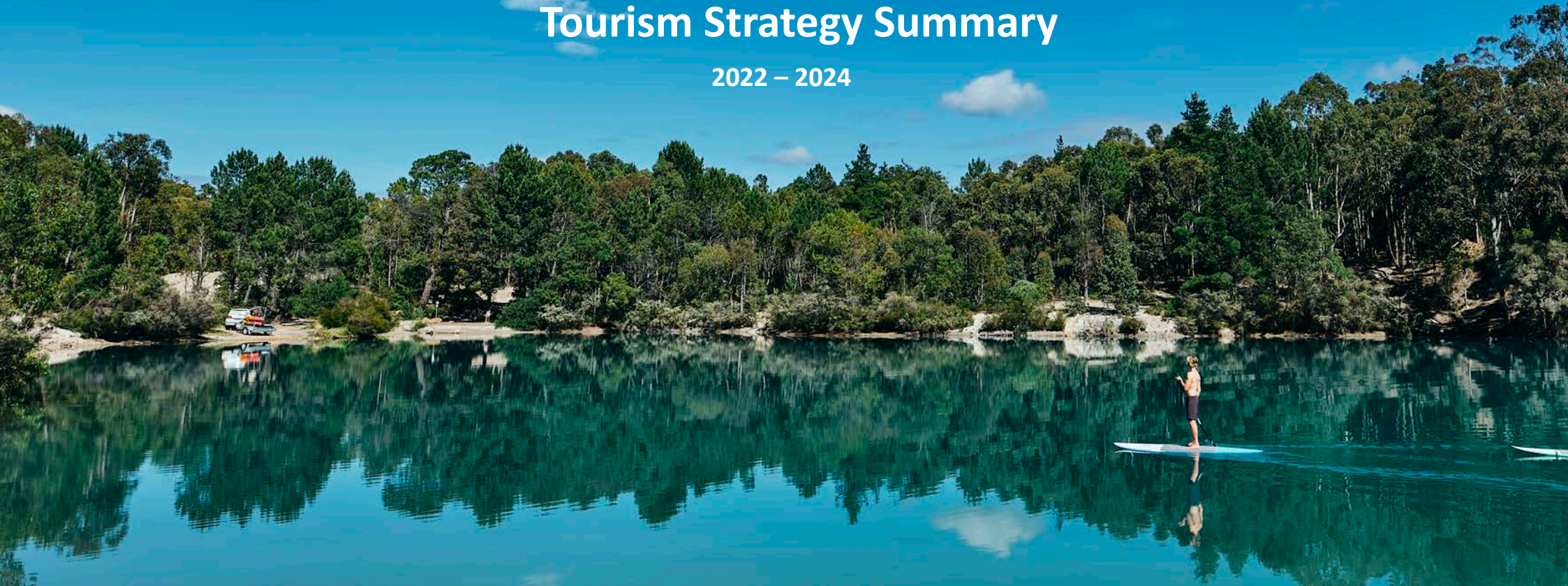


Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership

BUNBURY GEOGRAPHE

Tourism Strategy Summary

2022 – 2024



Introduction

The Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership (BGTP) is a collaboration between six Local Government Authorities (LGAs) (City of Bunbury, Shires of Dardanup, Harvey, Capel, Donnybrook Balingup, and Collie).

A strategic plan was developed in 2015 to guide the work of this group. In 2021 the group reviewed the strategy and committed to a further three years of funding. A service level agreement has been signed with Australia's South West (ASW) the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) to facilitate the delivery of BGTP's strategic direction.

This strategic document provides guidance on the direction that the BGTP is taking from 2022 – 2024 and beyond.



The Story So Far

The Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership (BGTP) has been operating since 2015 with the support from Australia's South West and the South West Development Commission. Up until 2019 the region was progressing very well towards the 2030 goals set out in the original strategic plan. Visitor numbers and visitor nights had already exceeded 2030 targets and most of the other measures were on track to be achieved well before 2030.

