



Report to Country Arts SA, Australia Council, Arts SA and Alexandrina Council

Just Add Water Evaluation 2012 – 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Greg Hatcher, *GastroSkeletal*, from *Contemperate* Ephemeral Sculpture Trail, Middleton 2014. Photo: Meg Winen

Christine Putland – Research Consultant

April 2015



Australian Government



About This Report

In 2012 the Alexandrina Council hosted the third Regional Centre of Culture (RCC) program in South Australia, the previous two having been held in Port Augusta (2008) and Murray Bridge (2010).

Managed by Country Arts SA on behalf of the South Australian government, the RCC model aimed to contribute to building a strong and resourceful community and improving wellbeing through arts and cultural development.

In Alexandrina the program was named *Just Add Water*, reflecting the community's unique and precious relationship with the rivers, lakes, sea and wetlands in the region.

Country Arts SA commissioned an independent evaluation of the 2012 program documenting the many positive outcomes for the community. The 2012 Evaluation Report by Dr Christine Putland can be found on the website [here](#).

Based on the success of *Just Add Water* in 2012 it was nominated for a further two years funding by the Australia Council for the Arts, Cultural Places Initiative as one of two pilots, the other being Rockhampton in Queensland.

A further evaluation of *Just Add Water* until the end of 2014 was undertaken to ascertain progress towards the goals of the Cultural Places Initiative.

This Report supplements the 2012 findings and is based on the evaluation conducted during 2014 by Dr Christine Putland.



Launch of *Station to Station*: Artists Seb Humphreys and KAB101; photo Richard Hodges

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
INTRODUCTION – PROGRAM BACKGROUND	16
EVALUATION OVERVIEW	17
FINDINGS PART 1:	21
FINDINGS PART 2:	49
ATTACHMENT A	102
ATTACHMENT B.....	104
ATTACHMENT C.....	123

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following people are acknowledged for their contribution to this evaluation and report:

Staff of Country Arts SA, in particular Jo Pike, Executive Producer, for general direction and program details

Staff of Alexandrina Council, in particular Victoria MacKirdy, Anne Liddell, Leah Grace, Di Gordon, Tanya Mitchell and Kelly Robinson for administrative or technical support and vital information

Members of the Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee to Council for background information and feedback

Assistance with data collection and technical support (Pip Gare, Wendy Williams, Libby Wall, Carol Gaston, Tony Hargreaves, Ann-Marie Simpson, Jeannie McNicol, Janet Simpson)

Community members from the Alexandrina region for making time to give feedback and suggestions

Local artists, project coordinators and contributors, community groups and volunteers for insights, inspiration and most importantly for your dedication – without which there would have been no program to report on.

Thank you

Christine Putland

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout 2012 the Alexandrina Council region was the site of *Just Add Water*, the third Regional Centre of Culture (RCC) program managed by Country Arts SA on behalf of the South Australian Government. The RCC model aimed to contribute to building stronger communities through arts and cultural development. It worked by injecting a diverse range of high quality arts and cultural experiences from outside the host region while simultaneously stimulating and supporting local initiatives and infrastructure development in partnership with the Council.

During 2012 the Australia Council for the Arts, Cultural Places Initiative was launched and *Just Add Water* was nominated as one of two 'Cultural Places' pilots, alongside Rockhampton in Queensland (branded 'Creative Capricorn'). The initiative was broadly based on the RCC approach with the following objectives:

1. To increase arts and cultural opportunities for community members, artists and visitors
2. To increase the extent to which the community values arts and culture
3. To strengthen local commitment to arts and cultural planning and development
4. To increase local capacity to plan, deliver and evaluate arts and cultural activities and events.

'Cultural Places' funding enabled *Just Add Water* to continue for a further two years. Building directly on the foundations established in the first year with Goolwa as its hub, in 2013 and 2014 *Just Add Water* sought to embed arts and cultural considerations more deeply at the local level and to encompass the whole Council region more extensively.

