

Introduction to the Forum, Notes from Professor Fran Baum, Director Southgate Institute, Flinders University of SA

Welcome everyone!

We recognize the traditional owners of this land and their custodianship of this part of the Kurna lands. I thank you all for coming and acknowledging the importance of community participation to health. Please read the resolutions from WACRA which are on the seats and we will consider them towards the end of the forum.

This morning was a beautiful beach morning – what my mother-in-law Edith wrote in a poem about Henley Beach as a “born-again Henley morning” . I’m sure most of you are here because you live in Henley or are a keen visitor. When people visit from interstate and overseas what they like is the village atmosphere. They say it’s so good that it isn’t another faceless Gold Coast of Glenelg. Henley is a living space for people from across all of Adelaide – they love coming to the Square, having a meal or coffee, eating fish and chips and swimming, walking and playing, talking.

I’m sure that the community protest at recent suggestions that we should have 10 storeys or at the lack of master plan are not about a crude NIMBYism – but are about wanting to retain Henley as a people friendly space which is developed according to community values and ecological principles.

Participating in community action is good for your health – so you are doing yourselves as well as a Henley a favour by being here. And you can keep active and healthy through involvement with WACRA so please visit the WACRA webs site and the Henley Voice website too.

By coming here today you are part of a network of peoples around the world who want to protect the human scale, ecology and liveability of their community. Whatever the various issues in particular communities that get people active – here are some headline messages in people’s protests:

- Community needs before those of developers
- Public perspectives before those of private
- People and environment before profits
- It is places that keep people healthy – places where you can exercise, meet friends, feel in harmony with the environment

The planning at Henley doesn’t seem to have to been very transparent – little or no community participation – not healthy in any sense of the word.

I think we are in the same position as Arthur Dent, the anti-hero of Douglas Adams' *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* when he found that his planet Earth was about to be demolished in 12 minutes and was told he'd missed the planning notification:

"But Mr Dent, the plans have been available in the local planning office for the last nine months."

"Oh yes, well as soon as I heard I went straight round to see them, yesterday afternoon. You hadn't exactly gone out of your way to call attention to them, had you? I mean, like actually telling anybody or anything."

"But the plans were on display ..."

"On display? I eventually had to go down to the cellar to find them."

"That's the display department."

"With a flashlight."

"Ah, well the lights had probably gone."

"So had the stairs."

"But look, you found the notice didn't you?"

"Yes," said Arthur, "yes I did. It was on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying '**Beware of the Leopard**'."

Today we take on the leopard!