A Tourism Marketing and Development Manager was employed to undertake the day-to-day delivery of the strategy and to service the BGTP committees. In addition, important infrastructure had been developed across the region providing some key focal points for promotion and visitation. The Bunbury Waterfront and Dolphin Discovery Centre redevelopment and the development of the Wambenger Adventure Trails and Wellington Dam and Collie mural trails are all significant factors to the future success of the region as a visitor destination.

An opportunity exists to work with the industry to develop more market ready product that can be used to promote the region and create economic benefits for the industry and community.

Current Environment

While the region was tracking well up until early 2020, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been significant. Initial impacts in 2020, saw the complete halting of travel around WA and the closure of borders to interstate and international travellers. While intrastate and interstate restrictions were relaxed for a time, they were reinstated in late 2021 and this had a significant impact on interstate visitor numbers. Restrictions were eased in March 2022 with further relaxation of rules ongoing. This has led to an increase in international and interstate visitation but has also brought with it increased COVID-19 infections and ongoing impacts on staffing capacity at venues. It is likely these impacts will continue for some time to come.

One consequence of COVID-19 was an increase in intrastate travel. While this has always been the major market for the destination the inability of Western Australians to travel out of the state and Tourism Australia and Tourism WA campaigns to encourage people to holiday at home have led to more locals exploring their back yard. One of the challenges with this has been the concentration of visitors on the weekends and school holiday periods which has led to overcrowding and pressure on businesses.

Another impact has been the reduced access to labour across all industries but particularly for hospitality businesses. The industry has long been reliant on backpackers and other transient labour, which is no longer available. In addition, many hospitality workers have left the industry for more attractive roles and better pay. This in conjunction with COVID-19 restrictions, regulations and infections is creating significant challenges across the industry in providing high quality service and experiences.



Strategic Plan

The strategic plan undergoes regular reviews to ensure that the strategic priorities align with the desired outcomes of the partners and any changes in the operating environment.

Vision

Bunbury Geographe is recognised as a highly desirable visitor destination and our visitor economy contributes to the region's sustainable future.

Mission

BGTP's mission is to deliver strategic tourism leadership across the Bunbury Geographe region guiding the development of the visitor experience, building industry capacity and growing customer awareness of the region's tourism experience offering.

Purpose

We exist to grow the visitor economy through leadership, promotion, and development. With our partners, we will build Bunbury Geographe's image, drive visitation, and boost the economy.

Long Term Goal

By continuing to work in partnership, Bunbury Geographe is a highly desirable destination with a diverse range of outstanding experiences that attract more visitors, and drive jobs and sustainable investment across the region.

Core Values

- **Inspire:** Enhance the reputation of Bunbury Geographe as a visitor destination and develop an emotional connection with our audiences.
- **Inform:** Build awareness for Bunbury Geographe's offering.
- **Activate:** Increase product development and visitation to Bunbury Geographe.
- **Unite:** Expand the growing sense of unity within the Bunbury Geographe tourism sector.

Focus Areas

1. **Leadership:** Provide leadership and coordination to the tourism industry creating a united and compelling voice.
2. **Industry Development:** Empower the tourism industry and help to build capacity and capability.
3. **Product Development:** Support product and infrastructure development and investment.
4. **Destination Positioning:** Increase awareness, raise the appeal, and generate demand for the destination.

Measurable Goals

Specific goals were identified in the 2021 review as:

- 599,000 overnight visitors and 2,078,000 visitor nights per annum by 2030.
- 1,686,000 day trips per annum by 2030.
- \$231,481,000 per annum overnight visitor expenditure and \$193,867,000 per annum day trip expenditure by 2030
- \$425,348,000 per annum visitor expenditure across the region by 2030
- Sustainable medium-term growth in visitation of 1.9% per annum (annual average).
- Ongoing financial and in-kind support for the partnership.

It should be noted that the disruption caused by COVID-19 has significantly impacted both visitor numbers and the ability to accurately gather data. It has been agreed that the 2030 targets will be maintained and reviewed in 2024 prior to the end of the current funding agreement.

