



NORTH EAST TASMANIA & DORSET

Destination Action Plan 2017-2020

June 2017



Acknowledgments

The development of the North Eastern Tasmania 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 North East and to establish achievable affordable priorities that if delivered would increase the destination's competitiveness.

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Introduction

Tourism Northern Tasmania is supporting the Destination Action Plan process for North East Tasmania 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 North East Tasmania identifies priority strategies and actions which if implemented over three years will enhance competitiveness of the North East 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 North East Tasmania visitor economy and experience.



General description of North East Tasmania

Dorset covers 3,200 square kilometres of North East Tasmania, with a population of around 7,300 people scattered throughout this largely rural municipality. The main service centre for the region is Scottsdale, located approximately one hour's drive from the northern regional city of Launceston – the closest point of entry if coming from mainland Australia (via the Launceston Airport).

The nearby coastal town of Bridport is a popular holiday destination, and other towns in Dorset include Branxholm, Derby, Winnaleah, Ringarooma, Legerwood, Gladstone, Herrick, Tomahawk and Pioneer. Derby is home of the world class mountain bike development, the Blue Derby Trails which hosted the international mountain bike event Enduro World Series in 2017.

Key historical elements have been incorporated in the design route of the mountain bike trails in Derby, with tin mining the basis of the local industry until the late 1930s. Prior to World War 1, this saw a large influx of Chinese immigrants, predominantly working as miners.

Tasmania's North East has a rich and ancient history, incorporating over 40,000 years of continuous habitation and significant Aboriginal Heritage. The Tebrakunna Visitor Centre near Little Musselroe Bay provides informative displays about the traditional owners, as well as details about the Musselroe Wind Farm and the agricultural history of the Cape Portland Farm still in operation beneath the turbines.

Early European settlement saw the emergence of the timber and farming industries in the region. Although both sectors are now in transition, they are likely to remain important sectors of our local economy.

The district is well endowed with natural resources, including large areas of volcanic soils of extraordinarily high fertility, native and plantation forests, abundant water, and significant coastal resources. The spectacular diversity of landforms and ecosystems that can be seen here, including coastal geomorphology with extensive complex dunes, rolling rural landscapes, precipitous mountains, RAMSAR coastal wetlands and a broad range of forest types, make the region a visually stunning and interesting place to visit.



The visitor economy – North East Tasmania

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

Town	Passed through	Stopped and looked around	Stayed overnight/ average no. of nights	Total visitors
Scottsdale	50,804	38,463	12,097/1.7	101,364
Derby	33,111	15,359	5,273/1.8	53,743
Bridport	20,793	25,243	18,855/2.8	64,891

Source: TVS data Y/E 2016

Objectives

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.



Our collective strengths



- Walks – forests, eco system diversity
- Free camping
- Access – airport and Spirits
- Golf – Barnboughe
- Beauty, scenery, mountain views
- Local characters – unsanitised
- Wineries
- Beaches
- Bridport
- Bridestowe Lavender Farm
- Diverse nature
- Clean, green
- Chinese history
- Rural experiences
- Mountain biking
- Brewery
- Small, local eateries
- Farm gate and produce
- 4WD
- Lifestyle, slower pace
- Waterfalls
- Carvings
- Recreational angling
- Quiet reflection
- Weather – seasons, no extremes
- Indigenous history – Tebrakunna Visitor Centre
- Cheese
- Dog friendly
- Service businesses
- Diversity of accommodation
- History
- Sidling views
- Mini festivals and events
- Playgrounds
- Rail trail
- Scenic flights
- Winding roads
- Fossicking
- Lower costs
- Adventure tourism.



Vision for the future – 10 years time

- Beach, forest, nature = adventure
- Innovative
- Diverse experiences – each town has something to offer
- Family friendly
- Genuine, serious MTB destination – all towns involved
- Attracts passionate visitors – not just riders
- Coastal touring
- Marina at Bridport
- Bridport attracts more residents
- Multi-day walking experiences, connects towns with community/hosts
- Local food and wine 7 days/week, consistency
- Old history preserved
- #1 destination in Tasmania
- Vibrant town streets – boutique, local, diverse services
- Enabling infrastructure – roads, water, parking, signage, Telco
- Bridport foreshore and history centre
- 11km walking track at Bridport, flora and fauna
- Vibrant RV friendly
- Pier at Bridport – cruise ships
- Hospitality training a focus
- Recreational angling a popular attraction
- Winter festivals, events attract visitors
- Farm experiences – produce to plate
- Well trained young people working across visitor businesses
- Gourmet trails
- Craft/arts – major festival
- Artist in residence experiences
- Attract higher yield visitors – we can cater to their needs
- Iconic accommodation
- Beauty and adventure
- Experience life on a farm
- Rail trail
- Immersive experiences
- Helicopter tours
- Local host accommodation
- Base camp – beach – then experiences
- Golf course expansion.



