



GREAT WESTERN TIERS AND MEANDER VALLEY

Destination Action Plan 2017-2020

June 2017



Acknowledgments

The development of the Great Western Tiers and Meander Valley Destination Plan has been facilitated by Tourism Northern Tasmania with the support of the Department of State Growth.

The process brought together representatives from all stakeholder groups that benefit from the visitor economy; local government, state government agencies, industry and the community, to develop a plan. This Plan seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities facing the Great Western Tiers and Meander Valley – and to establish achievable affordable priorities that if delivered would increase the competitiveness of the destination.

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Introduction

Tourism Northern Tasmania is supporting the Destination Action Plan process for Great Western Tiers and Meander Valley in recognition of the potential of the region, and to build on the key pillars of the Northern Tasmanian Destination Management Plan.

The Destination Action Plans are an implementation initiative of the *Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy 2015-2020 (T21): Priority #4: Building capability, capacity and community*.

A core strategy is to recognise that visitors to the region are primarily attracted to destinations and experiences. Therefore the development, marketing and management of the region's destinations are pivotal to the success of the whole region.

The Destination Action Plan for Great Western Tiers and Meander Valley identifies priority strategies and actions which if implemented over three years will enhance competitiveness of the destination as a primary visitor destination of the region. These strategies will also facilitate regional collaboration and cooperation.

The Plan has been prepared by a facilitated workshop process involving business and community representatives who considered and reached consensus on tourism development, marketing and management opportunities and challenges. The group then identified and agreed on the key priorities and actions that would make a positive difference to the growth and sustainability of the visitor economy and experience.



General description of the Great Western Tiers and Meander Valley environs

The Great Western Tiers area within the Meander Valley is a timeless and mystical landscape that some say has been 370 million years in the making. The chain of mountains that forms the tier has more than 3,000 lakes and tarns and its alpine environment is so rare that it is protected as a World Heritage Area. In this ancient landscape, limestone caves are a world away below the surface. To the original Indigenous inhabitants the Great Western Tiers were known as Kooparoona-Niara (Mountains of the Spirit). The hidden valleys now shelter farming villages first settled in the early 1800's. The area is popular for its walks, wildlife, waterfalls, historic homes, gardens, specialty produce, artists and craftspeople.

At its heart, Deloraine is a busy regional centre and has become a major tourism attraction in its own right, with its streetscape classified as an historic town.

Surrounding areas include limestone caves at Mole Creek, bushwalks in the Liffey World Heritage area, trout fishing in streams cascading down from the Central Plateau lakes, cycling on the Tasmanian Trail and the quiet rural roads, along with outstanding opportunities to taste Tasmania's finest produce at the source – smoked trout, truffles, cheeses and raspberries.

Charming villages and towns within the area include; Deloraine, Mole Creek, Chudleigh, Jackeys Marsh, Meander, Hagley, Carrick, Prospect Vale, Bracknell, Elizabeth Town, Hadspen, and Westbury.

Objectives

Industry research has established that the following factors are present in successful destinations that are achieving the above objectives. The workshop participants considered these factors relative to Meander Valley in reaching consensus on the priority strategies and actions. A focus on continuous improvement of all these factors will contribute to the competitive growth and sustainability of the visitor economy of Meander Valley. The common objectives for tourism are:

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

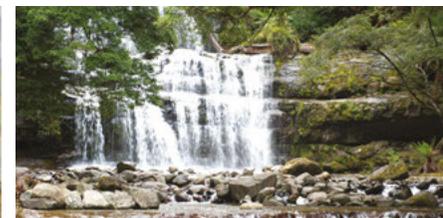
The visitor economy – Meander Valley

Visitor activity by township (TVS data Y/E Dec 2016)

Town	Passed through	Stopped & looked around	Stayed overnight/ average no. of nights	Total visitors
Deloraine	63,092	68,345	28,274/2.5	159,711
Mole Creek	35,909	32,251	7,311/2.6	75,471
Westbury	33,889	20,542	6704/3.9	61,135



