

Community Capacity and Connection Strategy 2026–31 Summary

Building stronger communities
Draft



Supporting an informed, active, creative and empowered community

A stronger community

The Community Capacity and Connection Strategy 2026–31 explains the City of Onkaparinga's aims for people to be well, connected, included and to take part in and shape community life.

Guided by the Community Vision 2034, it focuses on improving wellbeing, strengthening community capacity and creating more opportunities for people to engage, participate, learn, contribute and lead.

Strong communities make it easier for people to connect and support one another, access opportunities, respond to challenges and shape their future.

The 4 implementation plans associated with the strategy explain how the City of Onkaparinga will meet its aims.



Why this matters

Onkaparinga is a large and diverse community, and many people feel connected and require less support or access to services than others.

At the same time, fewer people are volunteering or participating in community groups, fewer people are getting recommended levels of physical activity, reliable information is becoming harder to find, and more people are experiencing loneliness, financial stress, difficulty accessing services and the challenges often associated with ageing and disability.

The council supports improving the quality of local community life by bringing people together to address challenges and make the most of opportunities.

Under this strategy, we will do this by:

- creating safe, welcoming and inclusive places
- supporting social connection and participation in a wide range of contexts
- empowering the community to participate in and contribute to decision making
- backing community-led ideas, initiatives and activities
- working with local organisations, businesses and other levels of government.

What we mean by community capacity and connection

Community capacity is about people and communities having the skills, confidence and opportunities to participate in community and civic life and take action to shape their future.

A connected community is one where people feel they belong, are valued and have access to what they need.

This means:

- reducing barriers to participation, like cost, isolation or lack of access
- supporting people to build skills, confidence and networks
- creating opportunities to connect and work together
- supporting local leadership.

What we mean by community life

Community life is all the things that make living in this region special. The council has a broad role in contributing to that. This includes through libraries and their programs, sport and recreation opportunities, artistic and cultural enrichment, a wide range of community programs, services, events, activities and facilities, and civic processes around decision-making.

Our approach

We will work in ways that advance social equity and develop communities to:

Build on existing local strengths and community knowledge

Focus on inclusion and fairness, especially for under-represented groups

Respond to different needs across ages, cultures, abilities, and locations

Support volunteering and community leadership

Work across the council and with partners to deliver better community outcomes

We will pay attention to groups who can face barriers to participation, including (but not limited to):

Children

Young people

Older people

People with disability

People on low incomes

Culturally diverse communities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Neurodiverse people

LGBTIQA+ communities

New citizens

The strategy will be delivered over time through implementation plans covering 4 areas:



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Informed Community (to be developed)

Helping people access information, services and learning opportunities, including through libraries and digital inclusion.



Active Community (to be developed)

Supporting people to be active and healthy through sport, recreation and inclusive programs.



Creative Community (to be developed)

Encouraging arts, culture and creativity to build connection, identity and pride.



Empowered Community

Supporting people to live well, get involved, have their say and lead community action.

The Empowered Community Implementation Plan 2026–31 has been developed. It provides actions that encourage and support a community that is well and equipped to participate in and shape community life, engage with decision-making via local and larger democratic processes, and lead action on shared priorities.

Working together



Strong communities are built through collaboration.

Council will work with community members, community groups and clubs, service providers, businesses and other levels of government to deliver this strategy.

Libraries, youth, community, arts and positive ageing centres, along with recreation facilities will continue to play an important role as places where people connect, learn, participate and lead.

Progress on delivering against the strategy will be reported to the council every two years to demonstrate the real outcomes being achieved.

Our commitment

Through this strategy, the City of Onkaparinga is committed to supporting a community where everyone feels they belong and has the opportunity to participate, contribute and thrive, now and into the future.

You can read the full draft Community Capacity and Connection Strategy and its Empowered Community Implementation Plan by scanning this QR code.

