

Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

Community Engagement Outcomes Report

September 2025



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1. Introduction

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The Gumeracha Opportunity Shop (Op Shop) is owned and operated by the Adelaide Hills Council (AHC) in a small standalone building originally built with funds raised by the local Country Women's Association. The Op Shop commenced trading prior to the formation of AHC in 1997 and was first established to meet a local need in the community at a time when this type of alternative shopping offering was limited.

In June 2025, BRM Advisory were engaged to undertake the Service Review of the Gumeracha Op Shop, and a detailed report of their investigations is available as part of the 26 August Council Meeting Agenda. The Service Review has considered the rationale and long-term viability of the Op Shop by examining matters that include:

- trends in community demand, competition, and demographic shifts
- alignment of the service with AHC's strategic priorities and objectives
- financial performance
- WHS issues and building condition
- current and future resource requirements
- challenges and opportunities

Following the service review, four possible options for the future of the Gumeracha Op Shop were presented to Council. At the Council Meeting held on 26 August 2025, Council resolved to undertake a community engagement process guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum, with volunteers and key stakeholders around the ongoing operation or cessation of the service and transition plan, should it be required.

During September, we invited feedback from key stakeholders and local residents about the Op Shop service review and future of the service.

We are currently working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand their feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the future of the Op Shop considering, use of Council resources, staff time and the building the Gumeracha Op Shop currently operates from. This report presents feedback received during the engagement period and will be presented to Council and made available to those who participated in the consultation on Council's Engagement Platform.

We received a total of 31 formal feedback responses regarding the potential future options for the Op Shop and the use of council resources. Of these:

- 30 responses were submitted via the online and hardcopy feedback forms.
- 1 response was received via email.

In addition to the formal feedback, we held drop-in sessions attended by 17 community members, as well as stakeholder meetings/discussions with 20 participants. While many of the attendees had already submitted formal feedback, these sessions provided valuable

opportunities for in-depth conversations and allowed us to explore specific concerns in greater detail.

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Together, the formal feedback and face-to-face engagement helped us develop a strong understanding of the key themes and priorities emerging from the community.

2. Summary of Engagement

Engagement approach

The purpose of the engagement was to assist us to understand our community's level feedback about the service review undertaken on the Gumeracha Op Shop and community interest in the continuation of the service or diversion of resources to other community initiatives within the Gumeracha area.

Community engagement was not legislatively required for this engagement under the Local Government Act 1999, however community consultation was a stipulation of the Council motion endorsed at the Meeting on 26 August 2025. A community engagement plan was developed, and community engagement with key stakeholders and local residents between 27 August and 26 September 2025.

Our engagement approach aimed to provide detail about the history and current condition of the Op Shop and share details about the service review undertaken and possible future options for the service and building.

Questions were asked to determine participants feedback on the four options presented in the August Council Report, community preference for how Council prioritises resources and any additional feedback or comments. A feedback form was developed and provided online and in hardcopy format. It contained both closed and open style questions.

Feedback could be provided via any of the following options:

- Online submission form on Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub
- Email to engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
- Mail to Community Engagement Coordinator, 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152
- Phone 8408 0400
- Hardcopy feedback forms available from AHC Library / Customer Service Centre at Gumeracha
- Attending a community drop-in session at the Gumeracha Library / Torrens Valley Community Centre
- Meetings arranged with volunteers and key stakeholders

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted through the following channels:

- Adelaide Hills Community Engagement Hub Page
- Email to key community stakeholders
- Email to Elected Members to share
- Meetings / discussions held with key stakeholders
- Drop-in sessions at the Gumeracha Civic Centre / Library
- Posters, hardcopy information and feedback forms available at Customer Service Centres and Library at Gumeracha.

A copy of information provided on Council's Engagement Platform and feedback form is available in Appendix A.

All verbatim online feedback responses are provided in Appendix B.

All written submissions (emails and letters) are provided in Appendix C.

All e-newsletters, advertisements and social media posts are provided in Appendix D.

3. Participants

This section provides details about participation during the engagement period and demographic information about respondents.

Participation source

The following table displays how participants provided feedback or were involved in discussions, during the engagement period.

Table 2 Participation Source

Formal submissions	Number Participating
Online submissions	13
Hardcopy submissions	17
Written response – email, letter	1
Total formal submissions	31
Informal submissions / discussions	Number Participating
Drop-in sessions	17

Stakeholder meetings and conversations	20
Total informal participants	37
Total participation across all streams, with duplicates removed	56

Participation characteristics

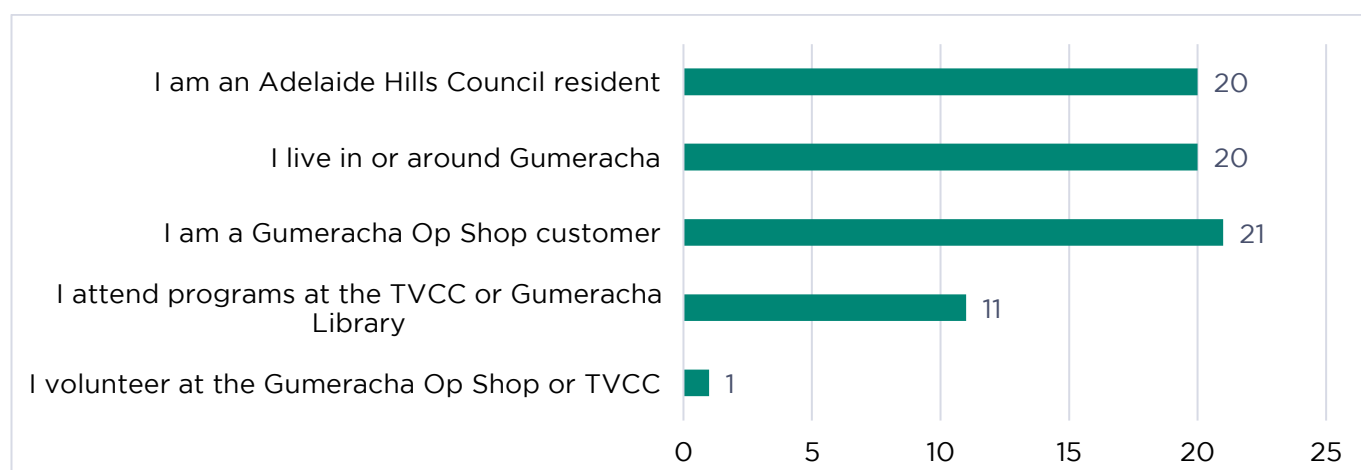
Table 3 Participant Suburbs - formal engagement contributors (survey and email)

