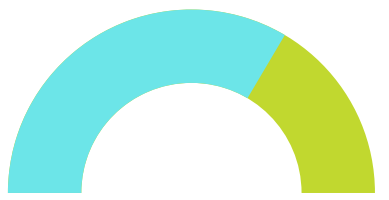


# Thinking of Making the Move?

Information to help new arrivals get to know the Limestone Coast, South Australia





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Please note: Any information provided about the laws in Australia or South Australia is provided as general information only it is not legal advice. This document is a starting point only and is not a substitute for legal or professional advice.

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# 1. Welcome!

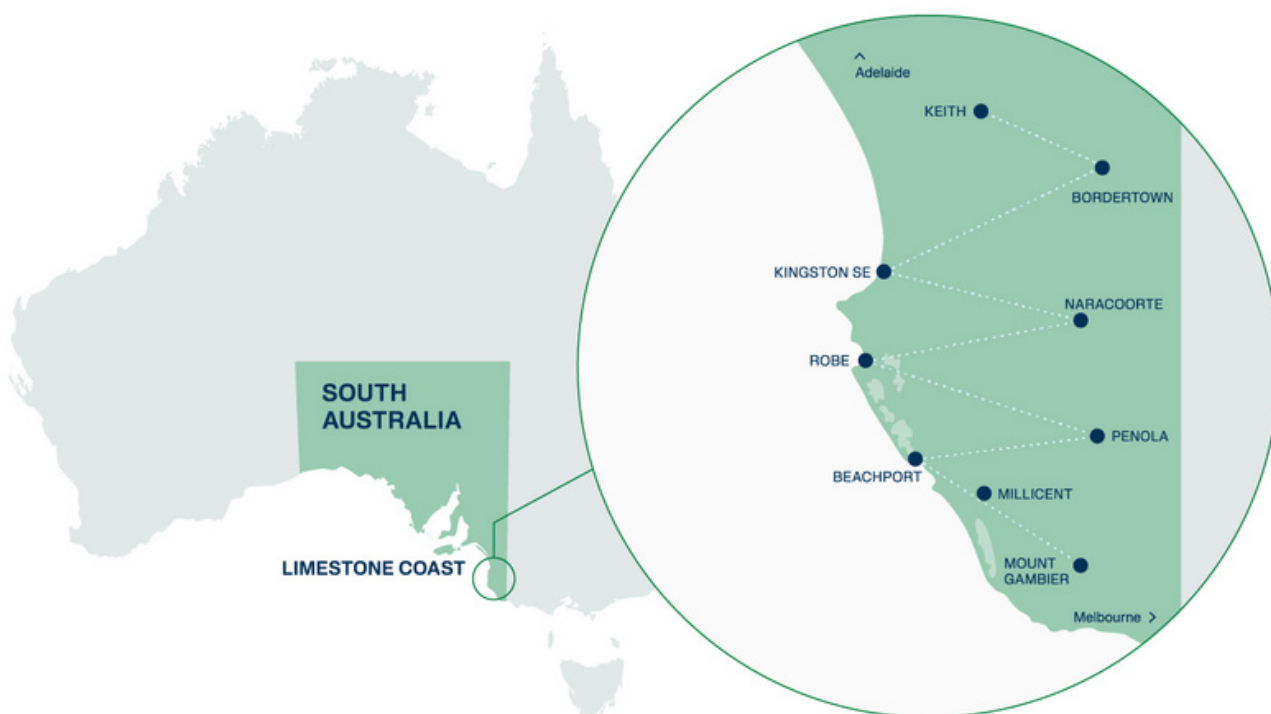
If you are reading this guide, you are thinking about making the move to the Limestone Coast in South Australia, or you have just arrived - either way, welcome! Congratulations on choosing to call this amazing part of the world home.

This guide will provide you with some general information on the region, on what life is like here, and on things such as accommodation and education for your family. It will hopefully also answer questions you may have about this unique part of Australia.

## Where is the Limestone Coast ?

The Limestone Coast is located in the very south east corner of South Australia. The region is between 200 and 450 kilometres south-east of Adelaide, and between 400 and 500 kilometres west of Melbourne.

The Limestone Coast is predominantly rural. Mount Gambier is the main city with other regional centres at Beachport, Bordertown, Keith, Kingston SE, Millicent, Naracoorte, Penola, Port MacDonnell, and Robe.



