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Darebin Integrated Families, Youth & Children Strategy

Background Report

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities in Darebin

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present, and future leaders. We pay respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin. We recognise, and pay tribute to, the diverse culture, resilience, and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We acknowledge the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the right to self-determination in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect

Demographic overview of FY&C in Darebin

This presents an overview of selected demographic and other characteristics of FY&C and households in Darebin as of 2021. It shows the number and gender of children and young people, where they live, their need for assistance due to disability, the role of unpaid childcare, and level of engagement in school and work. Selected information is also presented with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Following this, a brief outline of population forecasts relevant to FY&C is presented. For reference purposes, according to the ABS, the Usual Residence Population (URP) in 2021 is 148,578 and the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for the City of Darebin for 2022 is 150,325.

Selected characteristics for children and young people living in Darebin

Around 26% of Darebin residents are children and young people, with males and females reasonably evenly spread across the 0 to 24 years age groups.

Service age groups divide the population into age categories that reflect typical life-stages. They indicate the level of demand for services that target people at different stages in life and how that demand is changing. As shown below, with regard to total persons in Darebin:

- 5.3% (or 7,896) are aged 0 to 4 years
- 6.9% (or 10,231) are aged 5 to 11 years
- 5.5% (or 8,229) are aged 12 to 17 years
- 8.2% (or 12,160) are aged 18 to 24 years

Darebin has an overall lower proportion of persons aged 0 to 24 years than the Greater Melbourne average (25.9% and 30.4% respectively). In addition, 19.2% (or 28,587) persons in Darebin are aged 25 to 34 years and 23.0% (or 34,168) are aged 35 to 49 years, the age groups within which people are most likely to have children. Darebin has a higher proportion of people in these two age groups than the Greater Melbourne average (42.2% versus 37.5%). Overall, the number of persons living in Darebin increased by 1,855 from 2016 to 2021.

City of Darebin – Total persons (Usual residence)	2021			Change
Service age group (years)	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	2016 to 2021
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	7,896	5.3	5.9	-940
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	10,231	6.9	8.7	-490
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	8,229	5.5	6.9	+643
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	12,160	8.2	8.9	-2,414
Young workforce (25 to 34)	28,587	19.2	16.0	+120
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	34,168	23.0	21.5	+729
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	18,376	12.4	11.9	+2,176
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	12,762	8.6	9.5	+1,587
Seniors (70 to 84)	12,220	8.2	8.6	+231
Elderly aged (85 and over)	3,949	2.7	2.0	+213
Total persons	148,578	100.0	100.0	+1,855

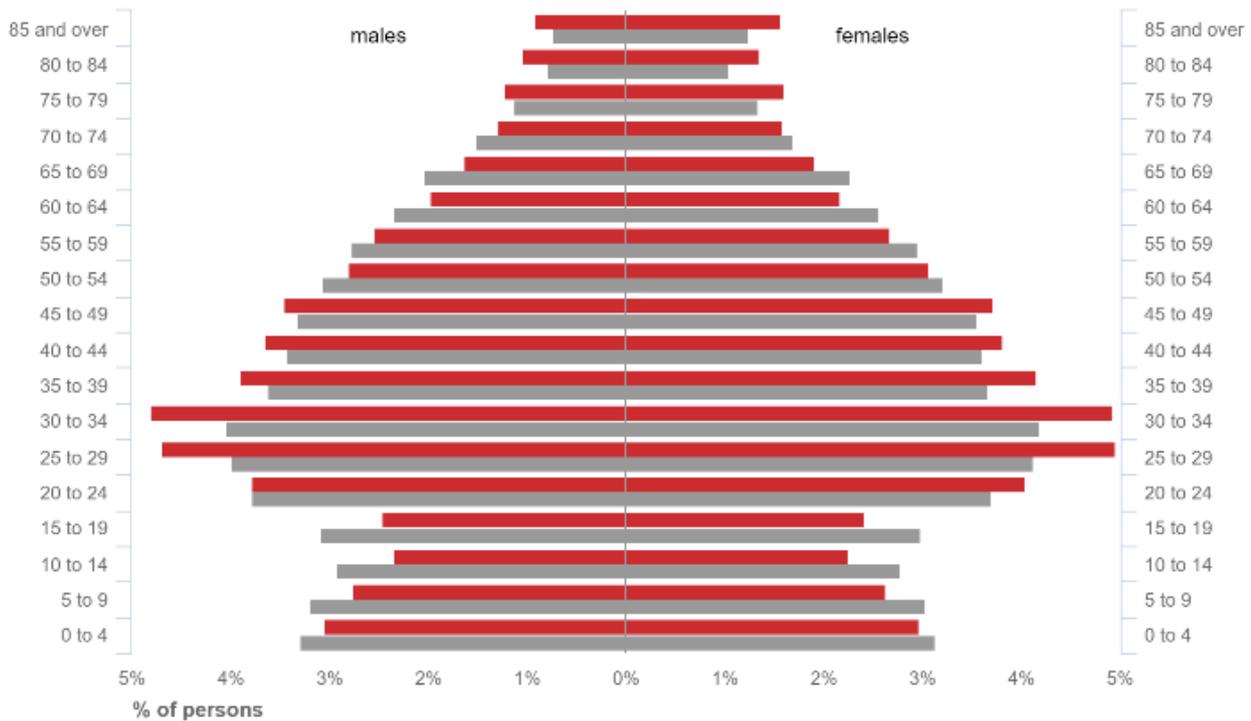
(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/service-age-groups>).

