

Ceduna Far West Our Town Plan

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Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Far West Coast Aboriginal Peoples, the Gugada/Kokatha, the Mirning and the Wirangu Peoples; the Traditional Owners and custodians of the Far West Coast region.

We respect their Elders past and present. We respect their history, culture and ancient knowledge, and we acknowledge that their beliefs and practices are just as relevant today to the living Traditional Owners. Through our actions we will respect their Cultural Heritage and ongoing connection to these lands and waters.

Vision

Ceduna/Far West reclaims our collective story and wellbeing by growing community voice and healthy beliefs. Through skills and recognition, we will foster the role for community in change.

Understanding the system our community is a part of

To understand our community system is to understand the recent and past historic context of Our Town Ceduna/Far West.

This is best shared through story.

Ceduna is the most amazing place in the world with a semi-desert environment it offers a unique and pristine vista of beaches, bushlands, big open spaces, and the biggest sky. Ceduna comes from an Aboriginal language word meaning – a place to sit and rest. We have a wonderful diverse community of people - Aboriginal people from Oak Valley, Yalata, Koonibba and Ceduna; a Greek fishing community; in recent times we have had doctors from Ireland, West Africa, Sri Lanka and Iraq; and business, hospitality and professional people from India and broader Asia.

Industries include farming, fishing, and oyster farming; mining of mineral sands, gypsum, and salt; services delivery; hospitality and east-west transport services amenities; construction. However, Ceduna community is largely sustained by the economic infrastructure around service delivery through government departments and non-government organisations (NGOs).

Some years ago, a report from a university professor named Ceduna as one of the 6th poorest towns of its size in Australia. As a result, there was an influx of more Government Departments and Non - Government Organisations (NGOs funded and accountable to government through KPI driven outcomes). The increase in number was overwhelming and confusing for the community and changed the economic balance through highly paid CEO employee wage structures.

'In 2011, a Coronial Inquest into the deaths of six Aboriginal people in and around Ceduna challenged agencies to improve service responses to longstanding issues regarding the safety and wellbeing of people moving between remote communities and Ceduna Township'.¹

¹ Direct quote from Ceduna Services Collaboration paper

In a response to the findings of the Coronial Inquest, programs increased with the Services Reform Group (formed at the time) using data collected at the Hospital on admissions to both there and the associated Sober-up Centre. The data suggested high use of facilities but on scrutiny it was a small number of people with constant use. However, it was this data that informed what was to follow. The beds were increased at the Sober-up Centre and led to a rise in numbers as people saw it as a place to stay. The findings were pointing to some 10-20 Anangu people from Yalata and Oak Valley. The programs were often resourced by unskilled workers to deal with people who were labelled "the vulnerable", and a deficit model approach was implemented rather than speaking with the people on what they needed.

The group and local government supported the introduction of the Indue-Cashless Debit Card (the Card) as an answer to the problem. This decision was based on community consultation which only existed at the agency/department level. The Streetbeat Program followed a Dog Squad Program initiated by the Ceduna Council and was set up for services to engage people in the street. It only existed for a short period of time due to issues of 'shame' from community and responses from agencies concerned for relationships with community.

The introduction of the Card created division between the local and remote Aboriginal Communities and Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people. The community was devastated, and the impact was felt keenly by the Aboriginal Community and predominantly seen as another thing the Government was doing to them.

Historically for Aboriginal Communities since the nineties many programs have been imposed with little to no consultation. Pre-nineties service personnel worked closely together and went to Communities and sat

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with people and asked what it was that was needed. And at that time in the background at Yalata the palpable force of an age-old leadership system in the community was evident in the fight for the Maralinga Lands.

On the plus side after the initial resentment from communities blaming each other, people came together for a public meeting with Nick Xenophon and Jacqui Lambie who as they departed assured the meeting that they would vote

against the introduction of the Card.

Next came a public meeting with Alan Tudge and Nick Xenophon, Nick insisted there be two surveys at specific points to monitor the effect. In front of a stacked audience of more affluent local people, two of the four actual community elected Aboriginal signatories of the MOU stood up and addressed the room speaking about signing the MOU under duress with limited understanding. The rest of the signatories were employees of Aboriginal Organisations that had been headhunted by Prime Minister and Cabinet.

For the Community it was very soul destroying. The resultant emotional and psychological impact is still felt 4 years later.

Orima Research was engaged to do the research. They came twice and the first-time people that responded were given a \$25.00 food voucher

It is these systems [community clubs and groups] that the team is interested in fostering and building skills in to support the wellbeing of community

prevails where people are blamed and punished for their circumstances.

The Services Reform Group is now Ceduna Services Collaboration and has moved towards community inclusion and because of all that has happened now includes principles of codesign, building on strengths, and moving towards ways of listening to community voices in its new mandate.

On a positive note we have three initiatives in Ceduna, one being Our Town Ceduna/Far West which has already captured a big range of people usually not found in the same space. The second initiative is the Restorative Practice training which fits beautifully with Our Town principles, and to date some 350 people have undertaken the training.

and the second time \$50.00. Despite the research findings being met with criticism and are questioned by the Auditor General, the government spin at Local and Federal level still maintains a great outcome.

Our town story illustrates that data collection, survey, and research methodologies that people undertake are questionable and often formed and used with outcomes in mind and also even when research is questioned and found to be flawed it is ignored. In this instance the dominant voice

The third initiative is Stronger Places, Stronger People where building capacity at the community level to make decisions is the objective. The latter has been driven by the Department of Social Security (now Services Australia) in response to the recognition of failure in service delivery to Aboriginal Communities.

During all this we have had a strong Fight for the Bight Campaign against interest from BHP, Chevron and Equinor. Now Equinor has withdrawn on economic grounds. It may be of interest to note that at initial glance people who were for the Card were also for drilling in the Bight. In this instance people banded together to protest the drilling.

