

Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group

Meeting Date: Monday, 15 February, 2021
Location: Council Chambers / Microsoft Teams
Time: 5.00pm

Please note: Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Confirmation of Minutes

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3. Reports

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4. General Business

TA21.7	Councillors Update <i>A space in the agenda for Councillors to update STAG members on any tourism related information they have seen in the region (as requested by STAG).</i>	
TA21.8	Industry Feedback <i>A place in the Agenda for Industry Members to provide any comments on trends, issues or matters they wish STAG to be aware of.</i>	
TA21.9	Sports Board Update <i>A verbal update to be presented by David Goodman, Chair, Shoalhaven Sports Board</i>	

Membership

Mr Rob Crow - Chairperson

Mr Mark Thirlwall – Deputy Chairperson

All Councillors (Clr Gash & Clr Kitchener – voting delegates – Clr Alldrick & Clr Watson – alternate voting delegates)

Mr David Goodman (Chairperson - Shoalhaven Sports Board)

Mr Neil Rodgers

Ms Brenda Sambrook

Dr James Lin

Ms Kylie Pickett

Ms Juliet Barr

Mr David Duffy – NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service representative

Mr Mat Lock

Mr David Fleeting

Quorum – 7

Role and Purpose

- Inform the development, implementation and review of council priorities from the Shoalhaven Tourism Master Plan and councils corporate plan
- Represent the tourism industry and advise and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to tourism, the development of tourism and the future of tourism in the Shoalhaven.
- Promote the direct and in-direct value and benefits of tourism within the Shoalhaven and on a regional, state and national basis.

Delegated Authority

- Make recommendation on the expenditure of the annual Shoalhaven marketing budget as provided by Council.
- Appoint suitable representatives to fill casual vacancies
- Inform and recommend policy for tourism related funding programs, and where required by Council, vote on related matters.

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN TOURISM ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting Date: Monday, 26 October 2020
Location: Via Microsoft Teams
Time: 5.00pm

The following members were present:

Mr Robert Crow – Chairperson – (Remotely)
Clr Gash
Clr Watson – (Remotely)
Mr David Goodman – (Remotely)
Mr Neil Rodgers – (Remotely)
Mr David Duffy – (Remotely)
Ms Brenda Sambrook – (Remotely) from 5.29pm
Dr James Lin – (Remotely)
Ms Juliet Barr – (Remotely) from 5.02pm
Mr Mat Lock – (Remotely)
Mr David Fleeting – (Remotely)

Others present:

Clr White – (Remotely)
Robert Domm – Director City Futures – (Remotely)
Sara McMahon – Manager – Business Assurance & Risk – (Remotely)
Joe Puglisi – Visitors Services Manager – (Remotely)
Kristy Mayhew – Tourism Marketing Specialist – (Remotely)
Greg Winchester – Events Liaison Officer – (Remotely)

The Chairperson addressed the meeting and thanked everyone for their patience with the temporary new meeting format.

The Chairperson acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land and pay respects to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was received from Clr Kitchener. The Chairperson advised that an apology was received from Coralie Bell and that Shannan Perry-Hall has vacated the role as of 9 October 2020.

Note: Juliet Barr arrived at 5.02pm

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Mat Lock / Juliet Barr)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group held on Monday 10 August 2020 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil

REPORTS

TA20.19 Tourism Manager Update

HPERM Ref:
D20/411847

Robert Domm addressed the meeting and advised that Coralie Bell – Tourism Manager was on a leave of absence.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Tourism Manager's Report for information.

RESOLVED (Clr Gash / Neil Rodgers)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Tourism Manager's Report for information.

CARRIED

TA20.17 Destination Marketing

HPERM Ref:
D20/411758

James Lin raised a question regarding Council's plan to attract new tourists to the South Coast during COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Staff advised that Council ran a campaign throughout the Winter period and will continue this into summer. Reports have confirmed that 114% increase in new visitors to the South Coast in recent weeks and in future bookings.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Destination Marketing Report for information and endorse the Annual Marketing Plan 2020/2021.

RESOLVED (David Goodman / Neil Rodgers)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group:

1. Receive the Destination Marketing Report for information; and
2. Endorse the Annual Marketing Plan 2020/2021.

CARRIED

TA20.18 Events and Investments Report

HPERM Ref:
D20/411773

Clr Gash thanked staff for the comprehensive report including the Tourism Event Support Program. The Chairperson advised that both reports TA20.18 and TA20.22 cover off on events. The members held a conversation in relation to the funding program.

Greg Winchester – Events Liaison Officer advised that item TA20.22 covers the Support Program. The Support Program is a 2-step process. The first round of applications in January for which results will be delivered in March. The second round of applications in July and will have results delivered in September. Staff report to STAG on the application rounds. Greg clarified that the application periods do not correspond with dates when the event being held, as many of the applications are approved well in advance.

The support program funding is issued 50% upon a successful application and then the remaining 50% following the completion of the event.

The members advised that a Working Group was previously formed in relation to Events and Investments. The members suggested that those members of the Working Group meet to discuss the current format of 50/50 payment before and after events and provide feedback to STAG.

Note: Brenda Sambrook arrived at 5.29pm

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Events and Investment Report for information.

RESOLVED (Robert Crow / Clr Gash)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Events and Investment Report for information.

CARRIED

TA20.22 Tourism Event Support Program

**HPERM Ref:
D20/429187**

The Committee held a discussion in conjunction with the previous item.

Recommendation

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group (STAG) formally request Council:

1. Recognise the importance of event partnerships to our visitor economy
2. Endorse the formalisation of the Event Support Funding Program, Guidelines, and Application Form, and
3. Proceed to implementation early 2021.

RECOMMENDATION (David Goodman / Mat Lock)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group (STAG) formally request Council:

1. Recognise the importance of event partnerships to our visitor economy
2. Endorse the formalisation of the Event Support Funding Program, Guidelines, and Application Form, and
3. Proceed to implementation early 2021.

CARRIED

TA20.20 Visitor Services Update

**HPERM Ref:
D20/421497**

Joe Puglisi – Visitors Services Manager addressed the meeting and advised that it has been a busy time during Winter with some operators/providers reporting 100% occupancy. They have also reported a shortage of cleaners.

Holiday Booking agents have reported that they are bringing in a lot of other bookings from other business.

Due to COVID-19 the mobile visitor service unit has been cut back, however it is still providing mobile service delivery of the Guides and checking listings. Face to face enquiries in centres have decreased however, phone and email enquiries have increased at the VIC's.

There has been mixed responses from private operators/providers in relation to refunds for unforeseen cancellations. Support may be a full or partial refund, some operators are not offering any refunds. David Goodman commended Holiday Haven for their approach to cancellations.

The Committee was advised that the VIC will be moving to the Administration Building during December 2020 to July 2021 however the dates are not fixed.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Visitor Services Report for information.

RESOLVED (Clr Gash / Mat Lock)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Visitor Services Report for information.

CARRIED

TA20.21 River Festival Update

**HPERM Ref:
D20/427524**

David Fleeting addressed the meeting and advised that discussions have been held with the Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee regarding a collaborated approach to activities or events. It is intended that River Festival Activities will take place around the Easter school holidays in 2021.

Further discussions will take place regarding the River Festival for 2021.

Recommendation

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group recommend the below members and request Council officially appoint the 2020 River Festival Committee as follows:

- a. Committee Chair: David Fleeting (& Arts liaison)
- b. Treasurer: Gary Wells
- c. Secretary: Kim Willett
- d. Logistics: Anna Butler
- e. Lighting/Sound/Entertainment: Brendon Comber
- f. Water Co-Ordinator: Ron Cowlshaw
- g. Arts Advisor to the Committee: Marla Guppy

RECOMMENDATION (Clr Gash / James Lin)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group recommend the below members and request Council officially appoint the 2020 River Festival Committee as follows:

- a. Committee Chair: David Fleeting (& Arts liaison)
- b. Treasurer: Gary Wells

- c. Secretary: Kim Willett
- d. Logistics: Anna Butler
- e. Lighting/Sound/Entertainment: Brendon Comber
- f. Water Co-Ordinator: Ron Cowlshaw
- g. Arts Advisor to the Committee: Marla Guppy

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

TA20.23 Sports Board Update

HPERM Ref:
D20/437829

David Goodman – Chairperson of the Shoalhaven Sports Board provided the following update:

- Sport over the last 6 months has been at a minimum.
- Approach was made to the CEO for a face to face meeting of the Board for December, which has been approved.
- Some Sport Board members are retiring, and the Board will be seeking new membership, please contact the Chairperson if anyone would like further information.
- It has been announced that an \$8 Million grant has been secured for the upgrade of Artie Smith Oval Masterplan

TA20.24 Industry Feedback

HPERM Ref:
D20/437835

The Committee held a discussion, and the following points were raised:

- With the Nowra Bridge project underway, is there a Traffic Control Plan in place for the peak period over Christmas?
 - It was advised that Council and the Shoalhaven Traffic Committee are in discussions with RMS on this issue.
- It has been observed that there is already an impact on traffic flow through Bomaderry and Illaroo Road, is it possible for the Contractors to provide a Briefing to the STAG?
 - A request can always be made for a Briefing. David Fleeting will liaise with Tourism Staff and the Bridge Contractors to request a briefing to the next STAG meeting.
 - Also, to find out if there is opportunity to install flags/banners for Tourism on the Bridge
 - It was advised that the plans for the project are on public display, Cllr Gash encouraged members to view the plans.
- In the coming weeks there will be an influx of visitors to the area and it has been noted that the facilities including but not limited to parking, toilets, bins and cleaning will need to be increased. Temporary short-term plans will need to be put in place.
 - Cllr Gash advised that this is known and services are being increased to reflect the increase visitation.
- The buoy markers in the water at Callala Beach were removed after Easter, will this be continued for the Christmas Holiday period?
 - This is a question that needs to be raised with Service NSW (RMS).

