

Reimagining Billilla

Community Engagement Summary

9 March 2022



Bayside
CITY COUNCIL

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1 Background

Council is working to bring the unique historic property of Billilla in the heart of Brighton back to community use for the first time in over 15 years.

The engagement process conducted over several months presented an exciting opportunity to engage with the Bayside community on how to maximise social benefit from this landmark building and grounds in the heart of Brighton.

Given the number of stakeholders, the historic nature of the building, its location and proximity to a number of other Council owned buildings the decision about the purpose and direction of Billilla Homestead will be a complex one.

This engagement process gathered feedback from community members and stakeholders on ideas and possible uses for both the building and gardens. This feedback, along with technical research and feasibility reports, will assist Council in bringing new life to this historic homestead, creating positive outcomes for the Bayside community.

Culture and history are greatly valued by the Bayside community, of equal importance are accessible spaces and buildings to both accommodate an aging and inclusive community.

Community engagement for this project was designed to foster creative participation through generating ideas about how to return this significant Council-owned building and gardens to benefit our broader community. Billilla could be an intergenerational and inclusive space, creating opportunities for residents to express their ideas and abilities, share common interests, and feel a greater sense of connection and inclusion. There is also potential for commercial and/or social enterprise opportunities to be co-located at the site.

Likewise, residents living close to Billilla are concerned about any changes to Billilla that could increase noise, parking or traffic. Feedback from the community engagement program will inform a future management model, which will govern any future tenants or events with strict conditions of use.

○ 1.1 Project History

Prior to conducting this consultation, Council carried out the following research which will be used alongside community engagement findings to identify future opportunities for Billilla:

- Social needs assessment which considered nearby Council-owned buildings and services to identify any gaps that could be filled by Billilla.
- Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to understand how to invite broader community use now and protect it for future generations. The CMP will ensure the heritage values of the place are retained during maintenance, operation and any works at the site. The heritage nature of the will be a key consideration for Council when determining Billilla's future. Further investment may be required to restore heritage features once future uses are determined.

Some spaces within Billilla are currently leased at no cost to artists to support their creative pursuits. This popular program will continue until at least the end of 2022 and many participants provided feedback on this program and strong support for the arts was noted throughout the consultation.

2 Consultation process

This report provides a summary of the community engagement conducted with the Bayside community and stakeholders regarding their views on the future use of Billilla Homestead, for both the building and gardens of Billilla.

2.1 Consultation purpose

Engagement ran from September 2021 to February 2022.

The purpose of engagement was to:

- Seek community and stakeholder feedback on how to maximise community benefit and potential future use of Billilla Homestead.
- Provide Council an evidence base for the future use of the property, how to maximise community benefit from the Homestead and how to support accessible, intergenerational use.
- Combine engagement with activities that promote possible future use of the area.

Topics that the project stakeholders could influence and inform (negotiables) were:

- ways to maximise community use of Billilla for social benefit
- ways to ensure Billilla offers appropriate and inclusive services that provide value and address local community needs
- ways to ensure intergenerational and broad use of the site
- ways to improve accessibility and inclusion
- ways to improve and increase community involvement and enjoyment of the gardens
- management model for the site, including how tenants and/or events should be managed
- whether to have commercial/social enterprise/community/Council service provision occupants and the mix of occupants
- allocation of restored/preserved spaces of the historic Homestead for tourism/education
- whether to add additional, purpose built, architecturally designed space to allow for larger, accessible gatherings
- ways to foster partnerships to support community connections and social engagement
- volunteering opportunities.

Topics that were not open for discussion (non-negotiables) during this engagement were:

- changes to the layout of the building and any structural work
- Billilla gardens to remain open to the public under any future use of the site
- no sole/private occupation of the site that would prevent broad community access
- selling the building.

2.2 Consultation methodology

Table 1 lists the community engagement activities, the findings of which have been included in this report.

Table 1. Community Engagement Activities

Details	Activity
125 ideas shared	How would you like to enjoy Billilla in the future? share your ideas gather tool Via Have Your Say, Council's online engagement platform
6 shared	Share your memories of Billilla
	Children's drawing activity (draw the types of activities you would like to see at Billilla)
74 postcards and 5 children's postcards	Postcards 'How would you like to enjoy Billilla in the future?' Via the Billilla Garden Party Event and Bayside Chamber Orchestra Concert
Participation from over 465 participants	Dotmocracy on four key themes Via the Billilla Garden Party Event (Sunday 27 February, 2022)
6 emails and 1 phone call	Other submissions Via email and phone

Online Engagement

Have Your Say 'Imagining Billilla' featured a timeline with excerpts, photos and video, detailing the history of the Billilla Homestead and gardens. Participants were able to add to the page by sharing their own stories or memories and how they would like to enjoy Billilla in the future. There was a children's worksheet that could be downloaded inviting children to draw the activities they would like to enjoy at Billia in the future.

