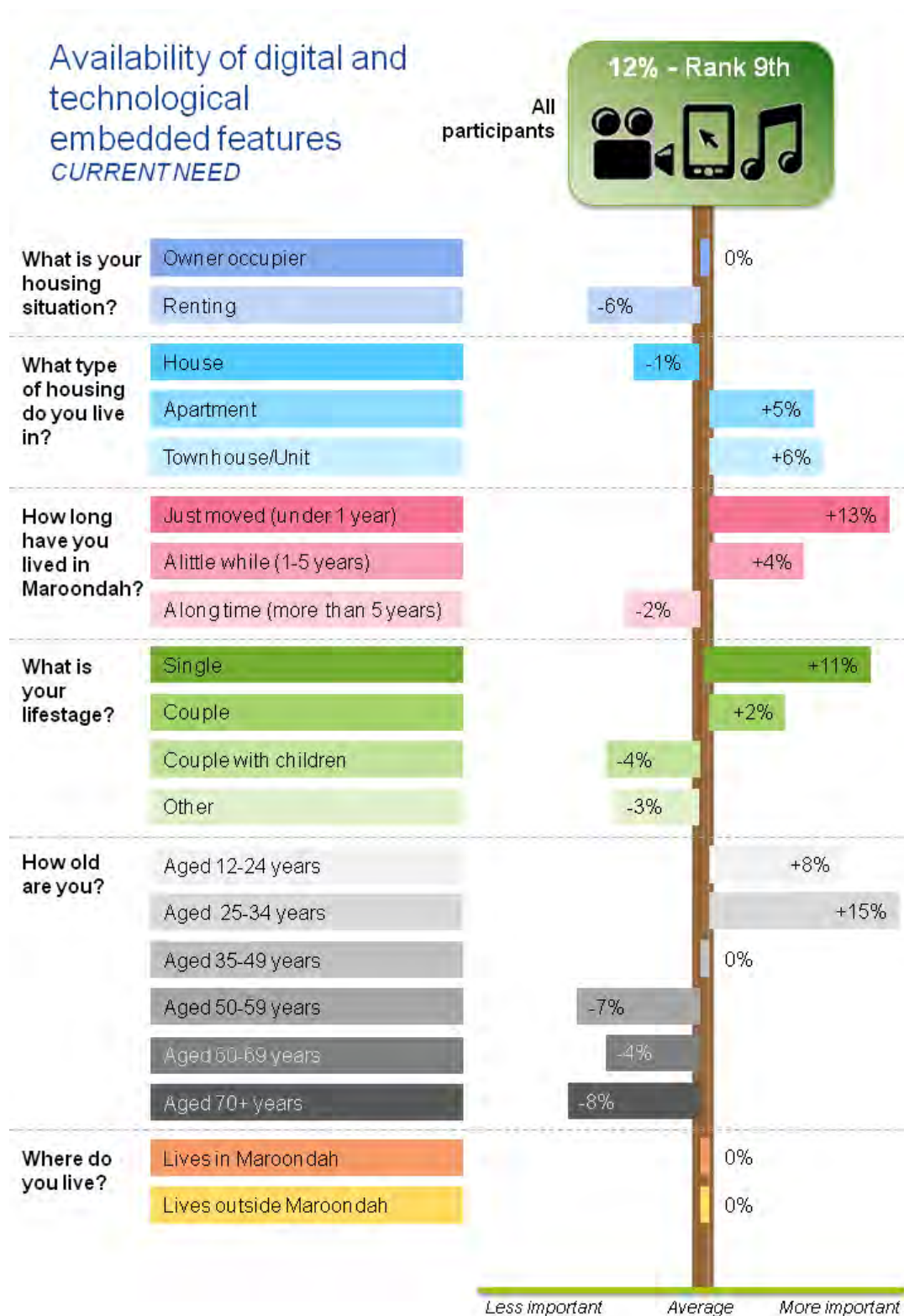
The seventh ranked current housing need was whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestyles. This need was most expressed by respondents aged 25-34 years, those who have recently moved into Maroondah over the past year and respondents identifying as single. It is less of an issue for those who are currently renting.

Current Need #8: Whether the house is energy and water efficient



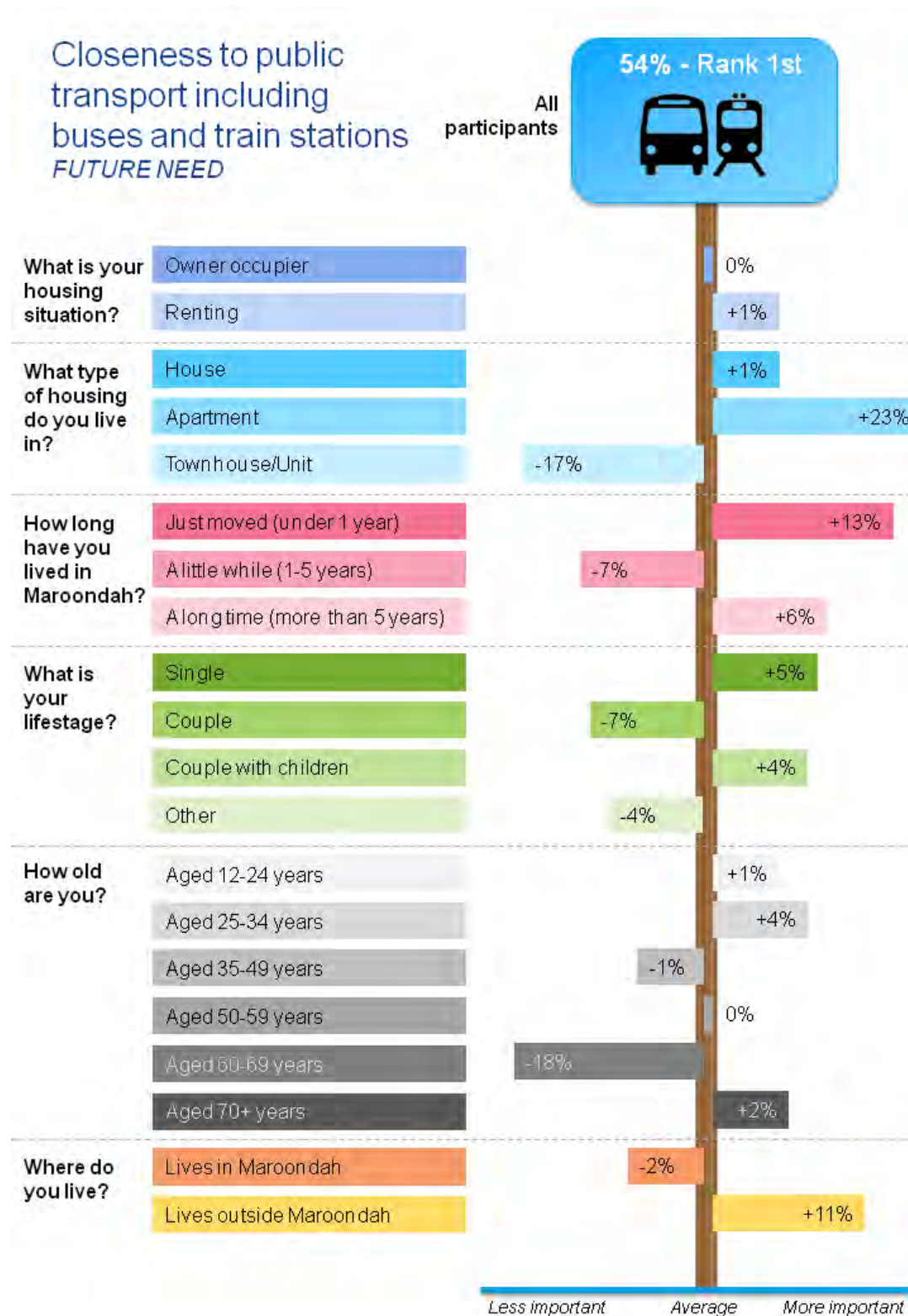
The eighth ranked current housing need was whether the house is energy and water efficient. This was particularly identified as a need by respondents who are currently renting. It was also seen as important to residents aged 50-59 years and 60-69 years. This need was seen as less of a priority for those who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years and those aged 25-34 years.

