



# *Indicators of Community Wellbeing for the Southern and Hills Local Government Area*

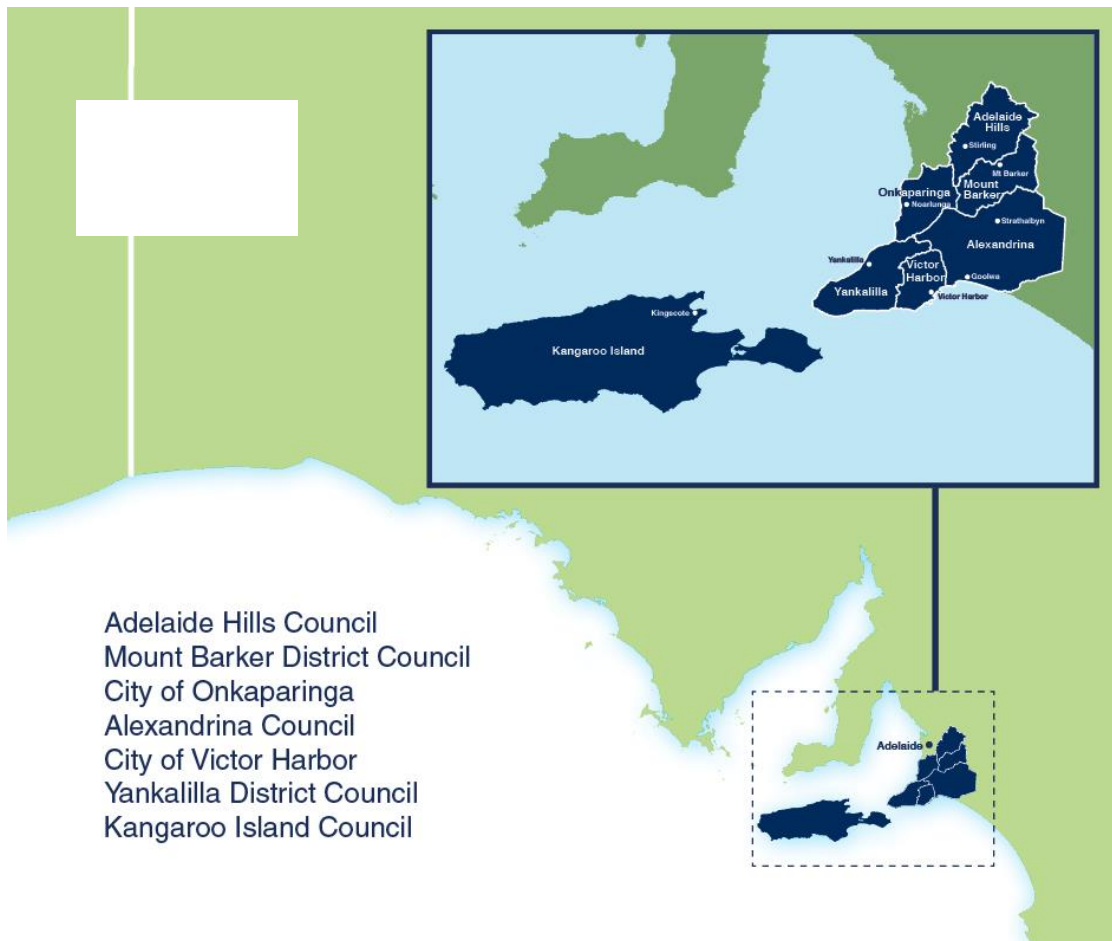
*August 2021*



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*For the Southern and Hills LGA which covers:*



This project was funded by the Local Government Research & Development Scheme.

### *Acknowledgment of Country*

The Southern & Hills Local Government Association acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the region's first people and recognises their traditional relationship with Country. We acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices of Aboriginal peoples come from their traditional lands and waters and that the cultural and heritage beliefs, languages, and laws are still of importance today.

# Forward

This report gives us a new picture of what our communities look like. It reports on some of the most important components of public health and wellbeing such as the health of our environment, the opportunities in our places and the strength of our communities.

It is the first regional report generated using a model Framework for Indicators of Community Wellbeing at the LGA level that has been developed by the S&HLGA and with funding from the Local Government Research and Development Scheme. The report shows us how community wellbeing varies across our region, between local government areas and how we compare to Adelaide and SA. It also identifies where there is a shortage of good quality information and where more work is needed to fill data gaps.

The Indicators of Community Wellbeing offer us a robust shared tool to monitor the dynamic domains of community wellbeing that are within the influence of local government.

Healthy and strong communities are built through the combined actions of government, business and communities. Councils have many opportunities to improve wellbeing, including through services they provide and actions to create safe and accessible public places, provide practical opportunities for involvement in sport, recreation and cultural activities, increase tree coverage and manage resources sustainably. They can also help build and support partnerships and networks in local areas through supporting volunteering, investing in local leaders and encouraging local business. The indicators in this report track these, and many other, aspects of community wellbeing.

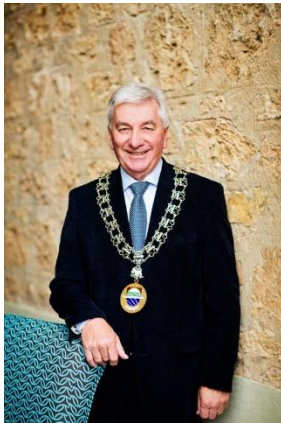
Councils in our region will be able to use the insights provided by the Indicators of Community Wellbeing in their strategic and public health planning, service development, funding submissions, advocacy priorities and community engagement initiatives.

Close to 100 people working at councils in our region, across the South Australian local government sector and in public health organisations have been involved in this project. I wish to acknowledge and thank them for their contribution to developing the Community Wellbeing Indicator Framework and this first report for the Southern and Hills LGA region.



Mayor Keith Parkes

President, Southern and Hills LGA



# *The Indicators of Community Wellbeing*

## *The health of our environment*

*Our communities report nature is important to them*

1. Tree canopy coverage

*Our communities want a sustainable future*

2. Greenhouse gas emissions
3. Household recycling
4. Council use of recycled water

## *The opportunities in our places*

*Our communities want services that make places liveable*

5. Growth of jobs and businesses
  6. Internet access
  7. Transport disadvantage
  8. Cultural and community facilities – visits to libraries
- PRIORITY DATA DEVELOPMENT AREA – access to services and infrastructure

*Our communities want access to opportunities for all*

9. Low-income households
10. Housing stress (rental and mortgage)
11. Those who do not feel safe on the street after dark
12. Discrimination
13. Accessibility of public spaces

## *The strength of our communities*

*Our communities value social connection/participation*

14. Social isolation
15. Participation in community groups
16. Volunteering

*Our communities want opportunities for play, recreation, and exercise*

17. Developmentally on track in first year of school (children)
18. Physically inactive (adults)
19. Walkability

*Our communities want to have a say*

20. Opportunities to have a say – voting in local elections.

# Community wellbeing

Our local communities are important. The places we live, and the opportunities they provide, contribute to our health and wellbeing by giving us access to economic resources, services we need, and facilities where we can learn, play, exercise, and connect.

