OCTOBER 2026

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MAYORAL REPORT



NEW HOUSING

On 24 September, I represented Council at the launch of the Renewal SA modular housing initiative in Adelaide, where the Minister formally launched the modular home display and showcased an approach to addressing housing availability across South Australia.

Access to suitable and affordable housing remains a significant challenge for regional communities, including those within the Flinders Ranges Council area. The availability of housing is particularly important in attracting and retaining essential workers who provide vital services to our communities, including teachers, school support staff, nurses, hospital staff and other healthcare professionals.

Regional communities rely heavily on having these essential workers living locally, rather than travelling considerable distances or being unable to accept employment due to a lack of suitable accommodation.

Modular housing presents an opportunity to explore more flexible and potentially faster housing solutions for regional areas, particularly where traditional construction can be challenging due to cost, availability of trades and the limited supply of existing homes.

For the Flinders Ranges, initiatives such as this are important to the long-term sustainability of our towns. Housing availability is not simply a matter of accommodation; it directly affects our ability to maintain essential services, support local businesses, grow our population and provide confidence for families considering relocating to the region.

Council will continue to advocate for practical regional housing solutions and opportunities that help ensure our communities remain attractive places to live, work and raise families.

CARE IN MOTION - SUPPORTING AN ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY SERVICE

I would like to acknowledge and thank the dedicated local volunteers who give their time, energy and commitment to delivering this service. Their contribution is an excellent example of the community spirit that underpins our regional towns. Without the generosity and commitment of volunteers, many important community services would be significantly more difficult to sustain.

As a Board Member of Care In Motion and Council representative I extend my sincere thanks to everyone involved with Care in Motion, including its volunteers, staff and Board members, for their continued efforts in supporting people across our region.

NORTH QUORN STREET WORKS - A POSITIVE COMMUNITY OUTCOME

The completion of the North Quorn street works is a very positive outcome for the township and its residents.

These works, which included improvements to road surfaces and associated street infrastructure, have addressed long-awaited local priorities and represent a tangible investment in the safety, presentation and functionality of our community streets.

Roads and associated infrastructure are fundamental to the daily lives of residents, local businesses and visitors. Improvements such as these help maintain the amenity of our towns while supporting accessibility and the ongoing use of local streets.

I acknowledge the work undertaken by Council staff, contractors and everyone involved in bringing this project to fruition. Delivering practical infrastructure improvements that respond to community needs remains an important priority for Council, particularly as we balance competing demands across our extensive road network.

The North Quorn works demonstrate the value of identifying local priorities, securing the necessary resources and delivering improvements that the community can see and appreciate.

SALE OF SURPLUS COUNCIL LAND AND BUILDINGS

Council's recent sale of surplus land and buildings has proceeded very well, representing a positive outcome in the responsible management of Council's property portfolio.

Council holds a range of land and buildings that, over time, may no longer be required for direct service delivery or may not represent the most effective use of public assets. Where properties are identified as surplus to Council's operational requirements, their sale can provide an opportunity to release funds that can be redirected towards more immediate community priorities.

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Importantly, the proceeds from these sales are intended to be reinvested in accordance with Council's Community Plan priorities across the council communities, particularly the maintenance, repair and improvement of existing community infrastructure.

This approach reflects the need to manage public assets responsibly and ensure that available resources are directed towards maintaining the facilities and infrastructure that residents rely upon.

With the increasing costs associated with maintaining roads, buildings, public facilities and other community assets, Council must continually assess how best to utilise its resources while protecting the long-term interests of the community.

The successful sale of these surplus properties is a positive step in that process, helping Council focus its resources on essential services, infrastructure maintenance and repairs, and the ongoing sustainability of our towns.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS - UPDATE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Residents are reminded that the next South Australian Local Government elections have been delayed until April 2027.

Local Government plays a critical role in shaping the future of our communities. Elected members make decisions that directly affect local infrastructure, community facilities, services, financial sustainability, planning and the long-term direction of our region.

Council encourages all eligible residents who have an interest in their community and its future to consider nominating for election.

Serving as an elected member provides an opportunity to contribute to important local decisions, represent community interests and help guide the future development of the Flinders Ranges Council area.

Our region benefits when people with different experiences, perspectives, skills and backgrounds become involved in local government. A willingness to listen, work collaboratively and make decisions in the interests of the broader community is an important part of effective representation.

