



# Youth Action Plan 2021-24

Adopted December 2020





## Mayor's Message

I am delighted to present the Adelaide Hills Council Youth Action Plan 2021-24.

Young people are the future of our community and we realise they face unique opportunities and challenges in the Adelaide Hills environment.

Building on our Youth Development initiatives over the last 15 years, this plan confirms our continued commitment to providing our young citizens with opportunities and support in their transition into adulthood.

While we all face uncertain times as we recover from the effects of bushfires and the global pandemic, our youth are particularly vulnerable as they are already experiencing a multitude of personal changes every Day. A stable environment, opportunities to network in a healthy environment and the right support, can help them navigate those changes.

To ensure that we are meeting our young people's needs, this plan was developed in close collaboration with the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia. Together we facilitated consultation sessions in high schools and online and held focus group discussions with regional stakeholder organisations and Adelaide Hills Council's Youth Leadership group. This has helped shape and direct this plan so it is relevant, accessible and informed by the young people who live here.

The actions contained in our plan are aimed at building leadership, skills and experience, resilience and connections that will help our young citizens prepare for happy and productive lives post-school.

Engaging our youth in the community now creates a sense of belonging and a shared sense of purpose for the future. We value the innovation, diversity and perspective our young people provide in our community and this plan outlines how we will work with them towards a brighter future.

Dr Jan-Claire Wisdom  
Mayor

## Acknowledgment of Country

Adelaide Hills Council acknowledges that we undertake our business on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna Nations. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging as the Custodians of this ancient and beautiful land.

We are committed to working together to ensure that Peramangk and Kurna cultures and traditions are preserved and valued. Together we will care for this Country for the generations to come.

## About the Adelaide Hills Council

Adelaide Hills Council is a local government organisation that undertakes its business on the traditional lands and waters of the Peramangk and Kurna peoples.

The land area of Adelaide Hills Council is 795 square kilometres, and extends from Mount Bold Reservoir in the south, to the South Para Reservoir in the north, and from the hills face in the west to the eastern escarpment of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Council provides a range of services for nearly 40,000 residents, and nearly 500,000 domestic day-trip visitors annually. These services include:

- planning and development,
- maintenance, management and renewal of properties, playgrounds, and public infrastructure,
- library and customer services,
- volunteering,
- public health,
- parking and by-law enforcement,
- sport and recreation planning,
- youth development,
- positive ageing,
- community centres,
- communications, engagement, and events,
- community development and cultural development,
- community grants,
- economic development,
- sustainability, open space, and biodiversity,
- animal management,
- parks, reserves, and cemeteries,
- fire prevention, emergency management, and bushfire recovery, and
- waste and water management.

Council operates Service Centres with libraries in Gumeracha, Stirling and Woodside; Community Centres in Gumeracha and Norton Summit; a Resource Recovery Centre in Heathfield; depots in Gumeracha and Stirling; the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub in Lobethal; and 16 historic cemeteries within the Council area. In-person Council meetings are held in Stirling and are live-streamed for community members. Council supports the Hut Community Centre in Aldgate and the Adelaide Hills Swimming Centre in Woodside.

Council provides its residents and visitors information about Council initiatives, meetings, consultations, events, grants, employment and volunteering opportunities, programs and activities. Council also provides local businesses information about legislation changes, tips, case studies and events.

## Youth Development

Youth Development in the Adelaide Hills Council is aimed at supporting young people to connect, learn, participate, grow and develop resilience. Young people are invited to develop and attend events that support connection and participate in workshops and volunteering activities to support skill development. Council's Youth Development Officer works alongside young people to identify emerging trends and issues and supports them to advocate to all levels of government and also address those needs at a local level.

The Adelaide Hills Council Youth Action Plan 2021-24 represents and outlines Council's continued commitment to support our young people in their transition to adulthood. Central to this commitment is a program of youth development activities that offers opportunities for participation, skill development, building connections, engagement, showcasing talent, and celebration of young people's achievements.

