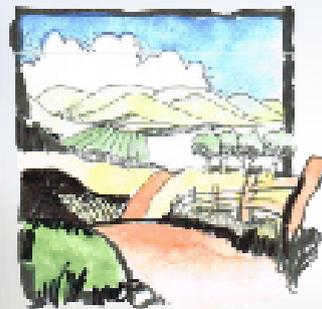


Friends of Willunga Basin inc.

PO Box 710, Willunga. Chair: Geoff Hayter Secretary: David Gill, Tel. 08 85562289 info@fowb.net



WELCOME, FRIENDS

What a pleasure it is to be the Chairman of this healthy and thriving organisation that very definitely punches above its weight! The Committee is strong and this year has been refreshed with two new members who bring with them strong environmental and community engagement credentials to enhance those already in the pool of professional and personal resources.

WILLUNGA MAIN STREET PROJECT

The community elected Main Street Reference Group is now in a holding position, with work on the upgrade of the street due to start as we go to print. As you may have seen from the Reference Group Newsletter, the following agreements and understandings have been reached with Council:

TREES

Approximately 18 trees will be removed (those that are at end of life/mostly Desert Ash/impacted by overhead powerlines). The historic Monterey Pine is still under consideration as to its future

About 71 new trees will be planted with a view to providing an avenue of trees into the town

Heritage considerations include reference to the original area of 80 acres, measured in (Gunter) chain lengths, which will be reflected in the paving; and of course there will be new slate from the local quarry.

The tree palette is expected to be made up of:

- Jacaranda
- E. Leucoxydon Rosea (SA Blue Gum)
- Algerian Oak
- Zelkova Serrata
- E. Microcarpa (Grey Box, as suggested by NRM Board because of its formerly wide presence in the area)
- The final plan may be viewed on the Council Website.

The Community Reference Group will be monitoring the work and invites you to contact Stephanie on 0402128644 if you feel concerned about any matter relating to the refurbishment.



Above: artist's impressions of Council's design for tree pits in High Street

Willunga Basin Trail



A FUTURE ICON OF THE BASIN

The Willunga Basin Trail is a new 100km walking circuit of the Basin, from the hills to the coast, and from the Onkaparinga River to Sellicks. We think it will be famous one day.

Although it sprang from FoWB, the group overseeing the trail's creation is now an incorporated body and membership is/will be independent of FoWB. As soon as the trail is formally included in Council's pending Recreational Trails Strategy (more on this below), the very strong and vibrant group can start work in earnest, including negotiations with various landholders whose properties are nearby.

The marking of wayfinding points along the Trail is now being undertaken twice weekly, in addition to the regular Friday walks across some of the most beautiful and interesting parts of the Basin.

If you would like to be involved, whether in working bees or as a walking participant (in the company of interesting people who invariably boost the economy of one of the many coffee houses along the way!), contact either Chris on 0439 077 038 or Zara at zaralupton@hotmail.com.

THE ONSLAUGHT AT OLD ALDINGA CONTINUES!

In our last Newsletter, we informed you about the removal of 72 (we incorrectly reported 62) trees adjacent to the Uniting Church cemetery. We can all now delight in the high visibility of the Hungry Jacks and OTR signage from far away.

But wait; there's more!!!!!!

In another major change for the townscape, Aldi will shortly start construction of its new store on the corner of Main South Rd and Port Road, opposite OTR. Modernity has arrived in old Aldinga. Fortunately, our appeal against aspects of the proposal resulted in some small enhancements to the now larger plan.

To pile on the change, the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) is about to upgrade South Road on its approaches to Aldinga to the reported tune of \$40m. Community interest in the project has been strong and has resulted in a number of modifications to the original scheme. The work will include a roundabout at the Port Road intersection, incorporating a less than satisfactory cycle and pedestrian crossing.

We support the improved safety for road users, and the upgrade of a difficult intersection, but think that cyclists and pedestrians deserve better. As below, we have a plan.

Meanwhile, the many small businesses in old Aldinga look forward to completion of the long, drawn-out upgrade of Port Road.

Final plan for changes at Port Road, South Road Junction



EAST-WEST CYCLING LINK



Right: Suggested location for a cycle underpass at west end of Little Road



Consultation around the South Road upgrade brought to the fore the matter of an east-west cycling and pedestrian link between Willunga and Pt Willunga.

FoWB is strongly of the view that such a link is required to complete the Shiraz Trail, and has been lobbying Council in this regard.

Council is presently reviewing its Recreational Trails Strategy, with a draft of the new plan due to go to public consultation in March. Council acknowledges the need for east-west linkages across Willunga Basin, both for the benefit of local residents and as part of its tourism infrastructure.

