



# Altona Meadows

---

## Neighbourhood Profile



Hobsons Bay  
CITY COUNCIL

Published by Hobsons Bay City Council  
December 2013

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Past, Current and Future Development .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A. <b>Location .....</b>	6
B. <b>History and development .....</b>	6
Aboriginal History .....	6
European settlement.....	6
C. <b>The Current Environment .....</b>	9
Land uses .....	9
Environmental Features .....	10
Landmarks, features and public art.....	11
Residential Development .....	12
Community Facilities .....	13
Children's services .....	14
Schools.....	15
Residential aged care.....	15
Health Services .....	16
Recreational facilities and reserves.....	17
Retail Centres.....	18
Public Transport.....	19
D. <b>What's ahead for Altona Meadows .....</b>	21
Open space .....	21
Arts and Culture.....	21
Road and Paths.....	21
<b>References.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Data Profile .....</b>	<b>23</b>
E. <b>Population Characteristics.....</b>	23
Population: number and age structure .....	23
Family and households types .....	24
Diversity of Residents .....	26
People with disabilities .....	28
Participation in education .....	29
Internet connected .....	31
F. <b>Labour Force Characteristics.....</b>	32
Labour force participation .....	32
Employment by industry.....	33
Unpaid work and volunteering .....	34
G. <b>Financial Wellbeing.....</b>	36

Individual incomes .....	36
Household incomes .....	37
Centrelink Payments and allowances.....	39
SEIFA index of disadvantage .....	39
Gaming losses .....	40
<b>H. Housing.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Dwelling types .....	41
Public housing stock .....	41
Residential aged care.....	41
Building permits.....	42
Housing tenure .....	42
Housing sales .....	43
Housing mortgages.....	43
Availability of rental housing .....	45
Rental payments.....	45
Housing stress.....	46
<b>I. Transport.....</b>	<b>48</b>
Car ownership.....	48
Journey to work .....	48
<b>J. Population Forecasts.....</b>	<b>50</b>
Population numbers .....	50
Age structure .....	50
Housing and households forecasts.....	51
<b>Consultation Summary .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>K. Introduction .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>L. Methodology.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>M. Summary notes .....</b>	<b>54</b>

## Tables and Graphs

Table 1: Population numbers .....	23
Table 2: Households with children.....	25
Table 3: Households without children .....	25
Table 4: Overseas born residents.....	26
Table 5: Main countries of birth.....	27
Table 6: Year of arrival in Australia .....	27
Table 7: Type of educational institution attending.....	30
Table 8: Level of schooling completed (persons aged 15 years and over).....	30
Table 9: Internet connection.....	31
Table 10: Labour force status (people aged 15 years and over).....	32
Table 11: Industry sector .....	33
Table 12: Occupation .....	34
Table 13: Assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age.....	34
Table 14: Unpaid child care.....	35
Table 15: Volunteer status.....	35
Table 16: Gross weekly income individual income (persons aged 15 years and over).....	36
Table 17: SEIFA index of disadvantage ranking (2011) .....	40
Table 18: Private dwelling types .....	41
Table 19: Public housing stock in Altona Meadows.....	41
Table 20: Residential aged care .....	42
Table 21: Housing tenure of households (occupied dwellings) .....	42
Table 22: Weekly rental payments .....	45
Table 23: Car ownership (households).....	48
Table 24: Journey to work.....	49
Table 25: Population forecasts.....	50
Table 26: Households and dwellings.....	52
Graph 1: Population Change 2006-2011.....	22
Graph 2: Age structure of Altona Meadows and Hobsons Bay .....	24
Graph 3: Assistance needed with a core activity, by age group .....	29
Graph 4: Individual income quartile groups (persons aged 15 and over) .....	37
Graph 5: Gross weekly household income.....	38
Graph 6: Household income quartile groups .....	38
Graph 7: House and unit sale prices .....	43
Graph 8: Monthly housing loan repayments (households) .....	44
Graph 9: Mortgage repayment quartiles .....	44
Graph 10: Housing rental quartiles .....	46
Graph 11: Forecast age structure .....	50
Graph 12: Change in age structure (2012-2022).....	51
Graph 13: Family and household forecasts.....	52



# Altona Meadows Neighbourhood Profile

## Executive Summary

Altona Meadows is bounded to the north by the Princes Freeway, Laverton Creek and the Werribee railway line. The eastern border is formed by a line which follows the edge of residential development and then cuts along Queen Street to follow Laverton Creek. Port Phillip Bay is to the south of the neighbourhood and Skeleton Creek and Crellin Avenue South are to the west.

The predominant land uses in Altona Meadows are residential, park and recreation, and public conservation zones.

Altona Meadows has some significant environmental features including the Truganina Coastal Parklands and the Cheetham Wetlands which follow the coast through to Point Cook.

In describing their neighbourhood residents talked about enjoying the way Altona Meadows had been subdivided, creating a lot of courts and cul-de-sacs which encouraged people to get to know their neighbours and fostering a sense of community. Altona Meadows is seen as being still relatively affordable for both renters and buyers, although prices have begun to increase. Open space is also highly valued and as one person put it, "*We are very privileged to have the open space that we have here.*" But some residents felt these environmental features were not well utilised. "*We have lots of lovely green areas like the 100 Steps and I think they could be used a lot more.*" They also noted that public transport and traffic could be improved, mentioning poor linkages between buses and trains and the congestion associated with the Princes Freeway.

### Population numbers

- Altona Meadows has a population of just over 18,729 people (22 per cent of all the municipality's residents), making it the most populated neighbourhood in Hobsons Bay.
- Over the next decade, the population of Altona Meadows is forecast to remain stable. Contributing factors to this lack of growth are increasing numbers of maturing families and an ageing of population.

### Age structure

- Between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, there were significant changes in the age structure of the Altona Meadows population. Young and school aged children decreased in number, as did adults in the 35-49 years age bracket. In contrast, the number of older residents grew, especially those aged 60 years and over.
- The ageing of the Altona Meadows population is forecast to continue over the next decade. It is anticipated that there will be a decrease among most age groups up to 50 years while the number of older residents, particularly those aged in their 60s and over, will continue to increase.

### Overseas born residents

- Altona Meadow has 6,524 residents (34.8 per cent) who were born overseas, an increase of 2 per cent since the 2006 Census and 4 per cent above the municipal figure.
- Their main countries of birth are the United Kingdom, India, Malta, Vietnam and the Philippines.
- The vast majority of overseas born residents have a non-English speaking background (83 per cent) and their numbers have increased since 2006 (+341).

### **Residents with a disability**

- It is estimated that approximately 3,200 Altona residents (17.1 per cent) have a disability.
- The 2011 Census findings show approximately 1,000 residents of Altona Meadows residents (5.3 per cent) need help with a core activity involving self-care, communication and mobility. This was a 1.2 per cent increase since the 2006 Census. Two thirds of those needing assistance are aged 55 years and older.

### **Education**

- There are two government primary schools, one Catholic primary school and no secondary schools in Altona Meadows.
- Approximately 21 per cent of the neighbourhood's residents are enrolled in education which is similar to the participation rate for Hobsons Bay.
- Close to 46 per cent of Altona Meadows residents have completed Year 12 or an equivalent which is approximately 4 per cent lower than the rate for Hobsons Bay.

### **Internet connection**

- Since 2006, the internet connection rate for Altona Meadows has jumped by approximately 15 per cent, with almost three quarters of Altona Meadows households now connected, 2 per cent more than for Hobsons Bay.

### **Labour force**

- In 2011, just over 93 per cent of Altona Meadows residents were employed, marginally lower than the rate for Hobsons Bay (94.4 per cent). The main change in employment for the neighbourhood's residents between 2006 and 2011 was an increase in part-time workers.
- Approximately 7 per cent of the neighbourhood's labour force was unemployed at the 2011 Census, compared to 5.6 per cent for the municipality, and the majority of local residents were looking for full-time work.
- The key industries where Altona Meadows residents are employed are manufacturing, retail and transport.

### **Income**

- At the 2011 Census, the average weekly income per worker in Australia was \$1,026. In Altona Meadows, 1,960 residents (12.6 per cent) aged 15 years have incomes above that level, but well below the Hobsons Bay figure of 19.4 per cent.
- Conversely, a further 6,166 residents (39.8 per cent) have incomes below \$400 per week which is higher than the municipal figure of 36.7 per cent. (The poverty line for a single working person is \$459.83).

### **Housing**

- There are 7,386 private dwellings in Altona Meadows and the vast majority are separate houses (89.8 per cent), with the remainder being medium density housing (10.2 per cent). There is slightly less medium density housing in Altona Meadows, compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole.
- Approximately one third of households in Altona Meadows own their home, one third are paying a mortgage and a further one quarter are renting. The main change in tenure since the 2006 Census has been an increase in home ownership and a corresponding fall in those with a mortgage.
- Compared to Hobsons Bay, Altona Meadows households are more likely to have a mortgage and fewer are renting.

## **Transport**

- Almost 88 per cent of households in Altona Meadows are car owners which is approximately 3 per cent above the municipal rate.
- Altona Meadows has a far lower proportion of households without a car (5.5 per cent of Altona Meadows households compared to 9.0 per cent of Hobsons Bay households). Conversely, they are more likely to own three or more cars (Altona Meadows 16.8 per cent and Hobsons Bay 12.8 per cent).
- Seventy 2 per cent of the neighbourhoods workers either drive to work or are car passengers, which is six per cent above the Hobsons Bay figure.

## **Future development proposed for the neighbourhood**

- A new exhibition space, called 'Orbit', is due to open at Central Square shopping centre in late 2013.
- Construction of the shared pedestrian/cycle path on the east side of Point Cook Road, between Central Ave and Skeleton Creek, is planned.
- Also ahead is the redevelopment of the play space at Laverton Park; works will include pathway improvements.
- Floodlighting will be installed at Altona Green Park which is a multi-purpose sports field, as well as new public toilets at HD Graham Reserve.

### **DATA DISCLAIMER**

Every care has been taken to ensure the information in this document is correct. However, Hobsons Bay City Council does not accept any liability to any person or organisation for the information (or the use of such information) provided in this document.



# Altona Meadows Neighbourhood Past, Current and Future Development



## Location

Altona Meadows is bounded to the north by the Princes Freeway, Laverton Creek and the Werribee railway line. The eastern border is formed by a line which follows the edge of residential development and then cuts along Queen Street to follow Laverton Creek. Port Phillip Bay is to the south of the neighbourhood and Skeleton Creek and Crellin Avenue South are to the west.

## History and development

### Aboriginal History

The Hobsons Bay City Council Heritage Study notes that “most of the coastal territory of what is now regarded as the Melbourne metropolitan area and the Mornington Peninsula was, in pre-contact times, the territory of the Bunurong people. The Bunurong were divided into six different clans or tribes. Those who lived in the area now covered by Hobsons Bay (and stretching around to Albert Park) were the Yalukit-willam people”<sup>1</sup>.

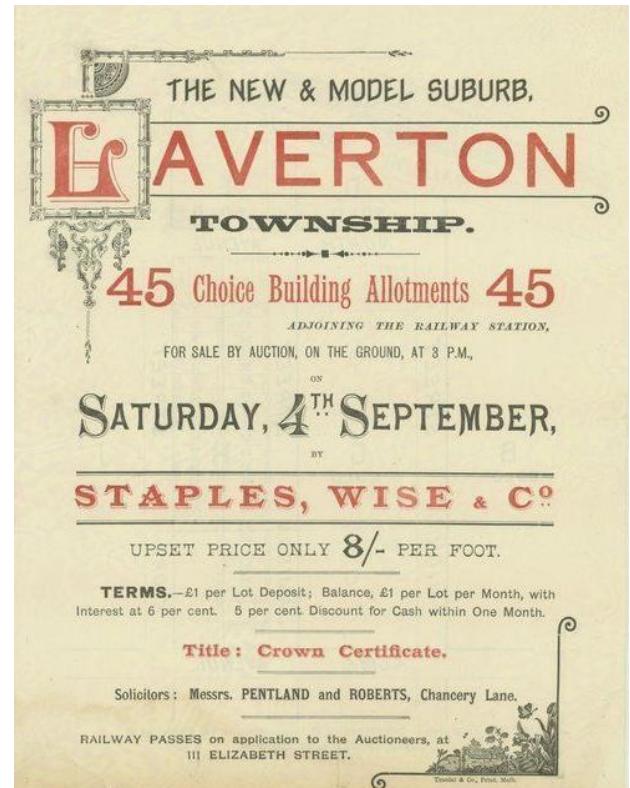
*Yalukit-willam: The First People of the City of Hobsons Bay*<sup>2</sup> a publication written by Dr Ian Clark, commissioned by the Hobsons Bay City Council, refers to the Yalukit-willam being “semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers who moved around within the limits of their territory to take advantage of seasonably available food”. Hunting was generally undertaken by the men and included kangaroos, possums, lizards and fish while the women gathered a range of food such as yam, wild cherries and murnong which was something like a yam. “In the early years of European settlement murnong grew profusely along the Kororoit Creek and other creeks in the area”.

### European settlement

In her book *Altona, the Long View*<sup>3</sup>, Susan Priestly makes reference to Skeleton Creek and its mention in the journal of James Flemming. Flemming was part of a survey party commissioned by Governor Philip King in 1803. In his journal he recorded crossing two creeks near the Altona coast, one of which was Skeleton Creek, sometimes referred to as Skeleton Water Holes and Chain of Ponds (page 8).

In Dr Clarke’s publication, cited previously, records from the early 1800s make reference to Skeleton Creek. “There is a slip of trees about half a mile from the beach, then a clear level plain to the mountains, which I suppose to be fifteen to twenty miles. Passed two inlets of salt water, Kororoit and Skeleton creeks”.

In the early stages of development in the 1880s, developers of Altona Meadows (parts of which were formerly Laverton) were keen to promote the attributes of the ‘new model suburb’.

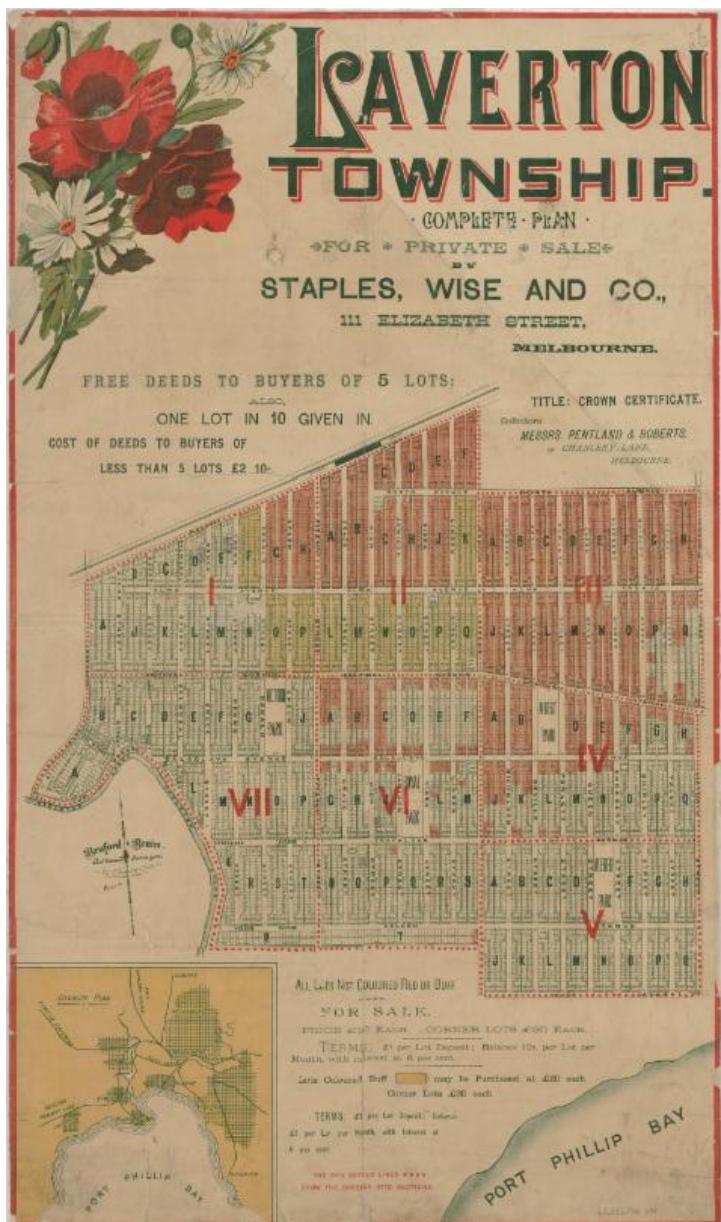


The new & model suburb, Laverton [Auction notice], ca 1880-1890, Troedel & Co.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/181958126>

(More information on the geographical changes to the boundary of Altona Meadows is included in the next section on the current environment.)

The promotional map below shows parcels of land for sale that were located much of what is now Altona Meadows, extending from the railway line in the north down to South Avenue. Lots were for sale for £10 and £20 for corner lots.



State Library of Victoria - Laverton township [cartographic material] : complete plan for private sale by Staples, Wise and Co. / Bruford & Braim, authorised surveyors. 1886

According to one developer at the time, the area has:

*...extensive views in all directions, comprising the Bay with its shipping, the Dandenong Ranges, Plenty Ranges, Mount Macedon, and the You Yangs—in fact, every prominent landmark within a radius of fully thirty miles is plainly visible. The land itself is unsurpassed in the district, and has been known for years as one of the richest spots in the locality, and the owners guarantee that every allotment is suitable, without the expenditure of a shilling, for the immediate erection of dwellings, it having sufficient elevation for drainage without any broken ground, cliffs, or other impediments. The price and terms upon which it is offered to the public are unequalled in the history of land sales, and have been arranged so that everyone may have a chance of securing one or more allotments, and the owners, not grasping at every attainable shilling, offer the land at an absurdly low figure, leaving the unearned increment for the benefit of purchasers. That no safer investment can be found than suburban property is now universally allowed, the enormous accumulation of wealth which is taking place year after year ensuring a steadily improving value.*

Extract from- C.R. Staples 1886, Laverton, the new and model suburb: with a short history of Melbourne from its foundation to the present time.



