

# Council Guide

A guide for Councils participating in *Parks Alive!*



Experience and  
explore your local parks

# Parks Alive!

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### Disclaimer

While all care has been taken in the preparation of this material, no responsibility is accepted by the author(s), participating Councils or any of the project partners, sponsors or funding bodies for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies. The material provided in this guide has been prepared to provide general information only. It is not intended to be relied upon or be a substitute for legal or other professional advice.

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## What is *Parks Alive!*?

*Parks Alive!* is a program of arts, cultural, learning, health, recreation and environmental activities in Council-managed neighbourhood parks and reserves.

The *Parks Alive!* program aims to promote community engagement, well-being and the role of Councils in local parks and reserves through the coordination of a large number of small to medium-sized events and activities.

Activities which invite people to use their own local park or reserve are encouraged, rather than large Council-organised events or festivals. The focus is on neighbourhood events, picnics, BBQs, 'park parties', games or other activities organised collaboratively with local community and resident groups.

Councils can develop their own events/activities, and determine their number, size, nature and location. However, each *Parks Alive!* event/activity, Council-run or not, will benefit from State-wide publicity and marketing.

The beauty of the *Parks Alive!* model is that it is possible for Councils to participate without committing any additional budget or resources by programming existing events/activities to coincide with this date.

Neighbourhood development through support for diverse and inclusive cultural activity is also increasingly understood as a legitimate and valuable Council role.

Many older residents remember with nostalgia 'bandstand' concerts that at one time were held in parks. Local people also want to see their neighbourhood parks and reserves used more actively in ways that support people to come together, enjoy themselves and feel part of a connected community.

Working on a *Parks Alive!* project supports community groups in developing their skills and confidence, as well as helping build a good relationship with their local Council.

## What kind of events can be part of *Parks Alive!*?

Any not-for-profit community event or activity that is held in publicly accessible open space and supports the objectives of *Parks Alive!* can participate.

*Parks Alive!* community events can be very diverse, ranging from:

- 1 Small informal events for neighbours, friends and families
- 2 Medium-sized neighbourhood events organised by a community group or association
- 3 Larger community events organised by community groups, agencies or local Councils

### Some activities in your area might be:

- Park parties, BBQs, picnics and celebrations in local reserves with a 'Meet your Neighbour' theme
- Activities by community and residents groups supported through small grants from Council's Community Grants program
- Performances in the park by local musicians, choirs, dance or drama groups
- Games, story telling, arts and crafts workshops
- Learning activities embracing health and well-being
- Activities promoting water conservation and native vegetation awareness
- 'Come and try' activities by local sports and recreational clubs

### Objectives of *Parks Alive!*

*Parks Alive!* aims to:

- provide opportunities for the visible expression of local community identity through a range of small to medium-sized community celebrations, cultural activities and events
- promote welcoming, inclusive activities which value diversity and build community capacity
- raise awareness of local parks, reserves and services provided by local Councils
- encourage the use of public environments as active 'living spaces' which are shared equitably
- invite and inspire local people of all ages and backgrounds to instigate and participate in life-long learning and well-being activities

## How can Councils benefit from participating?

Councils can participate in *Parks Alive!* without committing any additional budget or resources by programming existing events or activities to coincide with this date.

Local events will also benefit from the State-wide media that *Parks Alive!* will generate by promoting the role of local Councils in managing parks and reserves, and the support they provide for communities to use them.

The *Parks Alive!* weekend provides an opportunity for cross-department collaboration, encouraging areas such as Community and Cultural Services, Youth, Recreation, Safety, Neighbourhood Centres, Libraries, Environment and Open Space staff to work together in new and creative ways.