Billilla Garden Party

The event was held at the Billilla Homestead and Gardens on Sunday 27 February 2022. At this event, each participant was invited to vote on their preferred future use for the Homestead. Figure 1 shows some photos from this event.

Postcards

Postcards asking participants how they would like to enjoy Billilla in the future were made available at the Billilla Garden Party as well as the Bayside Chamber Orchestra Concert.

Submission direct to Council

Participants were offered the opportunity to provide their ideas via email and in one instance over a phone conversation.

Figure 1. Engagement Method Images



4 ipation

An estimated 681 participants provided feedback across the six engagement opportunities, with the highest number of responses gathered from the dotmocracy activity at the Billilla Garden Party. This was followed by participation through *Have Your Say 'Imagining Billilla'*. Postcards submitted by children have been considered separate from the postcards from adults. Table 2 shows participation across engagement activity.

Participants were able to contribute online or through a dotmocracy activity held on site at the Billilla Garden Party. With over 2,200 people taking up the opportunity to attend the Garden Party this indicates a strong level of support for this type of activation.

Table 2. Participation by Engagement Activity

Engagement Activity	Number of participants
Dotmocracy	465 (378 over 25 years and 87 aged under 25 years)
HYS Gather Tool	125
Postcards	74
Children's postcards	5
Email submissions	6
Phone submissions	1
Total	681

○ 3.1 Demographic Details

Demographic details were not obtained across the engagement activities, however different colour stickers (dots) were given to people under 25 years of age and over 25 years of age for the Dotmocracy activity. From participation in the dotmocracy activity, 378 participants aged over 25 years of age participated; while 87 participants were under 25 years of age.

Although children were not heavily represented in the engagement activities, it was observed that the Billilla Garden Party attracted many families with children who participated in the activities on offer (face painting, story time and games). The Billilla Garden Party was also attended by the Country Women's Association and U3A.

5 Consultation findings

This section summarises key themes from the community feedback. Throughout the document, quotes have been used to demonstrate the sentiment expressed by participants. Where there was more than one mention of a topic or item, the number of mentions has been specified in brackets (X).

Figure 2. Consultation finding images

○ 4.1 Desired Future Uses and opportunities

Following is a summary of community feedback related to the desired future uses for Billilla. The question '*How would you like to enjoy Billilla in the future*' was asked online, via the postcards and through email and phone submissions. A total 212 comments were received in response to this question. A coding frame was developed to categorise the response into key areas. Some comments have been tagged more than once, depending on the level of detail provided.

Table 3 shows the themes and lists the type of topics covered by each theme and the count of comments for each theme.

Table 4 shows the results from the democracy activity at the Billilla Garden Party. The four themes were developed based on the feedback received on the Have Your Say page. The four themes and sub themes were:

Ripponlea Model: picnics, markets, horticultural lectures, tours of the estate and outdoor cinema.

Community Hub: community use at low cost, community organisations and co working space.

Cafe and restaurant: high tea in the dining room, cafe, community and private functions and social enterprise.

Arts and cultural centre: museum display and guided tours, artists and writers in residence program and public concerts.

Following these tables is more detail about the suggested ideas generated by theme.

Table 3. Coding Framework

Theme	Sub-Category Inclusion
Commercial opportunities 164 comments	This theme includes feedback relating to opportunities around art retail, a health and wellbeing centre, accommodation, events such as weddings, a nursery, a cafe and restaurant, and a museum.
Garden use 120 comments	This theme includes feedback surrounding picnics, music events and plays, and horticultural tours within the garden.
Community Arts Studios and Program Spaces 114 comments	This theme includes feedback about makers markets, art installations and events, school programs, and art classes.
Flexible and Adaptable Community Meeting Rooms 32 comments	This theme includes feedback relating to community meeting rooms, including - but not limited to - those that may be used for groups such as the U3A or the Rotary Club.
Other Opportunities 20 comments	This theme included possible opportunities for the Billilla Homestead, including celebrating aboriginal culture, restoring the mansion and gardens, and Billilla as a community asset.
Co-worker Hub 6 comments	This theme includes feedback on a hub which could provide a collaborative and community based shared office space, which would see increased business in the area.
Social Enterprise Opportunities 3 comments	This theme includes feedback about opportunities including a repair cafe, commercial kitchen, and social enterprise cafe.