The dominant government voice contributes to an unhealthy power-over model diminishing community self-esteem and leaves people feeling powerlessness affecting any ideology that subscribes to the possibility of change.

There are long-standing attitude and value systems that are lodged in the distant past, preventing a clear view of current circumstances, and it is this that we need support with. A support that shows ways to value strengths and embrace traditions, while supporting emerging leadership. We are on a precipice with the initiatives and influences they bring; where people's uniqueness and strengths are captured to inform a stronger and more cohesive community, and all are valued. In moving towards a plan, where cultural nuances are respected, and the impact of historical events are considered, a platform is created for community voices to be heard.

While the initial Our Town application from Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Services (now Yadu Health) highlights the systems in Ceduna as government or agencies (NGO's) the Ceduna /Far West team now

considers other systems of paramount importance. As demonstrated through the community voice we actively listened to, unless the community systems become the dominant voice and agency is at the community level with ownership of decision making, there will be no movement. Other systems of value and connection are through sporting clubs, various other clubs, and groups. The other systems provide places of purpose and meaning for different parts of our community. It is these systems that the team is interested in fostering and building skills in to support the wellbeing of community, at the same time opening the systems to be more inclusive of the broader community.

Through our interviews both lived-experienced and key informant the team found strengths and resilience that often people/systems hardly recognised in themselves. For instance, local farmers make the most natural response to a neighbour's crisis by coming together to seed or crop the land whatever is needed—the stories of these natural interventions are numerous. When we highlighted this to two people that are natural leaders in the sector, they were both surprised by how it was viewed and recognised by the community at large as a strength and pure giving in times of crisis.

The response to the threat to our pristine environment demonstrated that when there is crisis the community comes together, and usual differences are dropped. A capture of that coming together without the crisis is part of what we see as a way forward, we know it is possible.

About Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice seeks to resolve problems and restore relationships after conflict. The practice aligns with Our Town Vision and Plan in the following ways:

- Relationships as with Our Town Ceduna/Far West are at the heart of Restorative Practice principles.
- The use of circles promotes a platform for all voices and fits well with the team's ideas of recognition and fluidity.
- Yarning circles have been an integral part of our process with ideas that there is always possibility for movement from the inner to outer circle.
- Restoring relationships balance as a way forward healing both past and present are part of both.
- With the widespread training in Restorative Practice creates a foundation for Our Town to build on.
- The team is part of the community of practice for Restorative Practice, broadening our network.

Our Key Insights

The Ceduna/Far West community has identified four key insights that matter most to us. The insights were informed by lived experience and key informant interviews. These were added to by a range of community people through an open house approach where community members came to sessions, were guided through the insights by the team and invited to make their contributions.



Swimming against the tide

The undercurrents are strong, the water is murky.

People get stuck in a system & a process that they have little control over.

People want control back, yet there is lack of self determination; a culture of dependency (of people on services) and a practice of intervention (by government and services) is getting in the way.

Generations of people experiencing poverty and control over their lives; people need to regain capacity for decision making.

Community Perspective

There is too much intervention in Ceduna/Far West.

People do not want to be labeled but do want to be listened to.

People have told us that there are too many services in Ceduna/Far West and it is confusing. When people need help it is hard to find the right person. Eligibility creates division.

Services work in crisis and are driven by KPIs; they decide what people need. Providers of support are time poor. This gets in the way of people having control over their own journeys.

There is intergenerational learnt behaviour of relying on services and government support. This is normalised.

People are experts in their own lives yet feel they are not listened to; ownership means pride.

How might we...

- Empower community to take ownership of their journey?
- Provide a space for conversations where people feel heard?
- Use community strengths & voice in the way services are delivered?

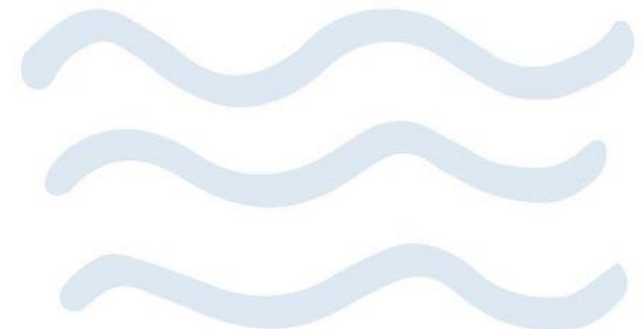
Supporting Evidence

There are **34 police officers** for a community of **3,400**.

At Yalata Community the first building on entering is the police station.

There are **over 75 services** within Ceduna, Koonibba, Yalata and Oak Valley.

High numbers of Aboriginal people per population are incarcerated.



Strong trees have deep roots

Western ways of healing are not the only way.

Medical model has a strong presence in people's lives.

Other options-not explore or understood. Labels confine people.

People have talked to us about their own methods of healing, which need acknowledging and listening to. All systems want to impose labels and people are tired of this.

Community Perspective

People do not want to be labeled but do want to be listened to. 'I just want somewhere to be listened to rather than diagnosed and medicated'.

People are looking for alternative options for managing their wellbeing. "There is a lack of the right services and not enough options for wellbeing choices".

People like talking with and are supported by peers but there are limited places for connections and conversations to occur. "Some of the best counselling is from peers, those that have been through it before".

Ngangkari come to Ceduna regularly and are accessed by Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people.

Current systems do not facilitate good early or post intervention. Siloed service contracts see people with no supports to prevent or recover from issues relating to mental health, domestic family violence, child protection interventions and so on.

How might we...

- Build on what exists so there are options people can choose?
- Grow awareness of options that exist?
- Create new options to support a wholistic approach?