Our collective strengths



- Meander River and town of Deloraine
- Friendly people
- Great natural beauty of Valley & Tiers
- Local organic food
- Trowunna Wildlife Park
- Ashgrove Cheese
- Walking experiences
- Art walks and history
- Natural beauty and variety
- Shops – retail & boutique
- Mole Creek Caves: Marakoopa, King Solomon
- Authentic experiences, variety
- World Heritage area
- Arts and crafts
- Tulampanga/Alum Cliffs, Mole Creek
- Cradle to Coast Tasting Trail
- Built heritage, mountain huts
- Visitor Centre & museum
- Fishing
- Diverse community
- Arts, events, festivals (Winterfest)
- Range of accommodation
- Tasmanian Craft Fair
- Deloraine Street Car Show
- Naidoc celebrations (July)
- Sporting heritage (Doug Youd)
- Liffey Falls
- Kooparoonia Niara Cultural Trail/Bush Tucker Trail
- Cycling trails/roads
- Proximity to Cradle Mt
- Proximity to gateways – airports, Spirits (Mel)
- Discovery/surprise by visitors
- B&B's in remote locations
- Talents, expertise of community
- Sculpture trails – including Westbury
- Folk Museum – Jimmy Possum exhibition
- History & Mystery (Tas Tiger)
- Yarns exhibition
- Honey – world recognised brand (Stephens).



Vision for the future – 10 years time

- Sustainable use of environment – adventure tourism
- Boutique shopping precinct Deloraine
- Reputation for great food and beverage, and Open!
- Renowned for our arts and artists – gallery, schools
- Training facilities
- Small scale family businesses
- Unified complete experience for visitors – referrals are our 'normal'
- Increased visitor numbers as a result – sensitive growth
- Support services – pick and pack; hire equipment – bikes & kayaks etc
- Aboriginal, wilderness, wildlife
- Disconnect, reconnect, recharge with yourself and others
- Natural heritage heightened – more high quality walks, engage with the history of this place
- Indigenous experiences
- Celebrated walks
- Engaged with the river – music, trail, on-river
- Local produce accessible
- See us as a destination, not a drive through
- Integrated visitor information – widely available in all the townships
- We've been discovered! All year round
- Deloraine is the hub of the Valley – township with retail and accommodation
- Creativity, mystery, art
- Hands-on experiences
- New experiences and accommodation
- Calendar of events
- The food heart of Tasmania, on the back of our producers and agricultural growth
- Award winning 'Paddock to Plate', and Apps
- Some of the last pristine temperate environments
- Digital presence and promotions optimal
- Heritage stories collated and communicated
- Boutique townships celebrated
- Optimise 'hidden gem' status
- Action and adventures.



Our challenges

- Broader awareness of GWTTA & others good work
- Retail group, unsupportive of tourism
- Wayfinding- off the highway
- Registered training – lack of opportunity
- Parochialism
- Lack of recognition locally and externally of our uniting brand/themes
- Boundary focus of tourism agencies/council
- Small business community/low resource base
- Lack of unity in destination – collective focus
- Greater participation by Councillors
- Small businesses without the resources to engage – time poor
- Better understanding of what the visitor wants
- Coordinated & maintained marketing promotion
- Sustainable strategic plans
- Strength of destination and marketing focus
- Respect for everyone in the community
- Agriculture/tourism & other local industries working together more
- Lack of awareness of employment through tourism
- 12 month/fulltime employment opportunities
- Marketing winter events/appeals
- More representation on TICT Board from the north
- Structured approach to develop key themes = more impactful based on passion
- Find greater resources from private sector
- Digital presence lacking for some businesses
- Inconsistent funding to develop destination
- Locally managed skills/talent pool
- Cultural cringe – indigenous
- Role clarity – state/region/local – inconsistency
- Self-sufficiency of industry
- Public acceptance of visitors/outsideers
- Professionalism of businesses vary
- Opening hours of businesses
- How to market destination/gain engagement
- Emergency recovery.



