

Birdwood Community Forum

24 August 2026, Birdwood Institute
Community Forum Summary Report



Adelaide Hills
COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional Country of the Peramangk and Kaurna people. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders past and present as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land for they hold the memories, traditions, spiritual relationships, culture and hopes of the First Nations of Australia. We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kaurna culture and traditions are sustained, valued and continuing.

Purpose

Community Forums are held throughout the year in community facilities around the Hills. They provide an opportunity for council and local residents to communicate directly with each other about emerging issues, services and council initiatives.

Forums are an opportunity for:

- Council and local residents to communicate with each other.
- Hearing about activities being undertaken by local community groups and organisations.
- Finding out about our latest council projects and updates.

Our most recent Community Forum was held in Birdwood and had a focus on Bringing Council and Community Together.

- Location: Birdwood Institute - 44 Shannon St, Birdwood
- Date: Monday 24 August 2026
- Time: 6pm to 8pm



Bringing Council and Community Together

The forum included a range of presentations and discussions from council representatives, community and sector leaders. We began the evening with an opportunity to connect with each other and have a bite to eat.

Presentations kicked off at 6.30pm and we heard from the following presenters:

- Mayor Nathan Daniell:
 - Provided an update on Council's final Annual Business Plan 2026-27 and the changes that were made following community engagement.
 - Spoke about some of the capital works that will occur around Birdwood, Gumeracha and surrounding townships during the 2026-27 FY.
 - Explained the strategic asset planning and land management project council are undertaking during 2026-27.
 - Shared information and images around the upcoming new signage for stage 4 of the Amy Gillett Bikeway.
 - Provided an update on dates for next Council Elections which have now been postponed until April 2027.
- Matt Parkin, President of Birdwood Park and Sporting Clubs Association Inc:
 - Touched on the history of the Birdwood Park site.
 - Spoke about the committee and their valued volunteers and amazing commitment to the community.
 - Discussed what is on the horizon for the association, including the pending commencement of a critical facility and infrastructure strategic masterplan.
 - Shared that the park will be hosting the 2028 Supreme Australian working dog Championship
 - Shared some of the difficulties clubs and associations face managing increasing costs for ground maintenance and facility redevelopment and some of the ideas the association is investigating to bring more/new income into the site.
- Carol Moore, local cycling enthusiast and member of the Birdwood Cycling group:
 - Discussed how what began as a single feasibility study has grown into one of the Adelaide Hills' most valued shared spaces — Amy Gillett Bikeway.
 - Today, the multiuse Amy Gillett Bikeway welcomes walkers, runners, riders (bikes and horses) and families every day, offering safe, scenic

escape from the road and a genuine boost to the health, connection and prosperity of our community.

- Shared ideas for future enhancement and extensions of the bikeway and how these works could support local businesses and surrounding townships / communities.
- Jean Colquhoun, Secretary of Friends of Birdwood Institute:
 - Shared some of the history of the institute and the different functions and events it had hosted over the years.
 - Explained the role that the Friends of Birdwood Institute see the building playing in the community now and into the future.
 - Shared that the hall is available for hire for a range of different functions, programs and events and ready to be utilised by the community.
- Karli Hull, Team Leader Community Centres at Adelaide Hills Council:
 - Talked about the programs offered through the Torrens Valley Community Centre and The Summit Community Centre.
 - Shared how community priorities and requests shape the programming offered at our centres.
 - Spoke about the volunteering opportunities available across council and specifically around the Birdwood area and the benefits of volunteering.
 - Shared information about council's new partnership with the Spark project through University of Adelaide. The project focuses on addressing social isolation and the loneliness epidemic through engaging activities.
- Eliza Loechel from the United Church Food Pantry:
 - Shared information about the food pantry that runs from the United Church in Birdwood, including the various support the pantry offers.
 - Spoke about how the need for the service has significantly grown and how this has required the church to expand the space they are using for the pantry.
 - Shared how the pantry is open to anyone who needs support whether it be a one off or on an ongoing basis and that everyone is welcome to access the service without any judgement.
- Bruno Davids, Manager of the National Motor Museum:
 - Shared information about the location and history of the museum and the role it plays in the community.
 - Spoke about how the museum would like to get more involved in the community and community activities.
 - Shared information about the upcoming RAA Bay to Birdwood event.
 - Invited community members to come down and visit the National Motor Museum.

