

GEOFF EATON – THALASSA WARD COUNCILLOR – JANUARY 2025 -NEWSLETTER

My activities during December included:

- Flagstaff Oval board meeting with councillor Themeliotis.
- Launch of new Fleurieu Coast Visitors Guide with mayor and councillors Platten and Bell - Cherry on Main, Chandlers Hill.
- Cherry Gardens launch of new Telstra G5 Tower representing the mayor.
- Noarlunga Sea Cadets End of Year Parade representing the mayor – Lonsdale.
- Centenary event Port Noarlunga Art Centre with councillors Davis and Wilks.
- Northern Communities Forum with mayor.
- Aberfoyle Community Centre Men’s Breakfast.
- Fluerieu Connections worksite visit with senior staff - South Road Aldinga.
- Coromandel Valley Community Centre End of Year event for their volunteers with councillor Themeliotis.
- Assisted at Christmas BBQ breakfast held for depot staff with mayor and councillors Davis, Wilks, Bell, Yoemans and Pritchard – Seaford Meadows.
- Clarendon Historic Hall and Museum meeting.
- Assisted at Noarlunga Centre council staff Christmas BBQ, with mayor and councillors Wilks, Yoemans, Davis and Pritchard.
- Morton Road Mash Up Roger Rasheed Sports Foundation - Morton Road Christie Downs.
- Represented mayor at the Road to Christmas Steeds Church Aberfoyle Park.
- Woodcroft Neighbourhood Watch Carols in the Park with councillor Davis.
- Australia Day Awards Committee meeting with mayor and councillors Davis and Strafford.
- Happy Valley Sports Park board meeting with councillor Themeliotis.
- Cherry Gardens Uniting Church Christmas Carols evening at the Cherry Gardens Memorial Hall.
- Represented Mayor at the Aberfoyle Baptist Church Christmas Carols event.
- Ironbank Cherry Gardens Recreation Ground board meeting.
- Official opening of the Witton Bluff coast boardwalk with mayor and councillors Wilks, Greaves and Bell.

Due to time clashes I had to miss the following engagement opportunities:

- Southern Districts Baseball Clubs committee meeting.
- Cherry Gardens Garden Club.
- Flagstaff Hill Neighbourhood Watch end of year meeting.
- Healthy Cities Onkaparinga end of year luncheon.
- First Nations Art Exhibition opening.
- Reynella Neighbourhood Watch meeting.

Council Activities 2024

I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of our achievements that have occurred during 2024. This helps to demonstrate to our community the extent of activities we undertake:

- Reset the Long-Term Financial Plan principles (considering the recommendations of the Essential Service Commission of South Australia report into the City of Onkaparinga.
- Approved the 10-year Community Plan with appropriate metrics.

- Revised the Strategic Asset Management Plan following extensive community consultation.
- Raised over 2,200 elected members enquiries on behalf of our community.
- Welcomed 380 new citizens from around 50 different countries.
- Committed \$5.4 million for Noarlunga Aquatic Centre.
- Took possession of the Hopgood Theatre and commenced refurbishment.
- Opened three dog parks.
- Completed and opened first purpose-built athletics park south of Adelaide, Southern Athletics – Knox Park.
- Honoured (late) Helen Oxenham OAM with Keys to the City (prior to her passing) for her pioneering leadership in eradicating domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Initiated a Housing Strategy focusing on affordability.
- Completed a review of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and commenced next stage to Innovate RAP.
- Received Local Government Professionals Excellence in Community Services and Development (Living Well Matters initiative).
- Customer Relations Team consistently ranking in the top three council customer service centres nationally awarded Australian Customer Experience Professionals Australia.
- Advocated successfully for state legislation change to improve tree protection.
- Continued council's 20-year review of local heritage places.
- Approved a world-class Coastal Adaptation Plan.
- Led advocacy that saw the state chosen developer for Aldinga – Villawood – commit to high sustainability standards.
- Launched partnership with One Tree Per Child, including a highly successful tree giveaways to encourage planting on private land.
- Revitalised Beach Road, including completion of public toilet (Market Square) and public art.
- Created, endorsed and started implementing our Advocacy Plan for various initiatives across the City of Onkaparinga.
- Reviewed dog on/off leash/prohibited areas with new controls in place in wetlands Minkarra Park and Port Noarlunga sand dunes.
- Reset council's by-laws on movable signs, local government land, roads and foreshore.
- Re-opening of O'Sullivan's Beach Kiosk, introduction of digital boat launching permits.
- Revoked and transferred council land in the Aldinga Washpool to the Minister for Environment to be incorporated into the Aldinga Washpool Conservation Park.
- Multiple property acquisitions to support the Major Projects Team with the delivery of trails and intersection upgrades, particularly for the 21 intersections in McLaren Vale to improve road safety.
- Completion of the Minkarra Park Link Trail.
- Completion of the Aldinga to Willunga Cycleway.
- Very high quality of dog attack investigations, withstanding scrutiny at the highest levels, including the Supreme Court.
- Nurtured the winner of the LGA Professionals Emerging Leader from within our Planning Directorate (Trevor Ashenden).
- Environmental Health Officer Tricia Franks won an award for outstanding individual participation in the Environmental Health Professionals.
- Excellence in Public Health Immunisation Team – Environmental Health Association Award for Excellence in Community focussed Environmental Health practice for Japanese encephalitis immunisation program.
- Community safety engagement with Paws and Pals to assist vulnerable people in getting animal care and ability to meet compliance with legislation.
- \$14.14 million in Federal funds for programs and works including the Noarlunga Aquatic Centre, Urban Rivers, Disaster Readiness, Black Spot, resulting in every Federal submission being funded.