Table 4. Dotmocracy activity

Dotmocracy Activity	Under 25	Over 25	Total
Ripponlea Model	190	678	868
Picnics	29	108	137
Markets	44	203	247
Horticultural lectures	13	77	90
Tour of the estate	14	102	116
Outdoor cinema	90	188	278

Community Hub	54	233	287
Community use available at low cost	28	97	125
Community Organisations U3A	13	100	113
Co working space	13	36	49
Cafe and Restaurant	96	447	543
High tea in the Dining Rooms	33	142	175
Café	38	205	243
Community and private functions	11	57	68
Social Enterprise	14	43	57
Arts and Culture	93	532	625
Museum display and guided tours	18	97	115
Artists and writers in residence programs	32	144	176
Public concerts	43	291	334
Total	866	3780	4646

Commercial Opportunities

The broader theme, commercial opportunities, encompassed many ideas such as art retail, health and wellness centre, accommodation, events, nursery, cafes and restaurants, and museum and history tours. This theme reflects the ideas of a majority of comments, and sits at a total of 164 mentions. A number of suggestions included ideas to increase funding for the restoration of Billilla and events held on the premises, however, many comments were more focused on opportunities for community interaction.

Responses directly related to events, provided opportunities to come together as a community or family.

- "Functions such as weddings could be good. I fondly remember small school fetes too in the gardens. Most of all, it's been wonderful to see people using the gardens. I feel like total patronage during the COVID lockdown era would exceed the aggregate of the previous 20 years patronage."
- "The olden days garden party today was a great success. It was wonderful to see so many families and friends enjoying their picnics and the children happily enjoying the games and activities. This would be a wonderful activity to have annually at this time of year."

Many participants suggested ideas related to cafes, restaurants or food trucks, whether it be solely for a place to meet with members of the community or as an accompaniment to events held at Billilla.

These comments sometimes suggested hosting these food or drink related events in such a way that it reflects the time period and incorporates an elegant and sophisticated setting.

- "Revelling in the charm of its stately presence, enjoying the spaces and grandeur, this property could enhance the lives of many. I can see it with spaces for high teas, string quartets, and peacocks in the gardens."
- "It would be fabulous to see a food icon/chef use one of the spaces for a Cafe and or casual style Restaurant. Imagine a lovely champagne brunch, high tea, long lunch or dinner encompassing the romance of Billilla Mansion. This is an iconic landmark showcasing Melbourne's beauty of yesteryear. How wonderful to have an opportunity to share it with people from all over."
- "Ideal for weddings, functions, community activities. Now Brighton International is gone, it's all we have left in Brighton. The grounds/gardens are ideal for receptions, cocktail parties. Make it a community asset."

Cafes and High Teas were strongly supported in the dotmocracy activity with 243 votes for a cafe, followed closely by 175 votes for High Tea in the dining rooms.

Garden use

A variety of ideas were received that related to the gardens and grounds of Billilla. These range from outdoor music events, picnics, general use and horticultural tours of the site. Some participants outlined the use of the gardens as a way to promote health and wellbeing of the community.

- "We can 'borrow' ideas from other councils such as Stonnington who regularly host musical events in their beautiful gardens."
- "Great gardens, we love enjoying them. Picnic tables would be a great addition."
- "I would like to see a community garden here at Billilla. There is a lot of space here."

In the dotmocracy activity there was strong support for an outdoor cinema at 278 votes, picnics at 137 votes, horticultural lectures at 90 votes.

Some participants reflected on the social and community benefits of visiting Billilla Homestead over the course of the recent lockdowns and considered the importance the space had for the wellbeing of the community.

As lockdowns eased, it has been mentioned that many families had discovered the beauty of the grounds and utilised the space for picnics and a space for children to play in nature.

One comment suggested that the ability to visit and walk through the Homestead was a 'lifesaver'.

Here are some direct community comments specifically about access to the gardens:

- "This is a beautiful place to walk a dog, read a book or have a picnic and during lockdown it was quite possibly a lifesaver."
- "The superb Billilla gardens provided such a haven during our recent lockdowns."
- "It was so lovely to see small groups using the grounds for play and picnics during the lockdown."
- "Over the last 2 years of lockdown, so many families have discovered the beauty of Billilla gardens."

- “During the COVID Lockdowns we often walked to Billilla and benefited enormously from the peace and tranquility of the gardens. Having such a place is very important for the well-being of all age groups in our area and I hope this continues.”

Community Arts Studios and Program Spaces:

Participants mentioned ideas relating to art installations and events, farmers and makers markets, school programs and art classes. Ideas in this section often mention cultural values and support for local artists, as well as the opportunity to create a space for upcoming artistic individuals.

