



MEDIA RELEASE | 25 October 2022

Caring Neighbourhood Program celebrates 25 years of supporting older people in the Victor Harbor community

This year marks the Caring Neighbourhood Program's 25th anniversary, which means it's the perfect time to acknowledge the positive impact of the program on the local community.

For a quarter of a century, the Caring Neighbourhood Program has offered an inclusive and supportive environment to those who are aged over 65 and feeling isolated or disconnected.

The initiative first began in 1994 as a pilot program based in Willunga. In 1997, the program as we now know it was extended to the wider Fleurieu Peninsula.

The core values of the program have always been to develop a sense of community, companionship and friendship.

The current aim of the program is to provide goal focussed social opportunities to build on people's strengths through community based, meaningful activity.

Some of the activities currently offered by the service include:

- **Social lunch groups** - A chance to get together and socialise over a meal
- **Art and painting sessions** - Relaxed, fun sessions to learn the art of painting
- **Flutter Bus** - A longer bus trip that includes lunch
- **Social stretch** - Gentle chair based exercise classes
- **Community singing group** - A relaxed singing group for people who like to sing for fun.

A special anniversary celebration event was held on Friday, 21 October 2022 with many clients and volunteers present.

City of Victor Harbor Acting Chief Executive Officer, Karen Rokicinski, said many Council staff, volunteers, community members and Elected Members had contributed to the program over the years.

“I would like to say an enormous thank you to everyone who has been part of the program since it commenced,” said Ms Rokicinski.

“The Caring Neighbourhood Program is a highly valued initiative in our community, helping to support and connect individuals that may otherwise be quite isolated and vulnerable.”

“Every single day, for a quarter of a century, someone in the local community has received support as part of the Caring Neighbourhood Program. This anniversary is definitely something worth celebrating!”

Currently, the City of Victor Harbor co-funds the Caring Neighbourhood Program with Commonwealth Home Support funding. All clients are assessed for eligibility and referred through My Aged Care. The program is then facilitated by Council staff who visit the clients to ascertain their needs and manage the valuable team of volunteers.

For more information about the Caring Neighbourhood Program, please visit www.victor.sa.gov.au/ageingwell