

The Management Committee of Willunga Recreation Park (Incorporated) (WRPI) has created this document to inform the community, supporters and potential supporters of the history, operations and, most importantly, future plans for the valuable Willunga community facility, the Willunga Recreation Park (WRP).

WRPI works to ensure that the benefits the WRP and its operations provide to the communities of Willunga, the Fleurieu Peninsula and the City of Onkaparinga are both understood and recognised and how the community and other stakeholders can engage with and support future endeavours to redevelop and enhance the facilities and programs.

The Aim

The aim of WRPI is to ensure that Willunga Recreation Park remains a well-managed and sustainable community asset with facilities that reflect and meet community needs now and into the future. These needs include sport, entertainment, education, cultural and wider community engagement for people of all ages.

To meet the financial requirements of this aim, WRPI seeks additional sources of income to support the planned projects listed below.

We currently generate income by:

- Staging major events,
- Applying for sponsorship and grants,
- Hiring facilities to both permanent and casual users,
- Engaging with sponsors and potential sponsors, and
- Maximising the efforts of community volunteers to run our events.

The Facility – Willunga Recreation Park

Willunga Recreation Park (WRP) has a long history and owes its existence to early residents who were determined that a public park be provided for the use of locals. In 1876, eight acres of land within Willunga was purchased for £96 and dedicated to the community. Much has happened since then.

Today, WRP is a vibrant shared community facility in the centre of town. It is home to several sporting and community clubs and state/national organisations including the Country Fire Service, the Returned Services League and the Country Women's Association.

WRP is unique. It is entirely owned and managed by and for the community of Willunga by an elected Management Committee with a representation process that engages all resident club and organisation stakeholders.

As a community based, not-for-profit entity, WRPI self-funds most of its upgrades and maintenance. Facilitating this is an army of hard working volunteers on whom the WRPI totally relies to successfully run fund-raising events and support all WRP operations

Our multi-purpose complex is a huge asset for the residents of the Willunga, Fleurieu Peninsula and the City of Onkaparinga catchment area. The combination of indoor and outdoor facilities, well maintained oval and surrounds, courts for both netball and tennis and the sharing of the facilities with Willunga Primary School ensure its high profile in bringing our community together.

The facilities are available for hire by casual and one-off community users, such as concerts and celebrations. It is estimated that more than 500,000 use or visit WRP each year.

Over the ensuing years since 1876, use of WRP has changed with the times. However, it has maintained its role as focal point for the community for sporting activities, social, educational, arts and community events.

It is vital that the Park reflects the needs of our changing and growing local community. Central to this is how we can best develop the facilities to continue to positively engage people. This requires not only maintenance of the present (and ageing) facilities, but also a clear vision of what might work best in the future informed by regular feedback from all our stakeholders – clubs, organisations, businesses and the wider community.

Responding to community needs, recent projects undertaken include installing a sprung wooden floor and replacing the roof and air conditioning of the Festival Hall. The heritage exterior stone walls of the Show Hall have been restored, facade repainted and the interior upgraded with new paint, air conditioning, heating and acoustic panels. Externally, major areas of the non-playing surfaces have been sealed and a new landscaping improvement program commenced.

Proposed Projects

In consultation with stakeholders, WRPI is planning several projects to continue to modernise WRP facilities to address safety, capacity or aesthetic concerns and improve environmental and energy efficiency. It is aiming, with support, to complete these projects within the next five (5) years.

Willunga, Fleurieu and Onkaparinga communities will benefit from these various projects when implemented. Updated facilities will cater for increased participation in existing activities and enhance the commercial appeal of WRP to generate income from potential hirers. The latter enabling WRPI to generate income that will assist them to meet ongoing costs.