- A possible future project for tree planting in colour schemes from Bomaderry to Berry to attract Tourism to the area.
- Brenda advised that there is discussion on social media regarding the impact of the L'Etape Tour travelling through Kangaroo Valley in relation to the disadvantage the residents and businesses will experience during this time due to road closures.
 - Staff are working with the event organisers to provide communication to the people of Kangaroo Valley.
 - It was requested that Coralie Bell and Rob Crow obtain further information and communicate this information back to the members of STAG.

RECOMMENDATION (David Fleeting / Robert Crow)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group recommend to Council that:

1. Council request that the Contractors of the Nowra Bridge project provide a Briefing to the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group.
2. Tourism Staff obtain further communication regarding the L'Etape Tour travelling through Kangaroo Valley and provide this information back to the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group.

CARRIED

TA20.25 Councillors Update

**HPERM Ref:
D20/437843**

Clr Gash advised that in relation to the Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee, a decision has been made in relation to Christmas promotions/activities that Junction Court will be closed between 9-28 December for Christmas themed activities. Other activities include Christmas lights in Junction Street and Jelly Bean Park.

The Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee is looking for others to assist with supervising the activities.

Note: Clr Gash left at 6.22pm

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 6.25pm.

Mr Robert Crow
CHAIRPERSON

TA21.1 Tourism Manager Update

HPERM Ref: D21/9697

Department: Tourism

Approver: Robert Domm, Director - City Futures

Attachments: 1. NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
2. NSW aims to be the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific by 2030
[↓](#)

Reason for Report

To give a brief outline of the Tourism Manager's activity over 1 October – 31 October 2020

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Tourism Manager's Report for information.

Options

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Request more information from the Tourism Manager.

Staffing Update

Staffing

- Recruitment of Events and Investment Specialist role – interviews have been completed and the preferred candidate has been formally appointed.
- The Tourism team continue to work from home 2 – 3 days a week, with exception to the Visitor Services Team who are working from the Nowra and Ulladulla Visitor Information Centres.

General Updates

2021-22 Delivery Program & Operational Plan

It is that time of the year again where Shoalhaven City Council starts the development of the 2021-22 Delivery Program & Operational Plan (DPOP). Tourism Manager has reviewed Tourism related KPIs and comments have been submitted to Council's Corporate Performance & Reporting Team.

Letters of Support given

- Destination Sydney Surrounds South - South Coast Centre of Excellence
- Destination Sydney Surrounds South – Rensw Website
- Illawarra Escarpment Walking Track Partnership - Illawarra Escarpment Walking Track
- Shoalhaven City Council - Huskisson Mangrove Boardwalk

- Shoalhaven City Council - Boongaree Development

Summer holidays update

Overall, feedback from business operators is that trade of the Christmas Holidays has been very strong. Many accommodation operators have commented that several cancellations were made due to confusion around Covid-19 restrictions, however it was also reported that the available accommodation was quickly re-booked. Overall, the Shoalhaven region was extremely busy over the Christmas holiday, and bookings leading up to Easter are positive. Some issues around illegal camping at various showgrounds across the region

We have attended or presented at:

- Hon. Stuart Ayres MP and Destination NSW workshop – 2 Oct 2020
- NSW South Coast Centre of Excellence meeting – 6 Oct 2020
- Ongoing - National Tourism Incident Communication Plan Communications Meeting – 12 Oct 2020 and 24 Nov 2020
- Nowra Riverfront Precinct Working Group – 14 Oct 2020
- STAG - presentation of 2020/2021 Marketing Plan – 14 Oct 2020
- Business Case Development and Benefits Realisation Workshop – 21 Oct 2020
- Interviews for the Events and Investment Specialist – 14 Dec 2020
- Nowra Showground PoM and MP meeting – 17 Dec 2020
- ABC Radio interview – 21 Dec 2020
- Huskisson Triathlon Festival meeting – 14 Jan 2021
- Nowra Riverfront Precinct meeting – 18 Jan 2021
- Nowra Golf Club meeting – 21 Jan 2021
- Meeting with Strategic Planning regarding Tourist Industrial Zone Berry Bomaderry – 28 Jan 2021

Out in region:

- Bundanoon Trust Site Visit – 16 Oct 2020
- Lunch with Tourism Australia at Bangalay Dining – 9 Dec 2020

Key priorities over the next few months:

- Shoalhaven 360 Model, Phase Two
- Back to usual with teams coming back into the office
- Induction and training of our new recruit
- Working with City Futures on key projects for the region including Nowra Riverfront Precinct.



Stuart Ayres
Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism
and Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 18 January 2020

NSW AIMS TO BE PREMIER VISITOR ECONOMY OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC BY 2030

A new roadmap outlines the NSW Government's bold plan to make NSW the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific by 2030.

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres launched the *Visitor Economy Strategy 2030* today to aid recovery and turbocharge visitor economy growth through securing world-class events, boosting regional visitation and building new tourism icons and visitor experiences for the future.

"If COVID-19 has shown us anything it's that the visitor economy is everyone's business - it accounts for almost 300,000 jobs and 110,000 businesses, and is integral to our state's economy," Minister Ayres said.

"Once health advice allows, NSW will bounce back as a result of a \$200 million a year investment to help get the tourism sector back on its feet; we have shown how agility and resilience will keep our State open for business throughout this challenging pandemic.

"NSW is the largest visitor economy in Australia and this strategy is a roadmap to rebuild our \$43 billion visitor economy and grow it to \$65 billion by 2030 to become the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific.

"From regions to roads, planning to precincts, the strategy provides a framework to guide investment and decision-making in the areas of marketing, events, business support, regulations, training and tourism infrastructure."

The strategy – prepared by the Government's tourism and major events agency Destination NSW through extensive stakeholder consultation with industry and government stakeholders – features these 2030 targets:

- To reach \$65 billion in total visitor expenditure, up on the previous overnight visitor expenditure target of \$55 billion by 2030 which was set in 2018
- A new focus on the day trip market, worth an estimated \$10 billion by 2030
- Growing opportunities in regional NSW as a key to the future, to contribute \$25 billion total
- The domestic market will be the primary focus until international travel resumes

"The Visitor Economy Strategy is not just about recovery, it's about the future," Minister Ayres said.

"The NSW Government is already charging ahead to create new tourism experiences and icons such as the new Sydney Fish Market, new sporting stadiums and cultural institutions and world-class walking tracks in regional NSW.

“We will bolster our reputation for staging premier events including the Australian exclusive production of Hamilton, Vivid Sydney, Disney’s Frozen and we are close to securing the full suite of 10 World Cup sporting events for NSW in 10 years.”

A Senior Officers Group will be established to coordinate funding and government services relating to the visitor economy while Destination NSW will lead a coordinated, whole of government approach to implementing the strategy.

Simon McGrath, CEO Accor Pacific, said the Visitor Economy Strategy was a solid roadmap which demonstrates the NSW Government’s understanding of how valuable tourism is to our state.

“From an industry point of view the Visitor Economy Strategy is prepared in a very collaborative way, with a focused approach. As a result it has delivered an incredibly dynamic and strong platform which gives confidence to investors, operators and the industry as a whole. The result of this is that it will bring renewed interest from the private sector into tourism in NSW,” Mr McGrath said.

The Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 is now available at:
www.destinationnsw.com.au/VES2030

TA21.2 Destination Marketing

HPERM Ref: D21/4645

Section: Tourism

Approver: Robert Domm, Director - City Futures

Attachments: 1. Adventure Campaign Strategy (under separate cover)

Reason for Report

To provide a summary of Destination Marketing activity from October 2020 – December 2020.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Destination Marketing Report for information.

Options

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Request more information.

Industry News

Overview

Demand continued to grow with support from Visit NSW and Tourism Australia Campaigns as well as our own, resulting in October Long Weekend being reported by operators one of the busiest in history, 'like Christmas'. Weekends throughout November and early December were also heavily booked, where there would normally be a lull, including mid-week demand, including many displaced 'schoolies' visitors. The biggest increase was the influx of 'New Visitors' to the region, people who may have been travelling interstate or overseas who were making themselves acquainted with the Shoalhaven for the first time.