Current Need #9: Availability of digital and technological features



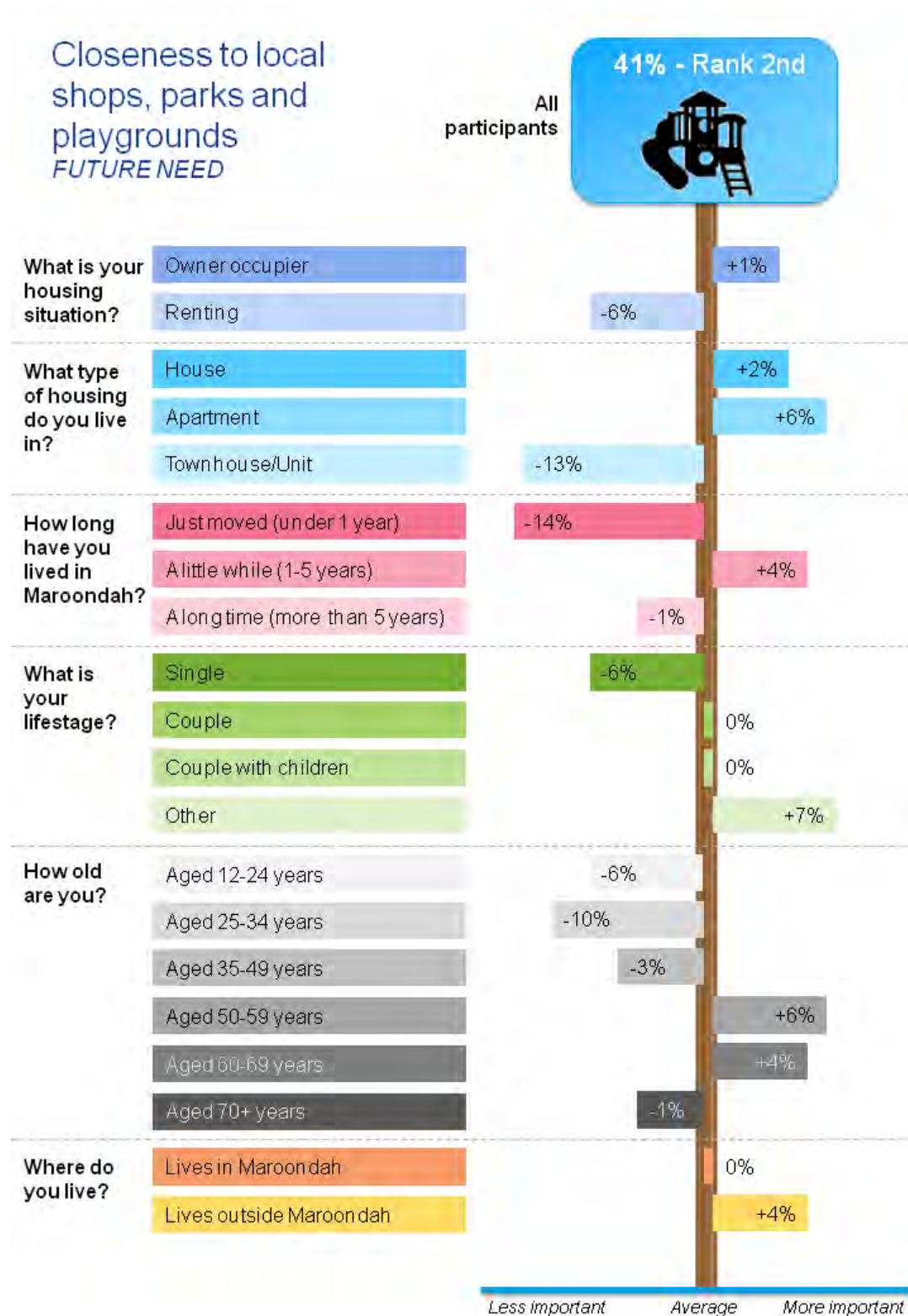
The ninth and lowest ranked current housing need was the availability of digital and technological features. This factor was most expressed as a current housing need by respondents aged 25-34 and those who have moved into Maroondah over the past 12 months. It was less of a need for those respondents aged over 70 years.

Future Need #1: Closeness to public transport including buses and train stations



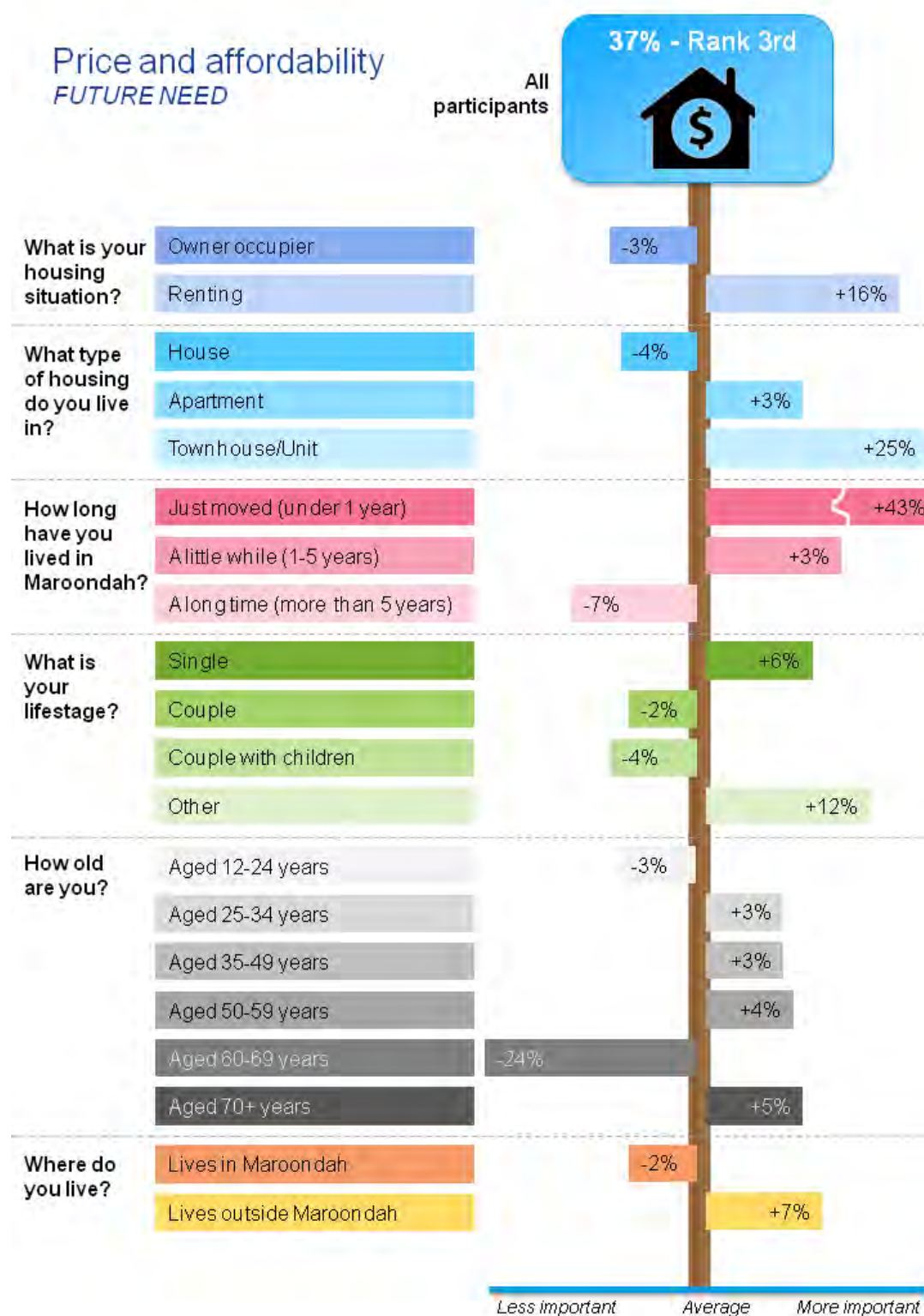
The highest ranked future need was closeness to public transport including buses and train stations. This represents the same ranking as current housing need, although respondents rated this future need as an even higher priority. Respondents living in apartments and those having just moved into Maroondah over the past 12 months ranked this future need most highly. It was seen as less of a need by respondents aged 60-69 years and those living in townhouses and units.

