



Wedderburn Area Data Profile

2026

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This document has been prepared to provide a data profile on the health and wellbeing of Wedderburn area. It contains publicly available data that has been collated and summarised to inform local government, health services, advocacy and community groups. Refer to the [Loddon Data Profile](#) for further information at Local Government Area level.

All effort has been made to report data accurately and represent data available at time of publishing. These estimates may differ from those seen elsewhere due to differences in calculation methodologies and/or source data used.



We acknowledge the First Peoples of Australia who are the Traditional Custodians of the land and water where we live, work and play. We celebrate that this is the oldest living and continuous culture in the world. We are proud to be sharing the land that we work on and recognise that sovereignty was never ceded.



We welcome all cultures, nationalities and religions. Being inclusive and providing equitable healthcare is our commitment.



100 Barnard Street. Bendigo VIC 3550
lmpfu@bendigohealth.org.au
1800 959 400
www.bendigohealth.org.au/LMPHU/

Produced by Bendigo Health, Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit.
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Summary

Wedderburn, located in north-central Victoria within Loddon Shire, lies 215 km northwest of Melbourne and is set among granite ridges, box-ironbark forests and historic goldfields dating back to the 1850s gold rush. The town is situated on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, whose long-standing custodianship continues through cultural heritage protection and land stewardship led by the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. Today, Wedderburn area functions as a service hub for an agricultural region characterised by dryland cropping and sheep and cattle grazing, with essential services and industries supporting the wider farming community.



Population

Wedderburn area is located in central Victoria within the Loddon Shire Council and has a population of approximately 1,487 people. Wedderburn area has an older population, with a median age of 56 years and 36.3% aged over 65 years.



Priority groups

Priority populations include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (3.5% of Wedderburn area population), people with disabilities (7.7% of residents needing core activity assistance) and people experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage. Data on LGBTIQ+ communities is limited, though state and national figures indicate heightened vulnerability in health outcomes.



Health determinants

Wedderburn faces higher levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and educational attainment is low, only 28.4% have completed education beyond Year 12. Income levels are lower than state percentages and the area shows elevated rental stress with 20.3% of renters experiencing rental stress.



Health risk factors

Overweight/obesity rates are high (70.6%), physical activity levels are below average (47.9% meet guidelines), and smoking rates are 13%. Poor water intake is an issue, and sugar-sweetened beverage consumption is high, with 20.4% reporting daily consumption.



Health conditions

Wedderburn area has a higher count of long-term health conditions compared to Loddon Shire. The three most commonly reported conditions are arthritis, mental health issues and asthma, with these being more frequently self-reported by females.

Data Sources

Defining the geographical boundaries for assessing the health and social needs of Wedderburn area, located within the Loddon Shire has been challenging due to limited data availability and small population sizes. In consultation with local stakeholders, Wedderburn area has been defined as:

- Postcodes 3518
- Postcode 3520

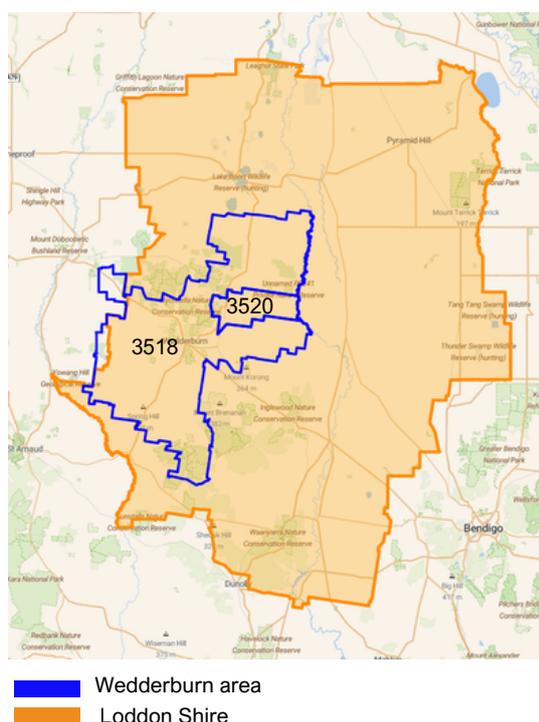
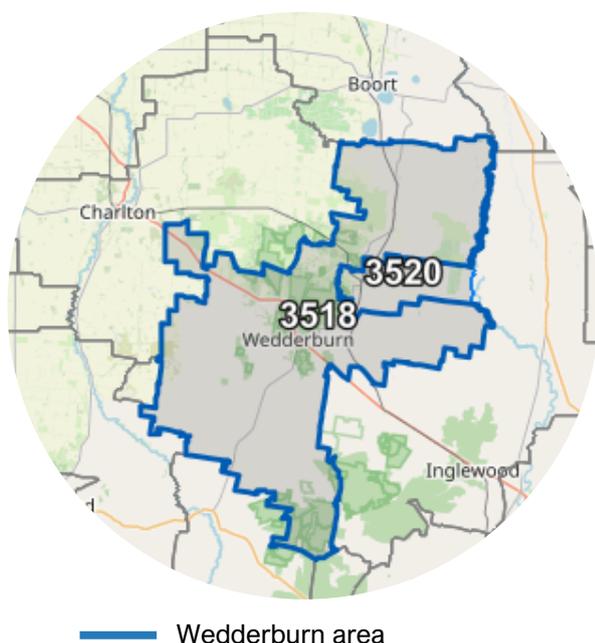
Postcode data is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. However, some sources include surrounding areas, which vary in definition. As the Loddon Shire data also includes Wedderburn area data the differences may be even more pronounced if data specific to Wedderburn area was not included in the comparison.

Healthy Heart of Victoria Active living census (ALC)

Data from the 2019 Healthy Heart of Victoria Active living census (ALC) represents a sub-region of Loddon Shire. This survey was widely promoted and open to all members of the community, allowing anyone to participate without any structured sampling or stratification.

For this analysis, results were grouped into five sub-regions for the Loddon Shire: Boort and surrounds, East Loddon Area, Inglewood/Bridgewater and surrounds, Pyramid Hill and surrounds, **Wedderburn and surrounds** and South Loddon Area. The ALC allocated respondents to sub-regions according to their suburb of residence, using the suburb-to-district classifications from profile.id for Loddon Shire. These sub-regions represent functional catchments centred on major towns and their surrounding rural communities rather than formal ABS boundaries or postcode areas.

A voluntary, widely promoted survey can provide useful insights into the views and experiences of respondents, but because participation is self-selected and not representative of the broader population, its results should be interpreted with caution and cannot be reliably generalised to population-level estimates like those from a probability-based survey such as the Victorian Population Health Survey.



Wedderburn

The township of Wedderburn is located in north-central Victoria, approximately 215 km northwest of Melbourne and 75 km northwest of Bendigo. It sits within the Loddon Shire and lies in a landscape shaped by granite ridges, box-ironbark forests and gold-mining history. The town developed during the 1850s gold rush.