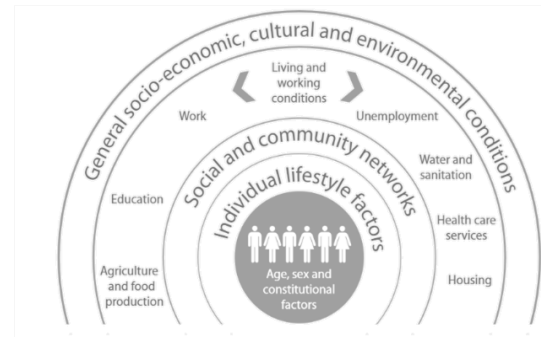
A unique [research project by The Curtin University](#) defined community wellbeing “from the ground up” for the Yawuru community. The Yawuru see a person’s wellbeing (*mabu liyan*) as them having and knowing a good life (living well). This concept encapsulates how a person feels about themselves, their connection to others, relationship with the community, ability to contribute, sense of belonging, self-determination, and obligations to family, community, and the environment. For the Yawuru, *mabu liyan* [is underpinned by two other pillars](#):

- » *Mabu buru*: strong country
- » *Mabu ngarrungunil*: strong community.

Improving community wellbeing relies on action across these three pillars.

This traditional concept of what underpins a good life resonates with Australian academic definitions of community wellbeing, as “the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential”. This definition is based on public health’s [social determinants model of health](#), which emphasises social, economic and environmental interventions governments can use to improve wellbeing (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Social determinants model of health



Source: Dahlgren & Whitehead 1991.

In Victoria, the Department for Victorian Communities described [community wellbeing](#) for local governments using a framework based on the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu that focused on the resources available in communities. He argued a community’s standard of living and wellbeing is generated from a combination of economic resources (jobs, housing, infrastructure, etc), human capital resources (skills, health, etc), and social capital resources (accrued through networks (personal, community and political) (Figure 2).

# Outcomes local governments can influence

We have used the Victorian model to consider the levers local governments have in South Australia to improve community resources/wellbeing through their land use and transport planning, environmental and other services, and economic and community development activities<sup>1</sup>. Figure 2 shows the theoretical framework underpinning our *Indicators of Community Wellbeing*, that we developed with stakeholders. We then asked them to select the most important indicators to be tracked across this framework.

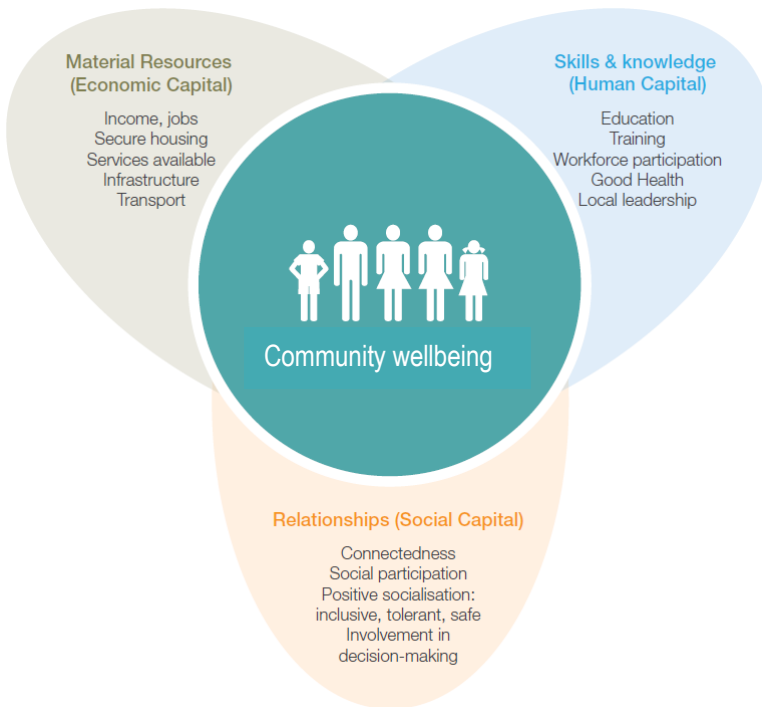
<sup>1</sup> Kashef Z (2018) ‘These are the ingredients for a happy community’, World Economic Forum website, 29 May 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/05/communities-with-these-things-say-they-re-healthier-and-happier>

Figure 2. Local government actions that can impact on community wellbeing <sup>2</sup>

## Local governments can:

**Improve access to economic resources** through actions that support:

- **Natural environments and environmental sustainability**
- **Jobs or enterprise** – planning and amenity (to attract industry), actions to support people to work locally, etc.
- **Reduced cost of living** – low-cost services, free Wi-Fi, etc.



**Improve access to health, education and cultural (human capital) resources** through actions that support:

- **Life-long learning** – playgrounds, libraries, etc.
- **Health and wellbeing** – infrastructure for sport, exercise and active transport, facilities for health and support services, etc.
- **Community transport and internet.**

**Improve access to social capital building resources** through actions that support:

- **Participation cultures:** recreation/community facilities that encourage participation and connection and house volunteer associations and clubs, and their activities
- **Civic entrepreneurs and local governance capabilities:** civic buildings, innovation spaces, etc. <sup>1</sup>

## What are indicators?

Indicators are summary measures of social, economic and environmental phenomena that allow us to keep a track of complex issues in a simple way. There is currently no set of indicators that let policy officers assess of the complex issue of community wellbeing in South Australia.

These *Indicators of Community Wellbeing* highlight **outcomes** that local governments can influence that will assist in their strategic planning, public health planning, community planning and service provision. They are **not performance indicators**. This is because the outcomes in Figure 2 are shaped by global events and all levels of government, industry, community organisations, and communities themselves. Other influences can cause the indicators to move the wrong way, despite effective local government action.

## How the indicators were selected

To be effective summaries of issues, indicators need to fit three criteria. They must be:

1. **Theoretically sound** – have clarity about what they are summarising, and in this case, focus on outcomes local government has influence over.

To ensure the indicators are theoretically sound we developed the framework in Figure 2, before searching for data.

2. **Commonly understood** – be understood and agreed on by a range of audiences.

To ensure the indicators are ‘commonly understood’, we analysed stories about what is important to Southern and Hills communities from council plans, council community engagements, and other community research. We came up with a set of themes and tested these in workshops with 35 council officers from the region and selected 20 indicators to report on those themes.

3. **Technically accurate** – sourced from a robust, accurate time series data collection.

To ensure that the indicators are technically accurate, we have only included indicators that can be made from robust time series data sets, or that could reasonably be developed. A broader group of 60 government and non-government stakeholders tested our selection and provided input into the best (most accurate) data sources or data development possibilities.

## How to read this report

In this first report of the *Indicators of Community Wellbeing* you will find:

- » **20 indicators of community wellbeing** that meet the criteria above. Some are currently data gaps, but focus on issues that are important to communities (e.g. social isolation)
- » **Ideas for data development** for the data gaps
- » **Case studies and links to more detailed data** to provide more context and information.



# Snapshot of our communities

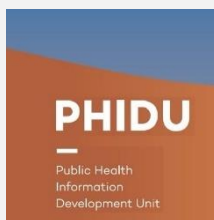


## Find out more about who we are, what we do, and how we live



[The RDA Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island Community Profile](#) provides community and economic data from population Census from 2011. You can select your LGA, the region, the State, or Australia.

## Find out more about our population's health



[The Social Health Atlas of Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), created by the Public Health Information Development Unit, has data about a broad range of health outcomes and their social and economic determinants that are important to the public health planning work of local governments.

# *The health of our environment*

“Strong country” underpins community wellbeing.

Natural environments support the ecosystems on which human life depends. They provide the materials for our economies, are restorative and good for our health, support physical and recreational activities, and strengthen social connections. They are the most utilised community infrastructure and give our communities their identities.

For some, this comes from the knowledge of up to seven generations who have lived and worked in the region. For our Aboriginal communities, it comes from a culture that “maps” over 80,000 years of knowledge about this place and how to look after it.