Service age groups by sex

When considering age groupings in the context of sex, in 2021, males and females are reasonably evenly spread across the 0 to 24 years age groups.

Age-sex pyramid, 2021

■ City of Darebin ■ Greater Melbourne



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, selected years between 1991-2021 (Enumerated data).
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

.id informed decisions

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/age-sex-pyramid>).

In 2021, the proportion (%) and number of children and young people in each suburb varies.

- Areas with the highest proportions of children aged 0 to 4 years are Reservoir (Edwardes Lake) (6.6%) and Reservoir (Cheddar) (6.5%), while the largest numbers are located in Preston (East) (935), Reservoir (Cheddar) (933), and Reservoir (Edwardes Lake) (929).
- Areas with the highest proportions of children aged 5 to 11 years are Reservoir (Edwardes Lake) (8.1%), Preston (West) (7.5%), and Fairfield (7.5%), while the largest numbers are located in Preston (West) (1,198), Preston (East) (1,173), and Reservoir (Edwardes Lake) (1,141).
- Areas with the highest proportions of young people aged 12 to 17 years are Alphington (7.3%) and Bundoora-Macleod (7.0%), while the largest numbers are located in Northcote (East) (959), Preston (East) (895), and Preston (West) (844).
- Areas with the highest proportions of young people aged 18 to 24 years are Bundoora-Macleod (19.2%), and Kingsbury (12.2%). The largest numbers are located in Preston (East) (1,426), Bundoora-Macleod (1,336), and Preston (West) (1,179).



(Source: <https://atlas.id.com.au/darebin>, 2023).

Areas in Darebin where children and young people live

- **0 to 4 years:** Proportions ranged from a low of 3.4% in Bundoora-Macleod to a high of 6.6% in Reservoir (Edwards Lake). Suburbs with the highest percentages are Reservoir (Edwards Lake) (6.6%), Reservoir (Cheddar) (6.5%), Thornbury (East) (5.6%), and Reservoir (Merrilands) (5.6%). The largest numbers are located in Preston (East) (935), Reservoir (Cheddar) (933), Reservoir (Edwards Lake) (929), and Preston (West) (849).
- **5 to 11 years:** Proportions ranged from a low of 5.7% in Bundoora-Macleod to a high of 8.1% in Reservoir (Edwards Lake). Suburbs with the highest percentages were Reservoir (Edwards Lake) (8.1%), Preston (West) (7.5%), Fairfield (7.5%), and Alphington (7.3%). The largest numbers are located in Preston (West) (1,198), Preston (East) (1,173), and Reservoir (Edwards Lake) (1,141).

- **12 to 17 years:** Proportions varied from a low of 4.3% in Kingsbury to a high of 7.3% in Alphington. Suburbs with the highest percentages were Alphington (7.3%), Bundoora-Macleod (7.0%), Northcote (East) (6.4%), and Northcote (West) (6.3%). The largest numbers are located in Northcote (East) (959), Preston (East) (895), and Preston (West) (844).
- **18 to 24 years:** Proportions varied from a low of 6.6% in Northcote (West) to a high of 19.2% in Bundoora-Macleod. Suburbs with the highest percentages were Bundoora-Macleod (19.2%), Kingsbury (12.2%), Alphington (9.5%), and Reservoir (Oakhill) (8.5%). The largest numbers are located in Preston (East) (1,426), Bundoora-Macleod (1,336), and Preston (West) (1,179).

Usual residence - 2021 Area	Total population Number	0-4 years		5-11 years		12-17 years		18-24 years	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Alphington	3,161	139	4.4	232	7.3	231	7.3	300	9.5
Bundoora-Macleod	6,945	237	3.4	398	5.7	487	7.0	1,336	19.2
Fairfield	5,843	323	5.5	436	7.5	346	5.9	433	7.4
Kingsbury	3,460	180	5.2	201	5.8	148	4.3	421	12.2
Northcote (East)	15,058	703	4.7	1,095	7.3	959	6.4	1,079	7.2
Northcote (West)	10,211	451	4.4	694	6.8	648	6.3	671	6.6
Preston (East)	17,839	935	5.2	1,173	6.6	895	5.0	1,426	8.0
Preston (West)	15,927	849	5.3	1,198	7.5	844	5.3	1,179	7.4
Reservoir (Cheddar)	14,330	933	6.5	872	6.1	635	4.4	1,093	7.6
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	14,142	929	6.6	1,141	8.1	747	5.3	977	6.9
Reservoir (Merrilands)	9,716	546	5.6	643	6.6	560	5.8	796	8.2
Reservoir (Oakhill)	12,939	697	5.4	834	6.4	697	5.4	1,103	8.5
Thornbury (East)	11,362	634	5.6	774	6.8	585	5.1	763	6.7
Thornbury (West)	7,635	343	4.5	532	7.0	447	5.9	585	7.7
City of Darebin - benchmark	148,578	7,896	5.3	10,231	6.9	8,229	5.5	12,160	8.2

(Source: <https://atlas.id.com.au/darebin>).