This plan recognises that young people have a right to be involved in the decision making process on matters that affect them. The term Young people refers to individuals from a wide range of ages and developmental stages, each with their own characteristics, interests and challenges. Young people therefore bring a wide range of interests, aspirations, strengths and needs, with an ability to offer insights into the challenges that they face, as well as being a unique resource for potential solutions to improve life for young people in the district.

### Background

The Adelaide Hills Council Youth Action Plan 2021-24 has been developed to articulate council's continued commitment to supporting young people in our district. It primarily provides direction for the provision of youth development activities, as well as identifies linkages to other relevant Council plans that impact on youth across domains such as Libraries, Sport and Recreation, and Disability Access and Inclusion. Council provides many other services which support the wellbeing of young people but this plan focuses on those that have a main focus on youth.

For the development of this plan Council contracted the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia (YACSA), to conduct consultation sessions held in 2019 with students of the high schools in the district, participants of Council's Youth Leadership Program, and stakeholders in the Adelaide Hills region. YACSA's findings were then further workshopped with Council Members and staff, and the Youth Leadership Group to develop the final Youth Action Plan.

The finalisation of this plan was delayed due to the occurrence of the 2019 Bushfires and the COVID-19 Pandemic - two major events that have significantly impacted the lives of young people in the district.



## Our Youth Community

### Demographics and characteristics

The Adelaide Hills Council comprises 55 townships across a surface area of 795km<sup>2</sup>. In 2019, the district had an estimated population of 39,977 residents, resulting in a population density of 0.5 persons per hectare.



In 2016, the Adelaide Hills Council was home to 6269 young people aged 12-25. This makes up approximately 16.1% of the Council's population. The majority of this cohort (55%) lives in the Ranges Ward, while 45% live in the Valleys Ward.

Before COVID, youth disengagement in the 15-25 age group in the district was low, at 5.4% of the total cohort, though there were hot spots of up to 8.0%. In the 15-25 age group, 12.4% of the total labour force in this age group was unemployed, with hot spots as high as 17.6%.

### Education

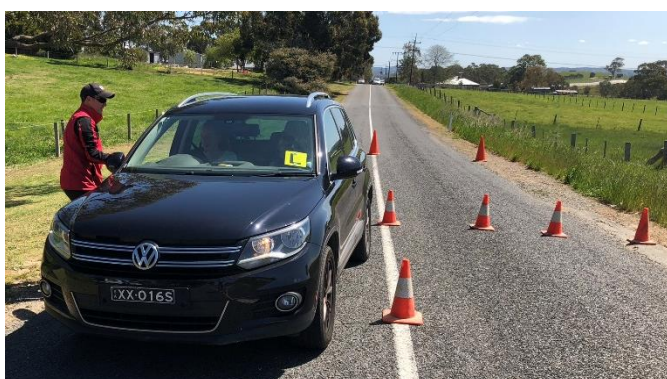
There are three public high schools in the district, three private schools that cover Reception to Year 12, and one small private middle school. Of these schools, only one public high school is located in the Ranges Ward, along with the middle school, and one private school which is effectively serviced by the neighbouring City of Campbelltown due to its location on the very boundary of both Councils. The remaining 2 public schools are located in the Valleys Ward, along with two private R-12 schools of which one has only this year included Year 12.

There are no tertiary education institutions in the District. Adelaide Hills Council young people mainly travel to Adelaide or Mount Barker to access tertiary education.

### Transport

Limited public transport limits young people's ability to travel independently for education, employment, support services, sports and entertainment. This has implications for Council's provision of youth programs and services.

Access to support services is further complicated due to the fact that the vast majority of support services is located outside of the district, in the neighbouring Mount Barker District Council.



## Strategic Context

The actions in the Adelaide Hills Council Youth Action Plan 2021-24 are grouped under three central themes:

- 1) Leadership and Skill Development
- 2) Connection and Inclusion
- 3) Engagement and Advocacy

These themes are linked to priorities identified in both the South Australian State Government and Adelaide Hills Council plans.

