

Experience Hobsons Bay

Tourism Strategy 2019–24





Hobsons Bay Coastal Trail (Bay Trail) - Altona

This strategy was compiled by Hobsons Bay City Council for reference purposes only. For further information contact Hobsons Bay City Council on 9932 1000 www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Council acknowledges the people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of these municipal lands.

Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.



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MAYOR'S MESSAGE



I am pleased to present the Experience Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy 2019–24.

With its rich maritime history and an array of natural attractions, Hobsons Bay is a unique and widely regarded destination for visitors, just a short distance from central Melbourne.

The picturesque coastline, cultural attractions and diverse shopping precincts on offer not only benefit our local residents, but provide people from across Melbourne and further afield with the opportunity to escape the city, to take a short ferry, bike or train ride, and feel completely removed from the hustle of the CBD.

Tourism is a major contributor to the Hobsons Bay economy, generating more than \$294 million in output and supporting more than 1,300 jobs locally.

Council plays an important role in supporting the preservation of our tourism assets and ensuring the ongoing growth of visitation to Hobsons Bay. By creating a welcoming and consistent experience for all visitors we can ensure this important industry continues to thrive.

This strategy explores opportunities to support and grow the local tourism industry, to attract new and diverse visitors and encourage residents to explore their local area. It outlines the key themes and objectives that will guide our work to achieve our vision of Hobsons Bay being “A place that locals are proud to call home. A place that is recognised globally for its rich experiences and visitor offering”.

We are grateful to the many local people who that provided input in the development of this strategy. The feedback you have provided has directly contributed to the key themes of this strategy and we look forward to delivering strong outcomes for the tourism industry over the next five years.

**Cr Jonathon Marsden,
Mayor of Hobsons Bay**



Time Beacon, Truganina Park - Altona Meadows



Newport Lakes - Newport



Seaworks - Williamstown

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Experience Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy outlines the key themes and objectives that will guide Council’s work in supporting the sustainable growth of the local visitor economy.

Aimed at achieving a long-term vision for Hobsons Bay, the Experience Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy (the strategy) reflects Council’s commitment to ensuring Hobsons Bay is a place that people are proud to call home, and a place that can be recognised widely for its rich experiences and visitor offering.

Through the strategy, Council will identify a series of projects, opportunities and initiatives that can influence and accelerate positive change within the local tourism sector, attracting new and diverse visitation, and delivering increased economic and social benefit to the city.

Building on previous work, the strategy will be supported by an action plan, and together these documents provide the economic context and framework for Council’s future tourism development activity.

The action plan outlines the priority activities, key partners and resources required to deliver the objectives of the strategy.

Experience Hobsons Bay comprises four key themes:



ABOUT THE STRATEGY

The Experience Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy (the strategy) has been developed by Hobsons Bay City Council, in partnership with local tourism operators, industry partners and other key stakeholders.

Careful consideration has been given to the context in which this strategy sits, including its alignment with previous local tourism strategies, other Council policies and strategies, the local community and the wider region of Melbourne's west.

To ensure the strategy accurately reflects the needs and priorities of the local tourism industry, consultation has been undertaken to identify the scope and capacity of the current tourism industry, existing and potential opportunities for growth and the needs and priorities of industry and community stakeholders.

The consultation process has included:

- two workshops with industry partners and tourism operators
- a workshop with Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre volunteers
- consultation with relevant departments across Council
- interviews with tourism operators

The themes and priorities identified through this consultation have formed the key themes, objectives and actions of the strategy.

The strategy development process has included:

- business engagement/consultation
- background review
- policy context
- economic and socio-economic analysis
- stakeholder forums
- theme development
- action/implementation plan
- monitoring and evaluation



POLICY CONTEXT

The Experience Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy outlines the key themes and objectives that will guide Council’s work in supporting the short and long term growth of the local visitor economy.

Local

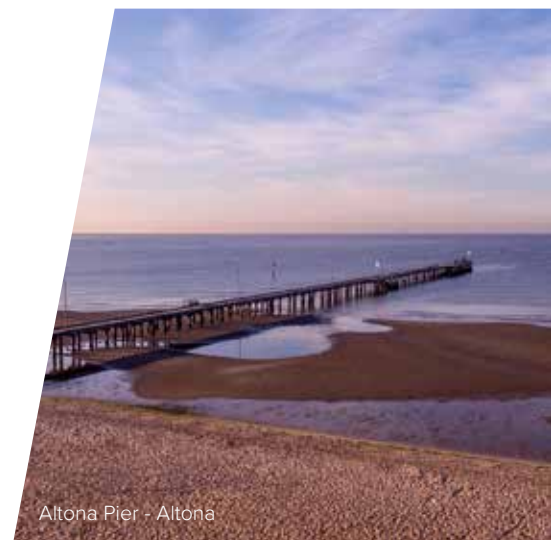
The strategy addresses Priority 3 and 4 of Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision, namely: ‘growth through innovation, access to local jobs, technology and education’; and ‘proactive enrichment, expansion and conservation of the natural and urban environment’. It also aligns with Goals 2 and 3 of the Council Plan 2017–21, which aims to ensure that Hobsons Bay is ‘a great place’ that is ‘well designed, maintained and environmentally sustainable’.