Supporting Evidence

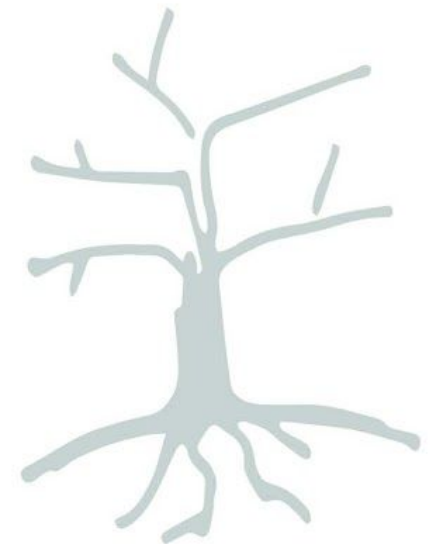
We looked at local intake data of a program as a sample and found that data over 6 years (2013-2018), shows 151 people accessed the service and of the 151, 116 were Aboriginal. Young people were highly represented with 30% aged 16-24 and 12% aged between 14-16. 35 had a diagnosed mental health condition, - 32 had an undiagnosed condition and 75 were unknown.

This data also highlights the amount of intervention and services focused on Aboriginal people. Reinforcing the dependence on a service response.

On a number of at risk indicators our region is assessed as high risk and identified as one of the seven communities experiencing the highest levels of disadvantage in Australia. (Dropping off the Edge Report 2015)

Of Mental Health related presentations at Ceduna Hospital ED over a 6 month period data shows high rates of people aged 25-34 (28) and 16-24 (20). Far West Coast residence (excluding Penong) far exceed presentations for Mental Health than other Eyre Peninsula towns-282 of total 380 and 46 of 79 acute presentations.

Data shows an increase in at risk indicators since the introduction of the cashless card policy, including increased levels of Child protection notifications. Raising significant concerns about the impact on mental health and wellbeing now and into the future for those effected.



There's more to what meets the eye. There is a story behind a label.

Speak to me in my language.

Mental health is confusing.

See me for who I am.

We heard that people want ownership of their own problem. We heard that people want to be listened to.

We heard people don't want to be labeled. We heard that people struggle with the word wellbeing but could tell us what happy is and barriers.

Community Perspective

So many words used that people don't understand, "We've got to keep it real".

To access help you have to be given a label, people don't know where to go for support; "I had all these feelings I didn't understand".

As we held conversations with a diverse range of people in our community the lack of shared languages for mental health and wellbeing stood out as a common theme. Together we need to explore and share "What does wellbeing mean" in our community.

How might we...

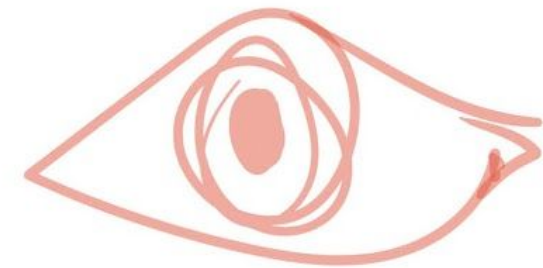
Listen deeply to build knowledge and understanding of what wellbeing & mental health is in our community, so that people can have ownership and are separated from their labels & their narrative is at the fore?

Supporting Evidence

There is a gap in record keeping of hospitals and mental health services. Some information is shared, and some kept on separate systems. Because we have visiting mental health services, some records are kept in Pt Lincoln (4 hours away).

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework for Aboriginal People referenced in the Our Town Literature Scan (pg.9) points to how the Anangu people hold the concept of 'mental health' in their linguistic world view. In their community people are not ostracized when their wellbeing is compromised. There are stories of Aboriginal people going bush to get better to reconnect to country to find themselves again.

Restorative Practice training is taking place in the region with approximately 300 completing training over the last 6 months. A Restorative Community of Practice is in development. This is a strength-based approach being adopted locally that can be built on.



Coming together like the desert and the sea.

Connections are a way of life; disconnection creates division.

Connections are foundations to build on.

We might be different, but we belong together.

We heard our community is two communities. Perceived division needs breaking down..

There is no obvious space for listening if you are not connected.

Community Perspective

We heard sport, activities and clubs are a way of life, but not accessible to all.

Aboriginal people we yarned with spoke of wanting “to be friends with white fellas in Ceduna” and spoke about the relationship with Ceduna through place of birth.

Divisions in the community are keenly felt and people are wanting to move past this. We also found that there are amazing community champions who are natural connectors in our community.

Part of community make efforts to support each other such as the farming sector, when there is an issue neighbouring farms in the area all come together to lend support.

How might we...

- Influence the divisions and disconnections, by introducing alternate and new ways to connect?
- Grow sense of permission to act, to connect, to acknowledge and promote, mutually celebrate?
- Utilise already established groups to be more inclusive and places of connection?
- Encourage people to access common outlets to connect?
- Grow capability for people to see broader community, create welcoming environments and experiences?
- Spot and connect momentum already happening in the community and build awareness of role of these things in wellbeing?

Supporting Evidence

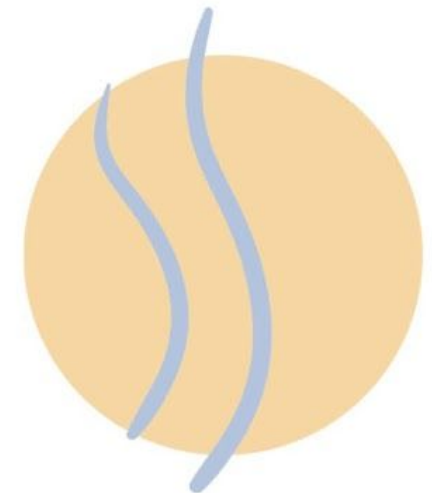
Membership levels for sporting clubs per population remains high and is static over the last 5 years.

Rates of child protection notification and removal of children per capita is high.

There are over 75 services within Ceduna, Koonibba, Yalata and Oak Valley.

A sample of service data shows a high number of social/emotional support referrals - 275 and 474 COVID related over 6 months period to June.

Most data accessed was non-specific and able to be linked to the focus of policy priorities of the time.