Following presentations, there was a 45-minute breakout session where participants could speak to presenters, staff and Elected Members about the presentation topics, share their ideas and feedback around council engagement opportunities and discuss local ideas and issues.

You can view a summary of what we heard and what was discussed below.

A copy of the community forum presentations can be found on [Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub](#).

Summary of what we heard

Community members participated in a range of engagement activities with council staff and Elected Members at the forum. Feedback has been categorised into topics and themes and summarised below.

All things Birdwood and Surrounds

Support for small businesses

What support does council have available?

Council feedback

Council has a Coordinator Activation and Economy who works with businesses across our region and we'd be happy to connect you with her.

Anna Del Rio

Coordinator Activation and Economy

adelrio@ahc.sa.gov.au

Idea for a fundraising event at Birdwood Institute

- An event that celebrates the history of the institute and raises money for the community / hall.
- It could be a ball or themed event linked to historic events / activities held at the hall.
- Could it link with the Birdwood National Motor Museum linking in cars from that era as well?

Council feedback

Council offers support for community events whether it is through assistance with administration of the event e.g. risk requirements, extra waste support. We also offer small grants to support community events. Council has an Events and Grants Officer.

AHC Community Grant Funding Programs - www.ahc.sa.gov.au/community/community-grants

AHC Support for Community Events - www.ahc.sa.gov.au/services/support-for-community-events

Steph Pongraz
Events and Grants Officer
spongraz@ahc.sa.gov.au

Fencing issues at Rex Amber Reserve

- There is an informal dog park in Birdwood (Rex Amber Reserve) next to the Lutheran Church and due to issues / damage to the reserve fence, dogs are getting out of the park and into private property and the cemetery.
- Could council consider repairing the fencing to reduce some of these issues?

Council feedback

Staff explained that there is a team that regularly repairs fences at different reserves around the council region and that they could have a look at this location. The best way to notify staff about any damage / repairs required is to submit a customer service request on our website or by calling council.

Submitting an AHC service request - <https://my.ahc.sa.gov.au/s/>

Gorse weeds along fire track

Concern about increasing gorse weeds growing within the fire track along the Torrens. Previously there had been a program to remove / reduce the gorse but this has since stopped and now the area is overgrown with gorse. Private residents have a responsibility to remove gorse weed on their properties.

Council feedback

Staff explained that there is a Landscapes SA program to target key areas of weeds as determined under a state priority process. This area was targeted a few years ago. Council's Manager Open Space said council staff could follow this up and provide an update to the resident.

Landscapes SA Hills and Fleurieu - <https://hf.landscape.sa.gov.au/>

Connecting with Council – Disability Support Service Provider

Representative of a Birdwood disability support organisation would like to connect with council to discuss any opportunities to work together.

Council feedback

During Term 4 (Oct to Dec) there will be fortnightly Community Outreach Services meeting in the Gumeracha Library foyer on Mondays from 10am - 12pm. This will be in collaboration with multiple services and led by Michelle Busto Regional Coordinator with Community Connection Program.

Staff will share contact details of the resident with Council's Inclusion and Wellbeing Officer, so that they can make a time to meet and discuss opportunities to work together and share Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Yve Cole

Inclusion and Wellbeing Officer

ycole@ahc.sa.gov.au

Town Boundaries

- How are these decided / changed?
- As it stands properties just outside of township boundaries must comply with rural property rules around what they can do on the land even if they are not a primary producer.
- New housing opportunities in Birdwood are non-existent. If the township boundary was increased this would allow for some subdivision and new low-density housing.
- There are no opportunities for young people to buy in Birdwood and stay in the area and keep the community thriving.
- It is important to have growth opportunities.
- Currently you can't rent or buy in the township.

Council Response:

Staff explained that the Region and Place team are currently undertaking a project called Our Homes in the Hills which is around creating a Township Precinct Plan and Local Area Housing Plan and that they would be really interested in speaking to residents about this project and their ideas and concerns.

[Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub - engage.ahc.sa.gov.au/our-homes-hills](https://engage.ahc.sa.gov.au/our-homes-hills)

James Szabo

Manager Region and Place

jszabo@ahc.sa.gov.au

Community Centres and Libraries

Opening Hours and Programing Times

- Some community members would like to be more involved in the community, but it can be tricky when you are a parent and working.
- Opening hours of community centres and libraries can be restrictive.
- Previously there was a cooking program in the evening at Torrens Valley Community Centre which was great to attend. It would be great to have more out of hours activities even once a week or once a month – art, cooking etc.
- Mobile library – does it come out to Birdwood, and would it be possible to come out in the evening?

