



Sustainability Strategy Community Consultation Findings Report

"Partnerships are central to the process of sustainability."

(State Sustainability Strategy, 2003)

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Working with Community

The Shire of Denmark defines community engagement within the *Shire of Denmark Community Engagement Policy and Framework 2015* as "...an important process of fostering relationships between Council and the community, whereby Council shares information, consults, involves, collaborates and actively enhances community capability to influence and shape the planning and delivery of services and Council decisions."

The Shire of Denmark is committed to working with our community to create a culture of sustainable living. This involves listening and working with the community to understand the programs and support required to foster local action. The Shire of Denmark has committed organisations and community groups who have wide ranging knowledge and experience which, when brought together, can be a valuable resource. Council will work to facilitate those connections and assist these organisations and groups to deliver better outcomes.

Sustainability Strategy Working Group

The Shire of Denmark Sustainability Strategy Working Group (SSWG) was Council's vehicle for engaging with community to develop a Sustainability Strategy which would work towards achieving the sustainability goals and targets identified and agreed to in the Paris Agreement. The SSWG was established in November 2017 from *Council Resolution No. 181117* with the objective of developing a Sustainability Strategy for the Shire of Denmark. The SSWG was comprised of three Councillors, eleven community member representatives through a self-nominated process with selection and appointment made by Council, the Director of Assets and Sustainable Development and the Sustainability Officer. The SSWG supported the utilisation of the One Planet Living Framework and the premise of the ten pillars of sustainability as the median by which to use to develop the *Shire of Denmark Sustainability Strategy and the Shire of Denmark Sustainability Action Plan*.



Photos: Sustainability Strategy Working Group Workshop #1: 29th May 2020



Community Consultation

Community consultation on the development of the *Sustainability Strategy* involved engagement with various aspects of the community through a variety of mediums including interactive workshops and surveys. This level of engagement is supported by the principle of co-creation espoused by Bioregional, the creators of the One Planet Living Framework.

"The most effective Action Plans come from a collective process with everyone involved – whether that be staff, customers, local people, suppliers, future residents, designers, engineers and so on." (Bioregional, 2018)

Five workshops were conducted throughout the Sustainability Strategy development process; three involving the SSWG from inception through to draft strategy review and two additional interim workshops which were aimed at gaining information and feedback from various directorates from internal Shire staff.

A community online survey was conducted with the public invited to comment over a five-month period from July to December 2020. The Denmark Senior High School was approached to gain their input through a class workshop and a hard copy of the survey, as well as via an online survey. [see Appendix 1: *Shire of Denmark Sustainability Strategy Survey Questions*].

Key stakeholder groups were also directly targeted and emailed the link to the online survey to gain comments and feedback from representative groups from within the Denmark community.

Key Stakeholders

Community Representation	Community Group	Survey Medium	Date
Sustainability Strategy Working Group		Interactive workshops x 3	29 th May 2020 26 th June 2020 9 th February 2021
Internal Shire Staff Managers Meeting		Interactive workshop x 2	5 th August 2020 21 st January 2021
Denmark Senior High School		Class workshop Survey monkey	August-September 2020
Denmark Community		'Bang the Table' online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
Targeted key stakeholder groups	Chamber of Commerce	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Wilson Inlet Catchment Committee	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Denmark Environment Centre	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Green Skills	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Plastic Reduction Denmark	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Colin Stonehouse – Energy	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Community Resource Centre	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Rural and Regional Economic Solutions	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Denmark Weed Action Group	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	South Coast Natural Resource Management	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Department of Biodiversity and Conservation	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Denmark Community Windfarm Ltd.	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Deco-Village Ecovillage Community	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
Schools	Denmark College of Agriculture	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Steiner School	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Spirit of Play	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020
	Denmark Primary School	Email invitation to online survey	15 th July - 8 th December 2020

Table 1: Summary of Community Consultation undertaken on development of Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan

Community Consultation Results

Community Survey Responses

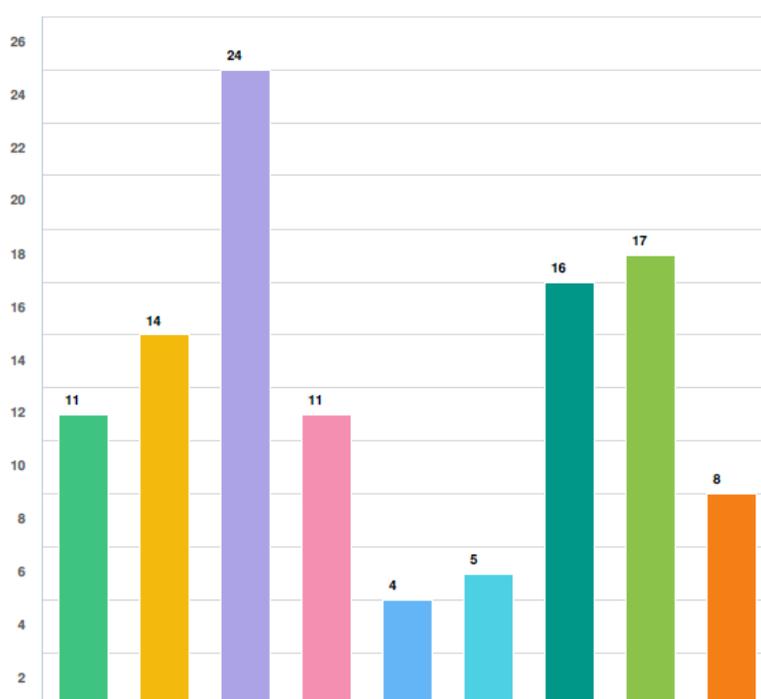
The *Let's Plan A Sustainable Future Survey Response Report (15 July - 8 December 2020)* is the culmination of the online survey that was available on the Shire of Denmark's website through the Your Denmark community engagement forum as a means for community members to have their voice heard on the development of the Sustainability Strategy. The survey comprised of three questions:

- ❖ Question 1. From the 10 Sustainability Pillars listed choose up to three that are the most important to you.
- ❖ Question 2. What do we need to do or focus on now to improve your three priority areas?
- ❖ Question 3. Imagine the year is 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?

QUESTION 1

There was a total of 37 respondents over the five month period that the survey was made available for public comment. The predominant response to the most important sustainability pillar was that of *Land Use & Natural Environment* with 24 respondents; followed by *Zero Carbon* with 17 respondents; and then third with *Sustainable Water* with 16 respondents.

Q1 From the ten areas (pillars) listed below, which are most important to you? (please choose up to 3)



Question options

- Culture & Community (E.G.: Volunteering, public art, events, education)
- Health & Happiness (E.G.: Connecting people to each other and their environment)
- Land Use & Natural Environment (E.G.: Protect & preserve our waterways such as the Wilson Inlet)
- Local & Sustainable Food (E.G.: Buy local, local food markets / community gardens)
- Sustainable Materials (E.G.: Alternate building materials, support new industries)
- Sustainable Transport (E.G.: Install high speed electric charging infrastructure)
- Sustainable Water (E.G.: Water tanks required for all new houses)
- Zero Carbon (E.G.: Renewable energy)
- Zero Waste (E.G.: Recycling)

QUESTION 2

There was a total of 33 responses to the Community online survey Question 2: *What do we need to do or focus on now to improve your three priority areas?* Four respondents choose not to answer Question 2.

A common theme expressed in the narrative responses to Question 2 as to what the main foci to achieve sustainability outcomes was that the sustainability pillars are all intrinsically linked and when efforts are made in one area it has flow-on positive effects in another. *"All ten pillars are important... would be good to design a holistic program... they are all intrinsically linked... many initiatives go hand-in-hand"*. One cited example is that of the Shire supporting community lead sustainability initiatives, engaging and empowering community collaborations in sustainability programs, with a local focus, can lead to social development and equity outcomes, and therefore improved health, well-being and community connectedness.

The number of narrative theme responses from Question 2 correlated almost directly with the sustainability pillar priorities outlined in Question 1. The notable exception was that of *Zero Waste*, where there were more responses in Question 2 given in relation to suggestions on how to achieve *Zero Waste* as a priority sustainability pillar.