Just Add Water 2012 was the subject of an evaluation documenting the many positive short term effects on the community, based on the aims of the RCC.¹ The current Report effectively picks up from where the 2012 Report left off, appraising progress from a longer term perspective with a specific focus on achieving the 'Cultural Places' Objectives over the three years to December 2014.

Evaluation Overview

Given the broad and diverse program, a variety of methods and tools was employed to assess progress and gather feedback from different perspectives.

Community Survey

A survey of the general public including people who live and/or work in Alexandrina as well as visitors administered using the on-line tool Survey Monkey© in 2014. Questions explored participation and satisfaction in relation to arts and cultural activities; awareness of arts and cultural programs, in particular *Just Add Water* projects; views about the value of arts and cultural activities; and, ideas and expectations for the future.

Participant Survey

A survey of participants in *Just Add Water* projects conducted during 2013 and 2014 was administered using the on-line tool Survey Monkey©. 'Participants' were typically those involved in creative projects for a sustained period (eg over weekends or school holidays or in weekly workshops or rehearsals). Questions explored participants' own involvement in the projects, the quality of their experiences, appraisal of the benefits of participating and suggestions for future projects.

¹ *Just Add Water* 2012 [Evaluation Report](#)

Local Contributor Survey

A survey of local people who had played a role in the delivery of the *Just Add Water* program or projects conducted in November and December 2014. They included on-site coordinators or contact persons for schools and community groups, project artists and coordinators, gallery assistants, technical staff, arts and cultural volunteers, and cultural and local historical advisors. Questions explored how well the program objectives had been achieved, creative and professional development for themselves and others, and suggestions for future activity in the region.

Council Staff Focus Groups

Two focus groups with staff of Alexandrina Council who had direct or indirect involvement in program delivery were conducted in October 2014. Areas represented were finance, governance and strategy, assets and infrastructure, customer service, visitor information, community wellbeing, human resources, tourism, administration, communications, arts and culture, recreation, youth development, planning and development. Discussion explored the achievements of the program, strengths and weaknesses in its delivery, community benefits and improvements for the future.

Additional Consultation

- Interviews with ten individuals were conducted between November 2014 and January 2015. These included people with specialised knowledge of program areas or in key decision-making positions, and several staff who had been unable to attend the relevant focus groups. Questions mirrored those discussed in the focus groups.
- Members of the Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee met in January 2015 to discuss the emerging findings and consider further developments. Attendance included general community and elected member representatives.
- Members of the public, community groups and school students were invited to comment on themes of 'inspiration', 'impact', and 'change' related to *Just Add Water*. These comments were inscribed by hand on long coloured ribbons as part of the 'Rain Curtain' installation in the Signal Point Gallery for the final public event in December 2014.

EVALUATION FINDINGS IN RELATION TO CULTURAL PLACES OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1

Arts and Cultural OPPORTUNITIES for COMMUNITY, ARTISTS and VISITORS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Program documentation shows there has been a significant increase in arts and cultural opportunities as a result of *Just Add Water*, characterised by a diverse range of artforms and types of activity, in a multitude of locations and settings. Community feedback indicates that these were genuine opportunities which afforded people from different backgrounds and interests to experience high quality arts and cultural activities.

Program Statistics

To place the opportunities offered as part of the program in context, the total investment over the three years was budgeted at \$1.6 million but in the event exceeded this amount, with contributions of \$600,000 from the Australia Council for the Arts, \$1.6 million from the South Australian government through Country Arts SA, and \$1.5 million from Alexandrina Council. In addition, a total of \$2.7 million was invested in capital development of facilities (\$800,000 from state government and \$1.9 million from Council) without which many of the program events would not have been possible.