At present, its preferred path from Willunga to Pt Willunga is over private land along Willunga Creek.

We prefer Little Road as a more practical solution. Such a trail would run along Little Road between the two highways (including a section of closed road at its eastern end), connecting to the Willunga Creek reserve west of South Road and Little Road East to the east of Victor Harbor Road. We also think that it is possible to construct underpasses beneath both South and Victor Harbor Roads.

The first step however is to ensure that this alignment is captured in Council's new Trails Strategy. To this end, we need all FoWB members to respond to the consultation period, demanding that Little Road be identified as a future east-west cycling and pedestrian link, to extend the Shiraz Trail from Willunga to Pt Willunga. Once it's in the strategy, we can start to lobby for its construction. Keep an eye out for the consultation notices.

MCLAREN VALE BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

This is a project to dramatically improve the biodiversity value of the Willunga/McLaren Vale wine and grape growing district, and especially its creeks, by removing feral plants such as briar rose, desert ash and olive, with follow-up planting of provenance trees and shrubs.

The project is a joint initiative of FoWB, the NRM and McLaren Vale Grape Wine & Tourism Assoc. (MVGWTA) via the Sustainable Australia Winegrowing programme. The MVGWTA link provides a direct tie-in between the project and the grape industry – with the objective being to improve the region's biodiversity score and so support its 'clean, green' credentials.

It recently won the environmental award at the McLaren Vale Business Association's Annual Awards night

The project's immediate purpose is to put volunteer feet on the ground, doing hands-on environmental work on selected sites. The initiative is now steaming ahead, with a strong group of volunteers rocking up for two hours only at 8.00am on the second Sunday of each month.. In winter, we plant; other times, we clear. All are welcome.

If you want to get involved please register your name and contact details by contacting Geoff Hayter at geoff.hayter@propad.com.au, or the McLaren Vale Biodiversity Facebook page.

A new initiative arising from this will be a strategy of FoWB for a Feral Olive/Briar Rose/ Desert Ash Free Basin by 2027.



Above: Biodiversity group volunteers



Right: removing woody weeds



THE WASHPOOL: GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

Good news!

The Minister for the Environment, Hon Ian Hunter MHR, has advised that the fragmented ownership of the land in which the iconic washpool is located is under review. Current owners include Council, DPTI and SA Water. Consolidation of ownership would thus enable a better approach to the management of the area, potentially including its incorporation into the Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park.

The bad news!

Part of the land for the intended Park is proposed for the parking of several thousand vehicles during the Sellicks Beach bike races, thereby threatening damage to this fragile area. This is but one problem we see with this event – another is the potential for damage to the pebble dunes – which we will monitor closely. FoWB has also written to the Minister to suggest a possible moratorium on the event pending the resolution of environmental matters, but to no avail.

Membership Application

You are invited to join us.

Our annual membership fee for individuals is only \$10.00 (\$15.00 for families).

Please post to: P.O. Box 710, Willunga 5172

I hereby join as a

FRIEND OF WILLUNGA BASIN

and declare my support for retaining the natural and rural character of the Willunga Basin as stated in the objectives.

Title Name: (First Name)

(Surname):

Address:

.....p.code
email (optional)..

.....

Payment enc. \$.....

FOWB gives its assurance that your email will not be disclosed to anyone.

Tick if you wish us to post you a receipt.

Please let us know of any particular interests or concerns that you may have.

Please print, cut out, complete and post to join, or visit fowb.net

PLANNING REFORM

FoWB has been making its views on the current Planning Reform process known to the Government, both directly and via our local members, most recently at our AGM at which the guest speaker was Hon Chris Picton, MHR.

As seen from the above, the residents of the Willunga Basin are frequently disappointed at some of the poor planning outcomes and the ongoing environmental degradation that continues to occur in the Basin. We remain concerned to ensure that the voice of the community will still be heard when the new planning system is in place.

**FOWB does not oppose development.
We oppose bad development.**

Be the first to know that is happening around the Basin! We are a group that cannot be ignored by either local or State governments. We meet at 7.30 on the second Wednesday of every month at the Environment Centre in High St, Willunga. Membership is a trifling \$10 for individuals and \$15 for families. A bargain at twice the price! Membership forms are available on our website at FOWB.net, and by printing and cutting out the form above.

You can support our work by simply being a member and thereby strengthening our 'voice' when we talk to the powers that be. Indeed, given recent events there is no better time than now to join Friends of Willunga Basin as your principal advocate for the built and natural environment in which we live.

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