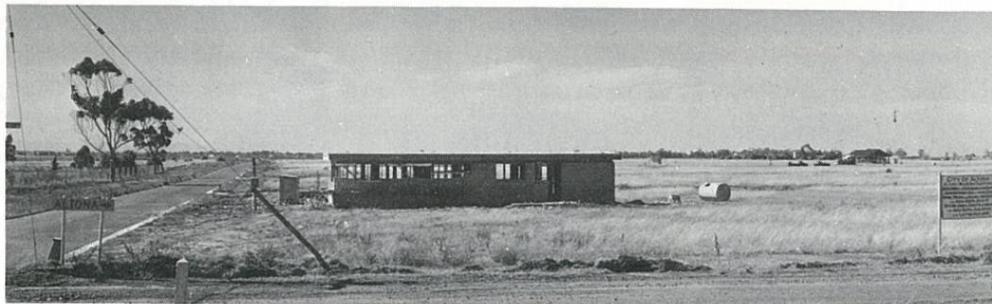
It is not clear how many people took up the offer to purchase land and move to the area, but by 1888, the Laverton State School No 2857 was opened at Kiora Street in Altona Meadows. However, a heritage study undertaken for the Hobsons Bay City Council in 2006 suggested that, “It [the opening of the school] demonstrates the somewhat premature speculative development of Laverton over 100 years ago”<sup>4</sup>, so presumably the number of new residents was small. Historically, the school building which still exists is significant, is the oldest school building in the municipality and one of the few surviving one-room schools in the metropolitan area.

In 1924, the Cheetham Saltworks Pty Ltd bought part of the former Point Cook Pastoral Estate to harvest salt in man-made evaporative lakes. The saltworks, which are now called the Cheetham Wetlands occupied land along the coastal edge of Altona Meadows, extending south over Skeleton Creek into what is now Point Cook. When the company operations were wound up in the 1990s, the land which included significant wetlands and bird habitats, came under the management of Parks Victoria.<sup>5</sup> (More information on the wetlands is included in the next section.)

Land in the former City of Altona was relatively cheap because housing blocks were generally unserviced and some studies suggest that it was not until the late 1970s that development started in Altona Meadows.<sup>6</sup> However in her book on the history of Altona, Susan Priestly noted that,

*By October 1978, the Altona Meadows kindergarten and infant welfare centre was being well used, and an embryo commercial area was completed with the opening of a self-service store and a butcher's shop. Two years later, there was an acute need for a primary school and by 1983 there were over 400 children enrolled at the Altona Meadows Primary School and a further one hundred at the local Catholic school.<sup>7</sup>*

*First house in Altona Meadows under construction March 1971.*



Source: Priestly, S. (1988) *Altona, the Long View*, Hargreen Publishing Company, Victoria

In the mid 1980s, the then City of Werribee attempted to gain approval to annex Altona Meadows and the petrochemical complex at Altona. Both the Altona Council and the residents were opposed to this move. Residents collected a petition with more than 10,000 signatures, preferring to remain in the Altona municipality which had a good economic record and delivery of facilities and services and the proposal failed.<sup>8</sup> A decade later in the 1990s, the Kennett Government introduced an extensive program to amalgamate local government areas. As a result, Altona Meadows, which fell within the City of Altona, became part of the City of Hobsons Bay.

## The Current Environment

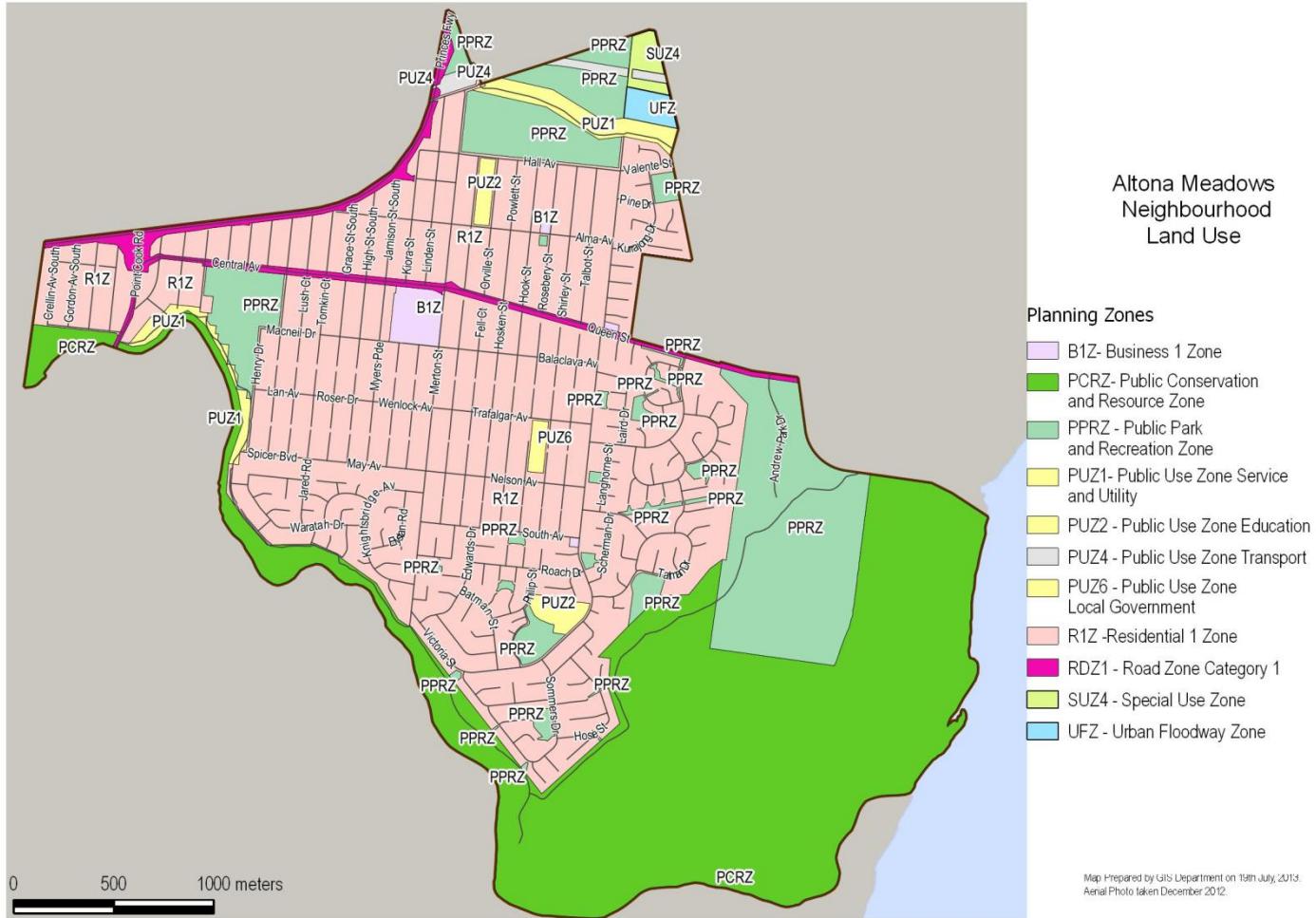
Geographically, Altona Meadows has existed in its current form since Victorian council amalgamations in 1994. Prior to that, Merton Street formed the western boundary of the neighbourhood and the land beyond was part of the City of Werribee (later renamed City of Wyndham). With the amalgamations, the Cities of Williamstown and Altona became Hobsons Bay and the western boundary was moved further west to Skeleton Creek. At the same time, parts of Laverton were redefined as Altona Meadows. Among longer term residents who are familiar with the area's history, it is not uncommon for parts of Altona Meadows to still be referred to as Laverton.

### Land uses

The types of land uses in Altona Meadows are predominantly residential (R1Z), public park and recreation (PPRZ) and public conservation zones (PCRZ). As the map below shows, coastal areas of the neighbourhood to the south east and land that skirts Skeleton Creek, along the south west corner, all fall within the public conservation zone.

The neighbourhood's residential zones are bisected by a road zone – category 1 (RDZ1). This road, Central Avenue / Queen Street, is the key link to other parts of the municipality as well as a key entry and exit point for the neighbourhood. The Princes Freeway which forms part of the northern boundary is similarly zoned.

The main commercial zone, in the middle of the neighbourhood, is the location of the large Central Square shopping complex and includes the Altona Meadows Learning and Library Centre. (Business zones were recently changed to commercial zones and appear as B1Z in the map below). There are two primary schools to the north and south of the neighbourhood which are located on land zoned for public use education (PUZ2).



## Environmental Features

Arguably the most significant environmental features in Altona Meadows are the Truganina Coastal Parklands and the Cheetham Wetlands. The wetlands and Truganina extend along the coastal area between Laverton and Skeleton Creeks; the creeks are managed by Melbourne Water. Truganina is located at the northern end and is managed by Hobsons Bay City Council and the wetlands are crown land which is managed by Parks Victoria.



Photo: Skeleton Creek

Truganina Park covers approximately 70 – 75 hectares and was created on the site of the former Altona Landfill Tip which closed in 1998. Growing in the area is the Chaffy Saw-sedge (*Gahnia filum*) which is a significant food source for the larvae for the Altona Skipper Butterfly. While Skipper butterflies are also found in several other parts of Port Phillip Bay, the ones found here are scientifically important as they are geographically isolated from other populations and as a result have some unique characteristics. The population here is known as the Altona Skipper Butterfly (*Hesperilla flavescens*). Truganina and Cherry Lake in Altona are believed to be the main two sites in the west where this saw-sedge grows.

Storm water from the parts Altona Meadows is filtered and diverted into the wetlands to create a bird habitat, and to reduce unwanted nutrients and rubbish washing into the bay. The wetlands attract a wide range of birds including spoonbills, egrets, coots, crakes and several types of hens.<sup>9</sup>

There are remnant areas of high quality salt marsh growing to the north east of the Park. Extensive revegetation and conservation work has been undertaken by the relevant management authorities and community groups including local schools and volunteers who attend ‘hands on’ events like National Tree Day. Ongoing upgrades are occurring in the park to improve and control public access and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Landmarks, features and public art**

#### *100 Steps to Federation and Time Beacon*

A feature of the Truganina Park is the 100 Steps to Federation. An initiative of Hobsons Bay City Council, the steps were built from basalt rock, recycled from a clean-fill tip that is now closed. At the summit of the 17 metre high mound is a viewing area that provides extensive views of the local coast to the Melbourne CBD and across Port Phillip Bay.



#### *H2O Stint Map*

The sculpture (see photo at left) takes its name and shape from two of the site’s most remarkable features: its water and its wildlife. This work by David Murphy was installed on the Bay Trail at Skeleton Creek in 2004. The sculpture is located at a fork in the Bay Trail, near Tatman Street.

### *Airtime*

A group of flagpoles erected at the Altona Meadows Skate Park in Queen Street are used to show a changing display of young people's artworks.

### *Grow*

Grow is a sculpture by Jonathan Leahey and was installed at the corner of Queen and Merton Streets in 2011. Made from steel, the sculpture is a large single stemmed flower representing the diverse population of the neighbourhood, the flower being an emblem of friendship and respect that recognises all ages and cultures.

## **Residential Development**

Development in Altona Meadows predominantly dates back to the 1980 and 1990s. The street layouts on the south side of Queen Street and Central Ave clearly date to this era. A traditional grid layout is replaced by streets that are curved and punctuated with roundabouts and road narrowings. To the north, the streets follow a grid pattern.

Also typical of the era is the lack of footpaths in some parts of the neighbourhood. It is not uncommon for some streets to have none or to only have footpaths on only one side of the street. This makes it very difficult to walk around safely and access some parts of the neighbourhood, including local shops and schools.



Some housing in the northern section of Altona Meadows, around Laverton Park, appear to have been built pre 1980s, possibly in the mid to late 1970s. According to Council records, one house in this area is probably among the oldest in the neighbourhood, built in 1925.

Housing in Altona Meadows is almost uniformly brick veneer construction and detached. Unlike many other parts of the municipality, the relative newness of the housing stock here has resulted in limited redevelopment. However, there are some instances of housing being replaced, sometimes by unit development.

## Community Facilities

### Altona Meadows Community Centre

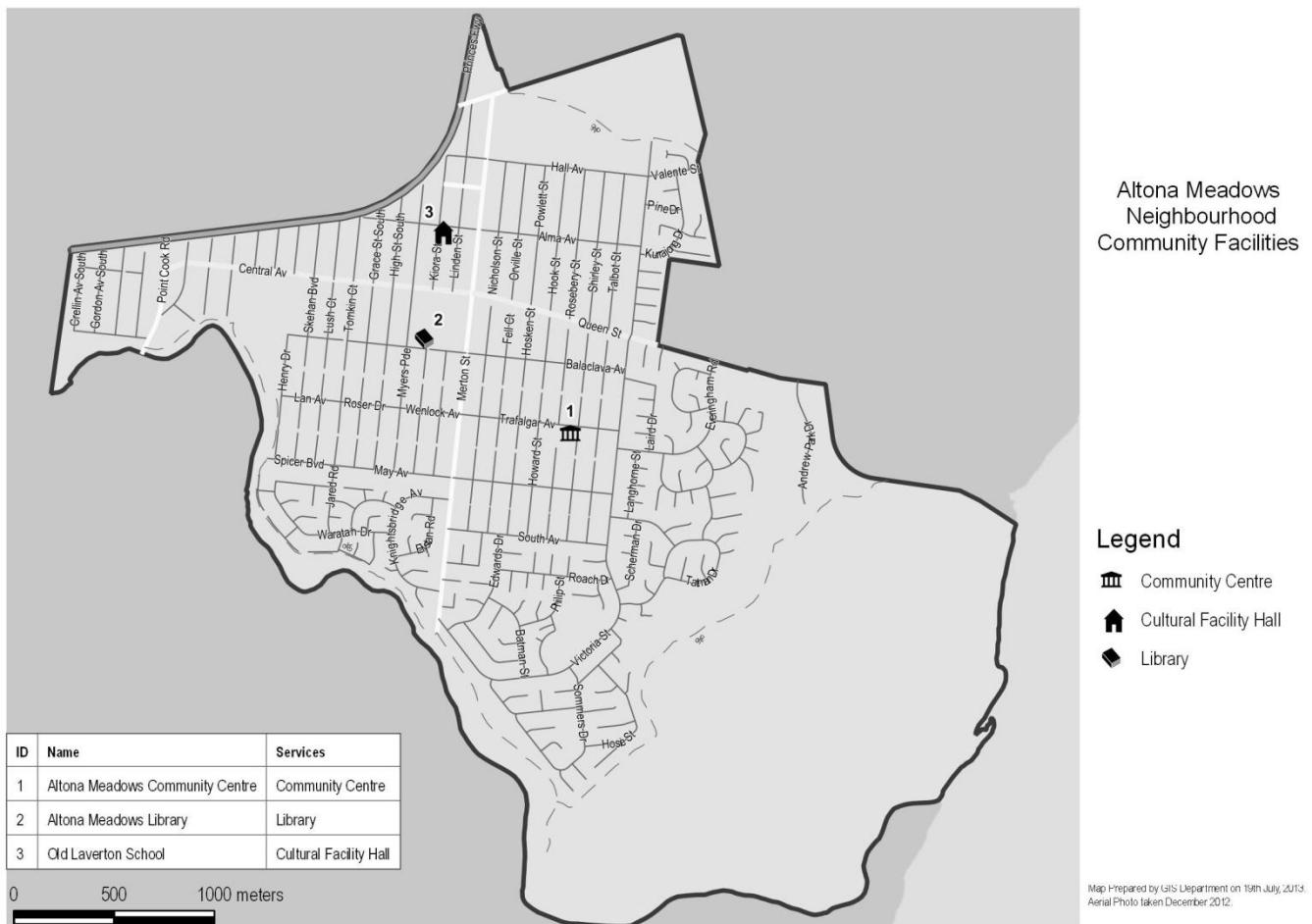
Altona Meadows Community Centre, in Trafalgar Avenue, has operated since 1991. The centre runs a diverse range of services and programs for people of all ages and abilities. These cover employment services, education and literacy and numeracy, disability support programs & services, counselling services and culturally and linguistically diverse programs. There are also sports and creative arts programs, together with services and programs for young people and children, including occasional childcare and after school programs.

### Altona Meadows Library and Learning Centre

Located at the Central Square shopping centre, the Altona Meadows Library and Learning Centre is a relatively new building and has a range of books, magazines and Audio Visual (AV) material, including community language collections in Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese. Community meeting and exhibition spaces are also available for hire.

### Old Laverton School

Old Laverton School in Kiora Street is a community and arts facility available for hire to casual and long term tenants. (Refer to the section on History and Development for more information about the building's heritage.)



## Children's services

### Maternal Child Health (MCH)

There are three locations where MCH services are delivered and each is co-located with a kindergarten. These are at the Russell Court Kindergarten and MCH, Cooraminta (corner of Central Avenue and Skehan Boulevard) and Altona Meadows Kindergarten and MCH (Powlett Street).