Climate change – and the increasing heatwaves, drought, storms, bushfires, and coastal inundation that are resulting – threaten these benefits. [A Lowy Institute \(2020\) survey](#) shows that the majority of Australians believe environmental disasters such as bushfires and floods are a critical (67%) or important (30%) threat and want governments to act.

This section outlines 4 indicators of issues that are important to our communities:

*Our communities report nature is important to them*

1. Tree coverage

*Our communities want a sustainable future*

2. Fossil fuel emissions

3. Household recycling

4. Council use of recycled water

*Our communities report nature is important to them*

## 1 Tree canopy coverage

**Target: no target for regional South Australia.** Tree canopy cover is an indicator of nature, tree planting, and tree loss. Trees protect our health through environmental protection (carbon storage, air pollution removal, air temperature control, wind reduction, flood mitigation, noise reduction), infrastructure protection (cooling buildings/road/street infrastructure - reducing costs), wildlife protection, and improvements in our mental and physical health. Tree coverage has been declining as land use changes with population growth. Protecting and enhancing our urban and rural tree canopy is integral to healthy, ecologically diverse, and vibrant places.

Source: Not currently available. Adelaide Hills measure comes from [Benchmarking Australia's Tree Canopy 2014](#), Mount Barker have conducted their own survey in three zones (unpublished)

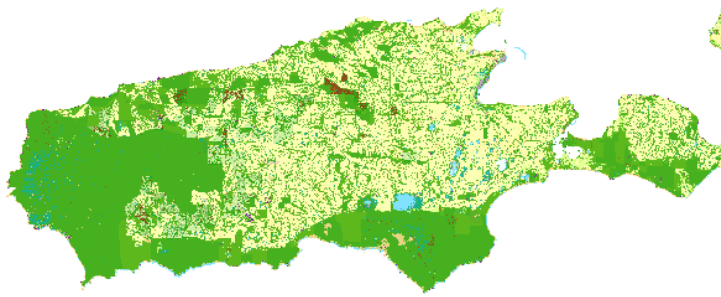
**DATA GAP**

[Heat and tree canopy maps](#) are only complete for Adelaide, but are forthcoming

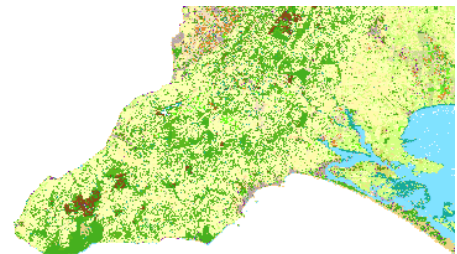
### LGAs

Adelaide Hills	44%	2014
Alexandrina	n/a	
Kangaroo Island	n/a	
Mount Barker	11%-22% across 3 zones	2019
Victor Harbor	n/a	
Yankalilla	n/a	

Nature maps – native vegetation in green, agricultural land in yellow, plantations in brown



Source: Enviro Data SA [Nature maps](#)



## Case study #1: Animal and bird biodiversity

Birds and animals are important to communities and are a vital part of healthy ecosystems. The last [South Australian government species loss strategy](#) (2007) reported a quarter (24%) of our native animal species are threatened, including:

- 54% of mammals (46/85)
- 22% of birds (106/485)
- 17% of reptiles (24/144)
- 12% of amphibians (2/17)
- 11% of fish (4/36).

## Developing new indicators: nature

Important aspects of biodiversity and access to nature are outlined in [Healthy Parks Healthy People South Australia 2021-26](#), developed as part of the Public Health Partner Authority Agreement between Wellbeing SA and the South Australian Government Department for Environment and Water. Indicators are not currently available, but could be developed.

Condition of wetlands, and satisfaction with access to nature, are examples of potential indicators raised in our workshops.



Source: [South Australian Property and Planning Atlas](#)

## Case study #2: Visits to parks

The [South Australian Parks Visitation Survey 2020](#) found 83% of 1054 South Australian residents surveyed had visited a park and:

- The two most important values of parks were that they provide:
  - o Protection for native plants and animals or cultural heritage (54%)
  - o Community spaces for recreation, enjoyment, and health (44%)
- People visited parks for (in order):
  - o Experiencing nature and scenery (89%)
  - o Walking (89%)
  - o Socialising with friends (66%) or family (63%)
  - o Learning about nature (60%)
  - o Time by themselves (56%)
- People with a disability were half as likely to visit parks.

# Our communities want a sustainable future

## 2 Greenhouse gas emissions

**Target: zero by 2050.** Greenhouse gas emissions cause climate change, resulting in sea level rise, droughts and extreme weather events (floods, bushfires, storms). Our region's emissions are rising and must be reduced to avoid the impacts on our health and wellbeing, property and infrastructure, and energy/insurance prices. [Deloitte Access Economics](#) estimates that if no change is made, the economic cost by 2070 will be a shrinking of Australia's GDP by 6% – a \$3.4 trillion loss in GDP in present value terms, nearly equal to the impacts of COVID-19 on the Australian economy today.

Source: Ironbark Sustainability, [Snapshot — community climate tool](#), annual measure

### S&H Region LGAs

**+ 113900**

tCO<sub>2</sub>e increase

2017/8 – 2018/9



	t CO <sub>2</sub> e		
	2017-18	2018-19	
AH	410 100	428 900	↑5%
A	345 100	369 100	↑7%
KI	239 000	226 600	↓5%
MB	361 600	431 200	↑19%
VH	160 600	169 100	↑5%
Y	115 300	120 700	↑5%

### Where do our region's emissions come from?

Transport 41%

Agriculture 22%

Electricity - residential 17%

Electricity - industry 10%

Waste 4%

## 3 Household recycling

**Regional target: to be set in 2023.** Household recycling is a measure of kerbside waste recovered by municipal waste collection and diverted from landfill from two kerbside bins: recyclables, and organics. South Australia's [Waste Strategy 2020-2025](#), seeks to create a circular economy that designs out waste and pollution, keeps products/materials in use, and regenerates natural systems to ensure we are using the earth's resources sustainably.

Source: [South Australia's Recycling Activity Survey 2018-19 Report](#) – South Australian Government

### Regional SA LGAs

**37%**

kerbside waste diverted from landfill

23% recyclables  
17% food waste

Adelaide Hills	n/a
Alexandrina	n/a
Kangaroo Island	n/a
Mount Barker	n/a
Victor Harbor	n/a
Yankalilla	n/a

2018-2019



(37% in 2017/8)

### DATA GAP

at the LGA level

# 4

## Council use of recycled water

Demand for water is increasing and recycled water is an important resource in regional areas. It is used for non-potable functions in Council buildings/facilities, and irrigation of Council properties such as sports grounds, open spaces and parklands, gardens, and roadside trees. 3% of all water used in South Australia is recycled waste or stormwater. [A Lowy Institute's \(2020\) survey shows](#) drought and water shortages are the most critical (77%) or important (22%) threats perceived by Australians.

