



Safer Cities: Her Way 2

LITHGOW CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER 2026

Walkshops, Survey and Ideas Pinboard Results Summary

www.letstalksevenvalleys.com.au/safer-cities-lithgow
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Pictured (L-R): Robert, Jessica, Almudena, Bruce,
Johanna, Saaskia, Emma, Mayor Coleman, Anjum, Julie.
Photo by: Saaskia Girdler

2026

Safer Cities: Her Way 2

Over \$1 million to spend on Lithgow town centre improvements.

This year Lithgow City Council received \$1 million in funding through Transport for NSW's Safer Cities: Her Way 2 program to support improvements that help women, girls and gender-diverse people feel safer, more comfortable and more confident when moving through the town centre. Council will contribute \$100,000 in co-funding to enable this project, bringing the project total to \$1.1 million. The project particularly focuses on the key arrival corridor between Lithgow Railway Station, Cook Street Plaza and Main Street.

The Safer Cities: Her Way program recognises that perceptions of safety are influenced by more than crime alone. Factors such as lighting, accessibility, maintenance, activity levels, visibility, wayfinding and the overall design of public spaces all contribute to whether people feel comfortable spending time in a place, particularly after dark.

To ensure future improvements respond to community needs and lived experience, Lithgow City Council has undertaken an extensive consultation program, with particular effort made to hear from women, girls, gender-diverse people, young people, people with disability and others who may experience public spaces differently.

The consultation findings will inform the next stage of the project, including a community co-design workshop and the development of a prioritised package of improvements for the town centre.



Consultation

Community Engagement

Council undertook a broad communications and awareness campaign to encourage participation and ensure community members – especially girls, women and gender diverse people – as well as residents, business owners, young people, community organisations, service providers and visitors had multiple opportunities to contribute feedback, ideas and lived experience to help shape future improvements to Lithgow's town centre.



To complement online engagement, Council implemented a multi-channel promotional campaign including:

- Boosted Facebook posts and social media promotion
- Posters and flyers distributed throughout the community
- Radio and print media advertising
- Council and LEEP communication channels
- Direct stakeholder engagement and community networks

The Safer Cities Lithgow 2026 page on Let's Talk Seven Valleys attracted 500+ visits, 39 survey contributors and 16 ideas pinboard contributors, generating 43 individual ideas and suggestions over the consultation period. Online engagement was strongly supported by social media, with Facebook representing the largest source of traffic to the project page, accounting for more than 140 visits (out of 501), with search engines, Council websites and e-news communications also contributing to project awareness.

Consultation at a glance

➔ 100+ community members directly engaged through:

- 🚶 Day Community Walkshop: 11 participants
- 🚶 Night Community Walkshop: 28 participants
- 📋 Survey Responses: 39

- 💡 Online Ideas Pinboard Contributions: 16
- 🎓 Student Engagements: 18
- 🤝 + Targeted consultations with youth workers and LGBTQIA+ community, community organisations and service providers

Photo by Saaskia Girdler.

Key themes

Lighting is the Number 1 Issue



Lighting was consistently identified as the most important safety improvement.

Participants highlighted:

- Poor lighting around Lithgow Railway Station
- Dark sections of Railway Parade
- The pedestrian tunnel
- Laneways and side streets
- Lighting gaps creating uncertainty and feelings of vulnerability
- Flickering or broken lights creating negative perceptions of safety

Young people, service providers and community members all stressed the importance of both functional lighting and decorative lighting that creates a welcoming atmosphere. Suggestions included fairy lights, projected lighting displays and a "Lithgow Lights" style activation program.

Key themes

The station-to-town journey needs improvement

The route between Lithgow Railway Station and Main Street generated the most feedback.

Key concerns included:

- Poor lighting, particularly in the tunnel
- Limited wayfinding
- Accessibility challenges, such as uneven surfaces, no disability toilet, and a lack of mobility and bike parking
- Crossing Railway Parade from the station is difficult for many people
- Lack of visible help points, poor taxi rank visibility and booking system
- General perceptions that the station entrance does not provide a positive first impression or arrival experience
- Anti-social behaviour such as urination in the tunnel

Participants consistently describing this route as a critical gateway that should feel safer, easier to navigate and more welcoming.