- “Creating opportunities for en plein air painters to come and paint outdoors on the property, of the property. Also, watercolour workshops and demonstrations inside, perhaps with the Victorian watercolour society. A rolling program of many kinds of artists to do demonstrations, oil painting, mosaic, sculpture artist in residence program Art events, exhibitions, run by a gallery or a rotary.”
- “Billilla should be used as an arts precinct – music, writing, and other artistic pursuits by groups and individuals. Encourage this to have community involvement including shows and exhibitions.”
- “Please keep the arts and culture part of Billilla going — the artist in residence program is AMAZING! I loved it when there were concerts inside and a regular market day in the gardens – to build community at this site is so important – it’s a gorgeous site and we want to honour it appropriately.”

The writers and artists in residence program received strong support in the dotmocracy activity with 176 votes.

Many ideas referenced the history and charm of the Billilla Homestead, historical tours were suggested as not only a way to remember, but also to teach and inform children about Brighton’s history.

- “It’s a treat to walk through the gardens and feel the history of the building. Please don’t develop this important space.”
- “Bayside held an exhibit on the Weatherly family some years ago, and I am sure many people would enjoy something to be permanently on display about the history of the building.”
- “Keep the grounds open and the house using guided tours by trained community volunteers (restore furniture etc and have historical details available)”

A total of 115 participants voted for the museum display and guided tours in the dotmocracy activity.

Flexible and Adaptable Community Meeting Rooms:

Participants frequently made mention of spaces that allow for a variety of uses, including meeting rooms and adaptable spaces for activities that provide inclusive programming opportunities for the community.

In some of these comments, participants suggested that the availability of flexible and adaptable community meeting rooms can and has provided necessary options for the community during recent lockdowns.

- “We are a Community group within the Bayside area, we could see this wonderful house being used to be the home of many community groups, including ours where large rooms are needed, for club meetings with ample room for large seating areas with kitchens and lockable storage facilities.”

- "Lease for community classes: pottery, yoga etc. low cost lease to micro businesses and makers, crafters, etc."
- "I think it would be wonderful for artists in residence, exhibitions of art, craft, CWA or local group fundraisers in the form of high teas, book clubs, knitting circles, young mums groups, tai chi, yoga, bridge, mahjong etc, but in particular, I would like it to be viewed as a possible space for the women of Bayside. A safe, happy place for women of all ages to gather and share."
- "Smallish rooms for community activities such as Probus group who have no place to meet for book clubs/tech groups etc. as members no longer wish to meet in private homes since Covid's advent."
- "I hope the beautiful building will be treasured and made use of and appreciated by all."

Co-worker Hub

Some participants suggested a collaborative and supportive approach to assisting those without adequate access to computer services, by creating a publicly available co-working hub. Comments in this section suggested this idea as it has been necessary for many community members to work from home during recent years, and that this may provide an opportunity to meet with other businesses or entrepreneurs. There were 49 votes for a co-worker hub in the dotmocracy activity.

- "Many residents work from home. They have limited access to corporate services - IT, meeting rooms etc. A co-working hub would be a terrific way of building a collaborative and supportive approach to business in Bayside."
- "As so many people are working from home it would be great to have a community base where you could drop in for a coffee and meet other local start up founders or small business owners as well as connect with corporate people who work from home. People are missing the city buzz and networking."

Social Enterprise Opportunities

A few participants suggested Billilla being used for social enterprise opportunities to build social connections in the community and help those that need it. Social enterprise opportunities were more strongly supported in the democracy activity, receiving 57 votes.

- "Spaces for local social enterprises and community groups."
- "It would be great if you open a Community store where people can take what they need and leave what they can to build a healthy community."
- "Create opportunities for free entry or gold coin donation (to go to local emergency relief charities) for concerts by up and coming jazz groups/performers including secondary school programs."

Figure 3. Desired opportunities images



Other opportunities

Numerous opportunities were mentioned during the engagement activities, with 20 comments (4% of the total) containing an opportunity for the Billilla Homestead. More details on the most prevalent opportunities are provided below.

Aboriginal culture (9)

An opportunity to celebrate and learn about Aboriginal culture through stories, art, food and events at Billilla Homestead.

- "Would love to see an indigenous arts and learning centre established that can be shared with the public for yarning and story sharing."
- "Music in the gardens please! Various diverse themes - classical, bands, indigenous cultural festivals, kids' concerts."
- "I think it would offer an amazing opportunity to acknowledge and show respect to the Aboriginal peoples of the area. It could be a great gesture of reconciliation and provide ample opportunity for cultural exchange and learning about the more than 60 million year continued history."