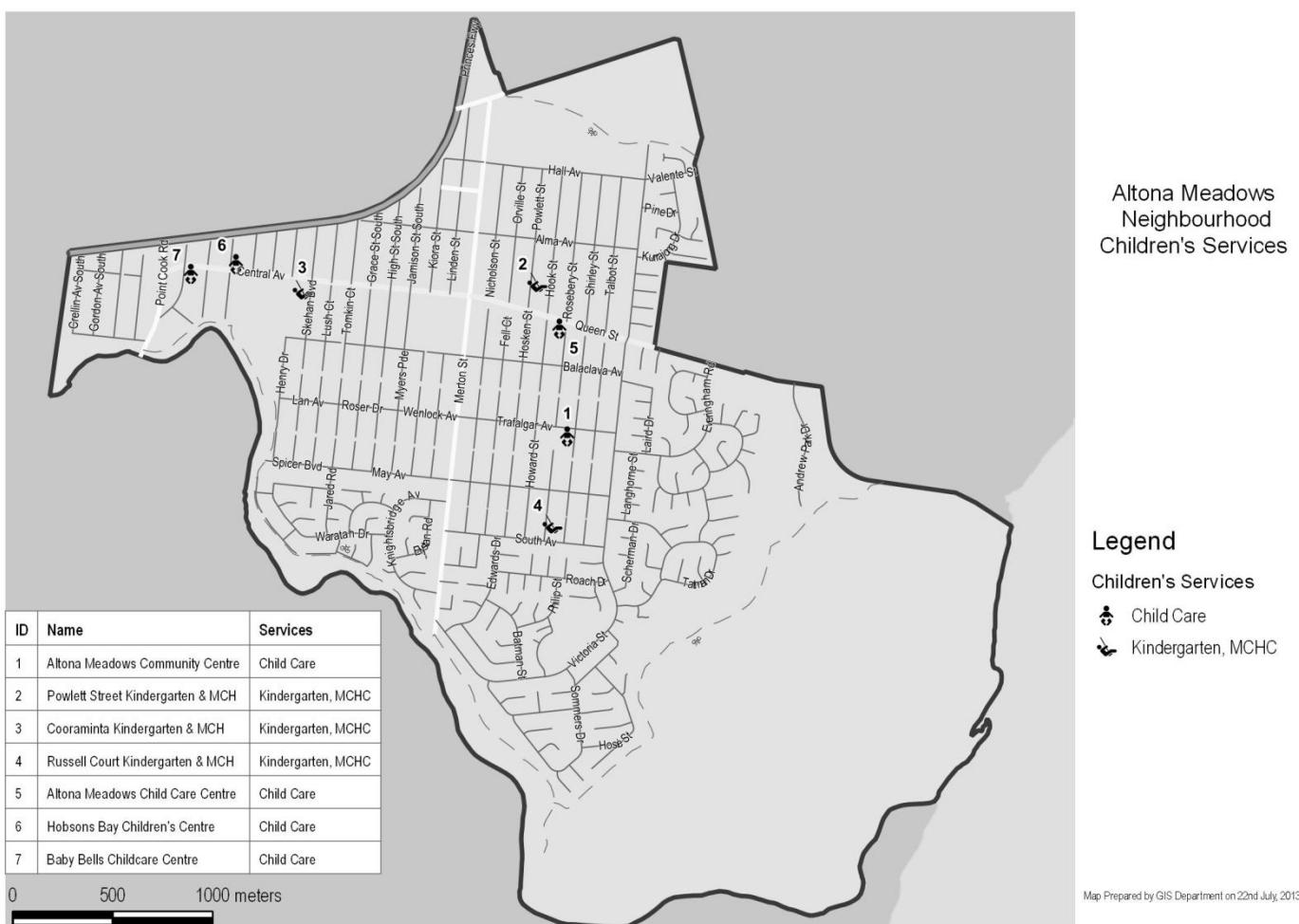
### Child care

Altona Meadows Children's Centre in Queen Street is a long day childcare service which is provided by the Council. There are also two privately operated centres: Baby Bell's Child care (corner Central Avenue and Fitzpatrick Street) and Hobsons Bay Children's Centre (corner Central Avenue and Ascot Street South). Both provide long day care.

### Kindergarten

Altona Meadows Kindergarten is a community managed service that operates out of a Council owned building and offers programs for children aged four to six years.

Russell Court Kindergarten runs from a Council owned building and is a community managed service which offers both three and four year old programs.



## Schools

The neighbourhood has three primary schools. These include two government primary schools, Altona Meadows and Altona Green, and Queen of Peace, a Catholic primary school. There are no secondary schools in Altona Meadows. The closest secondary schools are Laverton (Prep-Year 12), Point Cook Secondary College (Prep -Year 9) and Point Cook Senior College (Years 10-12).



## Residential aged care

There are three residential aged care facilities in Altona Meadows. Between them, they offer a mix of high and low care beds as well as respite care. Two of the facilities, St George's and Altona Meadows, provide rooms which enable residents to age in place.

## Health Services

### *ISIS Primary Care*

ISIS Primary Care is a not for profit community health organisation, predominantly funded by the Department of Human Services. Among the services provided are nursing, community health, speech therapy, podiatry, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, other health management programs and health promotion.



### Doctors

There are three medical centres in Altona Meadows:

- Altona Meadows Family Medical Centre, 100 Victoria Street, Altona Meadows
- Altona Super Clinic, Shop 2, Central Square Shopping Centre, Altona Meadows
- Meadows Medical Centre 311 Queen Street, Altona Meadows.

### *Dentists*

The neighbourhood has three dental practices

- Altona Meadows Dental Clinic, 95 Victoria Street, Altona Meadows
- Smile Point Dental Centre, 23 Point Cook Road, Altona Meadows
- Million Smiles Dentist, Shop 50, Central Square, Altona Meadows.

### *Pharmacies*

There is one pharmacy in Altona Meadows

- Pharmasave Central Square, Shop 15, Central Square, Altona Meadows.

### **Recreational facilities and reserves**

Altona Meadows has a range of recreation spaces, both formal and informal.

#### *AB Shaw Reserve / Laverton Park*

This reserve is located north of Queen Street, adjacent to Laverton Creek. Facilities include tennis courts, lawn bowls and ovals for soccer, cricket and football. There are also four spots pavilions, cricket nets and a playground. A shared walking and cycling path runs between the reserve and Laverton Creek and the Council has committed to completing the unpaved sections. Works have also commenced at the Merton Street underpass which will connect the path through to the north side of the railway line and on to McCormack Park in Laverton.

#### *Bruce Comben Reserve*

This reserve is at the western end of Central Avenue. It has a cricket oval and nets, tennis courts, a playground and sports pavilion. Touch football is also played here.

#### *Altona Green Reserve*

This public use reserve is adjacent to the Altona Green primary school in Victoria Street. In addition to two tennis courts, there is an oval which is used for cricket and in winter it serves as an 'overflow' oval for football. The reserve also has several cricket nets and a playground.

#### *HD Graham Reserve*

Graham Reserve is at the eastern end of Queen Street, close to Laverton Creek. Among the sports infrastructure is a skate park, a BMX dirt track with jumps and two tennis courts.

#### *The Altona Sports Centre*

The centre has six indoor basketball courts and two outdoor courts which are used for basketball and netball. It also includes two meeting/function rooms which are available for community use.

#### *Truganina Park and Cheetham Wetlands*

These areas of open space are key linked spaces, incorporating a number of shared paths. Beginning at the skate park on Queen Street and skirting the housing development the main path heads south to Skeleton Creek. It then divides and users can either continue across Skeleton Creek to Point Cook or take the path that follows the eastern side of Skeleton Creek through to Carinza Reserve in the north western corner of the neighbourhood. (Refer to Landmarks and Features for more information about these spaces.)

In addition to the playgrounds that are located at the sporting venues and mentioned above, there are a number of smaller local parks scattered across the neighbourhood some of which have playground equipment. Barbeque equipment is also installed at Carinza Reserve and Tatman Reserve which sits on the edge of the Cheetham Wetlands.

#### *Hobsons Bay Coastal Trail*

The Hobsons Bay Coastal Trail which is a sealed pathway that follows the coastal area of Altona Meadows and connects the neighbourhood eastward through to Altona, Williamstown and Newport



#### Retail Centres

The neighbourhood's major retail centre is Central Square Shopping Centre shopping complex, built in 1994 and refurbished and extended in 2004. The Centre includes several major anchor stores and 55 other specialty shops and trades 24 hours seven days a week. An Aldi supermarket is also scheduled to be established within the centre over the next six months. Adjacent to the centre is Hobsons Bay Altona Meadows Library and a Medical Centre.

Three very small shopping strips within the neighbourhood also provide a local service. At the corner of Roseberry Street and Cameron Avenue are a combined grocery/liquor store, butcher and hairdresser. At Queen Street and Victoria Avenue is a medical centre, a cycle shop and a takeaway shop. Further south, at the corner of Victoria Street and South Avenue, is a milk bar, take-away shop and hairdresser.

### Public Transport

Altona Meadow is on the edge of zone 1. Bus services are the only public transport option to directly service the Altona Meadows neighbourhood. The closest railway station is in the neighbouring suburb of Laverton. Trains run from Laverton into the Melbourne CBD and to Werribee.

*Bus services<sup>10</sup>*

**Routes 411 & 412 - Laverton - Footscray via Altona Meadows, Altona, Millers Road**

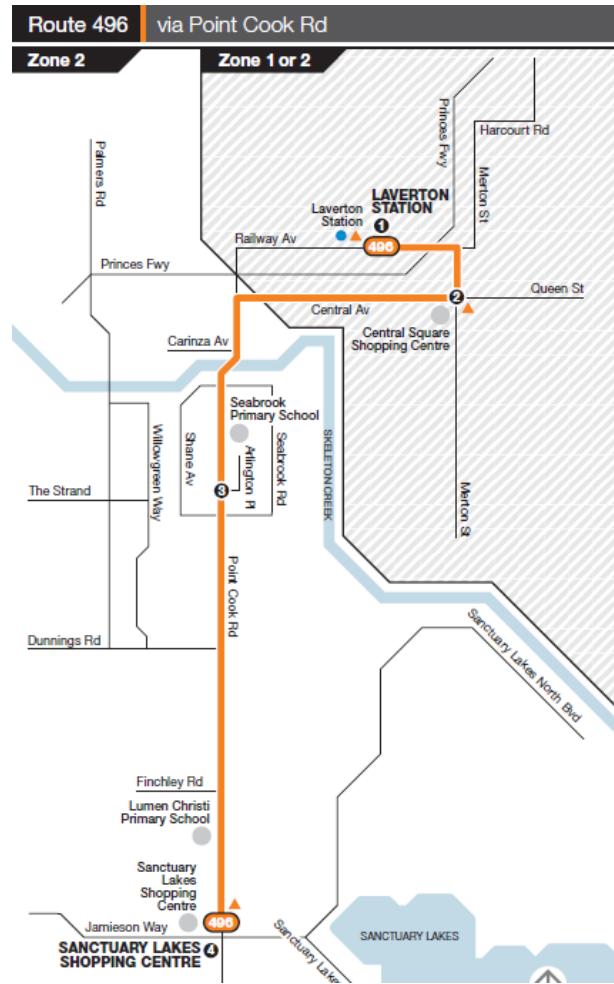
Route 411 - departs from the terminus in Paisley Street and runs via Albert Street, Buckley Street, Geelong Road, Altona Gate Shopping Centre, Millers Road, Blyth Street, Maidstone Street, Queen Street, Victoria Street, Merton Street and Railway Avenue to the terminus at Laverton Station

Route 412 - follows the 411 route, with a slight deviation at Altona North where the 412 route runs via McIntosh Road and Mills Street before linking up again on Millers Road.



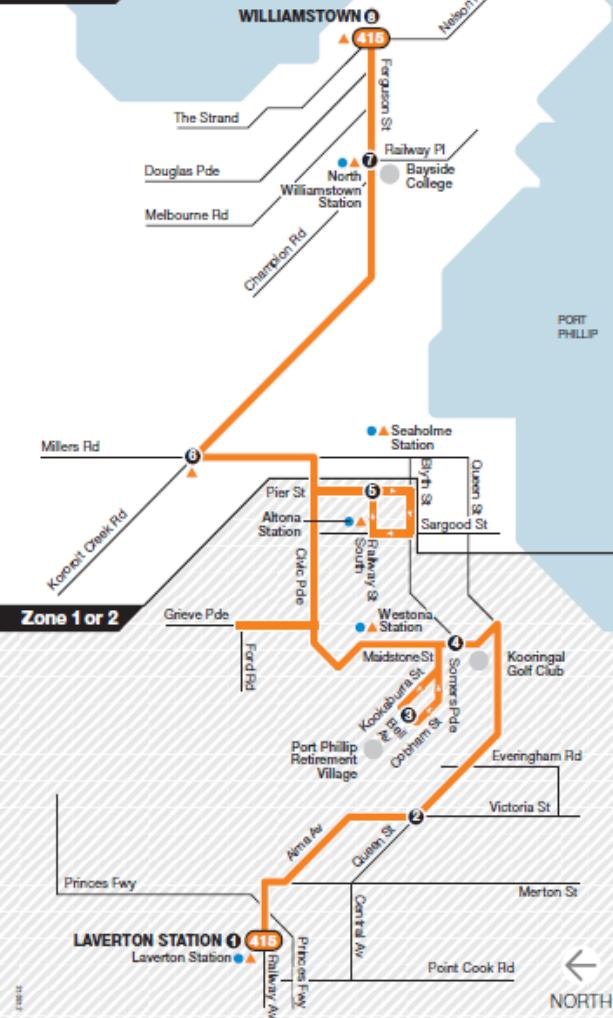
**Route 496 - Laverton - Sanctuary lakes SC via Point Cook Rd**

Departs from the terminus at Laverton Station and runs via Railway Avenue, Merton Street, Central Avenue and Point Cook Road to Sanctuary Lakes Shopping Centre in Point Cook (Wyndham municipality).

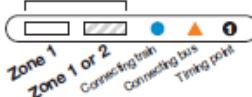


**Route 415 | via Altona**

**Zone 1**



Ticketing zones



For more information visit [ptv.vic.gov.au](http://ptv.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 800 007 (8am – midnight daily)  
MAP NOT TO SCALE

**Route 415 - Laverton to Williamstown via Altona, North Williamstown**

This service does not run directly from Altona Meadows but departs the terminus at Laverton Station. It runs via Railway Avenue, Merton Street, Alma Avenue, Victoria Street, Queen Street, then on to Williamstown.

## **What's ahead for Altona Meadows**

The Council works that are planned for the neighbourhood, subject to budgetary constraints, include:

### **Open space**

- A redevelopment of the A.B. Shaw play space at Laverton Park, together with pathway improvements
- New public toilets at HD Graham Reserve for users of the reserve and the adjacent BMX/Skatepark
- Floodlighting at Altona Green Park which is a multi-purpose sports field
- Traffic changes and improvements to the entry into Newland Street
- Works at Bruce Comben Reserve Car Park will include a new parking configuration, lighting and dedicated pathways.

### **Arts and Culture**

- Orbital is a new exhibition space which is due to open in late 2013. Located in an external wall of the Aldi supermarket which is being constructed at Central Square shopping centre, this purpose built space will showcase three exhibitions per year. Aldi has contributed two years of funding to the project.

### **Road and Paths**

- Planning for the upgrade of the shared pedestrian/cycle path, east of Point Cook Road, along the southern side of Skeleton Creek
- Commencement of a new footpaths program
- Upgrading of the Merton Street underpass, including flood mitigation works
- Road resurfacing works on Merton Street.

The State Minister for Planning recently announced reforms to the Residential, Business (now known as Commercial) and Industrial Zones across Victoria. The reformed Residential Zones must be implemented by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014. The Council are currently undertaking a review of zones to ensure they met the needs of future planning.

## References

1. Hobsons Bay City Council (2003) Hobsons Bay Heritage Study: Thematic Environmental History
2. Clarke, I. (2001) The Yalukit-willam: The First People of the City of Hobsons Bay, Council for the Arts, Australia
3. Priestly, S. (1988) Altona, the Long View, Hargreen Publishing Company, Victoria.
4. Victorian Heritage database, [http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/reports/report\\_place/15096](http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/reports/report_place/15096)
5. Hobsons Bay City Council (2003) Hobsons Bay Heritage Study: Thematic Environmental History
6. Hobsons Bay City Council (2003) Hobsons Bay Heritage Study: Thematic Environmental History
7. Priestley,(1988) Altona, the Long View, Hargreen Publishing Company, Victoria.
8. Dept of Sustainability and Environment  
[http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/114646/Bk.2.14.TheskipperandtheSedgeland.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/114646/Bk.2.14.TheskipperandtheSedgeland.pdf)
9. Public Transport Victoria (PTV) <http://ptv.vic.gov.au/timetables>

# Altona Meadows Neighbourhood Data Profile

## Population Characteristics

### Population: number and age structure

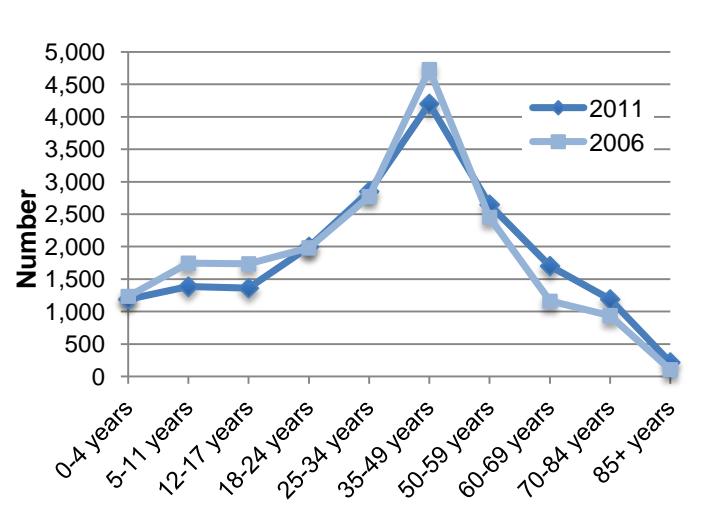
Altona Meadows has a population of just over 18,729 people (22 per cent of all the municipality's residents), making it the most populated neighbourhood in Hobsons Bay. (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Census).

Looking at how the Altona Meadows population and age structure changed between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, the table and graph below show a slight decline in the total population. There were however significant changes within the population age groups. Young and school aged children, particularly those aged 5-17 years, declined. Adults in the 35-49 years age bracket have also declined. These changes highlight a loss in families. In their place, Graph 1 indicates that the population is starting to age and the number of older residents, especially those aged 60 years and over, is growing.