Key themes

More activity means more safety

A recurring message was that active places feel safer places.

Community members suggested:

- More outdoor dining and evening cafes
- Longer trading hours
- Twilight entertainment + opportunities to gather after business hours, live music
- Markets and events, pop-up retail, fresh food options
- Performance spaces for busking and performances
- Café activation in Cook Street Plaza
- Better use of vacant shopfronts, such as for social enterprises
- Children's activities

Participants frequently linked increased activity with improved passive surveillance, more "eyes on the street" and stronger perceptions of personal safety.



Key themes

Better wayfinding information



Many community members reported difficulty navigating the town centre.

Suggestions included:

- Wayfinder maps
- Directional signage
- QR codes
- Visitor information
- Digital noticeboards
- Formal walking routes
- Better information about transport, services and attractions

Young people specifically suggested improved promotion of local services and events through community noticeboards and social media channels including TikTok and Facebook.



Key themes

Public art, murals and identity

Public art featured strongly across every consultation theme.

Ideas included:

- Community murals
- Storytelling murals celebrating Lithgow
- Street art trails
- Laneway activation
- Art reflecting local identity
- Creative lighting installations
- Also celebrate natural beauty including flowers and trees = greener streetscapes

There was strong support for projects that create local pride while improving perceptions of safety through activity and beautification.



*Pictured (L-R):
Joy, Toni, Wendy,
Brett, Rebekah,
and Saaskia.
Photo by
Saaskia Girdler.*



Key themes

Accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility concerns were raised across multiple groups.

Key issues included:

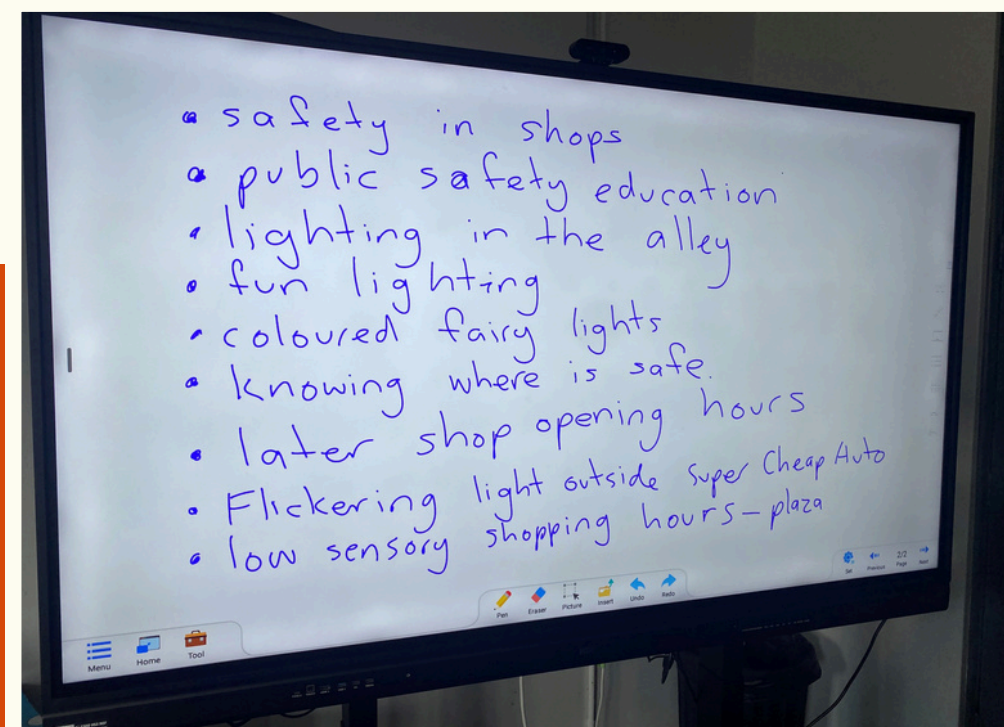
- Pram and wheelchair access
- Mobility access between the railway station and town centre
- Uneven surfaces
- Safer pedestrian crossings and crossing safety issues, particularly Railway Parade
- Availability of seating and lack of handrails
- Lack of disability toilets and mobility parking spaces at the station

Participants were particularly interested in creating spaces that are safe and welcoming for everyone regardless of age, ability, background or identity.