New Product

[The Growers](#), Worrige: new indoor/outdoor casual eatery at The Springs Resort

[Harvest, Berry](#): new paddock to plate eatery in Berry with chef Brent Strong

[Lagom Bakery](#), Burrill Lake: new immensely popular sourdough bakery from Chef Matt Upton

[Altar Wine Bar](#), Milton: indoor/outdoor style wine bar on grounds of the Old Church Milton

[Inlet Gourmet Pies](#), Sussex Inlet: pies, gelatos and coffee in Sussex main street

[South Coast Railway History Museum](#), Lake Tabourie: Milton Ulladulla Mini Rail display

[Nook Juice Bar](#), Huskisson: cold press juices from the Wild Ginger window during the day

[FAB Burril Lake Farmers Market](#): Friday market with fresh produce

[Loco Lane Cantina](#), Culburra Beach: Mexican food and cocktail eatery

Industry Collaboration

In December, the team hosted Tourism Australia's office staff on a business famil (50+ staff). This was the first time the Tourism Australia office had travelled in region together and it was focussed on visiting and supporting bushfire affected areas. Consisting of staff from all departments, they were hosted with activities in Jervis Bay: dolphin cruise, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, cycling, and an Aboriginal cultural experience. This was followed by lunch at Bangalay Dining including an opportunity to network with all levels of staff including

the CEO. It was a great opportunity to network and thank them for their support in 2020 with the Holiday Here This Year Campaign.

Publicity

Overview

Spring is traditionally a busy time and editorial in the lead up to Christmas is less about driving visitation and more about planning your trip for the following year and/or brand awareness. As a result, most editorial opportunities were achieved reactively through relationships direct with media or with Tourism Australia and Destination NSW.

Highlights

Publication	Reach	Links / Update
TODAY Show	253K	Kangaroo Valley morning weather crosses - Barranca, Kangaroo Valley Olives, Woodworks and Leadlights, Cool Climate Wines, Canoes + Canapes, Cambewarra Estate High Tea, Red Trig bushwalking. https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4xtzqukn945hmgx/AAA7vBeUdOO9Vvytng8hNqlva?dl=0
Concrete Playground	747K	Twenty Blissful Coastal Escapes You Can Book in Shoalhaven https://concreteplayground.com/sydney/travel-leisure/travel/twenty-blissful-coastal-escapes-you-can-book-in-shoalhaven
Better Homes and Gardens	6million	Graham Ross visits Merribee Gardens https://www.bhg.com.au/graham-ross-merribee-gardens
Broadsheet	1.2million	Editorial on the Shoalhaven Wine Coast https://www.broadsheet.com.au/sydney/travel/article/guide-wineries-along-shoalhaven-coast
Nine Honey	3.3million	Kangaroo Valley road trip https://travel.nine.com.au/destinations/bushfire-recovery-road-trip-kangaroo-valley-shoalhaven/4d4db063-dd47-4e51-b812-fc425806ddad
SMH Traveller	739K	Story with the mayor quoted preparing visitors with Conscious Traveller messaging pre-summer holidays https://www.traveller.com.au/travellers-flood-to-nsw-south-coast-as-covid-lurks-h1swep
Concrete Playground	747K	A Weekender's Guide to Jervis Bay https://concreteplayground.com/australia/travel-leisure/a-weekenders-guide-to-jervis-bay
Canberra Times	2.7million	Rick Stein's Mollymook Love Affair https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6394051/rick-steins-mollymook-love-affair/
Time Out	1.3million	How to plan an adventure-filled South Coast getaway for your mates https://www.timeout.com/sydney/travel/how-to-plan-an-adventure-filled-south-coast-getaway-for-your-mates-2805
Sydney Weekender	180K	Say Hello to Huskisson https://sydneyweekender.com.au/say-hello-to-huskisson
Wotif.com	300K	South Coast itinerary including Shoalhaven product and Grand Pacific Drive https://www.wotif.com/vc/blog/nsw/guide-to-nsw-south-coast

Australian Traveller	4.9million	Where to Eat Stay and Play in Kangaroo Valley https://www.australiantraveller.com/nsw/south-coast/kangaroo-valley/where-to-eat-stay-and-play-in-kangaroo-valley
Urban List	1.5million	Article including Greenwell Point Oysters https://www.theurbanlist.com/sydney/a-list/where-to-eat-oysters-nsw
Sydney Morning Herald	9.9million	https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/nsw-residents-face-border-restrictions-at-popular-jervis-bay-beaches-20210111-p56t7e.html
Local Editorial		
ABC TV (new years' broadcast)	8.1million	https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-12-31/nsw-south-coast-shoalhaven-tourist-boom-despite-covid-19-threat/13019488
South Coast Register	97K	https://www.southcoastregister.com.au/story/7074438/business-booms-for-tourism-operators-despite-booking-chaos/?cs=203

Summer Marketing Strategies

Coming into the busiest period of the year, a risk assessment was undertaken, and several pre-emptive messaging were delivered to visitors both in and outside the region and planning to travel. Collaboration with Council's Executive Communications team, including on-call marketing staff throughout the holidays monitored and activated Conscious Traveller, 100 Beach Challenge i.e.: Hyams Beach overcrowding, and COVID-safe messaging throughout the December period.

Radio

Thirty second on-air ads across 2ST and Power FM scheduled throughout summer holidays to raise awareness to those already in region. Three campaigns were programmed: The Conscious Traveller and 100 Beach Challenge ads from 14 December to 26 January, and Spend Here This Xmas ads ran from 1 December to 24 December promoting shopping local.

Social Media

Facebook and Instagram ads were targeted to people (travelling or living) within a 20km radius of Jervis Bay to offer alternative white sand beaches to those thinking of heading to Hyams Beach, whilst Conscious Traveller messaging was delivered to people within the entire region. COVID-19 updates were also posted throughout the holidays to communicate changes to restrictions such as the Northern Beaches cluster.

Operator Engagement

Due to the ever-changing environment, communications with operators were essential. Email Newsletters were sent throughout December when significant events affecting visitors occurred, and tourism marketing staff were on-call to watch and digest ministerial press conferences, liaise with Executive Communications at council and inform operators where necessary.

Risk Assessment

A detailed risk assessment with trigger points and draft posts were prepared in collaboration with Council Rangers, Visitor Services and Executive Communications, traversing subjects such as free camping, shorebirds, floods, fire, COVID, overcrowding etc.

Visit Shoalhaven is at Jervis Bay National Park.
Published by Demi McGregor · December 28, 2020 at 4:00 PM · Huskisson, NSW

Fact of the day: Did you know that famed white sands of Hyams Beach is the same as all its neighbouring beaches? We have 16 White Sands of Jervis Bay, equally as beautiful and equally as bright, squeaky and white.

Read more about what beaches to visit
shoalhaven.com/blog/insiders-guide-hyams-beach

Don't forget to join the #100BeachChallenge by signing up at 100beachchallenge.com

[instagram.com/benmack_](https://www.instagram.com/benmack_)