Table 1: Population numbers

Age	2011	2006	Change 2006-2011
0-4 years	1,190	1,234	-44
5-11 years	1,383	1,744	-361
12-17 years	1,359	1,735	-376
18-24 years	1,995	1,982	+13
25-34 years	2,850	2,770	+80
35-49 years	4,199	4,729	-530
50-59 years	2,648	2,452	+196
60-69 years	1,702	1,161	+541
70-84 years	1,186	936	+250
85+ years	217	104	+113
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,729</b>	<b>18,847</b>	<b>-118</b>

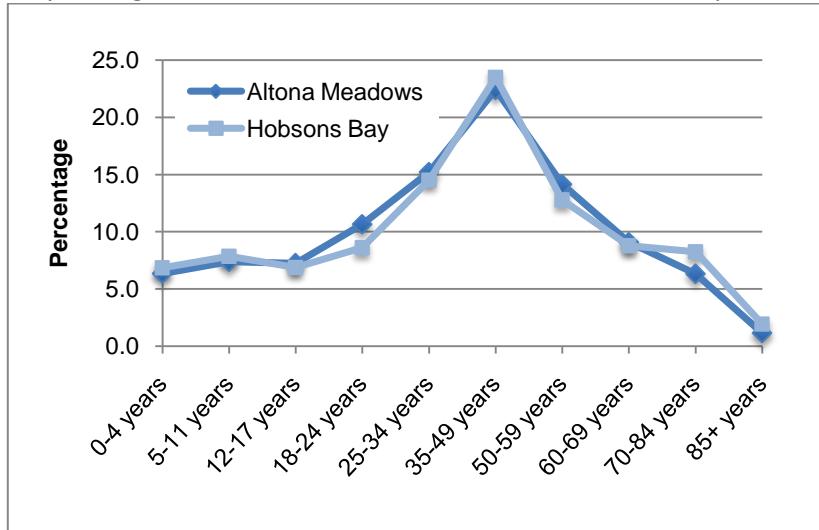
Graph 1: Population Change 2006-2011



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Comparing the Altona Meadows age structure with that of Hobsons Bay as a whole indicates there are reasonable similarities (Graph 2). The main difference is that Altona Meadows has a slightly larger proportion of 18-24 year olds, suggesting that a higher incidence of mature families with older children still live in the neighbourhood. Altona Meadows also has a lower proportion of residents aged 60 years and over when compared to the rest of Hobsons Bay, indicating the ageing of the Altona Meadows population is not quite as advanced as in other parts of the municipality.

Graph 2: Age structure of Altona Meadows and Hobsons Bay



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Family and households types

Altona Meadows has a total of 6,946 households, of which 3,331 (48 per cent) have children. Of these households, 2,427 (34.9 per cent) are couple families with children and 904 (13 per cent) are single parent families. Looking at the ages of children in these family types, couple families more commonly have children aged under 15 years whereas single parent families are more likely to have older children still living at home (Table 2).

Since 2006, the number of families with children in Altona Meadows has decreased by 5 per cent. This decrease is apparent across most family groups except among single parent families with older children, where there was an increase of around 100 families.

Compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole, Altona Meadows has a higher proportion of households with children, however the gap has decreased since the 2006 Census.

(Population forecasts are at the end of this section.)

Table 2: Households with children

	2011			2006			Change 2006- 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
<b>Couples with children</b>	<b>2,427</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>2,632</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>-205</b>
Couples with young children*	1,149	16.5	17.4	1,267	18.8	17.1	-118
Couples with older children**	957	13.8	10.4	956	14.2	10.5	1
Couples with mixed-age children	321	4.6	3.9	409	6.1	4.6	-88
<b>Single parents with children</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>-35</b>
Single parents with young children*	280	4.0	3.5	421	6.3	4.5	-141
Single parents with older children**	522	7.5	6.4	427	6.3	6.0	95
Single parents with mixed-age children	102	1.2	1.2	91	1.4	1.2	11
<b>Total households with children</b>	<b>3,331</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>3,571</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>-240</b>

\*children aged under 15

\*\* children aged 15 and over

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

The number of households without children in Altona Meadows is marginally lower than those with children. Households without children are fairly evenly split between couple (1533, 22.1 per cent) and lone person (1,493, 21.5 per cent) households.

The number of households without children has increased by 3 per cent (364) since 2006. Compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole, Altona Meadows has a lower percentage of childless households however the difference between the two areas narrowed between 2006 and 2011.

Table 3: Households without children

	2011			2006			Change 2006 – 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
<b>Couples without children</b>	<b>1,533</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>1,383</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>150</b>
Young couples	512	7.4	8.6	510	7.6	7.9	2
Middle-aged couples	545	7.8	7.1	502	7.5	7.1	43
Older couples	476	6.9	7.8	371	5.5	7.7	105
<b>Lone person households</b>	<b>1,493</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>166</b>
Young lone persons	547	7.9	7.1	581	8.6	8.0	-34
Middle-aged lone persons	560	8.1	8.3	476	7.1	7.6	84
Older lone persons	386	5.6	8.9	270	4.0	8.8	116
Group households	218	3.1	3.8	170	2.5	3.2	48
<b>Total households without children</b>	<b>3,244</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>2,880</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>364</b>

- young: 15-44 years

- middle aged: 45-64 years

- older: 65+ years

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Diversity of Residents

Within the Altona Meadows population there are 6,524 (34.8 per cent) of residents who were born overseas, an increase of 2 per cent (332 people) since the 2006 Census.

The vast majority of overseas born residents have a non-English speaking background (83 per cent) and their numbers have increased since 2006 (+341). Residents with a non-English speaking background also make up a larger share (28.9 per cent) of the total neighbourhood population when compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole (23.1 per cent).

Table 4: Overseas born residents

Birthplace	2011			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
<i>Non-English speaking backgrounds</i>	5,416	28.9	23.1	+341
<i>Main English speaking countries</i>	1,108	5.9	7.7	-9
<b>Total Overseas born</b>	<b>6,524</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>+332</b>
Australia	11,213	59.9	63.5	-347
Not Stated	997	5.3	5.6	-101
Total Population	18,734	100.0	100.0	-116

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

The main birth countries of those from overseas are shown in the table below. While the United Kingdom topped the list in both the 2006 and 2011 Censuses, a number of shifts are emerging. The most noticeable is the increasing number of Indian born residents. In 2006, there were 201 residents born in India and it was ranked tenth on the list of overseas birthplaces. In 2011, India was ranked second with 659 Indian born residents, just behind the United Kingdom.

Apart from some increase in residents born in China and New Zealand, numbers from the most common countries of birth decreased between 2006 and 2011.

Compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole, Altona Meadows has higher proportions of residents who were born in India, Malta, Vietnam, the Philippines, China, Yugoslavia and Serbia/Montenegro.

Table 5: Main countries of birth

	2011			2006			Change 2006 to 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
United Kingdom	663	3.5	4.5	705	3.7	4.8	-42
India	659	3.5	2.8	210	1.1	0.9	+449
Malta	526	2.8	1.6	535	2.8	1.8	-9
Vietnam	419	2.2	1.6	456	2.4	1.8	-37
Philippines	417	2.2	1.2	430	2.3	1.3	-13
New Zealand	326	1.7	1.9	301	1.6	2.0	+25
China	290	1.5	1.0	196	1.0	0.7	+94
Italy	282	1.5	2.0	338	1.8	2.3	-56
Greece	278	1.5	1.4	292	1.5	1.6	-14
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	277	1.5	0.9	336	1.8	1.0	-59
Serbia / Montenegro (fmr Yugoslavia)	232	1.2	0.9	259	1.4	1.1	-27

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Looking at when the overseas born residents of Altona Meadows arrived in Australia, it is clear that a sizeable proportion have recently arrived. The table below highlights that close to 19 per cent of these residents arrived between 2006 and 2011, more than in any previous period. Based on data in the previous table, it is likely that a large proportion came from India.

There are generally only minor differences between arrival data for the neighbourhood and Hobsons Bay, the most noticeable being that there is a lower proportion residents who arrived before 1960 living in Altona Meadows.

Table 6: Year of arrival in Australia

	2011		
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %
2006 to 9 Aug 2011	1,203	18.5	20.8
2001 to 2005	581	8.9	9.1
1991 to 2000 (10 year period)	904	13.9	10.9
1981 to 1990 (10 year period)	988	15.2	13.2
1971 to 1980 (10 year period)	768	11.8	10.6
1961 to 1970 (10 year period)	1,147	17.7	17.0
Arrived in 1960 or earlier	629	9.7	13.9
Not stated	277	4.3	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,497</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## **People with disabilities**

The number of people in Australia who have a disability is based on the findings of the *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in partnership with the Disability Policy and Research working group. Based on the survey findings, disability estimates are produced for each local government area (LGA).

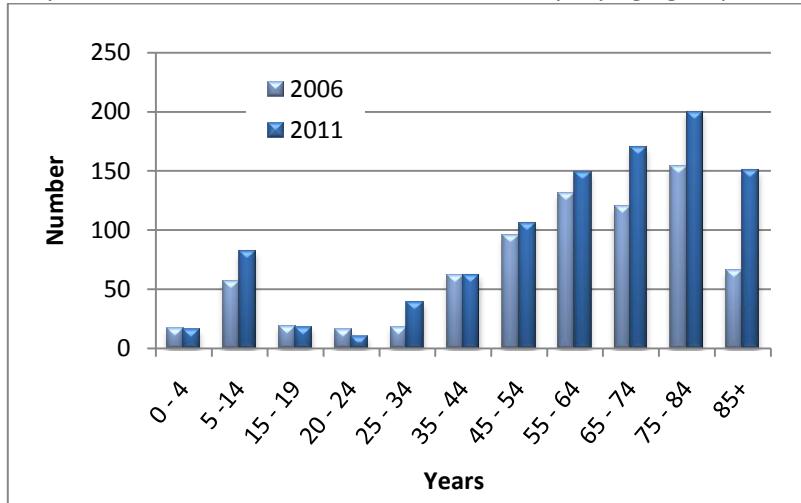
Based on the 2009 survey, the proportion of the Hobsons Bay population with a disability (and living in a private dwelling) is estimated to be 17.1%. Applying this same figure to Altona Meadows suggests approximately 3,200 residents may have a disability.

In addition to the 2009 survey data, the past two Censuses have included a question asking whether help or supervision was required with one or more of the core activities involving self-care, communication and mobility. It is important to note that these results do not reflect the true extent of disability in the community, as people with disabilities do not always require assistance. The 2011 Census findings show approximately 1,000 residents of Altona Meadows (5.3 per cent) said they need help with a core activity, similar to the rate for Hobsons Bay (5.2 per cent). Since the 2006 Census, the level of people in the neighbourhood requiring assistance increased by 1.2 percent (212 people), again this was similar to a 1.1 per cent increase across Hobsons Bay.

As might be expected, the table below shows that the proportion of people needing assistance tends to be higher among older residents. A similar trend is evident across the municipality. Among residents of Altona Meadows who need assistance, 67 per cent (670) are aged 55 years and older.

It is also interesting to note the changes since the 2006 Census in relation to the number of people who need assistance. Coinciding with the ageing of the Altona Meadows population outlined earlier in this section, 200 additional people indicated they require assistance; the most marked increase was among those in their mid 60s and older.

Graph 3: Assistance needed with a core activity, by age group



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Participation in education

Approximately 21 per cent of all people living in Altona Meadows are enrolled in education which is similar to the participation rate for Hobsons Bay.

Slightly less than 13 per cent of the neighbourhood population attends either primary or secondary school and again this is line for enrolments across the municipality. Looking to changes since 2006, the number of school enrolments in Altona Meadows has dropped, reflecting the declining number of school age children.

Post secondary enrolments of the neighbourhood's residents in TAFE, university and other educational institutions have all risen since the 2006 Census. Just under 6 per cent of the population (1,057 people) was enrolled in 2006 and this increased by 7 per cent (270 extra people) in 2011. When compared to Hobsons Bay, Altona Meadows has a marginally higher rate of TAFE enrolments and a lower rate of university enrolments.

Table 7: Type of educational institution attending

	2011			2006		
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay
Pre-school	253	1.4	1.6	303	1.6	1.6
Primary school	1,242	6.6	7.0	1,563	8.3	7.8
Secondary school	1,167	6.2	5.9	1,432	7.6	6.2
TAFE	394	2.1	1.9	370	2.0	1.7
University	701	3.7	4.2	540	2.9	3.2
Other	232	1.2	1.1	147	0.8	0.9
Not attending	13,468	71.9	71.1	13,173	69.9	70.2
Not stated	1,280	6.8	7.1	1,319	7.0	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,737</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,847</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Close to 46 per cent of Altona Meadows residents have completed Year 12 or an equivalent which is approximately 4 per cent lower than the rate for Hobsons Bay. As a result, the neighbourhood has higher rates of people having left school on completion of Years 9, 10 and 11 when compared to Hobsons Bay but a lower rate of leaving school at or before Year 8.

Looking back to 2006, school completion rates in Altona Meadows have been improving, with almost 5 per cent more people having completed 12 years of schooling. This trend is also reflected in the completion rates across the municipality.

Table 8: Level of schooling completed (persons aged 15 years and over)

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
Year 8 or below	1,237	8.0	8.3	1,361	9.1	10.2	-124
Year 9 or equivalent	1,100	7.1	6.2	1,074	7.2	7.1	26
Year 10 or equivalent	2,461	15.8	13.5	2,613	17.5	15.1	-152
Year 11 or equivalent	2,057	13.2	11.7	2,265	15.1	13.1	-208
Year 12 or equivalent	7,119	45.8	50.1	6,077	40.6	42.6	1,042
Did not go to school	253	1.6	1.5	288	1.9	1.8	-35
Not stated	1,311	8.4	8.6	1,295	8.6	10.2	16

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Internet connected

Access to the internet, particularly broadband, is an important tool that is now used in all aspects of life and that importance will only increase over time. Lack of access to the internet is considered to be a factor in compounding disadvantage, particularly in relation to education, services, and social connections.

Almost three quarters of Altona Meadows households are connected to the internet, 2 per cent more than Hobsons Bay. The vast majority of these connections are via broadband. Since 2006, the connection rate for Altona Meadows has jumped by approximately 15 per cent, similar to the municipal increase.

Nineteen per cent of households (1,321) in Altona Meadows have no connection which is slightly lower than the Hobsons Bay figure (21.3 per cent).

Table 9: Internet connection

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
<b>Total internet connection</b>	<b>5,138</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>1,142</b>
Broadband connection	4,713	67.8	65.0	2,793	41.5	37.9	1,920
Dial-up connection	194	2.8	2.8	1,164	17.3	17.2	-970
Other connection	231	3.3	3.9	39.0	0.6	0.6	192
<b>No internet connection</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>2,345</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>-1,024</b>
Not stated	493	7.1	6.9	391	5.8	7.3	102
<b>Total households</b>	<b>6,952</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,732</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>220</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Labour Force Characteristics

### Labour force participation

Labour force participation refers to the population who are aged 15 years and over who are either employed or unemployed and looking for work. Sixty two per cent of Altona Meadows residents (9,661) are in the labour force.

Of those in the labour force in Altona Meadows, just over 93 per cent are employed, marginally lower than the rate for Hobsons Bay (94.4 per cent). The main change in employment between 2006 and 2011 was the increase in part-time work.

Approximately 7 per cent of the labour force is unemployed. The unemployment rate rose slightly across the Census period 2006-2011 and the data indicates that the majority of people are looking for full-time work. This compares to Hobsons Bay, where unemployment dropped slightly over the same period.

A further 5,093 residents in Altona Meadows (32.7 per cent) are not in the labour force which means they are not actively looking for a job. They may be retired, parenting or caring etc.

Table 10: Labour force status (people aged 15 years and over)

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Employed	8,992	93.1	94.4	8,893	93.6	94.1	+99
<i>Employed full-time</i>	5,855	60.6	61.3	5,858	61.6	62.8	-3
<i>Employed part-time</i>	2,848	29.5	31.0	2,743	28.9	28.6	+105
Hours worked not stated	289	3.0	2.1	292	3.1	2.8	-3
Unemployed	669	6.9	5.6	611	6.4	5.9	+58
<i>Looking for full-time work</i>	452	4.7	3.6	417	4.4	3.9	+35
<i>Looking for part-time work</i>	217	2.2	2.0	194	2.0	1.9	+23
<b>Total Labour Force</b>	<b>9,661</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,504</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+157</b>
Total Labour force	9,661	62.0	60.9	9,504	63.5	59.1	+157
Not in the labour force	5,093	32.7	33.2	4,787	32.0	34.7	+306
Status not stated	816	5.2	5.9	674	4.5	6.2	+142
<b>Total persons aged 15+</b>	<b>15,570</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,965</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+605</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Employment by industry

The key industries where Altona Meadows residents are employed include:

- Manufacturing (14.5 per cent)
- Retail trade (10.5 per cent)
- Transport, postal and warehousing (9.4 per cent).

While manufacturing and retail are the largest employing industries of Altona Meadows residents, job numbers in both fell between 2006 and 2011. The main sectors where employment is rising are construction, health care and social assistance, and education and training.

Table 11: Industry sector

	2011			Change 2006- 2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	11	0.1	0.2	-9
Mining	8	0.1	0.2	-10
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>1,305</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>-225</b>
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	44	0.5	0.9	-23
Construction	738	8.2	7.7	+142
<b>Retail Trade</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>-79</b>
Wholesale trade	442	4.9	4.6	-42
Accommodation and Food Services	487	5.4	5.8	+10
<b>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>+29</b>
Information Media and Telecommunications	166	1.8	2.4	0
Financial and Insurance Services	398	4.4	4.9	+46
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	101	1.1	1.5	-33
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	465	5.2	8.2	-8
Administrative and Support Services	399	4.4	3.6	+27
Public Administration and Safety	495	5.5	6.4	+13
Education and Training	549	6.1	7.8	+117
Health Care and Social Assistance	813	9.0	9.4	+122
Arts and Recreation Services	174	1.9	2.1	+29
Other Services	325	3.6	3.4	+20
Inadequately described or not stated	310	3.4	2.7	+21
<b>Total employed persons aged 15+</b>	<b>9,026</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+147</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

There are clear differences between the types of occupations of Altona Meadows's residents and the municipality as a whole. For example, Altona Meadows has much lower rates of people working as managers and professionals but higher rates of people employed as technicians and trade workers, machinery operators and drivers, and labourers.

The main changes since the 2006 Census are an increase in Altona Meadows residents who are working in professional, management, and community and personal service positions. The number of residents working in sales and clerical and administration has fallen.

Table 12: Occupation

	2011			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Managers	741	8.2	12.4	+56
Professionals	1,335	14.8	22.8	+177
Technicians and Trades Workers	1,424	15.8	13.5	-1
Community and Personal Service Workers	831	9.2	8.5	+74
Clerical and Administrative Workers	1,538	17.1	15.8	-44
Sales Workers	844	9.4	8.4	-112
Machinery Operators And Drivers	1,006	11.2	7.4	-24
Labourers	1,077	11.9	8.8	-13
Inadequately described	223	2.5	2.4	+22
<b>Total employed persons aged 15+</b>	<b>9,019</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+135</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Unpaid work and volunteering

Questions about unpaid work and voluntary work were first included on the 2006 Census.

