

Kulin

Community Development Action Plan



August 2023

Foreword

When the citizens of Kulin decided they wanted to be more than a dot on the map, they took to that desire with a fury (thanks to some guidance from Peter Kenyon) and became the 'Capital of the Wheatbelt'.

Community members young and old, locals and ring-ins alike, banded together to share their visions for a vibrant, diverse and sustainable community – one that would thrive, not just survive! With a new mantra the community banded together to support new initiatives, events and a collective vision for the future – to be the Capital of the Wheatbelt.

This tiny wheatbelt town created a community that continues to strive towards the future and recognised that at the forefront of any success is volunteers. Volunteers are the backbone of the community and they empower the community which allows for a future that will see this town grow, improve, and thrive well into the future.

While always open to trying new things and to challenging the status quo, Kulin, like many other wheatbelt towns, faces new challenges that jeopardise its success. Highlighting and understanding these challenges is not beyond any motivated community. Kulin, however, has been enabling its own people for generations, they are passionate, they are ready.

The Kulin community is extremely grateful to be given this opportunity from Rural Aid and its hardworking team and volunteers and appreciate Peter Kenyon's invaluable expertise establishing the Kulin Community Development Action Plan. This plan was put together with many members of the Kulin community who came together to share experiences, history and ideas to help Kulin thrive into the future.

Acknowledgements

The formulation of this Community Development Action Plan was initiated and coordinated by the Kulin Community Builders Team (Taryn Scadding, Gen Whisson and Tom Murphy). It was funded by Rural Aid as part of their commitment to supporting Australia's small rural towns. The formulation of the Plan was undertaken by Peter Kenyon (Bank of I.D.E.A.S.), Jen Curnow-Trotter (Rural Aid), Roger Hitchcock (Rural Aid) and Londa Finlayson (Community Connector). Special thanks to so many passionate community members, organisations and businesses who gave so generously of their time, wisdom and experiences.

This Plan acknowledges the Kulin community forms part of the traditional lands of the Njaki Njaki Noongar group and acknowledges their significant contribution to our community past, present and future.



Our Story



Our can-do and thriving community of Kulin is in the Eastern Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, approximately 280 kilometres from Perth.

Our community of Kulin forms part of the traditional lands of the Njaki Njaki group, one of the fourteen dialectical groups of the Noongar aboriginal people of the South West Region of Western Australia. The name 'Kulin' is derived from the Aboriginal word 'Coolin' which was given to Sir John Septimus Roe by local Aboriginal guides to describe the area now known as Kulin Rock on his 1848-49 expedition to examine the South Coast.

In the 1870's, sandalwood cutters had begun cutting tracks across the district to harvest the sweet, scented wood for export to Asian markets, but soon abandoned their efforts in search of gold further inland. By 1905, the first pastoralists had taken out leases and so began a thriving agricultural industry in the region. The town of Kulin developed after the railway connection from Narrogin was established in 1915. Kulin Hotel opened for business in 1919 and the Memorial Hall was opened in 1928. In 1932, the Wheat Pool of Western Australia decided that local wheat silos would be installed with two engine operated grain elevators at the railway siding.

Back in 1994, our community faced uncertain times due to declining population and loss of services. The Community came together for a facilitated conversation with the theme: "Where is Kulin going? Don't put your future of the town in the hands of others – take control of your own destiny!" That event identified a preferred future and a wide range of community-led initiatives focused on 'Becoming a more that a dot on the map' and 'Building local pride and commitment.'

Today our Kulin community remains one of the most productive wheat and sheep farming districts in the West Australian Wheatbelt.

Many community-driven actions have occurred. Our annual Kulin Bush Races started in 1995 has become a popular regional attraction along with our iconic and beloved 'Tin Horse Highway'.

The determination and personal effort of our locals to bring the biggest waterslide in regional Australia to Kulin was another illustration of our dedication and commitment to our future.



Our Vision

A vibrant, caring, connected, safe and proactive community that takes the lead in creating our future.

Our Goals

Community goals are broad statements of intent that direct our efforts towards accomplishing our vision in line with our guiding principles.