Reaching Our Vision

Through the deep engagement processes with our communities, they have shaped Our Community's Vision.



<https://vimeo.com/481467046/424723c64a>

Ceduna/Far West's original application to Our Town was developed by the Ceduna Services Collaborative (CSC), the vision was shaped from the perspective of that group. With every conversation in community we have confirmed they see and believe in 'Our Community's Vision', the vision shaped from their insights. The Ceduna Service Collaboration also supports this new aspiration.

The shift in vision is significant - from services led to community led - it shows what is possible in our community.

Before

Vision of CSC for Community

"The change that CSC wants to see in Ceduna/Far West Coast is improved mental health through better community-based preventative locally grown mental health literature, programs and practices"

Now

Our Community's Vision

Ceduna/Far West reclaims our collective story and wellbeing by growing community voice and healthy beliefs. Through skills and recognition, we will foster the role for community in change.

A Vision Shaped by Insights

The community vision brings to the fore and holds as central to the future, community informed and led processes. In the application the emphasis on community voice was not front and centre. The application came out of the Ceduna Services Collaboration who are managers of services in Ceduna/Far West. At the start the team was two managers, an independent lead and a person working at an NGO. The need for people at the community (rather than managerial) level became apparent and mid-year two other people replaced the managers as action in terms of community engagement was needed. The narrative at the managerial level was solution based rather than explorative at the community level.

The main four team members all work with community in their various roles. There was the inner and outer team, and the outer was 22 people mostly government service managers with an expectation of meeting regularly and having reports coming from the team. Ceduna/Far West Coast has a meeting culture with attendees being service managers and not community members. This was turned around in the first few months and now we have an outer ring of governance people and an inner ring of a community activation people made up of community members.

In viewing the options, they are entirely focused and informed by community voice. For the team this has been a long and arduous journey of insisting on community voice and placing their voice in front of the dominant (government) voice.

Options

As we listened deeply to our community four key insights, that really matter to our community emerged:

1. Swimming against the tide
2. Coming together like the desert & the sea
3. There's more to what meets the eye
4. Strong trees have deep roots

These insights led to our vision for reclaiming our story and wellbeing as a community.

To achieve this vision our inter-related options are to:

- build capacity within community to use their voice and take action on what matters to them in wellbeing;
- activate community connections and networks that can spread and grow community voice and action.

Key to our success will be continuing to build trust in the community. We will know we are progressing when the power-over model is seen to be replaced by a model where community is at the centre with ownership of decision-making.

Our Vision: Ceduna FarWest reclaims our collective story and wellbeing by growing healthy beliefs, skills and recognition; growing our voice; and fostering the role of community in change.

Ways to start could be...

Yarning circles

Stories that bond

Embracing cultural ways

Finding pride in our shared history & future



Ways to start could be...

A strengths based, collective approach

Equipping people with skills & confidence

Deep capability building



Swimming against the tide

Too much intervention
People are their own experts
Ownership means pride
Lack of money (essentials)



Coming together like the desert & the sea

Connections are a way of life.
Connections are foundations to build on.
Disconnection creates division. We might be different, but we belong together.



There's more to what meets the eye

Speak to me in my language.
Mental health is confusing.
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Western ways of healing are not the only way. Medical model is strong in people's lives. Labels confine people. Other options-not explore or understood.

Building Community Voice and Action

What it is

The concept is to facilitate foundational capability across community in deep listening to one another. It focuses on values and beliefs, so that people can connect with others in much healthier ways.

Underpinning the approach is storytelling and fostering connections that heal unhelpful divides, especially the divide between black and white in the region.

It joins up with the community connectors/champions concept (as detailed below) and aims to equip many people across the diverse parts of the region to turn spaces, events, and everyday interactions into welcoming and connecting experiences.

The approach helps people to understand themselves first, to then be able to understand others. It draws out people's knowledge and the shared knowledge within any group. It fosters storytelling and shared understanding.

No one is doing things at such a fundamental level – beliefs, values, and attitudes. We experience training in concepts without doing the foundational work that will see new practices truly implemented. Good implementation at foundational level looks like the voice of community informing and being part of the action to be taken.

Where we will start

Surfacing beliefs and skills that help people see their own strengths and strengths in others. To enable people to identify what really matters to them in terms of their own wellbeing and that of community.

Equipping people with skills and confidence to be able to voice what really matters and start to make decisions for themselves.

A strength based, collective approach to doing this where the community has ownership and is successful in changing the narrative of “being done to”.

What will result

Our Town Ceduna/Far West will see a change in the way government approaches community- from doing to – to doing with and in the longer term being guided by community.

As we venture further into community such as schools, we will see natural community leaders emerge and will add value through our processes, to peer to peer support.

Activating Community Connection and Network

What it is

The concept is to build a diverse network of community connectors/champions - a movement of local people who reach into various parts of community. They will engage community in conversations and activities that drive the change we want to see.

Underpinning this approach is having community connectors/champions at the fore of establishing and growing this network. We have identified and seen in action community connectors/champions through the discovery phase. We will start with these individuals as a network to then work with our community to identify who they see are the community connectors/champions around them.

This approach puts community in charge of choosing who the leaders of change are in our community. Community connectors/champions are key in the ongoing linking and creating of momentum of community-led projects and ideas. The community fund for groups/organisations to apply for wellbeing initiatives places wellbeing front and centre and encourages and influences a mindset of ideas about what wellbeing is in our community. A list of criteria will be developed, with discussion as a funding prerequisite for the purposes of aligning activities with our plan and principles. The community fund has the potential to act as leverage for attracting other funds for the same purpose.