- Funding from SA Cricket Association to the amount of \$21,705 for renewal of the Frank Smith Reserve – Coromandel Valley.
- State office of Sport and Recreation funding of \$41,300 for participation of women and girls, and \$75,000 for Reynella Sports Oval lighting.
- Opened the toilet block on Beach Road, and Byards Road will be open soon.
- Continued with the Wearing Street renewal and completed the works with water sporting groups and Education Department.
- Completed Witton Bluff Base Trail and hosted public opening.
- Initiated new partnership in road safety - Blue Dinosaur Foundation.
- Commenced process for City to be known as a Dementia Friendly council.
- Recognised Pt Willunga for it's history.
- Advanced works on Wearing Street Port Noarlunga.
- Had all our motions passed unanimously at the national ALGA assembly and then approved by the National ALGA Board for their advocacy.
- Engagement sessions with community member information sessions in respect to Multi Use Sports Facilities.
- Passed advocacy agenda and mayor meeting with State and Federal members of parliament.
- Celebrated our Citizen of the Year Gill Golding becoming SA Citizen of the Year, cheered on our Sportsperson of the Year para-triathlete Anu Francis at the Paris Para-Olympics.
- Hosted civic reception for environmental volunteers.
- Election of mayor Moira Were as chairperson for the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils and consequential appointment to the Local Government Association of South Australia board as well as appointment their Audit Risk Committee, as well as Cities Coastal Committee of the LGA board.
- There have been thousands of hours in volunteering, meals served, hands held, books borrowed, balls kicked into goals and passed through hoops, artists' works viewed by thousands of eyes, millions of steps taken on our tracks and trails.

Local government really is where everything does come together and we look forward to what can be achieved during 2025, particularly delivering a zero-budget deficit at the end of the 2024/25 financial year, which meant we as a Council had had to make some hard and unpopular decisions for this current financial year.

Santos Tour Down Under

The world's best cyclists will descend on Onkaparinga this month for the 2025 Santos Tour Down Under, marking 25 years of both the iconic race and the council's involvement. The southern hemisphere's premier cycling race will launch the international season and the UCI World Tour and Women's World Tour from 17–26 January, with the City of Onkaparinga hosting three key stages:

- the Ziptrack® Women's Stage 1 finish at Aldinga on Friday 17 January
- the Health Partners Women's Stage 2 finish at Willunga Hill on Saturday 18 January
- THINK! Road Safety Men's Stage 5 from McLaren Vale to Willunga Hill on Saturday 25 January.

The 25th anniversary is a huge milestone for both the region, the event and the state. The Santos Tour Down Under is one of Australia's great sporting success stories and Onkaparinga is entwined with this history, having partnered every year since its inception in 1999.

Our stunning coastline, townships and vistas have become synonymous with the race – broadcast to millions around the world – and we are looking forward to seeing crowds line the streets over three packed days to celebrate the milestone.

It is great to see that Race Director, Stuart O'Grady, has gone with a greatest hits approach to Onkaparinga's involvement in 2025, with classic stages such as McLaren Vale to Willunga Hill alongside major drawcards including our beaches and world-famous wine region. It is also a historic event in that we are hosting two women's stages for the first time.

For more information:

- On the race routes, trackside events and more, visit tourdownunder.com.au.
- On road closures and parking restrictions, visit onkaparingacity.com/tdu

Australia Day Events

For those residents looking to come together on Australia Day, our Australia Day Family Fair is happening again at the South Adelaide Football Club on Lovelock Drive in Noarlunga Centre from 5.30pm to 9.30pm. The event will be filled with an assortment of activities designed for the whole family's enjoyment.