Our challenges

- Airline seats ex SYD/MEL/BNE
- Highway upgrades to North East
- Community resistance to change
- Business resistance to training
- Critical mass of experiences – passionate followers e.g. MTB and golf
- AUD rate – economy, confidence
- Political will – to push through apathy and resistance; planning schemes; overseas investment impact
- Lack of effective networking (local) and collaboration between agencies
- Consistency and quality of visitor information
- Lack of cohesive/cooperative marketing – of the region, as a whole
- Too many layers of marketing agencies
- Lack of cash to build what we need – private and public
- Barriers to investment attraction
- Lack of public transport – train vs coach
- Federal/State governments – not willing to accept the will of the locals = change
- Lack of diversity of experiences – lack of sharing/marketing
- Inconsistent opening hours/seasonal closures
- Misperception about Tasmanian weather/seasons
- No rostering between businesses
- Spread of activities/events across year
- Skilled labour shortage
- Local training aligned to local industry
- Affordable long term (staff) rental
- No planning for disaster recovery
- Leadership of the DAP
- Community awareness of the DAP
- Balancing development with sustainability (environmental/social)
- Amenities (lack of quality) – water, sewage, Telco
- DAP/Council boundaries (west and east) – conflicting with North East
- Effective events marketing and management benefit whole region
- Maintaining essential services
- EWS 2019 return
- Attracting more events.



Our opportunities



- Seasons – 365 days of climate – no extremes
- Networking events
- Natural environment
- Build on MTB – more adventure opportunities – rail trail, cycling, other
- Build on audiences already coming – support and supplement experiences
- Individual town interests – referral networking, information to visitors – act as the North East
- Eco tourism market
- Recruiting new generation into the industry
- Tap into millennials – younger markets; experience focus, value for money
- New leader development
- Industry to work together – to remove 'bad' businesses

- Training courses – link to high school, and adults: vocational training. Beacon Foundation partnerships group; encourage tourism industry to participate with work experience – talk about what you do/enthuse students
- Trails development – food collection, produce, art, adventure, history
- Communicate with residents – NE Advertiser/social, be proactive, increase confidence in community
- State Government election – promote NE DAP opportunities
- Agri-tourism experience development
- Local Government – investment support 'a celebration'
- Referral business to business – sell the benefits to local business
- Social media/sharing increased – NE social media and TNT marketing

- Industry input to media releases
- Create a #NE Tas hashtag
- Creative marketing ideas to action from within the region – use icons and characters
- Hook icons supporting acts (people and places)
- Directing visitors 'where to go'
- NE Tas APPs and maps for visitors
- Promoting the flow-on effects of the DAP to locals
- A taxi service/uber/hire car in the region
- In peak times, develop a system of accommodation availability
- Big business to help others (e.g. Spirit, Airport)
- Marina at Bridport
- More RV camping
- Develop a Marketing Plan.



