

# SWANSEA

*The Hub of the East Coast*



Destination Action Plan 2018-2020  
April 2018



# Acknowledgements

The development of the Swansea Destination Action Plan has been facilitated by David Reed through the Department of State Growth.

The process brought together representatives from stakeholder groups that benefit from the visitor economy including local government, state government agencies, industry and the community to develop the plan. This Plan seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Swansea in tourism terms.

Specifically, we would like to thank the individuals that participated in the plan development process:

## Facilitator

David Reed

## Swansea Destination Action Plan Leadership Group

Adele Plunkett

Leanne Dann

Sandy & Glenn Travers

Tammy Woolley

Bob Moore

Anne Held

Alison Wallace

Bianca Melling

Janelle & Peter Woodward

Elizabeth Stroud

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# Introduction

Swansea will build its reputation as **The HUB of the East Coast**. A key objective for Swansea is to increase visitor length of stay. **Unpack once** in Swansea to enjoy all the wonders of the East Coast.

The Swansea Destination Action Plan identifies the priority objectives and actions that, when implemented, will ensure sustainable economic growth through tourism.

The planning process recognises the iconic status of the Great Eastern Drive and its attraction for tourists. Swansea sees its current and future success as a tourist destination in its centralised location that make east coast experiences easily available while staying in Swansea.

## Location, location, location

Swansea sits at the heart of the East Coast; 45 minutes' drive from all the key tourist attractions and 1.5 hours from both Launceston and Hobart airports.

Centrally located and rich in history, Swansea provides easy access to cellar doors and farm gate experiences, day trips to Maria Island, Freycinet National Park and many miles of pristine coastline.





## The visitor economy

Tasmania's East Coast is the 6<sup>th</sup> most tourism dependent region in Australia.\*

For the past few years the East Coast has been experiencing double-digit growth in visitation.\*\*

\*Source: Tourism Research Australia

\*\*Source: Tasmanian Visitor Survey

## Objectives

The common objectives for tourism in priority order for Swansea are:

1. To increase visitor length of stay
2. To increase visitor expenditure
3. To increase visitor dispersal (geographically & seasonally)
4. To increase visitor numbers
5. To increase visitor satisfaction.





Community pride is evident in the vast number of current strengths identified and summarised below:

- Location – Tasmania's two major airports are 1.5 hours away in either direction
- Mid way between East Coast and midlands attractions
- Climate – warm, sunny days
- Cultural assets including historic buildings; East Coast Heritage Museum, Bark Mill Bakery and Tavern Yesteryear Museum, Morris's Store Museum, the Cemeteries, Piermont amphitheatre, Swansea Court House, Jubilee Beach and the Town Hall
- Cellar door and farm gate experiences
- School
- Two playgrounds – Jubilee Beach and Duck Park
- Two art galleries – Artifakt Gallery and Kings Fine Art Gallery
- Local people with knowledge about regional history
- Duck Park with a blackwater dump point and easy fresh water access for caravans and motorhomes
- Waterloo Point walk and several bush walks and waterfalls
- Quality services: emergency services, hospital, mechanic
- Two supermarkets trading from 7am-7pm
- Fishing – both sea and river and a new deep-water boat ramp
- Sporting facilities – golf, tennis, bowls, cricket, football
- Quality local tourism attractions
- Accommodation with a range of offerings including dog friendly, disability access, self-contained chalets, motel-style, heritage B&Bs and backpackers
- Pristine, child friendly beaches.





## Collective opportunities

Our collective opportunities include immediate actions through to longer term initiatives:

- Position Swansea as the **HUB** of the East Coast
- Establish a listing of local businesses and activities (including trading hours where relevant) and make it available to all businesses in the region. This information could potentially be shared with visitors when they make a local booking
- We have a myriad of tour and event opportunities – history walking tours, bicycle, motorcycle tours, bus tours, self-drive tours, food & wine festival and fishing competition
- Meet with local businesses to understand their business challenges and explore ways to collectively address these issues as a community
- Water taxi or ferry service to Coles Bay from the Swansea jetty
- Exploit our assets, new 'loo with a view', new boat ramp, larger boat access and marina, historic buildings and natural attractions
- Make the best possible use of existing marketing channels and collateral available especially East Coast Tasmania marketing activities
- Attract developers/new business to the area
- We have the potential to be a port of call for cruise ships.