- **Replace Kitchen** – The existing kitchen is inadequate for all but extremely basic catering. A planned total renovation will bring the kitchen to current standards and both allow and encourage greater use of facilities for involved groups and casual hirers. **(\$300,000)**
- **Insulate Hall Facilities for heat and sound** – In addition to improving energy efficiency, this will enhance the quality of sound for performances and movies resulting in greater comfort and enjoyment for patrons. **(\$120,000)**
- **Replace Oval Watering System** – The aged system has been subject to ongoing repairs and nearing its end of life. A new system will ensure optimum turf growth and efficient use of limited water resources. **(\$200,000)**
- **Replace Sport Lighting** – Expansion of sporting codes has increased demand for nighttime outdoor training and competitions necessitating the need for improved, safe and more energy efficient lighting. **(\$250,000)**
- **Replace roof of RSL and CWA clubrooms** – The roof is still the original one installed in 1979. It leaks and valuable historical artifacts have been damaged. **(\$90,000)**
- **Resurface tennis/netball courts** – Increased usage year-round inevitably means more wear and tear on surfaces and additional effort to provide safe playing surfaces. **(\$250,000)**
- **Upgrade the cricket nets** – to provide additional capacity for the club and to ensure the nets are safe to use. **(\$75,000)**
- **Refurbish Festival Hall entry and foyer** – This will address security issues and improve street appeal of the property. **(\$30,000)**
- **Upgrade Festival Hall toilets** – The facilities inside the Festival Hall are dilapidated, lack disabled access and generally unsuitable for a modern facility. **(\$45,000)**
- **Complete bitumen paving and rectify drainage issues** – Completing the recent bitumen paving and drainage project will provide safer pedestrian surfaces and reduce flooding of the park and school. **(\$150,000)**
- **Upgrade Tennis and Netball Clubroom** – Increased participation in both sports demands increased capacity in this shared clubroom as well as improved spectator facilities. **(\$150,000)**
- **Replace Oval Fence** – The existing galvanized pipe fence has significantly deteriorated, replacement with a metal-based picket fence will be safer, require minimal maintenance and reinforce the 'village' aesthetic of Willunga. **(\$60,000)**
- **Replace aging fencing on Aldinga Road** – The existing fence is old and unappealing. A new fence will improve the safety and look of events such as Almond Blossom Festival and markets. **(\$15,000)**

Total Estimated cost – \$1,735,000



Future Projects

Future projects to be considered by WRPI include.

- **Expand Sports and Social Club Facilities** – Existing facilities are at their limit catering for the increased patronage associated with the growth of sporting clubs and inclusion of more junior and female teams. The club rooms require further capacity and an upgraded kitchen to meet the needs of families and other supporters.
- **Establish clubroom for the Basketball Club and improve viewing capacity for spectators** – The new sprung floor has encouraged more people to play basketball and bring their families to watch, stretching current capacity and the work of the Club itself.
- **Upgrade Cricket Club facilities** – The popularity of local cricket and introduction of female teams has surpassed the capacity of existing facilities.



The Community – Willunga Township and Surrounds

Nestled in the splendid Fleurieu Peninsula, Willunga township is a vibrant community bursting with history, charm, and local flair. With a population of approximately 3600 residents, Willunga thrives on a powerful sense of camaraderie and active participation in local events, centered around the lively Willunga Recreation Park.

The WRP is in the heart of Willunga and is a magnetic hub for sporting, community, and entertainment activities. With the town residents engaging in recreational activities at the park, it serves as a vital space for connection and well-being. WRP contributes significantly to the “market image” of Willunga by staging the Willunga Quarry Market and hosting the Artisans and Green Light markets. The township truly rallies behind its events, with local businesses and organisations enthusiastically stepping up as sponsors, creating an exciting atmosphere that fosters community spirit and pride. A shining example of this is the annual Almond Blossom Festival (ABF) established in 1970 and continuing to this day, albeit in a modern mini country show format. Attending the ABF is a rite of passage for young locals and now they come back from near and far with their children.

Recent road and rail upgrades have made Willunga more accessible to folk from Adelaide and our events and markets are well attended by city residents keen to enjoy what Willunga can offer.



The Major Events

WRPI proudly stages several major events that attract attendees from across South Australia and beyond. These celebrations not only enrich the social and cultural fabric of the township, but also significantly boost local and Fleurieu tourism and economic activity.

- **Willunga Almond Blossom Festival:** Attracting on average, 20,000 visitors per annum since 1970, this festival celebrates the region's agricultural heritage with family-friendly activities, market stalls, and live entertainment.
- **Willunga Chilli Festival:** in excess of 4,000 attendees, this spicy event showcases the best of local chilli products, food, and culture.
- **Willunga Jigsaw Mania:** This unique gathering brings together hundreds of jigsaw puzzle enthusiasts for a weekend of speed puzzling fun and spirited competition, including the South Australian Championship.
- **Willunga Quarry Market:** This long running monthly market is operated by WRPI and attracts more than 4,000 attendees yearly.



Willunga Almond Blossom Festival

As a result of our promotion of these events, we are attracting increasing numbers of intra and interstate visitors. In addition to the more than 150 businesses directly participating, benefits flow on to other local and regional businesses and attractions. Many community organisations also benefit.

The Clubs and Organisations Supported

Sporting

Willunga Football Club
Willunga Netball Club
Willunga Cricket Club
Willunga Basketball Club
Willunga Tennis Club
Willunga Table Tennis Club

Entertainment

Cinemallunga
Second Friday Film Club
Stone Pony (Music)
Fleurieu Folk Festival

Community

Willunga CFS Brigade
Willunga Primary School
Willunga RSL
Willunga CWA
Willunga Girl Guides
Willunga Quarry Market

Green Light Market
Artisan's Market
Several Fitness Classes

Contacts

For more information about Willunga Recreation Park and WRPI plans:

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This document has been prepared by the volunteer Management Committee of WRPI with input from other volunteers. Contact as above for volunteering opportunities.