Source: [Water Security Statement 2020](#), South Australian Government

South Australia

25%

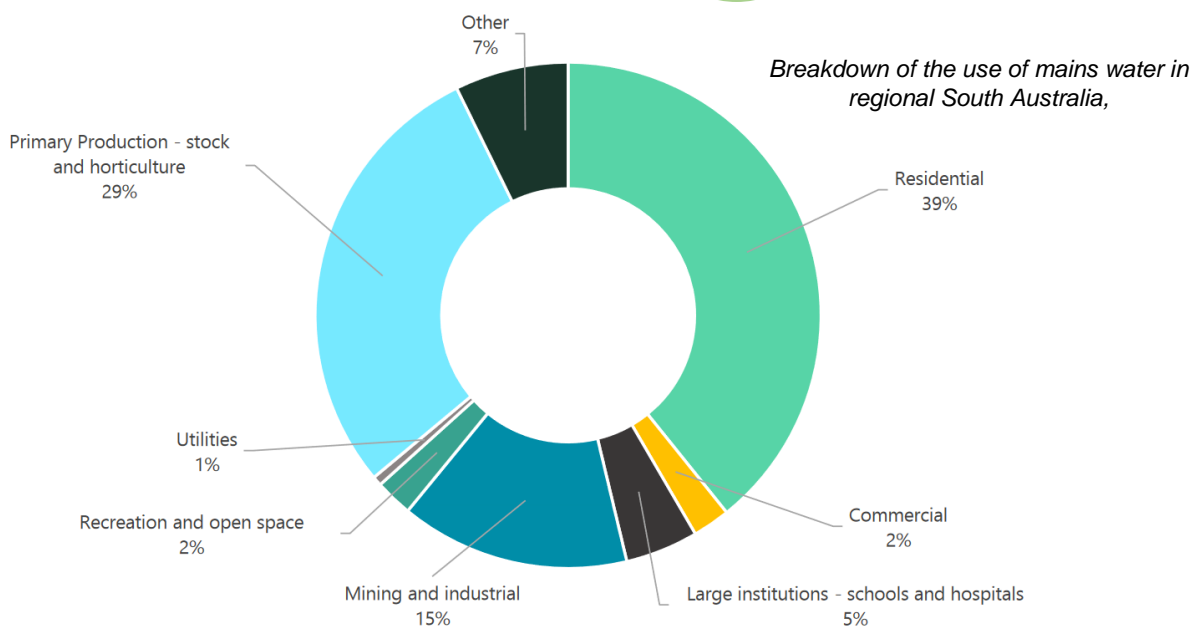
of water used by SA councils for council purposes is recycled waste or storm water

2015/6-2018/9

LGAs

Adelaide Hills	n/a
Alexandrina	n/a
Kangaroo Island	n/a
Mount Barker	n/a
Victor Harbor	n/a
Yankalilla	n/a

\* The Essential Services Commission collect this data and it can be requested and checked for accuracy



Source: [Water Security Statement 2020](#), South Australian Government

## Case study #3: Running Council operations on renewables

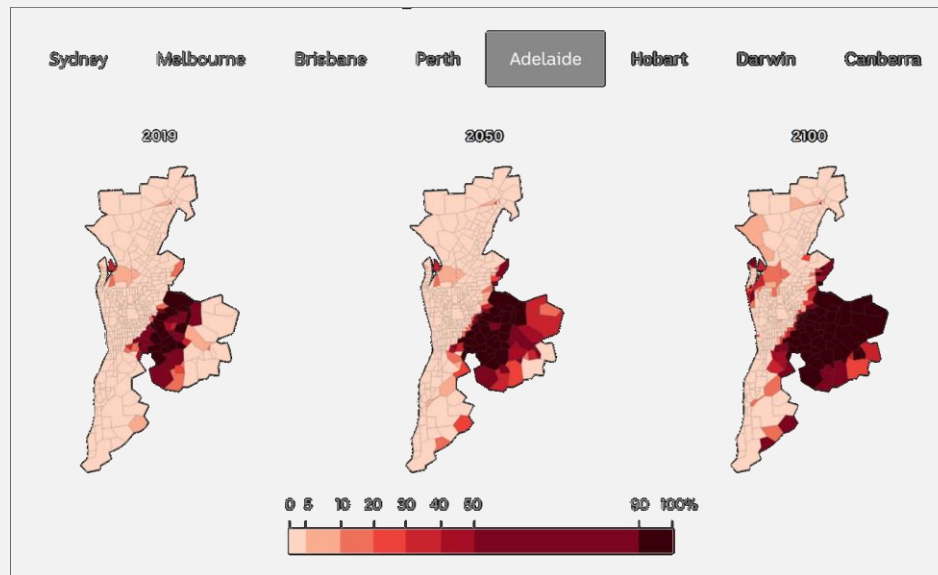
Power Purchasing Agreements (PPAs) create groups of electricity buyers to bulk purchase renewable energy, reducing emissions and costs, and creating the investment to develop renewable industries. Fifty-two South Australian Councils (along with 5 affiliated organisations, including waste management authorities) have supported LGA Procurement to examine the feasibility of new electricity contracts from 2023 to run their operations on 100% renewable energy. They are also advocating for reforms to better define what makes up 100% renewable electricity, which will benefit all renewable customers in the future.

## Developing new indicators: uninsured households

An indicator of uninsured or uninsurable houses is not currently available, but could be developed.

Insurance premiums are rising in areas prone to extreme weather events and in some areas, insurance is now unavailable. [It has been reported](#) around 10% of home owners and 40% of renters are under-insured. [The ABC has reported](#) Adelaide will see the fastest expansion of insurance “red zones” (uninsurable housing) of any capital city. These will mostly be in the Adelaide Hills with uninsurable addresses predicted to rise 10-fold by 2100.

*The percentage of addresses in an Adelaide suburb that would have very expensive premiums if all climate risks were insured.*



Source: [The rise of red zones of risk](#) (ABC, 2020)

## Case study #4: Climate change is compounding disadvantage

The South Australian led [Australian Impact of Climate Change on Disadvantaged Groups](#) study has found the impacts of climate change – from extreme weather such as heatwaves, flooding, cold, and drought – are disproportionately experienced by disadvantaged populations and compound disadvantage overtime. These impacts include on: health (morbidity, mortality, and mental health), property/infrastructure, economic opportunities, and cost of living (rising energy, water, food, and transport costs). The study found disadvantaged households have greater difficulty adapting to extreme weather due to social exclusion (including in decision-making), a lack of access to adaptation options, and difficulties accessing information and financial services.



# *The opportunities in our places*

The places we live provide opportunities and resources that shape our wellbeing.

These include employment opportunities, services across our life courses, natural environments, and opportunities for exercise, learning, play, participation with others, and activities that bring us joy.

Local governments work to ensure these opportunities are accessible to everyone. This means helping members of our communities overcome disadvantages from cost-of-living pressures (e.g., providing internet in the library for those that cannot afford it), feeling unsafe (e.g., providing walking infrastructure), having a physical disability (e.g., making nature parks and trails accessible), or discrimination.

This section outlines 9 indicators of issues that are important to our communities:

## *Our communities want services that make places liveable*

5. Growth of jobs and businesses
  6. Internet access
  7. Transport disadvantage
  8. Cultural and community facilities – visits to libraries
- PRIORITY DATA DEVELOPMENT AREA – access to services and infrastructure

## *Our communities want access to opportunities for all*

9. Low-income households
10. Housing stress (rental and mortgage)
11. Those who do not feel safe on the street after dark
12. Discrimination
13. Accessibility of public spaces



*Our communities want services that make places liveable*

## 5 Growth of jobs and businesses

Growing industries are important for community wellbeing because they provide employment and the services we need (e.g., health care and social services). In 2016, half (52%) of our employed residents worked locally and it is likely that since COVID-19, more people who work elsewhere now work from home at least some of the time. This can increase spending in local areas.