## Our First Nations People

The lands and waters of the Limestone Coast are central to the culture and beliefs of our First Nations people. We acknowledge the elders past, present and emerging, and we respect the deep feelings of attachment and relationships of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to Country, including the Boandik, Bindjali, and Ngarrindjeri people.

## 2. About the Region

The Limestone Coast region's estimated resident population is 68,542 (ABS 2021). More than one third of the population live in the city of Mount Gambier.

With stunning coastlines, forests, and prehistoric caves and sinkholes, our region is home to some of South Australia's most beautiful natural wonders. The region has something for everyone with world-class vineyards, theatres, restaurants, and a strong sporting culture.

The Limestone Coast encompasses a total land area of more than 21,000 square kilometres. Rural land is used largely for agriculture (particularly forestry, dairy, sheep and cattle grazing, and grain growing), with flourishing horticulture, viticulture, and aquaculture (fishing and lobsters) industries. The manufacturing sector is primarily focused on timber processing, food processing, and engineering.

Tourism is also an important industry in our region and visitors (and locals alike) are spoiled for choice with a wide selection of restaurants, cafes, and bakeries. Visitors have many accommodation options to choose from, including hotels, motels, short-term rentals, glamping, and caravan parks.

### Summer

Dec-Feb  
Temp range  
20-35°C



### Autumn

March-May  
Temp range  
11-20°C



### Winter

June-Aug  
Temp range  
7-15°C



### Spring

Sept-Nov  
Temp range  
10-20°C





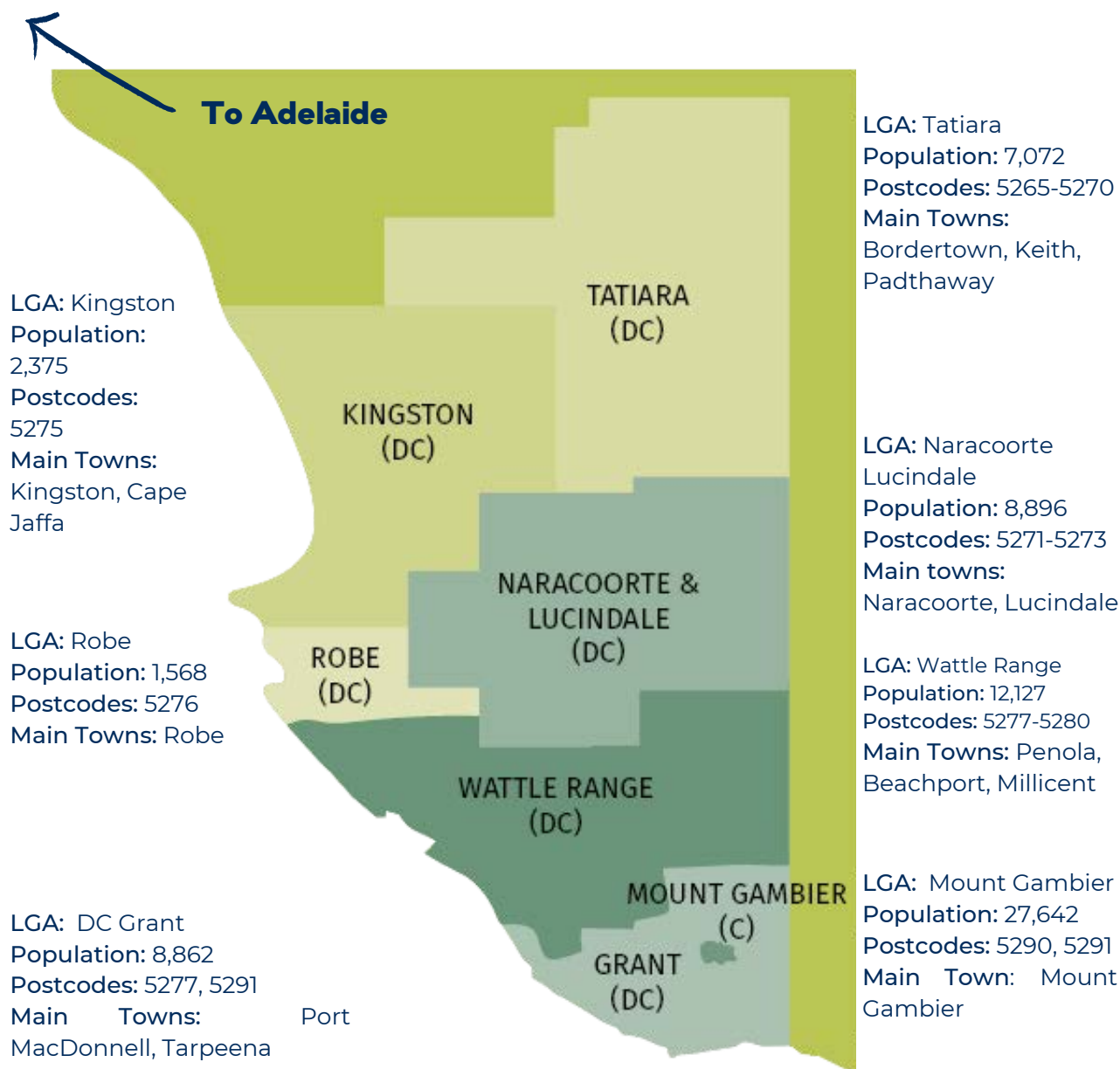


The Limestone Coast is comprised of seven Councils (or Local Government Areas). Councils are the lowest tier of Government in Australia and provide services that respond to the needs and priorities of local communities.

Councils are responsible for things like local roads, waste services, property rates, and animal registration. They are also responsible for public spaces like parks and sporting facilities. Many Councils also operate libraries and child care facilities.

Local libraries or Councils can be a good starting point to access information about what is going on in your local community. Libraries also offer free computer access and free internet access.

LGA = Local Government Area or Council Area



Figures from ABS Estimated Resident Population 2021



# 3. Migrating to Australia

Australia offers a wide range of temporary and permanent visa options, depending on your skills, experience and qualifications.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Home Affairs, manages the Australian visa program, and makes all visa decisions, as well as all decisions in relation to business sponsorship, and entry to Australia.

All applications for visas are lodged with and decided by the Department of Home Affairs.

For information on the full range of visa options, please visit [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

