

A COMMUNITY engagement session on June 24 to seek input from club representatives about the Argana Park master plan at Elizabeth Downs has been organised by Playford Council.

Argana Park is one of the most active sporting facilities in the northern region, used by four sporting clubs including Elizabeth Downs Soccer Club, Elizabeth Football Club, Craigmores Cricket Club and Elizabeth Netball Association.

This is the first in a series of engagements on the development of a master plan.

The broader community and club members will be invited to provide feedback on the draft plan once it is developed.

Playford councillor Akram Arifi said people were pleased to see action.

"Locals are pleased to see action being taken to resolve a number of issues at Argana Park and the first part of the consultation is to hear

directly from the club representatives about their needs," he said.

"Community engagement is important, and it's a great opportunity for clubs to express their concerns and views to help build the master plan."

A report by council in July 2020 highlighted carparking was not meeting demands at peak use times and clubs have reported near misses at the congested carpark.

"Locals have advised me that a number of accidents have occurred at the northern end of the park and a child was hit by a reversing vehicle in the narrow carpark around the main oval," Cr Arifi said.

"With growing female participation in netball and soccer, clubs are desperate for proper change-room facilities and toilets.

"Club members have told me that they have been waiting for this upgrade for years, and to see action taken by council is a positive sign."



Playford councillor Shirley Halls, Elizabeth Football Club's Carey Williams, Playford councillor Akram Arifi, Craigmores Cricket Club's Scott Dawson, Playford councillor Marylin Baker, Elizabeth Downs Soccer Club's Ben Aldridge, and Playford councillor Misty Norris. PHOTO: Supplied

Fellow councillor Misty Norris has played at the venue for years and said parking had always been a worry.

"I have been a netball player at Argana Park for over 30

years," she said. "We have seen such growth over the years, and parking has always been a point of concern.

"I have personally had to walk long distances to get

to my vehicle. We also often see vehicles parked on the reserves – simply due to a lack of other options."

"We need to improve parking and facilities and must

invest in the future of Argana Park as one of Playford's major sporting hubs."

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Thomas Grindlay lives the dream of driving a steam train at Port Adelaide's National Rail Museum. PHOTO: Supplied

## Tom, 86, lives out his steam dream

ELIZABETH retirement village resident Thomas Grindlay, 86, lived out his lifelong dream earlier this month, driving one of Australia's famous steam trains at the National Rail Museum in Port Adelaide.

Every Thursday, Mr Grindlay joins a social group at Resthaven Northern Community Services, where clients enjoy activities tailored to their own interests.

The organisation's manager, Karen Hammond, said through these meetings, she had learned of Mr Grindlay's wish to drive a locomotive.

"Tom and I have had many chats about his childhood dream to drive a steam train, and at his age, he thought that would remain an unfulfilled ambition," she said.

"One day, Tom showed me his childhood journals from when he was around 10 years old. They were all about trains – I knew then that we had to try to fulfil this childhood dream for him."

With the determination to make Mr Grindlay's dream a reality, the team at the Elizabeth Resthaven contacted the railway museum.

It is home to four Peronne engines built towards the end of World War I.

They never made it to war, and all four came to Australia, with one still being fired up for the occasional "driver experience", alongside the museum's enthusiastic volunteers.

Ms Hammond said the volunteers at the museum explained it was possible for Tom to drive the Peronne.

"We were so excited to book it for him, and for his social group friends to join in the fun," she said.

At 1pm on June 5, Mr Grindlay put on his engineer's hat and climbed the steep stairs into the cabin of the Peronne, while his friends took their seats in the carriage.

He said it was an experience he would never forget and compared it to trains he grew up admiring.

"The smokestack on the Peronne is similar to those manufactured in Scotland, my birthplace," he said.

"It was a wonderful experience – words cannot express how I feel. Thanks so much to the staff for organising it for me... it was truly a dream come true."

Resthaven said its social group aimed to keep people socially active to help maintain mental health and wellbeing by meeting people, going on outings, and enjoying activities with like-minded people.

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