



COTA SA

COTA (Council on the Ageing) SA is an older people's movement engaging every day with older South Australians all over our state. We are independent and non-partisan; we have our sights firmly set on calling out ageism; we are focused on overcoming disadvantage and inequality; we champion the diversity of ageing across our state; and we offer programs which create new possibilities for and with older South Australians.

COTA SA is also the peak body representing the rights, interests, and futures of more than 700,000 South Australians aged 50+, who together make up more than a third of our population. We were established in 1957 and continue to evolve and develop to reflect modern South Australia.

COTA SA is financially sustainable with revenue generated through government funding, investments, self-funded programs and services, private sector support, sponsorship, donations and bequests.

COTA SA is a proud partner in the COTA Federation, made up of COTAs in each state and territory along with COTA Australia. Together, our reach and influence is felt both locally and nationally.

COTA SA CONNECTS WITH 100,000+ OLDER SOUTH AUSTRALIANS EACH YEAR:

- Our **advocacy** on issues such as employment, housing, health, aged care, climate change, cost of living and transport to improve older lives.
- **The Plug-in**, our consumer engagement and insights social enterprise that provides opportunities for researchers, government and business to connect with, and better understand, older people.
- Our **Strength for Life** program, offers an affordable way for older people to gain strength and stay fit at more than 106 sites throughout South Australia.
- Our **Rainbow Hub**, with its proactive Advisory Group and Silver Rainbow training program providing better support and amplifying the voices of LGBTI+ elders.
- Our **Let's Talk Aged Care** team offers programs, services, and opportunities to understand and access aged care and other services for vulnerable older people.
- Our **COTA SA advisory groups** and round tables offer representation, contribute to policy advice and provide lived experience across topics that matter to older people.
- Our **staff and volunteers** provide information by phone, email and face to face, and contribute to expos, presentations and webinars.
- Our **COTA Visitors** program designed to reduce social isolation and loneliness including with older people who live alone or in aged care facilities.
- Our **Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network** is a member-based social connection program run by and for people living in the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula.
- Our contribution to **research, universities, reviewers and investigative bodies** to better understand and engage with the needs and interests of older people.
- Our ongoing focus on older people in **rural and regional** South Australia including through the Goolwa Victor Harbor and Yorke Peninsula Advisory Groups.
- Our **COTA SA Members, Member Clubs and Supporters** represent thousands of older South Australians and organisations across the state.
- Our partnerships with a wide variety of organisations and people who represent the **diversity of older South Australians**.

Cover image: COTA SA Visitors program participants Shervin and Lorraine.



COTA SA in 2023

COTA SA represents more than 700,000 South Australians aged 50+ and we connect with more than 100,000 older people and their supporters each year through our programs, services, advisory groups, membership activities, events, communications and our policy and advocacy work.

This is a significant and hugely diverse group, with wide-ranging life experiences, interests, preferences, and needs. Despite these differences, in 2023 it's clear that cost of living pressure is the number one concern for older South Australians and the major barrier to ageing well. Challenges accessing housing, health and aged care services, transport and securing appropriate employment have all contributed to rising everyday living pressures for older people, made worse by systemic ageism and age discrimination. We've put these issues front and centre in our policy and advocacy work with Government and decision-makers, to empower older people to generate more income, reduce costs and age well.

In 2023 we have brought the stories, experiences and insights of older people to the table to contribute to solutions through the Housing Security for Older Women Taskforce, the State Government Concessions Review, and state and federal roundtables on ambulance ramping, health and aged care.

Our commitment to advancing the rights, interests and futures of older people is also why we choose to shine a light on the positive aspects of ageing that should be embraced and celebrated, including through our annual event for the UN International Day of Older Persons. This year our keynote speaker Tim Jarvis AM and a diverse panel of speakers inspired 180 attendees to continue to find purpose, even though the way we might achieve this inevitably changes as we age.

Every day, our helpful, expert staff and more than a hundred volunteers deliver a range of programs to help older South Australians age well, including by: sharing information and connecting people to services, improving strength and balance, preventing frailty, navigating the aged care system, finding friends, building a community of supportive peers, and contributing valuable insights into research and policy development that can make a positive difference to older people across the state.

Our organisation also underwent some significant changes during the year: in March 2023, Miranda Starke was appointed the new Chief Executive of COTA SA following a six-month transition period acting in the role. We were proud to record a surplus for the 2022–23 financial year, following a number of years of financial challenges. And in October, our members unanimously voted to adopt a new, modernised constitution, and we made an important shift to a free and sustainable membership model focused on mutual support for our values and purpose.

As reflected in this annual snapshot, we have made a meaningful difference in the lives of our community, but we cannot do our work alone. Our achievements highlight the collective efforts of our staff, volunteers, Board, Policy Council, and advisory groups, as well as our members, clubs, COTA SA Supporters, and funding bodies. Together, with the support of our valued community, we continue to bring our vision to life: that ageing in Australia is a time of possibility, opportunity and influence.

Emeritus Professor Anne Edwards AO – President

Miranda Starke – Chief Executive

It is important that the Policy Council continues its work to enable COTA SA to have timely and well-informed responses to issues and programs, so it achieves its vision of ageing being ‘a time of possibility, opportunity, and influence’.

Policy Council member

Policy

We delivered credible, trusted, and independent policy and advocacy for South Australians aged 50+.

As a member of the State Government’s Housing Security for Older Women Taskforce, we worked alongside key stakeholders to help drive real change and solutions for older women who are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.

We made eight submissions to represent the rights and interests of people aged 50+ on key topics, including coercive control and advance care directives.