Council feedback

Feedback on our opening hours / program offering is appreciated and acknowledged. Opening hours for Libraries were reviewed in 2023 with changes made based on utilisation patterns and community consultation. While opening hours and program offerings at Libraries / Community Centres need to be provided within funding and resourcing limits, we endeavour to provide a range of activities across days / times of the week.

Community centre programs aim to include some 'out of hours' workshops or events each term, e.g. after 6pm during the week or on a Saturday. Our most recent July to September program included 9 sessions held out of hours, 1 being a 5-week series and both community centres have a yoga class out of hours to enable those who work to attend. We welcome further feedback on days and times that suit the community via our online form

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/zHJzEcyieb?origin=lprLink>

The Mobile Library visits Birdwood every four weeks on a Thursday, from 12-1pm on Shannon Street near the Post Office. The Mobile Library is not currently able to provide evening stops. We also stop at Kersbrook and Mount Torrens. Our timetable is available here: [Home Service and Mobile Library • Adelaide Hills Council](#)

Spark Project

- Referral from food service
- Opportunities:
 - Walking group
 - Conversation / chats in partnership with community services

- Looking at opportunities with food service / bank to come along in term 4's planned community services drop-in sessions. Emails exchanged.
- Food production at TVCC community garden – cross promote.

Council feedback

Spark Project - Adelaide Hills Council are teaming up with Spark to create new community-led initiatives to intentionally address loneliness.

1 in 3 Australian's report that they experience loneliness, and it has been declared by the World Health Organisation as a global health epidemic.

We're working in partnership to spark new initiatives in this region. Whilst community and volunteer led in the activity, we are looking to commence with a new café conversation group and walking group but will be guided by the energy of the volunteers we hope to recruit soon.

There will be two information sessions to gauge interest and provide more information about Spark. Tuesday 3rd November at The Summit Community Centre and Thursday 12th November 11.30am - 12.15pm. Contact Karli for more information 0456 803 533.

Amy Gillett Bikeway

Next stages of Amy Gillett Bikeway

- Barossa
- Mount Pleasant
- Working on Australian Government Grant
- Exploring other links – funding pathways
- Navigating timing

Links into towns?

- Scoping for future works and nodes – facilities to improve experience
- Lavender Trail link

Discover Play Pathway date recommended:

- October long weekend
- Easter long weekend

New Amy Gillett Signage and Artworks

- More pink to link in with Amy Gillett brand
- Horse manure signage – pick up your horse manure

Optimising Our Community Land and Assets

RV Facilities

- Birdwood Park is looking at RV Facilities as an option in the masterplan they are undertaking.
- Caravan Park facilities in AHC / camping Silver Lake Road
- Currently camping options are limited and it would be great to have camping available for Amy Gillett Bikeway users.

Barossa Council Grant Funding

- Match if community groups find / success in other grant applications.
- Built into council financial plan.

Council feedback

Council is undertaking some important projects during the 2026-27 FY to put the structure in place to allow us to plan for future spending on sporting, recreation and community infrastructure. We anticipate this work will allow us to identify the way forward regarding the management, maintenance and renewal of our recreation assets and provide a priority list of projects for council to concentrate our focus on.

Next Steps

Feedback and ideas discussed during the forum will be shared with Elected Members and staff across council to be consider for integration into upcoming works and future planning, including:

- Future community centre and library programming and volunteering opportunities.
- Development of the Our Homes in the Hills integrated planning project.
- Finalisation of new artworks and signage for stage 4 of Amy Gillett Bikeway.
- Planning for future community forums and activities.
- Supporting the development of our draft 2027/28 Annual Business Plan and draft Long-Term Financial Plan.
- Ongoing works and maintenance around Birdwood and the wider council area.

Thank you

We would like to say a big thank you to our presenters from Birdwood Park and Sporting Clubs Assoc, Birdwood Cycling Group, Friends of Birdwood Institute, The Birdwood Food Pantry and the Birdwood National Motor Museum. Thank you to Friends of Birdwood Institute for hosting us and to Tony Two Times for providing our delicious catering.

Thank you very much to all participants for getting involved in this community forum. We had a great time meeting with community members and hearing about your ideas, experiences and interests. We appreciate your feedback, and we look forward to seeing you at the next one





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