The first section of the question about unpaid work related to caring for an aged person or a person with a long term illness or disability. Altona Meadows has 1,668 residents (10.7 per cent) providing this type of unpaid assistance which was marginally lower than the Hobsons Bay figure (11.5 per cent).

Table 13: Assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age

	2011			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Provided unpaid assistance	1,668	10.7	11.5	211
No unpaid assistance provided	12,602	81.2	79.7	320
Not stated	1,258	8.1	8.9	31
<b>Total persons aged 15+</b>	<b>15,528</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>562</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

This question also focussed on unpaid childcare among the neighbourhood's residents aged 15 years and over and found that just over 25 per cent provided childcare. Of this group, close to three quarters were caring for their own children.

The number of people caring for children decreased between 2006 and 2011. Among the possible contributing factors outlined previously include a fall in the overall number of children in Altona Meadows and an increase in people working part-time.

Table 14: Unpaid child care

Altona Meadows	2011			Change 2006 -2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay	
Provided unpaid child care (all)	3,932	25.3	26.7	-305
Cared for own child/ren	2,866	18.4	19.7	-301
Cared for other child/ren	1,005	6.5	6.2	52
Cared for own child/ren and other child/ren	61	0.4	0.8	-56
No unpaid child care provided	10,464	67.3	65.4	775
Not stated	1,142	7.3	7.9	97
Total persons aged 15+	15,538	100	100	567

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

In relation to the Census question about volunteering among those aged 15 years and older, it should be noted that the question specifically referred to volunteering for an organisation or group and potentially missed out those who volunteer in less formal ways. As a result, the figures may present an undercount.

The table below shows that 10.5 per cent of residents (1,634 people) volunteer with groups and organisations, which is almost 4 per cent below the municipal rate. Since the 2006 Census, the neighbourhood's rate of volunteering has remained stable, as have those for the municipality.

Table 15: Volunteer status

	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
Volunteer	1,634	10.5	14.3	1,584	10.6	14.1	50
Not a volunteer	12,600	81.1	77.2	12,222	81.6	76.4	378
Volunteer work not stated	1,308	8.4	8.5	1,172	7.8	9.5	136
Total persons aged 15+	15,542	100	100	14,978	100	100	564

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Financial Wellbeing

### Individual incomes

According to monthly data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at August 2011 (the point at which the 2011 Census was collected), the average gross weekly income in Victoria was \$976.10. (ABS, Cat 6302.0, Table 12b.).

Census data in the table below shows that 11,024 residents (71.1 per cent) of Altona Meadows have a gross weekly income below \$999. This is higher than the municipal figure (64.7 per cent). Looking at those on very low incomes, there are 6,166 residents (39.8 per cent) whose incomes are below \$400 per week which again is higher than the municipal figure (36.7 per cent). (The poverty line for a single working person in September 2011 was \$459.83. (Source:

[http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/publications/Poverty%20Lines/Poverty\\_lines\\_Australia\\_Sep2011.pdf](http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/publications/Poverty%20Lines/Poverty_lines_Australia_Sep2011.pdf))

At the upper end of the income scale, there are 1,230 residents (7.3 per cent) who have weekly incomes of \$1,500 or more. This figure is well below the Hobsons Bay figure of 13.5 per cent.

Table 16: Gross weekly income individual income (persons aged 15 years and over)

	2011		
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay
Negative Income/ Nil income	1,484	9.6	8.6
\$1-\$199	1,283	8.3	7.4
\$200-\$299	1,840	11.9	10.9
\$300-\$399	1,559	10.0	9.8
\$400-\$599	1,585	10.2	10.2
\$600-\$799	1,753	11.3	9.6
\$800-\$999	1,520	9.8	8.2
\$1000-\$1249	1,363	8.8	8.0
\$1250-\$1499	828	5.3	5.9
\$1500-\$1999	763	4.9	6.8
\$2000 or more	367	2.4	6.7
Not stated	1,180	7.6	8.0
<b>Total persons aged 15+</b>	<b>15,525</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

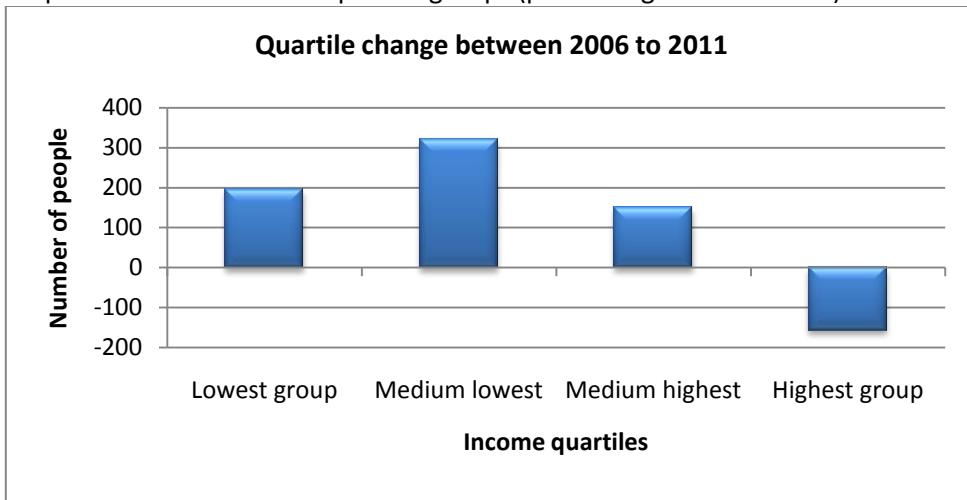
Due to the influences of economic change such as wage fluctuations and inflation, it is difficult to compare incomes over time. By using income quartiles (ordering population incomes from lowest to highest and splitting into four equal groups), we are able to compare incomes across different time

frames. (These quartiles are calculated by using Melbourne Statistical Division (MSD) individual income data.)

Analysing income changes that have occurred over time shows Altona Meadows residents have relatively less income in 2011 than they did in 2006. For example, 3,720 residents (26.9 per cent) were in the bottom income quartile in 2006 and this increased to 3,916 (27.3 per cent) in 2011. Similarly, the percentage of residents in the medium lowest quartile increased 1.4 per cent (321 residents) over the same period.

While there was an increase in the number of people in the medium highest quartile, there was a 2 per cent fall in the highest quartile group. This went against the Hobsons Bay trend which saw small decreases in the bottom two quartile groups and corresponding increases in the top two.

Graph 4: Individual income quartile groups (persons aged 15 and over)



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

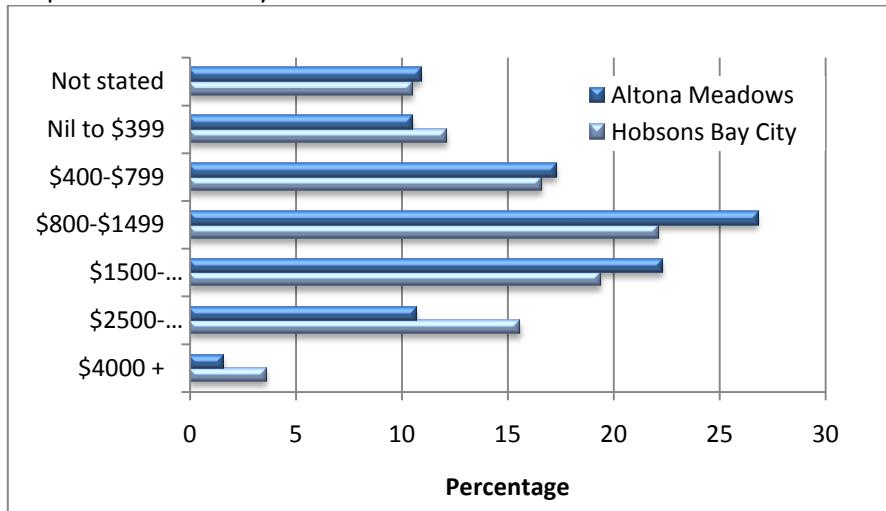
### Household incomes

In Altona Meadows, slightly more than 12 per cent of households earn \$2,500 or more per week while 10.5 per cent have weekly incomes that are below \$400. Just over a quarter earn between \$800 and \$1,499 per week.

The gross weekly incomes of Altona Meadows households vary considerably compared with those across Hobsons Bay as a whole. In general, Altona Meadows tends to have a higher proportion of households with incomes that are below \$800 through to high incomes of up to \$2,499. After which, Altona Meadows has proportionately fewer households with incomes in excess of \$2,500 than does Hobsons Bay.

(NB: It should be noted that there was a high non response rate of 11 per cent to this Census question so the data should be treated with some caution.)

Graph 5: Gross weekly household income

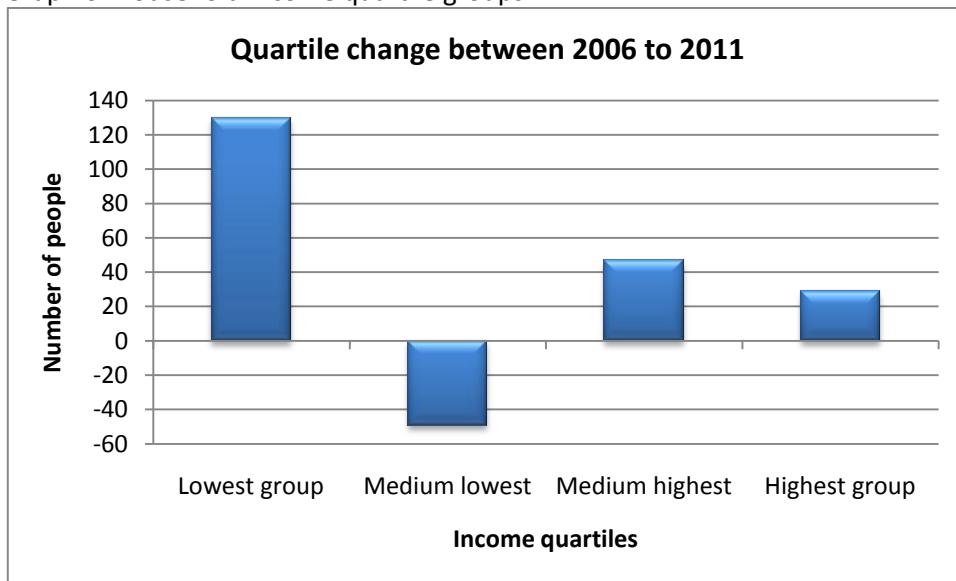


Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

As with individual incomes, household incomes are also not comparable over time. As a result, the income quartile method used earlier is again used here to compare changes in the income distribution of the community over time.

The data in the table below indicates some minor shifts in the incomes of Altona Meadows households between 2006 and 2011, the main change being a rise in the number of households on low incomes. For example, there are 130 more households in the lowest income quartile. The number of households in the second lowest quartile dropped and there was an increase in the number of households in the two highest income quartiles. So while the financial circumstances of some households are improving, there are others whose incomes are declining.

Graph 6: Household income quartile groups

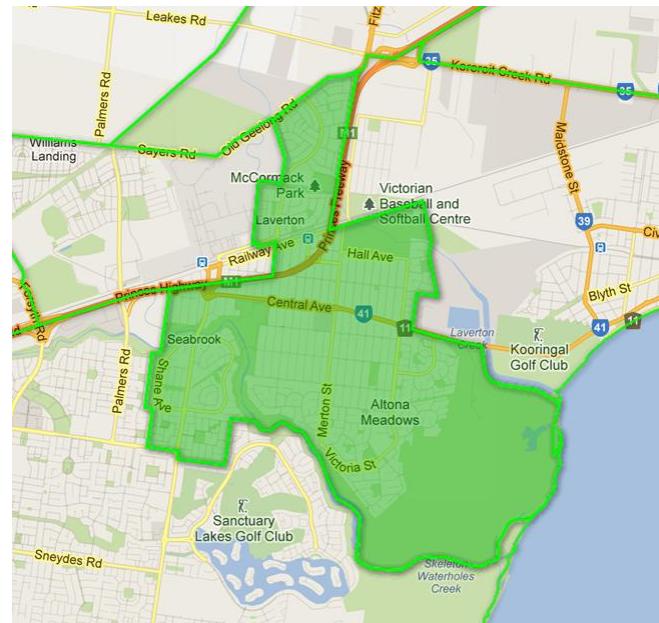


## Centrelink Payments and allowances

The smallest area that Centrelink provides data for is by postcode. The 3028 postcode, as shown on the map, includes Altona Meadows, along with Seabrook and Laverton. However, Altona Meadows residents make up two thirds of the postcode population so the data is still useful to consider.

Aged pensions make up the largest portion of Centrelink payments received by residents in this postcode. At December 2012, Centrelink payments for residents of Postcode 3028 were as follows:

- Aged pension - 2,497
- Disability support – 1813
- Newstart – 1,018
- Youth allowance (other) 176
- Single parenting payment – 430
- Youth Allowance (student) – 304.



In addition, 2,529 residents were in receipt of a health care card and 821 held a low income card.  
(Centrelink (requested data) December quarter 2012)

## SEIFA index of disadvantage

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) disadvantage index is produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and is drawn from Census data. The disadvantage index takes into consideration factors such as low income, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations, low educational attainment and other variables that reflect disadvantage. These are weighted to provide a single score. The Australian average score is set at 1,000. Scores below 1,000 represent greater disadvantage among the population and conversely those above indicate less disadvantage.

The SEIFA disadvantage score for Altona Meadows is 981, below the Australian benchmark figure of 1,000 and also the Hobsons Bay figure of 1002. It is ranked fourth most disadvantaged when compared to other neighbourhoods in the municipality.

Table 17: SEIFA index of disadvantage ranking (2011)

	<b>Disadvantage score</b>
Laverton	891
Altona North	910
Brooklyn	947
<b>Altona Meadows</b>	<b>981</b>
Hobsons Bay City	1,002
Altona - Seaholme	1,019
Spotswood - South Kingsville	1,024
Seabrook	1,031
Altona Meadows	1,044
Williamstown North - The Rifle Range	1,058
Williamstown	1,062
Newport East	1,087

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Gaming losses

Residents of Hobsons Bay, have access to or are affected by the provision of electronic gaming machines (EGMs). The municipality has ten gambling venues, with a total of 579 EGMS. Hobsons Bay is ranked thirteenth in relation to the highest number of gaming machines per adult and twelfth in terms of losses per adult (Victorian Local Governance Association).

The financial impact of gambling on EGMS by Hobsons Bay residents is highlighted in the 2011/12 which shows that \$52.6 million or \$763 per adult was lost in the municipality. Both amounts were up on the previous year's losses of \$51.4 million or \$747 per adult.

While there are no EGMS in Altona Meadows, \$3,581,521.36 was lost at the nearby venue in Laverton in 2011/12. In addition, there are three venues nearby in Point Cook and one in Laverton North.  
(City of Greater Dandenong <http://www.socialstatistics.com.au/>, Gambling statistics)

## Housing

### Dwelling types

There are 7,386 private dwellings in Altona Meadows and the vast majority consists of separate houses (89.8 per cent), the remainder being medium density housing (10.2 per cent).

When compared to Hobsons Bay as a whole, the neighbourhood has a far greater supply of separate housing (14.6 per cent more) and less medium density stock (12.5 per cent).

Table 18: Private dwelling types

	2011		
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %
Separate house	6,631	89.8	75.2
Medium density *	755	10.2	22.7
High density	0	0	1.4
Caravans, cabin, houseboat	0	0	0.4
Other	0	0	0.3
Not stated	0	0	0
<b>Total Private Dwellings</b>	<b>7,386</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* 'Medium density' includes all semi-detached, row, terrace, townhouses and villa units, plus flats and apartments in blocks of 1 or 2 storeys, and flats attached to houses.

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Usual residence data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Public housing stock

A total of 186 dwellings in Altona Meadows (2.5 per cent of the total housing stock) are owned by the State Government and the majority of these are two or three bedrooms. This compares to Hobsons Bay as a whole where public housing makes up 3.2 per cent of the housing stock.

Approximately 63 per cent of the public housing stock is made up of separate housing and a further 28 per cent is medium density housing.

Table 19: Public housing stock in Altona Meadows

1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	Total
9	67	93	14	3	186

Source: Dept of Housing, 2010, requested data

### Residential aged care

Altona Meadows has three residential aged care facilities which provide a total of 210 beds. Approximately two thirds of the beds are for residents with high care needs. In addition, there are two beds available for respite care.

Table 20: Residential aged care

Facility Name	Total Beds	High care	Low care	Respite High	Respite Low
Benetas - St Georges	90	60	30	0	1
Altona Meadows Private Nursing Home	90	45	45	1	
Allanvale Private Nursing Home	30	30	0	0	0

Source: Data obtained from the facilities by the Hobsons Bay City Council

### Building permits

There were 25 permits issued for the construction of dwellings in Altona Meadows in 2012/2013. 15 permits were for detached housing and the remainder were permits for two to four units and town house developments, for a total of 22 dwellings.

In 2012/2013, one commercial permit was finalised for the construction of a supermarket at Central Square.

### Housing tenure

Approximately one third of households in Altona Meadows own their own home, one third are paying a mortgage and a further one quarter are renting. The main change in tenure since the 2006 Census has been an increase in home ownership and a subsequent fall in those with a mortgage. There has also been an increase in households who are renting privately owned housing.

The main differences in tenure patterns in Altona Meadows, compared to those for Hobsons Bay, are the neighbourhood's higher proportion of households who have a mortgage and lower proportion of renters.