Restoration (mansion/gardens) (4)

Celebrate the history of the past with the restoration of Billilla Homestead and the gardens to share with the local and wider community.

- "Restore the house and gardens to replicate what it was like when it was constructed and allow the public access on certain occasions so they may view the house in all its grandeur."
- "Offer people an appreciation of a bygone era by restoring some rooms and enable access to the tower... Restoring the gardens particularly between the front drive and lower lawn to mimic the original plantings."
- "It would be great if at least a portion of the mansion could be preserved/restored to show how it once was. My kids are fascinated by the small outhouse buildings behind the main residence. Makes them think about what life was like before modern conveniences."

Item-specific feedback

Several unique and specific ideas were made via direct submission to Council. Given the specific nature of these ideas they are separately reported on.

Annual Period Car Show (Direct Submission via Email)

This submission highlighted an event in partnership with the Bayside Car Enthusiast Group and Bayside City Council, sensitive to the history and time period of Billilla Homestead.

Whilst the car show would be the primary focus of the event, it would include opportunities for historical tours of the Homestead, art shows and refreshments as part of the event.

The submission outlined the management of concerns surrounding the event, such as associated fees and noise management. Suggestions to solve these issues included an entry fee for both vehicle owners and the general public that may be put toward the maintenance of Billilla, and an application criteria set by a committee in order to reduce unwanted behaviour or noise.

Some direct quotes from this submission:

- "I would propose that Bayside Council in conjunction with Bayside Car Enthusiast could host the Bayside Billilla Concours Car Show and develop it into an annual prestigious event which could be associated with several other components such as Billilla tours, a themed bayside art show, a garden cocktail party as part of the concours show the afternoon before the show judging takes place."
- "An entry fee would be charged for participating classic cars into the show and for the cocktail party and a gate fee for the public into the event. All proceeds would go toward the maintenance of Billilla."

Support for Stroke Survivors (Direct Submission - HYS)

This submission suggested the implementation of facilities and support for the significant number of stroke survivors in Bayside who require assistance. Here is a direct quote from this submission:

- "There are an estimated 3000 Stroke survivors living in Bayside with no known after care facilities. For example see City of Boroondara which has excellent support from the City. The Stroke Association of Victoria and the Stroke Foundation should be encouraged and supported by the City by providing facilities. I am happy to help in any way I can."

Performance space for "The Dress" (Direct Submission Email)

This parlour comedy piece titled 'The Dress', has been developed over the past year and is set to open at Werribee Mansion in October. Following a walk through of the Homestead, this participant felt that this is an appropriate location for 'The Dress' to be held, and hopes to achieve this prior to any renovations that may take place.

Here are some direct quotes from this submission:

- "As well as entertaining, the piece is historically and educationally-driven, giving insight into the intricate details of garment construction of the late Victorian period, as well as the very unusual and world-class high fashion scene present in Melbourne following the Gold Rush and preceding the Edwardian Period."
- "I am now more determined that our show should be performed there before the renovations, as a means of getting the public inside the house and perhaps highlighting the need for their support in saving this jewel of Brighton's history. I believe that this project could provide ample support in raising community awareness for Billilla's restoration."

Community housing project (Direct Submission - phone)

This telephone submission discussed the opportunity to include a community housing project that integrates sustainable food production for those in need. This suggestion came from a participant that has a non-for-profit foundation and has sought to help women over the age of 55 that are experiencing homelessness.

Here are some direct comments from this submission:

- “Billilla had its own vegetable garden back in the day; little plots in the corner – supply garden sheds. Encourage people to grow their own food.”
- “Community housing project and self sustaining community. Come together to garden etc... A back corner of the garden to grow vegetables for people who need it – relatively small piece of land.”

○ 4.2 Memories

Following are community memories shared online via *Have Your Say Imagining Billilia*. The prompt ‘Share your memories of Billilla’ was only asked online. Participants provided their recollections of previous visits to the Billilla Homestead or encounters. Memories included a nurse originally employed and working onsite; wedding guests and celebrations, and simply enjoying the premises as a child.

The overall sentiment from these stories was a desire for others to create memories at Billilia and experience the history and events from these times.

Here are some direct community comments:

- “Billilla left me with happy memories, and I hope the beautiful building will be treasured and made use of and appreciated by all.”
- “It would be lovely for present and future generations to be able to similarly experience this step back into time. I would hope that the Council can restore the home to some of its former grandeur.”
- “The grounds of Billilla were part of my playground growing up in the 70’s and 80’s. The acorns from the trees made great bullets in sling shots when playing ‘cops and robbers’. Riding bikes. Running around. Pretending we had horses in the back stables.”