Country Arts SA's contribution to program staffing for the duration comprised:

2011: 0.6 FTE (Executive Producer 0.5, Project Officer 0.1)

2011/12: 1.75 FTE (Executive Producer 1.0, Project Officer 0.5, Marketing Coordinator 0.25)

2012/13: 1.9 FTE (Executive Producer 1.0, Project Officer 0.4, Marketing Coordinator 0.5)

2013/14: 1.25 FTE (Executive Producer 1.0, Project Officer 0.25)

2014/15: 1.0 FTE (Executive Producer 0.75, Project Officer 0.25)

There were no directly comparable statistics kept prior to 2012, however as the first program of its type in the region the sheer number of experiences offered over the course of *Just Add Water* undoubtedly represents a significant increase. A total of 1333 separate activities, projects or events were provided in the following categories:

	Goolwa 2012	Alexandrina 2013	Alexandrina 2014	Grand Total 3 years
Total number of activities/events/projects	545	372	416	1333
No. of Indoor exhibitions (visual arts)	27	14	23	64
No. of Gallery public events	27	19	24	70
No. of Outdoor Visual Events	8	0	8	16
No. of new works created locally through JAW	23	28	21	72
No of hands-on sessions (days)	350	240	230	820
No of community conversation sessions	8	2	2	12
No of film/projection events	12	27	44	83
No of major public events	3	2	4	9
No of performance-based events	87	40	60	187

A very high bar was set in 2012 with the initial injection of state government funding and community interest peaking in the lead up to the Kumuwuki Regional Arts Australia Conference. Nevertheless the 2014 figures suggest that the momentum was substantially maintained.

Similarly, total attendances and participation rates show a high level of engagement by the community indicating that the projects, events, performances, exhibitions and workshops were regarded as worthwhile and genuine opportunities:

Goolwa 2012	Alexandrina 2013	Alexandrina 2014	Grand Total 3 years
53,711	29,929	44,714	128,354

Community perceptions of extent and quality of opportunities

Community feedback reinforced this positive assessment, highlighting criteria based on the program characteristics they considered important:

- Diversity – types of activity, multiple artforms, ways to interact
The Just Add Water team are to be congratulated for a program mix that had something for everyone. (Rain curtain installation)
- Accessibility – to the whole community
Being able to participate in our local area...it can be expensive to go to Adelaide...hard to justify when you are on a budget. (General community)
- Program spread – across different parts of the region
...sessions outside of Goolwa to share load of travelling and Goolwa people support other parts of the region so there is not so much of a divide. (General community)
- Program reach – awareness of the opportunities in the community and beyond
We have noticed that as the printed program gains in popularity there is an increased number of locals visiting us to pick up programs, find out more information and make bookings. (Council staff)
We live in central Victoria but one of the BIGGEST attractions to visit SA again is to further connect with this program... (General community)
- Publicity and promotion – the ongoing challenge
...try to think of additional ways to advertise as people still say they don't know about things. (General community)
- Artistic development – extending and growing through practical experience
Established artists were challenged to take a step or two up with their work (me, for example), emerging artists were identified and supported to develop... (Artist)

OBJECTIVE 2

Extent to which the community VALUES arts and culture

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As a sign of perceived value, the high levels of attendance and participation in *Just Add Water* demonstrate strong community interest in arts and culture. Feedback from Council staff, artists, local contributors, participants and the general community attests to the growth in appreciation of opportunities provided and concern that they continue. A similar level of valuing is reflected in the frequency of creative initiatives generated by the community and observations about the program's contribution to the local economy.

...there has been a huge shift in how much the community values and understands the benefits of arts and culture. (Local contributor)

Now even those not originally interested in art and culture are saying "I can get involved" and "I can do it" and "maybe I'll give it a go". (Council staff)

Individual satisfaction and rewards

Participants surveyed indicated a high level of satisfaction with their particular experience of the program: 100% said they 'enjoyed it' and 97% that it was 'positive overall'. Two of the highest rating factors influencing satisfaction were feeling 'part of the community' and 'proud of my contribution' (both 97%). Most (87%) said they would like to be involved in similar projects again, while all but 3 participants said they would recommend that others also get involved. Reasons given included: 'new skills', 'learning about themselves and their community', 'building confidence', 'sense of connection' and 'feeling valued'.