Our opportunities

- Become the premier short walk destination of Tasmania – rambling, themed, looped dog-friendly
- Aboriginal tourism niche
- Narrating the history & culture of the community – rural lifestyle
- Sharing together on social media
- Local celebration/communication of brand
- Leverage natural advantage of access/roads
- Paddock to Mouth experiences
- Develop region sustainably
- Promote legend of the thylacine
- Promotion/coordination of food experiences (web, apps, social, bloggers)
- Road signage solution
- Focus on themes, then packages and experiences, map solutions
- Industry driven partnerships – marketing; matched \$ for \$; supply side
- Marketing from gateways – airports, Spirit
- Get to know each other and what we are selling – famils, networking events
- Sculptures on highway access points
- Aboriginal community inclusion in industry
- Major event calendar by themes
- Supporting/evolving our events to be sustainable – succession planning
- New blood attracted to industry/events
- Volunteer groups celebrated
- Promoting to Tasmanians – advocates for Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)
- Packaging products
- Customer service training for industry
- Creating co-ownership of the brand with industry commitment
- Calculating/promoting 'value of tourism' to council & community
- Advocacy for Meander Valley Tourism
- Industry forum (online, closed) for better communication
- Jimmy Possum stories leveraged
- Staff sharing = roster sharing
- Leveraging off State campaigns
- Develop 'town of sculptures' – Deloraine.