○ 4.3 Concerns

Following are community concerns expressed through participants' response to the question ‘How would you like to enjoy Billilla in the future’ asked online, via the postcards and through email and phone submissions, with 34 comments (7% of the total) containing a concern. A coding frame was developed to categorise concerns. Some concerns have been tagged more than once, depending on the level of detail provided. Given the explicit nature of these concerns, community quotes have been used to demonstrate the concern. Concerns are listed in priority order based on the number of responses collected.

Noise for local residents (9)

- “Weddings were tried many years ago and every weekend day and night there was very loud music from live bands or dj’s and guests behaving badly as they left.”
- “The set up for large functions weddings and the like will inevitably remove the private quiet charm the grounds offer as set ups and clear ups will actually prevent locals from using this space for a few days and means they will have less access not more.”

Parking and congestion (8)

- “Parking in the street is also an issue for local residents, especially with the amount of property development currently. This is causing congestion and destroying the historic character of the neighbourhood.”

- "A lot of the surrounding streets are quite narrow and already packed with parked cars. Any development at Billilia must create additional parking within the existing grounds. If this is not possible then leave it how it is."
- "Large events that Council are suggesting require extra car parking, extra parking for tourist buses which neighbouring streets residents certainly don't want."

Management of Billilia (8)

- "Important to keep management of this facility within Bayside. Keep entities like the National Trust out."
- "Billilia should be managed in a similar way as is Rippon Lea. Public."
- "Don't lease out the building to schools anymore! It feels contrary to the spirit of this place."

Over development (5)

- "The grounds are lovely, and given the amount of urban development in Bayside, green spaces should be treated with great respect."
- "Establish a calm rejuvenating ambience in coherence with days gone by, and as a total contrast to the over development of nearby streets."

Leave it as it is (4)

- "Leave it completely as it is. There are too few beautiful peaceful reflective spaces such as this unique property open to locals and everyone as it is these days in Bayside."
- "My plea is that nothing changes too much... I have faith that between us we can work out a way to harmoniously share this wonderful place."
- "Leave it exactly as it is! It is already enjoyed by locals of all ages."

Figure 4. Desired future uses images



5 Support for ideas

Following is an overview of the most supported ideas from across all engagement activities.

Music events and plays

The sub-theme with the highest number of mentions was music events and plays, with 67 mentions found in the wider engagement. This theme mentioned music events or concerts wherein the community may attend for either a minimal cost or no cost at all. Whilst the genre of music played is not mentioned often, some have suggested Classical, Jazz or Chamber music.

Participants suggested using an entry fee as a fundraiser for various restoration activities, community purposes or to cover the cost of the concert itself, with a few comments also suggesting that local artists play at these events.

Here are some direct community comments:

- "It would be great for Jazz concerts to take place in the evenings, most of which should be free for the community to gather and enjoy (e.g. the cafe and function earnings could go towards this). Bands and musicians could be allowed to play on the weekends, following a similar approach to Bourke Street Music; these could be curated by the council."
- "Create opportunities for free entry or gold coin donation (to go to local emergency relief charities) for concerts by up and coming jazz groups/performers including secondary school programs."
- "promote Art and theatre activities such as concerts and Art shows."

- "It would be great to see more live music and arts events for the general public. Concerts and exhibitions that support local/Bayside artists."

This sentiment was also strongly highlighted in the dotmocracy activity, with a further 334 votes. Of those that voted, 43 participants were under the age of 25, and a further 291 over 25.

General events

The second highest number of mentions from the wider engagement was a request for general events, with 59 mentions. This sub theme included weddings, high teas and outdoor cinema events, with a handful of other community events.

Here are some direct community comments:

- "Many more public events inside and out. Concerts, outdoor cinemas, markets, exhibitions, community ethnic events, artists in residence to continue, bring back carols by candlelight here at Brighton Town Hall precinct."
- "When open to the public, make it self-funding by opening up the tea rooms on weekends and wedding receptions in the evening, fill rooms."
- "I would like a masquerade ball like Marie Antoinette's."

Support was reflected in the dotmocracy Ripponlea Model category, under outdoor cinema with a total of 278 votes, 90 of which were from the under 25 year old age group, and 188 participants over the age of 25.

Art installation and artistic expression

Art installations and artistic expression was a commonly mentioned theme, with 52 comments.

A number of participants expressed the desire for more art installations and a general positive attitude towards the Artists in Residence Program. A request for more installations was suggested throughout the Homestead, with some recommending that artists be provided their own exhibition space with adequate lighting.

One participant wanted Billilla Homestead to be a dedicated arts precinct that provides opportunities for local artists.