Socio-economic indexes show the extent to which children and young people are likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage based on the area where they live. Alphington has the lowest level of disadvantage with a 2021 IRSD index score of 1,084.4 while Kingsbury has the highest level of disadvantage (score of 957.9). Overall, children and young people living in households located in Kingsbury, Reservoir (Oakhill), Reservoir (Merrilands), Reservoir (Cheddar), Preston (East), and Reservoir (Edwardes Lake), are potentially more likely to experience higher levels of disadvantage.

Level of socio-economic disadvantage by area

In 2021, Alphington had the lowest level of Disadvantage with a SEIFA index score of 1,084.4. Kingsbury had the highest level of Disadvantage (score of 957.9). The areas of Kingsbury, Reservoir (Oakhill), Reservoir (Merrilands), Reservoir (Cheddar), Preston (East), and Reservoir (Edwardes Lake), experience higher levels of Disadvantage than the Darebin benchmark.

The ABS reports Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas. The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) contains only disadvantage indicators (i.e., unemployment, low incomes or education levels, single parent families, low skilled occupations, poor English proficiency), and is useful to identify disadvantaged areas. However, it does not differentiate areas that are highly advantaged from those lacking a lot of disadvantages (with population close to the middle). This index is commonly used for funding allocations and advocacy as it highlights the areas of most need.

City of Darebin – areas ordered from the lowest level (least) to highest level (most) of disadvantage	2021 IRSD	2021 Percentile
Alphington	1084.4	92
Northcote (West)	1080.3	90
Northcote (East)	1064.4	82
Fairfield	1062.5	81
Thornbury (West)	1059.4	79
Bundoora-Macleod	1040.0	66
Thornbury (East)	1039.9	66
Preston (West)	1033.4	62
City of Darebin - benchmark	1018.3	53
Greater Melbourne - benchmark	1018.0	52
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	1002.3	43
Preston (East)	996.6	40
Reservoir (Cheddar)	975.2	29
Reservoir (Merrilands)	964.4	24
Reservoir (Oakhill)	959.0	22
Kingsbury	957.9	22

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/seifa-disadvantage-small-area>).

In 2021, at least 812 children and young people in Darebin needed assistance in their day-to-day lives due to disability. Some children and young people may be living in a household where a person experiences a common long-term health condition, possibly a mental health condition.

Need for assistance due to disability

In 2021, 9,855 people (or 6.6% of the population) in Darebin reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This includes 812 people aged 0 to 19 years, an overall increase of 172 since 2016.

This disability statistic relates directly to need for assistance due to a severe or profound disability. The information can inform the planning of local facilities, services such as day-care and occasional care and the provision of information and support to carers. The City of Darebin's disability statistics assist understanding of the prevalence of people who need support in the community, and along with information on Unpaid Care to a person with a disability, how that support is provided.

City of Darebin – Persons (Usual residence)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	% of total age group	Greater Melbourne %	
Assistance needed by age group (years)				
0 to 4	83	1.1	1.3	+6
5 to 9	267	3.6	4.0	+47
10 to 19	462	3.3	3.5	+119
20 to 59	2,250	2.5	2.4	+278
60 to 64	544	7.7	6.5	+52
65 to 69	600	10.5	8.8	+31
70 to 74	774	15.9	12.5	+35
75 to 79	1,073	27.4	19.3	-15
80 to 84	1,439	41.9	32.2	+66
85 and over	2,341	59.9	53.7	+436
Total persons needing assistance	9,855	6.6	5.5	+1,081

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/assistance>).

Long term health conditions

In Darebin, the most common long-term health condition in 2021 was mental health condition. While 32.4% of the population reported one or more health conditions, a higher rate than in Greater Melbourne (29.5%).

For the first time, the 2021 Census captured the level of incidence of selected long-term health conditions in the community. The Census question asked respondents if they have been diagnosed with a specific condition (or other condition) from a list of 10 conditions plus "other". Combined, these 10 conditions comprise approximately 60% of Australia's deaths, and those which are not deadly contribute substantially to the burden of disease. See Sections 5 and 6 for more information about mental health initiatives intended to support children and families.

City of Darebin – Persons (Usual residence)	2021		
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %
Arthritis	10,759	7.2	6.9
Asthma	12,606	8.5	7.9
Cancer (including remission)	3,442	2.3	2.5
Dementia (including Alzheimer's)	1,159	0.8	0.7
Diabetes	6,334	4.3	4.5
Heart disease	4,664	3.1	3.3
Kidney disease	1,202	0.8	0.8
Lung condition	1,703	1.1	1.2
Mental health condition	16,395	11.0	8.1
Stroke	1,236	0.8	0.8
Other long-term health condition	12,866	8.7	7.8

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/long-term-health>).

In 2021, 22.9% of people in Darebin aged 15+ years were providing unpaid care for their own child/ren and/or child/ren other than their own. In relation to educational engagement, 23.4% of Darebin residents were attending an educational institution of which 13.7% were attending pre-school, primary school, or secondary school. Further, 76.6% of persons aged 15 to 24 years were fully engaged with employment and education.

Unpaid childcare for own and other child/ren

In 2021, 28,949 people (22.9% of people aged 15+ years) provided unpaid care to child/ren in Darebin. Of these, 4,867 people were caring for child/ren other than their own. The role of unpaid childcare in City of Darebin is determined by many different factors. For example, areas with high levels of unpaid childcare may have a dominance of single income families with one significant earner, or there may be a lack of provision of paid childcare in the area. The level to which people care for other's children can also indicate the role of extended family (i.e., grandparents caring for grandchildren and family day care).

