



Urrbrae House Historic Precinct Mission Statement and Organisation

Strategic Intent

The Urrbrae House Historic Precinct (UHHP) is part of the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Technology, and is the historic heart of the University's Waite Campus.

Urrbrae House is committed to civic engagement and education. It is a historic house museum within the University providing a museum experience to the on-campus community and general public. It provides opportunities for the appreciation, understanding and promotion of the social, scientific and cultural heritage of the University's Waite Campus. It also plays a role in supporting the education and research activities of the University, especially those in the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine in line with the intent of the Waite Bequest.

As part of the University of Adelaide, the UHHP supports the strategic goals outlined in the University's updated (for 2024-2025) Strategic Plan, *Future Making* <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/vco/strategic-plan> including its Five Pillars to Excellence. Urrbrae House expands the University's intellectual and cultural reach into the local community in South Australia and beyond. The museum enriches the Waite Campus experience through a calendar of social and artistic events, and invites visitors to learn about and enjoy the University's historic built environment, artefacts and beautiful spaces. Through educational activities and historical interpretation, Urrbrae House encourages the development of a publicly spirited and engaged community.

On 1 January 2026 the new Adelaide University, created from the merger of the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia, will open its doors. Our Strategic Intent positions Urrbrae House to be able to successfully transition to the new Adelaide University with momentum for the long-term success of the community museum precinct.

Museum Purpose and Services

The UHHP is a centre of:

- Heritage and collections that acquires, conserves and interprets movable and built cultural heritage relating to the
 - family and social times of University benefactor Peter Waite (1834-1922)
 - history of the Urrbrae estate and
 - history of the University of Adelaide's Waite Campus.

The UHHP aims for museum best practice in collection management and provides access to our collections to researchers and the public.

- Learning and curiosity emphasised by the museum's focus on education programs (which encompass interactivity and excitement), special events, exhibitions, and tours.
- Engagement through a variety of stimulating public programs and activities, and use of the museum site as a venue for site-appropriate functions. Community focused events are particularly encouraged.
- Community outreach, generating and sustaining strong relations with stakeholders on the Waite Campus especially with the Waite Arboretum, within the University of Adelaide, community groups, the museum community and in the broader world.



Structure, Reporting Lines and Responsibilities

As part of the University of Adelaide, the University has over-arching responsibility for the governance, management and operations of the Urrbrae House Historic Precinct museum. All museum staff and volunteers must comply with University policies and procedures. Urrbrae House together with its furniture, fittings and collections are owned by the University.

Organisationally, the Urrbrae House Historic Precinct (UHHP) reports to the Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Technology within the University.

The Manager, Urrbrae House Historic Precinct reports to the Director, Faculty Operations on strategic, operational and financial matters. The Manager also works collaboratively with the Curator, Waite Arboretum, Head of School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, and the School Business Manager on strategic directions and co-operative projects.

The Manager's position at Urrbrae House is 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE). Within the museum, the Manager is responsible for

- Strategic development and operational management including financial and staff management, and museum accreditation
- Curation of the museum's collections and liaison with the University Library concerning art and heritage collections
- Overseeing the care and conservation of the heritage-listed buildings and historic artefacts within the precinct (*note: the University's Infrastructure Branch has responsibility for major structural restoration and maintenance of the fabric of University buildings*)
- Community engagement which includes all public programming and delivery
- Education program development
- Exhibition development
- Volunteer management and supervision
- Site interpretation
- Historical research
- Communications including public talks, web content and social media
- Policy and procedures development
- Health, Safety and Welfare including Emergency Management
- Compliance obligations and risk management

The Urrbrae House gardens are jointly managed with the Curator, Waite Arboretum and Waite Arboretum Officer. Arboretum staff take primary responsibility for horticultural development and garden volunteer management while the Manager, Urrbrae House Historic Precinct oversees historical interpretation of the site and event management.

The Manager, Urrbrae House Historic Precinct liaises with the University Library via the Manager, Special Collections and Archives, and Curator, Art and Heritage concerning the Urrbrae House collections. The Library curates, manages, and preserves the University's Special Collections and University Archives. It has overarching responsibility for collection policy and procedures within the University.



The UHHP museum has two other continuing part-time staff who report to the Manager:

- Urrbrae House Co-ordinator, 0.7 FTE, responsible for volunteer and event co-ordination, and office administration
- Administrative Assistant, Urrbrae House, 0.45 FTE, responsible for administrative tasks, reception, and website updates and redevelopment.

In addition, a team of four casual staff are employed on a needs basis to facilitate after hours events at Urrbrae House and a casual museum cleaner is employed for cleaning tasks that are not covered by the University's standard office cleaning services.

In 2024 Urrbrae House has 35 volunteers who take part in seven programs within the museum:

- Community events
- Engineering and Technical (heritage) support
- Flower arranging
- Friends of Urrbrae House Committee
- Research and Collections assistance
- Schools' programs
- Tour guiding

In addition, there are 46 University volunteers who regularly work in the Urrbrae House gardens. Other community groups such as Heritage Roses of Australia (SA Branch) and Mediterranean Garden Society (SA Branch) provide specialised volunteer support to the gardens through their expertise and working bees.

The Urrbrae House Historic Precinct receives support from the Friends of Urrbrae House Inc. (FOUH) which is an affiliated but separate incorporated association with about 100 members in 2024. The Friends of Urrbrae House was formed in 1991. The aims of the Association are to

- 1) raise funds for and foster the care of Urrbrae House and the Historic Precinct of the Waite Campus; and
- 2) promote the cultural and social life of the Waite Campus.

The FOUH Inc. Constitution excludes the Association from direct involvement in the management of Urrbrae House.