Suburb / Township	No. of Respondents	% of Participants
Gumeracha	10	32.3%
Birdwood	6	19.4%
Mount Pleasant	3	9.7%
Mount Torrens	1	3.2%
Paracombe	1	3.2%
Houghton	1	3.2%
Inglewood	1	3.2%
Kenton Valley	1	3.2%
Kersbrook	1	3.2%
Lobethal	1	3.2%
Other suburbs outside of AHC: Adelaide, Highbury, Lockleys, Loxton, Stockwell	5	16.1%
Total	No. 31	100%

Table 4 **Participant Suburbs – engagement participants across all engagement streams**

Suburb / Township	No. of Respondents	% of Participants
Gumeracha	15	26.8%
Birdwood	12	21.4%
Mount Pleasant	4	7.1%
Forreston	3	5.4%
Mount Torrens	2	3.6%
Paracombe	2	3.6%
Houghton	2	3.6%
Inglewood	1	1.8%
Kenton Valley	1	1.8%
Kersbrook	1	1.8%
Lobethal	1	1.8%
Cudlee Creek	1	1.8%
Other suburbs outside of AHC: Adelaide, Highbury, Kongolia, Lockleys, Loxton, Stockwell	6	10.7%
Unknown	5	8.9%
Total	No. 56	100%

Chart/graph 1: Respondents' connection to the Gumeracha Op Shop and Adelaide Hills Council area



4. Online and Hardcopy Feedback

Participants' feedback about the Op Shop review and four options for the future of the service presented to Council

Participants were provided with an overview of the Gumeracha Op Shop service review and future service options presented to Council at the 26 August 2025 Council meeting:

1. Cease operation and consider future building options
2. Maintain current operation
3. Continue operations with additional resourcing
4. Expression of interest process

Participants were then asked if they had any feedback they would like to provide. 28 respondents chose to provide comments, and the themes of these comments can be seen in the table below. Verbatim responses can be viewed in Appendix B.

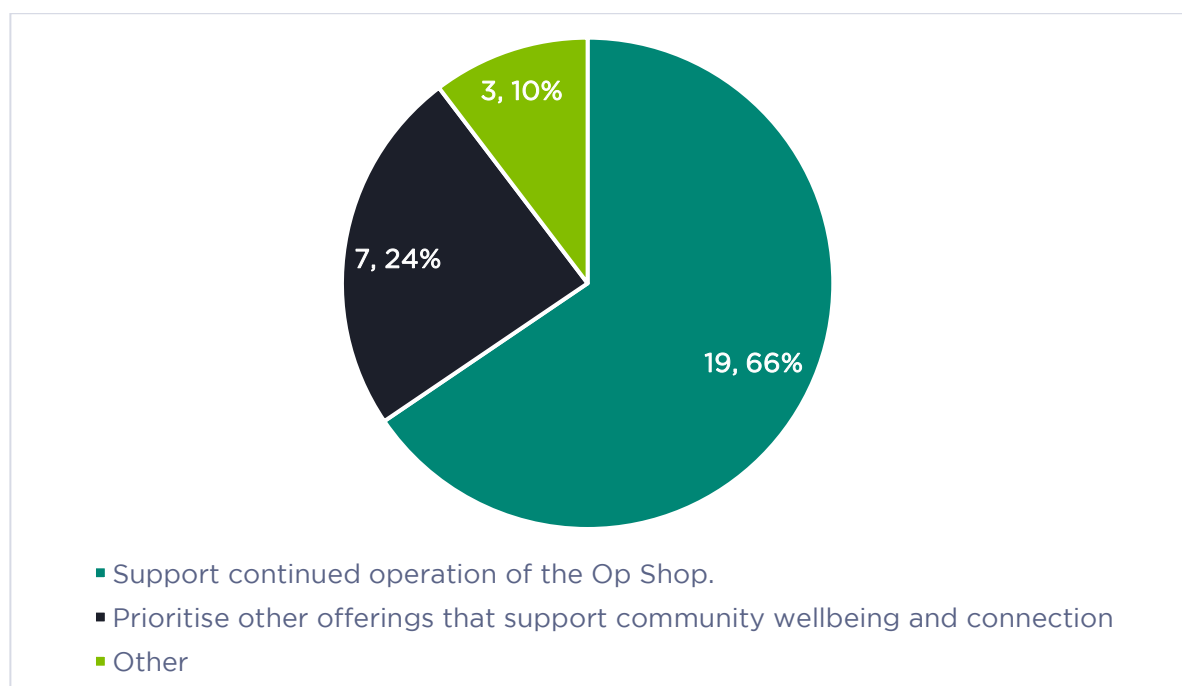
Theme/s	No. of Respondents
The Op Shop is a valued community resource / service	12
Support for exploration into other service models	4
Remove staff / council from service operation / management	4
Concerns about the effect on volunteers / volunteer opportunities / treatment of volunteers	4

Social value of Op Shop	4
Support council going out to an expression of interest for a community group to take over running of service	3
Op Shop is in the right / best location, community hub, supporting amenities	3
Increase hours of operation / open on weekends	3
Maintain / increase current service	3
Need for more community services in the Gumeracha area / concern about reduction of local services	3
Op Shop provides a tourism stop / attraction	2
Close Op Shop / repurpose resources	2

How would you prefer Council resources are prioritised?

