



Innovation,
Applicability and
Transferability

COTA SA Regional Listening Posts sponsored by Resthaven

Resthaven is committed to research and building social capital within communities.

In 2019, Resthaven provided funding for COTA SA to conduct research in consultation with people aged 50 years and over, living in regional and rural areas of South Australia.

COTA SA undertook a series of [Listening Posts](#) as the first step in understanding people's experience of ageing in country SA and the priorities of regional areas.

A series of stalls were set up in local shopping centres and libraries in the Murray Mallee, Riverland, Barossa Valley, Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Mid North and Fleurieu Peninsula. COTA SA staff spoke with around 400 people.

In many of these regions, over 50% of the population is aged 50 years and older. Around 55% of the people involved in the conversations were women, and although the great majority were Australian born, the sample also included people who were of Aboriginal, Greek, Dutch, Italian and Chinese heritage.

People were asked what is and isn't working for them in their community, and what matters most to them and their peers. Topics that were raised included housing, finances, Internet use, transport options, availability of local health services, and social engagement.

From the Listening Posts, COTA SA concluded that there is a need for a regional ageing strategy to be developed.

This would assist regional areas to be adequately equipped to deal with the opportunities and challenges presented by their ageing demographics.

COTA SA will urge the State Government to develop a strategy that allows those in country South Australia to enjoy the benefits of living longer, and to access opportunities to contribute to—and be included in—their communities.

The strategy should focus on the issues that older people across the state indicated are important to them.

Issues raised in Listening Posts included:

- Creating inclusive communities
- Cost of living
- Health and wellbeing
- Employment
- Housing
- Transport and mobility
- Digital inclusion.



Pictured: COTA SA Policy Officer Nicola Thurston (left) with Chief Executive Jane Mussared at Resthaven Riverland Community Services.