Future Need #2: Closeness to local shops, park and playgrounds



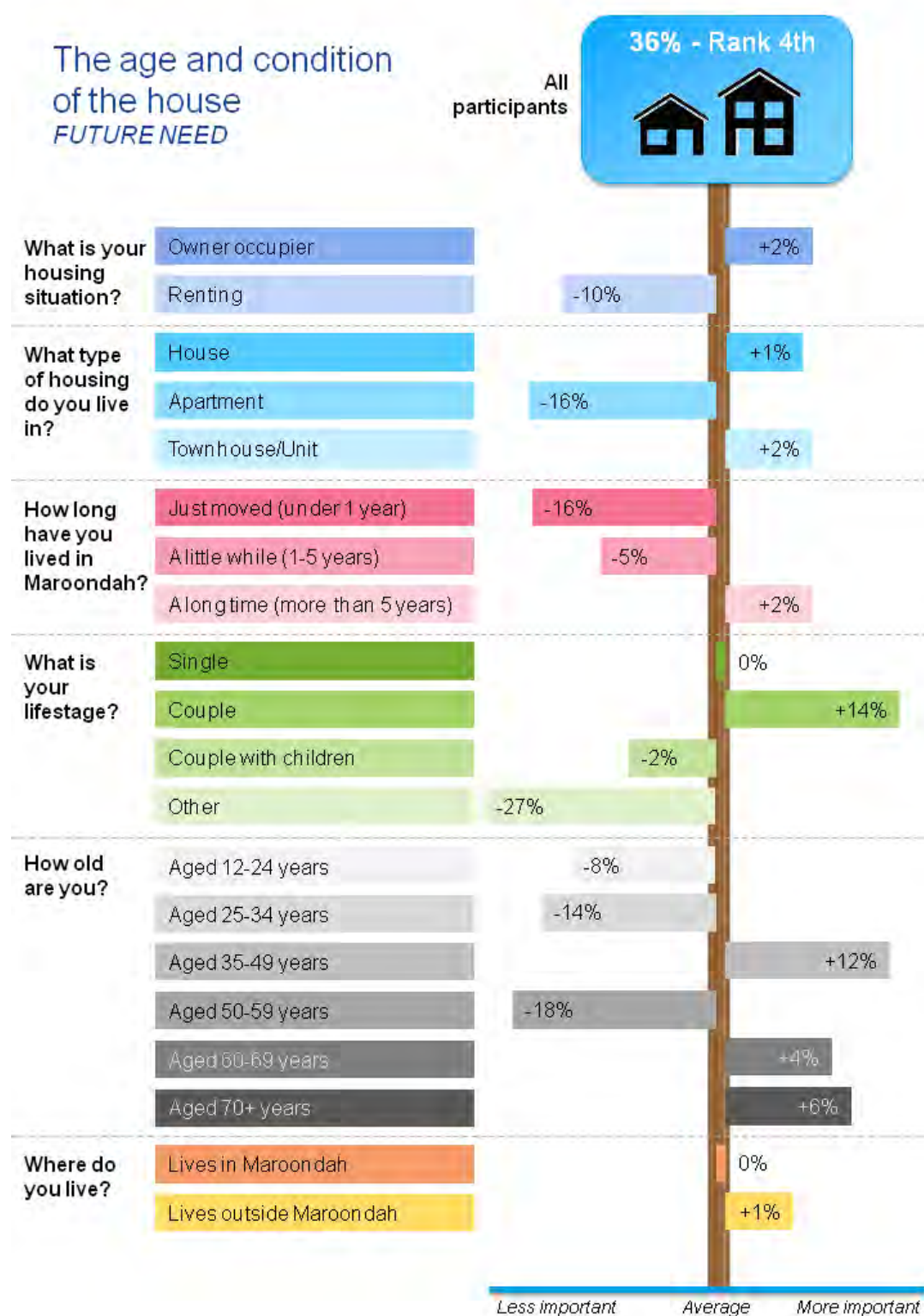
As with current housing need rankings, the closeness to local shops, parks and playground was ranked as the second overall future housing need. This was consistently important to most demographic groups with the exception of those who have moved into Maroondah over the past 12 months, those living in townhouse and unit dwellings, and respondents aged 25-34 years.