City of Darebin – Persons aged 15+ years (Usual residence)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Unpaid childcare				
Provided unpaid childcare (all)	28,949	22.9	26.5	-810
Cared for own child/ren	23,630	18.7	20.9	+1,283
Cared for other child/ren	4,867	3.9	5.2	-1,757
Cared for own child/ren and other child/ren	452	0.4	0.5	-336
No unpaid childcare provided	90,734	71.9	68.1	+7,621
Not stated	6,541	5.2	5.4	-3,867
Total persons aged 15+ years	126,224	100.0	100.0	+2,944

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/unpaid-childcare>).

Educational engagement

In 2021, around 23.4% of Darebin residents were attending an educational institution, of which 13.7% were attending pre-school, primary school, or secondary school. Darebin residents have access to Government, Catholic and Independent schools, however, most primary school and secondary school students attend a Government school. See Sections 5 and 6 for more information about the educational context.

City of Darebin – Total persons (Usual residence)	2021		Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	
Type of institution			
Pre-school	2,967	2.0	+810
Primary school	9,600	6.5	-237
Primary – Government	6,988	4.7	+68
Primary – Catholic	1,959	1.3	-302
Primary – Independent	653	0.4	-3
Secondary school	7,778	5.2	+1,031
Secondary – Government	4,692	3.2	+832
Secondary – Catholic	2,019	1.4	+34
Secondary – Independent	1,067	0.7	+165
TAFE/Vocational	3,766	2.5	+1,060
University	10,732	7.2	-1,820

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/education>).

Workforce and educational engagement by age group

In 2021, 76.6% of persons aged 15 to 24 years were fully engaged with employment and education and 6.9% were disengaged, consistent with Greater Melbourne.

Engagement in employment and education looks at the level of participation by age and sex of the population in the labour market, or full or part-time education. Full time employed or full-time student would be “Fully engaged”, while part-time students may be fully engaged if they are also employed, or partly engaged if they are not working. Engagement in the labour and education market is highly dependent on age. Retirees are generally disengaged, while stay-at-home parents are also likely to be disengaged. The rate of engagement, particularly in the younger and working age groups can be affected by access to strong employment and education markets and is a measure of socio-economic status and the level of welfare dependency in an area. See Section 6 for more information about youth educational and workforce engagement.

City of Darebin – Persons aged 15 to 24 years (Usual residence)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Engagement status				
Fully engaged	12,375	76.6	77.4	-1,530
Partially engaged	1,947	12.1	11.1	+35
Disengaged	1,108	6.9	7.0	-175
Undetermined/Not stated	721	4.5	4.6	-463
Total persons aged 15 to 24 years	16,151	100.0	100.0	-2,133

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/disengagement-by-age>).

Youth unemployment

The youth unemployment rate is defined as the rate of people aged 15-24 who, in the week prior to Census night, did not have a job but were actively looking for and available to start work. Youth unemployment is an issue of serious concern for the community. Persons aged 15 to 24 years are particularly vulnerable to unemployment, since the age group represents a transition from education to work, with generally higher unemployment rates than other age groups in most areas.

In 2021, 12.8% of persons aged 15 to 24 were unemployed (1,232 people in total), comparable to the Greater Melbourne rate of 12.2%. Kingsbury had the highest rate of youth unemployment at 15.7%, and Alphington the lowest at 9.3%. In some small areas of Darebin (SA1s) the rate of youth unemployment was above 40%, although it is important to note that these are small areas with between a total labour force aged 15-24 of between 15 to 40 people in total.

City of Darebin - Youth unemployment rate (persons aged 15-24) (Usual residence) Area	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	Total labour force aged 15 to 24	%	
Alphington	26	281	9.3	-13
Bundoora - Macleod	135	950	14.2	-170
Fairfield	47	402	11.7	-10
Kingsbury	51	325	15.7	-39
Northcote (East)	96	997	9.6	-23
Northcote (West)	92	616	14.9	+34
Preston (East)	163	1,200	13.6	-65
Preston (West)	125	1,066	11.7	-52
Reservoir (Cheddar)	98	884	11.1	-62
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	123	832	14.8	+13
Reservoir (Merrilands)	77	648	11.9	-19
Reservoir (Oakhill)	112	866	12.9	-25
Thornbury (East)	89	689	12.9	-27
Thornbury (West)	71	533	13.3	-7
City of Darebin	1,323	10,307	12.8	-459
Greater Melbourne - benchmark	46,241	379,276	12.2	-8,589

Selected characteristics of Darebin households

In 2021, households with children comprised 35.2% of all households in Darebin. Of which, 9,356 couples have young children, comprising 15.1% of households. Households with children have many forms and involve couples, single parents, intact families, stepfamilies, and blended families. The diversity of housing stock across the City and large geographical size has seen areas develop different roles within the housing market. These roles generally fall under three categories: Young adults and tertiary students; Established and mature families; and Young to mature adults and families in conjunction with young adults and tertiary students. In relation to housing tenure or ownership, households may fully own their home, be paying a mortgage or renting.