Participants were asked how they would like to see Council resources prioritised and provided with three possible answers. This question was answered by 29 respondents and the results are shown below:

Chart/graph 2: How would you like to see Councils resources prioritized?



If the opportunity shop was to close, what do you think is important to consider? 9

Participants were asked if the Op Shop were to close, what Council should consider. 24 respondents chose to provide comments, and the themes of these comments can be seen in the table below. Verbatim responses can be viewed in Appendix B.

Theme/s	No. of Respondents
Op Shop is a tourist destination / reason to stop	6
Op Shop is a valued community resource / service	5
Need for more community services in the Gumeracha area / concern about reduction of local services	4
Concerns about the effects on the town and Main Street of losing this shop	5
Support for exploration into other service models	4
Increase hours of operation / open on weekends	3
Social value of the Op Shop	3
Op Shop supports recycling / reduces dumping	3
Op Shop raises funds for the community	2
Continue service	2
Concerns about the effect on volunteers / treatment of volunteers	2
Other ideas suggested (1 each): repair café, turn into carpark, repurpose building	3
Importance of ongoing and transparent conversations with the community	1

5. Written and Verbal Feedback

One feedback submission was received via email. The email expressed support for the continuation of the Op Shop in Gumeracha and consideration for allowing the service to be volunteer run with increased operating hours, especially around events

Reasons for supporting continuation of the service included the central location of the Op Shop, positive of having two op shops in town and opportunity it provides to donate goods back into the community. 10

6. Community Meetings and Drop-in Sessions

Community Meetings

Meetings and / or conversations were held with the following key stakeholders / groups to discuss the Op Shop service review process and seek their feedback on the potential future options for the Op Shop and preferences for use of Council resources.

Groups / Stakeholders:

- Torrens valley Community Centre Op Shop Volunteers
- Lions Club of Torrens Valley
- Gumeracha and District Town Hall
- Community leader
- Gumeracha and District History Centre Inc.

The meetings and conversations involved 20 community members and volunteers and the main themes of discussions between staff and community members are provided below:

- Concern that there was no consultation with the town or volunteers prior to the 26 August Council Report.
- Concern about the volunteers being recognised with a celebration should the Op Shop close.
- Openness to building being used in an alternative way or for another group.
- Concern about there being another vacant building on the main street.
- Interest in taking over the Op Shop service.
- General discussions about promoting the engagement to members and other community representatives.

Community Drop-in Sessions

Two community drop-in sessions were held at the Gumeracha Civic Centre / Library on the dates below:

- 11am to 12noon, Monday 15 September 2025
- 4pm to 6pm, Thursday 18 September 2025

The drop-in sessions were an opportunity for community members to find out more about the review process that was undertaken and to share their feedback on the potential future options for the Op Shop and their priorities for council resources. 11

The drop-in sessions were attended by 17 community members from Gumeracha and surrounding townships. The main themes of discussions between staff and community members are provided below:

- Questions around the reason/s for the Op Shop service review – what instigated the review and the potential closure of the Op Shop.
- Requesting further information about the costs of running the Op Shop and why the service has become unsustainable.
- Seeking to understand the need for council staff management versus shop being purely volunteer run.
- Questions about the hours of operation of the Op Shop and if this could be extended to weekends.
- Interest in whether there could be improvements to the running model to bring the service back to a profit and / or be taken on by another organisation.
- Concerns about the effect on volunteers and treatment of volunteers.
- Preferences that Council be removed from running the service and outsource the service to another community run organisation e.g. Lions, Rotary.
- Commentary around the need for the service within the community to allow access to low-cost goods.
- Op Shop being key driver for people stopping in town and the effects the closure of the Op Shop could have on other services / businesses.
- Feedback around disappointment that engagement hadn't occurred earlier in the process.
- Importance of the building not sitting vacant if the Op Shop is to close.
- Ideas around other uses for the building e.g. a repair café.
- Role the Op Shop plays in providing social interaction opportunity.
- Commentary around the current location of the Op Shop being preferable due to proximity to library, community centre, reserve etc.

Community Engagement Summary – Op Shop and Use of Council Resources

Council undertook community engagement to gather feedback on potential future options for the Op Shop and the use of council resources. A total of **31 formal responses** were received:

- **30 responses** were submitted via online and hardcopy feedback forms.
- **1 response** was received via email.

While the engagement was targeted at local residents, **5 respondents (11.9%)** indicated they reside outside the council area.

In addition to formal feedback, Council hosted **drop-in sessions** attended by **17 community members**, and held **stakeholder meetings and discussions** with approximately 20 participants. Although many attendees had already submitted formal feedback, these sessions provided valuable opportunities for deeper conversations and exploration of specific concerns.

This combination of formal and informal engagement enabled Council to identify several **key themes and priorities** emerging from the community.

Key Themes from Consultation

Of the **29 respondents** who answered the question regarding how Council resources should be prioritised:

- **19 respondents** supported the continued operation of the Op Shop.
- **10 respondents** preferred alternative offerings or had other suggestions.

Supporters of the Op Shop highlighted its value in:

- Providing opportunities for social connection.
- Offering access to low-cost items.
- Encouraging visitation to the town.
- Preventing the building from becoming vacant, which was seen as potentially detrimental to the town's vibrancy.

During conversations, when information was shared about the challenges faced by Council in managing the service—particularly around **Work Health and Safety (WHS)** and **operational regulations**—many respondents expressed openness to the Op Shop being operated by another group. Some even preferred this option, believing it could be run more effectively under different management.

Stakeholder Interest

During stakeholder engagement, **members of the Lions Club of Torrens Valley** expressed interest in taking over the operations of the Op Shop, subject to:

- A meeting with their members.
- Appropriate conditions for building use being provided by Council.