Value to the community

Respondents to the General Community survey rated the value of arts and cultural activity for the community as a whole very highly, with over 90% agreeing that it contributes to 'creating social networks', 'appreciation of diversity and difference', 'community wellbeing', a 'vibrant community' and 'supporting people to learn new skills' respectively. The vast majority also agreed that 'artists and other creative people make an important contribution to the region'. These responses translated to over 90% agreement that it is important for governments to support the activity, and 89% for local businesses to do so, with more than one third adding comments urging Council to continue *Just Add Water* in the future.

Wider recognition

The perception of Alexandrina as a region associated with a lively arts community emerged strongly in the evaluation feedback. Public attention in state-wide media was noted, while increased *facebook* activity shows a similar rising level of interest. Many people reported with pride that visitors comment frequently on the region's growing civic identity linked to the arts, reinforcing its value in the minds of locals:

...everyone was saying "what an amazing place to live, look at what they do here!" (Council staff)

There is certainly a strong sense of pride in our arts and culture now, a sense that it has given us a bit of an identity that we can be proud of. (Local contributor)

The civic contribution of *Just Add Water* has been formally recognised in the Alexandrina Australia Day awards, with one of the major events (*Watersong 2012, Christmas Where the Angas Flows 2013, Saltwater SurfArtFest 2014*) receiving 'Community Event of the Year' for three years running.

Creative off-shoots

The many new or extended creative initiatives sparked within the community as a direct result of *Just Add Water* are both a valuable outcome of the program as well as confirmation that its value is recognised, for example:

- New visual arts workshop and exhibition spaces opening up across the region
- Establishment of a new theatre company presenting contemporary play readings
- Film Society extending its screenings to Milang and Clayton Bay as well as Goolwa
- Commitment to an annual Poetry Cup
- Local artists invited to work on events of historical significance (eg Anzac Day)
- Cross-art form collaborations including between Ngarrindjeri and non-Indigenous artists.

Economic flow-on effects

While not a specified outcome of the program it is evident that the additional arts and cultural activity has had direct and indirect impacts on economic activity. Council staff provided tangible examples of its contribution:

- Raising the profile of arts and culture has resulted in more artists able to gain income
It's emerging as more of an opportunity for people to make a living through the arts because a lot of the other areas traditionally here in our region are disappearing... that's a lasting legacy of Just Add Water to put artists on the map as legitimately earning a living from their expertise.
- Attracting new visitors and property owners
*We've got our holiday homeowners that are checking the program and making sure that they're down at their houses aligning with particular shows, bringing people with them...
...there are people who've actually bought and moved here because of what's going on.*
- Local small businesses opening and adjusting their hours to accommodate hospitality needs
We now have three businesses that previously weren't open late, that're staying open later, and another one coming on board to open for the evenings before a show, and looking to stay open after a show for drinks.
- Expanded advertising and marketing avenues for shows and events
We've been able to beef up next year's program with private people coming in paying us to use our facilities, because of the flow-on effects they've seen in the community.... And it brings in a new marketing database as well, so we get people from outside the region, we get money from outside the region... the economic development is huge.

In acknowledgement of this contribution *Just Add Water* received a 'Special Community Award' in 2013 from the South Australian Business Association.

OBJECTIVE 3

Local COMMITMENT to arts and cultural planning and development

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Alexandrina Council has expressed its ongoing commitment to arts and cultural planning and development in many tangible and strategic ways through financial investment, policies and practices, provision of human resources and infrastructure. This commitment is mirrored in the community as local groups, organisations and businesses engage with the opportunities provided. Recognition that such progress is inevitably subject to political and economic pressures shows a healthy realism but overall there is evidence of a determination to maintain the momentum incited by *Just Add Water*.

