

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the project is to respond to a group of community members in the Willunga area who have concerns that Council and community service providers are not attending to the needs of the local community.

The outcome of the project is a report that provides an analysis of the strengths, assets and needs within the Willunga community, and gives recommendations for future action.

The Willunga District and Township is home to a culturally homogenous community with a large sector of high socio-economic groups and a small but growing sector of medium to lowest income range. This growth could be attributed to the increase in lone-person households and one-parent family households. The dominant household type however, is a couple with children 15 years and under. Home ownership is high, unemployment is relatively low and educational levels are high with strong labour force attachment, therefore commensurate levels of human capital.

With the District and Township having considerable economic and community resources, there is a strong volunteering and 'can do' mentality and capacity. It is therefore a district providing a particular lifestyle to those commuting to Adelaide for work, to artists, and to those who have significant environment, agricultural and farming interests.

The strength of the Willunga community is the range of people and groups with considerable skill and capacity to volunteer time and resources to community programmes. The assets are the local schools, festivals, markets and industries along with the physical assets of the Township.

The Willunga Township supports a number of government and community activities. Schooling is supported by the State Government run District High School and Primary School, along with the privately run Willunga Waldorf School. The City of Onkaparinga runs a Library service within the centre of the Town. Landcare run a substantial environment awareness recourse centre with plans to broaden and develop their community information service. There are a broad range of religious and belief services and sport and leisure activities. This clearly has been strongly identified throughout the community consultations.

Community consultation has given strong endorsement to the development of a community focus on areas of social and community development. Common to the majority of discussions within the consultation was a need to develop the social connections of the community. Community consultation was based around meeting on a one-to-one basis with various agencies, interest groups and community members. Followed by a community consultation forum. The approach of the consultation was an agreed to by Council and the community groups. That is, that a strengths/assets based approach be utilised rather than a need based analysis.

Community members highlight youth as a problem as they have nowhere to go but a highly visible public space. Other population groups, such as, families and elderly were identified within the consultation as having a more hidden need and therefore requiring a different set of strategies and support structures. At the moment the community feels as though it operates as a set of different parts, albeit strong identifiable parts, rather than having a connecting set of strengths. The community is perceived to be growing with no means, other than sport or churches to connect people, and the development of a more inclusive, supporting and welcoming community. Community members need to travel to Aldinga, Seaford and Noarlunga for such supports and programmes.

The Primary and Secondary schools support a need for broadening the reach of community supports. The Primary School has identified considerable movement into the town of young families. The Secondary School has identified a school and community need, and will be refurbishing part of the schools facilities to develop a broader learning capacity through a model of school and community partnership. As a result of this project a partnership between school and community has commenced.

The Willunga Community Group has rightly recognised the need for a social and community development programme, along with a focus on vocational training. This has been strongly supported by the consultation. What has not been clear of established within this project is the extent of programming that will be needed. It has been recommended that a Community Development Officer be available for the Willunga Community Group to assist in the development of a community plan and in gaining broader participation and commitment from the Willunga community. The Willunga Community Group's local knowledge and networking will be a critical factor in gaining the confidence and support of the broader community.