They indicated capacity to commence operations within the timeframe outlined in Council's initial report (December 2025), and expressed a desire to:

- Retain existing volunteers.
 - Maintain current stock.
-

Alternative Suggestions

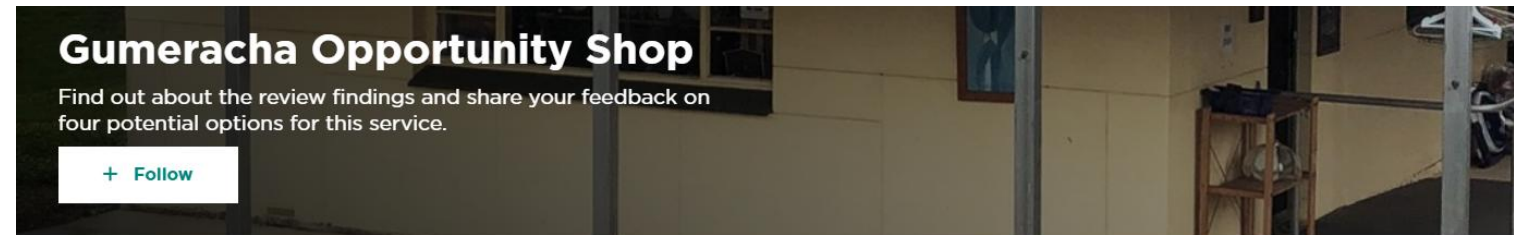
Some community members proposed **alternative uses** for the building, including:

- A **repair café**.
- Spaces for **special interest groups**.
- A **community garden**.

Several respondents suggested that an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** process would be a suitable way to identify a group better positioned to operate the Op Shop moving forward.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Information Provided and Feedback Form



[Home](#) / [Gumeracha Opportunity Shop](#)

What's happening

The Gumeracha Opportunity Shop (Op Shop) is owned and operated by the Adelaide Hills Council (AHC) in a small standalone building originally built with funds raised by the local Country Women's Association. The Op Shop commenced trading prior to the formation of AHC in 1997 and was first established to meet a local need in the community at a time when this type of alternative shopping offering was limited.

In June 2025, BRM Advisory were engaged to undertake the Service Review of the Gumeracha Op Shop, and a detailed report of their investigations is available as part of the 26 August Council Meeting Agenda. The Service Review has considered the rationale and long-term viability of the Op Shop by examining matters that include:

- trends in community demand, competition, and demographic shifts
- alignment of the service with AHC's strategic priorities and objectives
- financial performance
- WHS issues and building condition
- current and future resource requirements
- challenges and opportunities

Following the service review, four possible options for the future of the Gumeracha Op Shop were presented to Council.

Community Engagement

At the Council Meeting held on 26 August 2025, Council resolved to undertake a community engagement process guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum, with volunteers and key stakeholders around the ongoing operation or cessation of the service and transition plan, should it be required.



Document Library

Service Review - Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

PDF (982.24 KB)

Feedback Form - Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

PDF (109.27 KB)

We are currently working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand their feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the future of the Op Shop considering, use of Council resources, staff time and the building the Gumeracha Op Shop currently operates from.

Community engagement is open until Sunday 21 September.

Future options	Providing feedback	Drop-in sessions	Op Shop objectives	Service Review
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Future options for the Gumeracha Op Shop



Cease operation & consider future building options

Cease providing the Op Shop service in line with the review recommendations and consider future uses for the Op Shop building. This approach acknowledges the contributions of volunteers and the community and enables resources to be redirected toward initiatives that deliver greater strategic and community benefit to the Gumeracha community and surrounding townships. These services could include youth programing, gardening programs, activation of the Gumeracha Town Hall.



Maintain current operations

Continue providing the Gumeracha Op Shop with existing resources. This is not recommended, as the Service Review identified that additional staff support is needed to operate to the required standard to mitigate risk and provide value to the community. Should Council pursue this option, the Administration would need to undertake further assessment of the implications on service delivery and staff capacity.



Continue operations with additional resourcing

Allocate additional resources to cover the operating costs and the necessary staff support to provide this service. This would be in the realm of \$14,000 per annum in additional staff and operating costs. It is also an option to allocate additional investment to pursue strategies that might increase the financial performance of the Op Shop. An allocation of \$10,000 as a once-off cost for consultancy and retail advice could be expected.

Poster - Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

PDF (992.90 KB)

Factsheet - Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

PDF (652.21 KB)

Links

[Council Meeting Agenda - 26 August 2025 \(from page 89\)](#)

[Council Meeting Minutes - 26 August 2025](#)

FAQ

? Why did council undertake a review of the Op Shop?

? Is council considering closing the Op Shop?

? What are the other potential services that could be provided from the Gumeracha Civic Centre and Community Centre?

? What will happen to volunteers if the Op Shop closes?

? What is the current resourcing required to operate the Op Shop?

Rebecca Shepherd

Manager Community Wellbeing

Ph: 8404 0400

E: rshepherd@ahc.sa.gov.au



Expression of interest process

Seek expressions of interest from alternative organisations or groups to manage and operate an Op Shop at this site. This would involve a lease to the group who would be responsible for all operating costs and responsibilities, including work, health and safety. In considering this option, important factors include whether there is a community need for the service, given that another Op Shop operates in Gumeracha.

Melissa Clarke

Community Engagement Coordinator

Ph: 8404 0400

E: engage@ahc.sa.gov.au

Future options	Providing feedback	Drop-in sessions	Op Shop objectives	Service Review
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How can I share my feedback?

You can share your feedback via one of the following ways:

- Complete the online feedback form below
- Email engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
- Mail a letter to Community Engagement, 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152
- Phone 8408 0400
- Collect a hardcopy feedback form from Gumeracha Library / Torrens Valley Community Centre during opening hours

This engagement closes Sunday 21 September 2025.

Register / sign-in to participate

To complete the online feedback form below, you will need to be registered for Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub. Registration allows us to ensure we can close the loop with you about engagement outcomes and project next steps and helps us to understand who we are receiving feedback from.

Signing up for Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub is as simple as choosing a username and password and entering your email and residential suburb/township. There are other demographic questions you can choose whether you'd like to complete as part of the sign-up process.