The team holds community connectors/champions as an integral part of the process and a fundamental asset moving forward. We consider the

key attributes and actions of community connectors/champions to include:

- **Listening to learn**
- **Community connectors/champions are able to sit and be.** When you're in a space of connecting people it's like you're *"in two paddocks at once"*.
- Community connectors/champions **have the ability to hold space for the contribution of others.** They allow things to emerge without pre-empting or passing judgement.
- They are **trusted in our community**
- **Reliable and always true to their word**
- **Consistent** – *"We have an issue with people not doing what they say they will in Ceduna."*
- **Passionate about people**
- They **can adjust their communication style and approach** for different audiences.
- **Curious**, with an ability to ask questions in an expanding way.
- **Respectful**
- They **notice and then take appropriate action** *"Lots of people will walk past, but (community connectors/champions) they notice and act they really see. But are respectful and responsive to the needs of individuals"*.
- "They have the **confidence to go where others fear to tread.**" They **give voice to the often-unspoken issues in our community.** They know better outcomes can be reached sometimes through uncomfortable and difficult conversations.

- They are **resourceful and draw on their network for the benefit of all**. They acknowledge they might not have all the answer but are willing to seek out solutions through their networks
- They **walk alongside** you. *“Once you’ve shared the problem, you’ve halved the problem”*
- Community connectors/champions have a **fluid and free-flowing way they interact with community**, like water.

Where we will start

Activating a network of community connectors/champions. We will equip community connectors/champions – by coaching them in building and weaving relationships and practices in deep listening. Foundational is the listening exchange; listening to hear and understand. Building out capacity by developing skills for connecting, finding those doing it naturally and building them up.

Community projects that embrace and value cultural ways. With permission and invitations into culture encouraging deep cultural exchange through connection to country at a community level.

Community projects that grow pride in our shared history and future. There are assets in our community like sporting clubs, Arts Centre, annual events and celebrations that are existing networks to connect with and build on as places of connection. In turn encouraging more

people to feel welcome to join. Opportunities within to promote mental health.

Spot and connect momentum already happening in the community and build awareness of the role of these things in wellbeing. Grow sense of permission to act, to connect, to acknowledge and promote sense of belonging. Grow capability for people to see broader community, create welcoming environments and experiences.

Sharing stories that bond us. Weave the relationships between the divides by the power of storytelling, a healing through connecting to shared history. Growing role models within community. Fostering conversations that grow.

What will result

The different sectors of our community will be more involved with each other and this opens further links to build capacity at a community level. For example; the idea of the wellbeing champions resonated with the network of sporting clubs who can envisage two champions working across the multiple and diverse clubs including beyond football and netball.

Momentum through activating, which we have seen even in the process to get to a plan.

Who our options will involve

The very nature of our strategy is to work with people wherever they are in community and activating a community network requires us to involve all parts of our diverse community, if we are going to shift the underlying cultural attitudes and beliefs.

We are reluctant to name multiple parts of our community as it is clear in our process to date that the most unexpected openings are presented when we do not constrain ourselves to typical groups. The team wants to have the fluidity to respond to wherever the openness, energy, and potential for momentum surfaces. Through our engagement processes we have starting connections into the following diverse parts of our community, Koonibba, Thevenard (although part of Ceduna has its own ratepayer's association), Penong, Yalata and Oak Valley, and Smoky Bay. An example of this is when a team member arranged to meet/interview an Anangu man, a group formed around him which exemplified the very thing we were discussing - 'being with each other'. We asked "what does wellbeing mean to you", however wellbeing is not a word they use, so they changed the question to "what makes you happy?" It was a most productive discussion full of humour and fun and about aspirations of community. We have learnt from our conversations that we can build bridges and respond when people catch the momentum.

Fluidity to respond is critical to community trust and momentum, otherwise we risk repeating the roll out of programs that are done to community without any consultation.

Using evidence and data to evaluate how we are doing

Recent data by Orima on the Indue-Cashless Debit Card, questioned by the Auditor General but still supported by the Federal Government, leaves the team feeling dubious and wary of research/outcomes. Especially when at the community level no improvement is seen and additional issues have arisen because of its implementation, yet the policy remains. As a result, we scrutinised data captured by outside entities and found that most were biased towards validating the existing policy. Further compounding the experience that community needs and desires are not being responded to.

We will see people coming together in our proposed initiatives and that is the most important data. It will be evidenced by capturing and mapping new connections resulting from people sharing the same space. We will capture the stories of change that also result from these new connections. During the July, TACSI/Fay Fuller visit to Ceduna we were hampered by COVID limitation of numbers but finished up with a diverse group of people in the room to look at and add to options. There were some amazing interchanges between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people connecting through history of family members remembered by a non-Aboriginal woman who came from a farming family near Koonibba community. **Witnessing the power of shared history through storytelling was a revelation for the team and to see the relationship building of such interchanges now has become part of the plan to bring community together.**

Our Assets

Our Team

The symbol of the yarning circle featured as a metaphor describing the nature and fluidity of Our Town team. Both the inner and outer circles have provided the opportunity of movement from inner to outer as strengths, roles and capacity surfaced.

The team has deep commitment to the process and some strengths that have been positive are the recognition of the strengths in the community and highlighting that to others that generally talk deficits. The team has a mindset of anything is possible and change is a given as the momentum continues.

Our support requirements are:

- Dedicated paid positions (as per budget) to have the time for this initiative to move forward in a positive way we need to capture and run with the momentum already established as part of the process. (Note: time was a limiting factor for team members who are full time workers).
- Deeper understanding of systems leadership and theory of change.
- Bringing together a collaborative community connectors/champions group.
- Build/support peer to peer network.
- Coaching/mentoring skills.
- Deep listening skills - eg Just Listening.
- Motivation and initiative skills building.
- Engagement through storytelling- shared history initiatives.
- Public speaking.
- Clear Horizon support for capturing data.
- Scrutinise current literature around wellbeing in our diverse communities – check if the messages are clear and received if not develop more.
- The time and space to connect builds trust, momentum, and relationships.