Pictured: Lithgow residents Emily, Gilbert and Brendan.

Youth consultation themes

Students were particularly interested in visibility and belonging, noting that knowing where safe spaces exist is just as important as improving physical infrastructure.



Rainbow Skittles Group, Lithgow High School

Students identified:

- Lighting as the most important safety intervention
- Better information sharing and wayfinding
- Inclusive signage and messaging
- Low-sensory shopping periods
- Later opening hours
- Better crossing safety
- Safe spaces for young people after school



Proposal

Copper Wings Project

Lithgow High School Rainbow Skittles Group Proposed Student-led Inclusivity Project

One of the most innovative ideas identified through the youth consultation was the Copper Wings Project. The proposal centres on creating a Purple Copper Wing Butterfly-inspired design to be used as a symbol of belonging, inclusion and safety throughout Lithgow.

Potential elements include:

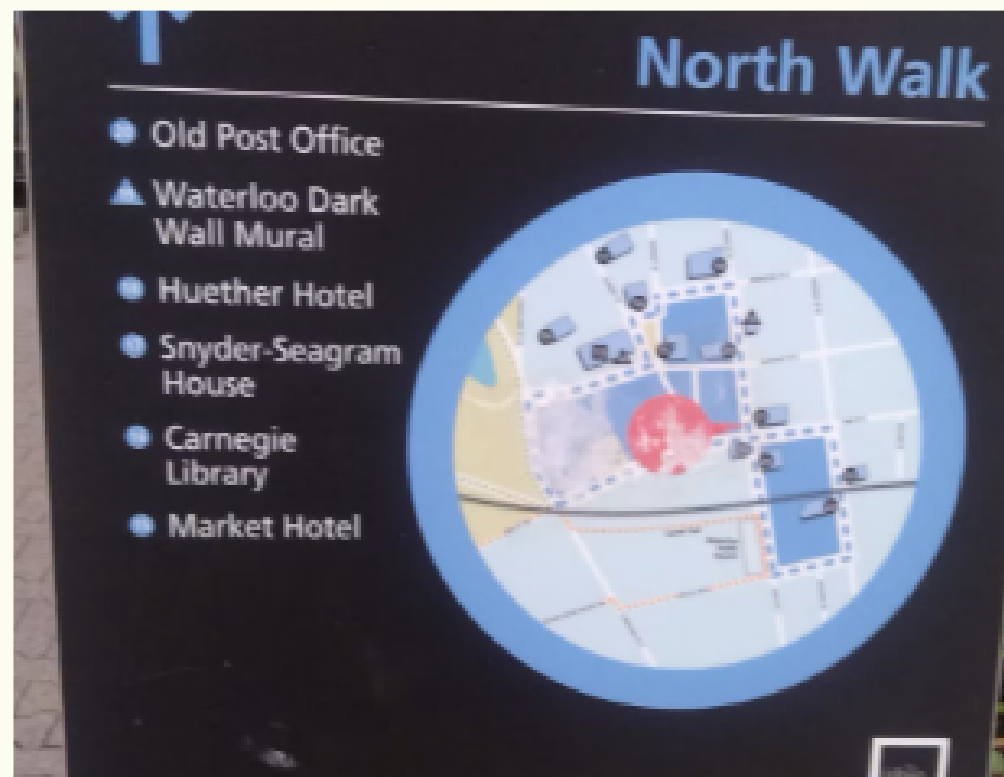
- Business window decals identifying welcoming spaces
- Badges and pins worn by staff
- Public posters
- A QR-code trail connecting stories of inclusion
- A community mural celebrating diversity

Students proposed the Copper Wings symbol could be created through a co-design workshop with a local artist, followed by a public mural painting workshop involving young people.

The concept strongly aligns with broader consultation themes around visibility, belonging, welcoming environments and helping people identify safe places within the town centre.

Online Ideas Pinboard

Outdoor seating and dining, flowers and trees, directional signage, lighting improvements and projections, and more!



Social media

Social media feedback

Feedback received through Council's social media channels aligned closely with the themes identified through other feedback channels.

Community members expressed strong support for improvements to lighting, wayfinding, public art, landscaping and activation of public spaces. There was also strong support for additional outdoor dining opportunities, improved connectivity between the railway station and Main Street, and increased activation of Cook Street Plaza.