If you are an existing member visiting the new platform for the first time, you will need to reset your password before you can sign-in. To reset your password, click the 'Log in / Join' button in the banner at the top the page. Then click the 'Forgot password?' link.

You will be asked to enter your email address. Click the 'reset and email password' button and we will send you instructions to reset your password.

Open	</> Embed
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Feedback Form - Future of Gumeracha Op Shop

Future options	Providing feedback	Drop-in sessions	Op Shop objectives	Service Review
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Come down to the Gumeracha Civic Centre / Library area to chat to a member of our team about the Op Shop Service Review and future options. You can pop-in anytime between the allocated times below. We will be setup upstairs and have hardcopy feedback forms available.

Key Dates



Monday 15 September 2025 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

Drop-in engagement session

Upstairs at the Gumeracha Civic Centre



Thursday 18 September 2025 04:00 pm to 06:00 pm

Drop-in engagement session

Upstairs at the Gumeracha Civic Centre

Future options	Providing feedback	Drop-in sessions	Op Shop objectives	Service Review
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Why Was the Gumeracha Op Shop Established?

The Op Shop was originally created to:

1. Provide access to low-cost goods for the community
2. Support reuse and recycling of goods and textiles
3. Offer connection and volunteering opportunities
4. Generate income which was later used to support other community centre initiatives

These are all important goals. When Council reviews a service, we ask:

- Do these needs still exist?
- Are they still a priority in the current context?
- Is Council the best organisation to meet them?

Do These Reasons Still Apply?



Access to Low-Cost Goods

✓ This need still exists.
However, low-cost items are now more widely available through:

- Online marketplaces
- Discount retailers
- Other local Op Shops (including one in Gumeracha)

➡ Council must consider whether it's necessary to continue providing this service when alternatives are already available.



Support Reuse and Recycling

✓ This remains important.
But other Op Shops and recycling programs in the region already support this goal.
➡ The community still has access to reuse and recycling opportunities without Council needing to run its own shop.



Volunteering and Community Connection

✓ Volunteering is a key part of community wellbeing.
Council offers volunteering roles across libraries, community centres, and other programs.
➡ Volunteers can still connect and contribute through other avenues—including the nearby Op Shop, which is actively seeking volunteers.



Income Generation

✗ This goal is no longer being met.

- The Op Shop has operated at a **net financial loss for many years**.
- Continuing operations would require **additional resourcing**.
- Costs related to **illegal dumping, waste removal, and WHS compliance** are increasing.

➡ The shop is no longer a sustainable income source and may divert resources from higher-impact programs.

Key Considerations from the Service Review



Strategic Misalignment

- Operating an Op Shop is not a core function of local government—it's typically run by charities or community groups.
- Continuing to run the Op Shop may limit Council's ability to invest in services with broader strategic impact.



Financial Sustainability

- The Op Shop has operated at a net financial loss for many years.
- To continue safely and effectively, it would require additional staff time to support volunteers, WHS, and increasing operational requirements
- Council must ask: Is this the best use of limited resources?



Operational Challenges

- Staff are increasingly required to manage:
 - Workplace health and safety risks
 - Illegal dumping and disposal of unsaleable items
 - Volunteer support
- These demands are growing and divert staff from other community programs.



Duplication of Services

- There are 10 other Op Shops within 25 km, including one in Gumeracha.
- This means the service is not unique, and similar benefits are available locally.
- Opportunities to access low-cost goods and recycle still exist—just through other providers.



Limited Broad Community Benefit

- While the Op shop has been a valued community program for many years and is run by a dedicated and passionate group of volunteers, its continued operation by council diverts resources away for developing other offerings that can offer broader community wellbeing outcomes.

Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

Feedback Form



This submission form is also available
online at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au
or you can scan the QR code

Please submit your feedback by Sunday 21 September 2025

Your Feedback and Ideas

Having been taken through the review process and now understanding the current status of the opportunity shop, available resources, future considerations, and the four options that were presented to Council:

1. Cease operation and consider future building options
2. Maintain current operation
3. Continue operations with additional resourcing
4. Expression of interest process

Do you have any feedback you'd like to provide?

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



About You

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Your Name _____

Your Email _____

Your Suburb/Township _____

To help us understand who we are receiving feedback from, please let us know if any of the following apply to you:

Select all that apply
☐ I volunteer at the Gumeracha Op Shop or Torrens Valley Community Centre
☐ I attend programs at the Torrens Valley Community Centre or Library
☐ I am a Gumeracha Op Shop customer
☐ I live in or around Gumeracha
☐ I am an Adelaide Hills Council resident

Thank you for providing your feedback!

Your feedback will be considered by the project team. You can find out more about this project and register to become an engagement subscriber of our Adelaide Hills Engagement Hub at: engage.ahc.sa.gov.au.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

Service review and future options



We are working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand your feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the ongoing operation or closure of the Gumeracha Opportunity Shop.

For further details and the opportunity to provide your feedback, please visit engage.ahc.sa.gov.au or contact us at:

-  8408 0400
-  engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
-  63 Mt Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152

Provide your feedback by Sunday 21 September 2025



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Gumeracha Op Shop

Service review and future options



We are working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand your feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the ongoing operation or closure of the Gumeracha Opportunity Shop.



Background

The Gumeracha Opportunity Shop (Op Shop) is owned and operated by the Adelaide Hills Council (AHC) in a small standalone building originally built with funds raised by the local Country Women's Association. The Op Shop commenced trading prior to the formation of AHC in 1997 and was first established to meet a local need in the community at a time when this type of alternative shopping offering was limited.

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- trends in community demand, competition, and demographic shifts
- alignment of the service with AHC's strategic priorities and objectives
- financial performance
- WHS issues and building condition
- current and future resource requirements
- challenges and opportunities

Following the service review, four possible options for the future of the Gumeracha Op Shop were presented to Council.