I encourage residents who may be considering standing for Council to learn more about the election process and the responsibilities involved. Strong community participation helps ensure that local government continues to reflect the aspirations and needs of the people it serves.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS - CELEBRATING OUR REGION

Preparations and community involvement continue for the upcoming Quandong Festival, an event that has grown from a Council-initiated initiative into a festival that is now community managed.

This transition is a wonderful example of community ownership and the willingness of local people to take responsibility for events that celebrate our region's identity, history, culture and distinctive environment.

Community festivals provide an important opportunity to bring residents together, welcome visitors and showcase the unique character of our towns. They also create opportunities for local businesses, community groups, volunteers and organisations to participate and benefit from increased activity throughout the region.

The Quandong Festival is particularly valuable in promoting the distinctive character of the Flinders Ranges and the stories, traditions and natural environment that make our region special.

I encourage residents, families and visitors to attend the upcoming festival, support the organisers and participating community groups, and enjoy the opportunity to celebrate what makes our region such a special place.

I also would like to thank the organisers of several Hawker event including the Hawker Hospital reunion, the Hawker sporting historical showcase and the volunteers and community members who have taken on the responsibility of continuing this event. Their efforts demonstrate the strength of our communities and the value of supporting locally driven initiatives.

Council is investigating funding and budget options for Fringe in the Flinders in 2027 and beyond. New State Government monieshas recognised the vital role regional communities play in the Fringe portfolio, with a renewed focus on supporting arts and cultural experiences in regional areas.

This is exciting news, with the funding attracting a range of Fringe shows to the region. Council staff are working to secure these performances, alongside planning for the broader Fringe in the Flinders event, to bring another vibrant celebration of arts, culture and entertainment to our communities.

Stay tuned for more details as plans take shape!

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FIRE DANGER SEASON COMMENCES THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2026

The CFS Chief Officer has declared the Fire Danger Season dates for 2026/2027 with the Flinders region commencing on Thursday 15 October 2026.

For further information please visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au

MAYORAL REPORT cont.

FLOOD RECOVERY – HIGHWAY REPAIRS AND COUNCIL ROAD FUNDING

Flood recovery is a major priority for our region following the significant rainfall events that caused extensive damage to roads and other infrastructure.

It is encouraging to report that the Department for Infrastructure and Transport has commenced repair works on sections of Flinders Ranges Way and Horrocks Highway. These works are an important step towards restoring road conditions, improving safety and supporting the movement of residents, freight, service providers and tourists throughout the region.

Council has also completed the required preparation and submission of supporting documentation and evidence relating to its flood-damaged road network. The $16m claim is currently progressing through the State Government's Treasury and Finance approval processes.

The scale of the damage has placed considerable pressure on Council's financial and operational resources. The cost of restoring the affected roads is substantial, and it is essential that appropriate government assistance is secured so Council can undertake the necessary repairs without placing an unreasonable burden on local ratepayers.

There has been very encouraging advice from initial estimates that the South Australian Government is expected to cover approximately 98 per cent of the eligible costs associated with the required works, subject to the final funding agreement and approvals.

This is exceptionally positive news for the Flinders Ranges community. Securing this level of assistance would significantly reduce the financial impact on Council and enable the restoration of essential road infrastructure following an extraordinary period of weather-related damage.

Council is working with the relevant State Government agencies to finalise the arrangements. A further announcement will be made once the final agreement has been received and confirmed.

I acknowledge the work of Council staff in compiling the evidence, documenting the damage and progressing the claim. This has been a significant undertaking and is an important part of ensuring that our community receives the support required to recover.

TOURISM, RECENT RAINFALL AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The recent rainfall has transformed parts of the Flinders Ranges landscape, bringing renewed colour, vegetation growth and striking scenery that has attracted a significant influx of visitors to our region.

The increase in tourism has been wonderful to see. Visitors provide an important boost to local businesses, accommodation providers, hospitality operators, service stations, tourism operators and community organisations.

Tourism is a vital contributor to our regional economy, and the natural beauty of our landscape continues to be one of our greatest assets. The recent conditions have provided a particularly memorable experience for visitors, highlighting the remarkable character and diversity of our region.

However, the substantial increase in visitor numbers has also presented challenges for our smaller communities. Increased traffic, pressure on facilities, waste management requirements and demand on local services all require attention, particularly where towns have limited infrastructure and operational resources.