Indulge in scrumptious food offered by a diverse range of vendors. Delight your little ones (including grandchildren) with engaging children's activities and be entertained by live performances throughout the evening. As the night draws to a close, enjoy the popular annual fireworks display. Feel free to bring your own food and non-alcoholic beverages, and we recommend bringing along picnic blankets and chairs to help you settle in for a great event.

We will also be announcing the City of Onkaparinga's Australia Day Awards recipients at an earlier event that is held in conjunction with our Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony, starting at 4.30 pm at the South Adelaide Oval.

Earlier in the day we will be again hosting three free Australia Day breakfasts from 8am until 11am. Meet and connect with your community and reflect on our history, diversity, achievements and bright future while you enjoy your free breakfast. There will be entertainment along with activities for the children.

The breakfasts will be held at Willunga's Centenary Park, Ramsay Place in Noarlunga Centre, and Happy Valley Sports Park. Just bring a picnic rug or a chair. The Happy Valley Sports Park events will be open to the public from 8.00 am with several community organisations participating, including our local Neighbourhood Watch areas (Woodcroft, Aberfoyle Park/Happy Valley, Reynella and Flagstaff Hill). This event attracted around 1,500 people last year and I will be there with my Thalassa Ward co-councillor Marion Themeliotis assisting. Please get along to this breakfast as we want to make it the biggest attended breakfast in the City of Onkaparinga. It is a great opportunity to bring the northern parts of the City of Onkaparinga together, along with some of our bordering council residents.

I will be representing the City of Onkaparinga mid-morning at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Australia Day event held at the Noor Mosque at Morphett Vale, so I will need to leave a little early but would enjoy catching up with our residents beforehand.

Head to onkaparingacity.com/australiaday for more information.

Beachside Food and Wine Festival

Our popular Beachside Food and Wine Festival will return on Saturday 15 February at Rotary Park, Christies Beach from 4pm to 9.30pm. Choose from a diverse range of local wine, beer and spirits from across our region, while indulging in the variety of food on offer with stunning coastal views.

There is more to the festival than just food, wine and a good vibe. There will be live entertainment and market stalls bursting with unique treasures that showcase the exceptional talents of our local artists and artisans.

Keep an eye on onkaparingacity.com/beachside where we will provide more information about the businesses and entertainment soon.

Surf Art Exhibition

Our annual Surf Art exhibition is on now at Port Noarlunga's Arts Centre until Monday 3 February. Surf 2024 celebrates Onkaparinga's surfing culture, lifestyle, history and stunning coastal environment.

This annual exhibition has carved a place in the hearts and souls of the southern arts calendar and has become one of the pivotal features of the Arts Centre's program. More than 100 works from more than 70 Australian artists are on display this year.

Scenes of the local coastal environment, or people enjoying the sun, sand and surf of the region's beautiful coastline are staples in the exhibition. The Arts Centre is open from 10am to 4pm from Monday to Friday, and from 1pm to 4pm on Saturdays. It's closed on Sundays and public holidays.

As part of your visit to this fabulous location take a walk down Gawler Street and take in that great ambience of the street and then even wonder to the Port Noarlunga beach and walk the new Witton Bluff boardwalk. There are some great eating places and lovely shops in this area.

Witton Bluff Base Trail Boardwalk

December saw the completion of the Witton Bluff Base Trail boardwalk, which will help connect the iconic beaches of Port Noarlunga and Christies Beach when the trail is fully completed in mid-2025. The \$6.7 million, 1.1-kilometre Witton Bluff Base Trail – jointly funded by the state government and the City of Onkaparinga – will provide access for people of all abilities, encourage the community to stay healthy and active in stunning surrounds, and boost the local economy through increased visitation.

Stage 1, opened to the public just before Christmas, has delivered a three-metre-wide shared-use boardwalk from Port Noarlunga to the tip of the bluff.

Work to repair the existing sea wall to the north of the new boardwalk is underway and will help protect the cliff's infrastructure from erosion and rising sea levels. An upgrade of the existing path at the Christies Beach end of the bluff will complete the project by mid next year.

The state government has committed an additional \$250,000 for First Nations public art, thanks to the support of local Members of Parliament Chris Picton and Katrine Hildyard.

We have also secured additional funding for sea wall repairs including \$1.2 million through the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund and \$355,000 through the state government's Coast Protection Board.

It is just one of several major projects we're delivering for the community in the area, with the major refurbishments of Noarlunga's beloved Hopgood Theatre, Noarlunga Aquatic Centre and Port Noarlunga's Wearing Street aquatic precinct also happening now.