Here are some direct community comments:

- "Billilla should be used as an arts precinct – music, writing, and other artistic pursuits by groups and individuals. Encourage this to have community involvement including shows and exhibitions."
- "A room with appropriate lighting and space capable of hosting small to medium sized art exhibitions."
- "Keep the Artists in residence, and promote Art and theatre activities such as concerts and Art shows and a craft market would be a good use of space."

Further votes toward this idea were gained through the dotmocracy with 176 votes received, 32 participants were under 25, with a further 144 over the age of 25.

Cafes and restaurants

Cafes and restaurants were commonly mentioned, with 52 comments received. High teas were a popular idea in the dotmocracy activity and received 175 votes.

Most mentions of cafes and restaurants provide positive feedback on their availability, with a small number of participants finding the idea to be unnecessary or problematic with parking and congestion.

This idea of temporary eateries was supported, either through events or shows being hosted on the Homestead grounds, with an area for tea and coffee for community interaction, or as temporary structures or food trucks.

Here are some direct community comments:

- "I think part of it should be used as a cafe with an outdoor area."
- "An outsourced cafe would be a welcome addition for anytime but certainly High teas would be a drawcard."
- "Musical events using Food Truck catering would be good for all ages."

Support for cafes received a total of 243 votes, 38 of which are from the under 25 year old age group, and 205 participants over the age of 25.

● 6 Project Evaluation

○ 6.1 Evaluation of Engagement

The engagement outcomes for this project were successfully achieved. The desired outcomes were:

- Seeking feedback on how to maximise community benefit and potential future use of Homestead
- Council needs an evidence base for the future use of the property – how to maximise community benefit from the Homestead and how to support accessible, intergenerational use
- Combine engagement activities that promote possible use of the area i.e. family arts festival
- Community needs to be mindful of limitations of site so a range of options should be presented

Table 5 evaluates how the desired outcomes were met.

Table 5. Impact of the engagement

Impact Evaluation:	Commentary
Seeking feedback on how to maximise community benefit	An estimated 681 participants provided feedback across the six engagement opportunities.

and potential future use of Homestead	
Council needs an evidence base for the future use of the property – how to maximise community benefit from the Homestead and how to support accessible, intergenerational use	Reimaging Billilla Engagement Summary provides Council with an evidence base of community feedback regarding future use for the Homestead.
Combine engagement activities that promote possible use of the area i.e. family arts festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Bayside Chamber Orchestra in the Billilla Gardens 5/12/21 o Garden Party at Billilla 27/02/2022 - attendance over 2200 people
Community needs to be mindful of limitations of site so a range of options should be presented	Clear negotiables and non- negotiables were outlined in the engagement overview.

o 6.2 Evaluation of Communication

The communications approach used to promote this project was successful in notifying people about the project. The purpose of communication was to:

- Promote the project to encourage participation in all engagement activities.
- Clearly communicate the purpose and value of the community consultation regarding the future use of the Homestead.
- Keep the community up-to-date on the progress of this project.

The consultation program was promoted through a variety of channels. The project was promoted to the community through:

- Community events at Billilla, including:
 - o Bayside Chamber Orchestra in the Billilla Gardens 5/12/21
 - o Billilla Garden Party 27/02/22
- virtual interactive tours on Have Your Say engagement platform
- information sessions and meetings
- video and infographics
- interactive hotspot map with information on different aspects of the property
- direct email to Have Your Say subscribers and key stakeholder groups
- letters/flyers to nearby residents
- website news stories and This Week in Bayside e-newsletter
- advertising, including prominent signage and social media
- Let's Talk Bayside magazine.

Table 6. Impact of the engagement communication

Impact Evaluation:	Commentary
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Promote the project to encourage participation in all engagement activities.	4,265 page views of reimagining Billilla websites with 100% positive feedback received
Clearly communicate the purpose and value of the community consultation regarding the future use of the Homestead.	eNewsletters were sent to 27,117 subscribers, with a reach of 14,721.
Keep the community up to date on the progress of this project.	Social media posts reached 53,165 (paid, organic) with engagement rates for the majority of posts well above 5% which is considered good.
	140 followed the project page

Table 7: Website Statistics

Page	Page views	Time on page	Feedback	Positive Feedback
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/news/reimagining-billilla	151	1:54	0	
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/explore-bayside/events/billilla-garden-party	2,790	3:52	0	
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/news/step-back-time	459	3:03	0	
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/news/family-fun-we-reimagine-billilla	382	1:56	1	100%
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/news/billilla-garden-party	482	2:24	0	
https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/news/musical-joy-beautiful-billilla	1	0:10		
Total	4,265		1	100%

o

Table 8: eNewsletters

Campaign	Date sent	Recipients	Opened (reach)	Clicks
Reimagining Billilla	16/12/2021	8,946	4,683	339