Source: [i.d. profiles](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

S&H Region

**+ 2374**

Increase in jobs

2014/5 – 2018/9

**+ 179**

Increase in businesses

2018-2019



LGAs

### Top 5 growing industries (by jobs)

#### Adelaide hills

Education & Training  
Construction  
Health Care & Social Assistance  
Retail Trade  
Accommodation & Food Services

#### Alexandrina

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing  
Health Care & Social Assistance  
Retail Trade  
Accommodation & Food Services  
Construction

#### Kangaroo Island

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing  
Accommodation & Food Services  
Retail Trade  
Health Care & Social Assistance  
Education & Training

#### Mt Barker

Retail Trade  
Health Care & Social Assistance  
Manufacturing  
Accommodation & Food Services  
Education & Training

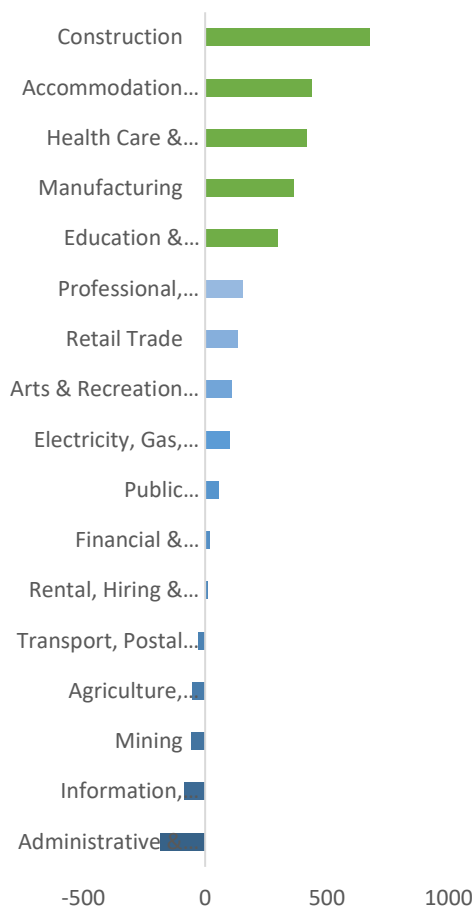
#### Victor Harbor

Health Care & Social Assistance  
Retail Trade  
Accommodation & Food Services  
Education & Training  
Construction

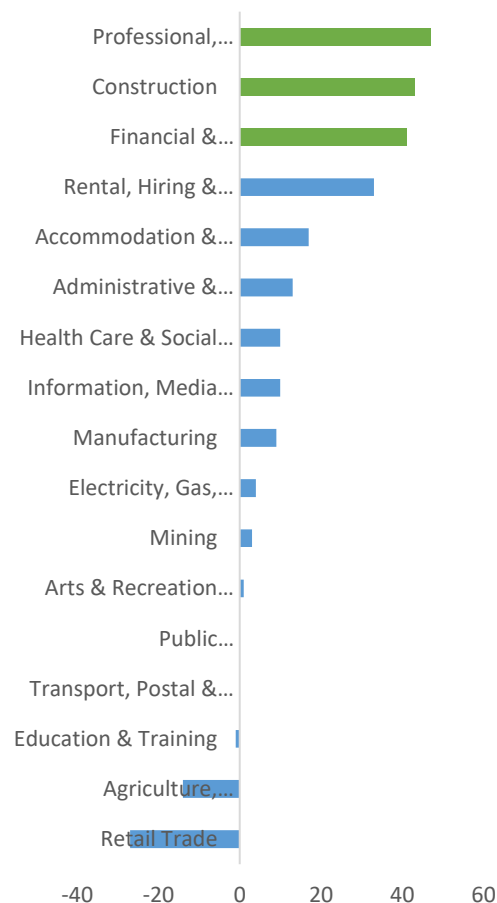
#### Yankalilla

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing  
Accommodation & Food Services  
Manufacturing  
Retail Trade  
Health Care & Social Assistance

### Jobs



### Businesses



# 6 Internet access

Fast, reliable, and affordable internet is vital in regional areas for both the provision of finance, health and education services, and for the success of regional businesses (from farms to professionals working from home). 'Internet access at home' is one indicator of access, but this measure has been dropped from the 2021 Census despite high regional numbers with no access. [Research has shown](#) households have no internet because they: live in black spots (map below), cannot afford it, or do not know how to use it. It has also shown that households that are more likely to not have internet are the most likely to benefit from it – rural/regional residents, families on low incomes, the unemployed, and those aged over 65. This indicator can be changed to 'use of internet services in libraries' when the data has been developed in 2021 (see box on next page).

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

## Regional SA

**16%**

homes have no internet

**2016**

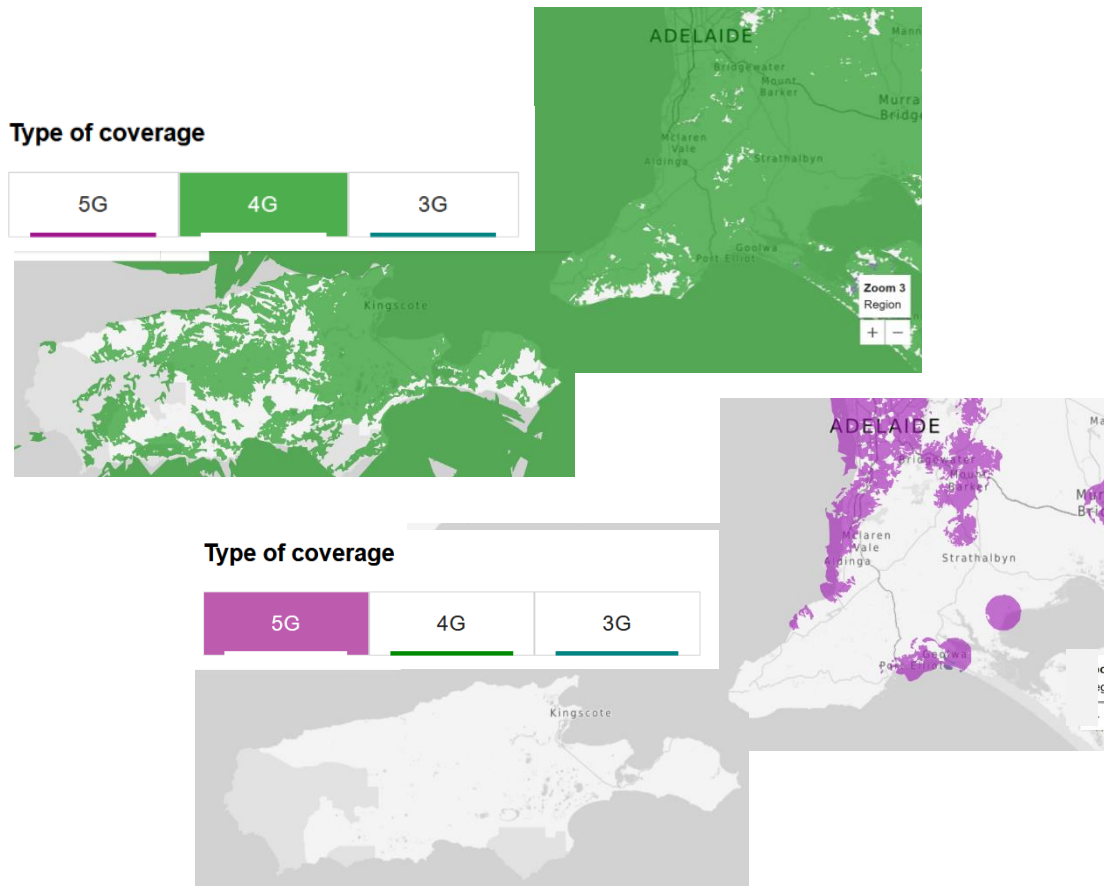


(28% in 2011)

## LGAs

Adelaide Hills	11.0%	1,514
Alexandrina	18.9%	1,938
Kangaroo Island	21.7%	393
Mount Barker	13.3%	1,603
Victor Harbor	21.8%	1,369
Yankalilla	20.5%	431
Gr Adelaide	17.7%	
Rest of SA	25.0%	