The region is situated on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, whose deep connection to Country spans tens of thousands of years. The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation represents Traditional Owners across the area and plays an ongoing role in cultural heritage protection, land stewardship, and supporting sustainable, community-led practices across the Loddon region.^[1]

Land use in Wedderburn and the surrounding area is predominantly agricultural, including dryland cropping, sheep and cattle grazing. The town functions as a service centre for the wider farming community, providing essential retail, education, emergency services and health and community support, alongside industries linked to transport, and agricultural machinery.^[2]

Wedderburn area has a population of approximately 1,487 people, with a median age of around 56 years - reflecting the older age profile common in many rural Victorian towns. The community includes long-standing farming families, retirees, and residents connected to local agriculture, small business, and service-sector employment. Key industries include farming, retail trade, health care, education, local government and tourism linked to gold prospecting and natural landscapes.^[3]



1. [Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation](#)
2. Socio-economic impacts of [land use change](#), Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry.
3. [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

1. Wedderburn Area Population

1.1 Population profile

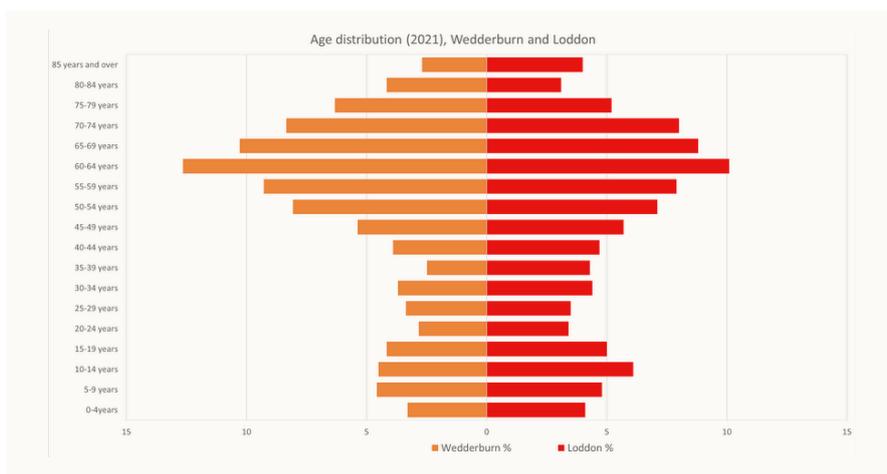
The age distribution of a population is important to understand the current and future demand on services, economic impact and community infrastructure and public health planning. The total population of Wedderburn area is 1,487, representing 19.2% of Loddon Shire total population (n = 7,759). Wedderburn area has a median age of 56 years, much higher compared to Victoria's median age of 38 years.

Location	Mean Age (2021)
Victoria	38 years
Loddon (LGA)	52 years
Wedderburn area	56 years

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021



1487 people reside in Wedderburn area (postcodes 3518 and 3520).



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021



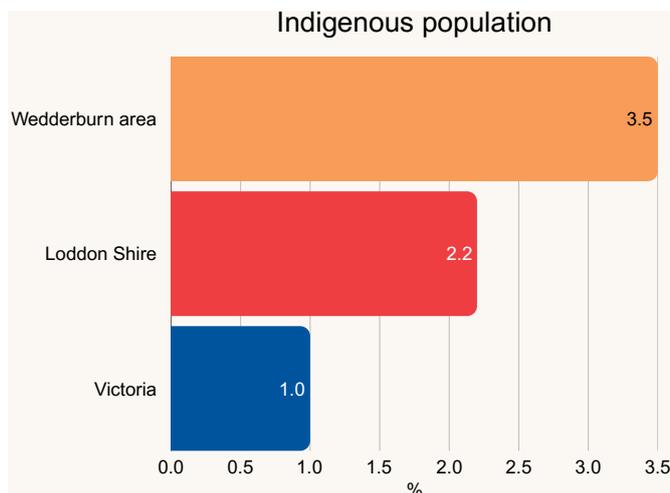
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

2. Priority Groups

2.1 Indigenous status



Dja Dja Wurrung people are the traditional owners of the land where Wedderburn area is settled.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

Wedderburn area proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is 3.5% (n= 43) contributing to Loddon Shire's 2.2% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are opportunities to learn from their spiritual and cultural connection to Country. However, we also know Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples disproportionately experience systemic disadvantage compared to the whole of population.

2.2 Multicultural communities

In Wedderburn area, 85.2% of households speak English only, with 2.9% speaking a non-English language at home.^[1]

2.3 LGBTIQ+

Unfortunately, there is a lack of local data on LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse people) population including population size and health and wellbeing data. There is data at a state and national level that can be used as an indicator. The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 estimates 5.7% of Victorian adults identify as LGBTIQ+, however some rural areas have attracted significant higher proportion of LGBTIQ+ people to their communities.

State and national data indicate poorer mental and physical health for LGBTIQ+ community members with significantly higher rates of drug use, alcohol, smoking, chronic disease, homelessness, and disability along with higher rates of anxiety and depression, psychological stress and low satisfaction with life.

Sources and for more information: [Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32 | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#); [The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria - Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 | Victorian Agency for Health Information \(vahi.vic.gov.au\)](#).

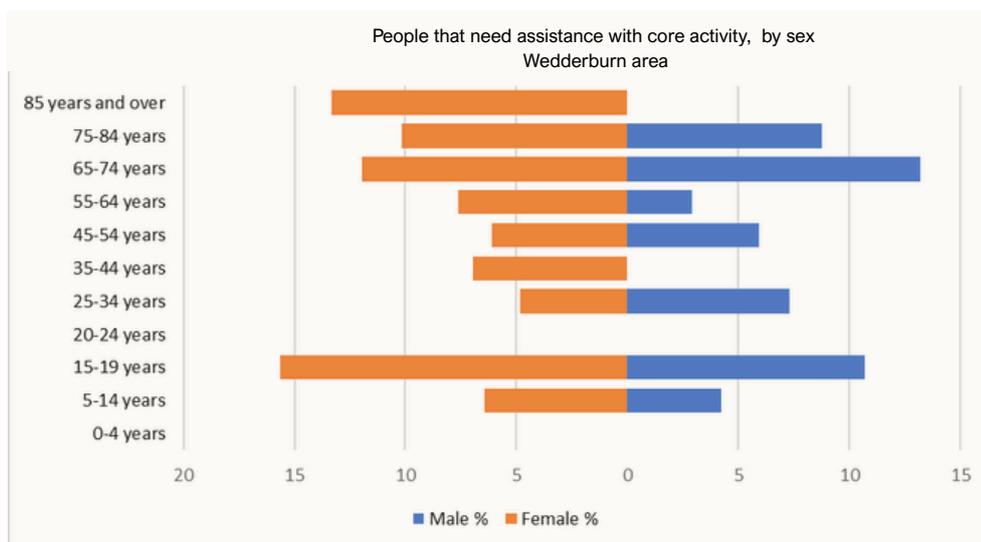
1. [Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021](#)

2.4 People with disability

People with a profound or severe core activity limitation are those needing assistance in their day-to-day lives in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of:

- a long-term health condition (lasting six months or more)
- a disability (lasting six months or more)
- old age.

In Wedderburn area, there are 55 males and 59 females, (total of 114 people) who require assistance with core activity.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

3. Determinants of health

3.1 Areas of disadvantage

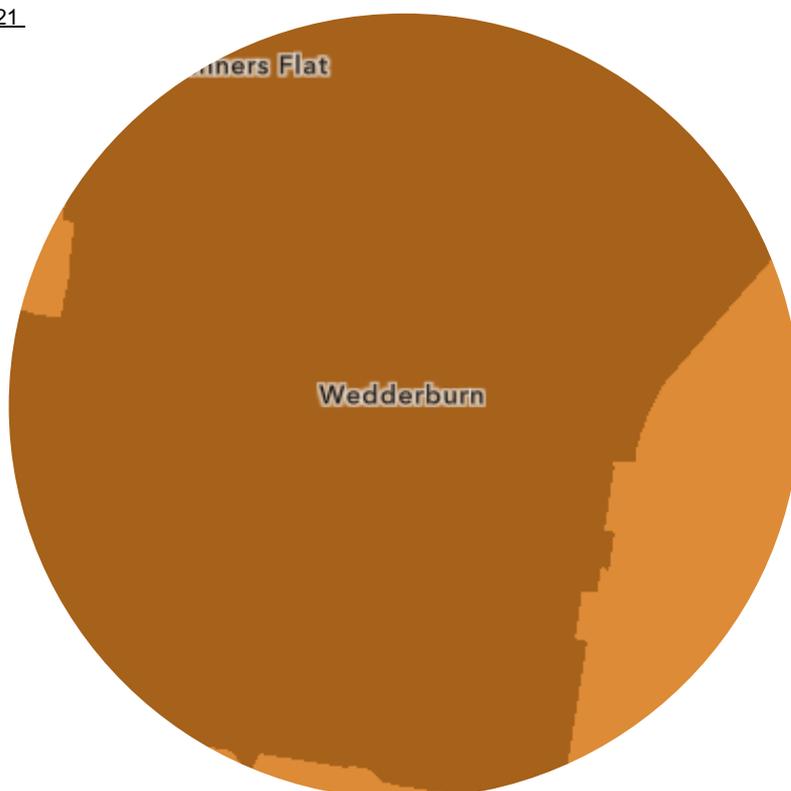
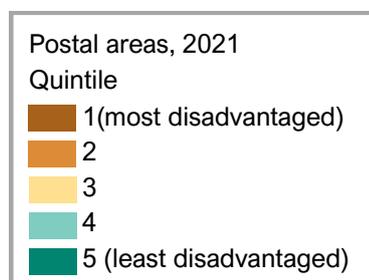
The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) is a general socio-economic index that summarises a range of information about the economic and social conditions of people and households within an area.