The strategy supports cross-departmental communication and collaboration, and the work will support the visitor economy as it crosses a number of Council’s strategic plans, including but not limited to:

- Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision
- Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2017–21
- Economic Development Strategy 2015–20
- Creative City Arts and Culture Plan 2018–22
- Activity Centre Strategy (in development)
- Events and Festivals Plan 2016–21
- Open Space Strategy 2018–28
- Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy 2013–17
- Integrated Transport Plan 2017–30
- Enterprise Digital Strategy 2018–22
- Learning Communities Strategic Plan 2016–19
- Multicultural Policy 2016–20

Key partners in Hobsons Bay include:

- local tourism operators
- local residents
- organisations representing and advocating for local tourism operators, such as traders groups
- Visitor Information Centre (VIC) staff and volunteers
- major attractions (including Seaworks, Scienceworks, The Substation)
- Western Melbourne Tourism



Altona Pier - Altona



Two Birds Brewery - Spotswood

Regional

Positioned 7km south west of Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD) Hobsons Bay benefits from its connection to both the central city and western region of Melbourne, and contributes to the economic profile and diversity of both areas.

Council works with a variety of stakeholders, including other local councils, state and federal governments and regional partners to promote local tourism and advocate for greater investment in the region. To ensure the strategy aligns with the objectives of other regional stakeholders, consideration has been given to other regional strategic plans, including:

- Western Melbourne Tourism, Strategic Plan 2017–20
- Destination Management Visitor Plan for Melbourne's West
- A Jobs and Industry Strategy for Melbourne's West
- The Western Agenda (in development)
- Inner Melbourne Action Plan 2016–26

Key partners in the west and inner Melbourne regions include:

- other LGAs/councils
- Western Melbourne Tourism
- LeadWest
- The Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) partnership

State and national

Tourism is an important contributor to the Victorian and Australian economies and plays an important role in stimulating the economy and creating employment opportunities.

The state and federal governments play an important role in increasing tourism visitation and building industry capacity through the operation of Tourism Australia and Visit Victoria respectively.

To ensure the strategy fits within the broader context of tourism in Victoria and Australia, the strategy has been developed to align with a number of strategies and plans, including:

- Plan Melbourne
- Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy
- Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy

Key partners at the state and national level include:

- Visit Victoria (comprising Tourism Victoria, Victorian Major Events Company and the Melbourne Convention Bureau)
- Tourism Australia
- Parks Victoria
- Invest Victoria
- Victorian Planning Authority
- Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC)
- Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP)