Table 21: Housing tenure of households (occupied dwellings)

	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Change 2006-2011
Fully owned	2,410	34.6	35.0	+101
Mortgage	2,372	34.1	31.4	-119
Renting	1,704	24.5	27.0	+156
Renting - Social housing	194	2.8	3.0	+14
Renting - Private	1,492	21.4	23.5	+157
Renting - Not stated	18	0.3	0.5	-15
Other tenure type	18	0.3	0.4	+4
Not stated	457	6.6	6.2	+87
<b>Total households</b>	<b>6,961</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+229</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

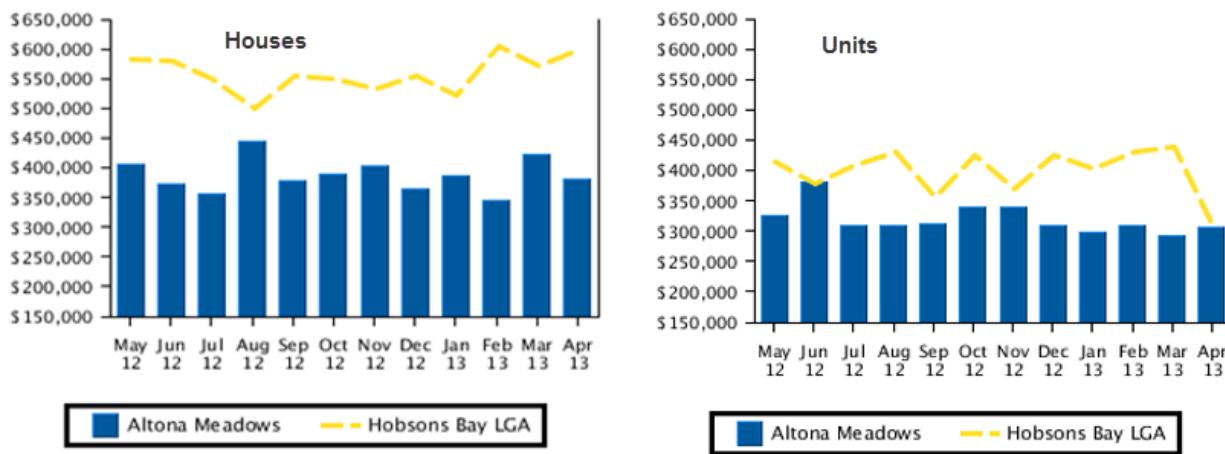
## Housing sales

The graphs below provide median monthly sale prices for houses and units in Altona Meadows, over a 12 month period. (The median price is the midpoint in the range of each month's sales.)

House sales data shows the median prices were generally at or below \$400,000 and on the whole the cost of housing was well below the municipal price range.

Median unit prices for the 12 months to April 2013 indicate prices are sitting around \$320,000 and while they are below prices for Hobsons Bay the difference is not as pronounced as it is for houses.

Graph 7: House and unit sale prices

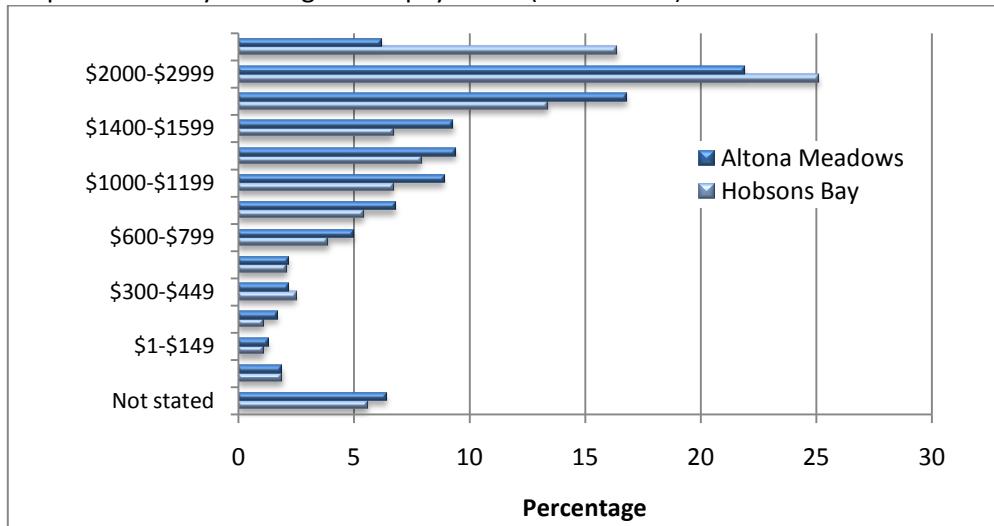


<http://www.rpdata.com/> (as at 5 June 2013)

## Housing mortgages

The monthly mortgage payments of Altona Meadows households tend to be lower than those for Hobsons Bay as a whole. For example, 21 per cent have monthly payments below \$1,000 compared to the municipal figure of 18 per cent. A further 44 per cent of households pay between \$1000 and \$2000; the Hobsons Bay figure is 35 per cent. Once mortgage payments exceed \$2000 a month, the proportion of Altona Meadows households affected drops to 28 per cent, compared to 42 per cent for Hobsons Bay.

Graph 8: Monthly housing loan repayments (households)



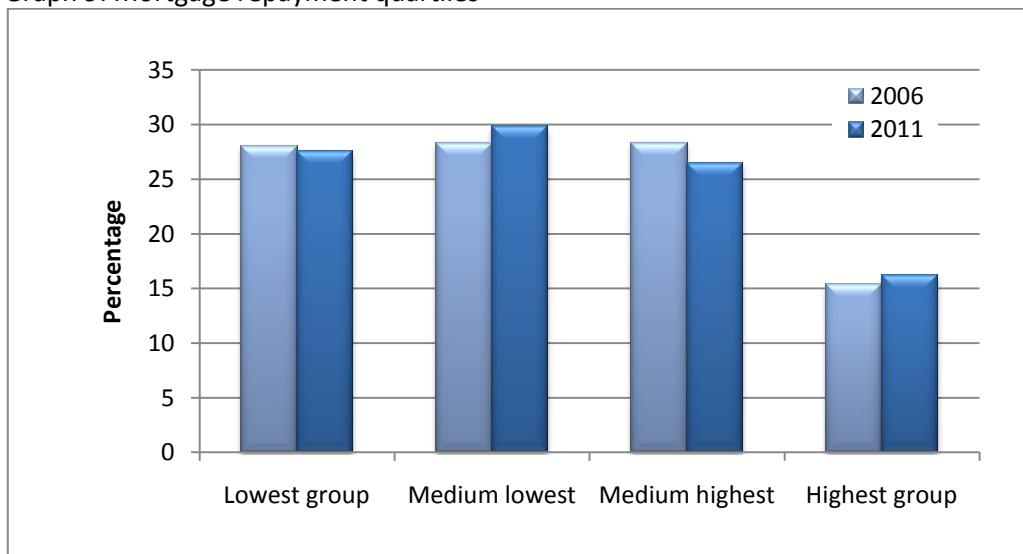
Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

Comparing changes to housing loan repayments over time is difficult due to the impact of economic change such as inflation and interest rates. However, using quartiles enables the data to be standardised and allows comparisons to be made across time frames.

The graph below shows that between 2006 and 2011 there were some very small shifts in the level of mortgage repayments of Altona Meadows households, with a slightly lower proportion of households in the lowest quartile group and a rise in those was a decrease in the percentage of households in the medium lowest quartile and a corresponding increase in the highest quartile.

In contrast, the Hobsons Bay quartiles remained relatively steady over the same period.

Graph 9: Mortgage repayment quartiles



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## **Availability of rental housing**

There is no central data source where information on monthly housing rentals for suburbs can be obtained so the following information has been taken from an online property site and should be treated as indicative only.

Of the properties advertised on one rental site in the second week of June 2013, there were 16 houses and 11 units for rent. House rents ranged from \$280 and \$360 per week, depending on the number of bedrooms, while unit rents were between \$235 and \$340 per week. (Source: [www.myhome.com.au/](http://www.myhome.com.au/) accessed on 13 June 2013)

## **Rental payments**

The data on household rental payments in the table below is from the 2011 Census. On the whole, rents paid by Altona Meadows households tended to be lower than municipal wide payments. For example at the higher end of rentals, 9 per cent of local households paid more than \$350 per week compared to 24 per cent of Hobsons Bay households. Looking at mid range rents, 60 per cent of Altona Meadows households paid between \$250 and \$349 which was well above the municipal figure of 41 per cent. At the low end of rentals, the proportion of local households paying less than \$250 per week was similar to the Hobsons Bay figure (Altona Meadows 27 per cent and Hobsons Bay 28 per cent).

This data, which is from 2011, indicates that housing rentals have remained reasonably stable over the last couple of years, when compared to current rents for properties (as per 2013 data in the previous subheading).

Table 22: Weekly rental payments

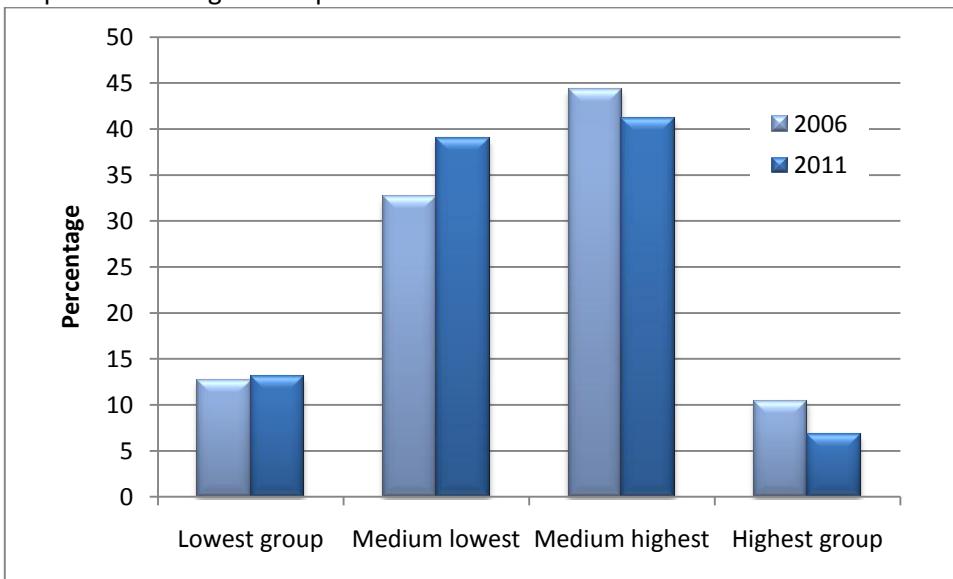
	<b>Altona Meadows</b>	<b>Hobsons Bay</b>
	<b>Number (households)</b>	<b>%</b>
Nil	36	2.1
\$1 - \$99	52	1.6
\$100-\$149	64	3.7
\$150-199	83	4.9
\$200-\$249	250	14.7
\$250-\$299	618	36.2
\$300-\$349	403	23.6
\$350-\$399	91	5.4
\$400-\$449	12	0.7
\$450-\$549	9	0.5
\$550-\$649	3	0.2
\$650 +	34	2.1
Not stated	53	3.1
Total	1,708	100

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

As with mortgage payments, comparing rental payments over time requires a method to standardise the economic influences of inflation. By using quartiles, comparison to be made to gauge the impact of rental cost. (Quartiles are calculated from the Melbourne Statistical Division rental payment data.)

The graph below shows that relative to the cost of renting in 2006, rents had become a little more affordable in Altona Meadows by 2011. The proportion of households in either the medium highest or highest quartile of rental payments had both dropped. While there was little change in the lowest quartile group, the proportion of households in the medium lowest quartile increased by close to 9 percent. In comparison, the Hobsons Bay quartile distribution remained fairly stable.

Graph 10: Housing rental quartiles



Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Housing stress

Hobsons Bay City Council commissioned *id.consulting* to assess the extent of housing stress across the municipality and its neighbourhoods. Housing stress refers to the percentage of a household's income that is required to cover rental or mortgage payments and a common definition is where this requires 30 per cent or more of a household's gross income. The extent of housing stress also depends on the level of a household's income, housing payments put households under varying degrees of financial stress. Therefore low income households paying more than 30 per cent are likely to under greater financial pressure and are described as experiencing housing stress while medium income households paying a similar share of their income are experiencing marginal housing stress.

Of the almost 7,000 households in Altona Meadows, approximately 37 per cent are low income households and 18 per cent are middle income households. The *id.consulting* analysis found that 11



per cent of low income households are in housing stress and almost 4 per cent of medium income households are in marginal stress.

Breaking this data down reveals that those who are renting, but particularly low income households, are experiencing much higher levels of housing stress than any other group. One in four low income households (25 per cent) are in housing stress; this compares to 6 per cent of medium income households who are renting and are experiencing marginal housing stress.

Analysis of households with mortgages shows that 13 per cent of low income households are in housing stress and 7 per cent of medium income households are in marginal stress.

## Transport

### Car ownership

Based on responses to the 2011 Census, just under 88 per cent of households in Altona Meadows are car owners which is approximately three per cent above the municipal rate. Thirty six per cent of these households own one car and 34 per cent have two cars. Both figures are on par with the municipal trend.

The largest differences between Altona Meadows and Hobsons Bay are in proportion of households without a car and those who own three or more. The data shows that 5.5 per cent of Altona Meadows households have no car compared to the Hobsons Bay figure of 9 per cent. Instead, they are more likely to own three or more cars (Altona Meadows 16.8 per cent and Hobsons Bay 12.8 per cent). The lack of good access to public transport in this neighbourhood is a key factor in multiple car ownership.

Table 23: Car ownership (households)

Altona Meadows	2011			2006			Change 2006-2011
	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	Number	%	Hobsons Bay %	
No motor vehicles	381	5.5	9.0	402	6.0	9.8	-21
1 motor vehicle	2,534	36.4	37.5	2,381	35.4	36.6	153
2 motor vehicles	2,398	34.5	34.2	2,473	36.7	34.1	-75
3 or more motor vehicles	1,170	16.8	12.8	1,078	16.0	11.9	92
Not stated	474	6.8	6.5	397	5.9	7.6	77
Total households	6,957	100	100	6,731	100	100	226

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

### Journey to work

The table below provides an overview of how people get to work and shows that the car is the dominant form of transport both in Altona Meadows and across the municipality. Seventy two per cent of working residents either drive to work or are car passengers, which is 6 per cent above the Hobsons Bay figure.

Two per cent less of the neighbourhood's workers catch the train to work compared to the total Hobsons Bay population, although there has been an upward trend in train travel since the 2006 Census. Residents of Altona Meadows are also slightly less likely to cycle or walk to work.

Table 24: Journey to work

Altona Meadows	2011			2006			Change 2006 -2011
	Main method of travel	Number	%	Hobsons Bay City	Number	%	Hobsons Bay City
Train	1,075	12.0	14.1	751	8.5	11.2	+324
Bus	72	0.8	1.4	87	1.0	1.1	-15
Tram or Ferry	0	0.0	0.1	3	0.0	0.1	-3
Taxi	0	0.0	0.2	13	0.1	0.2	-13
Car - as driver	5,958	66.4	61.2	5,992	67.9	63.1	-34
Car - as passenger	507	5.7	4.6	510	5.8	5.0	-3
Truck	66	0.7	0.6	63	0.7	0.8	+3
Motorbike	13	0.1	0.5	41	0.5	0.6	-28
Bicycle	28	0.3	1.3	27	0.3	1.1	+1
Walked only	53	0.6	1.7	77	0.9	1.7	-24
Other	63	0.7	0.8	45	0.5	0.7	+18
Worked at home	174	1.9	3.0	139	1.6	2.7	+35
Did not go to work	762	8.5	8.9	847	9.6	9.8	-85
Not stated	196	2.2	1.7	227	2.6	2.0	-31
<b>Total employed persons aged 15+</b>	<b>8,967</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,822</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>+145</b>

Source: ABS 2011 Census (Enumerated data) <http://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay/home>

## Population Forecasts

### Population numbers

Population forecasts for Hobsons Bay and its neighbourhoods are benchmarked on the results of the 2011 Census and adjusted to incorporate information such new residential development, together with population trends related to births, deaths and internal and external migration etc that has occurred since the Census was taken. The forecasts are developed for the Council, by *id.consulting*.

As noted earlier, the population of Altona Meadows decreased very slightly by 118 people (-0.6 per cent) between 2006 and 2011. The table below provides forecast data for the coming decade and indicates a continuation of this trend.

At this stage, there are approximately 200 undeveloped vacant blocks in the neighbourhood and as a result, residential development is limited. In addition, relative to the rest of the municipality, the housing stock in Altona Meadows is reasonably new and therefore opportunities for redevelopment are unlikely for some time.

Table 25: Population forecasts

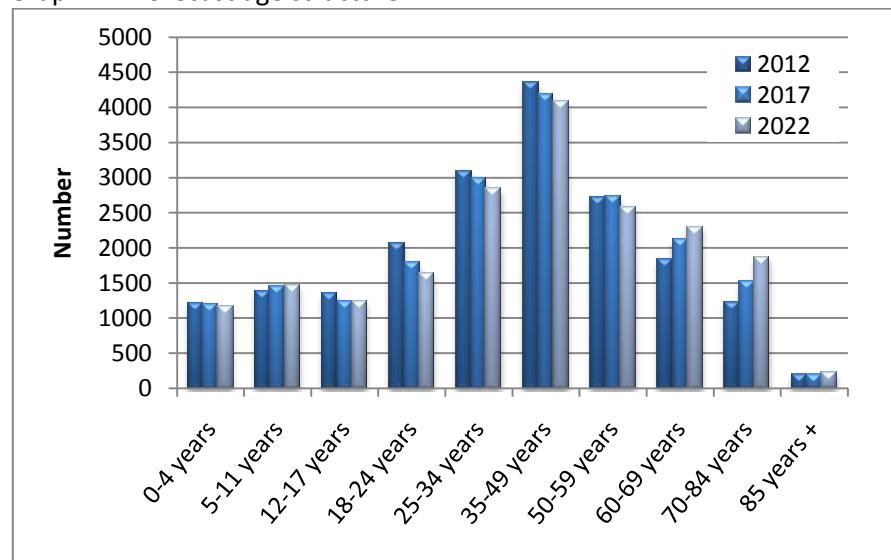
	2012	2017	2022	Change 2012-2022
Total Persons	19,464	19,436	19,431	-109
Percentage change		↳ -0.1%	0.0%	↳ -0.2%

Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=112&pg=5000>

### Age structure

The Altona Meadows forecasts for the next decade indicate an ageing of the population. It is anticipated that most age groups up to 50 years will decrease over that time while the number of older residents, particularly those aged in their 60s and over, will increase.