## Visa Options - Skilled Migration

There are a wide range of visa options available for skilled migrants moving to Australia. The following information is in relation to two of these options but please visit [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) to determine what visa is right for your skills and experience.

South Australia offers state nomination across two visa options that provide pathways to permanent residency. State nomination enables the South Australian Government to nominate highly skilled migrants to meet South Australia's skills needs. For skilled migrants, state nomination can assist you to qualify for a skilled migration visa, providing additional points towards your subclass 190 or subclass 491 application.

In order to apply for state nomination from South Australia, you must meet all Department of Home Affairs visa requirements, South Australia's state nomination requirements, and your occupation must be listed on South Australia's Skilled Occupation List.

### Skilled Nominated Visa Subclass 190

This is a state nominated permanent visa for skilled migrants that allows you to live and work in South Australia.

To apply for this visa you must be under the age of 45 at the time of nomination, have a valid skills assessment and an occupation listed on South Australia's Skilled Occupation List.

### Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) Visa Subclass 491

This is a state nominated provisional visa for skilled migrants that allows you to live and work in South Australia for up to five years.

To apply for this visa you must be under the age of 45 at the time of nomination, have a valid skills assessment and an occupation listed on South Australia's Skilled Occupation List.

## Benefits of state nomination

- Access to an extensive list of occupations
- Additional points towards the Australia points test for the 190 and 491 visas
- Priority visa application processing for the subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional visa.

For more information, visit <https://www.migration.sa.gov.au/skilled-migrants>





## Visa Options - Employer Sponsored

The employer sponsored visa programs enables businesses to fill skills needs when they have been unable to fill a skilled position locally. These are two options available in South Australia - please visit [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) for more information and other options available.

### Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) Visa Subclass 494

This visa helps employers fill vacancies where there are no suitable Australian citizens or permanent residents for the role.

Who can employers sponsor:

- Skilled migrants living overseas
- Temporary residents currently working in South Australia.

For an employer to be eligible to nominate a position under this visa, they must meet all criteria set by Department of Home Affairs, but is suitable for local South Australian businesses where:

- The business has a genuine need for a paid employee to fill a skilled position
- The business has undertaken labour market testing and has been unable to fill the position locally
- The position is full-time, skilled and likely to last for at least five years.