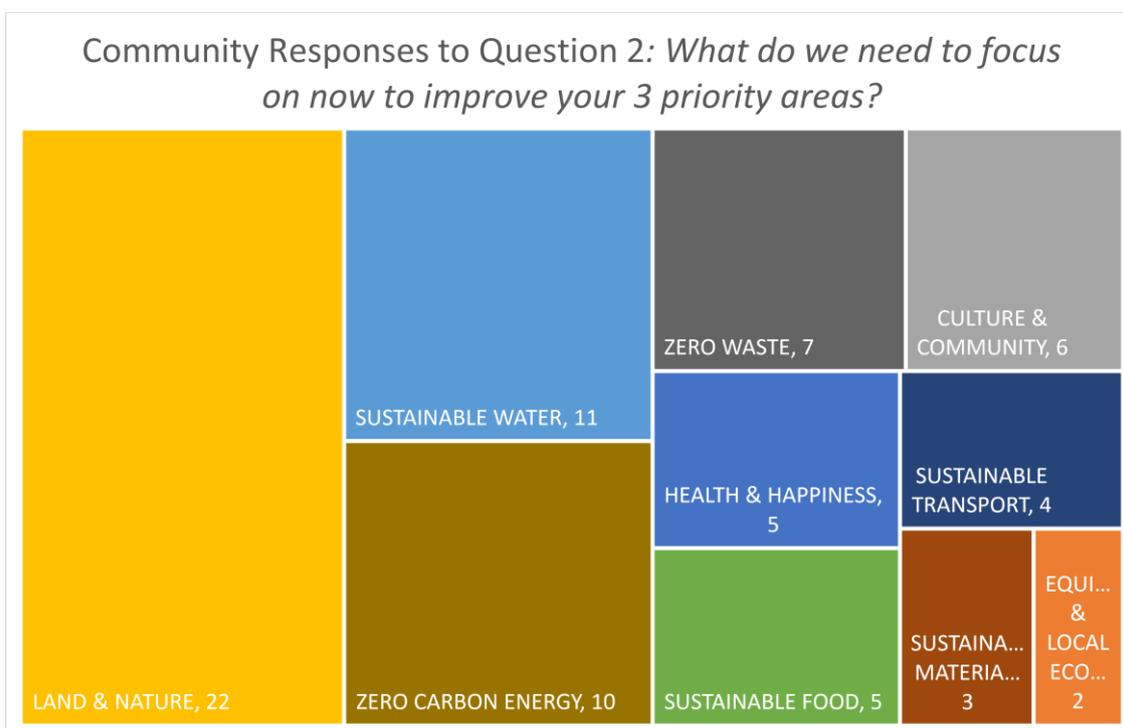


Figure 2: Community Responses to Question 2: *What do we need to focus on now to improve your 3 priority areas?*

Some narrative comments that express the common themes from within the ten sustainability pillar areas on what the community feel we need to focus on are as follows:

1. **Health & Happiness:** "community actively involved; value our sense of place; being more connected and listening to community; affordable housing"
2. **Equity & Local Economy:** "manage tourism in line with sustainability; employ Rangers to better manage tourists"
3. **Culture & Community:** "support community initiatives; engage in cultural events; focus on youth community; support volunteering; provide incentives and policy development for sustainable cultural change"
4. **Land & Nature:** "value and preserve our unspoilt natural environment; assign amenity value to natural assets; revegetate and rehabilitate rivers, creeks and land abutting waterways; review prescribed burning regimes; policy development to guide biodiversity management and drive sustainable development; connect people with nature; educate community on natural environment"
5. **Sustainable Water:** "install water tanks on Shire buildings and on new homes; improve water catchment management; improve water treatment processes"
6. **Local & Sustainable Food:** "buy local through supporting farmers markets; support farmers and local food production"
7. **Sustainable Transport:** "invest in electric transport options for Shire; support local taxi and bus service; provide infrastructure to accommodate green transport options"
8. **Sustainable Materials:** "support business to eliminate single-use plastic; support development of and requirement to use sustainable building materials"
9. **Zero Waste:** "support new technologies for zero waste; promote recycling including provision of recycling bins and centralised location for soft plastic recycling; promote elimination of single-use coffee cups; educate community and provide information on premise of reduce, reuse, recycle"
10. **Zero Carbon Energy:** "support new technologies for zero carbon; lobby governments at all levels to address climate change; fast track climate change initiatives including carbon sequestration; promote renewable energy; support community energy initiatives"