Future options for the Gumeracha Op Shop

1. Cease Operations

Cease providing the Gumeracha Opportunity Shop service in accordance with the review recommendations. This approach acknowledges the contributions of volunteers and the community and enables resources to be redirected toward initiatives that deliver greater strategic and community benefit to the Gumeracha community and surrounding townships. These services could include youth programming, gardening programs, activation of the upstairs area of the Gumeracha Town Hall.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Gumeracha Op Shop

Service review and future options



2. Maintain Current Operations

Continue providing the Gumeracha Op Shop with existing resources. This is not recommended, as the Service Review identified that additional staff support is needed to operate to the required standard to mitigate risk and provide value to the community. Should Council pursue this option, the Administration would need to undertake further assessment of the implications on service delivery and staff capacity.

3. Continue Operations with Additional Resourcing

Allocate additional resources to cover the operating costs and the necessary staff support to provide this service. This would be in the realm of \$14,000 per annum in additional staff and operating costs. It is also an option to allocate additional investment to pursue strategies that might increase the financial performance of the Op Shop. An allocation of \$10,000 as a once-off cost for consultancy and retail advice could be expected.

4. Expression of Interest Process

Seek expressions of interest from alternative organisations or groups to manage and operate an Op Shop at this site. This would involve a lease to the group who would be responsible for all operating costs and responsibilities, including work, health and safety. In considering this option, important factors include whether there is a community need for the service, given that another Op Shop operates in Gumeracha.

How can I provide my feedback?

We are currently working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand your feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the future of the Op Shop, including use of Council resources, staff time and the building the Gumeracha Op Shop currently operates from.

Share your feedback via one of the following ways:

- Complete the online feedback form at engage.ahc.sa.gov.au or via the QR code below
- Email engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
- Mail Community Engagement, 63 Mount Barker Road, Stirling SA 5152
- Phone 8408 0400
- Collect a hardcopy feedback form from Gumeracha Library / Torrens Valley Community Centre during opening hours:
 - Gumeracha Civic Centre / Torrens Valley Community Centre, 45 Albert Street, Gumeracha

This engagement closes Sunday 21 September 2025.

If you need assistance to provide your feedback, please email engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or call 8408 0400.

08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



Appendix B - Verbatim comments from online and hardcopy feedback responses

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Having been taken through the review process and now understanding the current status of the opportunity shop, available resources, future considerations, and the four options that were presented to Council, do you have any feedback you'd like to provide?

It would be a shame to lose the op-shop. Birdwood op-shop is only open twice per week and the church op-shop in Gumeracha is hardly open - plus they are all church ones and not council. Option 2 or 3 are good - run it with volunteers so it's low cost. The community hall is next door so that space can be used for events etc. This op-shop is also a great location - consider those without transport.
Maintain current operation.
May I suggest another option - to have the Uniting Church Op Shop do a joint venture and as ONE Op Shop in the most suitable premises (presumably the Main Street Council location for traffic) and share the takings accordingly. This would lighten the volunteer load, and reduce operating costs perhaps.
I think the best option is to seek expressions of interest from community groups and for one of those groups to continue the operation with that group's own interpretation on how it could be run to suit the community.
No. 2 op shop is a wonderful place to find toys, books puzzles etc for our extended family.
4. Expression of interest process Support exploring another community/s organisation running op shop
The current OP SHOP is a valuable resource in terms of STOCK and interaction with friendly staff. A point of contact for lonely people.
This could be an asset to both Council and community if allowed to operate to its fullest potential.
Essential service to prevent landfill of clothing that can be recycled. Provides affordable clothing etc for people who have limited resources. A trendy centre to visit as a tourist to the area.
Op Shops are something a lot of travellers look for on their travels. I have visited this shop on several occasions and it would be a sad day if it was closed. I actually volunteer in an op shop in the Riverland. We open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 2.30pm and 9am to noon on Saturday. The staff were very helpful and a credit to the place.
We need our op-shop. We need it how it has always been with a large selection to browse through. Our community has a great need for this service.
Op Shops are critical to community cohesion, emergency responses and as cost-effective options for low income locals. Council's can't promote community living while simultaneously reducing community services.

Op shop not allowed to open during weekend and events. Volunteers not treated well. Not enough transport and exercise services for older people. Don't use the op shop but do donate. Too many rules and regulations.

It would be a shame to see the Op Shop close. The community would lose a project that brings people together whether to benefit projects and charities or just an opportunity to acquire items that some one didn't want. It services the community.

Expressions of interest should include one from The Lions Club of Torrens Valley where they would take over the complete operation of the Op Shop with no involvement from Council apart from issuing a peppercorn lease for the building itself.

The Lions Club would maintain the operation of the shop using a workforce of existing and potential volunteers

Firstly the report was such that there were predetermined outcomes. It referenced a lot of council speak and glossed over important facts under the guise of the councils strategic aims, when there are many aspects to providing good community engagement. The data re other op shops in the area was inaccurate as they operate under different hours and conditions, and right now several are not accepting donations. People in the immediate area do not travel out of the immediate area to drop off donations. It was also a poor reflection on the operations of council and the torrens valley centre, that the ball had been dropped so to speak with regards to supervision and workplace and safety, as many issues such as overcrowding were obvious to us visitors back in 2024, and especially in early 2025. It would not take as much time to meet with volunteers and keep them up to scratch with safety, they try to do it now, as the report suggested. It is also an insult to imply that they wouldn't understand the rules, then on the other side praise them for the work they do.

Op Shop needs to continue - money to go to community - less operating costs why are operating costs so high?? Why is it necessary to pay someone from council - on high wages - super. Council should not be running it. Make it a low lease - ie \$100 a year.

2. The op shop is a very utilised shop. I shop there for nearly all of my families clothes shopping to save on money. I can not afford to buy new clothes due to only working part-time and need to be able to feed my family.

Maintain current or continued operation with additional resourcing. Community op shops are a vital resource for communities. The Gumeracha op shop provided great low cost shopping options for local families in an area where shopping options are already light on the ground. Council services are light on the ground in the upper hills area. It feels like council doesn't want to support many or any services beyond Woodside. This op shop should be core council business - it provides volunteer opportunities, training and skills, low cost or free family support and shopping opportunities. An op shop shouldn't have to run at a profit and many council services run at a loss.