Accessibility was another key theme, with calls for more seating, safer pedestrian crossings, effective taxi services and better information for visitors. Several contributions suggested that colourful public art, lighting installations and community-led projects could help strengthen Lithgow's identity while creating a more welcoming, vibrant and inclusive town centre for residents and visitors alike.

 **Lithgow Emerging Economy Plan - LEEP**
24 August · 🌐

How comfortable, confident and welcome do you feel walking between Lithgow Railway Station and Main Street during the day? What about after dark?
We're inviting the community, particularly women, girls and gender diverse people, to help identify opportunities to improve perceptions of safety, lighting, wayfinding, accessibility, public spaces and overall comfort throughout the town centre.
You can get involved by:

- ✓ Completing the community survey
- ✓ Adding ideas to the online pinboard
- ✓ Joining a day or night community walkshop

Consultation is now open and runs through September: www.letstalksevenvalleys.com.au/safer-cities-lithgow
This project is proudly funded by the NSW Government, through Transport for NSW's Safer Cities: Her Way program. [See less](#)



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Safer Cities Lithgow 2026

[Learn more](#)

CPTED workshop

As part of the Safer Cities: Her Way project, Lithgow City Council hosted a three-day Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) workshop delivered by Local Government NSW.

A total of 10 Council staff participated in the training, which included a practical site assessment component for Lithgow Railway Station, the station-to-town centre connection, and Cook Street Plaza. The assessment findings aligned with the themes emerging from the broader community consultation program, particularly around activation, wayfinding, public art, amenity and creating safer, more welcoming public spaces.



Applying CPTED principles, participants identified several opportunities to improve safety, comfort and activation within the town centre, including:

- Improved wayfinding and directional signage
- Murals on blank facades and cleaning or repainting of building frontages
- Additional drinking water stations
- More shaded seating and improved organisation of public spaces
- Development of a street activation policy and guidance to support business activity and economic development
- Introduction of play and recreation elements
- Review / rationalisation of lighting and street furniture

Practical improvements

The consultation identified the following practical improvements to existing infrastructure:

Lighting & Maintenance

- Repair flickering light outside Supercheap Auto.
- Repair broken lighting in and around the railway station.
- Remove overgrown vegetation creating concealment opportunities along Railway Parade.
- Pressure wash and clean-up of Main Street shops where required
- Awning/shopfront canopy touch-ups where required
- Policy development and guidance for local businesses

Railway Station

- Repair non-functioning taxi call button.
- Investigate help/emergency button provision on station approaches.

Wayfinding and public realm

- Update outdated or difficult-to-see alcohol-free zone signage.
- Graffiti removal where required.



Next steps

Co-design workshop

Turning ideas into action at the co-design workshop on 17 October, 2026.

The next stage of the project is a community co-design workshop on 17 October 2026, bringing together community members to transform consultation findings into a shared vision and prioritised package of improvements for Lithgow's town centre. Building on feedback gathered through surveys, walkshops, youth engagement, stakeholder consultations, the online ideas pinboard and CPTED assessments, participants will work collaboratively to explore practical solutions for the station-to-town centre corridor.



Rather than revisiting the issues already identified, the workshop will focus on what should happen next: determining which interventions will have the greatest impact, where they should be located, and how they can work together to create a safer, more welcoming and accessible town centre. Participants will help develop a concept for key locations including Lithgow Railway Station, the tunnel and Railway Parade connection, Cook Street Plaza, Main Street and surrounding laneways.

The workshop will produce a prioritised set of community-supported initiatives that can move into design development, feasibility testing and broader community validation in November 2026.

Conclusion

The consultation clearly demonstrates that the community sees safety as about much more than crime prevention alone. Participants consistently described safety as being closely linked to lighting, activity, accessibility, maintenance, inclusion and belonging.

Across all consultation streams, there was a strong desire for a town centre that is:

- Better lit
- More active
- Easier to navigate
- More accessible
- More welcoming
- Rich in local identity
- Supportive of community connection

Perhaps the clearest message emerging from the engagement is that people want a town centre where they feel comfortable spending time, not simply passing through. Creating opportunities for people to gather, connect, participate and belong appears just as important as physical infrastructure improvements in shaping perceptions of safety across Lithgow's town centre.