It is important that we continue to welcome visitors while ensuring that tourism is managed in a way that respects our communities, protects our environment and supports the long-term sustainability of the region.

I thank local businesses, community groups, volunteers and Council staff who have worked to accommodate the increased activity and help provide a positive experience for visitors.

The recent influx of travellers reinforces the importance of maintaining our roads, public amenities, recreational facilities and town infrastructure. These assets serve our residents every day, while also helping create the welcoming experience that encourages visitors to return.

Council recognises tourism as an important opportunity for economic development and regional promotion, while balancing the needs of residents and the practical demands placed on our communities.

CELEBRATING OUR TOWNS

The 150th anniversary celebrations for Quorn in 2028, Cradock in 2029 and Hawker in 2030 will provide important opportunities to recognise the history of our towns, celebrate their achievements and bring our communities together to reflect on their past, present and future.

All three (3) towns have unique histories, strong community identities and important contributions to the development of the Flinders Ranges. Quorn's railway heritage, historic buildings and longstanding community organisations, Cradock's farming and pastoral history and resilience, together with Hawker's rich regional history, pioneering spirit and role as a gateway to the Flinders Ranges, form an important part of the identity and character of our Council area.

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Council recognises that these milestones belong first and foremost to the communities themselves. Planning for celebrations will therefore be a collaborative process, with residents and community representatives given opportunities to contribute ideas, provide advice to Council and help shape the planning and delivery of each event.

Council intends to call for expressions of interest from community members to participate in appropriate planning groups or committees for each anniversary. Historical groups, sporting clubs, schools, businesses, community organisations, volunteers and interested residents will all have valuable contributions to make. Their involvement will help ensure the celebrations reflect the aspirations, stories and traditions of each town and provide opportunities for broad community participation.

These anniversaries will also provide opportunities to promote the regoin to a wider audience, attract visitors, encourage people to stay longer, support local businesses and showcase the heritage, character and community spirit that make our towns special.

I encourage residents in all communities to become involved as planning progresses and to share their ideas, photographs, stories and suggestions. Through this community-led approach, Council can support each town to develop celebrations that are meaningful, inclusive and reflective of its own identity.

These milestones should be more than celebrations of the past. They should also strengthen community connections, encourage tourism, recognise the contribution of generations of residents and help build confidence and pride as we look towards the future of Quorn, Cradock and Hawker and the wider Flinders Ranges region.

CLOSING REMARKS

September and October have highlighted the importance of continuing to invest in our communities, support essential services and maintain the infrastructure that underpins life across the Flinders Ranges. Our community also continues to benefit from the extraordinary contribution of volunteers, local organisations, businesses and residents who give their time and effort to make our region a better place to live and visit. As we look ahead, Council remains focused on responsible financial management, practical infrastructure improvements, community participation and supporting opportunities that strengthen the long-term sustainability of our towns.

I thank my fellow elected members, Council staff, community organisations, volunteers and residents for their ongoing commitment to the Flinders Ranges Council area.

Ken Anderson
Mayor, Flinders Ranges Council

ADVANCE NOTICE
2026 / 2027 CHRISTMAS CLOSURES

Please note the following temporary closure of Council facilities and offices over the 2026/2027 Christmas period.

Quorn Administration Office and Flinders Ranges Visitor Information Centre:
Close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 23 December 2026 and reopen at 9.00am on Monday 4 January 2027

Quorn and Hawker Works Depots:
Close at 5.00pm on Friday 18 December 2026 and reopen at 7.00am on Monday 4 January 2027.

Quorn and Hawker Swimming Pools:
Closed 25 December only.

Landfill and Waste Depots (Quorn and Hawker):
Open normal operating hours.
Sunday's 27 December 2026 and 3 January 2027 and Wednesday 6 January 2027

REMEMBRANCE DAY
11 NOVEMBER 2026

QUORN - HAWKER - CRADOCK



We Will Remember Them.

SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT ALL WAR MEMORIALS FROM 10.45AM

THE FLINDERS RANGES COUNCIL

Lest We Forget



MAYOR'S SENIORS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2026

11.30AM FOR 12.00PM LUNCH

QUORN TOWN HALL

ALL SENIORS WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

RSVP's appreciated but not compulsory

The Community Buses will be available for Hawker residents

Please contact Council on 8620 0500 if any questions

HAVE YOUR SAY - HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN OUR REGION

What makes our community a healthy and great place to live? What could make it better?