### A Brighter Future – Council’s Strategic Plan

Council’s Strategic Plan 2020-24: *A Brighter Future*, identifies that the district has a high proportion of school aged children but a lower than average proportion of young people in the post-high school ages. This suggests that it is a good area to raise children but people growing up in the district may leave after secondary education. This may be influenced by low levels of affordable housing, limited public transport options, limited access to support services, and a narrow range of local employment opportunities and/or options for local tertiary education.

The Strategic Plan identifies five primary goals:

- A functional Built Environment
- Community Wellbeing
- A prosperous Economy
- A valued Natural Environment
- A progressive Organisation

While the strategic plan is aimed at all residents, visitors and business, the goal most closely aligned with supporting young people is Goal 2, “Community Wellbeing” whereby Council aspires to:

*An inclusive and prosperous community with capacity to flourish and fulfil their potential through opportunities to engage, connect, participate and enhance wellbeing.*

More specifically the plan contains objectives relating to the wellbeing of young people which include:

C1.3 Make the district more accessible and welcoming for all with a focus on youth participation, positive ageing, disability inclusion and multiculturalism

C2.3 Facilitate opportunities for our youth to develop skills, build resilience and be actively involved in and connected to their community

## Strong Futures – SA Youth Action Plan

The South Australian Government adopted Strong Futures SA Youth Action Plan 2020-2022 in early April 2020. The Plan identifies four priority areas, informed through consultation with young South Australians:

- Earn and Learn: Young South Australians are ready for work and life
- Fair and Inclusive: Young South Australians are included and reach their potential
- Wellbeing and Environment: Young South Australians are safe, healthy and resilient
- Connect and Grow: Young South Australians are engaged and have influence

## Program design and implementation

### Council's role

An important step in the process of development of Council's Youth Development programs is a consideration of Council's role.

Council's Strategic Plan identifies a number of roles that may be appropriate for Council to take on, and the most appropriate role may differ per need or issue. Actions are intended to address.

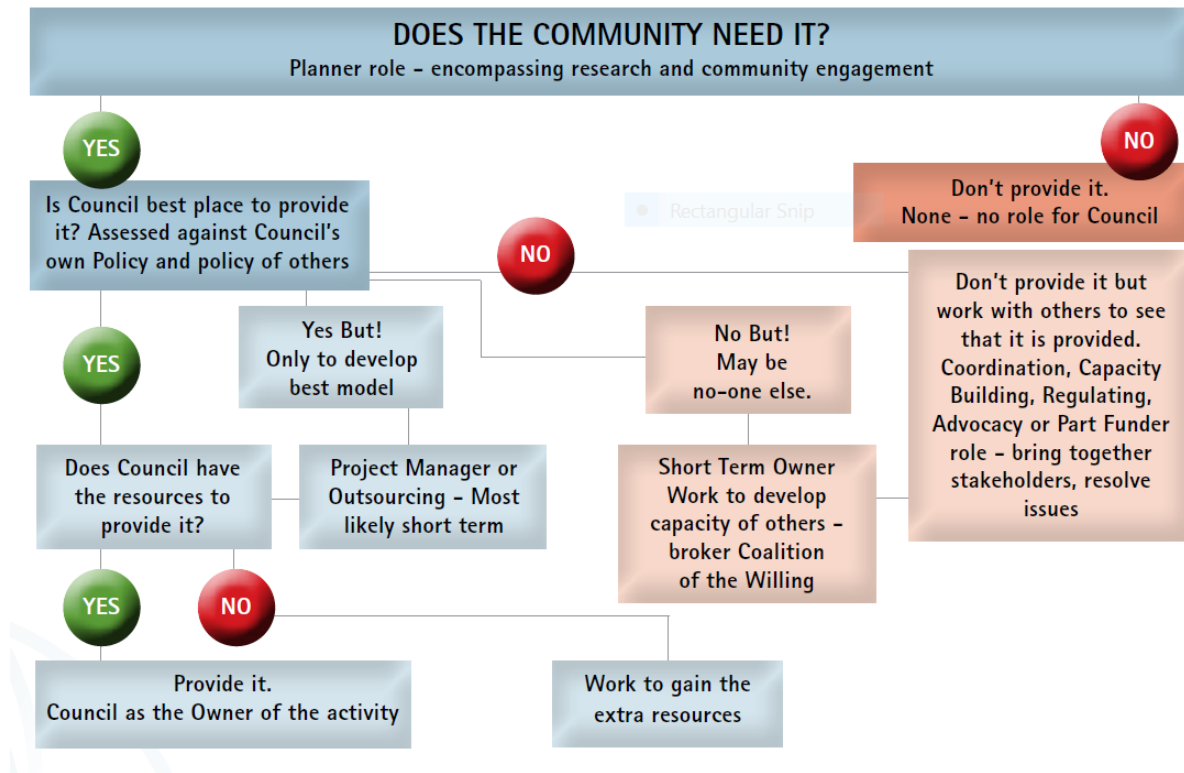
At times it may be appropriate for Council to facilitate and connect stakeholders, seek collaborations or partnerships where there are relevant service providers and agencies available in the region to provide the program, or part-fund the program. For other programs there may not be any suitable services providers or organisations active in the region, in which case it may be appropriate for Council to provide the service.