Community Responses to Question 3: *Imagine it is the year 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?*

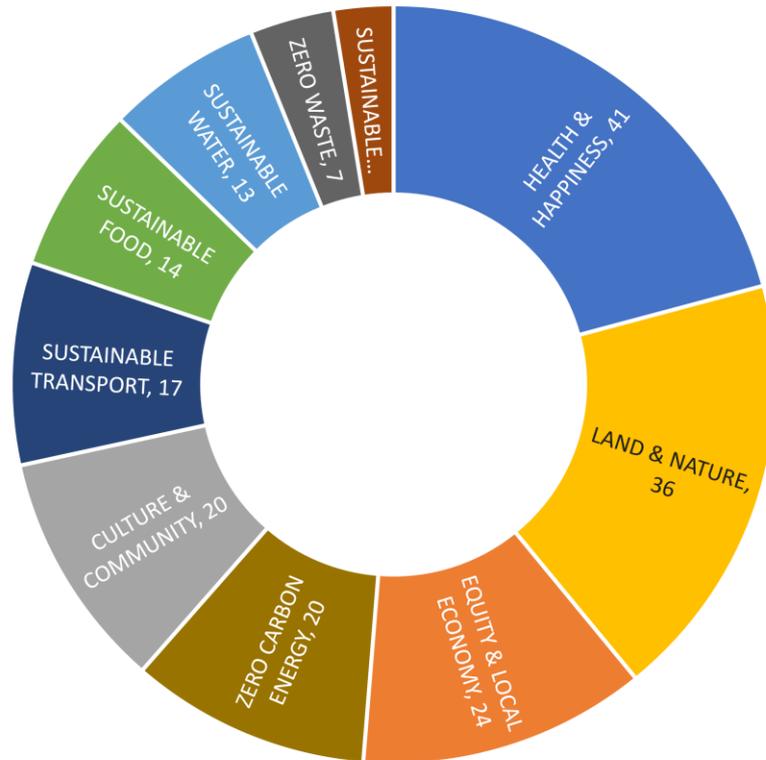


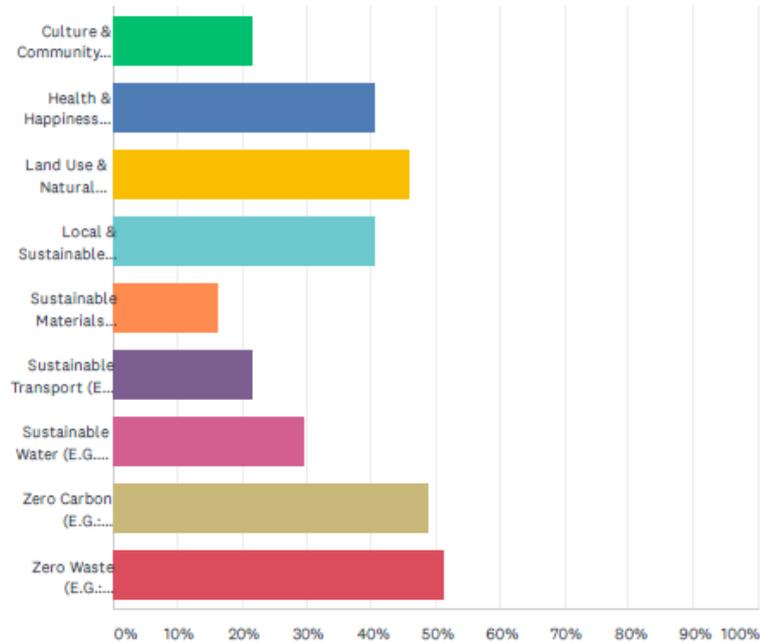
Figure 4: Community Responses to Question 3: *Imagine it is the year 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?*