If you are not sure which visa is right for your situation, Skilled and Business Migration provide a Visa Selector Tool on their website.



**Move to South Australia**  
**SKILLED + BUSINESS MIGRATION**

For information on other visa options, please visit [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

Please note that all information in relation to visa's is subject to change.

### Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) Temporary Skill Shortage visa (subclass 482) & Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 494) - Labour Agreement Streams

The DAMA program helps businesses fill vacancies where there is a shortage of local skilled workers by entering a labour agreement with the Australian Government through the South Australian Government.

Who can employers sponsor:

- Skilled migrants living overseas
- Temporary residents currently working in South Australia.

This visa is for South Australian Businesses that:

- Have identified a skills or labour shortage that they cannot fill locally
- The position occupation must be available on the DAMA Occupation Lists for South Australia
- The position must be full-time, and duties must align with the nominated occupation
- The business can fulfil all South Australian DAMA endorsement requirements.

The DAMA is a multi-stage process, with the South Australian Government assessing and endorsing employers who want to sponsor overseas workers under the DAMA. Once endorsed, the employer enters into a labour agreement with the Australian Government (Department of Home Affairs), and once agreed, seeks nomination approval. The final stage is the visa application.

# 4. Employment

You might be reading this guide because you have applied for a job with one of our region's employers - good luck! Or you might have been successful and are moving to the region soon - congratulations!

But you also might be interested in moving to the region and have not applied for a job yet. The good news is that we maintain a free online Job Board with vacancies listed from across the region - [www.rdalc.org.au/job-board](http://www.rdalc.org.au/job-board)

Although about 6,400 jobs are advertised every year in the Limestone Coast, we know that a lot of jobs are filled without being advertised. We encourage you to do some research and find out who the major employers are in your field of expertise - reach out to them and see if they have any vacancies coming up.

There are number of labour hire and recruitment companies working in the region who you could contact to assist in your job search - if you search on the internet, you will find out more about them.

## Largest sectors by employment across the region

Agriculture,  
Forestry & Fishing



Manufacturing



Retail Trade

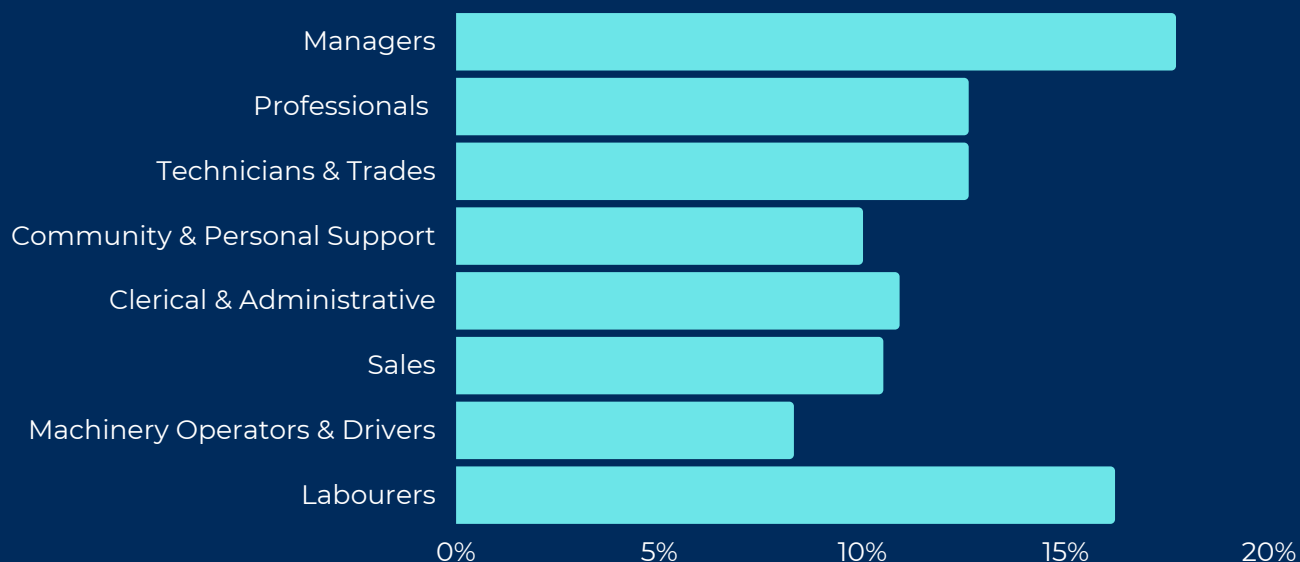


Healthcare & Social  
Assistance



## Occupations

The most advertised occupations across the region are shown below:





# 5. Accommodation

Whether you are coming from near or far, we know that finding accommodation can be challenging. We hope that this will help with your search.

