

SWANSEA

The Hub of the East Coast



Destination Action Plan 2018-2020
February 2018



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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; 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* to enjoy 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 East Coast Drive and its attraction for tourists. Swansea's current and future success as a tourist destination seeks to exploit this opportunity in consolidating east coast experiences that are 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. Swansea is 1.5 hours from both Launceston and Hobart airports.

Centrally located, rich in history, Swansea provides easy access to cellar doors and farm gate experiences, day trips to Maria Island, Freycinet National Park and Nine Mile Beach offering pristine coastline to explore.



The visitor economy

Tasmania's East Coast is the 6th most tourism dependent region in Australia.*

Recent visitation figures to the State, demonstrate that there is double-digit growth to the region, continuing for three consecutive years.

*Source: Tourism Research Australia

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 – central to airports 1.5 hours away in either direction
- Midway between East Coast and Midlands attractions
- Climate – warm, sunny days
- Cultural assets including 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 doors and farm gate experiences – fresh oysters
- School
- Two playgrounds – Jubilee Beach and Duck Park
- Two art galleries – Artifakt Gallery and Kings Fine Art Gallery
- History and Museum x 3 (Bark Mill, Morris and Noyes Street) Cemeteries
- Local people with knowledge about bygone era
- 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 and mechanical support
- Two supermarkets 7am-7pm
- Fishing both sea and river and new deep-water boat ramp
- Sporting facilities – golf, tennis, bowls, cricket, football
- Kates Berry Farm
- Range of great accommodation – some offer dog friendly, disability access, chalets, motel, heritage and backpackers
- Pristine child friendly beaches.



Collective opportunities

Our collective opportunities include immediate actions through to longer term initiatives. In some our opportunities are already aligning with our current strengths identified and summarised below:

- Promote and brand Swansea as central **HUB** of the East Coast
- Establish a full business and activity database to be made available in all accommodation and businesses in the region
- Promote the myriad of tour and event opportunities, i.e. history walking tours, bicycle, motorcycle tours, bus tours, self-drive tours, food & wine festival and fishing competition
- Meet with and include all local businesses to understand their needs/ wants and concerns; encourage and support their involvement
- Restaurant and attraction trading hours put into a document and available for accommodation places.
- Water taxi service/ferry/barge to Coles Bay from the Swansea jetty
- Exploit and communicate our current assets, ie. boat ramp, larger boat access and marina, historic buildings and natural attractions
- Establish a marketing strategy
- List of attractions available for visitors stating distance etc. that accommodation places can send out to clients on booking, which will hopefully get them to stay an additional day. Upgrade internet site to include the above information
- Attracting developers/new business owners; seasonal water based activities
- Cruise ships – opportunity.

Potential challenges

Our potential challenges will require a committed effort; however, confidence was expressed that given time and resources we will continue to learn and address these impediments. When addressed they will enhance our sustainable economic growth through tourism, ultimately improving the tourism experiences year-round, reducing the seasonality.

- Resistance to change; business and community attitude
- Attracting the right personnel to support tourism
- Housing and accommodation for employees in hospitality and across all businesses
- The seaweed along the town beach
- Establishing our identity
- The current seasonality of tourism
- Fresh water for cleaning boats
- Perception Swansea is a stop-over/way 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, *The common objectives for tourism*.

1. Branding 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. Being able to offer a 'package' 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, as well as suggested self-guided/day trips to Maria Island, Freycinet National Park, Discover the Midlands all whilst being based in Swansea. *'Unpack once to enjoy the wonders of the East Coast'*

- Launching the Destination Action Plan inviting business owners, community members, tourism representatives and government officials
- Ensure an inclusive community induction to better understand individual challenges and concerns; ensuring relevance through understanding
- Provide regular updates, public forums and speakers sharing regional successes
- Develop a collaborative business networking approach, with focussed marketing and advertising, including updating and maintaining the Swansea Chamber of Commerce website, and the Swansea page on the East Coast Tasmania webpage
- Offer training/education to the business community to ensure a consistent and accurate messaging and to address their expressed need.



Priority objectives and actions cont.

2. Establishment of a comprehensive database (short term)

To establish and maintain a comprehensive business and activities database for the **HUB** of the East Coast.

- Provide quality information packs to all operators, businesses and accommodation venues in the region
- Develop and design a compendium of attractions, activities and facilities available in Swansea to distribute to all accommodation providers and business in the region

To establish an open communication platform to optimise information sharing in an efficient and timely manner.

- Ensure timely and relevant communication with relevant tourism bodies and local businesses; recognising and addressing the challenges.

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

Promote a myriad of current and future tour and event opportunities, for example:

- History and cultural tours, sunset and sunrise tours, farm gate and cellar door tours, motorcycle/bicycle tours, self-drive tours ensuring a memorable and unique experience for visitors
- Establish a reputation for quality daily tours/self-guided tours and activities that contribute to the overall 'package' 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.

- Expressions of interest will be considered for events and venues throughout the seasons.

5. Identify and build on longer-term 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, encouraging visitors to return and/or to recommend others visit the region
- Encourage more bus tours to consider staying in Swansea
- Opportunity of a ferry service from Swansea to Coles Bay, a fishing competition, an increased number of boat users due to the ramp having the capacity for larger boats to use it
- Motorcycle tours – encouraging motorcycle groups to base themselves in Swansea to tour the region
- Attract developers and new businesses to the region by increasing the visitor numbers, the length of stay – their expenditure throughout the year will make the region and the **HUB** of the East Coast an attractive place to invest and/or re-locate to start a new business.