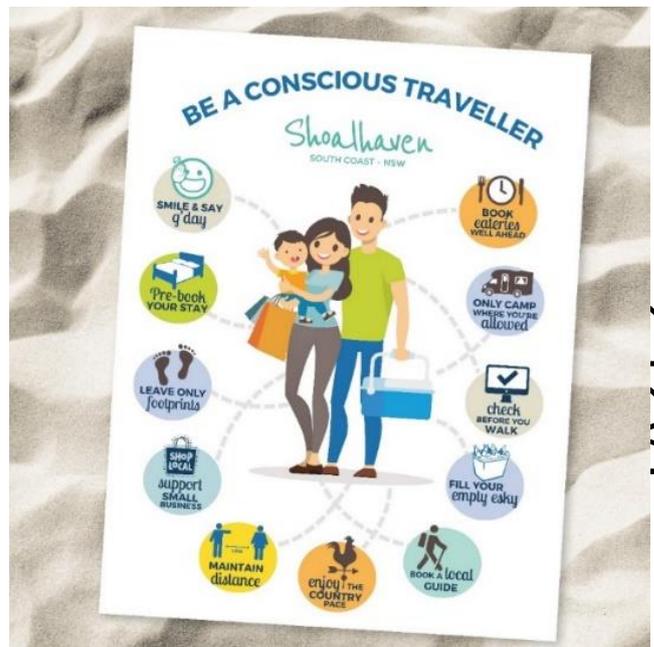
17,458
People Reached

2,026
Engagements

Boost Post

326

47 Comments 61 Shares



1.2

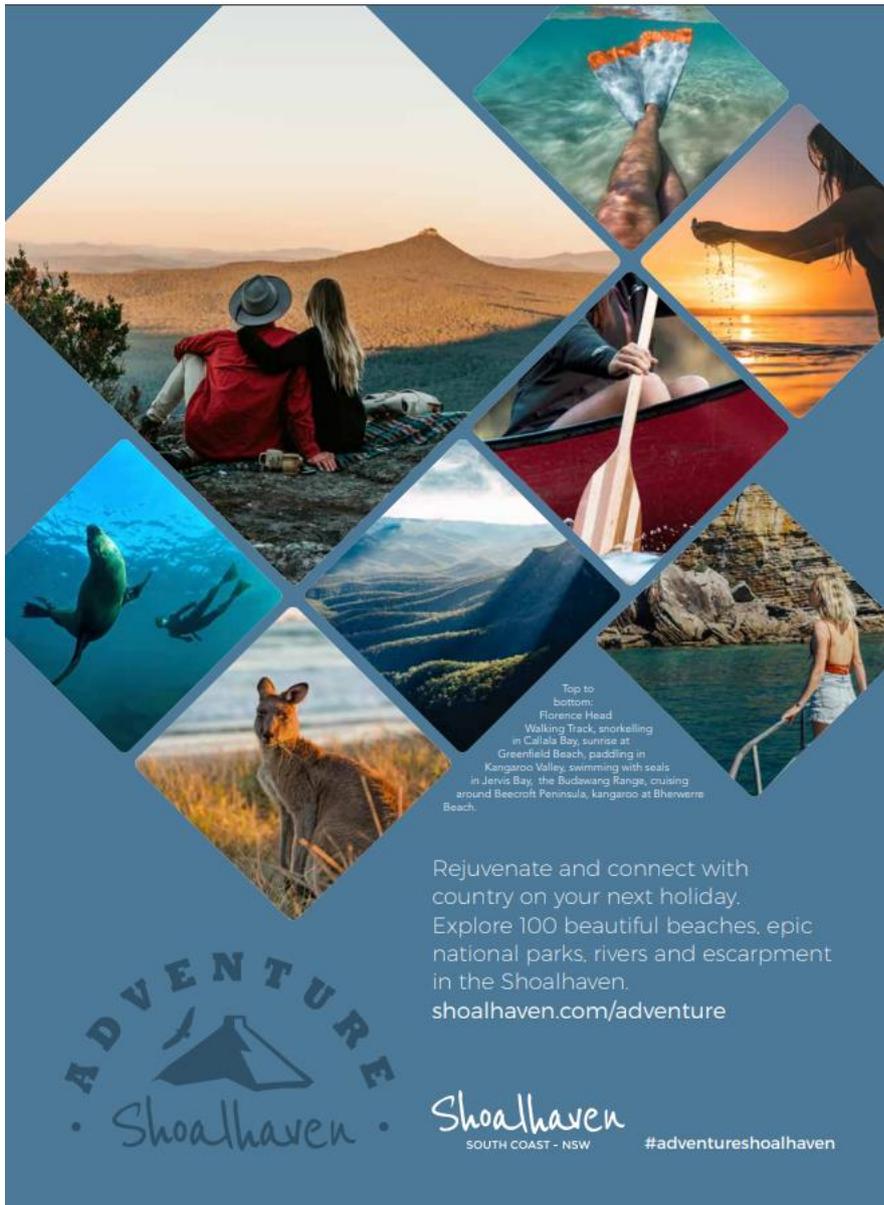
Upcoming Autumn Adventure Campaign

This years' autumn campaign focusses on adventure activities, specifically guided walks and tour experiences that bring yield and connection. An integral part of the strategy is connecting to culture, nature, and wellness. Adventure is more than bushwalking, it is a nature experience, felt all the deeper with a local guide. If our visitors feel more connected to an experience and place, they will be a more conscious traveller.

This 'mini campaign' brings together the existing walks, surf and kayaking brochure, plus other adventure pages such as biking, climbing and diving. The landing page offers leads to industry and links out to individual pages. shoalhaven.com/adventure will be promoted via the following channels from mid-February to April/May followed by our second iteration of wine and whales.

- Print ads and editorial in Wild, Being, and Wellbeing Magazines
- Print Ads, editorial, PR Famil, newsletter and digital with Australian Geographic and Australia Geographic Adventure Magazines
- Digital and social media advertising

Below is an example of one of our ads, showing the look and feel.



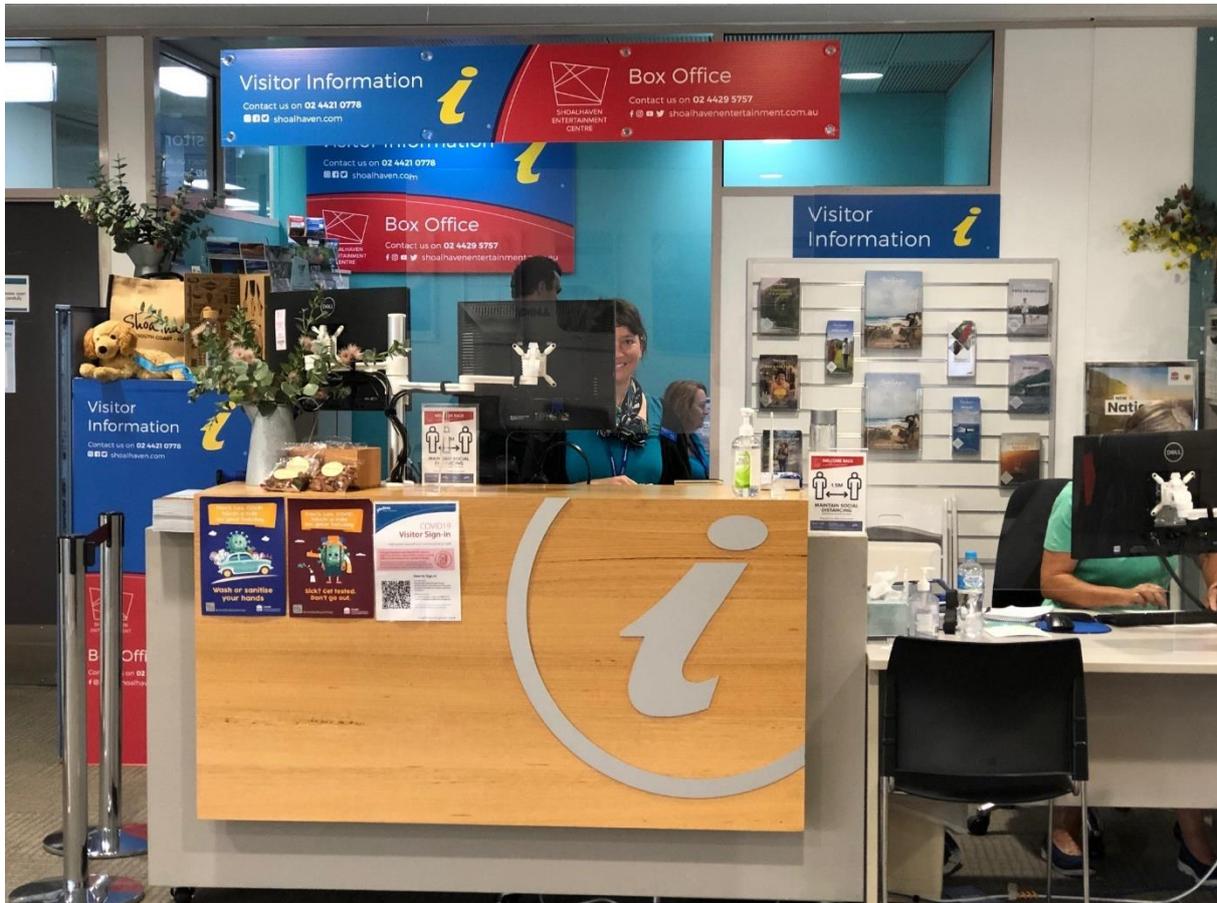
TA21.2

Visitor Guide Production

Due to bushfires and COVID affecting the distribution of around six months' supply of the 2020 Visitor Guide, this supply will continue into 2021, with no 2021 guide required. This is in part to give advertisers from 2020 the promised run of market, as well as not to waste 40,000 odd copies. The guide produced this year will be the 2022 guide and be launched in September 2021 in time for the October school holidays. A media kit has been circulated to advertisers in January, the timing for this callout has been sensitive, waiting for business to make back some profits before asking for advertising. It is yet to be seen how advertisers will respond, however tourism commits to creating this guide with full funding. It is estimated that the demand for digital in a COVID era will be higher, therefore more attention will go into a fully interactive online version.

Visitor Services Assistance

Due to the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre refurbishment project, the Visitor Services team in Nowra relocated to the Council Administration Building, as seen in the image below. This rolled out pre-Christmas and the marketing team assisted with creating the co-brand and signage, plus a communications plan that included operator email communications, google and Tripadvisor listings and internal communications.



TA21.2

Other Projects

- Pets on Holidays brochure update
- Insta-meet for 100 Beach Challenge with five photographers
- Planning 2021 relaunch of wine and whales' campaign
- Digital Asset Management, onboarding images and video into new system

Digital Marketing

Highlights

The Digital Marketing Assistant Role has been filled by Demi McGregor, who joined us in mid-November. Digital Marketing priorities have been promoting the 100 Beach Challenge, Visitor Guide downloads and wrapping up the Wine and Whales campaign which will be carried into the same May – November period this year due to COVID-19 disruptions. A small campaign to encourage both locals and out of region supporters to Spend Here This Xmas was activated in November to help our retail and experience sectors with things like downloadable vouchers right up until Christmas being popular gift ideas.

Key comparative statistics:

- Unique users to Shoalhaven.com are up by 75% from July – December 2020 compared to the same time in 2019, with new users also up by 76%. Our growth KPI's are only 10% but considering we had bushfires during that time, this is no surprise.
- Instagram followers have grown 54% since December 2019, with engagement also up by 105% compared to the July – September 2020 quarter. This highlights how strong Instagram is becoming with our target audiences, as our growth targets annually are only 10%.
- Visitor Guide downloads were up 122% in comparison to last quarter with 726 guides downloaded in the past three months. We did start our download campaigns earlier however, as normally we launch a new guide, and this year we continued with the existing 2020 guide.
- 100 Beach Challenge game sessions were up 92% this quarter compared to last quarter with 1003 new users participating in the game. This is largely due to the warmer weather and a stronger focus on the #100beachchallenge paid digital marketing strategy.
- Our industry email Tourism Talk, email subscribers have grown by 16% YOY exceeding our KPI of 10% each year.

TA21.2

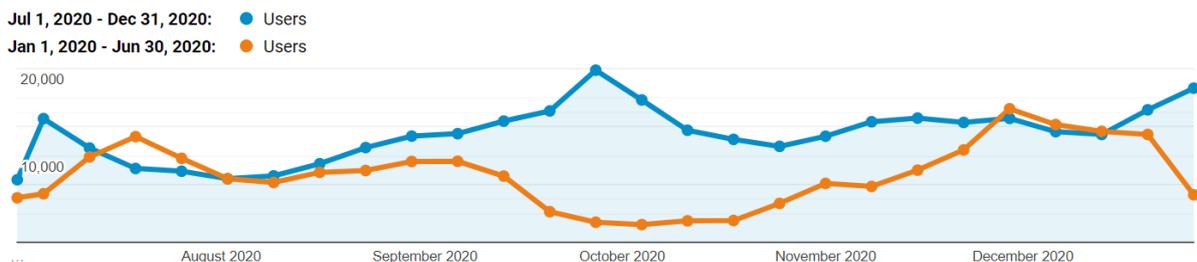
Shoalhaven.com:

We have experienced a significant increase in traffic to Shoalhaven.com in comparison to the first half of 2020, which was heavily affected by bushfires and COVID. Traditionally the first half of the year with summer holidays and easter would be considerably larger, but this year has seen an almost complete flip in web traffic and visitation trends. The large increase is what we expect based on recovery campaigns and no interstate and international travel. This is a good indicator that the region is on the road to recovery.

Half Yearly Comparisons

The table below compares the first half of 2020 to the second half of 2020 to showcase the spike in visitation and awareness of Shoalhaven as a holiday destination following bushfire and COVID-19 disruptions.

	January-June 2020	July-December 2020	Difference
Unique Users	192,328	310,920	Up 62%
New Users	187,804	303,775	Up 62%
Page Views	448,135	749,513	Up 67%
Sessions	244,159	402,134	Up 65%



The blue line is the back end of 2020's web visitation trends, compared to the first half of 2020 in orange. As the orange line steadily drops due to bushfires, 2020's blue line increases sharply at both the October and December school holiday periods. This is evident in the

growth of 62% with an increase in new users also up by 62% compared to the first half of 2020.

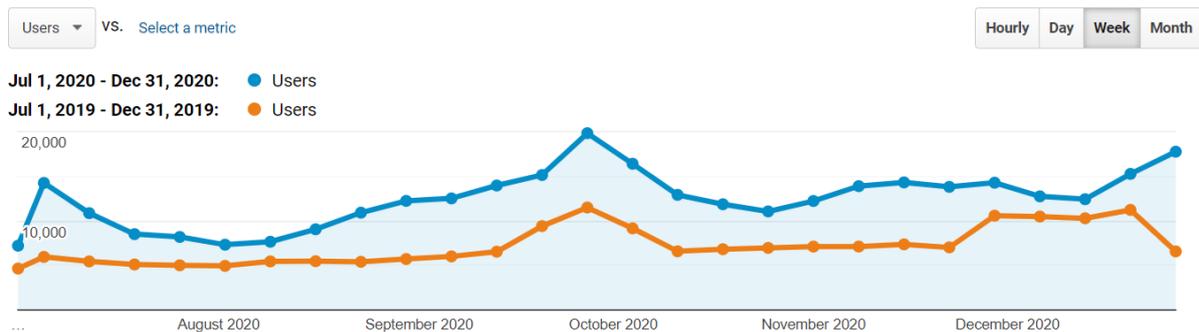
This is largely because of lockdown restrictions easing and intrastate travel opportunities opening up in July. However, during the quieter months we also launched our Spend Here This Year campaign which allowed us to push traffic to the site and stay top of mind for consumers as travel returned.

Apart from being best placed to welcome Canberrans and Sydney siders, we also found that sentiment remained for people looking to support our region in the rejuvenation following the bushfires and the second half of the year was their first chance to express that sentiment.

Year on Year (July – December) Comparisons

The table below also shows a significant increase in traffic to Shoalhaven.com in comparison to the same time in 2019 with an uplift of 75% users to the site with 76% new users overall.

	July-December 2019	July-December 2020	Difference
Unique Users	177,273	310,920	Up 75%
New Users	172,146	303,775	Up 76%
Page Views	434,135	749,513	Up 73%
Sessions	234,183	402,775	Up 72%



The blue '2020' line sits way above the orange '2019' line in web visitation which once again can be attributed to 2020 presenting intrastate and interstate travel opportunities. Each year we have aimed to tap into an off-peak "busy" period to help sustain the expenditure in our region year-round. This year because of COVID-19 and bushfire disruptions we have achieved higher visitation in our off-peak season than ever before and hope this will assist long-term in bringing people to the region at the same time in 2021.

Top 10 Visited Pages of 2020:

1. [Honeymoon Bay](#)
2. [Home Page](#)
3. Booking Cart
4. [Rejuvenate in the Shoalhaven](#) (Ad Campaign)
5. [Free and Low-Cost Camping](#)
6. [Guide](#) (Ad Campaign)
7. [What's on this Weekend](#)
8. [Spend Here This Year](#) (Ad Campaign)
9. [Events](#)

TA21.2

10. Booking Results

**As a result of November, December, January posting having been turned off last year due to bushfires we have focused on comparing our results to the previous quarter for social media.*

Facebook:

Facebook followers are increasing steadily each quarter with September figures at 50,895 and by the end of December we were at 51,772. Overall, we have grown by 5% in followers from the end of 2019 which hits the mark for our YOY growth target.

Despite the small jump in followers, we have one of the larger Facebook followings in comparison to our fellow local tourism bodies (see competitor analysis below).

Facebook	No. of Followers
Wollongong	52,034
Sapphire Coast NSW	31,218
Eurobodalla – South Coast NSW	13,508
Kiama NSW	5,254

Engagement and Reach:

Overall, 1,592,223 people were reached by posts in this period with 24,180 total engagements. Engagement spiked in October with over 10,675 engagements.

Video Views:

In total Shoalhaven Stories generated 103,000 views this quarter which is down 12,000 on last quarter. The drop in engagement is due to multiple factors, according to Facebook there has been a rush from tourism bodies to bring out marketing campaigns as travel returned therefore flooding the market with like-minded content resulting in a drop of daily interest. There has also been an algorithm change in preference over videos due to Instagram and Tik Tok already dominating this space.

Moving forward:

We have recognised a pattern in preference for albums, new product or real time announcements and a spike in engagement during an early morning posting time frame. We will be incorporating these tactics into our 2021 social strategy.

Top 3 Facebook Posts for the Quarter:

Visit Shoalhaven is at Abrahams Bosom.
Published by Kristy Mayhew - October 25, 2020 - Shoalhaven, NSW

Did you know you can check in to beach numbers 6 - 9 on the 100 Beach Challenge at Abrahams Bosom Reserve? Take the Wreck or Coomies walking tracks just near Currarong, where you can get a great potato scallop at Zac's after. You'll also pass by Gosangs Tunnel and Mermaids Inlet - sound dreamy? It sure is!

shoalhaven.com/products/abrahams-bosom-reserve
www.instagram.com

46,421 People Reached | 13,650 Engagements

Boost Post

438 Comments 212 Shares

Visit Shoalhaven is with David Campbell at Pigeon House Mountain.
Published by Kristy Mayhew - December 1, 2020

Exciting news: A visitor and local favourite the Didthul Pigeon House Mountain (Balgon) walk is officially back open after repairs due to bushfires as of today!

If you're planning to visit to get your own famed social shot, make sure to book your stay ahead as camping and accommodation is heavily booked!

The walk is steep but well worth the 360 views when you reach the top. Make sure to be mindful of the weather and pack plenty of water!

50,327 People Reached | 5,698 Engagements

Boost Post

245 Comments 139 Shares

Visit Shoalhaven added 8 new photos.
Published by Kristy Mayhew - October 8, 2020

#100BeachChallenge
Which is your favourite? Like, Comment or Share to vote and help us choose our next cover photo! Leave the well trodden paths behind and discover gorgeous beaches from North Durras to Seven Mile Beach at Shoalhaven Heads. When you are on the ground and uploading to Instagram use our hashtag #100beachchallenge. Play the game - www.shoalhaven.com/100-beach-challenge

12,320 People Reached | 1,649 Engagements

Boost Again

12 Comments 72 Shares

TA21.2



Why it was popular:

- Local tips
- Itinerary focused
- Picturesque

Why it was popular:

- Relevant
- Newsworthy
- Picturesque

Why is it popular:

- User generated content
- Coastal and aquatic
- Generates actions

Instagram

Instagram has been outperforming Facebook both in follower growth and engagement. This could be due to a shift in demographic interest with Instagram targeting the younger market to visit Shoalhaven whilst international travel remains unknown. As well as the focus on videos within the Instagram algorithm which is expanded upon below.