In such cases it may be appropriate to consider funding the program (either through Youth Development budgets or by seeking grant funding), and contract the program delivery to a suitable provider wholly or in collaboration.

An essential outcome of direct service provision or program delivery is the creation of relationships with young residents of the district. Besides financial implications and risk, this will be an important consideration when identifying the appropriate role in the development of Youth Development programs.

<b>Council's Role</b>	<b>Council will...</b>
<b>Lead/Empower</b>	Lead on behalf of community; support community initiatives
<b>Provide /Respond</b>	Fully or partially fund, or provide a service, or respond to a need
<b>Promote/Educate</b>	Develop resources to promote a common understanding; provide information; Distribute and display information produced by others; refer others to information, programs or organisation that might assist.
<b>Facilitate/Connect</b>	Bringing together stakeholders; initiate or join with other parties to collectively pursue a shared interest; service or resolve an issue
<b>Partner/Collaborate</b>	Formal partnerships bound by regulation, delegation or contract to deliver outcomes
<b>Owner/Custodian</b>	Manage community assets including building, facilities, public space, reserves on behalf of current and future generations
<b>Regulate</b>	Specific role in response to legislation & compliance – direct, specific or general in nature (such as duty of care)
<b>Fund/Grant/Auspice</b>	Collect and distribute funding from, and/or to, community (by law or policy on behalf of community)
<b>Funding applicant/ Recipient</b>	Apply for, receive and expend funding and/or revenues (by law or policy on behalf of community)
<b>Advocate/Influencer</b>	Make representations on behalf of community; engage in public policy development in the interests of community

In 2015 Adelaide Hills Council Youth Development undertook a study on behalf of the Local Government Association of South Australia, resulting in the report "Our Future Is NOW – Directions for Youth Development in Local Government". The report contains a useful flowchart that may assist with the identification of the appropriate role for Council when developing a new Youth Development program:



### Implementation and delivery

Youth Development programs will seek to collaborate with and utilise Council-owned facilities where appropriate and suitable. This includes but is not limited to community centres, libraries and town halls. Collaborations will be sought with relevant staff across the organisation, as well as community groups and other stakeholders in the region.



## Actions

### Theme 1: Leadership and Skill Development



Transferrable “soft” skills are important in the development of a young person to become a well-rounded, resilient individual that is ready to assume their adult life. Young people often report feeling underprepared to start their adult lives upon leaving secondary education.

Limited employment opportunities available locally, regionally and in the Greater Adelaide Area, result in a competitive labour market. Leadership and other skill development programs empower young people, and will assist them to be more attractive to future employers.

“Flagship” programs for this theme will be the Youth Leadership Program, and the Life Skills program (to be developed).