A low score indicates relatively greater disadvantage. For example, an area could have a low score if there are: many households with low income, or many people without qualifications, and many people in low skilled occupations. A high score indicates a relative lack of disadvantage. For example, an area may have a high score if there are: few households with low incomes, few people without qualifications, few people in low skilled occupations.

In 2021, both postcode 3518 (IRSD score=891) and postcode 3520 (IRSD score=747) showed greater relative disadvantage compared with the Loddon Shire (IRSD=948). Within Wedderburn area, there are two Australian quintile areas of disadvantage: quintile 1 (most disadvantage) and quintile 2.

LGA, 2021	IRSD Score ^
Victoria	1,018
Loddon Shire	948
Postcode 3518	891
Postcode 3520	747

Source: [Socio-Economic Index for Areas, ABS, 2021](#)
^ The lower the score the greater disadvantage



3.2 Single parents

Single-parent families can thrive, but they may face higher risks of economic hardship, time constraints and limited social support, which can affect both parent and child wellbeing.

Single parents, who are most often women, are at increased risk of burnout, housing insecurity, and mental health issues due to the combined pressures of caregiving and earning.

In 2021, there were 24 (6.7% of all families) single parent families recorded in Wedderburn area.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

3.3 Level of highest educational attainment

Education is an important determinant of health and is strongly associated with life expectancy, morbidity and health behaviours. Wedderburn area has lower levels of educational attainment compared with the Loddon Shire and Victoria. This may reflect physical and financial access to higher education.

 In Wedderburn area, 28.4% people had higher education above year 12, (Loddon, 36.7%)

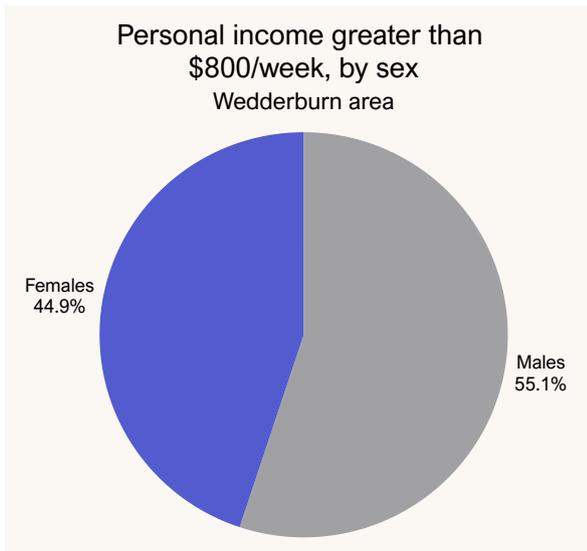
Level of highest education attainment	Wedderburn area (%)	Loddon Shire (%)	Victoria (%)
Bachelor degree level and above	6.8	10.6	29.2
Advanced Diploma and diploma level	6.1	7.4	9.8
Certificate level III & IV	15.5	18.7	14.3
Year 12	9.0	10.2	14.9
Year 11	7.5	8.8	5.7
Year 10	12.3	12.9	7.3
Year 9 or below	13.7	13.6	7.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, aged 15 years and over

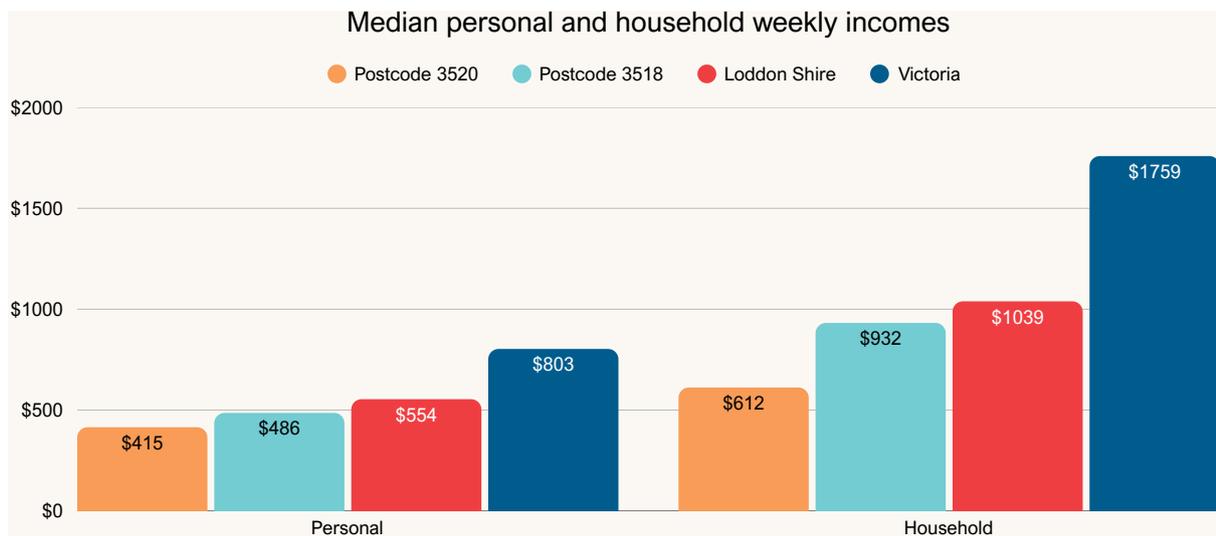
3.4 Household income

In Wedderburn area, the median personal and household incomes are lower than those for Loddon Shire and Victorian percentages.

Among people in Wedderburn area who reported a personal income over \$800/week*, 55.1% were males. This is a slightly lower gender pay gap compared to Victoria, where 56.5% of people reporting a personal income over \$800/week were male.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, people aged 15years and over, excludes people who did not state their income.

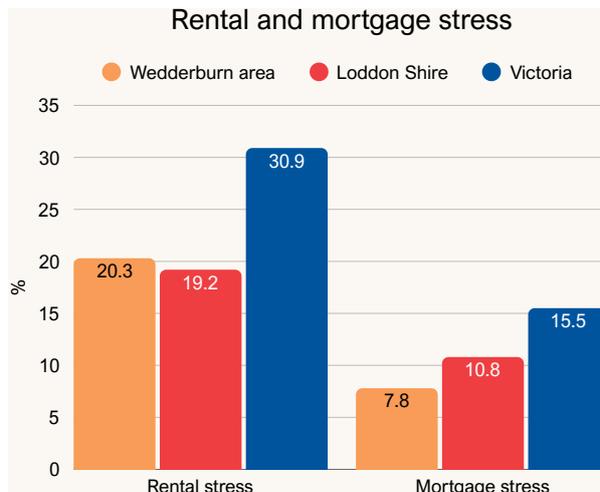
* \$800/week is based on the median total personal income for Victoria

3.5 Housing

The average number of people per household in Wedderburn area is 1.8 people, lower than both Loddon Shire (2.2 people) and Victoria (2.5 people). There are 228 (26.9%) private dwellings unoccupied in Wedderburn area.^[1]

Rental and mortgage stress is determined when rental/mortgage payments are greater than 30% of household income.

Wedderburn area, Loddon Shire and Victoria have higher rental stress compared to mortgage stress. Wedderburn area have slightly higher rental stress compared to Loddon Shire's but below Victoria.