Households with children by life stage

For households with children in City of Darebin, life stage is based on the age of children in the household. Parent(s) age is not considered. In 2021, households with children comprised 35.2% of all households in Darebin. Of which, 9,356 couples have young children, comprising 15.1% of households. Households with children require different services and facilities than other household types, and their needs change as both adults and children age. When many families in an area are at the same stage in their individual lifecycles, it creates a suburb lifecycle. Knowing where a suburb sits within a cycle of change helps planners make evidence-based decisions about the demand for services both now and in the future. Overall, the number of households in Darebin increased by 3,411 from 2016 to 2021.

City of Darebin – Households (Enumerated)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Households with children				
Couples with children	16,120	26.1	33.1	+281
Couples with young children (<15 years only)	9,356	15.1	18.3	-74
Couples with mixed-age children (1 or more children <15 years and 1 or more children 15+ years – must have 2 or more children)	1,740	2.8	4.3	+16
Couples with older children (15+ years only)	5,024	8.1	10.5	+339
Single parents with children	5,649	9.1	10.2	+309
Single parents with young children (<15 years only)	1,744	2.8	3.3	+119
Single parents with mixed-age children (1 or more children <15 years and 1 or more children 15+ years – must have 2 or more children)	463	0.7	1.1	+35
Single parents with older children (15+ years only)	3,442	5.6	5.7	+155
Total households with children	21,769	35.2	43.3	+590
Total households with children	61,828	100.0	100.0	+3,411

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/households-with-children>).

Types of families and family blending

In 2021, City of Darebin had 93.8% of intact families, 4.4% of couple families with children in stepfamilies and 1.6% in blended families. According to the ABS, an intact family is a “couple family containing at least one child who is the natural or adopted child of both partners in the couple, and no child who is the stepchild of either partner in the couple”, a stepfamily “has at least one resident step child, but no child who is the natural or adopted child of both partners” and a blended family “has two or more children; at least one child who is the natural or adopted child of both partners, and at least one who is the step child of one of them”. Information on blended and intact families can be an indicator of the level of family breakup and re-partnering within the area, and a potential indicator of socio-economic disadvantage. Family blending only applies to couple families with children.

City of Darebin – Total couples with children (Enumerated)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Intact family	15,243	93.8	92.0	+298
Stepfamily	710	4.4	5.3	+22
Blended family	257	1.6	2.4	-36
Other couple family	32	0.2	0.2	-7
Total couples with children	16,242	100.0	100.0	+277

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/family-blending>).

Diverse housing stock across Darebin

There is great diversity of the housing stock across the City and due to its large geographical size, areas have developed different roles within the housing market. These roles generally fall under three categories:

- Young adults and tertiary students: Most areas of the municipality, such as the Northcote, Fairfield, Thornbury and Preston and most of Reservoir due to the proximity to public transport and therefore connection to La Trobe and RMIT Universities to the north of the city, as well as tertiary institutions and private education providers in Melbourne.
- Established and mature families: Unique to Reservoir (Merrilands), where the housing stock, the amenity and attractiveness of the areas attract mature families.
- Young to mature adults and families in conjunction with young adults and tertiary students: Noteworthy in selected areas of the City such as Bundoora - Macleod and Alphington and reflects the continued availability of larger family homes as well as their proximity to public transport. This difference in function and role of the small areas in the City of Darebin means that population outcomes differ significantly across the municipality (<https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/drivers-of-population-change>)

Housing tenure or ownership

In the City of Darebin, 57.1% of households were purchasing or fully owned their home, 32.8% were renting privately, and 4.1% were in social housing in 2021.

City of Darebin's housing tenure data provides insights into socio-economic status and informs the role Council plays in the housing market. For example, a high concentration of private renters may indicate a more transient area attractive to young singles and couples, while a concentration of homeowners indicates a more settled area with mature families and empty nesters (Household Summary). Tenure can also reflect built form (Dwelling Type), with a significantly higher share of renters in high density housing and a substantially larger proportion of homeowners in separate houses, although this is not always the case.

City of Darebin – Households (Enumerated)	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Fully owned	17,587	28.5	28.7	+854
Mortgage	17,655	28.6	35.6	+2,495
Renting – Total	22,890	37.0	29.2	+2,158
Renting – Social housing	2,534	4.1	2.3	+62
Renting – Private	20,255	32.8	26.8	+2,112
Renting – Not stated	101	0.2	0.1	-16
Other tenure type	854	1.4	1.6	+29
Not stated	2,824	4.6	4.8	-2,146
Total households	61,810	100.0	100.0	+3,390

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/tenure>).

Children and young people in Darebin are living in households that are likely to be diverse in relation to maternal birthplace, birthplace, ancestry, language spoken at home, and religion.

Maternal birthplace

Information about maternal birthplaces (where someone's mother was born) gives a measure of the number of children and young people raised in families of different cultures and backgrounds, regardless of the birthplace of the child or young person. In 2021, the five most common maternal birthplaces for persons aged 0 to 24 years in Darebin were: Australia (65.5%), China (3.9%), India (3.5%), Vietnam (3.2%) and England (2.6%). (2021 census data analysed by Hayden Brown, City of Greater Dandenong).