Success factors

DIAGNOSTIC RATING

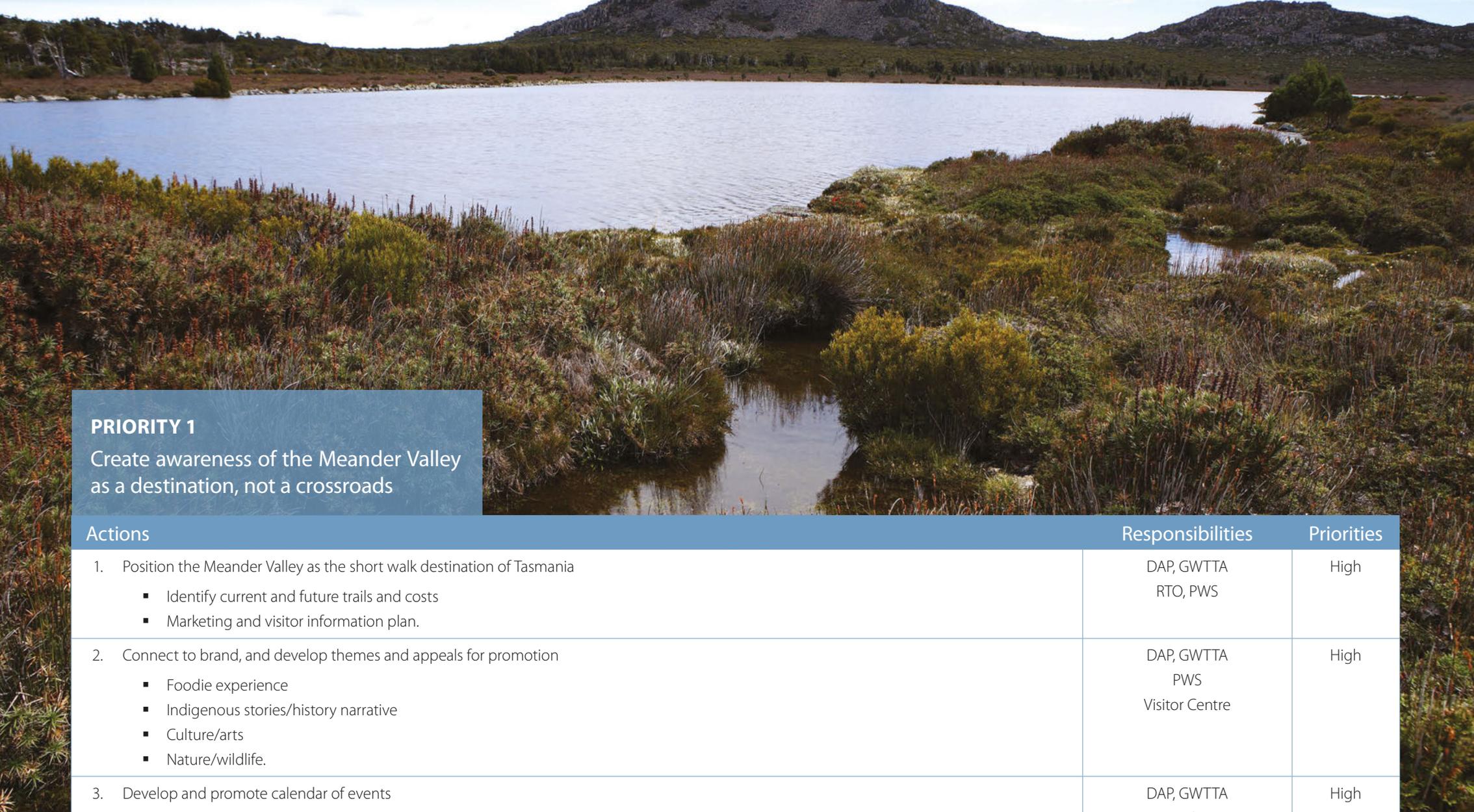
Characteristics	Rating	Comments
1. Strong local organisations focused on their core role of visitor servicing.	5	Committed but lacks support from local community.
2. Strong regional organisations focused on their core role of regional marketing and development.	6	Supportive, limited resources, disconnected from local businesses.
3. Local Government support.	5	Support to Visitor Information Centre, however tourism is not seen as a top priority.
4. Strong, consistent and effective leadership by individuals or organisations	5	People act as individuals, no strong tourism voices.
5. Strategic planning for the region with economic, social, environmental and cultural objectives supported by local destination plans.	4	Low awareness of the brand roadmap, need to communicate and engage with the DAP.
6. Consistent visitor service excellence.	6	Inconsistent, but visitor experience feedback is good.
7. Research driven cooperative marketing.	4	Brand research but not known. No coop marketing.
8. A breadth and depth of tourism infrastructure, experiences and events matched to market demand.	6	A lot of tourism product but no unifying resources or coordination.
9. Risk management plans in place.	3	Unknown. 2016 fire and floods – no knowledge of a plan.
10. Supportive communities which understand the value of tourism.	5	Value not recognised by community, needs communication of benefits.



Action Plan implementation

The priority actions have been assigned a KPI priority rating as a guide. These ratings are:

- HIGH within the first year
- MEDIUM within one to two years
- LOW within three years.



PRIORITY 1

Create awareness of the Meander Valley as a destination, not a crossroads

Actions	Responsibilities	Priorities
1. Position the Meander Valley as the short walk destination of Tasmania <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify current and future trails and costs ▪ Marketing and visitor information plan. 	DAP, GWTTA RTO, PWS	High
2. Connect to brand, and develop themes and appeals for promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foodie experience ▪ Indigenous stories/history narrative ▪ Culture/arts ▪ Nature/wildlife. 	DAP, GWTTA PWS Visitor Centre	High
3. Develop and promote calendar of events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill the gaps ▪ Share calendar with visitors and all businesses. 	DAP, GWTTA Visitor Centre RTO	High
4. Develop and follow a marketing plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage with students to communicate in digital environment ▪ Promote to Tasmanian markets ▪ Content through partner and assets. 	DAP, GWTTA School	High