Benefits include:

- Increased sense of neighbourliness
- Greater engagement of local residents and with their local park or reserve
- Positive profile for local government and its role in supporting community enjoyment of open space
- Support for local arts development and performance opportunities
- Potential to promote local environmental initiatives within parks and reserves
- Opportunities for multicultural groups to celebrate local cultural diversity in a positive and visible way, and increase respect for, and understanding of, diverse cultures
- Showcasing parks and reserves as a low-cost recreation option

## What is the role of Councils?

*Parks Alive!* is a community engagement program, and Councils are invited to take a leadership role in supporting the community to participate at a neighbourhood level. Councils will not necessarily organise any events themselves, although many may choose to do so.

Each Council will need to nominate one staff person as their *Parks Alive!* Council Contact who will generate and coordinate participation, collate information about and register all the events in their Council area. The Council Contact is not responsible for organising all *Parks Alive!* events themselves!

Participating community groups are responsible for organising their own events and activities, including ensuring necessary insurance cover, managing risks

and obtaining any required permissions. Councils are not expected to bear any liability for community-organised events in their Council area, and are advised to clarify this with participating groups. It is expected that for Council-organised events and activities, Councils will manage insurance and risk management procedures through their usual event planning procedures.

Although event planning and management advice is provided through the Community Guide section of this kit, no responsibility can be accepted by the author(s), participating Councils or any of the project partners, sponsors or funding bodies, for any known or unknown consequences that may result from participation in the *Parks Alive!* program.

## What is the role of Council Contacts?

The Council Contact will be a coordinating person for events in their Council area. They will liaise with community groups and other event organisers and support them when needed.

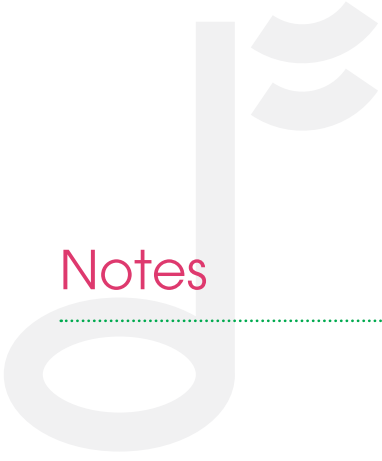
**It is not the role of the Council Contact to organise all *Parks Alive!* events!**

The schedule below outlines what Council Contacts will do over a five month period.

Example	Council Contact person action
<b>June - August</b>	<p>Promote <i>Parks Alive!</i> to local groups as an opportunity for them to organise their own events. This could be through local media, community newsletters, forums, libraries, neighbourhood centres etc. (You can use the flier template included in this kit).</p> <p>Encourage other Council staff to program existing events and activities during the <i>Parks Alive!</i> weekend.</p> <p>Distribute copies of the 'Guide to organising your <i>Parks Alive!</i> Community Event' to participating groups.</p> <p>Liaise with community groups and support them when needed.</p> <p>Collect details of all local events and activities organised either by Council or community groups.</p>
<b>August</b>	<p>Recommended community registration deadline - for groups/ residents to confirm with Councils their participation (gives Council Contacts 3 weeks to compile information).</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>Return all registrations to Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA) using registration forms included in this kit.</p>
<b>Early October</b>	<p>Coordinate media for local events (use media release template at end of Community Guide, if needed).</p> <p>Provide further information to PLA and/or LGA if requested, for use in other media campaigns.</p>
<b>Late October</b>	<p><i>Parks Alive!</i> events held.</p>
<b>November</b>	<p>Compile event documentation &amp; evaluation.</p>
<b>Late November</b>	<p>Provide PLA with evaluation form and copies of photos (see evaluation and documentation form included in this kit).</p>

\* This table is an example only. You should allow four months to plan and implement your event.

Notes





PARKS & LEISURE  
AUSTRALIA  
(SA/NT)

**This kit can be downloaded from [www.parksleisure.com.au](http://www.parksleisure.com.au)**

***Parks Alive!*** is a program of Parks & Leisure Australia.

***Parks Alive!*** was an initiative of the Creative Communities Network (CCN) SA, who were the original initiators and developers of this toolkit, with support from the Local Government Association of South Australia.

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