Telecommunication black spots on the Telstra 4G and 5G Networks are still significant in the region in 2021



## 7 Transport disadvantage

Ultimately, a measure of transport disadvantage should include access to community or public transport, as well as private transport. However, 'households who do not have a motor vehicle' is currently the only available indicator of transport disadvantage. In 2016, across the Southern and Hills region, 1543 households had no motor vehicle and 75% of those households were people living alone.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

### Regional SA

**5.7%**  
households  
have no motor  
vehicle

2016



(6.3% 2011)

### LGAs

Adelaide Hills	2.0%	275
Alexandrina	3.3%	333
Kangaroo Island	4.9%	88
Mount Barker	3.5%	425
Victor Harbor	5.8%	362
Yankalilla	2.9%	60
Gr Adelaide	8.0%	
Rest of SA	5.7%	

## 8 Cultural and community facilities – visits to libraries

South Australian libraries are community hubs that aim to ensure people in communities are: literate, life-long learners, and participating in life. After parks, libraries are the most used community infrastructure. Annually, South Australian public libraries welcome around 10 million visitors at over 130 locations across the State – more than the total annual attendance at Australian Rules football matches, cinemas, and the Adelaide and Monarto Zoos combined. This indicator describes library visits, both online and in person. The increase in this indicator over time is because of growth in online visits, with in-person visits and members declining.

Source: : State Library, Public Library Services data

### S&H Region

**1,984,445**

visits to libraries  
online and in  
person

2020



(doubled since 2018)

### LGAs

	Visits	Since 2018
Adelaide Hills	824,691	Doubled
Alexandrina	396,582	Trebled
Kangaroo Island	32,303	Doubled
Mount Barker	335,659	Trebled
Victor Harbor	340,213	Doubled
Yankalilla	54,961	Trebled

## Developing new indicators: comprehensive data on library use

A new data set is being established in 2021 to measure the use of libraries across a range of functions and the outcomes for communities. These include:

- The wide range of activities that libraries are used for: for example, makers spaces, digital literacy training, accessing technology and the internet, and learning and playing together
- The diversity of users
- The outcomes of use, including the general sense of wellbeing associated with the use.

In the future, it will be possible to include a broader set of indicators about libraries that provide a snapshot of this vital service, including the use of internet services.

## PRIORITY Developing new indicators: services and infrastructure

Services and infrastructure are important for residents' wellbeing, but developing indicators that fit the criteria of theoretically sound, commonly understood, and technically accurate was beyond the scope of this project. Different local governments offer different services, and access is a different complex problem in regional and urban areas. The workshops suggested indicators be created for:

- Community transport services
- Health services (GPs and hospital beds)
- Aged care home support services
- Availability of footpaths on at least one side of the street
- Availability and use of cycle paths, tracks, and trails
- Distance to open space, parks, and playgrounds
- Availability of public toilets

*Our communities want access to opportunities for all*

### 9 Low-income households

Low income reduces people's opportunities across all aspects of health and wellbeing. This indicator describes the proportion of households in the bottom 40% of the income distribution (those with less than 80% of median equivalised income), as a proportion of all households. Measures of [equivalised household income](#) (where income is standardised by household size and across time) show that the proportion of households with the lowest income in the Southern and Hills region rose between 2011 and 2016.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

S&H Region

LGAs

**41.1%**

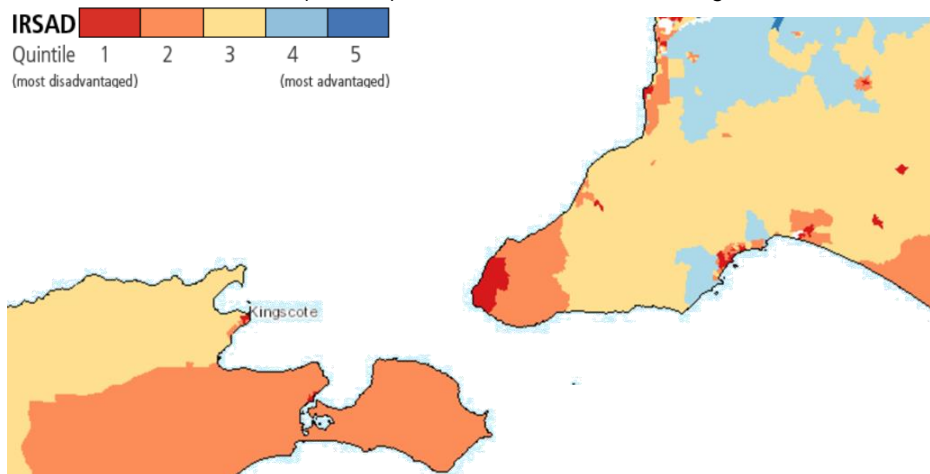
of households are low income

2016



Adelaide Hills	27.8%	3972
Alexandrina	46.8%	5087
Kangaroo Island	45.3%	930
Mount Barker	33.7%	4252
Victor Harbor	54.9%	6283
Yankalilla	49.1%	1128
Gr Adelaide	39.7%	
Rest of SA	49.0%	

*Disadvantage is concentrated in particular areas (red equals the 20% of most disadvantaged areas) by the ABS (Census) Index of Relative Disadvantage*



# 10 Housing stress (mortgage & rental)

[Housing affordability](#) disproportionately affects low-income earners and is declining across the region. This indicator measures the proportion of low-income households under housing stress. While local government has few levers, housing affordability drives many other important local issues and is included here for context. As cheaper housing has increased in price faster than more expensive housing, and [rentals have become less affordable](#), more households are in housing stress, and home-ownership rates are falling among the young and low-income earners. This is causing some, including essential workers, to leave the region.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

## Regional SA LGAs

**21%**  
households in rental or mortgage stress

2016



(24% 2011)

Adelaide Hills	19%	738
Alexandrina	24%	1223
Kangaroo Island	23%	217
Mount Barker	30%	1267
Victor Harbor	23%	819
Yankalilla	24%	269
<b>Gr Adelaide</b>	<b>29%</b>	
<b>Rest of SA</b>	<b>21%</b>	

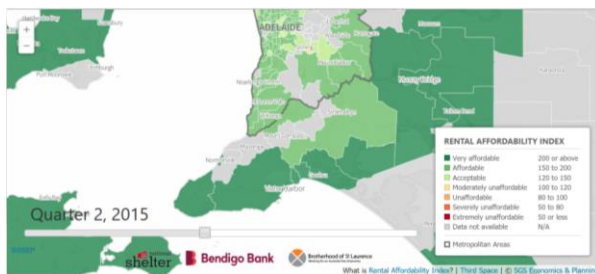
\* The proportion of households in the bottom 40% of the income distribution, who are spending more than 30% of their income on rent mortgage repayments or rent

## Case study #5: Declining rental affordability in pictures

Rental affordability – households paying 30% of income on rent, indicating the critical threshold for housing stress – has been getting worse over time. These maps show the change for two income groups from 2015 to 2020.