Given the difficulty in obtaining accurate visitation data the goals for the life of this Strategic Plan (2022 – 2024) will be focused on activity and where possible visitor figures will be collected as the industry returns to a more normal pattern.

Short Term Measures

- **Marketing Activity:** direct, cooperative, and leveraged
- **Social Media:** activity, engagement, and increased followers
- **Industry Engagement and Connection:** networking, industry input, industry resources
- **Tourism Offering:** Increased number of market ready products and experiences.



Key Audiences

The following audiences have been identified and strategic marketing and communications plans will be developed separately.

- **Internal** – Partner LGAs and ASW– require measurable results from their investment
- **External** –Tourism Industry Partners – this includes Tourism WA, the South West Development Commission (SWDC) the visitor centre (VC) network, tourism associations and groups and tourism businesses providing the experiences throughout the region.
- **Consumer** – Customer segments who will be targeted through marketing and promotional activities and future product and infrastructure development.



Adventure
Adrenaline Seekers



Adventure
Adventurers



Nature Lovers
Active Families



Nature Lovers
Explorers



*Food and
Drink Lovers*



Culture Seekers

Value Propositions

The key driver for the strategy is keeping it as simple and achievable as possible to ensure the most efficient and effective use of limited resources and to maximise the outcomes in the limited time available and within the current environmental constraints.

For each of the core markets a value proposition has been developed to identify the areas where additional focus or development is required. These value propositions along with the priorities identified by the partners and key stakeholders form the basis of the 2022 – 2024 Action Plan below.



Strategic Priorities

The broad areas of priority for the region are:

Raising Awareness & Creating Demand

United, collaborative, and cooperative approach to marketing

- Agreed key messages
- Reputation and expectation management
- COVID Exit Strategy
- Collaboration and leveraging partners

Economic Development

Tourism as a local economic development tool

- Improving Net Promoter Scores (NPV) and attracting inward investment and migration to the region.
- Regional investment in infrastructure
- Mitigating the impacts and maximising the opportunities of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road (BORR)

Facilitating and Supporting a Sustainable Industry

Business support and capacity and capability building – industry sustainability

- Workforce Availability
- Market Ready Product
- Business Sustainability

Implementation and Governance

The BGTP is made up of the six LGAs and ASW with each organisation being represented by its Chief Executive Officer. Each of the partners has a responsibility to have input to the strategic goals, resourcing and ensuring that activities and strategies within their jurisdiction contribute to achieving key performance indicators. This group has identified the reporting requirements for the program. The group has met annually to review performance and adjust and recommit to strategic directions.

To ensure that the partnership is agile and flexible, the group appoints an executive committee to assist with regular decision making and course corrections between annual planning sessions. It is recommended that this group meets three or four times a year. This group will assist with decision making between strategic planning sessions and assist in addressing any issues or challenges in a timely manner.

The Tourism Manager, employed through ASW, provides a secretariat service to the partnership and executive committee as well as delivering the strategic priorities of marketing and industry and product development. The Tourism Manager focuses on marketing and industry liaison and additional resources will be sourced to deliver additional projects and priorities as they arise, in consultation with the

Executive Committee. The Bunbury Geographe tourism program is managed through ASW via a service agreement and memorandum of understanding, providing management and in-kind support. This alignment with ASW facilitates greater leverage of regional and state-wide programs.

The Tourism Manager will work with a working group made up of the industry and the regional tourism network of VCs and associations to deliver marketing, industry, and

product development opportunities. This includes capability and capacity building programs, famils and access to trade events and campaign opportunities.

The Bunbury Geographe tourism program undertakes a range of marketing and promotional activities directed at the agreed core markets including social media, seasonal campaigns, collateral development, and distribution. A more detailed action plan is outlined below.

Governance



2022-2024 Action Plan

Action	Details	Lead	Partners	KPI
Leadership: Provide leadership and coordination to the tourism industry with a united and compelling voice				
Shared Strategic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual meeting of all partners to review strategy and reset priorities • Executive Committee with delegated authority appointed to guide activities • Facilitate up to four meetings annually 	Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership (BGTP) Partners	Bunbury Geographe (BG) Tourism Manager, ASW	Long term sustainability of the partnership
Strategic Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree report formats and frequency • Identify key indicators important to Councils • Identify critical timing of reporting 	BGTP Partners	BG Tourism Manager	Council recognition of the value of tourism and ongoing resource allocation supporting marketing and product development activities
Industry & Product Development: Empower the tourism industry and help to build capacity and capability				
Industry Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a reference group to meet annually to agree core messages and delivery • Facilitate up to four networking opportunities annually • Build industry knowledge of product and experience offerings across the region • Provide marketing and promotional opportunities to the industry • Establish relationships with industry partners whose marketing efforts can be leveraged for mutual benefit 	BG Tourism Manager	BGTP Partners, Tourism Businesses, VC Network, Associations, ASW, TWA, DBCA, DGLSC, Trails WA, Tourism Australia (TA)	<p>Industry engagement in messaging, promotions, and networking activities.</p> <p>Delivery of networking functions and activities</p> <p>Collaborative marketing opportunities</p> <p>Networks and relationships built</p>

2022-2024 Action Plan - Continued

Action	Details	Lead	Partners	KPI
Industry Training and Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand industry gaps and needs • Develop bespoke training and mentoring programs to build industry capacity • Access TCWA and other training programs • Develop training and capacity building programs as required 	BG Tourism Manager	ASW, TCWA	Industry capability and capacity building
Workforce Planning and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the gaps and needs across the industry • Work with Tourism WA to access their workforce development programs 	BG Tourism Manager	ASW, SWDC, Tourism WA	Increased jobs
Product Development: Drive product and infrastructure development, and investment				
Product Development and Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with businesses to identify those capable and interested in developing market ready product – food and drink, culture, tour products, accommodation 	Industry, BG Tourism Manager	ASW, SWDC, Small Business Development Commission (SBDC)	Market ready product development
Adventure and Nature Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify business development opportunities linked to infrastructure developments • Facilitate product development and testing 	BG Tourism Manager	BGTP Partners, Industry, DBCA, Tourism WA (2022 Budget Allocation)	Adventure and nature product development
Aboriginal Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the industry, WAITOC and Tourism WA to identify opportunities for Aboriginal product development 	WAITOC	BG Tourism Manager, ASW, TWA, BGTP	Aboriginal Product Development
Event Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in event offering • Identify funding and technical assistance with event development and delivery • Provide guidance and assistance with grant funding applications 	BG Tourism Manager	BGTP Partners, ASW, TWA, SWDC, Event Organisations, Local community	Event development

2022-2024 Action Plan - Continued

Action	Details	Lead	Partners	KPI
Destination Positioning: Increase awareness, raise the appeal, and generate demand for the destination.				
Marketing and Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver a Corporate Communications Plan • Develop and deliver a Bunbury Geographe Marketing Plan • Identify partners and programs that can be leveraged • Strategically manage social media platforms • Update and manage Bunbury Geographe website • Develop a program of trade and consumer event attendance linked to core experiences <p>Content Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop inspirational content and still and moving imagery • Develop regular blog posts • Develop a Content Strategy <p>Collaboration and Leveraging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree core messages and # for sharing on partner sites and social media • Ensure cross promotion and referrals across the region's VCs • Ensure cross promotion on partner websites • Encourage cross promotion and referrals amongst businesses • Leverage promotional activities of partners 	BG Tourism Manager	BGTP Partners, Industry, ASW, Tourism WA, TA, VCs, DBCA, DGLSC, Trails WA, other industry partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing collaborations Marketing activity Increased awareness of destination offerings (social media and website traffic, bookings) Leveraged marketing spend Increased overnight visitation Increased visitors spend

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Our Partners

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