Future Need #3: Price and affordability



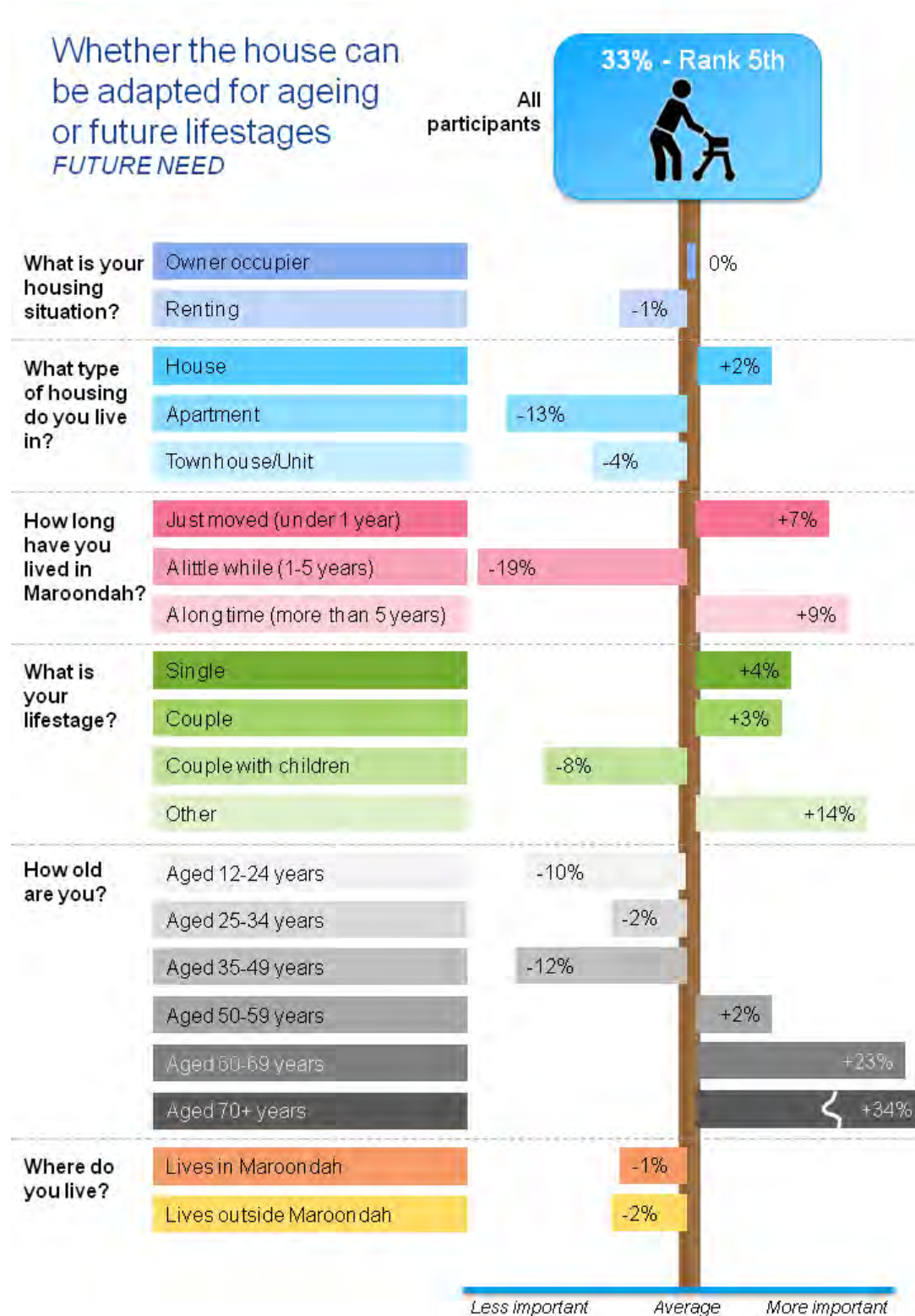
The third highest future housing need was price and affordability, again, as per the current housing need rankings. There was considerable variation in the perceived importance of this need between a number of demographic groups. This future need was highly important to residents who have just moved into Maroondah in the past 12 months, those living in townhouses and unit, and respondents who are currently renting. It was much less important for respondents aged 60-69 years and those who have lived in the municipality for more than five years.

Future Need #4: The age and condition of the house



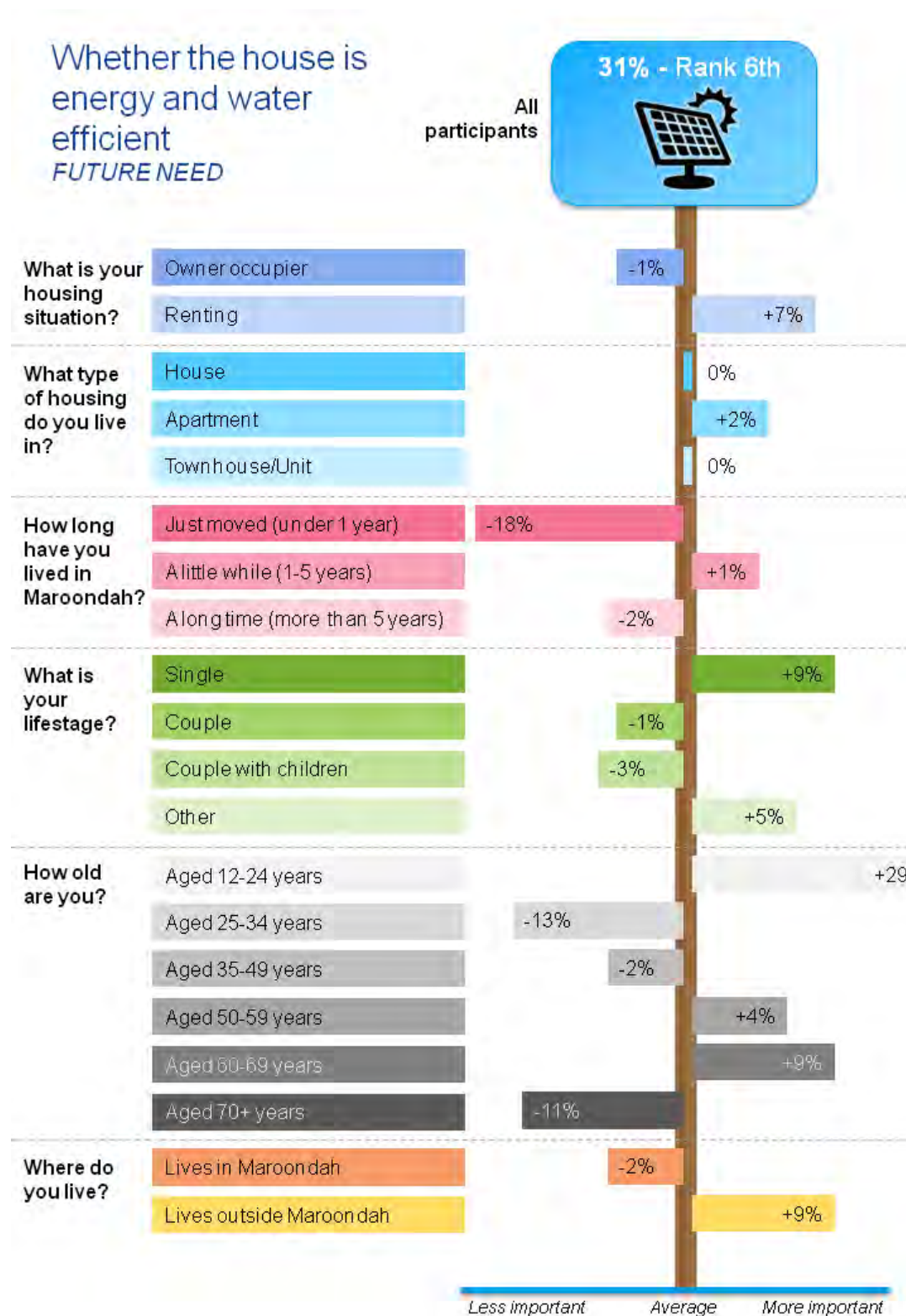
The age and condition of the house was ranked as the fourth highest future housing need by survey respondents. It was most important to couples and respondents aged 35-49 years but less important for those aged 50-59 years, respondents living in apartments and those who have just moved into Maroondah over the past 12 months.