Below are the six community goals which guide our community aspirations, namely –

- To develop a community where people of all ages and abilities are active, connected and contributing.
- To actively promote and showcase our community as a great place to stop, stay, experience, and reside.
- To actively pursue new economic and entrepreneurial opportunities that strengthen and diversify our local economy, business life and local employment opportunities.
- To create an environment where our young people feel involved, supported and empowered, and will consider returning to our community for work, business, family and lifestyle opportunities.
- To support, promote and celebrate active community participation and volunteerism.
- To retain strong sporting and cultural clubs, competitions, facilities, and traditions.



Our Guiding Values

The following six guiding values and attitudes provide the context for our community's identified actions and initiatives, namely -

- Sense of community - ensuring all our community members experience a deep sense of connection, inclusion and contribution.
- Embracing new opportunities - building upon local assets, capacities and creativity; and facilitating opportunities that enable all our residents to see and experience their community as a place of opportunity.
- Positive mindset - fostering community attitudes that embrace change, proactive 'can-do' behaviours, optimism, and hopefulness.
- Collaboration - appreciating community and stakeholder involvement, partnerships, collective action, volunteerism, and active citizenship.
- Intergenerational solidarity - creating opportunities for all ages to share, support and learn from each other.
- Respect for Heritage and Environment - valuing our indigenous and non-indigenous heritage and culture, and our unique natural and built environment.

Our Challenges

Like many small inland rural communities, our community needs to respond creatively to a series of demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges. These issues include -

Limited retail options.

- Lack of 7-day food availability/outlet
- Limited and bland signage including lack of entry signage, wayfinding and town signage
- Freight costs
- Volunteer fatigue
- Business service gaps
- Organisation succession planning and implementation of community groups
- Tired and unmaintained mainstreet business facades
- Poor phone connectivity
- Limited face to face mental health support services
- Attraction and retention of youth back to the community after finishing schooling
- Medical Services - inconsistent/lack of permanent presence



Our Assets

People

- Community connectivity and welcoming spirit
- Community resilience, can-do attitude, drive and passion
- Our young people, Youth Week WA
- Our volunteers - (e.g - 250 volunteers make Kulin Bush Races happen)
- Community generosity (e.g. - donations through Containers for Change)
- CRC/Shire relationship, proactive Shire Council
- Community movers and shakers - leading by example
- Teachers, tradespeople, medical professionals, primary producers, farm consultants, Shire employees, local businesses
- Wide cross sections of skills in the community
- Citizen of the Year Awards
- Kulin Update
- Wisdom of the large Senior's community
- Strong sporting community
- Demographics - all ages and they mix well
- Robust community conversations.
- Community involvement in community activities and events (e.g. - Clean Up Australia Day, Charity Clothes Swap, Australia's Biggest Morning Tea)

Physical

- Main street, heritage buildings
- Recreational facilities- Bush Races Community Precinct (skate park, pump track, ninja warrior course), Freebairn Recreation Centre, BMX Park, Racetrack, Aquatic Centre and Waterslide, Visitor Discovery Zone, Kulin oval, golf course, 24-hour gym, playgrounds
- Key facilities- Shire Administrative Centre, CRC and Visitor Centre, Kulin Medical Centre, Kulin Child Care Centre, Freebairn Recreation Centre and Aquatic Centre and waterslide, Memorial Halls, Kulinda Village and Workman Estate, CBH Infrastructure, Kulin Caravan Park and 72hour RV
- Kulin District High School - high quality school facilities
- Kulin Arts Centre
- Amazing natural setting/vegetation/landforms, clean environment
- Small communities- Dudinin, Pingaring, Jitarning, Holt Rock
- Jilakin Rock and Lake, Buckley's Breakaway, Kulin Rock, Macrocarpa Trail, wildflowers
- Footpaths, Community Garden, town gardens and open space

Social Networks

- Sporting Clubs and Groups- football, junior football, netball, hockey, tennis, bowls, golf, softball, swimming, basketball, darts, seniors' fitness, walking group, Yagalates
- Cultural Groups- Kulin Arts, Kulin Gallery and Studio, Kulin Quilters, Butlers Garage, Kulin Wildflower Group
- Social Groups- Hub Choir, Gardening Group, Corporate Bowls, Senior's Movie Day, Community Sundowners, Seniors Morning Tea
- Service Groups - Lions Club, Freemasons, CWA, AOOB's, Kulin P&C, Men's Shed, Cultivating Kulin Committee, St John Ambulance, Volunteer Fire & Rescue
- Kulin Kids Club, Kulin Child Care Centre
- Girl Guides, Girls and Boys Clubs
- Community Hub
- Church groups- Uniting, Catholic, Anglican
- Kulin Bush Races, AOOB Charity Rally
- School Network, Facebook sites
- Kulinda Village community

Our Assets

Economic

- Community Bank, Community Crop, Cultivating Kulin Committee
- Self- generating funding- bank, crop, service groups, races
- Events - Kulin Bush Races, Kulin Community Markets, AOOB Charity Rally
- Accommodation - hotel, caravan park, air BnB's, short term accommodation
- 24-hour fuel facility
- Business services - hardware, mechanic, agricultural supplies and services, hire, supermarket, tyre service, hotel, hairdressers, post office, mobile vet, consultants, café, electrician, clothing, banking, mechanics, agricultural machinery
- Tourism attractions - Tin Horse Highway, heritage buildings, Aquatic Centre and Waterslide, Butlers Garage, Jilakin Rock and Lake, Macrocarpa Trail, Buckleys Breakaway, Bush Races Community Precinct, Visitor Discovery Zone
- Kulin Community Hub
- Social media- Facebook sites, Websites - visitkulin.com.au, kulin.wa.gov.au, kulinbushraces.com
- School enterprise initiatives- food van
 - CBH Infrastructure.

Institutions

- Shire of Kulin- staff, building, funding, programs, services
- Freebairn Recreation Centre and Aquatic Centre and Waterslide
- Kulin/Kondinin Allied Health Services- Clinic Nurse, visiting doctor, child health nurse, physiotherapist, primary health professionals, Aboriginal Health
- Central Agcare, Rural Aid, Holyoake Drug & Alcohol Counselling, Rural Community Support Service
- Kulin CRC and Visitor Centre
- Community Bank, Kulin Bush Races, Cultivating Kulin Committee, Kulin Cooperative
- Kulin District High School, P&C
- Kulin Child Care Centre
- Kulinda Village and Workman Estate
- WAPOL- 2 police officers
- Water Corporation, South Regional TAFE
- Community Housing
- Emergency Services

Culture, Stories & Sources of Pride

- Butler's Garage- Kulin Museum
- Macrocarpa Trail, Giving Trail, Kulin Heritage Sites Trail
- War Memorial
- Heritage buildings
- East Kulin School building
- Kulin Arts Centre
- Events- Anzac Day, NADOC, Kulin Bush Races, Blazing Swan, Kulin Triathlon, Holt Rock Hoedown, Gen Ag Conference, International Women's Day
- Christian activities
- Stories - books (heritage)
- Elderly memoirs in writing
- Walking trails, Tin Horse Highway, Blazing Swan Egg





Our Strategies & Actions

Theme One

Youth Retention and Attraction

ACTIONS

1

1. Continually implement actions that focus on three critical youth connection time periods-

- a. Their childhood and teenage years while still residing in Kulin- actions that build a sense of connection, affection, attachment and pride for their Kulin hometown e.g. diversity of youth relevant facilities, programs and experiences.
- b. That time period they go away to study, work and/or travel the wider world- actions that create a sense of connection and being valued and missed e.g., regular news and communications, invitations to hometown events etc.
- c. That 25-35 year old age period when they make decisions about partnering, having a family, buying a house, starting a business- constant reminders of the opportunities and advantages of doing such life experiences in Kulin- including organisation of reunions that bring people home.

Timeframe: Immediate & Ongoing

2. Continually identify local young people for recognition and participation in regional, state national and international award schemes and personal and leadership development programs.

Timeframe: Immediate & Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

SoK
CKC

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

CRC
KBR
RA
FRRR
KAB

CBHIF
WDC
RDAW
DoC



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Two

Tourism Enhancement

ACTIONS

2

1. Develop a tourism strategy that incorporates-

- Audit of current tourism attractions, facilities, events, trails and initiatives.
- Review of regional tourism links and trails.
- Opportunities for existing tourism product enhancement.
- Identification and development of new tourism products, including building on current calendar of special events.
- Enhancement of marketing, customer service, community storytelling and operator networking.

Timeframe: Medium Term

2. Undertake shire-wide signage audit and implement improvements

including out of town advertising, town entry statements and directional signage.

Timeframe: Short Term

3. KBR form a Community Events Company

employing locals to identify, attract and help facilitate new event possibilities for Kulin

Timeframe: Medium Term

LEAD GROUP

SoK
CRC
CKC

KBR

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

KCB
Tourism WA
CBHIF
WDC

RDAW
KAB



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Three

Housing and Accommodation Strategy

ACTIONS



1. Form Housing and Accommodation Task Team.

Timeframe: Immediate

2. Undertake audit of existing land and housing availability including on farms.

Timeframe: Immediate

3. Undertake research into housing, land, property investment and subdivision development initiatives happening in other small rural communities.

Timeframe: Immediate to short term

4. Explore resourcing options and state government funding.

Timeframe: Immediate to short term

5. Develop and implement a Housing, Subdivision, Local Investment and Land Development Community-Driven Strategy that encompasses short term worker, family and aged housing options.

Timeframe: Short to medium term

6. Undertake conversations with Housing Authority re criteria for social housing to ensure individuals and families in genuine housing need gain access not weekenders.

Timeframe: Immediate

LEAD GROUP

Housing and Accommodation Task Team
SoK

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Housing Authority
KCB
WDC

RDAW
CBHIF



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Four 'Ageing in Place' Initiatives

ACTIONS

4

1. Explore and pursue options and funding possibilities to develop a Kulin model of the Pingelly 'Staying in Place' Virtual Village initiative.
Timeframe: Ongoing
2. Explore funding options to expand the number of senior housing units.
Timeframe: Immediate
3. Explore means to employ a local Facilitator able to help Seniors navigate health and ageing options.
Timeframe: Short Term

LEAD GROUP

SoK
CRC
Medical Centre

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

'Pingelly Staying in Place' Virtual Village
Service groups
Retirement Homes Committee, Kulinda Village
CBHIF
RA
Lotterywest



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Five

Organisational Development

ACTIONS

5

1. **Support the Kulin Community Hub Board to achieve financial sustainability** and upgrade the Hub facility to fulfil community aspirations, especially in regard to its 'hubish' potential of being a place offering a full range of food, drink and meeting options.

Timeframe: Ongoing

2. **Instigate facilitated sessions with organisations interested in achieving effective leadership succession.**

Timeframe: Immediate & Ongoing

LEAD GROUP

KCH
CKC
KBR

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

KCB
CRC
RA

FRRR
CBHIF



Our Strategies & Actions

Theme Six

Improved Food Outlet Options

ACTIONS

1. **Form a Food Outlet Task Team** to explore and facilitate options to ensure seven day a week access to coffee and dining options.

Timeframe: Immediate & Ongoing

2. **Support Kulin Community Hub to market and operate their Café facility.**

Timeframe: Immediate

3. **Support the Kulin District High School to operate their youth enterprise food van scheme.**

Timeframe: Immediate

LEAD GROUP

Food Outlet Task Team

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

SoK
Kulin District High School
KCH

KBR
Kulin Business community
WDC

Abbreviations:

BOI	Bank of I.D.E.A.S.
CBHIF	Co-operative Bulk Handling Investment Fund
CKC	Cultivating Kulin Committee
CRC	Community Resource Centre
DLGSC	WA Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries
DoC	Department of Communities
FRRR	Foundation for Regional and Renewal Renewal
KAB	Keep Australia Beautiful WA
KBR	Kulin Bush Races
KCB	Kulin Community Bank
KCH	Kulin Community Hub
RA	Rural Aid
RDAW	Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt
SoK	Shire of Kulin
WDC	Wheatbelt Development Commission

Kulin

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