Discover the rich history of Billilla	20/01/2022	9,029	4,943	350
Billilla Garden Party this weekend	24/02/2022	9,142	5,095	313
Total		27,117	14,721	1,002

Table 9: Social Media

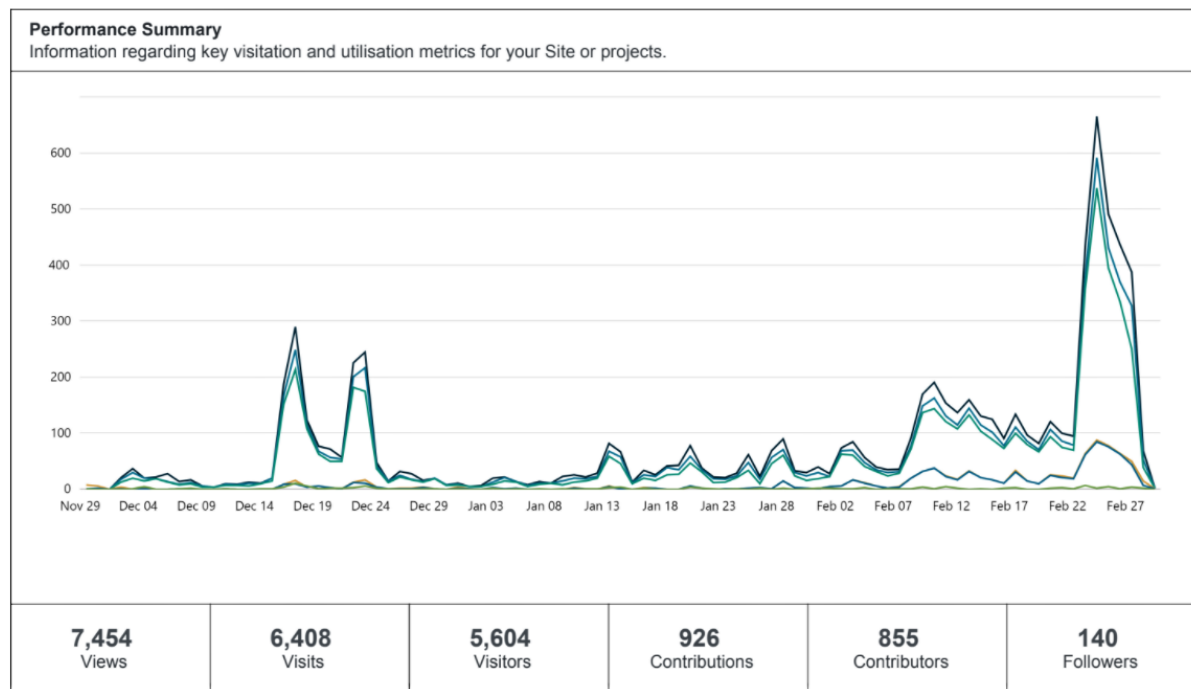
Date	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Link clicks	Organic reach	Paid reach	Organic impressions	Organic video views	Amount spent	Engagement rate
17/12/2021	103	15	7	0	3,900		4,417	2,229		12.03%
24/01/2022	78	5	11	0	3,036		3,152	1,687		9.82%
8/02/2022	64	13	2	803		8,195			\$220	
09/02/2022 Youth	3	1	0	0	380		381			2.89%
23/02/2022	88	28	18	1,110		29,592			\$500	
24/02/2022	5	0	3	0	4,399		4,484			5.46%
26/02/2022	40	3	5	0	5,325		5,327			6.01%
28/02/2022 Library	5	0	0	0	418		425			3.35%
01/03/2022	54	0	4	0	4,072		4,072			10.19%
01/03/2022	2	0	0	0	513		514			6.24%

Gallery										
01/03/2022 Youth	8	0	0	0	335		335			6.57%
Total	450	65	50	1,913	22,378	37,787	23,107	3,916	\$770	

Table 10: Instagram

Date	Likes	Reach	Organic impressions	Engagement rate
09/02/2022 Youth	13	120	133	10.53%
Total	13	120	133	

Figure 5. Performance Summary Have Your Say 'Imagining Billilla'



Legend

Views - The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.

Visits - The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.

Visitors - The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day.

Contributions - The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.

Contributors - The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a Site through the participation tools.

Followers - The number of Visitors who have 'subscribed' to a project using the 'Follow' button.