

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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'Village Hub' to support Fleurieu seniors as they age

Older people in the southern Fleurieu region will be supported to live and age well in the community, with the establishment of South Australia's first 'Village Hub'.

The Goolwa Victor Harbor Village Hub – which is being established by the Council on the Ageing (COTA) SA – will bring together a network of older people to work together for each other and their community.

The Hub will offer peer-to-peer volunteering and support, ageing well activities and events, information and support to access services, advocacy and representation about issues that matter to older people, as well as social opportunities between members.

The Hub will draw its members from older people living in the Southern Fleurieu, including Goolwa, Victor Harbor, Port Elliot, Middleton, Hindmarsh Island, Encounter Bay, McCracken and Hayborough.

The initial funding, until June 2024, will help establish the not-for-profit Hub, with membership fees and charges for some programs, activities, and services assisting with running costs over time.

COTA SA will establish the Hub, including setting up a governance structure, an activity program, volunteer training, and member recruitment during the first two years, before transitioning to management by its members in the third year.

A Federal Government initiative, the Goolwa Victor Harbor Village Hub is funded by the Federal Government's Seniors Connected program.

"With the region's older population, and through COTA SA's local advisory group and listening posts, we identified a need to bring older people together so that they can support each other to age well," said COTA SA chief executive Jane Mussared.

In the southern Fleurieu, 61% of the population are aged over 50 years, the highest proportion of any area in South Australia. Approximately 20% of these older people live alone.

"Many older people in the southern Fleurieu region relocated to the area in their retirement, they live a long way from family members, and will face major life transitions such as moving house, loss of a partner, reduced mobility and changes in their health," said Ms Mussared.

"Despite this, they are energetic and willing and eager to help others and be part of their community.

“Establishing the Goolwa Victor Harbor Village Hub will harness these strengths to create a grassroots, community-owned and led movement that will improve the ageing experience for local older people.

“The programs, activities and services to be offered by the Hub will create new connections between older people and provide opportunities for them to contribute and support others who may need help.

“We are very excited about the potential to harness the talents and sense of community of local older people who are keen to age well, stay connected and prevent loneliness and social isolation.”

Liz Graham, chairperson of the COTA SA Goolwa Victor Harbor Advisory Group – which was established in 2019 – said the Village Hub would bring many benefits to the community.

“We have championed the establishment of this Village Hub since our group was formed two years ago we have been keen to formalize a way to help one another,” Ms Graham said.

“All the advisory group members, and many other older people across the region, are highly skilled and passionate about giving back.

“We are excited to work with COTA SA, our councils and local businesses, to set-up the Village Hub and help change the way people think about ageing and the role that older people can play in the community. Our first priority’s to support COTA SA with recruiting the Hub’s manager.”

Older people in the southern Fleurieu region interested in joining the Goolwa Victor Harbor Village Hub can contact COTA SA on (08) 8232 0422 to register this interest.

“Once our Hub Manager is recruited, we can start letting locals know when and how they can get involved,” Ms Mussared said.

COTA SA is partnering with Independent Living Assessment (ILA) who are the Village Hubs National Grant Manager.

COTA SA is an older people’s movement and the peak body representing the rights, interests, and futures of more than 633,000 older South Australians aged over 50.

For media interviews or more information, please contact:

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