Our Partners

Our approach to building partnerships has been underpinned by a principle of maintaining trust and not setting up false hope. Through the process new relationships and momentum has been built at the pace of community and partners' capacity to play a role with or without funding.

These founding relationships have been built based on shared belief and respect in our community's role in mental health and wellbeing. They share values and beliefs and are people the team knows they can rely on for support.

Examples of key relationships established through the process are:

Partners	Strengths
Red Cross (asset also)	This may provide Our Town Ceduna/Far West a space for "Just Listening". May also provide office space for Our Town. Red Cross principles align with Our Towns.
Save the Children (asset also)	Youth Led Recovery Grant – Building strength, resilience, and voice. Strong candidate as it is a short-term initiative. Have a range of youth having participated and identified as leaders. A partnership will add value by further building young people's skills.
Lutheran School	Restorative Practice trained –a space to capture and add to momentum of change through youth engagement. Principal is involved in Our Town and is a systems leadership advocate.
Ceduna Area School	Restorative Practice trained - capture and add to momentum of change through youth engagement. Teachers interested in Our Town.
Ceduna Youth Hub (asset also)	Established meeting space. Has an active role in providing space and connection-strong candidates for skills building and emerging community leaders/connectors/champions.
Koonibba Women's Group	Provides space for connection. Interested and actively participating in Our Town.
Arts Ceduna	Space for connection through Art.
Progress Associations	Established committees for connecting and have spaces and events to connect.
Sporting clubs-many	Provide spaces for connection and active network. Open to ideas (options) and real possibilities of change through Our town processes.

Our Community Based Assets

Assets	Strengths
Lived-experienced	Bring understanding and insights to help inform current services. Can offer peer to peer support.
Community connectors/champions	Passionate about people and community, good at listening
Governance Team	Skilled in governance, project management, deep understanding of systems leadership and volunteerism.
Cultural assets of Anangu people of Yalata and Oak Valley	Age old and traditional wisdom.
Ceduna, Koonibba and Scotdesco Aboriginal Communities	Elders and natural Leaders.
Farming sector	Already support each other in crisis. Members are part of Our Town and interested in growing further connections and supports to the sector.
Anglican Church	Strong group of volunteers. Interested in "Just Listening" and commitment to wanting to activate church members as a larger part of the community.
Hospital Auxiliary	Group very proactive with deep connections/supports to older people in community.
Dragon Boat	Supports community and provides activity for connection.
Restorative Practice	Community of Practice Group and over 350 trained, has a momentum for change and aligns with principles of Our Town.
Business and Industry Sector	Interest is building and small businesses want to be involved in "Just Listening".
Men's Shed	Meeting place for connection and activities.
Whole community	Comes together in crisis.

Governance

Our Starting Governance Team

Our plan and funds will be managed by the Our Town Ceduna/Far West governance team, made up of a diverse range of community people, not government. The team has formed and at this stage is interim.

Depending on the outcome and understanding of time commitment this may change. The governance team was formed from a perspective of governance skills, understanding of systems leadership (two members have studied at graduate and post-Graduate) but primarily they are key informants and community champions from a cross section of our community. The governance team are experienced in governance and project management.

Our vision for the governance membership and team roles is to build more skills within community. One idea is the engagement of young people either through mentorship in governance roles or through traineeships in paid team roles.

Terry Moscos - Asset/Maintenance Supervisor for Gypsum Resources Australian. Terry has years of experience as President of the Thevenard Football Club. He has a Master's in Project Management, and researched volunteerism in the local Football Club as part of his course. Terry has worked overseas for some years for a Fortune Five Company in multi-cultural and culturally sensitive areas in Singapore, Malaysia, and

Indonesia. Terry is interested and excited about the project because it is community driven and leads to community engagement and as such will more likely have a lasting impact.

Susan Doherty – Parish Priest, Ceduna Anglican Church. Susan has Bachelor of Theology studied Systems Leadership Change Management with New Rivers Leadership Training (Peter and Sue Kaldor) Major Conflict Manage and Intentional Interim Training. Governance training in quality assurance and risk management accreditation with ACHS. Sat on 2 boards with Port Lincoln Health Services. The Uniting Church in SA Standing Committee-Governance Board for 9 years. Level 3 Unit Manager at Port Lincoln Health Services. Established governance for Victor Harbor Men's shed in collaboration with Victor Harbor Council.

Janet Jacobsen – Volunteers her time running the Ceduna Hospital Auxiliary. The Auxiliary attracts many volunteers who also looks out for elderly people living alone. The members make a large amount of money each year through street stalls and catering activities and donate the money to facilities improvements in Ceduna Hospital. They also take responsibility for making sure that the wellbeing of patients is a priority. Janet has extensive experience in governance, worked many years in local government, sat on numerous committees and was a Quality Assurance officer at Ceduna Hospital. Janet is a natural leader and community connector/champion.

Tony Peters-Principal of Crossways Lutheran School. Tony has returned to Ceduna after a period away and has a particular interest in systems leadership and attends workshops through the Lutheran Seminary on this and associated topics. He has strong relationships in the community. Tony has trained all staff in Restorative Practice.

Breony Carbines - Ceduna Regional Manager South Australia, Save the Children Australia. Breony has a keen interest in children and youth and with a strengths-based, systems leadership and codesign approach and is experienced in community consultation, workforce development and collective impact initiatives. Breony has sat on numerous committees, has worked in Aboriginal communities in Victoria and South Australia.