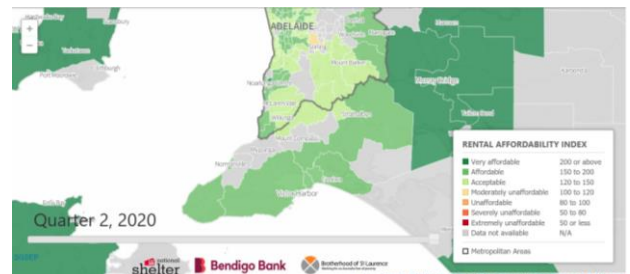
### 2015

For those on annual incomes of **\$95 000**, rentals have gone from very affordable (dark green)

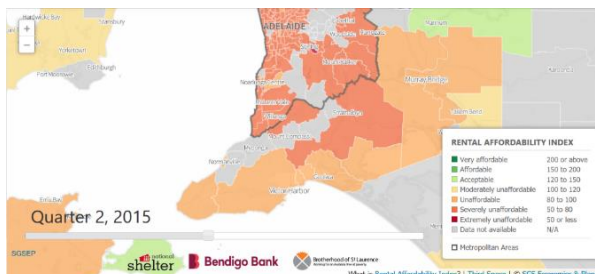


### 2020

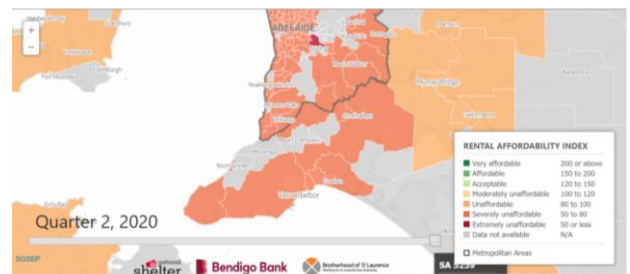
... to affordable (light green)



For those on annual incomes of **\$40 000**, rentals have gone from unaffordable (orange)



... to severely unaffordable (dark orange)



Source: SGS Economics and Planning [Rental Affordability Index](#)

# 11 Those who do not feel safe on the street after dark

Feeling safe in public spaces is a critical dimension of wellbeing and feeling unsafe can cause a drastic reduction in wellbeing and satisfaction with life. It can also cause people to adapt their behaviour in local environments, reducing health-promoting activity. Modifying environments, and connecting communities through activities and groups, increase perceptions of safety and help to compensate for other influences.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

## Regional SA LGAs

**42%**

do not feel safe alone after dark

2014



(49% 2010)

2018 available at cost

Adelaide Hills	29%
Alexandrina	34%
Kangaroo Island	26%
Mount Barker	40%
Victor Harbor	35%
Yankalilla	35%
<b>Gr Adelaide</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Rest of SA</b>	<b>42%</b>

\* **Modelled estimates** from Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey 2014, every 4 years

# 12 Discrimination

Discrimination impacts health and wellbeing, by reducing people's access to opportunities and resources, and by impacting their mental wellbeing and physical health. This indicator, from the General Social Survey, shows those (over 18) that reported they had experienced discrimination or had been treated unfairly by others in the past 12 months. In the 2018 survey, one in six Australians experienced some form of discrimination, and high rates were reported by people with a mental health condition or a disability (other groups have not been reported).

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

## Regional SA LGAs

**18%**

report having experienced discrimination

2014



2018 available at cost

Adelaide Hills	15.9%
Alexandrina	17.5%
Kangaroo Island	25.6%
Mount Barker	16.9%
Victor Harbor	17.7%
Yankalilla	17.7%
<b>Gr Adelaide</b>	<b>18.0%</b>
<b>Rest of SA</b>	<b>18.0%</b>

\* **Modelled estimates** from Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey 2014, every 4 years

## Updating the General Social Survey Indicators with 2018 data

Four indicators in this framework are modelled estimates from the Australia Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey in 2014:

- Those who do not feel safe on the street after dark (#11)
- Discrimination (#12)
- Social isolation – cannot get help in a time of crisis (#14 next section)
- No or low physical activity (#18 next section)

They can be updated with modelled estimates from collected 2018 data, but costs are high.



# 13 Accessibility of public spaces

A physical environment that is not accessible can reduce participation and access to resources and opportunities for some groups in our communities. As with safety above, this can dramatically reduce wellbeing, life satisfaction, and health-promoting behaviours. There are currently no overall satisfaction measures monitoring the success of disability action planning across SA, but Adelaide Hills and Mount Barker have developed satisfaction surveys (see box below).

Source: not identified

DATA GAP

## LGAs

Adelaide Hills	n/a
Alexandrina	n/a
Kangaroo Island	n/a
Mount Barker	n/a
Victor Harbor	n/a
Yankalilla	n/a
<b>Gr Adelaide</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Rest of SA</b>	<b>n/a</b>

## Developing new indicators: accessibility

Adelaide Hills has designed access and inclusion surveys. If all councils ran surveys with similar questions, an indicator could be constructed:

- Do you think the public spaces are accessible for people with disabilities in the XXX area?
- Do you think the public amenities are accessible for people with disabilities in the XXX area?

What is a public space?



What are public amenities?



Please tick one of the boxes:

# *The strength of our communities*

Connection and participation underpin community wellbeing.

The connections built through participation in communities generate a significant range of resources and positive outcomes for individuals and families in communities (including physical and mental health, positive parenting and child development, success at school and employment, and positive aging).

Connections also generate positive outcomes for the whole community, including the spread of information and innovation, social solidarity and cohesion, respect for others, reduced crime, collective efficacy, and disaster resilience.

Research has shown that general participation in community life (sports groups, volunteering, interest groups, etc) also gives some people the skills and confidence to take on leadership roles or become involved in decision-making about community assets and resources. If all groups within communities are represented (i.e., leadership is inclusive), this can lead to strong and effective local governance, with planning that better matches resources to need, reduces controversy, and produces better outcomes.

This section outlines 7 indicators of important issues to our communities:

## *Our communities value social connection/participation*

- 14. Social isolation
- 15. Participation in community groups
- 16. Volunteering

## *Our communities want opportunities for play, recreation and exercise*

- 17. Developmentally on track in first year of school (children)
- 18. Physical inactivity (adults)
- 19. Walkability

## *Our communities want to have a say*

- 20. Opportunities to have a say– voting in local elections.



# Our communities value social connection/participation

## 14 Social isolation

Social isolation – as indicated by those that report they cannot get help in a time of crisis – is the state of having minimal contact with other people. It is [a risk factor for loneliness](#), which one meta-analysis has found is associated with premature death at levels equivalent to obesity, smoking (less than 15 cigarettes a day), and air pollution. Not everyone who is socially isolated is lonely, but loneliness is not measured directly in any routine data collection. Loneliness has been found to be more common among two key groups: older individuals aged 75+ and [young people aged 15–25](#).

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

### Regional SA LGAs

6%

cannot get help in a time of crisis

2014



2018 available at cost

Adelaide Hills	5%
Alexandrina	5%
Kangaroo Island	5%
Mount Barker	5%
Victor Harbor	6%
Yankalilla	6%
Gr Adelaide	6%
Rest of SA	6%

\* **Modelled estimates** from Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey 2014, every 4 years

## 15 Participation in community groups

[Research has shown](#) that the broad networks built from participation in community groups (sporting, interest, walking, learning, play, social, etc) are associated with a range of positive outcomes, including improved health and psychological wellbeing, positive parenting and child development, success at school, better employment outcomes, and positive aging. There is currently no data collection for adult participation in community groups.

The [Wellbeing and Engagement Collection](#) across South Australian schools includes a measure of young people's participation in organised activities outside of school. It showed that, in 2020, 86% of young people in Years 4 to 12 across South Australia had a high or medium wellbeing score on participation in organised activities. This indicator declined from 2019 to 2020 across South Australia, no doubt related to COVID-19.