Our Rainbow Hub Advisory Group delivered the *‘Rainbow Horizons: Don’t leave me this way’* report. This resource was developed in consultation with older members of the LGBTI+ community and was supported by Office for Ageing Well.

We effectively delivered our **State Budget Submission 2023–24**, which was directly informed by consultation and engagement with thousands of older South Australians and key stakeholders, and represented and united the diverse voices and needs of over **700,000** older South Australians.

With the support of our regional advisory groups, we hosted a series of forums to identify the needs and issues impacting older people in rural communities, including *‘Growing Older on the Yorke Peninsula’* (pictured left) and *‘Ageing in the Fleurieu Peninsula’* events.

This year, the 18 members of our Policy Council explored important topics, including ageism, health, housing and climate change.

Collectively, the members of our key advisory groups held over 40 meetings to tackle the issues impacting their respective communities.



Loved it and
look forward to
the next event.

Reimagine Ageing attendee

Engagement

Our engagement with, by and for older South Australians.



Thousands of older people took the time to participate in surveys that allowed us to gain greater insights into the impact of important issues such as health, climate change and cost of living pressures.

180
attendees

celebrated International Day of Older Persons at our Reimagine Ageing event as Tim Jarvis AM (pictured left) inspired us to collectively reimagine ageing well with purpose.

Implementation of free membership for our current and future members. We appreciate the ongoing connection with our

5k+
members

106

volunteers

worked alongside COTA SA staff to deliver information, services and programs to over

100k

older South Australians

Our online engagement continues to grow

61,872

website visits

10,644

e-news subscribers

The Plug-in engaged

4,685

older people across
13 projects

5k+

callers reached out to COTA SA to gain independent and trusted information and support.

In partnership with the City of Salisbury, we hosted two Conversations with Salisbury Seniors events. We also delivered our inaugural Conversations in the City event funded by Adelaide City Council.

My relationship with Lorraine has shown me that the younger generation can benefit a lot from the care, energy and wisdom of the older generation.

Shervin, COTA Visitors volunteer

Leaders of ageing well programs and services



55

COTA Visitors

(volunteer pictured left) have brightened the lives of

64

vulnerable and socially isolated older people by visiting them over

1,500 times



This year, our Fleurieu Neighbourhood Network membership reached

111

Median age of COTA SA staff

54 years

Over

350

attendees of the Silver Rainbow training program learned more about LGBTI+ diversity and inclusion and how to deliver culturally appropriate and sensitive aged care services.

During our Aged Care Navigators trial, nearly

1k

older South Australians navigated the complex aged care system and accessed services that helped them age well and remain in their homes.

A fantastic informative session that was heartfelt as well as educational. I now have more understanding of our LGBTI+ elders.

Silver Rainbow training attendee



Take the opportunity to join Strength for Life. It has the potential to improve your quality of life physically, socially and emotionally.

Lillian, Strength for Life participant

Our **Aged Care Telesupport** program supported over

330

older people located throughout South Australia by providing expert aged care information and advice.

Since its introduction nearly

23k

people have improved their strength and fitness through our most popular program, Strength for Life (pictured left).

Our **Strength for Life** program has engaged

450+

participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

500+

older LGBTI+ people attended a range of events and programs delivered by the Rainbow Hub (members Peter and Stephen pictured below).

162

vulnerable older people received intensive support from Aged Care Navigators to access aged care as part of the new care finders program. This program is funded by Adelaide PHN.



COTA SA

Kaurna Country,
Level 1, 85 Hutt Street,
Adelaide, SA 5000

P: 08 8232 0422
Free Call: 1800 182 324
E: cotasa@cotasa.org.au
www.cotasa.org.au

PO BOX 7042,
Hutt Street SA 5000



COTA SA acknowledges the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains as the traditional custodians of the land our headquarters occupy. We also acknowledge all Aboriginal nations throughout South Australia. We honour Aboriginal peoples' continuing connection to Country and recognise that their sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal people.

COTA SA Board

COTA SA's Board is comprised of people from diverse backgrounds who bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience to ensure COTA SA and everything we do is guided strategically into the future.

Emeritus Prof Anne Edwards AO
President

Anne Burgess AM
Deputy President, Chair Policy Council

John Lipkiewicz
Chair Finance and Audit Committees

Barry Apsey
Chair Climate Change Group

Alexandrea Cannon OAM

Tony Catt

Helena Kyriazopoulos OAM

Justin Lynch
Chair Governance Committee

Julie Obst

Leadership Team

Our leadership team works closely with staff and volunteers to make COTA SA's vision a reality.

Miranda Starke
Chief Executive

Sarah Groth
Finance Manager

COTA SA Patrons

Our Patrons, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia and Mr Rod Bunten, elevate our work in ensuring that the voices of older South Australians are heard, respected and valued.

COTA SA Supporters

We thank our current COTA SA Supporters who continue to ensure the future of COTA SA's work, programs and services.

Aboriginal Community Services

Aboriginal Health Council of SA

Amber Aged Care

Ananda Aged Care Incorporated

Bartons Chartered Accountants & Wealth Advisors

Beyond Bank

Catapult Wealth

Centennial Park

City of Mitcham

City of Unley

City of West Torrens

Copper Coast Council

ECH

Eldercare Australia

Flinders University's Caring Futures Institute

Gawler Community Retirement Homes

Greven and Co

Helping Hand Aged Care

Hender Consulting

HESTA

Housing Choices SA

Kalyra Communities

Life Care

Port Augusta City Council

Regional Council of Goyder

Resthaven

SA Power Networks

Self Storage Australia

St Basil's Homes (SA)

Town of Walkerville

We also acknowledge the ongoing support of the **Office for Ageing Well**