What is the ulterior motive? Who is the manager? What qualifications do they have? Get AHC out and lease the building to the Op Shop. Peppercorn rent eg. \$100 P.A.

Maintain current operation but without council involvement. Maintain current operation, extending hours to include a weekend day, to be staffed by and run by volunteers. No need, in my opinion to have paid council staff involved.
I am interested in the CWA metal sign on the outside of the op shop building. I am involved with CWA for many (24) years with the Houghton Branch. They are having new premises built on the Houghton Oval and will have their own rooms. The sign would be most welcome if it becomes available.
3. Op shops are valuable assets in all communities.
Yes, I Luke option 3
Close it to stop the competition with the other op shop in the town that supports local community groups and charities.
I'd rather see the council use their time for inclusion and community projects. A community garden, or garden club would be great. Perhaps even a men's shed evening session.
2. Maintain current operation but create an op shop volunteer Committee. The volunteers are then responsible for revenue raising to make the op shop pay for itself. The fact there is another op shop in town is irrelevant as it is 600 metres uphill and impossible for locals to walk to. The convenience of this op shop being right by the Community centre and library is of the utmost importance. I am willing to be part of the Committee that manages the op shop and with my business background, I can assure you we will manage all costs.
The op shop should remain open and provides a valuable service to the community. I have often used this op shop to buy things that are donated by the community, not only does it recycle goods and divert them from landfill, it allows the local community to purchase things that they need at a lower cost. Everyone in the community is suffering with the cost of living and we cannot afford to lose access to op shops. I have bought bedding for my children and crockery, clothes and toys there. Council should be responsive to community need, it would take very minimal commitment and resourcing to keep the op shop open and it provides a very good service for many surrounding towns. It is also an opportunity to allow members of the community to volunteer which reduces social isolation and builds community resilience.

If the opportunity shop was to close, what do you think is important to consider?

I like the idea of community programs but if you could run the op-shop with volunteers then its low cost and you can do both. This whole side of the hills are forgotten by AHC.
Include some more practical activities that make use of the skills of retired or out of work people in the community who may want to feel useful and also gain social interaction at the same time. For example - a cabinet maker repairing chairs, a dressmaker repairing clothes, a handyman

repairing a kid's bicycle or scooter, and electrician repairing a toaster, etc., etc. This could be arranged via phone appointment for when the skills were required.
Could have many uses: Meeting room, Special Interest Group, Exercise Classes etc. It is a very solid old building which should be retained and maintained.
It would be a shame for it to close, it is a wonderful resource for locals and to be able to donate goods for others to enjoy and earn some money for community projects.
Talking openly and transparently with all stakeholders. Bringing the community along and involving them
Shop must continue to be used as a shop or active community hub in some form. Ideally this would be operated by another community group in the area, who would have lowering operating costs that Council and be able to utilise a more agile approach - e.g. more ability for stocking different items, ability for improved advertising/promotions and ability to open weekends etc. Different retail models could operate there, including hiring out gardening equipment etc. Things like BBQ's or cake stalls could also occur from the large patio along the street frontage. It is a very prominent site for any other non-profit organisation looking at fundraising options. The Gumeracha Main Street needs more activation when people are around (e.g. weekend day times) - having an Op Shop or similar in this premises (if it could open on weekends) would encourage more people to linger longer in Gumeracha. It would operate more as a 'tourist' Op Shop, whereas the one in the Uniting Church on Wellington Street is well hidden away and more directed at locals due to this. In addition, some people may not want to support a religious organisation for their own reasons. It is also important to consider existing volunteers wellbeing - essentially treat them as employees and offer 1:1 counselling/guidance about other opportunities - potentially via the Council's Employee Assistance Program service?
Community interaction for folk who live alone.
As a member of a club that has weekends away in various country towns around SA and buy and contribute to their economy, op shops are a major attraction for many of our senior members. This town seems to have lost the little convenience store and with the closure of the op shop - what is there? Not opening on Fridays and Saturdays is a major draw back. It seems the Council just rid of this outlet.
Probable increase in dumping of clothing in inappropriate areas.
Less travellers would stop in Gumeracha. The Rocking Horse may be of interest to families with children, but not so much to older folk. You've already lost your supermarket and post office, I think you need the op shop!
If the Op Shop closed - it would deprive people the opportunity to purchase and communicate. The funds raised assist projects and charities local to the area.
As stated above I would like to see the building continue to be used as an Op Shop and being controlled and run by the Lions Club

The council would continue to lose support over this, it is more of a hub than the community centre which currently runs very niche programs, same old same old, and if mostly you dont live in gumeracha you wont know about programs. And the childrens programs in the holidays are also mainly colouring sheets. no imagination or creativity. To close the op shop means that the whole site looks and becomes dead, some days the op shop gets more people than the library. Keep it open, perhaps only open when the library is open, more than just advertise on social media, and just putting the flag out, allow the place to be seen by prospective customers. The close it also negates the councils reuse and recycle policy as a lot of that happens there. And there are the volunteers, who love the job they do, and have been treated appallingly by council thro out the process, they cant/wont be able to just find other jobs to do, it is niche in the op shop, and they have defined groups that rely on each other. Put some solar panels on the roof to assist with power, look out side the square for a change, not a blinkered approach with a planned result .

Why does the op shop need a council paid overseer?? 1) community service. 2) Reason for travelling community to stop. They will stop for 1) Toilet. 2) Op shop. 3) Grocery buying (ie foodlands, woolies etc). 4) Coffee - when already stopped. 5) Take away - maybe.

The community needs it, it is well utilised by locals and people driving through.