Aberfoyle Community Centre Extension Official Opening

We are excited about the planned completion of the new Aberfoyle Community Centre expansion and are hosting an open day and family event celebration on Saturday 15 February 2025 from 11am to 2pm. The expansion is located at the rear of the building and includes a new flexible room suitable for new types of activities, a youth pod and an art studio space. Adjoining the new space is a centralised outdoor area with landscaping connected by large stacking doors for informal gatherings. These new spaces are tailored for a wide range of programs, such as arts, crafts, dance, exhibitions, social activities, and youth and family programs.

With the support of Erin Thompson MP, Member for Davenport and Nat Cook MP Member for Hurtle Vale, the state government has contributed \$1,540,000 to this exciting project.

We have several things planned for the opening celebration, including:

- Face painting
- A magician
- Live music
- VR experiences
- Children's craft tables
- Pottery demonstrations

Refreshments and a free sausage sizzle will be provided, supported by members of the Aberfoyle Lions Club.

Please join us for this opening along with Nat Cook and Erin Thompson.

Sturt Gorge & Surrounds Redi Communities Workshop

If you live in the suburbs adjacent to the Sturt Gorge this is a must for you to attend so that you are prepared should an emergency event occur.

Sturt Gorge & surrounds

RediCommunities

**COMMUNITY LED
DISASTER
RESILIENCE**

Intro/Workshop 1

Be part of a community led disaster action plan that contains actions to increase your community's disaster resilience

Date: Wednesday 5 February, 2025
Time: 6:45-9pm
Location: Coromandel Community Centre, 442b Main Rd

Registration free
Eventbrite
Leeza Peters or Lesley-Anne Lyle
City of Onkaparinga 8384 0666

Australian Red Cross

CITY OF ONKAPARINGA

This project received grant funding from the Australian Federal Government.

McHarg Reserve Heritage Agreement



MCHARG RESERVE HERITAGE AGREEMENT

A LONG TERM COMMITMENT TO ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

The City of Onkaparinga has entered into a Heritage Agreement to protect and restore McHarg Reserve, a critical biodiversity reserve in Happy Valley.

This long term, legally binding conservation agreement was established between the council and the Minister for Climate, Environment, and Water, following the recommendation of the Native Vegetation Council (NVC).

The agreement forms part of the offset for the Piggott Range Road Black Spot project and through the implementation of the associated Native Vegetation Management Plan, will achieve significant biodiversity outcomes. It highlights council's commitment to balancing the environmental impacts while delivering a high priority road safety project.

This agreement is only the second Heritage Agreement established on City of Onkaparinga land, with the first being at Pimpala Reserve in Woodcroft.

Heritage Agreements are established in perpetuity, ensuring the ongoing protection and ecological management of significant natural sites. For McHarg Reserve, this agreement secures 21.754 hectares of land within the Adelaide Hills Face Zone as a dedicated area for continued restoration efforts. The site is situated within a high conservation area, in close proximity to key environmental assets such as the Happy Valley Reservoir, Mount Bold Reservoir and Scott Creek Conservation Park. Additionally, McHarg Reserve is identified within council's Ecological Linkage Study 2023 (draft) as a priority ecological corridor.



City of Onkaparinga PO Box 1, Noarlunga Centre South Australia

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Community Wastewater Management System State Government Petition.

We are gathering signatures for a petition to support SA Water taking over ownership and operation of the council's Community Wastewater Management System (CWMS). This change would likely result in reduced wastewater charges for many customers.

The deadline is 20 January 2025, so please don't miss your chance to be part of this submission to Parliament. Visit your local Council office, library, or community centre to sign the petition in person. The CWMS services communities in Clarendon, Maslin Beach, McLaren Flat, McLaren Vale, Morphett Vale, Sellicks Beach and Willunga.

Find out more: <https://yoursay.onkaparinga.sa.gov.au/community...#Onkaparinga>

Encore Winter Program Achievements 2024

Results from the Encore activation program's 2024 Winter Activation grants are in, with an estimated local economic impact of \$959,815, a 73% increase on 2023.

Despite the difficult winter trading period and challenging business climate, the program has proven to be a successful catalyst for local growth and played a pivotal role in supporting business sustainability.

Place and business activations are a collaborative process to activate our tourism precincts, main streets and spaces with short-term commercial activities. They showcase our city, its experiences and businesses in creative ways to stimulate the local economy.

The winter activation program yielded increased economic growth and visitation from the inaugural year in 2023 including:

- Eleven business collaborations awarded grants offering 120 activities across our region
- Attracted over 9,895 visitors delivering an approximate local economic impact of \$959,815 (73% increase)
- Increased seasonal employment, supply chains and sale revenue
- Multiple sold-out activations, extended trading hours, boosted dinner reservations
- Reached an audience of over 315,000 people through marketing across various channels

View the winter activation program highlights video [here](#).

With the Winter Activation Grants on hold for 2025 while the grants program evaluation takes place, the Economic Growth and Tourism team will support businesses through a winter marketing campaign to continue to encourage visitation and spend during the low season.

Please check out our calendar of Encore Summer Activations at: www.valeandcoast.com.au/encore.

Affordable Housing Strategy Update

Since the Elected Members Session in late August and the September update, work on the Affordable Housing Strategy has commenced into full swing. We are focusing on researching housing needs for our communities, plus potential options for council's consideration. This includes:

Research and analysis

- Preparing a housing needs assessment, including data analysis of housing statistics in City of Onkaparinga. Initial findings indicate affordability has decreased for both home purchasers and renters, with low -income renters experiencing the greatest housing stress. Contributing to this is increasing house prices (higher than Greater Adelaide) and lower wages and lower income growth (less than Greater Adelaide).

- Discussions with other local governments and reviews of Local Government Housing strategies to understand and identify possible interventions that could be considered by Council.
- Engaging Capetal Advisory, specialist housing advisors, to inform council of funding models for affordable housing in the City of Onkaparinga. This will include development of a financial model highlighting puts/interventions/subsidies required for delivery. An EM workshop to discuss the findings and consider the ways forward will be scheduled for early in 2025.
- Council becoming members of Shelter SA, South Australia's peak representative body for low-income housing. CEO Alice Clarke has met with key staff to share how Shelter SA's Modern Village concept works, its benefits and its challenges and to consider if it could be applicable in the City of Onkaparinga.

Engagement

- A set of questions related to housing were included in the latest community survey, which closed on 15 December. This is the first time we've asked specifically about housing.
- Preparing for an online stakeholder workshop early next year, to which Elected Members will be invited. The invitation list includes real estate agents, Community Housing Providers, State government departments and more. At the workshop, stakeholders will be asked to consider key areas for housing specific to the City of Onkaparinga.
- Preparing for community engagement on what 'affordable housing' means to them, as part of the Affordable Onkaparinga session being planned for 19 February 2025. At this session, participants will have the opportunity to speak with us about what 'affordable' really means for them, beyond the initial cost of the housing itself and what housing diversity looks like in the context of the Community Vision.

Advocacy

- Council endorsed a submission regarding the draft Greater Adelaide Regional Plan, advocating for the needs of the City of Onkaparinga, including land supply and improvements to affordable housing provisions with the Planning and Design Code.

Neighbourhood Watch Awards/Meetings Schedule

Flagstaff Hill Neighbourhood Watch Area 453

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- Wednesday 12 March.
- Wednesday 11 June.
- Wednesday 10 September.
- Wednesday 10 December 2025– Christmas Dinner.

Meetings commence at 6.30 pm at the Flagstaff Hill Golf Club (temporary restaurant) where a light supper is provided.

Aberfoyle Park Happy Valley Neighbourhood Watch Area 491

- Monday 20 January 2025.
- Monday 17 March.
- Monday 19 May.
- Monday 21 July.

Meetings commence at 7.30pm at Aberfoyle Park Community Centre where a light supper is provided.

Reynella Neighbourhood Watch Area 048/146

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the following dates:

- I am still waiting advice on the meeting date for 2025.

Meetings commence at 7.00 pm at the Reynella Football Club 1 Oval Road, Old Reynella

Woodcroft Neighbourhood Watch Area 406

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the following dates for 2025:

- Tuesday 11 February.
- Tuesday 13 May.
- Tuesday 12 August.
- Tuesday 11 November 2025 AGM.

Meetings commence at 7.30 pm at the Woodcroft Heights Children Centre, 25 Investigator Drive Woodcroft.

YOURSAY

Open Engagements

- Community Survey 2024 (closes 15 December)
- Major refurbishment of Noarlunga Aquatic Centre (inform only)
- Motorised vessel exclusion zone Aldinga Beach/Sellicks Beach (closes 28 February 2025)
- Draft Open Space Strategic Management Plan (closes 2 February 2025)
- Community Wastewater Management System petition (closes 20 January 2025)
- Local Heritage Code Amendment – advanced notice of engagement opening February 2025 (inform only).
- Noarlunga master planning housing project – State Government engagement (closes 12 January 2025).

Closed Engagements

- Review of the Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010 – State Government engagement

Go to www.onkaparingacity.com/yoursay for more information.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this article are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of Council.

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