Future Need #5: Whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages



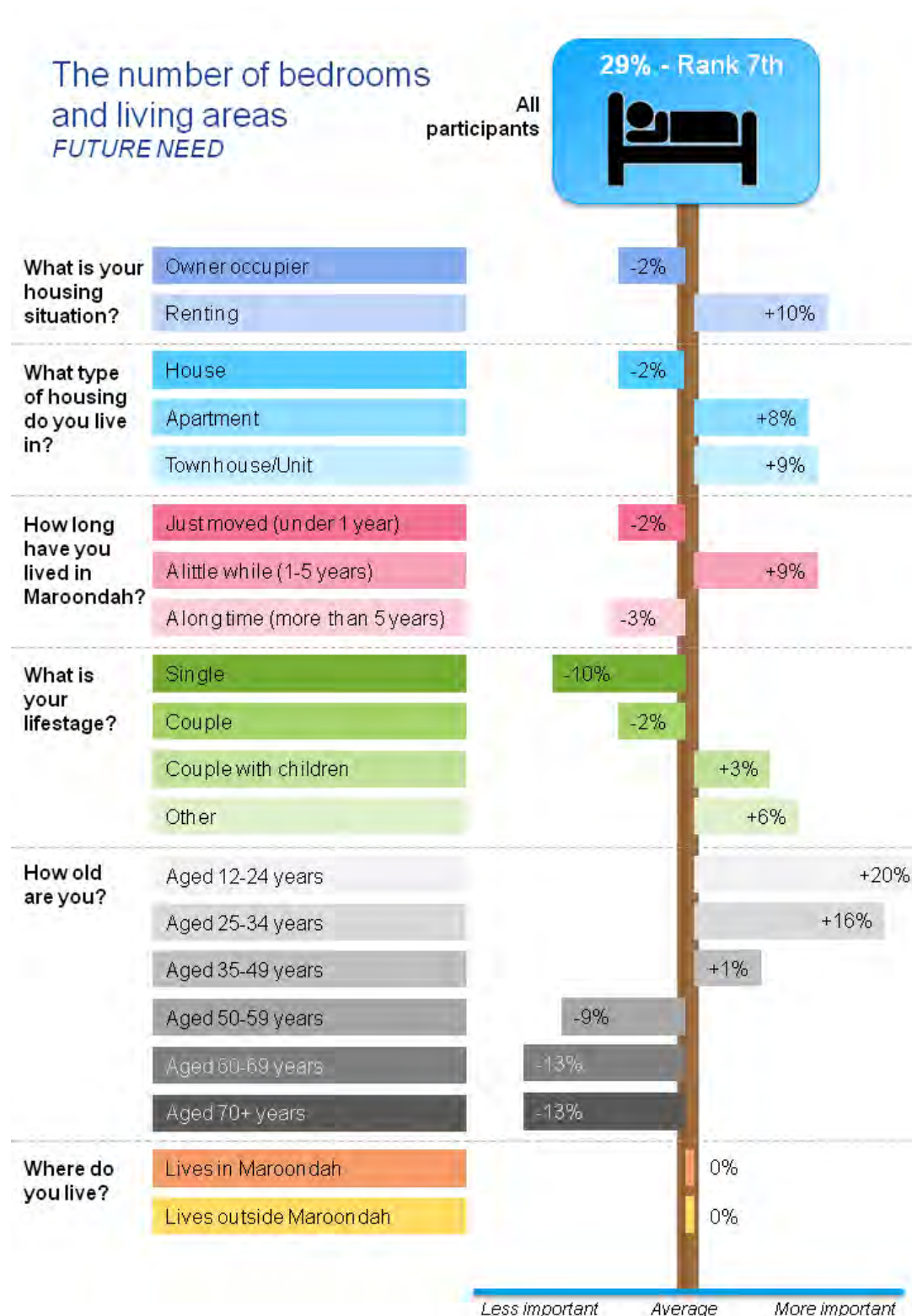
The fifth ranked future housing need is whether the house can be adapted for ageing or future lifestages. This was ranked more highly as a future need compared with a current need by a majority of respondents. Not surprisingly, this need was most highly identified by residents aged over 70 years and those aged 60-69 years. It was also seen as important by those who have lived in Maroondah for more than five years. This need is less important to respondents who have lived in Maroondah between 1-5 years, those living in apartments and respondents aged 35-49 years.

Future Need #6: Whether the house is energy and water efficient



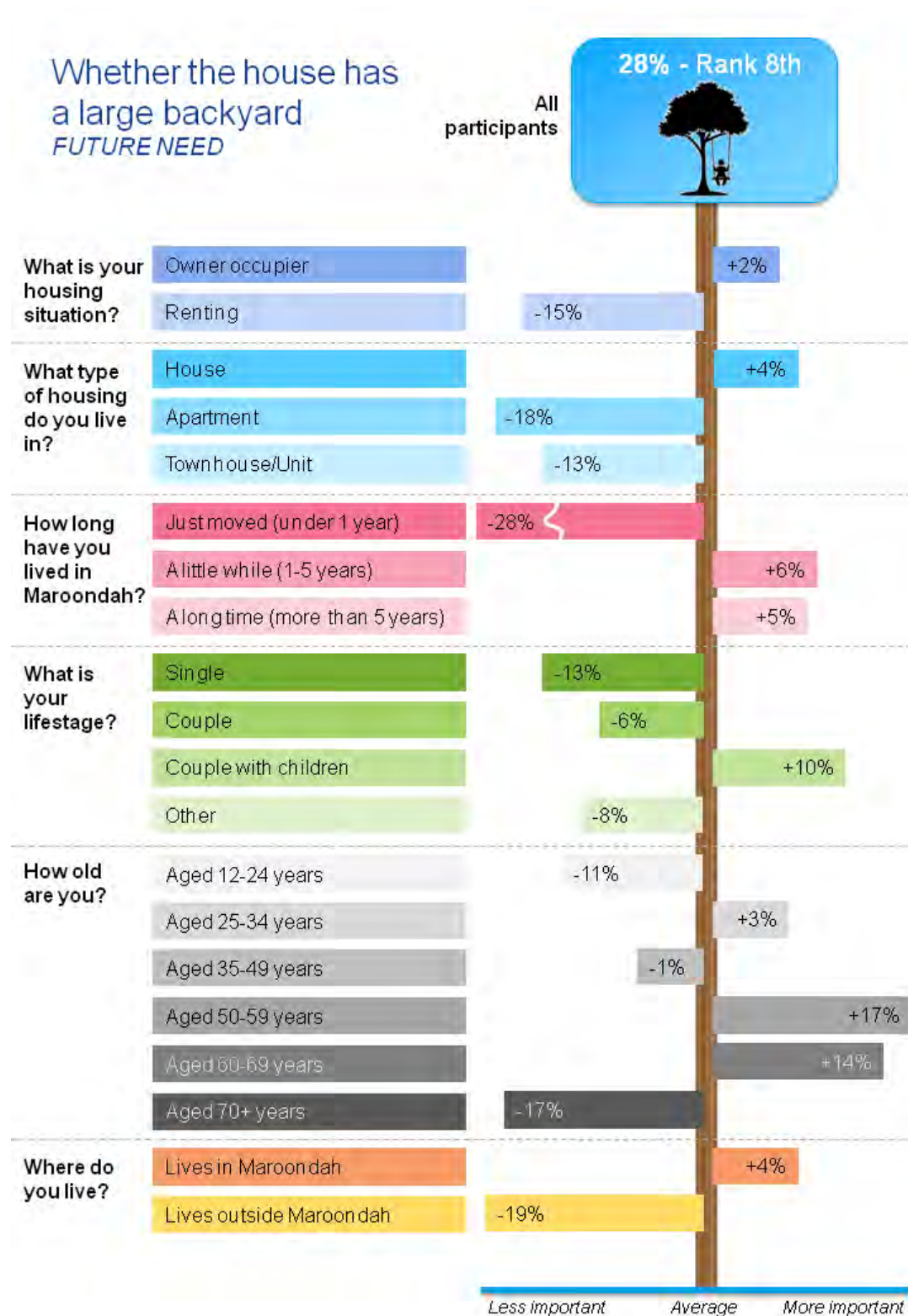
The energy and water efficiency of the house was the sixth ranked future need by survey respondents. This was also seen as a more important future need compared with a current need by a majority of respondents. Household energy and water efficiency was clearly most highly prioritised by youth and young adults aged 12-24 years. It was also seen as important by respondents identifying as single, those aged 60-69 years and those living outside the municipality. It was less important to respondents who have just moved into Maroondah in the past 12 months, those aged 25-34 years and respondents aged over 70 years.