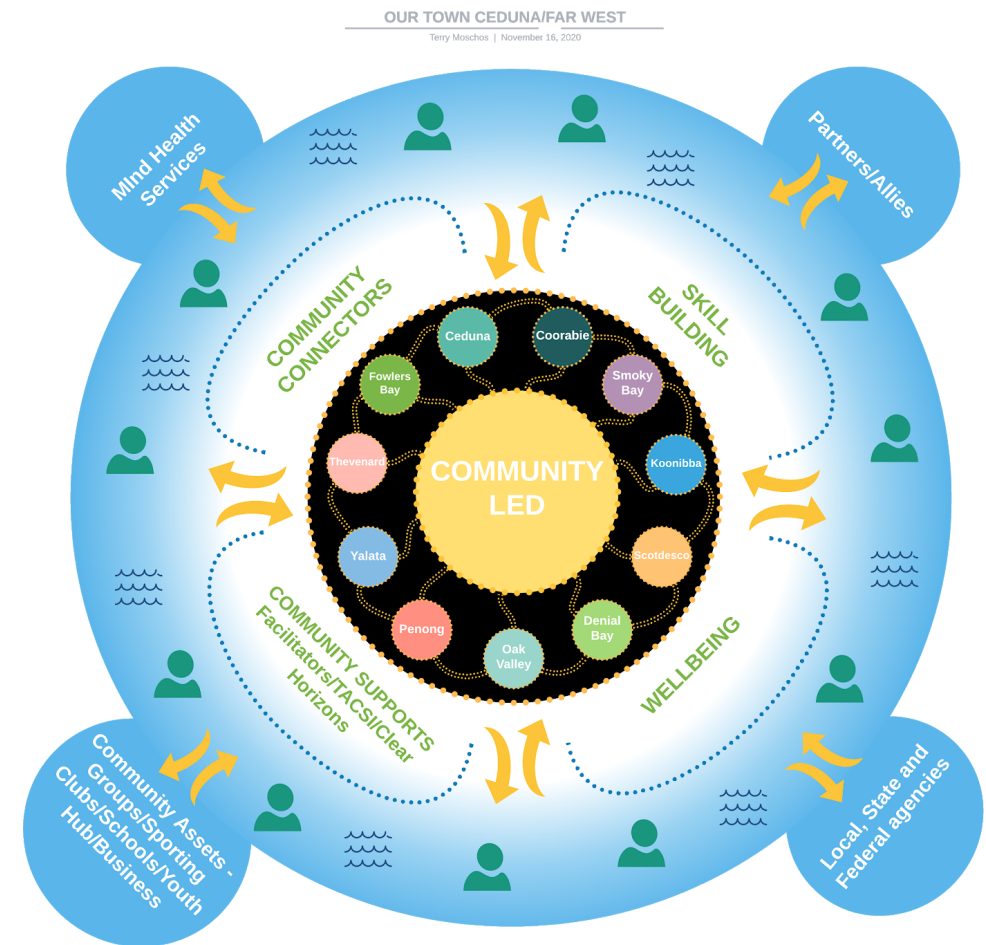
Tony Shipard - Lives in Penong and farms West of Penong and is an active member of the Penong Progress Association. Tony has many years of involvement with the Westies Football Club in official roles. Tony is wanting to see Youth more actively involved in Community and is open to exploring ways to promote the idea.

Paul Brown - Farms West of Ceduna and is a Councillor on Ceduna Council. Paul is concerned for wellbeing in the farming sector and is a community champion and holds a vision for a more cohesive Far West community where divisions are broken down. Paul is interested in shared history and storytelling.

The team has a diverse reach into the whole community and between them an impressive skills-set to support mentoring of young people in governance.

The diagram below conceived by the Our Town Ceduna/Far West team, created by Terry Moscos (governance team member) is a visual expression of Our Town Ceduna/Far West into the future. The Communities of Our Town Ceduna/Far West are at the centre and are connecting to each other and leading and creating a new way forward where everyone's business is the wellbeing of all community. The governance team are supporting (the symbolism of a moat) with an inward and outwards flow to the towns and to the services. Community

connectors/champions, facilitators, partners, allies, and community assets are all lending support to the momentum. Through skills building the community can influence the services to Ceduna/Far West to improve our wellbeing.



Our Principles

The team has named principles to work to and holds the primary principle of “nothing for me -without me”. The team agreed the following principles highlighting the deep commitment to change.

Principle	Important Features and they are unique because
Focus on wellbeing	We operate with a dynamic charter that keeps our focus on wellbeing and strengths to build on. We create opportunities to have community voice heard on multiple levels.
Movement and momentum	We build movement and momentum through growing trusting relationships that reach far into community and across its many sectors. We actively include all aspects of our community including business and industry.
Culturally Inclusive	We share messages that are culturally inclusive and create understanding. We communicate in multiple languages and find ways to identify and overcome barriers to wellbeing.
Recognition and acknowledgement	We create new connections and breakdown divisions through recognizing shared history and relationships. We acknowledge the past to move forward truthfully. We hold open and honest dialogue about the past and the effect on the present with the aim of creating a different narrative to move forward. Including recognition and acknowledgement of new achievements.

How decisions will be made

Decisions will be made by the Governance team and informed by the ongoing findings and revelations from the Community-through Our Town facilitators (paid roles described in budget). Throughout the process the team came to recognise that fluidity was necessary as we moved and made connections, we were open to whatever might surface, with an awareness that our assumptions can be tested at any time. However, in time with skills development and trust building decisions are made by community.

The creation of spaces and targeted conversations that community feel welcome into is key to inviting community into decision making (as was seen in the TACSI visit in July to view and add to insights). Use of visuals as conversation starters helps engage all members of community and removes language and literacy barriers. When a decision becomes clear, we go back and speak to community and then make a choice.

One of the first activities for the governance team is to develop a participatory process with criteria for the community activation grants that aligns with our principles and vision. Not just funds for funds sake.

How we will capture, make sense of, share and apply learning and outcomes

With the support of Clear Horizon, the team will capture learning regularly, as has happened all along through deep listening and engagement of community. When community starts to own processes, the team recedes to roles of support, advisory and coaching in the background.

In our journey, over the last 9 months, we have lived and breathed the way our community needs to be. We are role modelling by talking strengths in places where things are not happening, where the roll out of programs has taken an approach of doing to rather than with.

The team has already endeavoured to share outcomes - community voice - as widely as possible. After the Fay Fuller/TACSI visit in July we photographed the sticky notes of community voice and took them to the Ceduna Services Collaboration meeting of 20 people (cross sector managers). Our team spoke to the voices on the laminated posters we handed around -literally showing and speaking to community voice in a visual, creating a tactile experience of holding community voice.

Following is an excerpt of the presentation to the Ceduna Services Collaboration demonstrating the way Ceduna/Far West Team has embodied the principles guiding the work of Our Town, by its preparedness to collaborate in multi-sector contexts, by speaking and identifying strengths, and by putting community voice front and centre.

The sheets are a visual so you can see the process we went through. As you look at the voices hold the question "How might what you hear/see in the voices change the way you view our community or deliver services to community?"

The Our Town project is absolutely about Community voice and is based on systems leadership. We elected to undertake qualitative research and interviewed both people with lived-experience and key informants from our community. While we looked at a range of quantitative data it became clear that policies of the day influenced outcomes. We then felt that any data needed to be local and current, so we then sort to collect local data.

Through lived experience and key informant interviews and engagement from diverse sectors, we have witnessed the strengths in community, and we have seen that community has the solutions and are their own experts. While interviewing Anangu people one person said "Why doesn't the Ceduna Council employ Anangu to clean up the foreshore?" This has been discussed with two of the Ceduna Councillors and been taken to the CEO. Also the group spoke of wanting "to be friends with white fellas in Ceduna" and spoke about the relationship through place of birth with Ceduna, this also was relayed to two Ceduna Councillors and has had an impact in the way they view Anangu.

In this presentation to the Ceduna Services Collaboration we were conscious to make inroads into the deficit dialogue that dominates and to start changing the mindset by our approach. Some agencies photographed the voices. We also shared our 'community voice sheets' at Yadu Health by putting on the noticeboard so the 75 staff could see the voice and the same for the 26 staff at Centacare. We are aware that as a team we advocated for the voices but in time we envisage a flip, and the voices will self-advocate.

We have shared our gathering of voices with Stronger Places – Stronger People, a place-based initiative and Connected Beginnings staff. The Ceduna/Far West Our Town lead has spent valuable time in sharing the experiences, revelations, learnings and understanding from both process and engagement in the Our Town initiative. She also invited in the 6 staff from Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation to share and listen - this organisation has Aboriginal membership of two thousand people and is a self-reliant non-government entity. The thinking behind the sharing is always that others may benefit from the learnings and processes and see a way to engage at community level by looking at the capture of community voice and hearing basic engagement principles from the team.

We feel the sharing of community voice starts to change the dominant story of no voice and puts the thinking of community in front of people.

It has come to be a natural organic process for our team that we have modelled throughout the process. We envisage the same momentum of sharing through cross sector collaboration will continue and with the support of Clear Horizon we will learn and develop ways of capturing, using, and sharing outcomes in a more expanded and honest way.

The team has seen the possibilities open from informal and formal planting of seeds and the way people lean in and want to be part of the momentum. We have seen the power of just listening and allowing voice to be heard.

How funds will be managed.

The Our Town Ceduna/Far West team has options about where the funds will be held which are yet to be determined. This choice will lie with the governance team. Principles guiding the choice includes where most impact can be achieved and where there is greatest alignment with our principles and approach. Accountability and transparency are key in gaining community confidence, delivering on this expectation to community will also inform the choice.

What Next: Our Ongoing Approach

The name Ceduna comes from an Aboriginal word '**Cheedoona**' meaning a place to sit and rest. In this spirit – we will create space for our community to sit, rest and reflect together, to find their voice and a new narrative for our town's future.

This is an experiment and we are conscious that our community is somewhat delicate around what has happened to us in the past. However, the team is deeply heartened and encouraged by the responses from the options phase. The talk is positive and dominated by, *"Yes! We want to be together, understand each other and share spaces"*.

The relief that people express when they understand this initiative is truly community-led is so apparent. What captures people's attention the most is that it is not government doing this and it is about all of the community together. Community responses all have the same strong message:

"At last there is something real for the community"

"it is time to change all the government stuff - it does not work."

"Yes, we want to be involved. Yes, we want to be together."

"We want to share our art space with whitefellas."

We have been cultivating and connecting with a range of community members and stakeholders since January. Part of our approach going forward will include going back to those people; listening to how they might like to be involved and asking them who else they know that might

be interested. Through this community grapevine we will make unexpected connections and find a diverse set of people we can draw upon. Our team will be made up of a strong core team and a wider orbit of contributors who are free to play a more flexible role.

*We have lots of
strength in our
community, but
no-one knows it.*

*Observation from community
member of Koonibba*

Whatever we create our aim is to give people within our community (individually and collectively) a feeling of positive power and a sense they have a strong voice and say in the future of our town. Ceduna's story and community perspective needs to be visible to create action.

It will be noticed that the team has not gone towards the experts. The more we reached into community the more we saw that it is up to community to determine where the deficits lie in the current mental health system and it is their voice that will determine the most appropriate changes.

The team feels the process has highlighted through community voice the most central factor affecting the wellbeing of our community – division. Our focus for the funding is to address division by bringing people together and building trust, relationships and understanding.

We have seen this during the Our Town process when people (who are not usually in the same space) have come together as part of the process and the natural unfolding of storytelling around shared history has started to build relationships.

The team was holding an assumption that motivating the community, after years of being done to might be a long and difficult process, but the community has debunked this assumption by their enthusiastic

responses to engagement, possibility of change and ideas for further projects.

This initiative is the hope for a more cohesive community future as even though others are saying codesign we are not seeing this in action, and feel the Our Town team/initiative will provide the means to move in this direction by facilitating strategic partnerships and alliances to act as a conduit to change as we continue to model principles of community first:

“nothing about me – without me”

leading to

“by me – for me”