

Young people know what will deliver a more youthful Adelaide – if only we'd ask them

Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly, says that for Adelaide to change the narrative from South Australia being a “retirement state” and suffering from “brain drain” we must invite young people to participate in and contribute to future planning, decision-making and outcomes.

To ensure the City of Adelaide remains youthful, relevant and sustainable, Commissioner Connolly is asking leaders, decision makers, and public policy influencers to consider working with her to establish a youthful city framework that can drive engagement with young people so that their opinions will be formally captured and considered for future design of Adelaide.

Evidence shows that young people worldwide are seeking opportunities to participate in building communities that value their energy and naturally innovative approach. Given young people aged 15 to 24 years represent the largest group utilising the City of Adelaide, with this figure growing year on year, it makes sense to include them in any conversations about future planning.

The proposal is made by Commissioner Connolly in her ‘Youthful Cities’ report – released today to complement this year’s Youth Week themes of ‘Participate and Celebrate’.

The *Youthful Cities* report captures feedback from the Commissioner’s conversations held between August and November 2018 with 130 young people, including primary and secondary school students, international students, young people in homeless accommodation and young activists. What emerged in the discussions were three distinct themes of connected, creative and confident. The young people asked felt a city that could display these three characteristics was going to be very attractive to young people everywhere.

The report launch will take place today at a special Youth Week event featuring a panel of young leaders who will also share their thoughts and ideas on what they think will make our city more youthful. Panellists include, Ned Feary, UN Youth SA; Samantha James & Charlotte Pountney, Australian Youth Climate Coalition; Rebecca Lightowler, SA Youth Governor; Cr Luci Blackborough, City of Campbelltown; Mimona Abdalla, Multicultural Youth SA; Joseph Akot SA Health Consumer Representative and Hannah Southcombe from GIRL SPACE.

Quotes to be attributed to the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly:

For Adelaide to assert its future role in Australia's economic and cultural life, and to enable it to take its place on the global stage, we must listen to and incorporate the ideas and opinions of our young people. If we want our young people to build their futures here then we must ask them what it is they need and want for them to do so. By enabling our young people to influence how we develop a more youthful city we simultaneously nurture their sense of belonging through validation of their opinions and ideas. They would like to see solutions devised that reflect their needs and interests.

Background: The Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly, was appointed in April 2017 and is responsible for promoting and advocating for the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people across South Australia.

For more information about the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People and details of the Youthful Cities report launch visit www.ccyp.com.au

For general enquiries regarding this Media Release and to be sent a copy of the Youthful Cities report, please phone Sharon Cleary on 0407 990 983 or email sharon.cleary@sa.gov.au