The Flinders Ranges Council, together with the other councils of the Flinders Alliance, is developing a new Regional Public Health Plan, and we want to hear from our community.

The Plan will help identify the health and wellbeing priorities that matter across our region and guide how councils can work together, and with local communities and other organisations, to support healthier, safer and more connected communities.

We're holding a community session in Quorn and invite local residents, community groups and organisations to come along, share their experiences and tell us what matters most:

Tuesday 3 November 2026
Council Chambers, 1 Seventh Street, Quorn
4.00pm - 6.00pm

You don't need to be a health expert. We want to hear about your experience of living in the community – what works well, what gets in the way of good health and wellbeing, and what you think should be a priority for the future.

Can't make the session? You can still have your say.

We're inviting community members to complete a short community health and wellbeing survey. The survey is now open and available for you to have your say until 20 November 2026.

You can complete the survey regardless of whether you attend a community session. Every response will help us build a clearer picture of what matters to people across the region.

Come along, complete the survey, or do both. Your local knowledge, experiences and ideas will help shape the new Regional Public Health Plan.

You can access the survey via a link on the FRC webpage at www.frc.sa.gov.au or or by scanning the QR code to the left.

Hard copies of the survey are also available from the Quorn Administration Office and Hawker Motors.

BUCKET DRUMMING FUN

A fantastic time was had bucket drumming sessions held at the Quorn Golf Club and Flinders House!
Led by John Sharp, participants and residents put their coordination, rhythm and speed to the test in fun and energetic drumming sessions.
Held as part of Seniors Week and funded by the Office for Ageing Well, they were thoroughly enjoyable sessions filled with plenty of beats, smiles and laughter!
A big thank you to John Sharp and everyone who joined in.
Keep an eye out for more sessions in the future!









CALL FOR FOUTH AUSTRALIANS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE 2027 COUNCIL ELECTIONS

South Australians are being encouraged to consider standing for council, with a statewide campaign inviting people from all walks of life to help shape the places they call home.

The Shape Your World campaign, launched by LGA and the Electoral Commission of South Australia (ECSA), encourages South Australians to take an active role in the 2027 council elections, by exploring becoming a candidate or having their say at next year's ballot.

With candidate nominations opening in January, LGA President, Mayor Heather Holmes-Ross said now was the time to find out what serving on council involves.

"Every community has people who bring others together, see opportunities and care deeply about their local area," Mayor Holmes-Ross said. "They might be volunteering at a sporting club, running a business, raising a family or helping their neighbours. We want them to see that there could be a place for them on council. "You don't need a particular background to make a valuable contribution, your experience, your ideas and your willingness to listen to others are a good place to start."

Mayor Holmes-Ross said council decisions touch everyday life, from local roads, parks and libraries to community facilities and planning for the future. "Standing for council is an opportunity to help guide those decisions and contribute to something that matters," she said. "It takes commitment, and people should have the opportunity to understand the responsibilities before putting their hand up. That's why we're starting this conversation now.

"If you've ever wondered whether you could make a difference on council, use the coming months to learn about the role, attend an information session and talk to people who have done it. "We want people from different backgrounds and stages of life to consider standing, so our councils reflect the communities they serve."

To help people explore whether council is right for them, LGA offers free online learning, including a 10-minute leadership qualities and skills checklist and short online courses explaining what elected members do, how council decisions are made and the responsibilities of the role. "You don't have to decide today whether you'll stand," Mayor Holmes-Ross said. "Start with the online self-check, explore what the role involves and see how your skills and experience could contribute. It's a simple first step toward making an informed decision before nominations open in January."

Mayor Holmes-Ross said the campaign also encouraged South Australians to recognise the part they can play through voting. "Whether you choose to stand or help choose who represents you, council elections are an opportunity to take an active part in your community's future," she said.

South Australia's next periodic local government elections were originally slated for November 2026 but were deferred by the South Australian Parliament to April 2027 at the request of ECSA.

The updated key dates for the 2027 Council Elections are:
· Nominations open: 26 January 2027
· Nominations close: 12:00pm, 9 February 2027
· Ballot mailed-out: 11 – 17 March 2027
· Voting close: 5:00pm 7 April 2027

Voting in South Australian council elections is conducted by postal ballot, making it easy for residents to participate and have their say in the future of their local community.

Learn more at: www.councilelections.sa.gov.au