#### Objective 1: Develop Young Leaders

Deliver or outsource programs that develop leadership and transferrable soft skills

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
1.1	Deliver and evaluate an annual Youth Leadership Program which provides training and practical experiences for young people.	AHC SP C2.3, C2.4, C3.1	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget
1.2	Support Youth Leadership Program graduates to access further (internal or external) development opportunities, including in mentoring others	AHC SP C2.3, C3.1	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget

#### Objective 2: Support Skill Development

Deliver or outsource programs that develop or enhance skills to promote independence and employability

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
2.1	Develop and deliver a series of short 'life skills' workshops to support young people to develop independence and prepare for adulthood.	AHC SP C2.3, C3.1	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget + grants and partnerships
2.2	Provide opportunities for young people to showcase and market their artistic and/or crafting skills	AHC SP C2.1, C2.3, C6.3	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev Lib and CS					Existing YD and Library budgets
2.3	Encourage and support youth volunteering in the community and in Council's youth programs	AHC SP C1.2, C1.3, C2.3, C3.2	Priority Area 2	Youth Dev Lib and CS					Staff time; Existing YD and Library budgets
2.4	Support apprenticeship and work experience opportunities with Council	AHC SP C2.3 AHC DAIP 11.2	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev					Staff time implications. To be identified

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
2.5	Explore opportunities to promote local support groups for parents and teachers who are preparing children with disabilities for life beyond school.	AHC SP C2.3 AHC DAIP 10.1	Priority Area 2	Youth Dev					Staff time
2.6	Develop and provide STEAM and general programs specific to targeted age groups including senior home schooled students	AHC SP C2.1, C2.3 AHC Lib SP C2.1, C2.3		Lib and CS					Existing library budget
2.7	Provide and maintain youth oriented study spaces and technology within libraries	AHC SP C1.1, C2.3 AHC Lib SP C1.1		Lib and CS					Library budget reviewed annually

## Theme 2: Connection and Inclusion








The size and population density of the district, combined with the limited provision of public transport brings challenges to participate and connect, resulting for some young people in feeling socially isolated. Young people often report experiencing difficulties meeting the requirements to obtain their probationary driver's license. Those young people who are interested in things other than sports often report a lack of leisure, entertainment and socialisation options in the region. Stakeholders also identified geographical isolation as a barrier to access to services and programs.

Strategies and programs to increase options for young people to participate and build connections and relationships can help alleviate these issues and improve their wellbeing and sense of belonging, and help them to reach their potential.



"Flagship" programs for this theme will be the development of an online Youth Portal and the reviewed Youth Sponsorship programs.


### Objective 3: Expand opportunities to connect

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
3.1	Work with relevant partners (internal and external) to develop, trial and evaluate an attractive, fun and informative online point of connection for young people for wellbeing and engagement	AHC SP C1.3, C2.4, O6.4	Priority Area 2	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget + grants and partnerships
3.2	Continue to consider support for non-mainstream youth interests where opportunities for improved social connections can be identified	AHC SP C2.1, C2.3, C6.3	Priority Area 3	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
3.3	Review current youth grants and sponsorships to develop a new Youth Sponsorship Program with a focus on social inclusion.	AHC SP C1.2	Priority Area 2	Youth Dev					Youth Sponsorship s budget and other budgets to be identified
3.4	Encourage young people with disabilities to participate in AHC Youth Development programs, and provide accessibility supports where required.	AHC SP C1.2, C2.4 AHC DAIP 5.2 AHC Lib SP C1.1	Priority Area 2	Comm Dev  Lib and CS					Staff time  Staff Time
3.6	Include youth considerations in review of library access and wayfinding	AHC C1.1, C1.3  Lib SP C1.1		Lib and CS					Current Library budget and staff time
3.7	Provide space within libraries to support and encourage unstructured social connectivity	AHC SP C1.3  LIB SP C1.3		Lib and CS					Current staff time
3.8	Ensure physical and digital resources address the concerns and interests of young people	AHC SP C2.1  Lib SP C2.3		Lib and CS					Current Library budget
3.9	Support 'non-traditional' and unstructured recreation opportunities in the region (eg. Mountain Biking)	AHC Sport and Recreation Strategy 2017-2021, Strategic Actions p.7		Sport and Recreation					Staff time, Sport and Rec budget and relevant grants
3.10	Investigate potential locations for the portable skate ramp in conjunction with staff and the community. Implement a schedule for moving the ramp	AHC Sport and Recreation Strategy 2017-2021, Strategic Actions p.7		Sport and Recreation					Staff time

