

Administrators' Message



It will come as no surprise to our community that tourism is top of mind for us as Administrators, particularly as we see positive shifts when it comes to COVID-19 restrictions easing. 2020 has been a difficult year for us all but it has been particularly problematic for our local businesses and tourism industry.

Councils must be thorough and considerate when it comes to planning for tourism opportunities especially as we work towards recovery from the pandemic. Miscellaneous activities just do not cut it when you are trying to help support such a large industry; to catalyse real change and have a real impact we must be strategic and consider the long-term implications of our decisions.

In order to support our efforts, we are enlisting the help of our new Visitor Economy Strategy Advisory Group that will assist in outlining our strategic vision for South Gippsland and will ensure that the decisions we make are the best value for money and create the best opportunities possible for our region. We cannot wait to see what possibilities arise through this process and will keep the community informed every step of the way.

Ensuring Council and the community's scarce resources are used to the best possible effect requires careful long-term strategic planning. At South Gippsland this is something we take seriously, and development of our new strategy plus the grants we have made available through the Community Support Package, will ensure our efforts are focussed strategically to see a return on the amount of work and funding we invest in this space.

Outside of our committee and own strategy, Council also partners with industry bodies to ensure that South Gippsland is not only promoted as a wonderful place to explore, but that we play an active role in tourism for Gippsland as a whole. In particular we must highlight the work undertaken to create the Towards 2030 Gippsland Destination Management Plan with Destination Gippsland in the last twelve months. This plan is vital for creating a clear vision for achieving long-term, sustainable growth of Gippsland's visitor economy and it is something we are more than proud to have collaborated in.

A key campaign that is coming from this work is Destination Gippsland's 'Little Wonders' which is designed to assist tourism businesses recover from the events of 2020. By encouraging visitors to reconnect with family, friends and themselves by taking time out to discover Gippsland's range of visitor experiences, we expect the campaign to drive increased overnight visitation, increase visit frequency and spread visitor throughout Gippsland.

We are excited to see the campaign will be released to the wider Gippsland region soon which will expand to the rest of Victoria when the time is right. Therefore it is worth keeping an eye out for Gippsland's 'Little Wonders' on your TV, radio or social media in the coming months!

Our officers who work in Economy, Arts and Tourism strive to ensure that we support our businesses

and tourism operators the best that we can. Some of their work of late has ensured that local businesses are COVIDSafe, that they are registered with appropriate associations such as the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse for promotion, provide timely resources through enewsletters and engage in local campaigns including Buy Local and Discover Your Own Backyard.

For all of our community members who are reading this message please take the time to consider how you too can make an impact on your local community and support these businesses with us. We all have a role to play and we have no doubt that we can achieve some wonderful outcomes if we work together.

Julie Eisenbise, Christian Zahra AM and Rick Brown – Administrators