The main narrative comments that express the common themes from within the 10 sustainability pillar areas on Question 3: Community's vision for Denmark in 2035 is as follows:

1. **Health & Happiness:** "happy, healthy, connected community; inclusivity and strong sense of belonging; caring and altruistic community; conserve its village character; retain sense of identity"
2. **Equity & Local Economy:** "local businesses thrive through local support; circular thriving economy; vibrant, self-sustaining, locally owned small businesses; strong local economy; eco-tourism based local economy"
3. **Culture & Community:** "engaged close-knit community; diversity of age and cultural groups within community; place where people live lightly on the land; recognises indigenous cultural heritage"
4. **Land & Nature:** "community committed to conserving global and local environment; recognised global biodiversity hotspot; earth-care embedded in decision-making; strong environmental protection; adequate protection of forests and waterways; community education on the south coast, natural environment, wildlife, and the Wilson Inlet"
5. **Sustainable Water:** "self-sufficient waterwise community; wastewater and greywater reuse; rainwater tanks on new homes; waterwise community programs and incentives"
6. **Local & Sustainable Food:** "local produce based economy; sustainable agriculture; regenerative farming; self-sufficiency in food production"

Q1 From the ten (10) areas listed below, which are most important to you?
Please choose up to three (3).

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Culture & Community (E.G.: Volunteering, public art, events, education)	21.62% 8
Health & Happiness (E.G.: Community initiatives that connect people to each other and their environment)	40.54% 15
Land Use & Natural Environment (E.G.: Protect & preserve our waterways such as the Wilson Inlet)	45.95% 17
Local & Sustainable Food (E.G.: Encourage buy local, local food markets / community gardens)	40.54% 15
Sustainable Materials (E.G.: Provide community education on alternate building materials, support new industries)	16.22% 6
Sustainable Transport (E.G. Install high speed electric charging infrastructure)	21.62% 8
Sustainable Water (E.G.: Water tanks required for all new houses)	29.73% 11
Zero Carbon (E.G.: renewable energy)	48.65% 18
Zero Waste (E.G.: Recycling)	51.35% 19
Total Respondents: 37	

Figure 6: Denmark Senior High School Response to Question 1: From the 10 Sustainability Pillars, which are most important to you?

QUESTION 2

There was a total of 29 responses from DSHS students to Question 2: *What do we need to do or focus on now to improve your 3 priority areas?* Eight respondents choose not to answer.

The hierarchy of responses accorded to each sustainability pillar from Question 2 correlated almost directly with the sustainability pillar priorities outlined in Question 1 by the DSHS students. The notable exception was that of *Land & Nature*, where there was only one response given in Question 2 simply stating “*care more about the environment*” as the recommendation on what we should focus on.

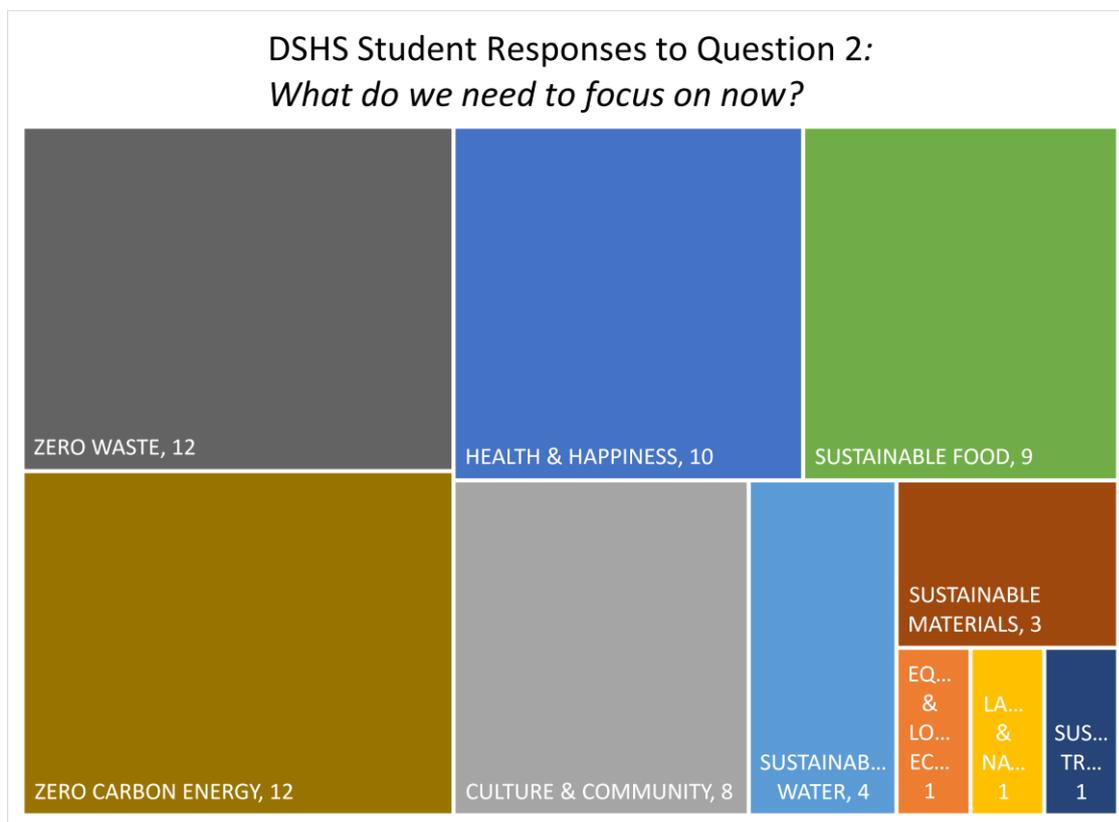


Figure 7: Denmark Senior High School (DSHS) Student Responses to Question 2: What do we need to focus on now to improve your 3 priority areas?

Some common themes that were expressed by the DSHS students in the narrative comments were as follows:

1. **Health & Happiness:** "more events that connect people; community awareness and programs to involve people; activities that build teamwork; educate people on mental and physical health; open a mental health clinic; bring back the Soup Kitchen; repurpose 'Tha House' to have a community focus; ensure people in the community are equally heard"
2. **Equity & Local Economy:** "make it easier for small businesses to operate; more opportunities for small scale produces to sell and/or trade to the town"
3. **Culture & Community:** "involvement and education on how to help; community-based events; integration of school and public/community activities"
4. **Land & Nature:** "care more about the environment"
5. **Sustainable Water:** "mandatory to have a water tank; desalination plant; new water management strategy that focuses on salinity, groundwater and clean water for the community"
6. **Local & Sustainable Food:** "more prolific community farmers markets; use local produce in cooking and hospitality; grow the community garden to include input from local schools; healthy organic food at the canteen"
7. **Sustainable Transport:** "encourage electric vehicle usage"

Denmark Senior High School Student Responses to Question 3: *Imagine it is the year 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?*

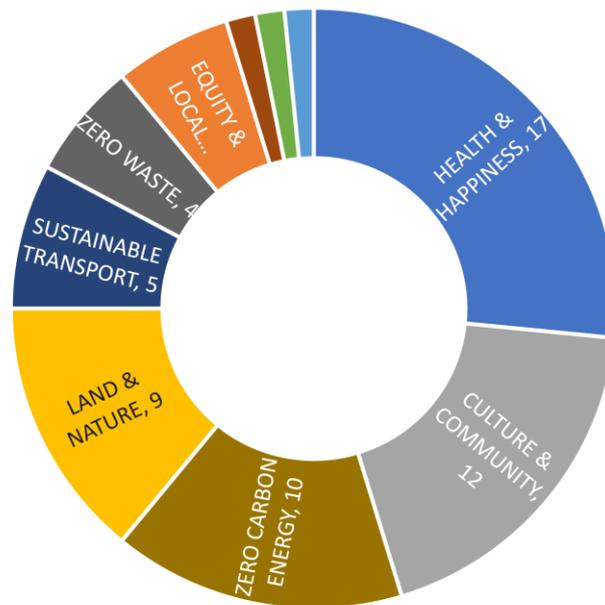
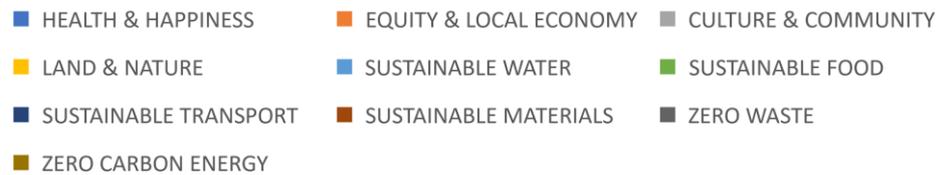