Birthplace

In 2021, 31.4% of people in City of Darebin were born overseas, compared with 35.7% in Greater Melbourne. Country of Birth data identifies where people were born and is indicative of the level of cultural diversity in City of Darebin. Residents referred to 112 birth places outside of Australia. The birthplaces with the highest percentages were Italy (3.5% / 5,220), Greece (2.9% / 4,240), United Kingdom (2.7% / 3,981), China (2.6% / 3,868), and India (2.5% / 3,726). Between 2016 and 2021, the number of people born overseas decreased by 2055 or 4.2%. The largest changes in birthplace countries of the population in this area between 2016 and 2021 were for those born in: China (-953 persons), Italy (-910 persons), India (-835 persons), and United Kingdom (+538 persons) (<https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/birthplace>).

Ancestry

The five largest ancestries in City of Darebin in 2021 were English (25.0% / 37,130), Australian (22.2% / 32,926), Italian (13.9% / 20,633), Irish (11.1% / 16,531), and Greek (8.4% / 12,451) (<https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/ancestry>).

Language spoken at home/English proficiency

In 2021, 63.4% (or 94,119) speak English only, 26.5% (or 39,313) speak another language and English well or very well, and 6% (or 8,931) spoke another language and English not well or not at all (<https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/speaks-english>).

Religion

In 2021, the largest religious group was Western (Roman) Catholic (20.9% of all people), while 45.2% of people had no religion and 5.4% did not answer the question on religion (<https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/religion>).

Spotlight on First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

In 2021, there were 1,449 persons in Darebin who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There were 865 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households which comprised couples with children, couples without children, one parent families, other families, group, and lone households. Overall, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and households in Darebin increased from 2016 to 2021. In 2021, 31.6% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were attending an educational institution, of which 18.9% were attending pre-school, primary school, or secondary school.

Service age groups divide the population into age categories that reflect typical life-stages. They indicate the level of demand for services that target people at different stages in life and how that demand is changing. Typically, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations around Australia have a younger age structure than the total population, but age structures vary greatly between areas. As shown below, with regard to total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Darebin:

- 9.2% (or 133) are aged 0 to 4 years
- 10.6% (or 154) are aged 5 to 11 years
- 7.2% (or 105) are aged 12 to 17 years
- 12.8% (or 185) are aged 18 to 24 years

Darebin has an overall lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 0 to 17 years than the Victorian average (27.0% and 37.7% respectively), and a slightly higher proportion of peoples aged 18 to 24 years (12.8% and 12.7% respectively). In addition, 22.1% (or 320) are aged 25 to 34 years and 17.3% (or 250) are aged 35 to 49 years, the age groups within which people are most likely to have children. Darebin has a higher proportion of peoples in these two age groups than the Victorian average (39.4% and 31.1% respectively). Overall, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Darebin increased by 280 from 2016 to 2021.

City of Darebin – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Victoria – First Nations %	
Service age group (years)				
0 to 4	133	9.2	10.7	+10
5 to 11	154	10.6	15.0	+35
12 to 17	105	7.2	12.0	-3
18 to 24	185	12.8	12.7	+3
25 to 34	320	22.1	15.4	+116
35 to 49	250	17.3	15.7	+41
50 to 59	158	10.9	9.2	+31
60 to 64	51	3.5	3.4	+19
65 and over	93	6.4	6.0	+28
Total people	1,449	100.0	100.0	+280

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/first-nations-age-structure>).

Household structure

In Darebin, 17.0% (or 147) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households comprise couples with children and 20.6% (or 178) comprise one parent families. The household and family structure of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population provides insights into the structure of the First Nations community. Across Australia, First Nations households are more likely to be larger families and one parent families, however, this varies from area to area, and it is important to consider populations across geographic benchmarks. Overall, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in Darebin increased by 207 from 2016 to 2021.

City of Darebin – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Victoria – First Nations %	
Households by type				
Couples with children	147	17.0	29.5	+25
Couples without children	164	19.0	19.5	+58
One parent families	178	20.6	25.5	+13
Other families	35	4.0	1.8	+19
Group households	122	14.1	7.0	+13
Lone persons	219	25.3	16.6	+79
Total households	865	100.0	100.0	+207

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/first-nations-households>).

Educational engagement

In 2021, 31.6% (or 456) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are attending an educational institution. This figure includes 3.6% (or 52) in pre-school, 9.8% (or 142 in primary school), and 5.5% (or 80 in secondary school). Overall, the number of attendees at pre-school and primary school increased by 22 and 30 respectively between 2016 and 2021, while secondary school attendees decreased by three.

City of Darebin – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	2021			Change 2016 to 2021
	Number	%	Victoria – First Nations %	
Pre-school	52	3.6	4.0	+22
Primary school	142	9.8	14.5	+30
Secondary school	80	5.5	10.0	-3
TAFE	57	4.0	3.2	+27
University	106	7.4	3.9	+27
Other	19	1.3	1.3	+2
Not attending	953	66.1	59.2	+192
Not stated	33	2.3	3.9	-22
Total people	1,442	100.0	100.0	+275

(Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/darebin/first-nations-education>).

Looking to the future - Darebin population forecasts by age group

Looking towards 2031 and 2041, the number of persons residing in Darebin is forecast to increase, including children and young people.