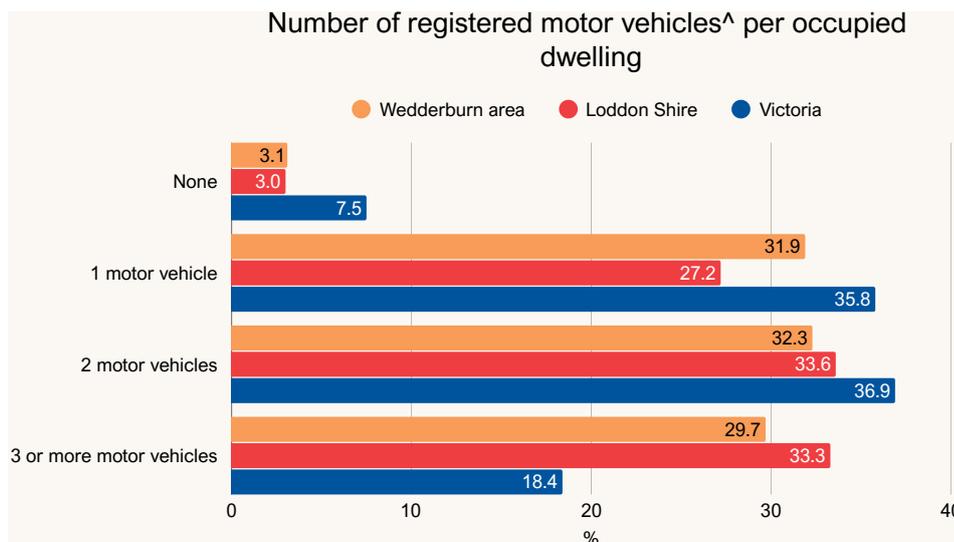


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

3.6 Motor vehicles

Rural areas have less access to public transport and must travel longer distances to reach essential services compared to their metropolitan counterparts. In regions like Wedderburn area, access to a motor vehicle is essential for obtaining fresh, healthy food, accessing healthcare and maintaining social connections.

In 2021, there were 19 homes (3.1%) without a registered motor vehicle.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

^Motor vehicles excludes motorbikes, motor scooters and heavy motor vehicles.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

3.7 Unemployment

Unemployment in Wedderburn area is (8.7%) higher than Loddon (5%) and Victoria (5%). The highest age group experiencing unemployment in Wedderburn area is 55-64 years.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, unemployed and looking for part-time or full-time work, aged over 15 years



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, unemployed and looking for part-time or full-time work, aged over 15 years

3.8 Occupation

The top three industries of employment in the 3518 postcode are local government administration, sheep farming (specialised), and other grain growing grain-sheep or grain-beef cattle farming, similar to the three industries of employment in Loddon.

The top three industries of employment in 3520 postcode are supermarket and grocery stores, other grain growing and take-away food services.

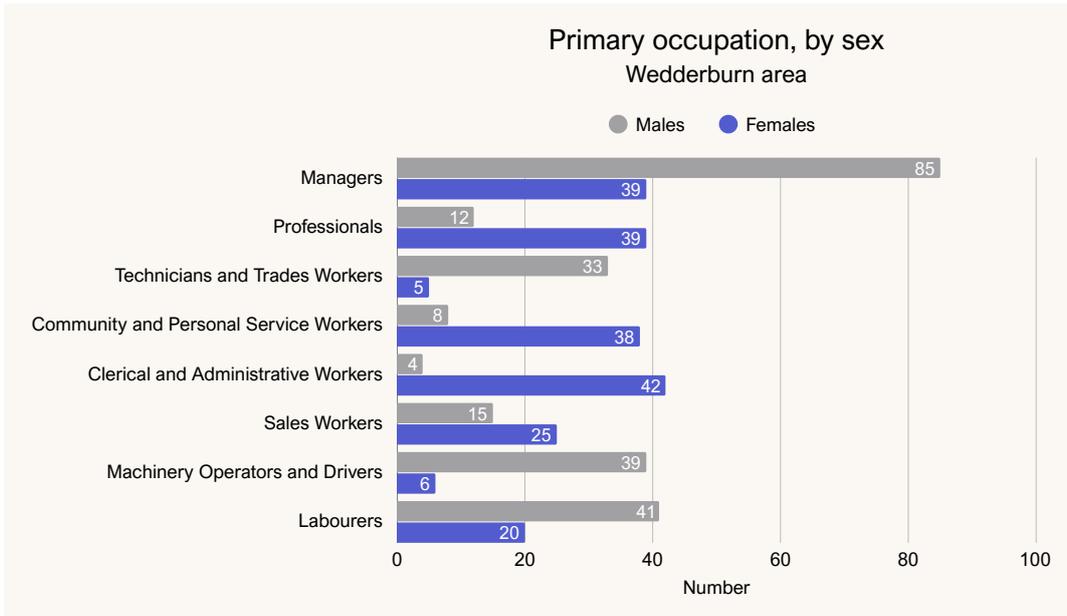
Industry of employment: top responses	Postcode 3518 (%)	Industry of employment: top responses	Postcode 3520 (%)
Local Government Administration	11.8	Supermarket and Grocery Stores	13.3
Sheep Farming (Specialised)	9.4	Other Grain Growing	10
Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming	7.9	Takeaway Food Services	10
Hospital (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	4.6		
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	4.2		

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

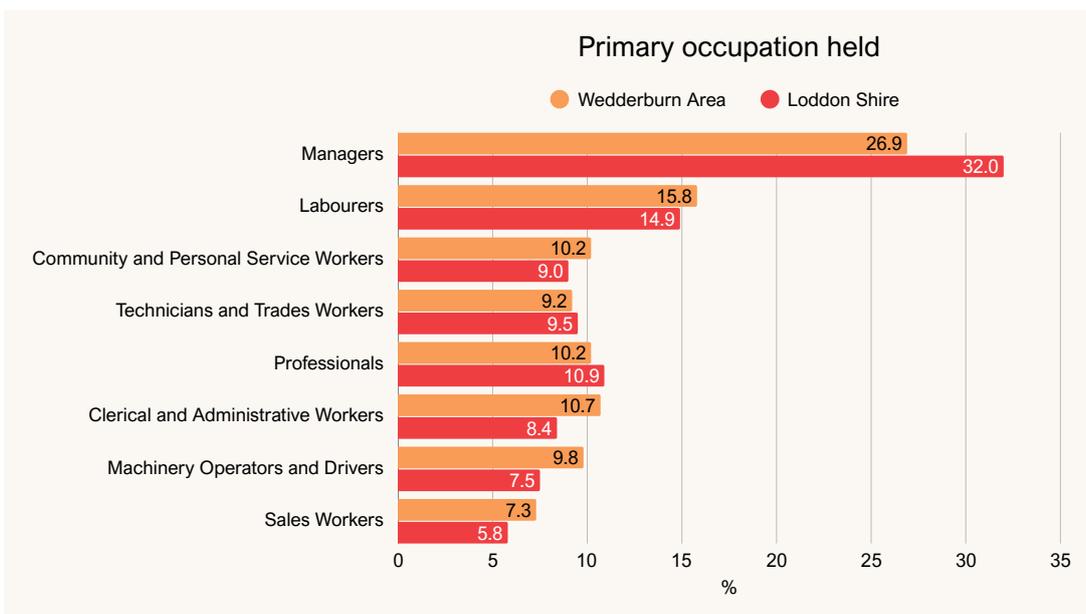
Data examining the primary occupations of employed individuals aged 15 years and over in Wedderburn area reveal a clear pattern of traditional gender roles.

These entrenched roles suggest a division of labour along gender lines, where men and women are concentrated in occupations typically associated with their gender. Such rigid gender norms contribute significantly to the perpetuation of gender inequity, limiting opportunities for individuals and reinforcing power imbalances.

The highest primary occupation for Wedderburn area were managers (26.9%) and labourers (15.8%).