#### Objective 4: Explore methods to improve transport options for young people within the region

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
4.1	Investigate a program to support young drivers to obtain their P-license thereby increasing their independence and employment opportunities	AHC SP C1.4, C2.3	Priority Area 1	Youth Dev					Staff time; grants and partnerships
4.2	Explore models to support young people to access public transport	AHC SP C1.4, C2.3	Priority Area 2	Youth Dev					Staff time






No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
4.3	Continue to deliver Drivers Awareness Courses aimed at improving safety for young road users	AHC SP C1.4, C2.3	Priority Area 3	Youth Dev					Existing YD budget

### Theme 3: Engagement and Advocacy

In the Youth Sector, an important role for Local Government is to identify emerging needs, trends and issues, gaps in service provision, and to develop appropriate responses. Youth Officers in local government typically coordinate local Youth Services forums, and maintain relationships with staff and students from schools in their district, government organisations, NGO's and other stakeholders. This enables them to develop responses to issues at relevant levels, both strategic and operational, through the development of collaborative approaches and partnerships.

Equally as important as such networks is the development of strategies and methods to connect with young people directly. As a fundamental principle in Youth Development, this is reflected in the SA Youth Action Plan in Priority Area 4: "Young South Australians are engaged and have influence". The development of strategies and methods to increase Council's Youth Engagement, as well as Youth Participation in decision-making results in youth plans and programs that are more robust and considered in meeting expressed Youth needs, with increased youth ownership, involvement and participation.

#### Objective 5: Identify and create opportunities to engage with young people and those that support them

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
5.1	Maintain relationships with staff and students from local schools to work collaboratively and identify gaps and needs	AHC SP O4.3		Youth Dev					Staff time
				Lib and CS					Staff time
5.2	Facilitate a range of opportunities to engage with young people including online options	AHC SP O4.1, O6.4	Priority Area 4	Youth Dev					Staff time; grants and partnerships
				Lib and CS					Staff time
5.3	Review and update youth consultation methods, including community engagement processes, to ensure the needs of young people are taken into account in all Council decisions that affect them	AHC SP C2.4, O4.1, O6.4	Priority Area 4	Youth Dev				Staff time	
5.4	Explore mechanisms to further engage young people in Council decision making	AHC SP C2.4, C4.1	Priority Area 4	Youth Dev				Staff time	
5.5	Actively seek participation in the AHC Disability Inclusion Reference Group by young people living with disability in our district	AHC DAIP 4.3	Priority Area 2	Comm Dev					Staff time
				Lib and CS					Staff time

**Objective 6: Provide Advocacy for youth to all levels of Government**

No.	Action	Strategic links		Team responsible	Time frame				Resourcing
		AHC Plans	SA YAP		21	22	23	24	
6.1	Participate in relevant youth networks with a view to developing partnerships and addressing current needs.	AHC SP O4.3		Youth Dev	██████████				Staff time
6.2	Provide feedback and advocate to relevant government and other organisations regarding youth matters	AHC SP O4.3		Youth Dev	██████████				Staff time
6.3	Provide advice to council staff and build organisational awareness on matters that impact on young people			Youth Dev	██████████				Staff time
6.4	Assist with bringing together relevant stakeholders to address sport and recreation issues	AHC Sport and Recreation Strategy 2017-2021, Council's role p.5		Sport and Recreation	██████████				Staff time
6.5	Campaign for and support sport and Recreation groups within the region	AHC Sport and Recreation Strategy 2017-2021, Council's role p.5		Sport and Recreation	██████████				Staff time