# Potential challenges

Our potential challenges will require a committed effort to overcome; however, confidence was expressed that with time and effort we will continue to learn and successfully address these impediments. When addressed we will have sustainable economic growth and ultimately improve the tourism experiences year-round.

- Resistance to change; business and community attitude
- Attracting the right staff to support tourism businesses
- Shortage of worker accommodation
- Seaweed on the town beach
- Successfully establishing our identity as the **HUB** of the East Coast
- The current seasonality of tourism
- Fresh water for cleaning boats
- Perception Swansea is a stop-over point, rather than a destination in itself.





# Priority objectives and actions

The following elements were agreed as our priority objectives and actions. These are listed in priority order and clustered into themes. The elements listed have been considered and mapped to our objectives for tourism (listed on page 4).

## 1. Position Swansea as the central HUB of the East Coast (short term)

To develop Swansea as a vibrant regional **HUB** of the East Coast, developing it as the place for visitors to base themselves to explore the East Coast and the Midlands. Be able to offer a range of things to do from Swansea as well as various tours whilst in Swansea, such as history and cultural tours, farm gate and cellar door tours, sunset and sunrise tours, and suggest self-guided/day trips to Maria Island, Freycinet National Park and the Midlands. *'Unpack once to enjoy the wonders of the East Coast'*

- Hold a launch event for this Plan for business owners, community members, tourism representatives and government officials
- Ongoing communication about this initiative that is inclusive of the entire community. Provide regular updates, public forums and guest speakers to share ideas and regional successes
- Work with businesses and community to ensure consistent and accurate messaging.





# Priority objectives and actions cont.

## 2. Establishment of a comprehensive list of businesses and activities (short term)

Establish and maintain a comprehensive business and activities list for the **HUB** of the East Coast

- Develop an accurate list of local businesses and activities (including hours of operation and other relevant information) and ensure this information is kept current and the information is distributed:
  - On the Swansea Chamber of Commerce website and the Swansea page on the East Coast Tasmania website
  - In a quality compendium of information to all relevant businesses in the region
- Set up an open communication platform to share this information in an efficient and timely manner.

## 3. Develop a region known for its daily tours and activities (midterm)

Develop and promote current and future tour and activity opportunities ensuring a memorable experience for visitors, for example:

- History and cultural tours, sunset and sunrise tours, farm gate and cellar door tours, motorcycle/bicycle tours, self-drive tours
- Establish a reputation for quality daily tours/ self-guided tours and activities that contribute to the overall appeal of being based in the **HUB** of the East Coast.





# Priority objectives and actions cont.

## 4. Establish the HUB of the East Coast as a region for remarkable events (longer term)

Become an area known for its events and festivals throughout the year. For example music festivals, fishing competitions and corporate conferences utilising our diverse venue options:

- Develop a prospectus for event organisers demonstrating the types of events the area is best suited for and promoting event venues.

## 5. Identify and build on additional opportunities for the region (longer term)

To continue to identify and respond to potential long-term tourism opportunities as the **HUB** of the East Coast, for example:

- Cruise ships anchoring off Swansea and tendering the passengers to shore: offering the opportunity to explore Swansea's attractions or connect with other locations on the East Coast
- Encourage more bus tours to consider Swansea as an overnight base
- Investigate the feasibility of a ferry service from Swansea to Coles Bay
- Encouraging motorcycle groups to base themselves in Swansea to tour the region
- Attract developers and new businesses to the region: develop a prospectus of opportunities for investors.