Instagram followers are increasing steadily each quarter with September figures at 26,086 and at the end of December we were at 29,147. Overall, we have grown by 54% in followers from the end of 2019 having doubled from 18,930 followers.

Engagement and reach:

In this quarter there was 59,021 total engagements which was up 105% compared to last quarter. This is largely due to our #100BeachChallenge fam in which we invited influential photographers to the region to photograph the lesser-known beaches and share on their personal pages with our @visitshoalhaven tagged. This helped drive traffic to our handle and encourage an increase in followers.

Video Views:

In addition to this the Instagram algorithm has shifted to favour Instagram Reels to compete with video content platform Tik Tok by featuring videos on their explore page. To increase our engagement, we have started to incorporate Reels into our strategy which has led to a record video views of 11.4K on our first Reel.

Moving forward:

We will be placing a focus on video for Instagram particularly creating Reels to generate an extended reach. We will also be capitalising on our increased engagement and followers by utilising the new features on the platform called 'Guides' which will allow us to create itineraries for our followers and house them on our page.

It is important to note for both Facebook and Instagram awareness of Shoalhaven has been at an all-time high due to the impact of the bushfires. This has resulted in organic support on social from celebrities, media, influencers, and tourism bodies which has helped significantly boost our pages in comparison to previous years.

Top 3 Instagram Posts for the Quarter:

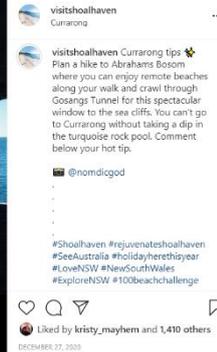
Why it was popular:

- Local secrets
- Picturesque
- Well-known
- local photographer



Why it was popular:

- Itinerary focused
- Swipe album
- Call to action



Why it was popular:

- Picturesque
- Coastal and aquatic
- Drone angle



TA21.2

Top 3 Instagram Videos for the Quarter:

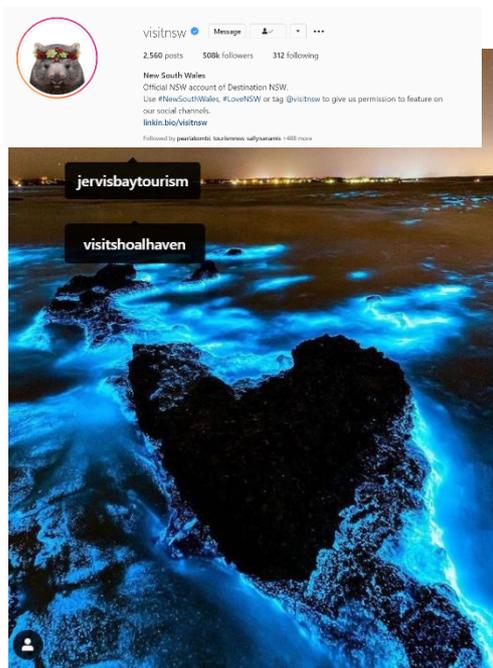


TA21.2

Significant Social Media / Influencer Engagement:

In the month of December, Visit NSW and Australia both completed a countdown of their best performing posts for the year. Out of 5 we were highlighted in two for @visitNSW. Coming in at number 5 was [Cambewarra Estate High Tea](#) and number 3 was the [Jervis Bay bioluminescence](#). Australia counted down from 10 in which we took out number 5 with [Jervis Bay bioluminescence](#).

The high following of both handles significantly helped us gain new followers in this period.



15,238 likes



153,802 Likes



48,718 Views

TA21.2

Google Campaigns Overview

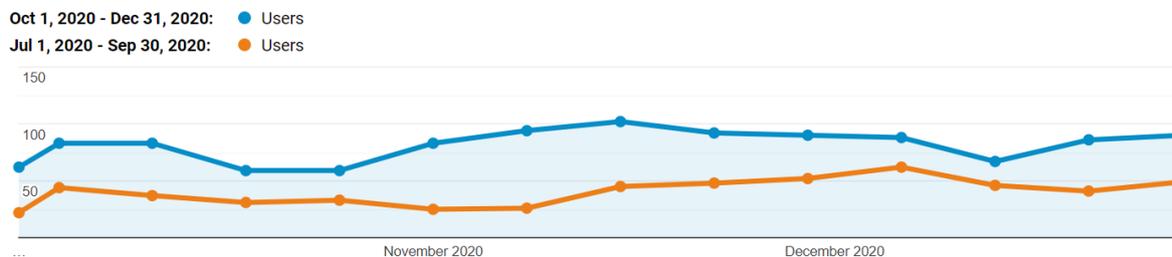
Over the quarter we generated 7275 clicks across Visitor Guides, 100 Beach Challenge and Wine and Whales Google campaigns with an average of 0.34 cost per view, which is well under the industry average. The Visitor Guide search ads alone generated 681 clicks and 726 guide downloads overall which is up 122% in comparison to last quarter, with guide downloads only hitting 327 downloads over July – September. This is largely due to the

increased focus on our guide advertisements across Google, Instagram, and Facebook in the lead up to summer as well as the influx of holiday goers for this period.

100 Beach Challenge

Social media advertisements were aimed at targeting Sydney, Canberra, local and regional audiences to participate in the 100 Beach Challenge. There was a total of 427,055 impressions and 8098 link clicks through to the Shoalhaven.com/100beachchallenge landing page from October – December 2020 through social media. This allowed us to continue to bump up traffic to our site which ultimately resulted in 10,059 page views for that landing page this quarter.

	July-September 2020	Oct-December 2020	Difference
Unique Users	476	1025	Up 115%
New Users	460	1003	Up 118%
Game Page Views	1678	3416	Up 104%
Sessions	933	1790	Up 92%



The blue demonstrates the website uplift across the board compared to the previous quarter. Out of the 10,059 page views there were a total of 1790 sessions on the 100beachchallenge.com ‘game’ completed, with sessions up a staggering 92% compared to the previous quarter. This can be attributed to both the time of the year and our consistent messaging on the various beaches available to visit, which we amplified through the photographer fam in October. In addition, December 2019, we ceased advertisements for the #100beachchallenge and lost engagement in the game due to bushfires therefore we have likely captured the audience who wanted to play the game in the summer of 2019-2020 but could not and are now participating this summer.

User generated content continues to grow for us with over 10,600 uses of the #100beachchallenge hashtag. During this quarter we also activated and tested improvements to the 100 Beach Challenge web-app to allow easier check ins from areas with lower quality mobile reception as requested by game players.

Spend Here This Xmas

Spend Here This Xmas was a small campaign following on from our Spend Here This Year campaign which encouraged people to spend in the region even if they were unable to spend in person due to border closures. Facebook and Instagram advertisements lead to 1411 landing page views to Shoalhaven.com/spendherethisxmas and 79,487 impressions across the quarter. This was ultimately a success as it helped keep people engaged with the Shoalhaven despite the realities of waiting for borders to open, we also received great enthusiasm from locals due to our assistance in keeping them afloat.

Wine and Whales Campaign Wrap Up

As the migration season came to an end so did our Wine and Whales’ campaign 2020. See below a table summary of results of the campaign that ran from May – November.

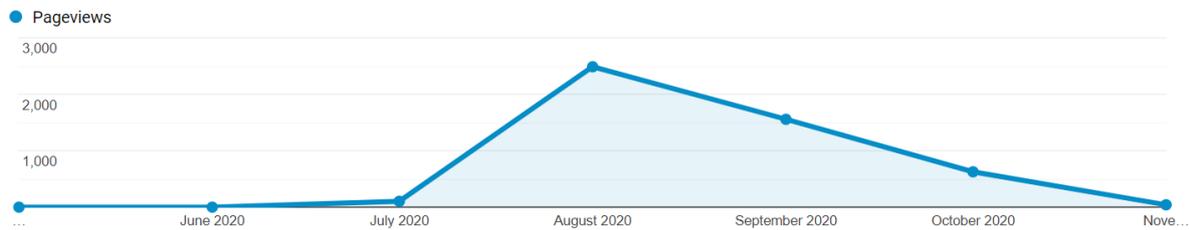
Social Metric	May – November 2020
Reach	85,814

TA21.2

Impressions	283,310
Unique Link Clicks	5645
Page Views	6889
Downloads from Social	81
Downloads Overall	274
Google Search Metric	May – November 2020
Key Words	20
Clicks	10,225
Users	7060
Sessions	7953

Shoalhaven.com/wine-whales landing page had a total of 4815 page views. Spike in traffic to the site was identified in August, September, and October months which was due to the opening of intrastate and interstate travel (see below infographic). We had also pulled back marketing in the earlier months due to the greater Sydney lockdown.

Shoalhaven.com/wine-whales



As a result of COVID-19 disruptions we will be carrying the Wine and Whales’ campaign into the same period this year in which we will report back on a year-on-year analysis.

Tourism Talk and Visitor Emails

Tourism Talk, our monthly B2B newsletter goes to around 1600 subscribers. During the period the monthly newsletter plus three extra COVID alerts were sent. The most popular content were the links to COVID information on December 19, 21 and 23 to share information from the governing bodies, NSW, ACT etc. about the escalating Northern Beaches cluster. The new Digital Marketing Specialist will work to complete and launch the Tourism Talk website by June 2020.

Subscribers to our B2C Visitor Email database sits at 7116 an increase of 16% year on year overhitting the KPI of 10% growth year on year. An issue with our websites ability to transfer subscribers from website campaigns to the mailing database was identified by our new Digital Marketing Assistant resulting in a bulk upload of around 1100 new subscribers in November.

TA21.2

Snapshot Quarterly Overview:



TA21.2

*Articles included are a result of proactive and reactive pitching or marketing editorial, list no exhaustive due to not having media monitoring services**

Up Next

- Adventure Campaign roll out
- Aboriginal product development
- Business Events product development
- Wine and whales campaign planning
- Food famils for winter

TA21.3 Events Report

HPERM Ref: D21/6639

Approver: Robert Domm, Director - City Futures

Reason for Report

To provide a summary of Events and Investment activity from 1 October – 31 December 2020.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the events report for information.

Options

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Request more information.

General

- Recruitment of Events and Investment Specialist role – interviews have been completed and the preferred candidate has been formally appointed.
- The Events Team is keeping up to date with the Covid-19 restrictions and are working closely with event organisers by directing them to relevant information, offering advice, support and information about opportunities available.
- Unfortunately we have seen the cancellation/postponement of our local shows due to Covid-19, we hope to see these events back in 2022.
- We have been working with our Tourism Marketing team to create a promotional video which features all events held throughout the year. The aim of this video is to highlight the fantastic events we already have throughout the region as well as attract future organisers to hold their next event in the Shoalhaven. The video will be shared across our Visit Shoalhaven social media handles, hosted on our Shoalhaven.com website and shared with potential stakeholders for viewing. Launch date will be confirmed following COVID-19 restrictions easing.
- *The Nowra Shine Bright Christmas Wonderland* Christmas celebrations were in full swing for 2020 with decorations coordinated by the Nowra CBD Revitalisation Committee. Junction Street featured a Christmas Tree Avenue which was complimented by local buskers around the CBD to make for a fantastic shopping atmosphere.

In Progress

The Festival of Place – Summer Fund program

NSW Government is supporting councils to activate local public spaces by running free, safe activations and events, creating more opportunities for people to connect. The Department were seeking expressions of interest from NSW councils to boost free, small-scale activations and events in public spaces. In collaboration with the internal grants department, an EOI has been submitted for the ‘The Festival of Place’ and works are underway to have an activation take place in Junction Street before the end of Summer.

- <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities/great-public-spaces/festival-of-place/summer-fund>

Events

Event Permits Issued October 2020 – December 2020

- October – Shoalhaven Rowing Club Regatta – Shoalhaven River
- October – White Sands Game Fishing Event – Woollamia / Huskisson
- October/November - Little Husky Triathlon Festival – White Sands Park, Huskisson
- November – NSW Wavesailing East Coast Titles – 7 Mile Beach, Shoalhaven Heads
- November – Pyree Arts & Craft Markets – Pyree Hall Reserve
- November to February 2021 – Farmers Market at Burrill – Lions Park, Burrill Lake
- December – Bondi2Berry – Event finishes in Berry
- December – Sanctuary Point Lions Christmas Carols – Sanctuary Point
- December – Callala Triathlon Festival – Callala
- December – Huskisson NYE Firework Display – Huskisson Sports Fields
- December/January – Huskisson Carnival – Huskisson Sports fields

Postponed/Cancelled Events October 2020 – December 2020

- October – Sand & Sea Festival – Huskisson – Cancelled
- October – Spring into Sanctuary Point – Francis Ryan Reserve – Cancelled
- October – Koori Knockout – Bomaderry Sporting Complex – Cancelled
- October – Summit Shoalhaven – Kangaroo Valley – Postponed
- October - South Coast Food & Wine Festival – Huskisson – Cancelled
- October – Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival – Kangaroo Valley Showground – Cancelled
- October – Dream Cricket Gala Day – Nowra Showground – Cancelled
- October – River Festival - Nowra - Postponed, planning alternative COVID safe event
- November – Fairground Music Festival – Berry Showground – Cancelled
- November – L'Etape Australia – Postponed until March 2021
- November – Noah's Challenge – Nowra – Cancelled
- December – Bomaderry Lions Carols in the Park – Held Virtual Event

- December – Currarong NYE Fireworks Display – Cancelled
- December – Berry NYE Firework Display – Cancelled
- December – Sussex Inlet RSL Carols by Candlelight – Sussex Inlet – Cancelled

Event applications currently being assessed January – March 2021

- January – Australia Day Breakfast – Mollymook
- January – Moona Moona Duck Derby – Moona Moona Reserve, Huskisson
- January – Berry Show – Berry Showground
- February – Foodies Night Markets – Culburra Beach
- February – Nowra Show / Smaller Events – Nowra Showground
- February – Huskisson Triathlon Festival – White Sands Park, Huskisson
- March – Game Fishing Tournament – Woollamia / Huskisson
- March – L’Etape Australia – Kiama/Berry/Kangaroo Valley

Filming applications assessed, and permits issued October 2020 – December 2020

- October – King Living Furniture Campaign – Kangaroo Valley
- October – Fishing Australia – Huskisson / Nowra
- October – Swimwear Photography Shoot – Huskisson
- November – Vogue Australia – Magazine Cover Shoot - Currarong
- November – Short Film Project – Currarong
- December – TV commercial – Plantation Point Reserve / Beach areas

Filming applications currently being assessed January 2021 – March 2021

- February – OZ Design Photoshoot – Callala Beach
- February – Subaru TV Commercial – Shoalhaven Heads

Tourism Event Support Program

Supported Events October – December 2020

<i>Event Name</i>	<i>Date of the Event</i>	<i>Economic Benefit</i>
Huskisson Triathlon Festival	31 st OCT / 1 st NOV 2020	\$342,000
Berry Motorfair	15 th November 2020	\$144,000
Summit Shoalhaven	28 th November 2020	\$342,000
Bondi2Berry	5 th December 2020	\$62,000

Events currently being assessed / approved:

- 2021 Australian Off-Road Championship / New South Wales Off-Road Championship, Motorcycling Australia
- 2021 L’Etape Australia Cycling Event
- 2021 Terra Nova Adventure Race
- 2021/22 Australian Beach Volleyball Tour

Up Next

- Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund completion report
- Facilitate and support the delivery of community and tourism events
- Work with industry to identify gaps in the market, support and grow COVID safe events to meet customer demand opportunities.
- Grow off-season, mid-week events with a strong focus on high yield target markets such as the Business Events Industry
- Create digital assets for Events, including Business Events.
- Update Event Policy and Event Application, including public exhibition period
- Review and update current Filming and Photography Policy and Filming Application.
- Facilitate the new Tourism Event Support Program process, communication to industry, media opportunities and key messages
- Industry and product development to upskill Shoalhaven event organisers with training, partnership opportunities, workshops and master classes.

TA21.4 Visitor Services Update

HPERM Ref: D21/5152

Section: Tourism

Approver: Robert Domm, Director - City Futures

Reason for Report

To give an update on Visitor Information Services activity from 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Visitor Services Report for information.

Options

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Request more information.

Visitor Centres

While the Covid-19 pandemic has had some influence over operations, both Nowra and Ulladulla Visitor Centres have continued to be operational during this last quarter.

The centres have been very busy, mainly with accommodation and camping inquiries, resulting in bookings for the quarter being the strongest for many years.

- Accommodation bookings for the next 4 months leading up to Easter are extremely positive.
- Shoalhaven operators have been reporting their busiest quarter in the last 5 years.
- Occupancy rates have achieved levels not seen in the Shoalhaven for some operators.
- Many retail and food related businesses are also reporting on one of their best seasons.
- The Visitor Centre at Nowra has been extremely busy with phone and email inquiries in the month of December as the school holidays approached.
- There are plenty of questions coming in about walking tracks, adventure activities, and wine and food inquiries.

Staff continue to work with operators to update their listings so they can take advantage of marketing opportunities that may arise.

Visitor Centre staff have continued to do an excellent job over this period, providing information, and assisting with many diverse inquiries.

Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer Services have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic due to social distancing measures and restricted activities at the visitor centre. This includes the mobile pop-up centres at Huskisson, Vincentia and Sussex Inlet.

Currently another 6 applicants have expressed interest in becoming a Tourism Ambassador. Since our relocation to the Nowra Administration Building, there is limited room and at this stage we have continued with the suspension of Volunteer Services.

We are currently reassessing the situation and will begin a trial of returning ambassadors in January.

Supplementary Visitor Information Centres

Visitor Services supports 10 supplementary visitor centres throughout the Shoalhaven.

All supplementary centres had been visited and stocked in December in preparation for the upcoming holiday season.

The centres have reported being very busy over the last three months, with many visitors calling in for some information on activities in the area, and maps.

Familiarisations

Familiarisation visits are an important part of our operations for the purpose of engaging with our operators and for staff to become familiar with properties, and the facilities that they provide.

However, due to COVID-19, we have had to suspend all familiarisation visits to our operators. The suspension continued for the last quarter.

We will review the situation in the next quarter.

Nowra Visitor Centre Relocation

The Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre has closed for a period for renovations. The time frame is estimated to be between December 2020 and May 2021.

The Nowra Visitor Centre and Box Office has temporarily relocated to the Admin building foyer during this time. All visitor services continue to be offered in the new location.

Financials

The table below shows income for October 2020 to December 2020, broken down into sales categories and compared to last year's results.

INCOME NOWRA

Description	Oct 2020 to Dec 2020	Oct 2019 to Dec 2019	Variance	YTD +/- *	YOY +/- **
Souvenirs	\$2,343	\$2,642	-\$299	-11%	-21%
Books/Maps	\$3,533	\$1,699	+\$1,834	+107%	+30%
Local Product	\$2,664	\$3,453	-\$789	-22%	-33%
Total	\$8,540	\$7,794	+\$746	+10%	-11%

*YTD +/- shows the % difference between the total income for the current financial Year to Date vs the same period last year.

** YOY +/- shows the % difference between the total income for the 12-month period vs the same period last year - Year on Year. This is useful to reflect impacts of seasonality.

Comments:

Due to adherence to the COVID Business Plan, merchandise cannot be fully displayed, mainly to reduce handling. Merchandise has been held behind the counter, with only a minimal display being presented.

While The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to negatively impact sales this year, there was huge increase in books and maps sales this quarter, resulting in an overall positive result for the quarter.

Local product sales were also boosted by record sales of Christmas hampers. Over 34 hampers were sold during December.

INCOME ULLADULLA

Description	Oct 2020 to Dec 2020	Oct 2019 to Dec 2019	Variance	YTD* +/-	YOY +/-**
Souvenirs	\$1,881	\$3,571	-\$1,633	-45%	-28%
Books/Maps	\$912	\$1,195	-\$283	-23%	-12%
Local Product	\$3,608	\$4,514	- \$906	-20%	-23%
Total	\$6,401	\$9,280	-\$2,879	-34%	-23%

*YTD +/- shows the % difference between the total income for the current financial Year to Date vs the same period last year.

** YOY +/- shows the % difference between the total income for the 12-month period vs the same period last year - Year on Year. This is useful to reflect impacts of seasonality.

Comments:

Due to COVID-19, the merchandise had to be moved away from the prime selling position so that Concierge services could be introduced.

The amount of merchandise on display was limited in its range and numbers.

Sales have been maintained to an acceptable level.

ENQUIRIES - NOWRA

Description	Oct 2020 to Dec 2020 Total Number	Oct 2019 to Dec 2019 Total Number	Variation Total Number	YTD* +/-	YOY +/-**
Counter	1,717	5,393	-3,676	-68%	-48%
Emails	849	1,388	-539	-38%	-13%
Phone SEC	720	1926	-1,206	-62%	-41%
Phone VIS	4,341	1,919	+2,422	+126%	+68%
Phone Total	5,061	3,845	+1,216	+31%	+10%
Volunteer	0	236	-236	-100%	-59%
Total	7,627	10,862	-3,235	-29%	-19%

*YTD +/- shows the % difference between the total number of enquiries for the current financial Year to Date (YTD) vs the same period last year.

** YOY +/- shows the % difference between the total number of inquiries for the 12-month period vs the same period last year - Year on Year. This is useful to reflect impacts of seasonality.

Comments:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there is a continuing decline in visitors to the centre.

There has been a significant increase of phone calls to the visitor centre. 4,296 additional tourist phone calls have been received year to date, compared to last year, resulting in a total of 10,582 tourist phone call year to date.

There have been many requests for accommodation, especially camping.

ENQUIRIES - ULLADULLA

Description	Oct 2020 to Dec 2020 Total Number	Oct 2019 to Dec 2019	Variation Total Number	YTD* +/-	YOY +/-**
Counter	2,847	3,673	-826	-22%	-8%
Emails	14	17	-3	-12%	0%
Phone	1,247	1,292	-45	-3%	-2%
Volunteer	0	8	-8	0%	0%
Total	4,108	4,982	-874	-17%	-6%

*YTD +/- shows the % difference between the total number of enquiries for the current financial Year to Date vs the same period last year.

** YOY +/- shows the % difference between the total number of inquiries for the 12-month period vs the same period last year - Year on Year. This is useful to reflect impacts of seasonality.

Comments:

Ulladulla has achieved a reasonably good result for this quarter, when allowing for Covid restrictions and reduced hours of operation.

The area has been extremely busy over the past quarter and this will continue with forward bookings being very positive.

What's Next – Quarter 3 – 2020/2021

- Continue support of Supplementary Visitor Centres.
- Maintain contact with operators impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, offering advice and further information, including links to helpful resources and information.
- Maintain operations of the Nowra Visitor Centre in its current temporary location.
- Assess and introduce online shopping option for merchandise sales.
- Trial volunteer return to the VIS Centre.

TA21.4

TA21.5 Chair's Report

HPERM Ref: D21/26997

Group: City Futures

Department: Tourism

Purpose / Summary

To update members of the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Group receive the Chair's Report for information.

Chair's report:

The previous 12 months have been unprecedented at every level of our community presenting a series of challenges here in the Shoalhaven, the State and Nationally as a result of a sequence of natural events inc. Drought, fire, flood and Covid19.

STAG has adjusted in line with Councils best practice initiatives and evolved into an online community efficiently and effectively continuing to provide feedback, expert guidance and support through this period to the Tourism department and individual Tourism based operators on a case by case basis.

STAG members have continued to support Council events where appropriate, the hosting of Destinations NSW being a prominent example and attended media and project launch events in the absence of Council representatives on a needs basis.

As a group we have witnessed the delivery of some crucial pieces of planning and supported the realistic approach taken by Tourism to adjust to the circumstances we have inherited in an uncertain business environment moving forward.

As a group we continue to welcome the opportunity to contribute provided by Shoalhaven City Council and we look forward to participating in facing the challenges and identifying unforeseen potential ahead as we all come to terms with "The new normal" across our business and broader community sectors.

Robert Crow

Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group Chair

TA21.6 River Festival Update

HPERM Ref: D21/21579

Department: Tourism

Approver: Robert Domm, Director - City Futures

Reason for Report

To update the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group on the Shoalhaven River Festival.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Tourism Advisory Group receive the Shoalhaven River Festival Committee report for information.

Options

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Request further information.

Chair's Report

The Shoalhaven River Festival (SRF) Organising Committee is scheduled to meet early/mid-February, following the school holidays, date to be confirmed after at end Jan 2021.

The possible sub-event at 2020 Christmas time to be undertaken with the Nowra CBD Revitalisation Committee did not proceed, due to an alternative undertaken by the CBD committee, we will be re-activating discussions with the CBD committee following our February meeting.

2021 Shoalhaven River Festival

It is intended that the Shoalhaven River Festival (SRF) will proceed in October 2021, probably within the School Holiday period, subject to co-ordination with Council. The Nowra bridge construction is well underway. Shoalhaven River Festival will be commencing liaison with Fulton Hogan/ Transport for NSW and, Council with regards to the festival site. The challenge will be to re-invigorate momentum following the cancellation of last year's event and the continuing uncertainty moving forward.

Objectives

- To produce a high-quality event with significant benefits for community and tourism,
- to increase the level of Community engagement across a range of age groups,
- to co-ordinate with other events/providers to optimise tourism outcome,
- to increase the visibility of the event and its planning,
- to establish a Siting Strategy that is co-ordinated with Bridge construction and Council,
- to explore further light and sound production opportunities, inc. steel bridge & construction,
- to highlight the Whole river experience,
- concentrate on "more grace than pace",
- to find a new "anchor commercial sponsor" and refresh our sponsorship approach,

- to broaden the base of the organising committee,
- to find a new arts co-ordinator, and activate broad arts engagement, with guidance from Marla,
- to find a new entertainment co-ordinator,
- to find a new sponsorship/ grants/fundraising co-ordinator,
- to enhance indigenous engagement, inspiration, and participation,
- to build relationship with CBD Revitalisation Committee,
- to explore profile building lead -up sub events including Easter with CBD committee.

Shoalhaven River Festival wish to collaborate and engage with STAG to enable the festival to be a catalyst for a “regional” weekend /week of activities and to be the very best it can be.

Expenditure budget

The Council funding (\$20K) was received for the 2020 Shoalhaven River Festival allocation, this enabled outstanding debts to be settled from the 2019 event, this has been done and the remaining amount is approximately \$11k.

Tourism continued involvement

- Shoalhaven Tourism will continue to provide support as needed and the Event Liaison Officer will attend meetings and provide advice as required.
- The River Festival will be required to formally update STAG at each meeting via a report. Minutes of meetings and any relevant reports will be provided to Council as needed via STAG.

Financial Implications

Due to the cancellation of the 2020 Shoalhaven River Festival, the funds received for the festival will be used for the 2021 event. The current Terms of Reference gives delegated authority to the River Festival Committee on spend and financial management of funds.