Looking towards 2031, the resident population is forecast to increase from 150,257 to 189,044 with an increase in the number of persons across all age groupings. As shown below, with regard to the total persons forecast for Darebin:

- 6.4% (or 12,137) will be aged 0 to 4 years
- 7.0% (or 13,291) will be aged 5 to 11 years
- 5.1% (or 9,619) will be aged 12 to 17 years
- 10.0% (or 18,948) will be aged 18 to 24 years

By 2031, it is anticipated that Darebin will have a higher proportion of persons aged 0 to 11 years (increased from 12.3% to 13.4%) and persons aged 18 to 24 years (increased from 8.4% to 10.0%). While there will be a lower proportion of persons aged 12 to 17 years (decreased from 5.6% to 5.1%), there will be a net increase in the number of persons (from 8,353 to 9,619). In addition, it is forecast that 18.4% (or 34,723) will be aged 25 to 34 years and 23.0% (or 43,517) will be aged 35 to 49 years, the age groups within which people are most likely to have children.

City of Darebin - Total persons	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Age group (years)							Number
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	8,122	5.4	12,137	6.4	13,433	6.2	5,311
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	10,386	6.9	13,291	7.0	15,147	7.0	4,761
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	8,353	5.6	9,619	5.1	11,455	5.3	3,102
Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	12,566	8.4	18,948	10.0	20,672	9.6	8,106
Young workforce (25 to 34)	29,339	19.5	34,723	18.4	38,828	18.0	9,489
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	34,476	22.9	43,517	23.0	48,176	22.4	13,699

City of Darebin - Total persons	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	18,344	12.2	19,551	10.3	23,816	11.1	5,472
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	12,642	8.4	15,696	8.3	16,908	7.9	4,266
Seniors (70 to 84)	12,105	8.1	15,816	8.4	19,631	9.1	7,526
Elderly aged (85 and over)	3,924	2.6	5,746	3.0	7,293	3.4	3,370
Total persons	150,257	100.0	189,044	100.0	215,360	100.0	65,103

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>).

Looking towards 2041, the number and proportion (%) of children and young people will continue to vary across areas throughout Darebin. Suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in the number of children and young people between 2021 and 2041 are:

- 0 to 4 years: Preston (West): 1,520, Preston (East): 796, and Northcote (West): 582
- 5 to 9 years: Preston (West): 898, Preston (East): 488, and Reservoir (Oakhill): 388
- 10 to 14 years: Preston (West): 467, Preston (East): 398, and Reservoir (Cheddar): 355
- 15 to 19 years: Preston (West): 870, Preston (East): 561, and Reservoir (Oakhill): 421
- 20 to 24 years: Preston (West): 1,622, Preston (East): 943, and Northcote (West): 543

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 0 to 24 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 5,757 (128.8%)
- Preston (East): 3,383 (67.9%)
- Reservoir (Oakhill): 2,129 (59.5%)
- Northcote (West): 1,996 (73.7%)
- Bundoora-Macleod: 1,757 (64.4%)

City of Darebin (0 to 24 years)	2021		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
City of Darebin	41,980	27.9	64,441	29.9	+22,461	+53.5
Alphington	1,005	31.6	968	28.6	-37	-3.7
Bundoora-Macleod	2,727	38.4	4,484	40.2	+1,757	+64.4
Fairfield	1,616	27.7	2,403	29.3	+788	+48.7
Kingsbury	1,032	29.8	1,492	36.1	+460	+44.5
Northcote (East)	4,225	27.6	5,958	29.6	+1,733	+41.0
Northcote (West)	2,708	26.4	4,704	31.4	+1,996	+73.7
Preston (East)	4,981	27.2	8,364	29.0	+3,383	+67.9
Preston (West)	4,469	27.1	10,226	29.3	+5,757	+128.8
Reservoir (Cheddar)	3,844	26.7	5,120	28.5	+1,276	+33.2
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	3,999	28.6	5,128	27.3	+1,129	+28.2
Reservoir (Merrilands)	2,727	27.9	2,679	26.0	-48	-1.7
Reservoir (Oakhill)	3,578	27.8	5,708	30.4	+2,129	+59.5
Thornbury (East)	2,965	25.8	4,479	31.0	+1,514	+51.1
Thornbury (West)	2,105	27.1	2,727	29.0	+622	+29.5

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 0 to 4 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 1,520
- Preston (East): 796
- Northcote (West): 582
- Northcote (East): 497

- Bundoora-Macleod: 379

City of Darebin (0 to 4 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Alphington	146	4.6	152	4.5	148	4.4	2
Bundoora-Macleod	241	3.4	596	5.8	620	5.6	379
Fairfield	318	5.5	401	5.6	459	5.6	140
Kingsbury	203	5.9	211	5.5	218	5.3	15
Northcote (East)	725	4.7	1,163	6.3	1,222	6.1	497
Northcote (West)	465	4.5	971	7.2	1,047	7.0	582
Preston (East)	971	5.3	1,532	6.4	1,766	6.1	796
Preston (West)	904	5.5	1,890	7.2	2,424	6.9	1,520
Reservoir (Cheddar)	936	6.5	1,126	6.6	1,113	6.2	177
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	926	6.6	1,020	6.3	1,183	6.3	256
Reservoir (Merrilands)	558	5.7	526	5.2	537	5.2	-22
Reservoir (Oakhill)	719	5.6	997	5.9	1,064	5.7	344
Thornbury (East)	653	5.7	952	7.1	1,011	7.0	358
Thornbury (West)	357	4.6	600	6.8	622	6.6	265