## Short term accommodation

The main benefit of short term accommodation is that it can give you, and your family, time to work out where you would like to live before making a longer term housing decision. There are limited short term accommodation options in the region, therefore you will need to do your research to find something that would suit your needs and budget. The most common ways to find a place to live in the Limestone Coast is from real estate websites, newspapers, or real estate agents. You might search for these webpages in your hunt for short term accommodation.



## Long term accommodation

When making a decision about long term housing, it is important to consider where you would like to live, what housing options are available, proximity to your employment, and required amenities (school/shops/parks), as well as how much you can afford to pay for rent/mortgage.

### Renting

Rental housing is available through real estate agents or private landlords. A 'lease' or a 'residential tenancy agreement' are usually for a fixed period of 6 or 12 months.

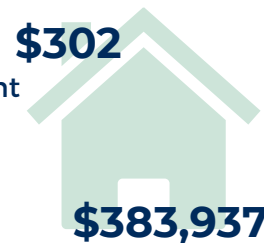
Do not sign a lease unless you have inspected the property and fully understand the terms and conditions in the document, as it becomes legally binding after you sign it.

If you intend to move out, you must give adequate notice to your landlord (generally a minimum of four weeks or as specified in your lease).

#### Tips for renting

- A tenancy lease agreement will need to be signed by the tenant and the landlord/agent
- All tenants will need to pay a tenancy bond or a deposit (usually 4-6 weeks rent)
- Expect property inspections every 3-6 months, usually undertaken by the agent or landlord
- Do not commit yourself to a lease that lasts longer than you are able to stay, as there can be significant costs if you leave before the end of the agreed period (known as 'breaking a lease').

Average  
weekly rent  
across the  
region



Average  
median  
house value  
across the  
region

(SQM Research Housing figures as of May 2023. Based on the median of 8 Limestone Coast towns - Bordertown, Keith, Penola, Naracoorte, Robe, Kingston, Mount Gambier, Millicent).

### Buying

Houses or flats for sale are usually advertised in the newspaper or online (see the websites below). Real estate agencies also list properties for sale.

If you are not a permanent resident of Australia, you may need foreign investment approval to buy a house.

If you need to borrow money to buy a property, contact your bank or other financial institution. In Australia, when buying property people usually use a solicitor or conveyancer to manage the transaction. Do not sign a contract unless you fully understand the terms and conditions.





## 6. Getting Around

The most common way to get to and around the Limestone Coast is by car. Outside of the city of Mount Gambier, there are no daily public transport services.

**Hire car** There are a few options for hire cars in the Limestone Coast, mainly in Mount Gambier. You can pick up rental cars at the airport.

**Taxi** There are numerous taxi options depending on where you are located. Search the internet for local listings.

**Fly** Regular return flights are available between Mount Gambier and Adelaide and Mount Gambier and Melbourne from the Mount Gambier Regional Airport. Flights are available with both Qantas Link and Regional Express (REX) airlines.

**Bus** Premier Stateliner offer daily inland and coastal coach services to and from Adelaide. To book, either call (08) 8415 5555 or visit their website.

V/Line offer daily coach services to and from Melbourne via Warrnambool or Ballarat. To book, either call 1800 800 007 or visit their website.

*If you are new to country driving, please take care on the roads. Be aware of trucks entering and exiting the main roads, and always look out for kangaroos and emus.*



## 7. Healthcare

In the Limestone Coast, you will be able to find hospitals, general practices, dentists, a wide range of allied health (including chiropractors, audiologists, optometrists, physiotherapists, and podiatrists), as well as pharmacies. A number of NDIS service providers also offer services across the region.

