



The natural burial site on Kessell Road, which is five hectares of land. (Supplied)

State first for burials in Goolwa

Jack Church

Goolwa is set to house South Australia's first restoration natural burial ground, with burials expected to start as early as December this year.

A groundworks and supporter gathering was held at the site on the corner of Kessell and Houlden roads on September 13, inviting the community to see the site, meet the project leaders, and become part of the pioneering project.

Natural Burial Ground Trust of Australia Founder Kevin Hartley says the project is moving along swiftly.

"Our aim is to help restore the environment through natural burial grounds," Kevin told the Fleurieu Sun.

Kevin has more than 30 years experience in the funeral industry and says many people are swaying towards being buried naturally.

"The idea of a natural burial has been around for a while, but this is the first site in South Australia to have only natural burials."

"The critical thing for us is get the master-plan done and start to facilitate burials."

People are already interested, with many wanting to make a difference to the environment, even after they have passed.

"Every burial contributes in a significant way to environmental restoration, even a crematorium burns fuel and it's energy intensive," Kevin said.

"This way, you've got a site where your great grandchildren will know you're buried and you'll be doing your bit for the environment."

Natural Burial Ground Trust of Australia and Nature Foundation have committed joint seed funding to commence the development process with the aim of being able to accept requests for burials by December 2025.

Concurrently, they have developed a campaign to raise additional funding to complete the site development over the next 12 months - initial goal of \$146,000.

For more information, visit wattlewood.org.au



Safe direct transport for Schoolies

The 2025 Schoolies Festival will for the first time have a Regional Express, which will provide free return transport from key regional areas to and from Victor Harbor.

Michael Simmons

School leavers across South Australia now have even more reason to celebrate with the biggest ever upgrade to Schoolies Festival bus services, supported by the Government of South Australia.

For the first time, Adelaide based charity Encounter Youth is proud to introduce the brand new Schoolies Festival Regional Express, providing free return transport from key regional areas including the Riverland, Eyre Peninsula and the Limestone Coast. Designed to support young regional people to get to and from Victor Harbor safely and easily, this is a game-changer for school leavers looking to celebrate at the end of their schooling year.

But that's not all.

The Schoolies Festival Metro Express will now offer multiple departure locations across metropolitan Adelaide, with seven different pick-up locations.

With buses running direct to Victor Harbor and returning home after the weekend, the Express services are a one-stop solution for safe, easy and free travel.

School leavers can book their seat now at schooliesfestival.com.au

Spots are limited and expected to fill fast.

Encounter Youth Chief Executive Officer, Nigel Knowles, said the expanded services marked a major milestone in the Festival's history.

"This is the biggest transport announcement we've ever made for Schoolies Festival and we're absolutely thrilled," Mr Knowles said.

"We know young people from both regional and metro areas want to be part of

this celebration and now we've made it easier, safer and more inclusive than ever before.

These services aren't just about convenience, they're about safety, accessibility and supporting families to feel confident their young people are in good hands.

"The peace of mind this offers to parents is huge, knowing their teenager will get to Victor Harbor and back home safely on a dedicated service makes all the difference.

"We're incredibly grateful to the Government of South Australia for backing this critical harm prevention initiative."

Minister for Police Stephen Mullighan encouraged South Australians to book early to secure a seat on this free bus service.

"It's important young South Australians have an enjoyable and safe Schoolies experience which is why we are happy to partner with Encounter Youth to expand the bus services," Mr Mullighan said.

"This free service will be incredibly popular with school leavers and their families making it more convenient and safer to get to and from the celebrations.

"For those who choose to drive, please be safe on our roads."

With the introduction of the Schoolies FestivalTM Regional Express and a broader Schoolies Festival Metro Express network, Encounter Youth continues to lead the way in delivering safe celebrations through smart, community-driven strategies.

The new services support the broader operational safety delivered by Encounter Youth over the past 27 years.

Bookings are now live and all seats must be secured in advance at <https://www.encounteryouth.com.au/bus-information/>

Music Opportunities

Michael Simmons

Eight emerging artists from the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula are set to receive a unique opportunity to professionally record and produce their own music.

The initiative, co-ordinated by the City of Victor Harbor's Youth Development Team and fully funded by Country Arts SA, will provide local musicians with free studio sessions to create, record and refine their original work.

Each participant will also benefit from mentorship with industry experts, gaining practical insights into both music production and the broader industry.

All recording will take place at Ridley Farm Studio in Hindmarsh Valley, giving young artists access to a professional environment

where they can develop their own extended play (EP).

The program aims to support aspiring musicians to take their first steps toward a career in the industry while also raising the profile of regional arts.

Applications are open to individual artists and bands aged 15 to 26 years from across the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate their creative output, either through demos, live performances, or an online presence.

Those interested can apply before mid-December 2025.

For more details, email localgov@victor.sa.gov.au or call 8551 0500.



Studio Sessions are available with Luke Ridley and Ben Ridley.



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