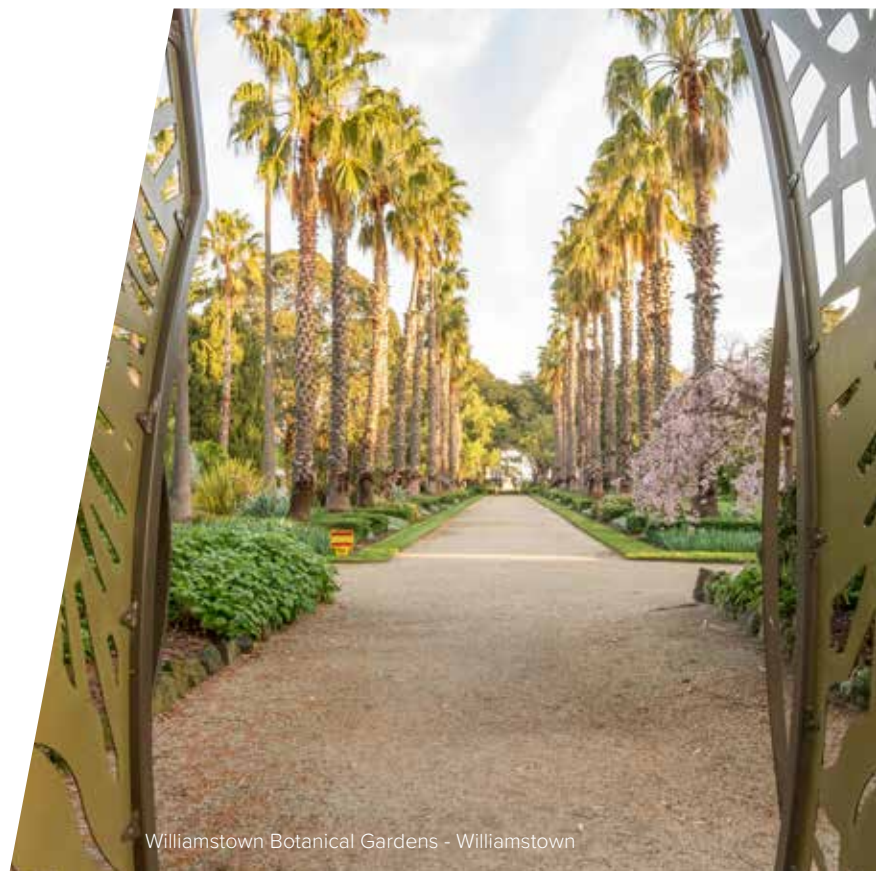
HOBSONS BAY

Located on the banks of Port Phillip Bay just 7 kilometres from the CBD, Hobsons Bay is a unique part of the Melbourne metropolitan landscape and a welcoming entry point into the ever changing region of Melbourne's West.

The region is made up of 12 suburbs. Each with its own identity, characteristics and tourism offering



Reunion, Grant Finck - Laverton



Williamstown Botanical Gardens - Williamstown



Scienceworks Pumping Station - Spotswood

Local destinations

Williamstown, with its views of the Melbourne skyline across the water, ferry access to and from Gem Pier and established hospitality and retail precincts is a popular destination for visitors, and recognised as an important location for tourism activity in Hobsons Bay.

History buffs and maritime enthusiasts can immerse themselves in the many attractions that tell the story of the first port of Melbourne; Seaworks and the boating clubs contributing to the marine economy are growing destinations for event producers while the Williamstown Botanic Gardens, Commonwealth Reserve, Burgoyne Reserve and Williamstown Beach are highly valued.

To the north, **Newport** and **Spotswood** have built on their industrial reputation to become thriving urban hubs where old and new come together and high profile attractions such as Scienceworks and The Substation are surrounded by boutique shops and cafes. Spotswood is also where the popular Hobsons Bay Coastal Trail begins before stretching 23 kilometres along the edge of Port Phillip Bay to Altona Meadows.

Centrally located in Hobsons Bay and a popular spot for fishing, swimming, kite surfing and more, **Altona** is one of the hidden gems of the west. The white sandy beach, expansive water vistas, pier and relaxed vibe of Altona village offer visitors a unique experience just a short drive (or ride) from central Melbourne.

Further west attractors include Woods Street Arts Space and specialist traders building a niche in **Laverton**, while Melbourne Ballpark has a very high seasonal visitor draw through its role as a state venue in the national baseball league with international profile.

Biodiversity for tourism

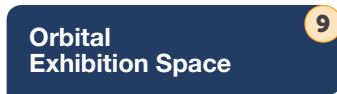
The diversity and extent of open space in Hobsons Bay endows it with richness for a multitude of environmental and recreational pursuits for locals and visitors, especially given our proximity to central Melbourne and the context of a growing western metropolitan region.

Our biodiversity has regional, national and international significance.

Experiences in nature including Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve, Newport Lakes and Truganina Explosives Reserve present opportunities to explore and interact with the environment while the extensive network of shared trails connecting many of these beautiful open spaces attracts a steady stream of visitors year round. Diverse waterways including creek systems, waterfront, piers, coastline and river frontages contribute to unique experiences based on the natural environment. Heading west from Altona along the Bay Trail towards the 100 Steps of Federation, we have a Birdlife Australia designated 'Key Biodiversity Area' at the mouth of Laverton Creek, adjoining internationally Ramsar recognised Cheetham Wetlands. This magnificent area hosts an array of birdlife including migratory shorebirds from as far away as Alaska and Siberia. Open space, proximity to the city, coast, waterways, birds, trails; it's a high value mix for Hobsons Bay.

Major attractions

Major attractions such as Seaworks in Williamstown, Scienceworks in Spotswood and The Substation in Newport play an important role in attracting visitors to Hobsons Bay and raising the profile of the local tourism industry. State government support and funding of these organisations has highlighted the role they play in attracting events, promoting local assets and bringing visitors to Melbourne's west. Opportunities exist to further collaborate with major attractions and encourage cross promotion within the broader Hobsons Bay tourism industry.





KEY

- | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| | Altona City Theatre | | Sports centre | | Coastal Trail |
| | Barbecue facility | | Sporting facility | | Laverton Creek Trail |
| | Bird watching location | | Sporting oval | | Lower Kororoit Creek Trail |
| | Boat ramp | | Swimming | | Maddox Road Trail |
| | Community centre | | Toilet | | Queen Street Altona Trail |
| | Dog park | | Accessible beach matting | | Skeleton Creek Trail |
| | Library | | Train station | | Skeleton Creek Trail upgrade (in progress) |
| | Public art | | UP youth services | | Walking/cycling trail |
| | Public reserve | | Williamstown Town Hall | | |
| | Snorkelling | | | | |

KEY ATTRACTIONS

Assets, attractions and experiences in Hobsons Bay include:

Altona

- Altona Beach (including accessible beach matting, beach wheelchairs and accessible changing facilities)
- Altona Coastal Park
- Altona Homestead and Logan Reserve
- Altona Laverton Historical Society
- Altona Library
- Altona Lifesaving Club
- Altona Pier
- Altona Sports Centre
- Altona Theatre
- Altona Tuesday Market
- Bay Trail shared coastal path/ public art
- Cherry Lake
- Events (summer events, Logan Reserve, beach)
- Kite Surfing
- Koorungal Golf Club
- Lantern Ghost Tours
- Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre
- Pier Street
- Truganina Coastal Parklands
- Truganina Explosives Reserve

Altona Meadows

- 100 Steps
- Altona Basketball Stadium/ HD Graham Reserve
- Altona Meadows Library and Learning Centre
- Bay Trail / shared coastal path / public art
- BMX-Skate Park
- Cheetham Wetlands
- Old Laverton School

Altona North

- Specialty food - Second Avenue and The Circle
- Altona Badminton Centre
- Altona Gate Shopping Centre
- Australian Islamic Centre
- Altona Lakes Golf Club
- Altona Miniature Railway
- Altona North Library
- Kororoit Creek Trail
- Public art

Brooklyn

- Federation Trail

Laverton

- Aviation Road
- Events (Laverton Festival, summer events)
- Laverton and Skeleton Creeks
- Laverton Hub
- Melbourne Ballpark
- McCormack Park
- Public art
- Woods Street Arts Space

Newport

- Accommodation (including Newport Guest House)
- Australian Islamic Centre
- Bay Trail/coastal path/ public art
- Cafes and shops - Hall Street, Mason Street, Melbourne Road
- HMAS Yarra Memorial
- Newport Community Hub and Library
- Newport Lakes
- Newport Railyards – Steam Rail Victoria

- The Substation
- Skate Park
- The Warmies boat ramps and river/city/bay views

Seabrook

- Skeleton Creek

Seaholme

- Altona Boat Ramp
- Altona Coastal Park/The Pines
- Altona Dog Beach
- Altona Yacht Club
- Bay Trail/shared coastal path

South Kingsville

- Cafes and shops - Vernon Street

Spotswood

- Bay Trail/shared coastal path/ river frontage
- Cafes and shops Hudsons Road and Hall Street
- Industrial Heritage walking tour and app
- Markets
- Melbourne Planetarium (Scienceworks)
- Scienceworks
- The Pumping Station (Scienceworks)
- The Punt
- River crossing
- Two Birds Brewery
- Westgate Bridge Memorial

Williamstown

- 30 Minute Bay tours
- Able Fishing Charters
- Accommodation including Amawind, Captains Retreat, Punt Hill, Quest
- Bay Sea Farm Mussels (Sundays at Gem Pier)
- Bay Trail/shared coastal path/ public art
- Blunts Boat Builders
- Commonwealth Reserve and The Rotunda
- Corvette Memorial
- Enterprize Tall Ship
- Events (day events and event series over multiple days)
- Cafes and shops - Nelson Place, Ferguson Street and Douglas Parade
- Ferguson Street Pier
- Gem Pier (and ferries)
- Historic churches
- Heritage pubs
- Heritage walking tours
- HMAS Castlemaine
- Hobsons Bay Historic Tours
- Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre
- Irish Famine Memorial
- Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve
- Kayak the Coast
- Lantern Ghost Tours
- Markets

- Melbourne Boutique Charters
- Melbourne River Cruises
- Nelson Place heritage precinct
- