

Survey reveals how the west has won

BY TARA MURRAY

FOOTSCRAY is leading the charge as a number of Maribyrnong suburbs make big gains in the ranking of Melbourne's most liveable suburbs.

A 'Liveable Melbourne' study, compiled for *The Age Melbourne Magazine*, assessed 314 suburbs on 14 indicators of 'liveability', including shopping centres, schools and beaches, public transport, crime rates, cafes and restaurants, roads and open spaces.

Footscray was ranked the 37th-most-liveable city in the study, up seven spots from its listing in a 2005 survey.

Yarraville, ranked 58th, jumped 30 spots. Seddon (49), West Footscray (55), Kingsville (91) and Maribyrnong (119) are all up by more than 25 places.

Maidstone, which is ranked 153th, had the biggest gain, rising 109 places from its 2005 listing.

Adam Terrill, of Tract Consultants and Deloitte Access Economics, which conducted the study, said Maribyrnong was no longer seen as an industrial heartland.

"Negative perceptions have always held the inner west back, but what this



The place to be: Ben Coyte and Kelly Hilton enjoy coffee in Footscray.

Picture: Scott McNaughton

survey shows is that when you strip away the suburban prejudice, it has many — if not most — of the elements of a very liveable place, rivalling the inner east.

"It's close to the CBD, has good public transport, and is strong on

cafes, restaurants and shops." Aberfeldie (14) has replaced Williamstown as the most liveable suburb in Melbourne's north-west.

Overall, South Yarra remains Melbourne's number one suburb.

Footscray cafe owner Nani Osman-

Phomas said she moved her shop, Oliveissance, to Footscray because of its diversity. "It's colourful, interesting, very diverse and certainly not boring. I'm not surprised [it has risen on the list]. I've lived here for 20 years and it's gone from strength to strength."

Melbourne liveability index

Top five suburbs

	Rank	Change
Aberfeldie	14	▲ 28
Footscray	36	▲ 20
Williamstown	40	▼ 12
Newport	42	▲ 12
Flemington	44	▲ 29

Bottom five suburbs

	Rank	Change
Sunshine North	312	▼ 14
Keilor Lodge	311	▲ 3
Campbellfield	310	▼ 5
Sydenham	307	▼ 1
Craigieburn	306	▼ 9

Biggest movers

	Rank	Change
Maidstone	153	▲ 109
Seabrook	163	▲ 68
Pascoe Vale South	114	▲ 65
Ardeer	244	▼ 79
Westmeadows	234	▼ 40

* 314 suburbs across Melbourne were surveyed for the study. Lists only include northern and western suburbs.

Manager of the Dancing Dog Cafe Ben Coyle agrees. His cafe, in the middle of Footscray, has been selling 'I love Footscray' T-shirts for eight years.

■ The full list of west and north-west suburb rankings is at hobsonsbayweekly.com.au