Graph 11: Forecast age structure

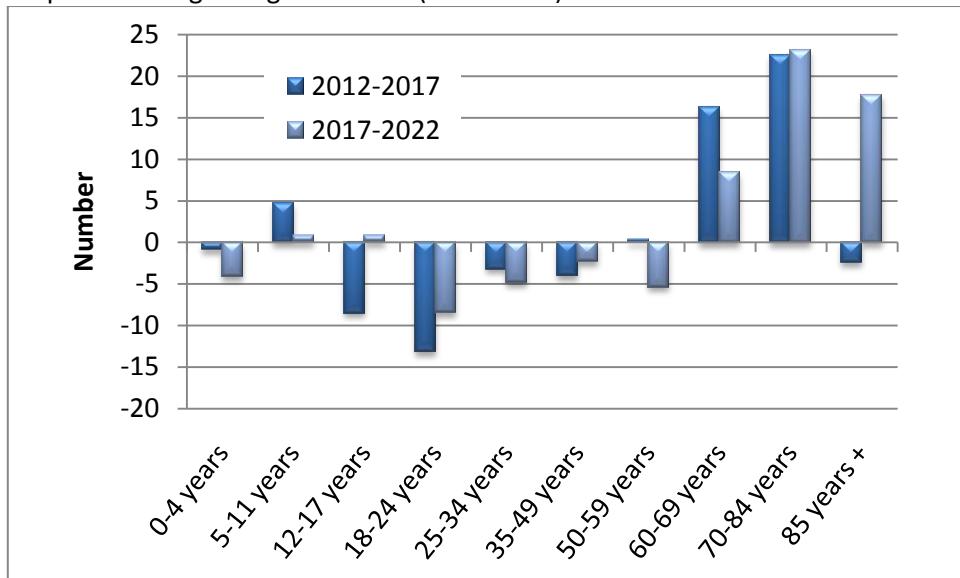


Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=112&pg=5000>

The graph below shows where the gains and losses in each age group are likely over the next decade and the clear pattern of ageing that is emerging. As shown in the previous graph, no growth is forecast in the under 50 year old age groups and it is clear that this neighbourhood has started to move into an ageing phase, although it should be noted that the actual numbers are still relatively quite small.

This neighbourhood, which is an area where residential development predominantly occurred throughout the 1980s-90s, initially attracted young families. These families have reached maturity and children are leaving home. As this trend continues, the number of older residents will continue to increase.

Graph 12: Change in age structure (2012-2022)



Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=112&pg=5000>

### Housing and households forecasts

As mentioned, the population of Altona Meadows has peaked in size and has started to age. As a consequence, household sizes which are slightly higher than the Hobsons Bay averages will start to fall slightly as more households have fewer children.

Given the lack of available land, new residential development will be limited as will the growth in the number of households.

Table 26: Households and dwellings

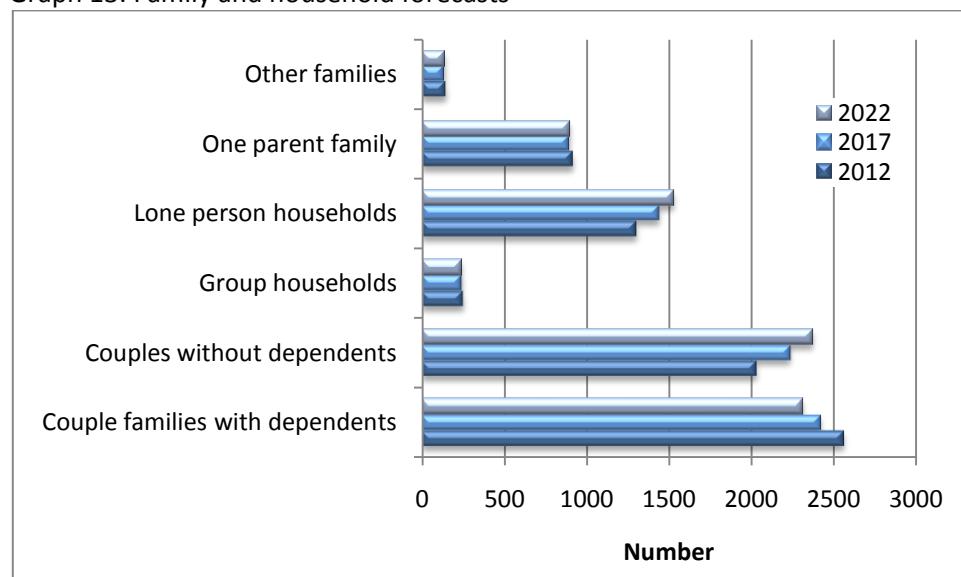
Altona Meadows	2012	2017	2022
Average household size	2.7	2.6	2.6
Dwellings	7503	7692	7793
Households	7218	7392	7481

Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=112&pg=5000>

The graph below indicates how family and household types are forecast to change over the coming decade. The number of couple families with dependants is expected to decrease in number, at least through to 2022, although single parent families are forecast to remain stable.

Alongside this trend, both couple families without dependants and lone person households are expected to increase.

Graph 13: Family and household forecasts



Source: <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=112&pg=5000>

#### DATA DISCLAIMER

Every care has been taken to ensure the information in this document is correct. However, Hobsons Bay City Council does not accept any liability to any person or organisation for the information (or the use of such information) provided in this document.



## **Altona Meadows Neighbourhood Profile Consultation Summary**

### **Introduction**

The Altona Meadows Profile provides an overview of the history and development of the neighbourhood, data about the characteristics of residents and information about the types of services and facilities available in the neighbourhood.

However in order to gain a better understanding around how people feel about Altona Meadows as a place to live, visit or work a number of community consultations took place. Below is a summary of these findings.

### **Methodology**

Consultations took place during September 2013. The method of consultation was through groups and individual interviews. In order to ensure a variety of views were heard consultations were held with a range of individuals and groups. This included:

- Interviews with two residents
- Focus group with participants in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class
- Focus group with grade five and six students from Altona Green Primary School
- Focus group with parents from a playgroup
- Focus group with people in aged care.

Each session lasted for approximately one hour. The questions used in the consultations are included in Appendix 1.

## **Summary notes**

The consultations were focused around several key questions, describing what people think about Altona Meadows as a place to live, well as how remember long term residents remember the neighbourhood. Below is a summary of participants' comments.

### **How would you describe Altona Meadows and what do you like about it?**

#### ***Community connections***

Often the things that had initially attracted people to live in Altona Meadows still remain. People talked about enjoying the way parts of Altona Meadows had been subdivided, creating a lot of courts and cul-de-sacs which encouraged people to get to know their neighbours, fostering a sense of community.

One woman spoke about why she and her husband chose to live in Altona Meadows, "*We just seemed to like the area. We're in a lovely court which is really family orientated.*" Other people confirmed this view, also emphasising that it was a great place to raise a family and that there was a real sense of community within their neighbourhood. Talking about where they had formerly lived, one person commented, "*We had a tiny back yard. So our house has got a huge backyard to me. We're in a great little court. It's beautiful, with a lot of families.*" This enjoyment of living in a court was also voiced by local school children, with one saying, "*In my court everyone knows each other.*"

Also appreciative of the friendships that had developed in her court, a long term resident commented, "*We've got great neighbours; some have been there since we moved in. The children went to school together so we used to car pool or they would catch the bus together and they've got really good friendships. Our daughters go out now, [name] is like a member of the family, they do a lot together... We're not in each other's houses all the time but we're out the front and we mow each other's lawns. We look out for each other.*"

Understanding the importance of having good neighbours but also the need to encourage community involvement was something one young mother felt was also important for her children. "*It's beautiful – like, a lot of families. I try and organise a court Christmas do and Santa comes and we organise Halloween. That's what I want my children to have. It's not necessarily there if you don't push for it yourself. When I talk to people about it they say 'that's sounds amazing you'll have to invite us'.*"

For some residents who are now living in residential aged care in Altona Meadows, the importance of good neighbours and support had not diminished. When asked what they liked about where they live, they talked about having friendships with other residents and good support from the staff. "*We all help one another. There's lots to do.*"

One participant, having been attracted to Altona Meadows by the opportunity to build their own home, and now a resident of 30 years, noted that the area was changing as families matured. "*A lot of my friends from school – everyone moved there... The age is changing now. There are more older people. They're my age with children grown up. I think there was more a sense of community when my children were younger because I was more involved in going to the community centres and the parks and catching up with mums. But they're older now so I'm not doing that.*"

### ***Environment***

Open space was commonly mentioned as an aspect of Altona Meadows that was highly valued. As one person put it, “*We are very privileged to have the open space that we have here.*” Another resident commented, “*It’s changed a lot [attitudes to the environment], even over the last 10 years. I think we’re getting more in touch with nature, health. The walking paths they’ve put in are really great.*”

For children, parks and open space were commonly mentioned as places that they enjoyed visiting, places where they could meet up with friends to socialise, kick a ball or ride a bike.

People also appreciated the improvements to the parks and open space and the revegetation that is taking place. “*There are new plantings between the creek and the basketball centre and it’s really nice that they are starting to do that.*” The walking path which follows the coastline was also a really important feature for many people regardless of their age. One young male commented, “*The thing I like most about it is the trails for exercise and walking, but for me it’s for exercise.*”

Others felt that these environmental features were not always recognised enough. “*We have a lot in Altona Meadows- but I don’t know how much they are promoted. We have lots of lovely green areas like the 100 Steps and I think they could be used a lot more.*”

### ***Central location***

In addition to liking the parks, one resident felt that the location meant that, “*I can generally take the bus here and there. The bus is very close for me, it’s within walking distance.*”

Describing the proximity of the neighbourhood to a broad range of places, another said, “*We are very fortunate with the location we are in – to get to the city, to get to the west coast. We’ve got Werribee Zoo nearby.*”

### ***Affordable housing***

Like most other areas, the cost of housing has increased in Altona Meadows. Some residents considered that prices in Altona Meadows will still relatively affordable. For one renter, “*It’s not too bad still. I’ve actually just moved and I ended up staying in this area because I can’t afford anywhere else. Altona - there’s no way [due to price]. I’d be paying \$50-\$60 more rent to go to Point Cook or other areas and then there’s the travel. With the road system from Point Cook or even Altona, you get that [traffic] bank up. So for me there’s the time, the petrol and the extra rent so I just basically decided to stay here.*”

One young man described Altona Meadows as, “*not ridiculously expensive but it depends on what you’re trying to get. If I was trying to get a three bedroom or four bedroom house, that would be quite expensive but if I was trying to get a one or two bedroom unit [it’s more affordable]. It’s pretty affordable on the west side of Hobsons Bay; once you get to Altona and beyond [further east], it gets expensive.*”

Another resident also felt that, relative to other areas, Altona Meadows was still affordable. However, its location as a middle ring suburb means that it is becoming more expensive. “*I think it is [affordable] compared to other locations. It has moved up though. I’d say it’s more expensive than*

*going out to Werribee and the outer estates.” She also mentioned that it is a stable area in terms of people leaving and observed that the neighbourhood had reached an age where housing was starting to be updated. “I don’t see many homes up for sale though. I’ve started to notice that people are renovating their homes, changing the face of them.”*

### **What activities do you do locally and what facilities do you use?**

#### ***Shopping***

Altona Meadows has one main shopping complex, Central Square, together with a couple of small shopping strips. Participants in the consultation were asked where they shopped for food and other items such as clothing.

On the whole, most people shopped locally at Central Square for food and smaller items. According to one resident, “*Central Square has got your bare necessities, your everyday stuff. But if you need something more, like you’re going out and need something to wear, you couldn’t go there. You’d have to go somewhere like the Plaza [in Werribee].*” Similarly another person said, “*It’s alright for food shopping and ducking into Big W. Other than that I would normally go to the Plaza.*”

Children also talked about their parents doing ‘small and big shops’ and that for food and smaller things they and their parents shopped at Central Square but for bigger or important purchases they went to the Plaza at Werribee, Highpoint, or Hoppers Crossing.

It was common for those who were born overseas to also do some shopping in Altona Meadows but many travelled further afield to buy foods that are culturally appropriate. “*Sometimes I shop here but usually I go to Point Cook because there are more shops and also sometimes I need an Asian grocery. The closest is Point Cook and maybe Footscray.*” Convenience was also a factor for one parent choosing to shop in Footscray. “*The kids go to the Chinese school in Footscray ... and I can go shopping there as well.*” However, due to the lack of locally available appropriate foods, one resident from Iran talked about the distances she had to travel to. “*There are some problems in terms of [access to] Iranian food - I must go to Doncaster or Lalor.*”

There were only a couple of people in the consultation who mentioned shopping in central Melbourne. Interestingly, there was only one woman who spoke about a preference for shopping online. “If can’t get it locally, I tend to get things online. I haven’t been to Highpoint or the Plaza in a year.”

#### ***Health services***

Altona Meadows is home to almost one quarter of the Hobsons Bay population, however it only has three medical practices to service this community, one of which is a super clinic that opened two years ago. As a result, there were mixed views about accessing health services. While some people felt that getting appointments was not difficult, others talked about having trouble making bookings therefore preferred to travel to practices where it was easier to see a doctor.

According to one mother, “*locally, the super clinic is quite good. But I’ve found it difficult to get in to, it’s always booked out on the day. We definitely needed something quite big because there’s of lots of smaller ones. Now I think ‘what did we use to do’*”.

One resident voiced frustration at the doctor shortage. “*Every time I ring up I can’t get in. A couple of weeks ago I rang and there was one doctor on so I tried Altona but they were booked out as well so I ended up at the super clinic in Hoppers Crossing.*”

Another parent talked about the difference between getting an appointment for children compared to adults. “*Central Square is really good. If it’s an emergency, when I’ve taken my child in they’ll see you straight away but I’d have to wait.*” Another parent also raised the same issue, although they spoke positively of being a long term patient at a smaller practice. “*I go to the Altona Meadows family doctor. They’re good with kids. You ring up [and they say] ‘bring them in’. Adults - you’ve got to wait. I’ve been seeing the same doctors for 15 years or so, so they know the family. They’ve been there for years, anywhere else you have to wait.*”

Several participants at the ESL consultation said that they visit Chinese doctors in Footscray but mentioned that there are now two Chinese speaking doctors in Altona Meadows. Another voiced a preference for more female doctors and not feeling comfortable discussing some things with male doctors. Having just found a good female doctor she was worried that the doctor will move. “*Every time I have found a good doctor, not so long and they move away and then we have to search for another one that suits.*” This concern about finding and maintaining a doctor was shared by another resident. “*Our family doctor is in Altona Meadows but he’s now working part-time so that’s changed a bit. What I’ve found though is that once you get a doctor they tend to move. I had a doctor in Altona North and now she’s in [Yarraville] so that made it hard.*”

Participants at the consultation tended to visit dentists in other areas of Hobsons Bay or beyond. It was not always clear if this was due to the fact that there are only three practices in Altona Meadows. In general though, they were able to get appointments without difficulty, although one person travels to the eastern suburbs to a dentist who speaks her language.

However for some people, the cost of visiting the dentist was prohibitive. In a couple of instances people mentioned using the free service at the dental hospital but this involved long waiting lists. “*They’re just too expensive. I can’t afford them at the moment. If you need an emergency appointment or anything like that you can’t afford to see a normal dentist. You’ve got to go into the city to the dental hospital or into Footscray and then you’ve got a waiting list, so that type of service is hard to access.*”

One resident, also with limited finances, indicated that getting a dental appointment for the children was a little easier, depending on the urgency. “[The community health centre] has a children’s dentist and you can ring in if there is an emergency. But you’ve still got to wait and fill in the questionnaire as to whether or not you’re on the high category or low and you wait a little bit longer, and it’s still for kids not adults. So if you’ve got a broken tooth or a painful tooth you’ve got to wait or pay, so adults miss out.”

### **Catching up with friends**

Most adults who participated in the consultation tended to either socialise in their homes or at other places in the municipality and beyond. This was mainly due to the limited number places in Altona Meadows where they could meet for a coffee or meal. As one person put it, “*Normally it would be at*

*our houses, but if we were going to go somewhere it would be in Williamstown cafes. In Altona Meadows, there's isn't much. There's nothing at all really. They don't have any cafes. There's fast food joints. There's only one place to go and have a meal at Central Square."*

Where this was different was among children. In addition to meeting at each other's houses, Central Square or parks are also common meeting places for this younger group. According to a couple of them, "*usually we just meet up in Central Square or we just go to each other's place*" and "*at Central Square we go to the food court or Big W, looking for clothes*".

### **Open space and recreation**

Altona Meadows has some expansive areas of open space that are mainly on the perimeters of the neighbourhood. As mentioned earlier, all age groups saw open space is a highly valued asset.

For children, open space provided them with the opportunity to meet friends and play, sometimes without the need for adult supervision. Some mentioned specific places such as Apex Park, while others spoke more generally, "*I like all the different types of parks here, running round and playing tiggy*" and "*I like kicking the football in the park with my brother.*"

The coastal trail that connects Altona Meadows to Altona and Point Cook is regularly used. One young girl commented, "*I really like the bike path. On the weekend if you have nothing to do you can go for a ride and get some exercise.*" This view was shared by another resident who had recently migrated to Australia. "*My daughter and I to go from Altona Meadows to Altona for exercise and the landscape is very beautiful.*"

Younger participants in the consultation also tended to be the biggest users of the neighbourhoods recreational facilities, including the skate park, basketball stadium and tennis courts. Several children also mentioned that they learn martial arts at the local Catholic primary school. However, one boy who had played junior soccer locally was now too old to play. "*I used to do soccer. I started when I was 8 and finished when I was 10. But there's no soccer after that.*"

The connection of children and exercise also came through in the comments of parents. One overseas born resident with a small child said that one of the things she liked about Altona Meadows were the facilities for her small boy, "*these are very convenient and that she was looking forward to taking him to swimming classes at a local centre.*" Another older parent talked about her adult children all having played basketball and tennis at local clubs.

### **Libraries and community centres**

Two of the consultations took place at community facilities, the local library and community centre. The ESL class meets at the Altona Meadows Library and Learning Centre and some people in this group also attend classes at the new Laverton hub which is nearby so were very familiar with these facilities.

Another participant and an avid library user, tended to go to the Altona branch, mainly for nostalgic reasons but partly because it was close to work. "*We used to go a lot to the library [when the children were younger] the one in Altona. The Altona Meadows library wasn't built then. I still use the library a lot. I know we've got the Altona Meadows one but I love the Altona one. Maybe because I've got that*

*connection, having my children go there. Even if I get a book on order, I get it there. I really like the location."*

Although most of the children in the consultation did not use the public library, probably because their primary school has one, one boy said that he went to the local library to do his homework.