How council could support low cost shopping options in the area. There is a lack of services in Gumeracha and surrounding areas. If the shop was to cease being council run, I would want additional support or services to be put in to the Gumeracha Civic Centre to support families. I would not support the shop being outsourced to a large "commercial" op shop provider as they are often not low cost or meeting the needs of the community. I also think council needs to commit to the ongoing support of and services in Gumeracha. The closing of the op shop cannot be the start of council closing down upper hills services.

Op-Shop best tourism attraction for Gumeracha.

The Op Shop not to close, but the council step out from managing it. This would allow resources to be used for programs or supporting the volunteers and groups that already exist.

This shouldn't be a question until a devising is made.

We need quality op shops to support the local community, cost of living is crazy. Also, I applaud recycling not unnecessary landfill.

Let the other op shop take items from the AHC op shop to avoid going to landfill.

If the building is not fit for purpose perhaps it could become more car parking for the site.

With the amount of small businesses that have close in Gumeracha in the last 3 years, losing the op shop would be detrimental to the Community.
The Northern Adelaide Hills needs more investment from Council, not closures for 'dead assets'
The op shop building was built by the CWA and since Council has owned it, it has become a neglected and forgotten piece.
Keep it open or sell it to me and I will keep it open and have the volunteers run it!

I cannot see any good reason for the op shop to close

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Images / snapshot of any emails or letters receive. Please ensure any personal information (name, email, phone numbers) has been removed /redacted.

Email 1

To whom it may concern,

I write to express my support in keeping the Oppe shop open in Gumeracha & perhaps considering allowing it to be volunteer-run to allow for openings on weekends when there are events happening in the town.

I have lived in the area for over 40 years. The oppe shop whilst only fairly small has served the community well. Whilst there is another in the town. This one is centrally located & some distance away from the other. I think it is a cop-out to expect the church to fill a void where the council has deemed not necessary. I also believe that the two can work in harmony for who has gone to an opportunity shop with a shopping list & got everything they've needed? Not many. Often, this is the beauty of these places. You never know what gems you might find unexpectedly. It can just be the fun of looking & having a chat with other locals. It also gives us the opportunity to donate perfectly good items back into our community.

I have heard that the turn-over in the shop has been good and they have had ample volunteers to staff it, so please support keeping this resource open & operating viably.

Thank you

[Redacted signature]

Appendix D – Advertisements and social media posts 34

Gumeracha Community Association Facebook Post – 11 September 2025



Gumeracha community communication.

🔔 Top contributor Sylvia Ullmer · 11 Sep · 🧑

The Oppe Shoppe needs your support if it is to remain open.

Council has commenced Community Engagement to review the future of our Oppe Shoppe. You can voice your opinion online, by emailing engage@ahc.sa.gov.au or by completing a hardcopy feedback form available from Gumeracha Library/Torrens Valley Community Centre. There will also be two community drop-in sessions at the Gumeracha Civic Centre:

Monday 15 September 11am-12noon

Thursday 18th September 4pm-6pm

We need to speak up in support of the Oppe Shoppe or it will close.

Gumeracha Opportunity Shop

Service review and future options



We are working with volunteers, key stakeholders and interested community members, to understand your feedback about what is important for us to consider regarding the ongoing operation or closure of the Gumeracha Opportunity Shop.

For further details and the opportunity to provide your feedback, please visit engage.ahc.sa.gov.au or contact us at:

- 📞 8408 0400
- ✉ engage@ahc.sa.gov.au
- 📍 63 Mt Barker Rd, Stirling SA 5152

Provide your feedback by Sunday 21 September 2025



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au
ahc.sa.gov.au



👍👤 The Big Rocking Horse + 28 19 comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

Op shop faces the chop

The future of the Gumeracha Op Shop hangs in the balance, with an independent report revealing the shop is no longer financially viable and at odds with the council's strategic objectives. Consultancy firm BRM Advisory conducted a service review...

by [Fin Dunford](#) Published September 03, 2025



Gumeracha residents Paul Hemmer, left, Claire Kernich, Rob Hawke, Pauline Stewart, Sylvia Ullmer, Adelaide Hills Councillor Adrian Cheater, Joel Taggart and Mell Penno.

The future of the Gumeracha Op Shop hangs in the balance, with an independent report revealing the shop is no longer financially viable and at odds with the council's strategic objectives.

Consultancy firm BRM Advisory conducted a service review, which found the volunteer-run shop did not align with the council's priorities; diverted resources from the Torrens Valley Community Centre; its financial performance did not offset the cost of service delivery; and it was a burden on council staff who had to ensure safety standards were met.

The shop was originally set to cease operations, but that was deferred by Adelaide Hills Councillors last month, who voted to hear from stakeholders.

The stakeholder engagement process does not mean the shop will remain open, but councillors believed the initial lack of engagement could “undermine trust” within the community.

The engagement process will inform a transition plan for the shop’s volunteers and help the community understand the reasons the shop is no longer viable.

Councillor Adrian Cheater – who introduced the motion to go to an engagement process – said it would not involve wider consultation with the community, but more targeted collaboration with the shop’s volunteers and stakeholders.

“The (service) review did not consult directly with volunteers or key stakeholders within the community, even though they have sustained the service for decades and have a strong sense of ownership,” he said.

“Deferring the final decision allows the council to undertake genuine engagement with volunteers and the community, explore alternative models for future management of the service (and) enable stakeholders to help shape the closure timeline and process, should that be the ultimate outcome.”

Gumeracha residents Joel Taggart and Mell Penno have criticised the move to close the shop without trying to collaborate and improve management.

“It was viable once upon a time, so if it’s managed properly, any business can thrive and it doesn’t matter how small or big that business is,” Ms Penno said.

Mr Taggart said the shop wasn’t allowed to open on weekends or able to promote itself on social media since becoming council-operated.

He said the main street “could be a tourist attraction”, especially given significant council spending on the area in recent years and beautification projects by the Gumeracha Community Association.

Council chief executive Greg Georgopoulos will bring the results of the engagement process to the council at its October meeting.



08 8408 0400
mail@ahc.sa.gov.au

ahc.sa.gov.au



Adelaide Hills
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