Figure 9: DSHS Student Responses to Question 3: *Imagine it is the year 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?*

The main narrative comments that express the common themes from within the 10 sustainability pillar areas on Question 3 of the DSHS student vision for Denmark in 2035 is as follows:

1. **Health & Happiness:** "friendly, close-knit community; green sustainable population; healthy seaside town; access to amenities for all; mentally healthy people; appealing to younger Australians; well regulated and planned urbanisation"
2. **Equity & Local Economy:** "tourist oriented town; sustainable businesses operating; no franchises; more career opportunities; no franchises"
3. **Culture & Community:** "strong community feel; promote inclusion and socialisation; cultural diversity education in schools; community informed in all decisions; strong focus on the arts; activities that are available for young people; inviting to youth"
4. **Land & Nature:** "lots of water in our waterways; diverse flora and fauna; preserve our wonderful environment; environment cared for"
5. **Sustainable Water:** "every house to have water tanks"
6. **Local & Sustainable Food:** "everyone with a veggie patch"
7. **Sustainable Transport:** "electric cars; infrastructure for electric vehicles; improved links to Albany for public transport"
8. **Sustainable Materials:** "increase in sustainable materials"
9. **Zero Waste:** "beautiful, uncluttered area; no rubbish; recycling and composting; low waste"

References

Bioregional, (2018). *Implementing One Planet Living: A Manual*, One Planet Living: Bioregional Australia.

Denmark Senior High School Student Responses to survey monkey August-September 2020

Shire of Denmark Community Engagement Policy and Framework 2015.

Shire of Denmark Let's Plan a Sustainable Future: Survey Response Report 15 July 2020 - 8 December 2020.

State Government of Western Australia, (2003). *Hope for the future: The Western Australian State Sustainability Strategy*, National Library of Australia, Perth WA.



Shire of Denmark

Planning for a sustainable future

What is a sustainability Strategy?

Sustainability means different things to different people, however for this purpose Sustainability means balancing economic, social and environmental factors and setting out the key environmental priorities for the future.

Our environment are the spaces we play in, and the places we build. It's how we get around, and the community around us. It's where we work, where we live and the natural areas around us.

Environmental sustainability is about maintaining all the things we love and value about where we live, work and play. It's about preserving everything that makes Denmark special, even as it grows.

This Sustainability Strategy will guide the future vision for how we live and what we do. Your feedback will assist us to ensure future generations have the same opportunities that we enjoy today.

Sustainability Strategy survey questions:

1. From the ten areas listed below, which are most important to you? (please choose up to 3)

- Culture & Community
(E.G.: Volunteering, public art, events, education)
- Health & Happiness
(E.G.: Community initiatives that connect people to each other and their environment)
- Land Use & Natural Environment
(E.G.: Protect & preserve our waterways such as the Wilson Inlet)
- Local & Sustainable Food
(E.G.: Encourage buy local, local food markets / community gardens)
- Sustainable Materials
(E.G.: Provide community education on alternate building materials, support new industries)
- Sustainable Transport
(E.G. Install high speed electric charging infrastructure)
- Sustainable Water
(E.G.: Water tanks required for all new houses)
- Zero Carbon
(E.G.: renewable energy)
- Zero Waste
(E.G.: Recycling)

2. What do we need to do or focus on now to improve your three priority areas?

3. Imagine the year is 2035, what is your vision for Denmark?