PRIORITY 2

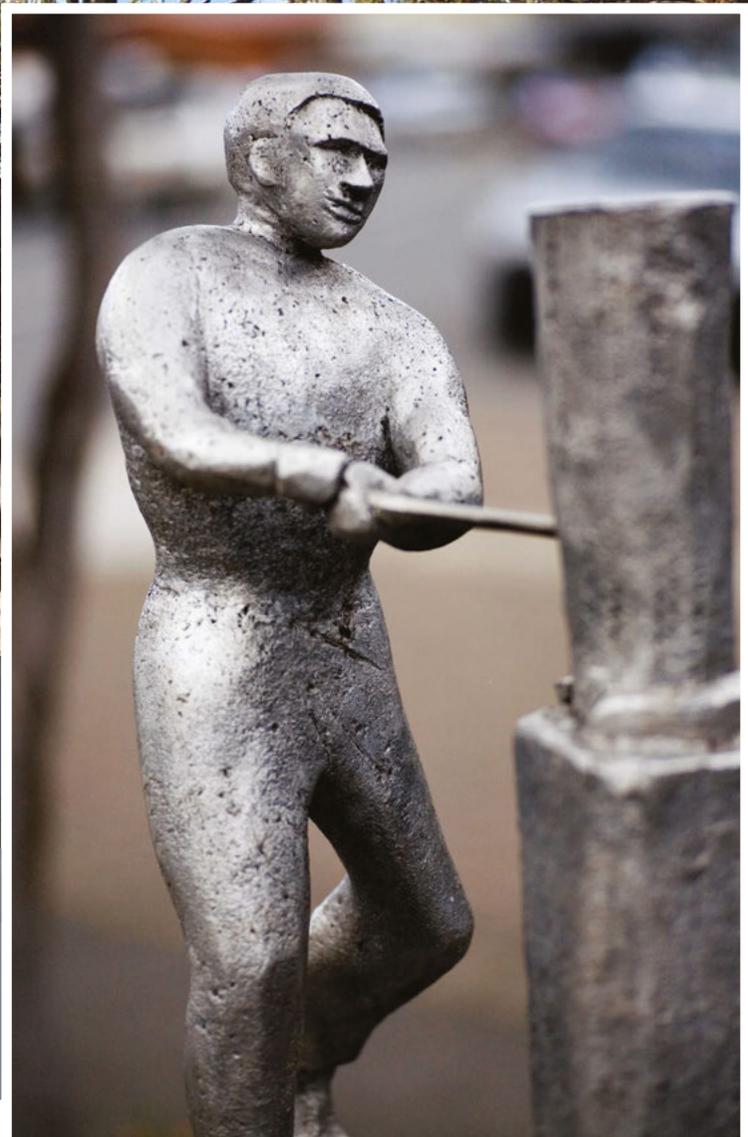
Strengthen community focus 'how we host visitors'

Actions

Responsibilities

Priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a DAP plan and leadership group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DAP group to become one business association ▪ Identify stakeholders, including local newspaper ▪ Theme champions for action. 	DAP GWTTA RTO	High
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Develop and follow an industry communications plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paid community facilitator required ▪ Establish face to face networking and familiarisations ▪ Website, social media (closed) and e-newsletter ▪ Use/connect with students to do these jobs ▪ Educate on the brand and how to use it. 	DAP GWTTA Visitor Centre Council School	High Medium Medium
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Use rural newspapers and local media to publish good news stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore schedule of stories (agri-tourism, events etc). 	DAP	Medium



PRIORITY 3
 Inspire and direct more visitors to discover the Meander Valley

Actions	Responsibilities	Priorities
1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gateways into the Valley created ▪ Entrance-way sculptures/installations. 	DAP, GWTTA Council	Medium
2. Port of Entry - visitor information/wayfinding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spirit, airports, hotels, car hire ▪ Signage renewal (Department of State Growth). 	DAP, GWTTA RTO, DSG	High



PRIORITY 4

Strengthening professionalism in our services

Actions

1. Identify from businesses what training is needed
 - What capabilities are required by 'themes'
 - Work with school for vocational training delivery.
2. Connect through the school to create excitement about jobs in the tourism industry.

Responsibilities

Priorities

DAP School/Trade Training Centre	Medium
DAP School/Trade Training Centre	Medium