Source: Department of Education, [Wellbeing and Engagement Collection 2020](#), annual

### DATA GAP

Adults

### South Aust.

14%

young people with low wellbeing on 'participate in organised activities out-of-school'

2020



(9% 2019)

Young people (Years 4 to 12)	
	Low
Adelaide Hills	10%↑
Alexandrina	15%↑
Kangaroo Island	8%↑
Mount Barker	13%↑
Victor Harbor	20%↑
Yankalilla	21%↑

\* Denotes those with low wellbeing (out of high, medium and low) on this measure

# 16 Volunteering

[Volunteering](#) covers a wide range of unpaid activities performed by individuals to contribute to their communities/environment, help others, and support local organisations. Its economic benefits are large. It is the most robust indicator of community participation available in Australia as it is collected about all adults in the [Census of Population and Housing](#). As well as being associated with improved physical and mental health, social connection, and employment outcomes in volunteers, volunteering benefits our communities in a wide range of ways, including alleviating poverty, improving the wellbeing of the elderly, protecting environments, building community resilience against disaster, improving social solidarity and cohesion, and bringing innovation into communities.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

## Regional SA LGAs

**32%**

volunteered

**2016**



(30% 2011)

Regional SA LGAs	Percentage	Population
Adelaide Hills	34%	10170
Alexandrina	30%	6008
Kangaroo Island	41%	1430
Mount Barker	29%	7318
Victor Harbor	29%	3471
Yankalilla	31%	1274
Gr Adelaide	20%	
Rest of SA	28%	

## Case study #5: Volunteers in South Australia

The 2016 [Census of Population and Housing](#) showed that 23% of South Australians volunteer.

Rates were higher for:

- Regional areas (29% inner regional, 30% outer regional, 37% remote areas)
- Women (25%)
- Those aged over 50 (23%).

Rates were lower for:

- Those under 50 (20%)
- Major cities (20%)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (16%)
- Those with a disability (11%)
- Those that do not speak English very well or at all (6%).

*Our communities want opportunities for play, exercise & recreation*

## 17 Developmentally on track in first year of school

The years before age six are important for a young person's development. In Australia, every child's development is measured in their first year of school across five domains: physical, social, emotional, language, and communication. This indicator describes children who are vulnerable on two or more of those domains.

Source: [Australian Early Development Census](#), data explorer, every three years

South Aust.

**13%**  
children developmentally vulnerable

2018



(12.2% 2015 & 2012)

LGAs

	2018
Adelaide Hills	10.3%↑
Alexandrina	15.8%↑
Kangaroo Island	15.6%→
Mount Barker	12.6%↑
Victor Harbor	14.0%↑
Yankalilla	10.4%↓

## 18 Physical inactivity

Physically activity is significantly associated with better physical and mental health, and active transport can produce community wellbeing outcomes through lower congestion, pollution, etc. Physical inactivity creates large costs for governments in expensive health care services. [An evidence review](#) in Australia has shown some groups are more likely to be physically inactive, including:

- » Girls and women of all ages
- » Adults in regional and remote areas
- » Adults on lower incomes, children, and young people in low socioeconomic status neighbourhoods
- » People in urban environments that are not amenable to walking
- » Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- » People with a disability, particularly in older age groups those over 65.

Source: [Social Health Atlas for Australia: South Australian Local Government Areas](#), Australian Census of Population and Housing data

Regional SA

**33%**  
get low or no physical activity

2014



2018 available at cost

LGAs

Adelaide Hills	40.3%
Alexandrina	26.3%
Kangaroo Island	26.7%
Mount Barker	32.0%
Victor Harbor	31.1%
Yankalilla	31.1%
Gr Adelaide	33.0%
Rest of SA	26.8%

\* low or no physical activity modelled estimates from Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey 2014, every 4 years

# 19 Walkability

Walking is the most accessible form of active transport and exercise for the largest proportion of the population and has been shown to have health benefits for a wide range of population groups.

Source: no indicator identified

DATA  
GAP

## LGAs

Adelaide Hills	n/a
Alexandrina	n/a
Kangaroo Island	n/a
Mount Barker	n/a
Victor Harbor	n/a
Yankalilla	n/a
Gr Adelaide	n/a
Rest of SA	n/a

## Developing new indicators: Heart Foundation walkability checklist

The Heart Foundation's [Community Walkability Checklist](#) allows residents to assess walking routes in their neighbourhoods. Data is submitted to the Heart Foundation who compile it for councils. The assessment rates areas on: walker friendliness, comfort, convenience, and safety. The local government of Mexico City mapped their public transport system through citizens collecting data across the city using their mobile phones.

These types of "citizen science" projects could make useful indicators that incorporate residents' subjective satisfaction and needs into the measure.

Walkability rating	
	The route is very walkable!
	The route is walkable but there is room for improvement.
	The route needs some work to make it more walkable.

## Developing new indicators: Footpaths, cycling and open space

As described in *PRIORITY Developing new indicators: services and infrastructure* on page 19, additional indicators could be made that describe local government levers for encouraging physical activity.

Suggestions from the workshops included indicators on:

- **Footpaths on at least one side of the road**
- **Cycling**
- **Access to open space.**

*Our communities want to have a say*

## 20 Opportunities to have a say – voting in local elections

[Voting for local representatives in local elections](#) is one way that local governments can ensure communities have a say in local decision-making. Representative community decision-making has been shown to create more appropriate services/policies, reduce controversy, and increase trust in the government. Only a third of eligible voters voted in the last local government election (it is not compulsory). There is still a long way to go to improve representation on councils with women, young people, and other population groups that are underrepresented. For example, across SA in 2018, 65% of elected officials were men and 59% were over 55.

Source: Electoral Commission South Australia, [Local Government Election Report- 2018](#)

South Aust.

**33%**

voted in the last election

**2018**



(32% in 2014)

Local

Adelaide Hills	31.4 ↓
Alexandrina	42.6 ↑
Kangaroo Island	66.6 ↑
Mount Barker	31.2 ↑
Victor Harbor	52.1 ↑
Yankalilla	49.4 ↓

### Find out more about population health in South Australia



The [South Australian Population Health Survey 2019 Annual Report](#) provides data on 5537 South Australian's (1566 who are regional).

The survey for adults covers:

- Overall health
- The Health Care system
- Mental health
- Disadvantage and inequity
- Chronic disease
- Disability
- Biomedical and behavioural risk factors
- Protective factors

The children report covers select topics from the above list.

SA Health also has data on its website for other health protection issues, including [immunisation coverage in children](#) and foodborne diseases (but not at LGA level and 2014 is the most current data) for which Local Government have levers.

## Why a report?

This project has created a framework for a set of *Indicators of Community Wellbeing* and populated it with data to foster a more robust discussion about data development.

Workshops with around 100 council staff and other stakeholders found a general preference for a report format because it can provide additional context to help officers interpret and feel confident citing data. Links to data sources allow for further exploration if needed.

Stakeholders were also keen that separate region reports be produced and that these may include a few different indicators for regional and metropolitan areas.

An e-book is a simple way to produce a range of products that are easy to update at low cost.

## Further development

There are several ways this indicator set can be developed from here, as described in boxes throughout the report. A fairly frequent reissue is important to let people become familiar with the set.

There are four immediate ways this report could be updated and reissued with new information that has emerged from the framework and workshops. The opportunities include:

### **1. Adding the priority 'access to services and infrastructure' indicators (2022)**

The first priority could be to develop a small set of the 'access to services and infrastructure' indicators, as described on page 19. These indicators require a review of the academic literature to determine what access means in regional settings and what the best measures are.

### **2. Updating indicators (late 2022)**

In 2022, twelve of the indicators will be able to be updated, including the five indicators from the 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

### **3. General Social Survey data**

Four of the indicators could be updated immediately with 2018 data if it could be bought from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (see page 21).

### **4. Regional reports could be created for other regions across South Australia.**

These could start with another regional area and a metropolitan one.

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