Future Need #7: The number of bedrooms and/or living areas



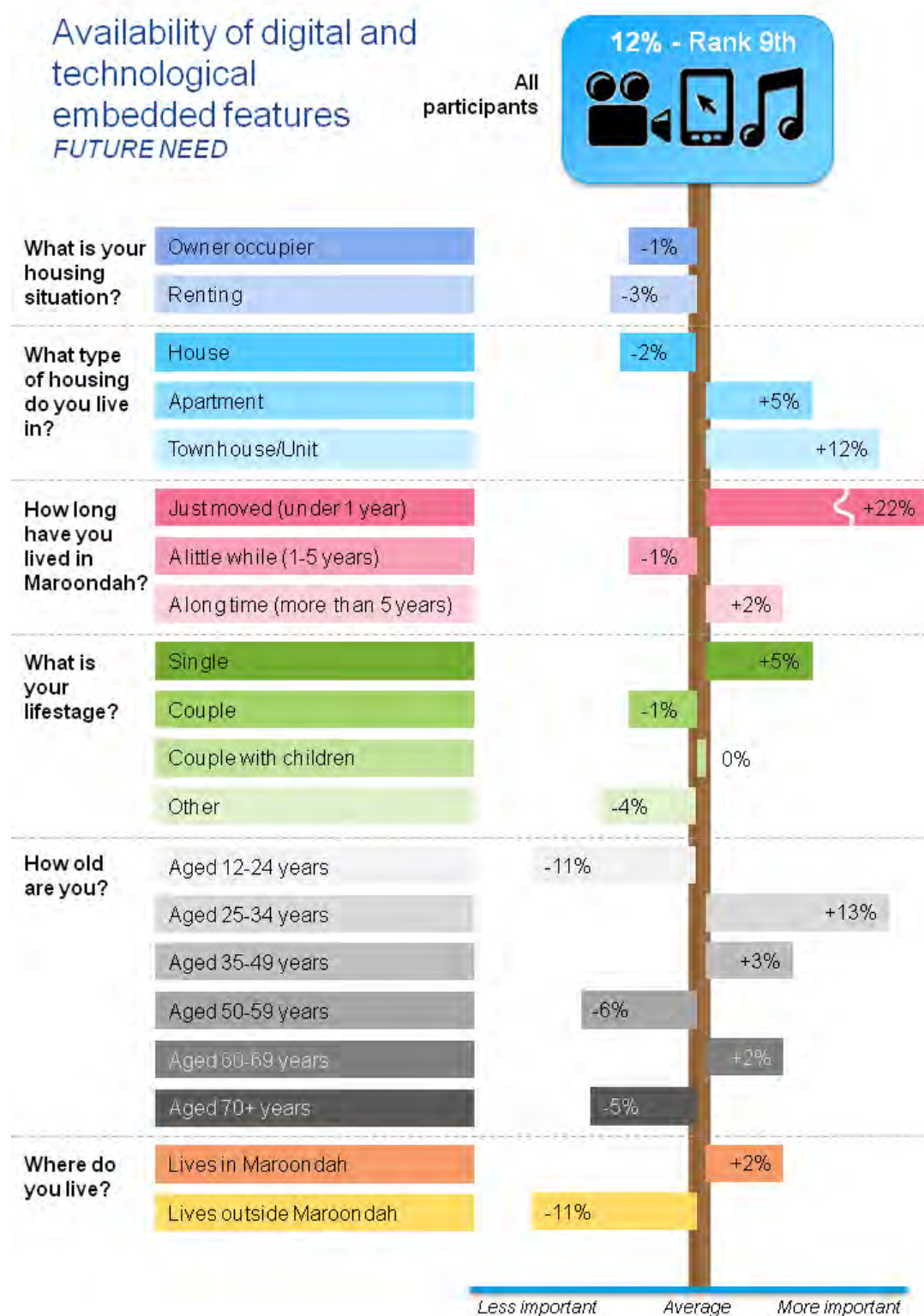
The number of bedrooms and living areas was seen as a less important future need by survey respondents in comparison to their current needs. It was most highly rated as a housing need by youth and young adults aged 12-24 years and respondents aged 25-34 years. It was a much lower priority future need for residents aged over 60 years and those identifying as single.

Future Need #8: Whether the house has a large backyard



Whether the house has a large backyard was also seen as a less important future need by survey respondents in comparison to their current needs. This eighth ranked future need was most highly ranked by respondents aged 50-59 years and those aged 60-69 years. It was considerably less important for residents who have recently moved into Maroondah in the past year, those living in an apartment and respondents aged over 70 years.

Future Need #9: Availability of digital and technological features



Similar to current housing needs, the ninth and lowest ranked future housing need was the availability of digital and technological features. This factor was most expressed by respondents who have moved into MaroonDAH over the past 12 months, those aged 25-34 years and respondents living in a townhouse or unit. It is seen as less important for respondents aged 12-24 years and those living outside MaroonDAH.

Community views on local infrastructure and services

What did we do?

Council provides a diverse range of services and facilities to meet the needs of the Maroondah community. To facilitate clear long term strategic directions for Council's assets, it is important to identify both current and future service needs of different population cohorts within the community.

In support of the '20 minute neighborhoods' principle outlined in the Victorian Government's metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne*, Council devised an engagement activity to seek people's input on which facilities and services are most important to them.

The question posed was: "How far would you travel to access services & facilities?" Participants were asked to select their top 3 services or facilities from a list of 24 facilities and services (see facing page). Please note that Council is not responsible for all of the facilities and services included in this list. A broader list of options was provided to seek a more holistic view of community needs and preferences.

Participants were then given the opportunity to categorise these services according to how far they would travel (5 minutes, 10 minutes, 20 minutes) to access or utilise the facilities and services by placing their choice on a 'dart-board' style poster with radiating bands to indicate distance from home. This activity was undertaken at the Ringwood and Croydon Open House events.

For the purpose of understanding outcomes from this activity, the list of services and facilities can be grouped in categories of transport and accessibility, retail, healthcare, community facilities and education (see facing page).