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 5 to 9 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 898
- Preston (East): 488
- Reservoir (Oakhill): 388
- Northcote (West): 364
- Bundoora-Macleod: 361

City of Darebin (5 to 9 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Alphington	150	4.7	165	4.9	160	4.7	10
Bundoora-Macleod	294	4.1	621	6.0	655	5.9	361
Fairfield	331	5.7	356	5.0	403	4.9	72
Kingsbury	138	4.0	200	5.2	213	5.1	75
Northcote (East)	779	5.1	1,023	5.6	1,101	5.5	322
Northcote (West)	487	4.7	749	5.5	851	5.7	364
Preston (East)	914	5.0	1,220	5.1	1,402	4.9	488
Preston (West)	853	5.2	1,263	4.8	1,751	5.0	898
Reservoir (Cheddar)	665	4.6	1,037	6.1	1,007	5.6	343
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	820	5.9	771	4.7	879	4.7	59
Reservoir (Merrilands)	467	4.8	430	4.3	450	4.4	-17
Reservoir (Oakhill)	622	4.8	939	5.6	1,010	5.4	388
Thornbury (East)	560	4.9	750	5.6	802	5.6	242
Thornbury (West)	393	5.1	485	5.5	507	5.4	113

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 10 to 14 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 467
- Preston (East): 398
- Reservoir (Cheddar): 355
- Reservoir (Oakhill): 338
- Bundoora-Macleod: 260

City of Darebin (10 to 14 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Alphington	218	6.9	169	5.0	168	5.0	-50
Bundoora-Macleod	351	4.9	528	5.1	611	5.5	260
Fairfield	281	4.8	297	4.1	346	4.2	65
Kingsbury	130	3.7	167	4.3	186	4.5	56
Northcote (East)	869	5.7	796	4.3	972	4.8	103
Northcote (West)	562	5.5	547	4.0	724	4.8	162
Preston (East)	786	4.3	909	3.8	1,184	4.1	398
Preston (West)	836	5.1	831	3.2	1,302	3.7	467
Reservoir (Cheddar)	542	3.8	850	5.0	898	5.0	355
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	720	5.1	661	4.1	732	3.9	12
Reservoir (Merrilands)	464	4.7	462	4.6	458	4.4	-6
Reservoir (Oakhill)	563	4.4	824	4.9	901	4.8	338
Thornbury (East)	500	4.3	548	4.1	661	4.6	161
Thornbury (West)	404	5.2	325	3.7	416	4.4	11

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 15 to 19 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 870
- Preston (East): 561
- Reservoir (Oakhill): 421
- Bundoora-Macleod: 368
- Reservoir (Cheddar): 308

City of Darebin (15 to 19 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Alphington	198	6.2	185	5.5	189	5.6	-9
Bundoora-Macleod	660	9.3	924	8.9	1,028	9.2	368
Fairfield	246	4.2	376	5.2	412	5.0	166
Kingsbury	119	3.4	241	6.2	279	6.7	159
Northcote (East)	733	4.8	839	4.6	965	4.8	232
Northcote (West)	477	4.6	618	4.6	724	4.8	247
Preston (East)	822	4.5	1,134	4.8	1,382	4.8	561
Preston (West)	646	3.9	1,171	4.5	1,515	4.3	870
Reservoir (Cheddar)	530	3.7	709	4.2	838	4.7	308
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	526	3.8	746	4.6	795	4.2	269
Reservoir (Merrilands)	465	4.8	478	4.8	470	4.6	5
Reservoir (Oakhill)	577	4.5	882	5.2	998	5.3	421

City of Darebin (15 to 19 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Thornbury (East)	474	4.1	598	4.5	687	4.8	213
Thornbury (West)	366	4.7	364	4.2	409	4.4	43

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

The suburbs with the greatest forecast increase in persons aged 20 to 24 years between 2021 and 2041 are:

- Preston (West): 1,622
- Preston (East): 943
- Northcote (West): 543
- Reservoir (Oakhill): 531
- Northcote (East): 502

City of Darebin (20 to 24 years)	2021		2031		2041		Change between 2021 and 2041
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Suburb	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Alphington	229	7.2	274	8.1	251	7.4	22
Bundoora-Macleod	1,020	14.4	1,348	13.0	1,366	12.2	346
Fairfield	354	6.1	570	7.9	631	7.7	277
Kingsbury	348	10.0	450	11.6	493	11.9	146
Northcote (East)	853	5.6	1,348	7.3	1,355	6.7	502
Northcote (West)	535	5.2	1,078	8.0	1,078	7.2	543
Preston (East)	1,176	6.4	1,820	7.6	2,118	7.4	943
Preston (West)	970	5.9	2,194	8.4	2,592	7.4	1,622
Reservoir (Cheddar)	920	6.4	932	5.5	1,025	5.7	105
Reservoir (Edwardes Lake)	779	5.6	1,114	6.9	1,226	6.5	447
Reservoir (Merrilands)	637	6.5	611	6.1	621	6.0	-15
Reservoir (Oakhill)	873	6.8	1,306	7.7	1,404	7.5	531
Thornbury (East)	604	5.2	1,007	7.5	1,059	7.3	455
Thornbury (West)	471	6.1	618	7.0	615	6.6	144

(Source: <https://forecast.id.com.au/darebin/population-age-structure>)