Investment in arts and culture

Aside from contributing to development of infrastructure, Country Arts SA invested in the program mainly through funding of core positions (Executive Producer, contribution to project officer, marketing officer), providing oversight, expertise, and support for the development of capacity at the local level. Alexandrina Council matched this investment in the form of infrastructure development as well as staffing local operations and administration, for instance.

The refurbished facilities have been central to making many events and activities possible. Council has committed to maintaining the high standard it has set in the major venues while acknowledging the community's raised expectations and need to ensure access across the region.

As an indication of Council's overall commitment into the future, the total arts and cultural budget in the year preceding *Just Add Water* was \$110,205, compared with the 2015 budget of \$402,200. This includes \$237,000 allocated to infrastructure, and provision for key positions as follows:

- *Just Add Water* Program Coordinator – FTE 1.0 (shared position with Country Arts SA for 2014/15)
- Centenary Hall
 - Venue Coordinator 0.5 FTE (new position)
 - Front of House and Technician (new casual positions)
 - Ticket services FTE 0.3 (new position)
- Community Development Officer 1.0 FTE (new contract position incorporating elements of *Just Add Water* continuation, Arts and Cultural Development)
- Arts and Cultural Development Officer 1.0 FTE (existing position)

The *Just Add Water* program continues

Council is providing continuity in 2015 with support for program delivery under the familiar *Just Add Water* banner, building strategically on the strengths of the past three years by:

Maintaining some of the most successful and well-subscribed events from the past program, for example:

- Drawing on Country – one day landscape art event in four sites, a partnership with Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin
- The Sponge kids art hub – school holidays workshop program introducing children to various art techniques inspired by the main exhibitions, run by Signal Point Gallery staff
- Fringe in Goolwa – a variety of performers from offering families a taste of the Adelaide Fringe on the Goolwa Wharf.

Supporting further development of promising emerging initiatives, for example:

- Special Delivery Stories – collection and distribution of tales about people’s lives are delivered to home bound residents by Council’s Meals on Wheels volunteers
- Youth Art Show mentorship – support for a young person to learn the ropes of curating the annual Youth Art Show
- New opportunities for local artists – linking local emerging artists to community initiatives to extend their skills and gain public exposure; for example in 2015 a young artist of Ngarrindjeri and Chinese descent will design an installation for a new nature playspace.

Continuing the partnership with Country Arts SA through ongoing artform development programs:

- Including residencies, ‘Shows on the Road’ theatre productions, national ‘Mainstage’ tours, touring exhibitions, ‘Screen Ed’ film for schools.

Fostering relationships with external arts companies, private promoters and visiting companies:

- Including Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, State Theatre Company, Windmill Theatre, Patch Theatre, Cirkidz, Jam Factory, National Film and Screen Archive, History SA and many more.

Addressing infrastructure needs of particular groups:

- An identified focus for 2015 is the need for a dedicated space for young people in light of intense and growing interest in theatre and other activities; Council is negotiating with a number of community based groups with a view to reactivating the historic ‘Chart Room’ at Goolwa North.

General support for community initiatives:

- Continued support in the form of publicity or access to venues and expertise as needed.

Embedding arts and cultural development in Council policies

Council’s commitment to the centrality of arts and cultural considerations is evident in policy and funding frameworks such as the following:

- The Alexandrina Community Strategic Plan 2014-2023 identifies arts and culture as a fourth pillar alongside social, economic and environmental criteria;
- The Council Reporting Template requires structural divisions across the organisations to report regularly against these criteria:

Council is committed to the vitality that communities and individuals enjoy through participation in recreation, creative and cultural activities; and the freedom to retain, interpret and express their arts, history, heritage and traditions. Outline how this item will impact of benefit.

- The name *Just Add Water* has been adapted and adopted as the title of a priority area in the Community Strategic Plan which includes major heritage and infrastructure projects: '*Alexandrina Experiences 'Just Add...'*'.
- An annual Community Arts Grants Scheme '*Connecting Communities through the Arts*' has been introduced (seed funding from *Just Add Water* in 2014).

Council's organisational culture

Less visible but nonetheless telling indicators in the form of shifts in daily practice by Council staff were discussed in the focus groups. Projects in all areas of Council business are being approached differently as a result of the experiences of *Just Add Water*, including a greater emphasis on collaboration across departments, staff being encouraged to show imagination and creativity in addressing issues, and confidence to use innovative ways to engage with the community. In particular arts and cultural staff were commonly seen working together with engineers, recreation and community wellbeing officers:

Who would have thought that an engineer and an art person would work together, like, a few years ago?

So when we talk about a project now, it's not just about infrastructure, it is also about making it a space for people.

Community commitment

Feedback from community members indicated that there was a clear perception of greater commitment to arts and culture in the region overall. Many survey respondents volunteered comments showing their approval:

... thanks very much for bringing this fabulous support and experience to this area. It was the right thing in the right place at the right time. (Local contributor)

[We] appreciate Council's commitment to art and cultural activities. (General Community)

Council staff, in turn, acknowledged the considerable commitment by community members, in particular the strong contingent of volunteers:

Volunteering in the arts venues represents a measure of the community's commitment to what has been started and a determination to see it continue. (Council staff)

OBJECTIVE 4

CAPACITY to plan, deliver and evaluate arts and cultural activities and events

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Leaving behind a legacy in the form of knowledge and ability to plan and deliver high quality programs is the ultimate aim of Cultural Places. The *Just Add Water* program incorporated a range of developmental opportunities to equip the community and there are clear indications of skills, knowledge, partnerships and general motivation showing that they are well placed to maintain the momentum of the past three years.

... it's established a foundation for us to work on and actually build on what we've seen developed.... we've got a baseline now, and we've got some excellent facilities that we can continue to utilise and develop... So, from a foundational perspective, I think it's been very, very good. (Council staff)

Country Arts SA/JAW has provided the ground work & scaffolding for the Alexandrina community to continue arts & cultural activities. (Local contributor)

It has been the guidance from Country Arts about what to do and how to do it that has been critical to the success of JAW. (Council staff)

Feedback revealed an awareness of the future challenges likely to arise in the absence of executive management by Country Arts SA and external funding sources, but an underlying confidence was evident to an extent that was not the case at the end of the first year.

Capacity building activity

The 'output' in terms of opportunities to develop skills and knowhow was considerable, including:

- a total of 4308 community participants attending 820 days of hands-on/workshop sessions;
- 106 separate opportunities to build capacity within organisations;
- 407 days of professional development and mentoring for artists and arts workers;
- 12 forums and events (including 7 'conversation cafes') for the general community, designed to promote discussion and ideas and gather feedback.

Survey feedback suggests that these sessions were well-received and effective:

- 91% of respondents to the General Community survey said they recognized the importance of this aspect of the program;
- 66% of the Participants surveyed indicated that they had learned *new* skills through their general involvement in the program (that is, not exclusively through sessions with a skills focus).

Gaining skills and confidence

Groups directly targeted for capacity building indicated that they had benefited greatly in terms of skills and confidence.

- Artists testified enthusiastically to their development:

I feel so much more solid and confident as an artist.... I would say in the past three years I have developed far more than in the previous four years of my practice. It has been fantastic.

It has grown my knowledge and understanding of the ways that councils operate. By mentoring young/emerging artists it has given me a clearer understanding of my own practice.

- Local contributors said they gained technical skills and experience in coordination and delivery:

...[we] are producing high quality exhibitions continuously now and that has been a huge leap. Community based galleries are also delivering great exhibitions so clearly we know what we are doing in this area.

...among the arts community we have individuals who can produce great activities and events, Saltwater showed that.

- Council staff described a growing maturity in their ability and confidence in managing and delivering arts and cultural programs; they highlighted: a greater willingness to collaborate across disciplines and awareness of the challenges involved; thinking beyond their immediate responsibilities; and, understanding the power of arts approaches in engaging the community to produce better outcomes in the longer term:

... I think that's something in our project planning stage, thinking about arts preparation early.

...[Just Add Water] broadened people's minds and thinking beyond just doing bricks and mortar...

...now we reach out to community and hopefully, with the end product, they'll be more likely to be engaged...a much richer outcome.

...lately it's more like, not 'can I do it?' but 'which way will I do it?'

Community capacity

Aside from development of individual skills the general community has had opportunities to discover the potential for arts and cultural activity to enrich their community through inclusive forums and conversation cafes in which up to 60 people at a time gathered to discuss, plan and evaluate progress. Council staff reported that local people are increasingly making contact in order to connect up with others or initiate their own activities.

The strong volunteer contingent that has grown up to support the arts venues and activities is one of the clearest outcomes in terms of community capacity. Further enhancing their confidence, a recent recruit who is an experienced gallery guide has been conducting a training program incorporating field trips to the state gallery.

...we've got some well-trained, good volunteers who are willing to support these activities. That makes it a lot easier for people to bring events and activities into the area, but also to assist and facilitate local people going to those things too. (Council staff)

'Cittaslow Goolwa', as the first accredited 'slow town' in Australia, is another example of a local organization developing experience and confidence through its involvement in *Just Add Water*. Cittaslow was an active partner in 2012 events, training volunteers for the Kumuwuki conference, and as a result gained the confidence to host the international Cittaslow conference in Goolwa in 2016.

Evaluating progress – gaps and all

Not only have people demonstrated an understanding of the importance of evaluation in their willingness to give feedback and contribute ideas, but also their ability to reflect critically on the strengths and weaknesses of

program delivery and how to improve in future has increased over the three years. Council staff noted the gaps in past practice as well as their own lapses, for example:

I think we could do a little bit better within Council as far as projects. We're told who we've got to consult with, but sometimes it doesn't quite happen...

We lost a lot of momentum at the end of each year... because the program was brought out in March... Whereas this year we've put a lot of effort into getting it released in December.

Similarly local contributors and artists recognized the need for further development:

The community still needs a fair bit of assistance from council staff to help with the practical aspects of realising arts and cultural aspirations. (Local contributor)

In terms of theatre, we are at a very early stage... But it is growing, there are small groups producing good stuff... (Artist)

The three-year timeframe was cited as a critical factor enabling Country Arts SA and Council to lay solid foundations for a sustainable approach.

It all happened over 3 years so there was plenty of time to gravitate towards one or more of the many opportunities. (Local contributor)

It takes time. If it had stopped at the end of the first year I don't think I would have got to this stage. It is a long process. (Artist)

The nature of working in communities and the open, fluid processes involved in arts and cultural development mean that achievement cannot be measured in absolutes. The four main objectives of the Australia Council for the Arts, Cultural Places Initiative are framed in terms of *progress towards* increased opportunities, greater community valuing, stronger local commitment and local capacity.

On balance, the evaluation finds that *Just Add Water* has addressed each of these objectives to a significant extent, has delivered the program in a very effective way and can demonstrate solid progress towards each of these goals. There will continue to be hurdles and setbacks, especially in a time of fiscal restraint at every level of government, but feedback suggests that the local community and decision makers are aware of this and better prepared than ever before to develop strategies to overcome them.

The most compelling finding radiating from the data was a strong motivation to continue the progress made since 2012, evident in the abundance of positive suggestions to Council about future development and also in expressions of personal resolve to contribute. Final comments from community members demonstrated this determination.

Just Add Water has been a fantastic blessing for this Council. We should make the most of it, build on it, and create a sustainable model by attracting or creating more unique, top quality programs that will bring people from far and wide and establish Goolwa as, amongst its many attractions, the Regional Arts Hub of the state. (General community)