### Finding health services

To find a local health service, including those that are open after hours, visit the Healthdirect service finder, the SA Health website, or search the internet and local Facebook pages.

Many people travel to Adelaide for specialist medical problems, although there are also visiting specialists that come to centres across the region.

In life-threatening or urgent situations, always dial Triple Zero (000) and ask for an ambulance.

Emergency Departments can be found at Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, Penola, and Keith Hospitals.

SA Ambulance Service offers ambulance cover state-wide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Ambulance costs aren't covered by Medicare, and even if you have private health insurance, your policy may not cover the cost of an ambulance.

In Police and Fire emergencies, dial Triple Zero (000).



## 8. Education and Child Care

### Child Care

There are a range of early childhood care and learning options available across the Limestone Coast. To find a centre near you, search the internet for options. Please note that there may be limited availability due to high demand. To maximise your chances of getting child care, register as soon as possible on your arrival (or planned arrival) to the region.

### Schools

In South Australia, it is compulsory for children to be in full-time schooling from the ages of 6 to 16. There are Government, independent, and Catholic schools located in the region. Search the internet for local options.

### Tertiary and vocational education

The Limestone Coast offers tertiary and vocational education options as well, including UniSA in Mount Gambier, TAFE SA, and Flinders University Rural Clinical School. Search the internet for available courses.

## 9. Settlement Support

There are many resources and support services for new arrivals to help with settlement, community participation, and promote cultural diversity.

### Australian Migrant Resource Centres

The Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC) provides settlement and community services to refugees and migrants, particularly new arrivals. There are centres in Bordertown, Mount Gambier, and Naracoorte.

Services include:

- Settlement and transition support
- Employment support
- Aged care and disability support
- Accommodation assistance
- Education and training sessions (including English language classes)
- Case management
- Community events, including cultural celebrations
- Migration information services.



Red Cross, Local Councils and the State Government also provide settlement support in the region. Dependent on the visa you hold, you may also be eligible for support from the Australian Government. The AMRC will be able to provide you with more information.



# 10. Community

Connecting to the broader Limestone Coast community after arriving can be really important for your social and emotional wellbeing. It also allows you to build up personal and professional networks, helping you feel more at home.

## Volunteering

Volunteering can help to improve community connections and provides new arrivals with an opportunity to showcase their skills and experience.

To register as a volunteer, contact community organisations such as your local groups or clubs, your children's schools, not-for-profit organisations, local Government, Volunteer SA and NT, Limestone Coast Volunteer Resource Centre, or services such as the State Emergency Service (SES).

## Community Events and Social and Sporting Groups

You can be an active community member by ensuring you look out for local events, support your local sports team, shop locally, join a class, or a group. Your local library or Council can be a good starting point to access information about what is going on in your local community.

There are also numerous Facebook groups you can join to give you information on the area and what's on. Check out pages like:

- Local Councils
- Limestone Coast Young Professionals Group
- Women in Business and Regional Development (member based organisation)
- Other sporting, arts, and social groups.

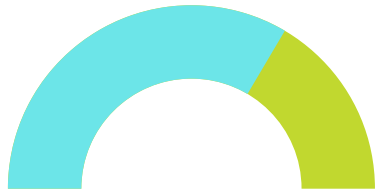
Country Women's Association, Rotary Clubs, and art groups have branches across the region.

If you play sport, there are a large number of clubs located across the Limestone Coast. From hockey to AFL to soccer, baseball, and tennis, there is something for everyone. Even if you do not play sport, you can be involved as a volunteer in many other capacities such as helping in the canteen (preparing and selling food), collecting entry money on the gates, and coaching.

Ask around or search the internet for what might be available in the Limestone Coast.







## What Next?

We hope that this brief guide has provided you with some useful information about the Limestone Coast, South Australia. We encourage you to do more research on the region, on the types of jobs available and on your visa options.

We have put together some useful links and resources on our website to help you plan your move - visit [www.rdalc.org.au/region-ready](http://www.rdalc.org.au/region-ready)

If you are already in Australia and have a visa, you might want to connect with other people that have made the move to the region, or you might want to ask us what its like!

Many of us have made the move that you are thinking about right now. Some people come and go, but increasingly, people are coming and staying. We think the Limestone Coast is one of those extra special places - a well kept secret that we have collectively decided to share.

So come on, give it a go! What are you waiting for?

2023