Success factors

DIAGNOSTIC RATING

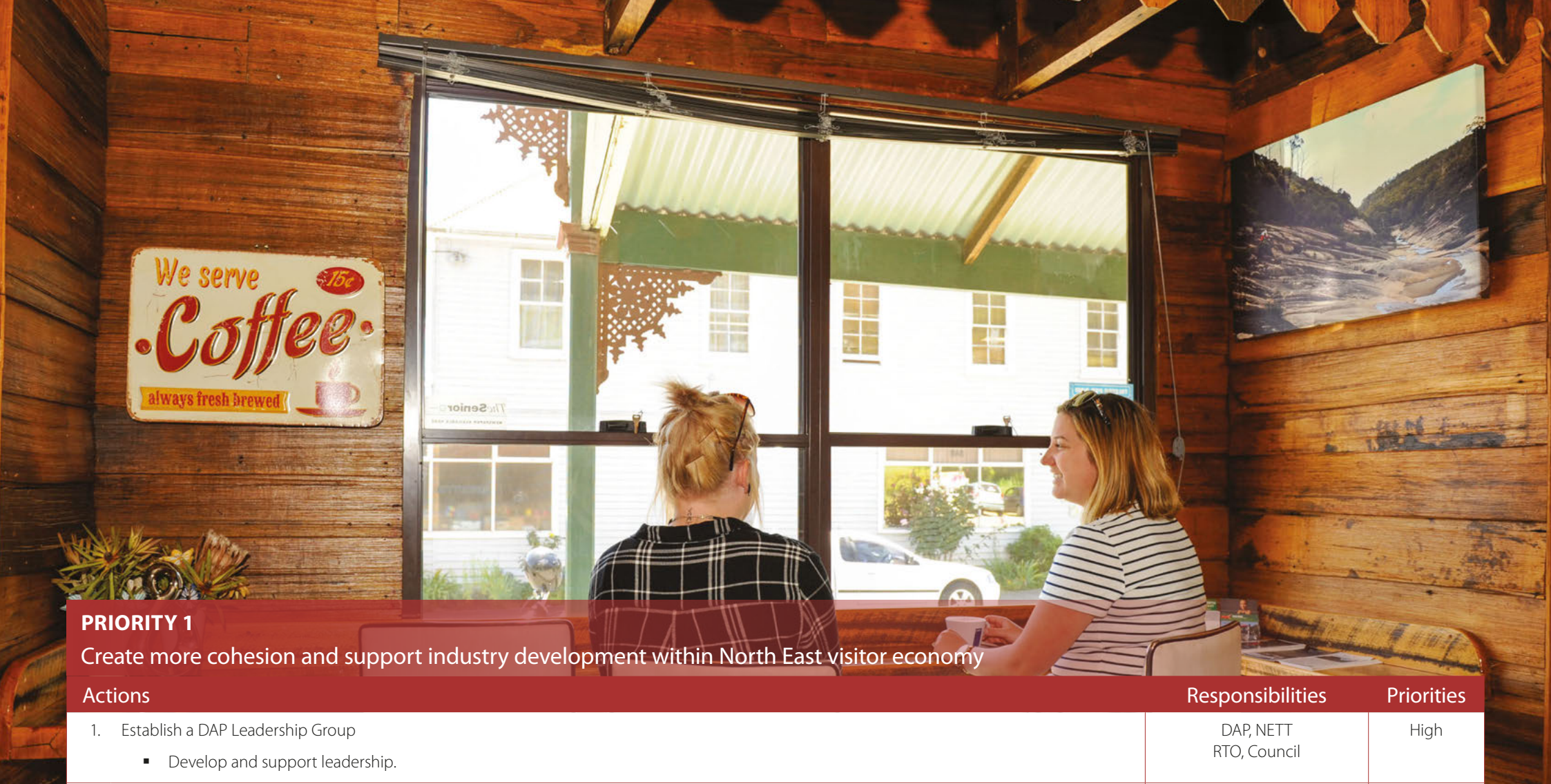
Characteristics	Rating	Comments
1. Strong local organisations focused on their core role of visitor servicing.	4	Could be more effective, lacking direction, local businesses do not join.
2. Strong regional organisations focused on their core role of regional marketing and development.	7	Proactively focused on MTB target market.
3. Local Government support.	8	Good support for MTB. Could broaden interest beyond Derby, needs more dedicated resources.
4. Strong, consistent and effective leadership by individuals or organisations.	6	No leadership for teamwork in region, many passionate individuals.
5. Strategic planning for the region with economic, social, environmental and cultural objectives supported by local destination plans.	5	No overarching strategic plan for greater region.
6. Consistent visitor service excellence.	6	Inconsistent quality, unreliable opening hours.
7. Research driven cooperative marketing.	5	Effective events strategy, but not cooperative marketing. Need coordinated social media for the area.
8. A breadth and depth of tourism infrastructure, experiences and events matched to market demand.	6	Lack of infrastructure e.g. water, sewerage. New MTB products, events – millennials market.
9. Risk management plans in place.	4	Unaware of any.
10. Supportive communities which understand the value of tourism.	5	Failure to work together. Infighting prevents progress. International visitors not always welcomed. Locals complain, while their children are employed in hospitality!



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 more cohesion and support industry development within North East visitor economy

Actions		Responsibilities	Priorities
1. Establish a DAP Leadership Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and support leadership.	DAP, NETT RTO, Council	High
2. Define the destination of the North East, and act as the North East.		DAP, RTO, Council, NETT	High
3. Survey industry skill needs to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direct vocational training and recruitmentIdentify training preferencesIdentify access to training.	Council, DAP High School	Medium
4. Establish a calendar of industry events.		DAP, NETT	High
5. Industry communication plan (align with Priority 2 – local media).		NETT, Council	High



PRIORITY 2

Improve effectiveness of our communication to visitors and locals

Actions	Responsibilities	Priorities
1. Create a brand for the North East.	RTO, Council NETT	High
2. Communicate the DAP to the community.	DAP, NETT	High
3. Use local news media and social media to increase awareness and confidence in the value of visitors.	DAP, NETT	Medium
4. Create and then follow a marketing plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a hashtag #northeasttasmania Social media sharing between towns. 	DAP, NETT Council	Medium
5. Review of provision of information to visitors and wayfinding.	Council, DAP	Medium



PRIORITY 3

Leverage off our icons of MTB, Barnbough Golf and Bridestowe Lavender Estate, supporting experiences and services

Actions	Responsibilities	Priorities
1. Agree upon, then profile target audiences (x3) then share between us including MTB, Golf and business and leisure events.	DAP, RTO, NETT	High
2. Support the return of EWS2019 and attracting other major events.	DAP, NETT	Medium
3. Develop theme-based trails, itineraries and packages.	DAP, NETT, RTO	Medium /Low
4. Communicate a brand aligned calendar of events and markets.	Council, DAP, NETT	High



PRIORITY 4

Advocate for infrastructure and new investment

Actions	Responsibilities	Priorities
1. Support infrastructure needs for visitor economy.	DAP, Council	Low
2. Support on-brand new developments, such as wukalina Cultural Walk.	DAP, Council	High
3. Audit products/experiences aligned to target audience needs.	DAP, NETT, Council	Medium