Another woman with older children reflected on the important role community centres had played in family celebrations. "*I go to Seabrook [community centre] and the Altona Meadows one for different things. We did use Altona Meadows when our children had communions or big family events. We actually hired them – they're great facilities for families I think.*"

### **Education**

Parents in the play group consultation mostly had children who had not yet started school but on the whole, they planned to, or were using, local kindergartens. One parent with older children had also sent them to a local kindergarten when they were young.

Among those with primary school aged children or whose children would be starting in the next couple of years, the responses varied. Some have children attending local schools, both public and private, and several have plans to send them to private schools outside of Altona Meadows.

Because there is no secondary school in Altona Meadows, the next phase of education for children attending Altona Green Primary School also varied a lot with some planning to go to government schools in Williamstown or Altona North while others were likely to attend private schools in Point Cook, Altona and Altona North.

As mentioned earlier, the children of some overseas born residents also attend language classes in Footscray. Some would need to travel long distances to attend specific language schools, "*if I want an Iranian school, Persian language, there is just one school in Doncaster.*"

### **What things do you regularly do outside the neighbourhood?**

Among the most commonly mentioned activities that people do in places other than Altona Meadows are shopping, socialising and sport. Aspects of these, particularly in relation to shopping, are also mentioned in other sections of this summary.

One participant went to a variety of places to catch up with friends, in part because there are limited places to meet in Altona Meadows. "*We'll come down to Altona for breakfast or we'll go to Williamstown, Richmond, the city but not Altona Meadows. You know sitting in Pier St having a coffee - it's got the park. There should be a park and a café there [at Altona Meadows] that would be great.*"

Younger parents talked about finding cafes that welcomed young children or were near places where the children could play. They were always on the lookout for somewhere new and the places they went to tended to be in other parts of Hobsons Bay.

Older residents of the aged care centre enjoyed trips on the centre's bus. "*We go in the bus to different places – to Williamstown. We do some shopping or have a cuppa. We go to Altona too – that's where I used to live.*"

The main activities children were involved in outside of Altona Meadows were sports and recreation. They talked about visiting the new ten pin bowling centre at Point Cook as well as swimming being another key activity. *"When the weather starts to get hotter, I like to go to the pool with my cousin. I don't think there's one near here" so she uses the pool in Mason Street, Altona North. Another child enjoyed "taking the dogs to the dog beach in Altona."*

The children participated in a variety of sports. *"I play footy with Point Cook and will be playing it next year because it's close to my home." Another girl talked about the range of activities she was involved in, "Basketball for the Laverton Jets at the Altona Sports Centre. I also do calisthenics at Altona Youth Calisthenics. I used to do dancing but I moved to calisthenics when that shut down. I also do sewing classes at Hoppers Crossing."*

One young male talked about the sports he had been involved in as a child and now as an adult. *"When I was a kid, I played at the Altona City Soccer Club then gave it up for ten years, since then I met friends who were playing in a social team in Werribee – Hoppers Crossing so I've been playing with them for the last 2 or 3 years." Reflecting back on when he was younger, he added, "As kids we went to Altona beach and we still do go to Williamstown in summer. I try to get there every couple of weeks."*

#### **How do you get about the neighbourhood?**

Residents used a range of transport methods to get about, including walking, cycling, public transport and driving. In talking about how they get to school, most children said that they walked, either alone or with friends, some get driven by parents and a few ride their scooters or bikes. Those who ride had worked out the safest routes to get to school such shared paths and using back streets to avoid busy roads. Children also talked about how they had overcome their fearfulness of getting about alone. *"When I first started riding anywhere I used to be very scared that someone might come and do something to me. That's why I ride with my sister but sometimes I don't mind riding on my own because I know how to get there. I used to be afraid that I might get lost but now that I know how to get there, I've done it by myself a couple of times and nothing's happened." This view was shared by another student who walked to school. "That was the same for me. Now that I've walked since I was in Grade 3, I've found people very friendly."*

Cycling was the preferred transport option for another resident when the weather was fine. *"For a little while I've been riding to work but I've stopped that over winter. But I also ride to Point Cook and Williamstown. It's been recently fixed up around the back of Skeleton Creek so now it goes all the way to Point Cook." Like the children, he also chose to ride on the trails. "I rarely ever ride on the road...I don't think it's safe riding on the roads anywhere. Even if there's a two metre road bike lane, I'd prefer to ride on a trail. So I'd go the longer way for safety and also the trails are more enjoyable."*

In terms of public transport, buses are the only option for Altona Meadows residents. The nearest train station is in the adjacent suburb of Laverton. A number of issues were raised by the participants including recent changes to the bus routes, poor connections between buses and trains and demand on car parking at the Laverton station. Despite these problems, some, who were regular public transport users, were generally satisfied with the service. According to one new overseas born resident, *"I don't drive a car here because I don't know the city and the streets and directions...For me*

*it's easy getting public transport. The bus is near to my house so that's good for me. I think it's easy to live in Altona Meadows. Sometimes I take a bus and go to the Laverton Station and take the train to Melbourne." Although not a bus user herself, one parent said. "my daughter uses public transport to go to school in Altona. The bus stop is opposite my house so it's very convenient."*

Another person's experience of using public transport illustrated both the positives and negatives of accessing the system. "*The trains are great. With public transport you expect there's going to be some issues but Laverton is a major station so doesn't have any issues. At Altona and Westona [railway stations], they get skipped now and again but from Laverton that's been perfect. But the parking is shocking there. I was recently working in the city and to get there rather than catching the bus to Laverton station I was driving to Newport and parking there. For reliability and getting to work I was driving to Newport rather than driving to Laverton because I don't want to get there and find no parking or the train running late, and taking the bus there's the risk of missing connections.*"

A parent talked about her son's recent public transport experience, explaining the difficulties of travelling to a relatively nearby location. "[He] went from our home to Old Geelong Road and it took him two hours round trip. He got dropped off [by the bus] at Laverton station. He then had to go to Hoppers Crossing because there's no bus to take you to Old Geelong Road. He then got the bus there. On the way back he caught the bus...to Williams Landing and then from there the bus to Altona Meadows." Asked if this problem had worsened in recent times she commented, "I think it is about poor [transport] connections generally but it has got worse ....The trains are always going as the bus is getting there."

As a result of concerns about public transport, some participants preferred the convenience of driving, especially if they were travelling some distance. "*To get to Highpoint, I'd drive definitely. When I didn't have a car we'd take public transport but that takes a while*" and "*I use a car to get about... The buses aren't as regular as they should be.*" Driving was also the preferred option for those working outside of the municipality. However, traffic congestion is a constant theme. The husband of one participants works as a builder which requires him to drive all around Melbourne. "*He has to leave at 6am to get there. Otherwise he's got the Point Cook traffic so that's pretty bad. I'd say 10 years ago we didn't have that issue.*" For those who drive, trying to beat the traffic is not always easy. "*My husband works in town and drives to work. He starts earlier and finishes earlier and misses peak hour, but if there's an accident [on the freeway] forget about it.*" Problems with traffic emerged time and again throughout the consultation and this issue is also covered in following sections about safety and improving life in Altona Meadows.

### **Do you think of Altona Meadows as a safe place?**

In general, residents said they felt safe living in Altona Meadows. As one person commented, "*I don't know if I should be saying this but I don't mind leaving the door unlocked while dropping off the kids*".

However, there were some concerns about road safety and what was described as 'hoon' driving. The roads which generated the most concerns were Queen Street, Central Avenue, Victoria and Merton Streets. These are the major routes through the neighbourhood.

Talking about negotiating the roundabout at Queen and Merton Streets one resident commented, “*sometimes it feels like you’re playing Russian roulette trying to get through. I think they should have [traffic] lights there. I think it’s too dangerous. Cars just zip through. I don’t know the statistics about accidents but I have seen many there.*” This intersection was also considered to be dangerous for pedestrians. “*There’s a pedestrian crossing further up but there’s issues for crossing the road from the Altona Green side to get to the shopping centre. I think if you had lights [at the roundabout] with a pedestrian crossing that would solve problems with the traffic as well as giving pedestrians time to cross.*”

Road safety around school times was raised by one resident who suggested that Victoria Street should have speed bumps reinstated to slow traffic, noting that existing bumps had been removed. This person also said that despite there being “*two lollipop ladies, crossing from Queen Street to Central Square is difficult because those ladies are only there for an hour and without them it’s dangerous.*”

A lack of good lighting was raised as an issue, particularly along the walking trails where there was limited surveillance. While one female said that dense planting close to the path was an issue, another resident noted, “*the street lighting in our area is actually pretty poor. A lot of the trees have grown large now [blocking the light] and there are not many lights anyhow. It would be good to improve that.*” Another person who enjoyed running said that they won’t run at night because they don’t feel safe due to the lack of street lighting. Talking about the walking trails, one person pointed out that “*all the way from the Esplanade through to Point Cook Road, there’s minimal lighting. There’s a little bit been put in near Skeleton Creek but other than that there’s not much at all.*”

Personal safety was not a problem for one young man who said, “*I’ve never had any issue whatsoever. Never seen anything. It’s been a good place to live.*” For some women however safety, particularly at night, was of concern. “*Walking on my own I don’t particularly like to do that, I’ve always got someone with me. I have friends who have had incidents just walking on the main walking tracks up to the 100 Steps. I don’t think I would do that on my own. The path to the 100 Steps, you’ve got homes backing onto the path and there’s no lighting so you wouldn’t go at night time, I wouldn’t go at night.*”

Residents of Altona Meadows also talked about ‘hooning’. Speaking about her concerns one young girl said, “*near my house there’s lots of people doing burn outs. They get really close to the kerb. My younger brother is always walking outside...he sometimes runs close to the edge, so it’s dangerous.*” She went on to say, “*Some people when they drive on the road – they’re not that careful. They don’t really care about people they just care about where they want to go. They just want whatever’s best for them.*” Another young boy also spoke about dangerous driving, “*on the bike track you can sometimes hear motor bikes down there speeding along.*”

In terms of safety, moving into residential aged care had been a positive experience for an older resident. Following the death of her husband, she was living at home alone and felt anxious and unsafe. “*My house got sold when I came in here...I couldn’t stay living on my own. It’s not safe. That’s what I like about this place. It’s very safe. It makes me feel comfortable and safe.*”

## **What would make it a better place to live / work / visit?**

The mother of a teenager and a primary school aged child spoke about the lack of places and activities for young people their age, “*there could be a little bit more in Altona Meadows. There seems to a lot of things for smaller children, like playgroups, but for teenagers there's only Central Square. Otherwise they end up going off to Highpoint, the city, Werribee Plaza. So there's shops but nothing that really interests them...My daughter is ten. But there's not much there at the park for kids to do. She'll go off to the park and want to kick a soccer ball around but there are no nets – they're kiddy parks.*”

As noted earlier in this summary, participant also spoke about the lack of places to meet such as cafés. People also wanted more banks and a greater variety of shops. The imminent opening of a new supermarket was welcomed.

Other suggested infrastructure improvements including the completion of a section of footpath at the eastern end of the neighbourhood. “*They've made a path from Altona to near Apex Park, but at Apex Park, that path just stops so if they took it all the way around past the basketball stadium that would be good because there is a path already there.*”

Throughout the consultation only one person pointed out that there was a very limited amount of work in Altona Meadows, “*There's no actual work here, maybe private businesses -working from home*” and suggested more employment opportunities would be good.

A number of transport issues, which have already been canvassed earlier, are things that residents would like to see resolved. Poor linkages between buses and trains and the lack of parking at Laverton railway station and traffic congestion were high on the agenda of most of the participants in this consultation. “*Our buses used to go round to the local primary school and now they've re-routed the bus so a lot of people who used to drop off in that area now have to get off in the main streets so that's not good.*” One proposed solution was to run a local bus that operated only within Altona Meadow. “*Many people are housebound. It would be good for the community. It could drop people at the station.*”

While the children at Altona Green primary also raised a number of traffic issues, speed humps were a real irritation to a couple of them. “*Driving with my mum and dad somewhere – all the speed humps – it's annoying how many there are*” and “*they make you go so slow.*”

Another transport issue was the lack of seating in some bus shelters which made life particularly difficult for older people. Both adults and children were also annoyed at the vandalism of bus shelters and the costs incurred, one of whom commented, “*I get quite angry when I go past the bus stop and I see it cracked. I think 'why do they do this'.*” In relation to vandalism it was suggested that a lack of things for young people to do was a contributing factor and more policing was required.

Graffiti was another form of vandalism that all age groups objected to, particularly children. While they disliked seeing it anywhere, they talked about its impact at their school. “*Before we had fences we had lots of graffiti but even with the fences sometimes they climb over and get onto the roof and graffiti there.*”

One resident, while enjoying the street tree plantings within the neighbourhood, questioned the appropriateness of some tree types. *"I don't think eucalypts should be planted as street trees, causing issues for drainage and homes. I think in parks, yeah they're great, but not where it's going to cause structural damage, though it's really nice when you walk down streets and there are trees there. I'm fortunate that I'm in a beautiful street that has trees with beautiful blossoms. Unfortunately the council has planted some different trees [in a couple of spots]. Personally, I think uniformity looks wonderful."*

A lack of awareness of what's happening in their neighbourhood was raised by the playgroup parents. In their conversation, there was a sense that they were often not aware of what was on offer and were not sure where to look for information. The most common way they got this information was by word of mouth. Some suggested a local newsletter or a community information board at Central Square as ways local activities and events could be better promoted. One person also said that more information would help those on tight budgets to find out about activities that they could afford. Others mentioned they would like a wider variety of classes than was currently available, such as yoga, pilates and tai chi. An associated issue that was raised was the prohibitive cost of hiring spaces for groups to run community sessions.

### **Do you plan to stay in Altona Meadows?**

While some residents said they wanted to stay in Altona Meadows and that it was a place where they had everything they needed, others were not as convinced.

In a discussion among participants, one resident was asked if she would move away if she could afford it. *"No, I actually don't think I would. I like Altona Meadows. Because I've been here so long I know my way around and I know people and it's just the expense too. For the same price over in Laverton, you're getting fibro houses, older houses. Here, you're getting older houses but they are still in reasonable condition. And then you might go to Point Cook - to get the same price, your right down Point Cook Rd, miles away or you come closer in and you're paying and absolute fortune, so Altona Meadows is a good spot."*

Another resident who is expecting a baby is looking for somewhere bigger to live and although planning to stay in Altona Meadows could be tempted to move. *"Altona Meadows is affordable but if I win lottery undoubtedly I would move to Altona as my husband is into boating and stuff and it's closer to the boat ramp!"*

Altona was also the choice for one person, once the children leave home. *"I'd like to move to Altona, the lifestyle is a little more relaxed I think. I know in summer it's busy but I can walk to the post office and places. I don't want to have to rely on public transport to do my shopping and I don't always want to take the car. Altona is accessible. Where I am now, the distance to Altona Meadows [shopping centre] is probably too far. I've got a lot of main roads that I have to cross as well, whereas in Altona, you wouldn't have that."*

Other things that affect whether people remain in Altona Meadows are education, work and proximity to family and friends. One mother, whose child will be attending a school that is some distance away wasn't sure if they would stay. *"That's such a tricky question, because I can't say we don't look, because we do look all the time, especially now we've chosen a school for my son. But at*

*the same time, here we have schools, doctors, hospitals around us, we have everything.”* Similarly, another parent might consider moving closer to the city when her kids go to university, but was happy living where she is for now.

For one young adult who was still living at home, moving out was a priority within the next five years. “*Where? - depends on the job. If I get a job in the city, I’d like to move closer. It would be easier...But I’d be happy to stay in Altona Meadows or Point Cook. They’ve got a lot of stuff there because it’s a new area and big, they’ve got a lot of their own cafes.*”

One overseas born resident spoke about wanting to move to the eastern suburbs to be closer to friends. “*We want to move and buy a house but we can’t afford it...But other things like my husband’s side of the family all live in the western suburbs so we maybe need to live in Altona Meadows.*”

Having moved into residential care, older residents were content with where they lived. “*It’s a good place. I’m quite happy here. It’s very clean and the meals are pretty good.*”

### **Remembering Altona Meadows**

Two participants in the consultation had strong memories of Altona Meadows in its early stages of development. “*It was just a big paddock - it was all empty. I was an electrician and I did a lot of work around here. I was working on houses... I was doing a job for another builder out in Caulfield. When I told him [where I lived], he asked ‘do you know South Avenue’. He says ‘I’ve got 12 blocks of land out there. I’ve never seen them – I bought them years ago’. At that time there were vacant blocks everywhere. They were all developed from Victoria Street upwards and then on the other side there weren’t a lot of houses.*”

Another resident who has lived in the neighbourhood for close to 30 years talked about the lack of infrastructure and services. “*Merton St was a dirt road. There were no shops or shopping centres. We had to come down here [to Altona] for shopping. I had a car or we walked. We didn’t use the buses very much – I think they were just starting because there was nothing past Merton St. I can’t recall seeing buses.*”

## Consultation Questions

### **What's your connection with Altona Meadows?**

Local resident  HB resident  Work here  Visitor

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**1. If you were describing Altona Meadows what are some of the area's distinctive features?**  
(what makes it different to other places)

**2. What are the things that make it a good place to live / work / visit?**

Prompts

- The facilities (eg parks, open space, leisure facilities)
- Access to shops; shops have what you need
- Access to services (doctors dentists etc, childcare/MCH, schools )
- Affordable housing
- Close to work

**3. What sort of activities do you do locally?**

Prompts

- Member of club / group
- Play sport
- Socialise / meet with friends
- Volunteer
- Shop
- Work

**4. What are some of the facilities you use in the local area?**

Prompts

- Childcare/MCH/preschool/schools
- Sports/ recreation
- Neighbourhood
- Community centre/halls
- Seniors centre



**5. What things do you regularly do outside the area eg in other parts of Hobsons Bay or beyond?**

Prompts

- library
- shop
- go to school
- access services health
- Sport/leisure activities
- Catch up with friends / socialise

**6. How do you normally get about the area?**

Prompts

- public transport
- drive
- walk
- ride a bike)

**7. Is it easy / safe to get about?**

**8. What would make it a better place to live / work / visit?**

Prompts

- sport/leisure places
- meeting /socialising opportunities
- transport
- shops
- services
- safety
- work

**9. Do you expect to still be living here in the next 5 years – if yes – how do you think your needs will change?**

- facilities
- services