Engagement activity participant at the Croydon Open House event in November 2015

Transport and accessibility



Shared trail



Footpath network



Bus stop



Train station

Retail



Local shopping strip
(no supermarket)



Neighbourhood centre with supermarket



Major shopping centre



Lifestyle/
homemaker centre

Sporting and Leisure



Small park



Large Park



Aquatic and Leisure Centre



Sporting ground or oval

Healthcare



Maternal and Child Health Centre



Medical facility with GP



Public hospital with emergency department

Community facilities



Youth facility



Seniors facility



Library



Community house



Art gallery

Education



Childcare centre



Kindergarten



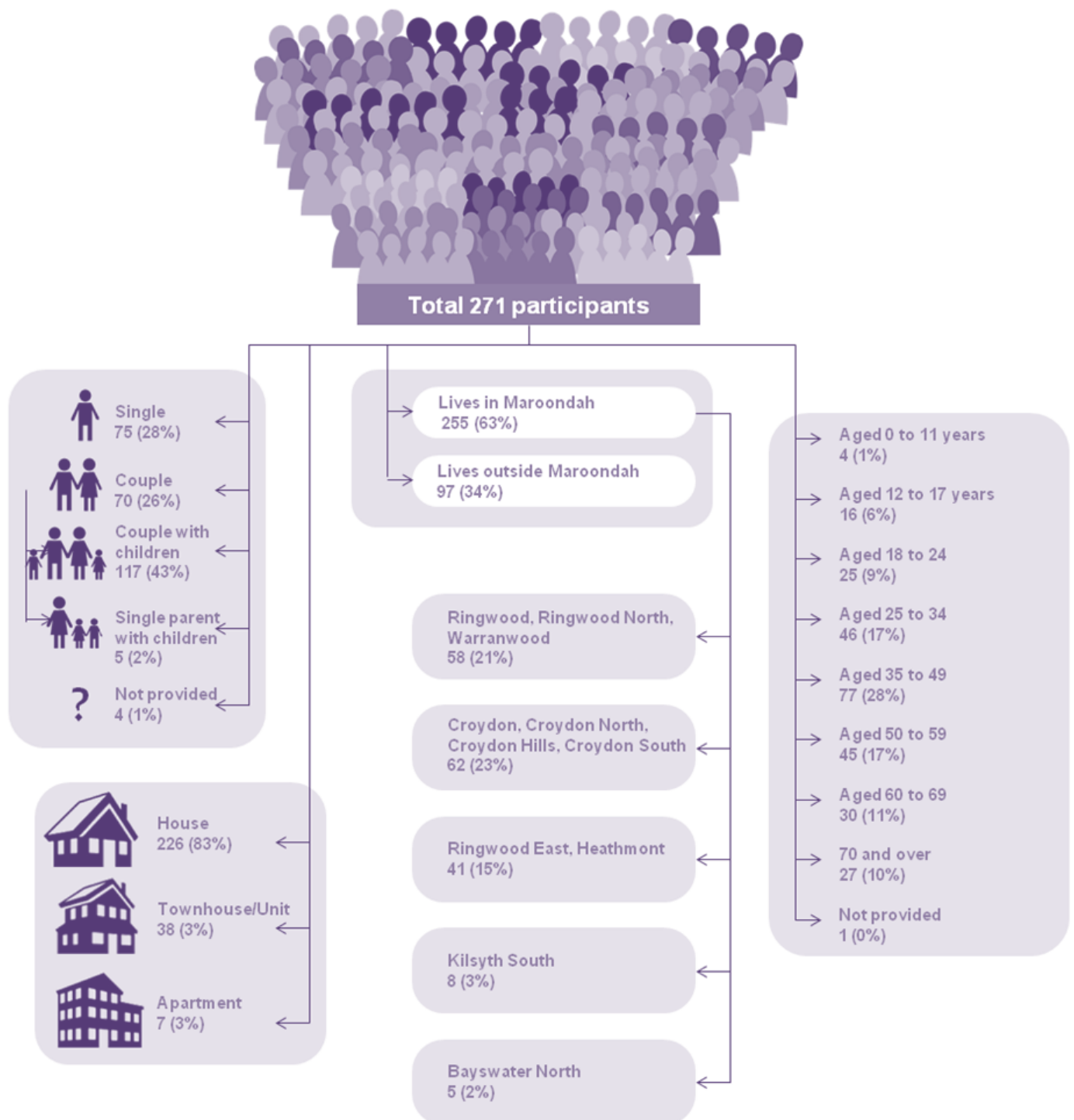
Primary School (public)



Secondary School (public)

Who provided input?

A total of 271 community members participated in this activity. 45% of participants were aged between 25 and 49, 83% lived in a detached house and 43% were couples with children. 22% of participants live in Ringwood, Ringwood North and Warranwood; whilst 23% of participants live in Croydon, Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Croydon South. A summary of participant demographics is shown below:



What did people say?

A summary of findings from this community engagement activity is shown in the table below:



#1 - Transport and Accessibility

Shared trail, Footpath network, Train Station, Bus Stop

Transport and accessibility services and facilities were identified as the highest priority with most participants selecting at least one option in this category. Most respondents wanted these amenities to be within a 5-10 minute travel distance from their home. The majority of respondents would like Shared Trails, Footpath Networks and Bus Stops to be within 5 minutes of their home. Over half of survey participants were willing to travel either 10 or 20 minutes to a Train Station.



#2 - Retail

Local Shopping Strip, Neighbourhood Centre, Major shopping centre, Lifestyle/Homemaker Retail Centre

Retail amenities received the second highest number of responses. The survey showed most participants were willing to travel 20 minutes or more to access Major Shopping Centres and Lifestyle/Homemaker Retail Centres. A considerable majority of respondents preferred to live within 10 minutes of Local Shopping Strips and Neighbourhood Centres.



#3 – Sporting and Leisure

Small Park, Large Park, Aquatic and Leisure Centre, Sporting ground or oval

Sporting and Leisure facilities and services received the third highest number of responses. Respondents were more willing to travel further to access Large Parks compared with Small Parks. The majority of participants were willing to travel between 10-20 minutes to access Aquatic and Leisure Centres.



#4 – Healthcare

Maternal Child and Health Centre, Medical Facility with GP, Public hospital with an emergency department

Healthcare facilities and services received the fourth highest number of responses. The considerable majority of participants preferred a travel time of between 5 and 10 minutes to access a Medical Facility with a GP. In contrast, most participants were willing to travel between 10 and 20 minutes to access a Public Hospital with an Emergency Department. Very few responses were received for Maternal and Child Health Centres.



#5 – Community facilities

Youth Facility, Seniors Facility, Library, Community House, Art Gallery

Community facilities received the fifth highest number of responses. A Library was the most popular facility in this category with a majority preferring to live within 10 minutes travel distance of this facility. The majority of respondents were willing to travel 10-20 minutes to access an Art Gallery. Mixed travel distances were identified for other facilities in this category.



#6 – Education

Kindergarten, Childcare Centre, Primary School

Education facilities received the sixth highest number of responses. Primary Schools (public) were identified as a higher community priority in comparison to Secondary Schools (public). The considerable majority of respondents preferred to live within 10 minutes of a Primary School (public) but most were willing to travel between 10 and 20 minutes.

Tell me more...

Some of the more detailed findings of participant input relating to local facilities and services can be found below. It is important to note that the low number of responses for certain forms of facilities and services result in limitations in looking into participant responses by particular demographic categories.

Priority #1: Transport and accessibility

Total responses	215
Types of facilities & services	Shared trail, Footpath network, Train Station, Bus Stop

Transport and accessibility was clearly identified as the highest priority amongst the community in regards to proximity to current and future housing.

- 79% of all participants selected at least one service or facility relating to transport and accessibility
- 60% of responses preferred access to at least one transport services and facility within 5 minutes of home. 92% of responses sought access within 10 minutes of home.
- Shared trails and footpath networks received 61 responses and 65% would like this facility within 5 minutes of home.
- Train stations were also popular with 47% of responses seeking access within 5 minutes of home, and 53% of responses happy to travel more than 10 minutes to access this service.
- There was a strong preference for high proximity to bus stops with 84% of responses identifying the desire to have one within 5 minutes of home.
- Access to a train station is particularly important for youth and young adults aged 12-24 with 68% of responses in this category nominating this as one of their top three priorities.



The upgraded Ringwood Railway Station was opened in 2016

Priority #2: Retail

Total responses	147
Types of facilities & services	Local Shopping Strip, Neighbourhood Centre, Major Shopping Centre, Lifestyle/Homemaker Retail Centre

The retail category received the second highest number of responses behind transport and accessibility. Data showed the community is willing to travel further to access larger shopping centres but would prefer smaller centres closer to home.

- 54% of responses for Major Shopping Centres and Lifestyle/Homemaker Retail Centres were willing to travel 20 minutes or more to access these facilities.
- 84% of responses for Local Shopping Strips and Neighbourhood Centres were placed within 10 minutes or less proximity to housing.
- 78% of responses for Major Shopping Centres and Lifestyle/Homemaker Retail Centres indicated participant willingness to travel 10 minutes or more.
- Lifestyle/Homemaker Centres were one of the lowest priorities across all services and facilities, receiving just five responses (3.4% of Retail responses). Most of these responses were from participants who live outside Maroondah.



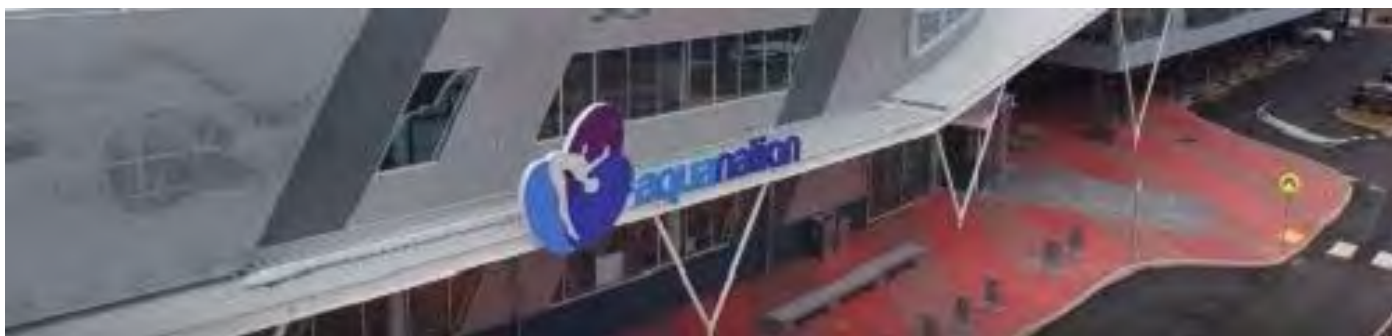
The new Ringwood Town Square in Ringwood was opened as part of the Eastland expansion during 2015

Priority #3: Sporting and Leisure

Total responses	145
Types of facilities & services	Small Park, Large Park, Aquatic and Leisure Centre, Sporting ground or oval

Sporting and Leisure facilities and services received the third highest number of responses, but a very similar number to the retail category.

- People were more willing to travel to access Large Parks (69% between 10 and 20 minutes) than for Small Parks (90% within 5 minutes)
- The majority of responses (77%) were willing to travel more than 10 minutes from home to access Aquatic and Leisure Centres.



Aquanation, a new regional aquatic and leisure facility in Ringwood, was opened during 2015

Priority #4: Healthcare

Total responses	131
Types of facilities & services	Maternal Child and Health Centre, Medical Facility with GP, Public hospital with emergency department.

Responses indicated that local residents are willing to travel further for certain types of healthcare facilities 84% of responses for a Medical Facility with GP identified a preferred proximity of less than 10 minutes from home. Participants were more inclined to travel further to access a public hospital with emergency department with 74% of responses for this facility willing to travel between 10 and 20 minutes to access this facility.

- Just 24% of responses in this sector were placed for 20 minutes travel time
- Maternal Child and Health Centres were one of the lowest priorities across all services and facilities, receiving just six responses (4.6% of Healthcare responses), most of these from couples with children.



Maroondah Hospital in Ringwood East

Priority #5: Community facilities

Total responses	92
Types of facilities & services	Youth Facility, Seniors Facility, Library, Community house, Art Gallery

Access to a Library was the highest priority for participants in this category, with 70% of respondents seeking access to this facility within 10 minutes of home.

- Almost all participants (98%) who identified an Art Gallery as a priority were happy to travel at least 10 minutes to access this facility.
- Although there was a low response rate for community house, 50% of those who nominated this facility as a priority would like access within 5 minutes of their home.
- Access to a seniors facility was particularly important for residents aged over 60 with 31% of participants in this age group identifying this facility as a priority.
- Interestingly, no respondents aged 12-17 selected a youth facility as one of their top 3 priorities, although this type of facility was seen as more important by some young adults aged 18-24.



The EV's Youth Centre in Croydon

Priority #6: Education

Total responses	83
Types of facilities & services	Kindergarten, Childcare Centre, Primary School (public), Secondary School (public)

Education facilities and services was the category with the lowest number of responses but it is important to note that these were particularly important for certain age and population groups.

- 85% of responses for Primary Schools (public) preferred proximity within 10 minutes
- 77% of Secondary School (public) responses were willing to travel between 10 and 20 minutes
- Secondary schools were seen as particularly important to participants aged 12-17 but there was no pattern in terms of proximity from home for this age cohort
- Primary schools were most important to participants in a couple family with children and aged between 25-49 years. More than half of these responses would like to access this facility within 5 minutes from their home and very few were willing to travel more than 10 minutes.

What will we do with this information?

We would like to thank all participants who provided input to this community engagement and helped to shape future residential development and address housing issues in Maroondah.

The community and stakeholder views and ideas highlighted in this report will assist Council to understand and plan for the housing needs and aspirations of the community, and inform a new strategy for housing in Maroondah as part of the third stage of the project from January to March 2015.

Whilst the focus of collecting this information is to support development of this housing strategy, input from this engagement process will also help to inform a range of other strategic planning, community development, asset management and capital works activities over the coming years.

Community members and key stakeholders will have the opportunity to have their say on the draft Housing Strategy when it is placed on public exhibition in April/May 2016. Stay tuned on by visiting www.theplaceswelive.com.au

For more information on this project, please contact the project team on 1300 88 22 33 or email housing@maroondah.vic.gov.au



To contact Council

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- email maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au

Translating and Interpreter Service

13 14 50

National Relay Service (NRS)

13 36 77

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