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, employed persons aged 15 years and over



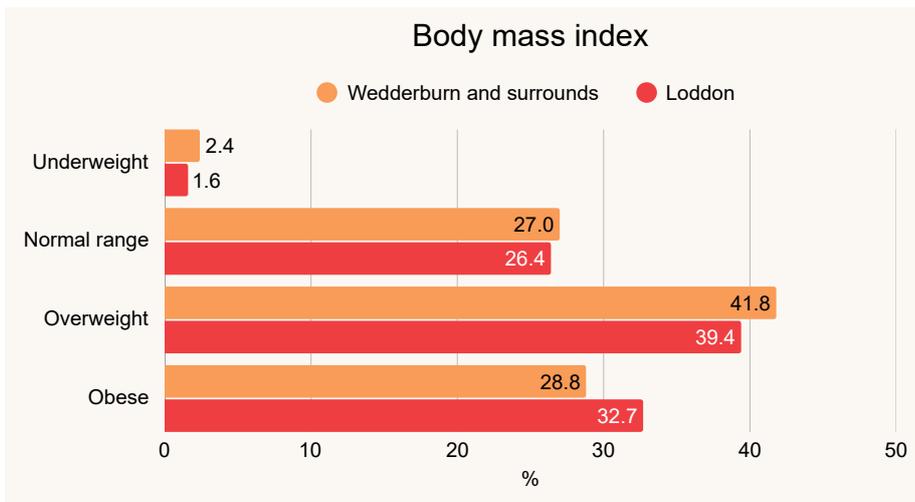
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, employed persons aged 15 years and over

4. Health risk factors

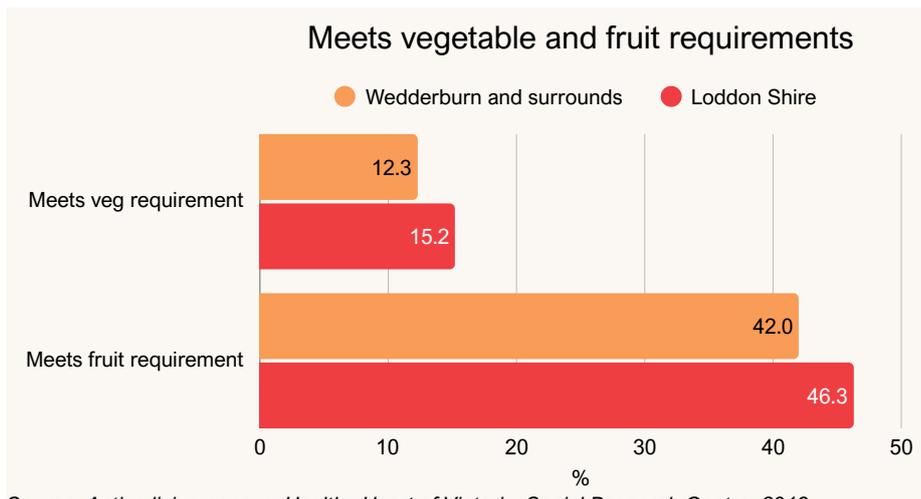
4.1 Healthy eating

Poor diet and lack of exercise contribute to being overweight and obese, which are leading contributors to chronic disease and premature death in Victoria.^[1]

In the Active Living Census survey, Wedderburn and surrounds has 70.6% people reporting they are overweight or obese, lower than Loddon Shire (72.1%). Only 12.3% of people in Wedderburn and surrounds met the vegetable requirements determined by the National Health and Medical Research Council.^[2] Personal preference / habit were the most commonly reported barrier for not meeting both vegetable and fruit guidelines in the region.



Source: Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019



Source: Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019

[1] Victorian Population Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-27

[2] Australian Dietary Guidelines, National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013

	Barriers to meeting vegetable guidelines in Wedderburn & surrounds (%)	Barriers to meeting fruit guidelines in Wedderburn & surrounds (%)
Personal preference/habit	25.9	30.5
Time poor	15.4	2.2
Diet / health restriction	12.9	21.1
Guidelines	18.2	10.0
Cost	16.6	20.8
Quality / availability	9	12.8

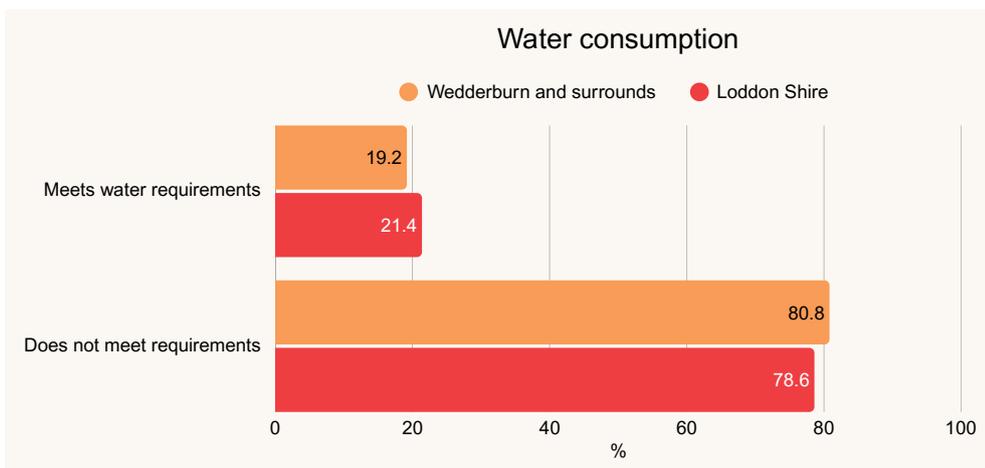
Source: *Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019*

4.2 Healthy drinking

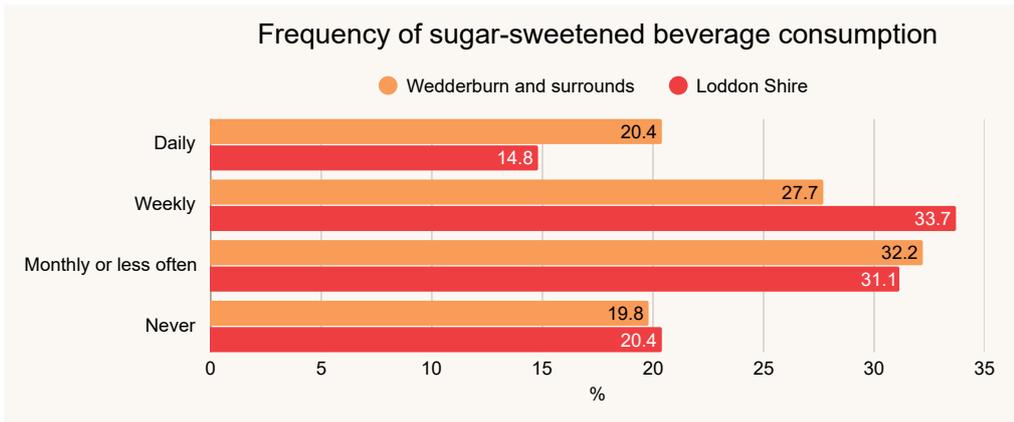
According to the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines prepared by the National Health and Medical Research Council, the recommended daily intake of water varies depending upon a range of individual factors such as diet and physical activity. The data below assumes that water consumption requirements have been met if individuals drink at least two litres (8 cups) of water daily.

In the ALC survey, a slightly higher proportion of people in Wedderburn and surrounds (80.8%) did not meet recommended water consumption levels, compared with 78.6% across Loddon Shire.

Wedderburn and surrounds had a significantly high proportion of people who consumed sugar-sweetened beverages (soft drinks, cordials, sports or energy drinks) daily (20.4%) compared with Loddon Shire (14.8%).



Source: *Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019*

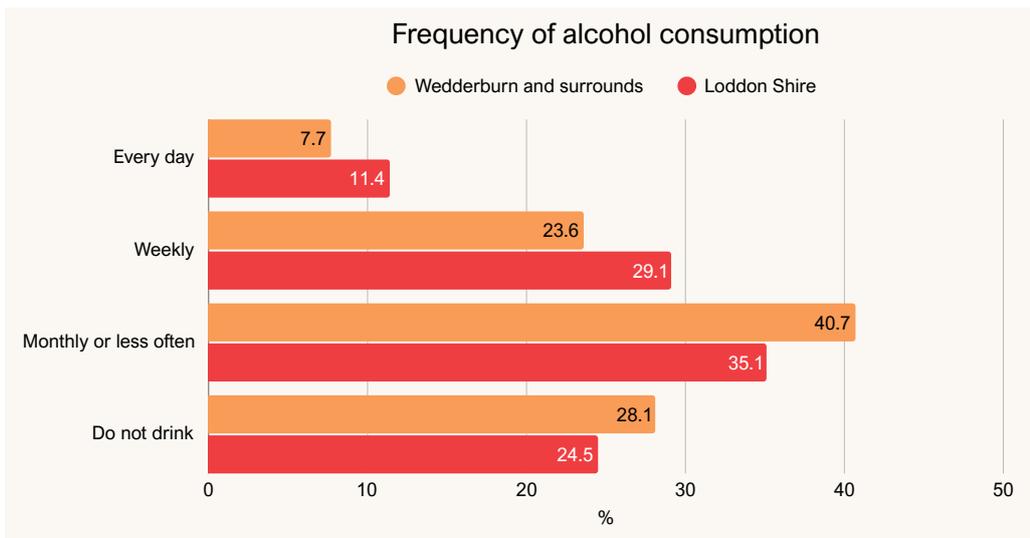


Source: *Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019*

While the impacts of drug use on health and wellbeing can vary, related harms can impact physical health through increased risk of chronic disease, exposure to infectious diseases, and mental health and wellbeing impacts.^[1]

In the ALC survey, Wedderburn and surrounds had a lower proportion of participants who consumed alcohol daily (7.7%) compared with the Loddon Shire (11.4%). A higher proportion of people in Wedderburn and surrounds reported not drinking alcohol (28.1%) compared with the Loddon Shire (24.5%).

People are considered at risk from the acute effects of excessive alcohol consumption if they report consuming more than four standard drinks on a single occasion in the past 12 months. Wedderburn and surrounds had a higher proportion of people consuming four or more drinks on one occasion (57%) compared with the Loddon Shire (53.9%).



Source: *Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019*

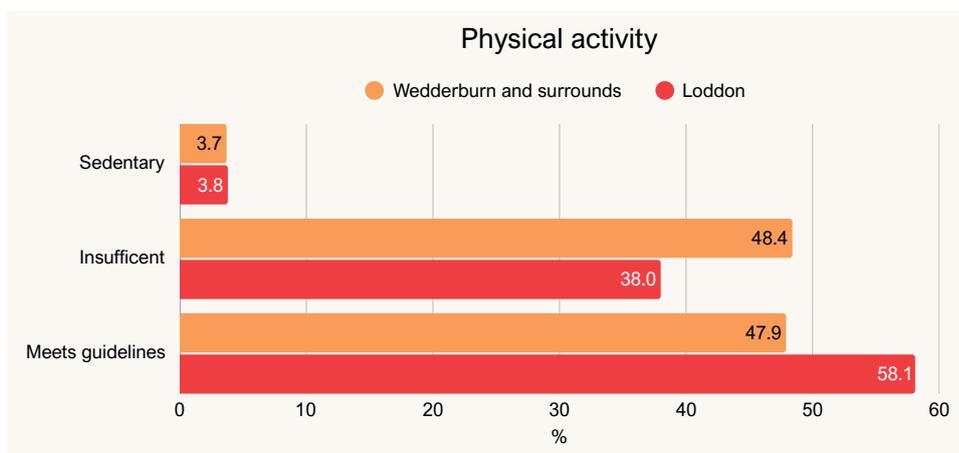
[1] National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

4.3 Physical activity

People are described as having met the guidelines if they have engaged in moderate or vigorous intensity activity for sufficient time. This consists of:

- 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity activity ('vigorous household chores, gardening or heavy work around the yard, that made you breathe harder or puff and pant')
- 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous activity ('vigorous physical activity, e.g. tennis, jogging, cycling or keep fit exercises, that made you breathe harder or puff and pant) or
- an equivalent combination of both as well as engaging in muscle strengthening activities at least two days per week.^[1]

In the ALC survey, Wedderburn and surrounds reported 47.9% (n=141) meeting the physical activity guidelines, lower than Loddon Shire (58.1%).

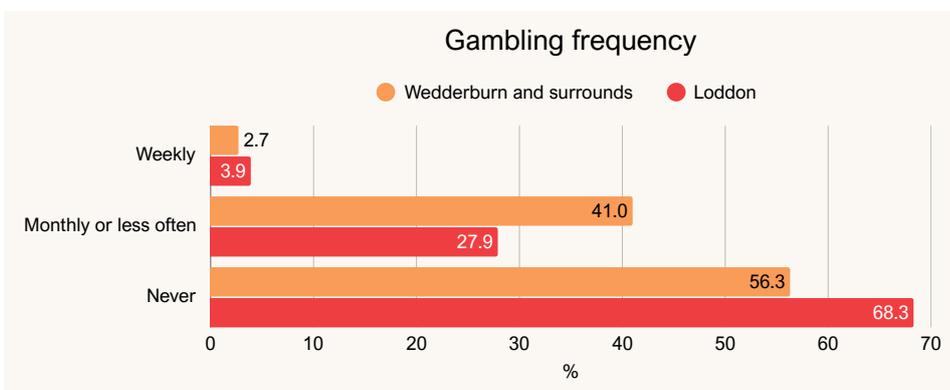


Source: Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019, 18 years and over

4.4 Gambling

The 2014 Victorian Prevalence Study by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation found that 70.1% of Victorian adults gamble, most of whom (82.2%) show no signs of harm from their gambling.^[2]

In the ALC survey, the proportion of adults gambling monthly or less often is considerably higher in Wedderburn and surrounds (41%) compared with the Loddon Shire (27.9%).



Source: Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019, 18 years and over

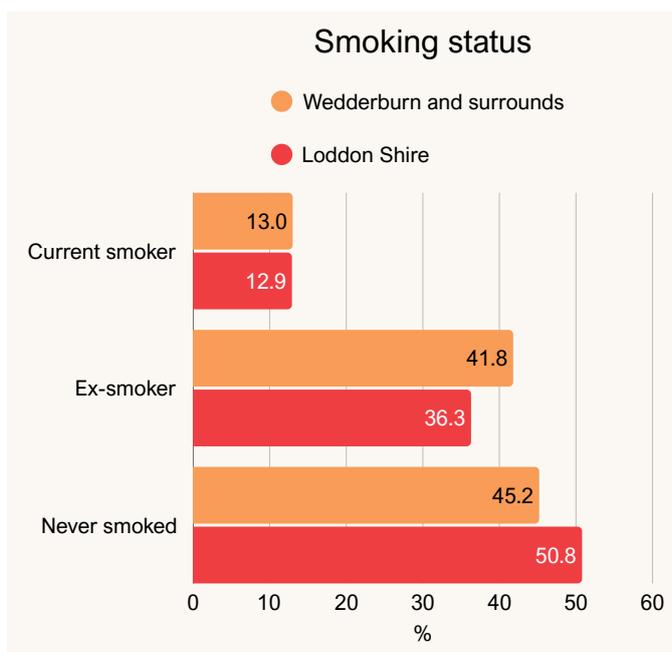
[1] Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour (Department of Health 2014)

[2] <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/publications/study-of-gambling-and-health-in-victoria-findings-from-thevictorian-prevalence-study-2014-72/>

4.5 Smoking

Smoking increases the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, eye disease, stroke, dementia, certain cancers (for example, oral cancer), gum disease and respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema and bronchitis.

In the ALC survey, the proportion of people in Wedderburn and surrounds who reported they are current smokers is 13.0%, comparable with the Loddon Shire (12.9%). However, Wedderburn and surrounds had a higher percentage of ex-smokers 41.8%, compared with the Loddon shire (36.3%).



Source: [Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019](#)

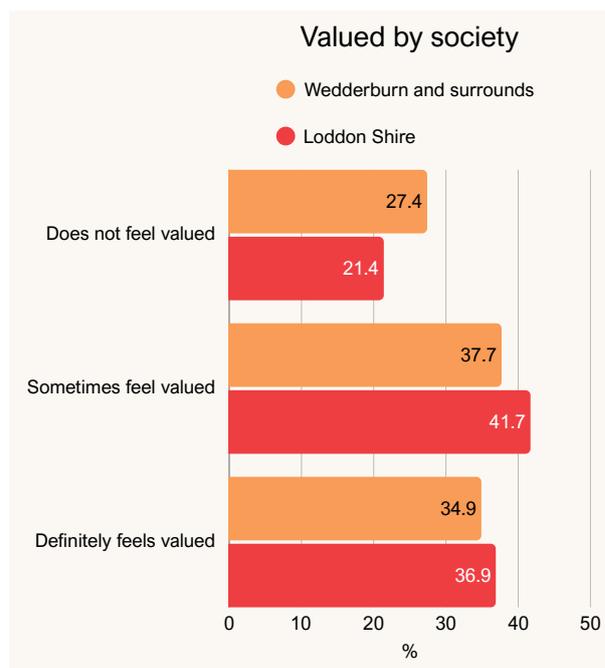
4.6 Mental wellbeing

By prioritising good mental health and wellbeing, we reduce stigma, increase social connection, improve physical health, promote productivity and create safer environments. Our mental health and our physical health are linked.

Life satisfaction was measured by asking ALC survey respondents how satisfied they feel about life in general, on a scale from 0-4 (low satisfaction) to 9-10 (very satisfied). In Wedderburn and surrounds, 71% of respondents reported high to very high life satisfaction, comparable with Loddon Shire (72.4%). In Wedderburn and surrounds, 34.9% of people said they definitely feel valued, compared with 36.9% across Loddon Shire.

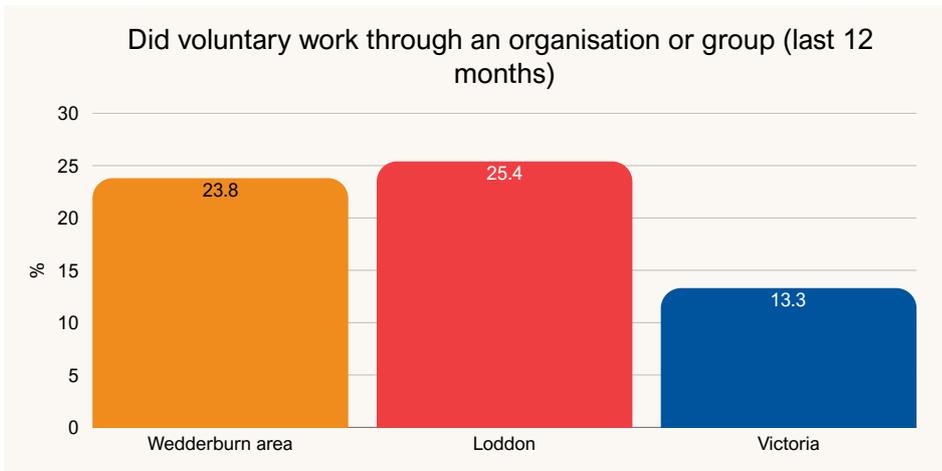


Source: [Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019](#), aged 3 years and over



Source: [Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019](#), aged 3 years and over

Voluntary work can help to support mental health and wellbeing by strengthening social connection and a sense of being valued. In Wedderburn area, 23.8% of people were involved in voluntary work in the last 12 months, slightly lower than Loddon Shire (25.4%) and considerably higher than Victoria (13.3%).

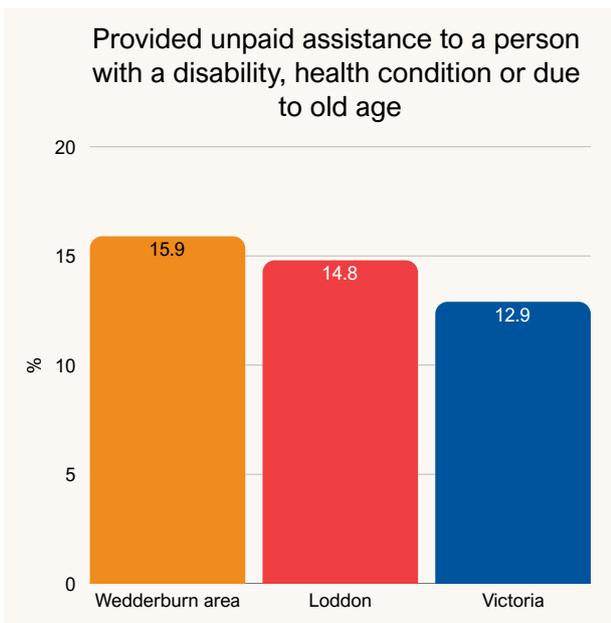


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

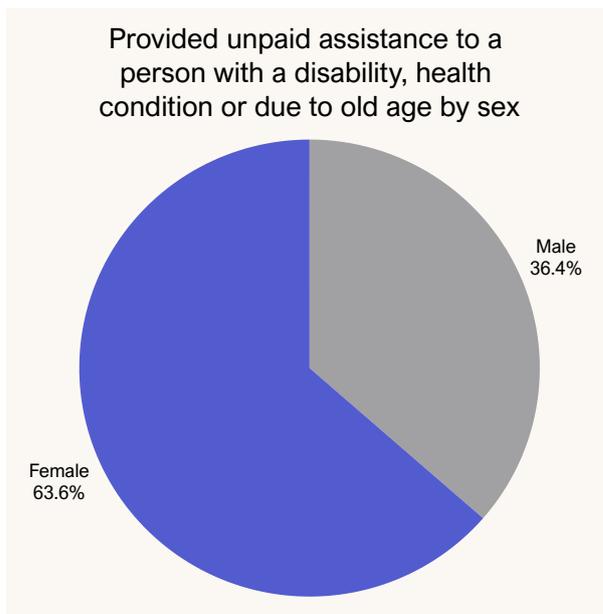
4.7 Carers

Carers of people with disability, chronic disease, or older individuals play a vital role in maintaining the health, independence, and quality of life of those they support. Their unpaid work reduces pressure on health and aged care systems, while providing emotional and physical care. However, the demands of caregiving can place carers at significant risk of physical and mental health issues, social isolation and financial strain.

Wedderburn area had 188 (15.9%) people providing an unpaid carer role to someone with a disability, health condition or elderly. Of the unpaid carers, 63.6% were female.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

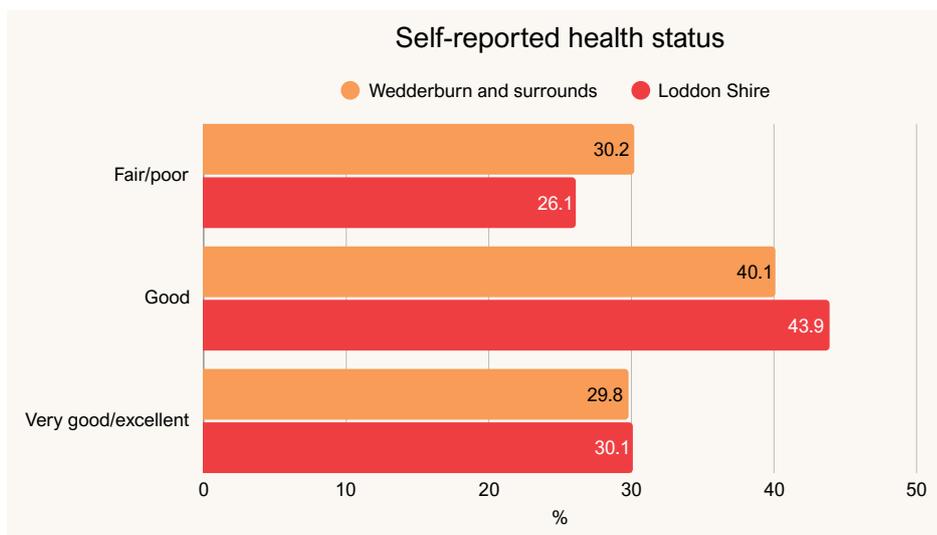


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021

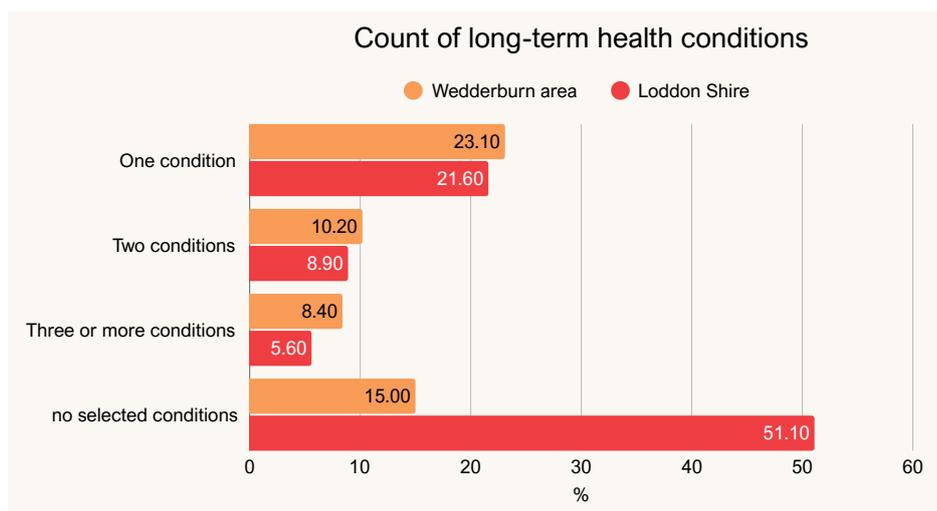
5 Health conditions

5.1 Long term health conditions

Wedderburn and surrounds (30.2%) had higher proportion of people reporting fair/poor health compared with the Loddon Shire (26.1%). Wedderburn area also has a higher overall count of long-term health conditions compared with Loddon Shire. In the census data, people were asked “have you (or dependants) been told by a doctor or nurse that they have any of these long-term health conditions?” The top three long-term health conditions reported in tWedderburn area were arthritis, mental health conditions and asthma.



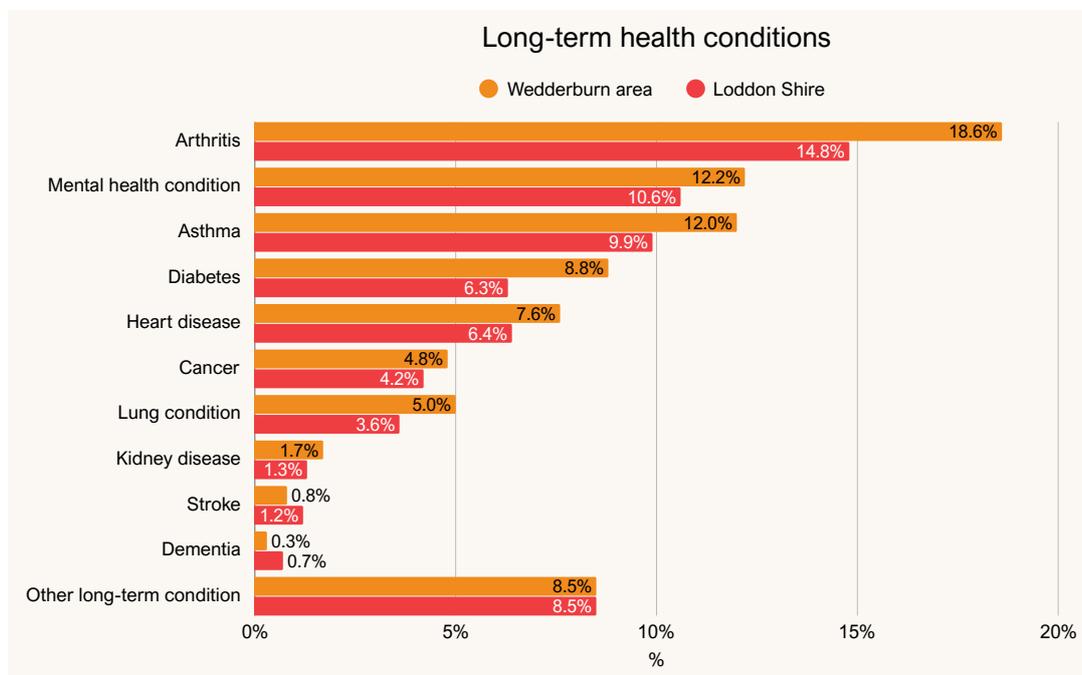
Source: Active living census, Healthy Heart of Victoria, Social Research Centre, 2019



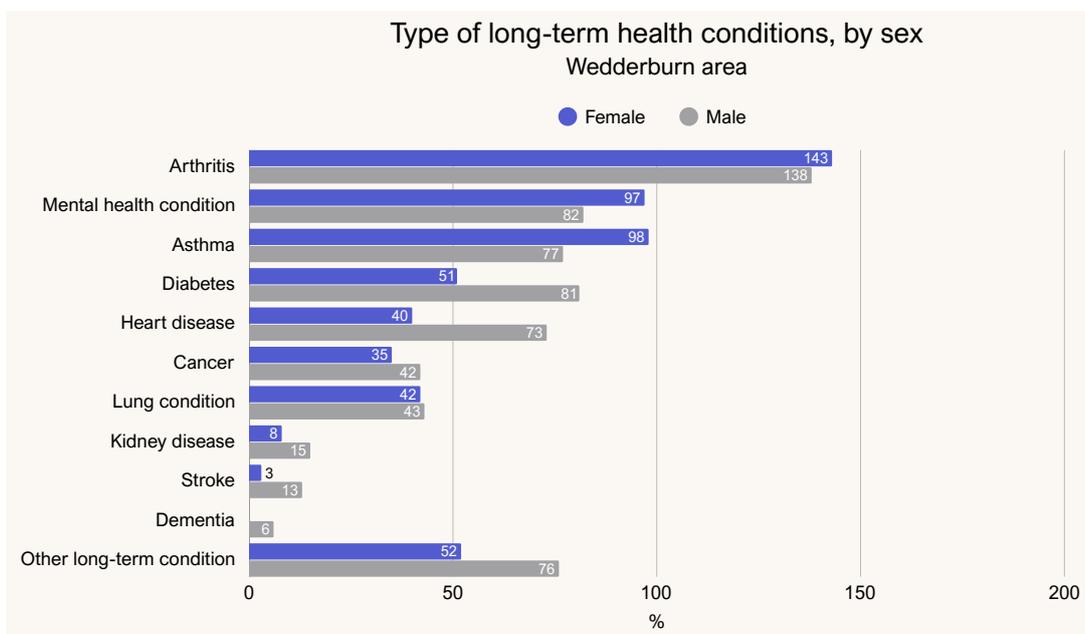
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, all people

Diabetes and heart disease were more commonly reported among male respondents, consistent with broader cardiometabolic health patterns.

Female respondents reported higher rates of asthma and mental health conditions, reflecting well-established gender trends in chronic disease burden.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, all people



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021, all people

6. References and abbreviations

LMPHU <https://www.bendigohealth.org.au/LMPHU/>

ABS Quick Stats <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/POA3523>

Abbreviation table	
ALC	Active Living Census
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LGA	Local government area
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse people
Loddon	Loddon Shire



LODDON MALLEE
PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT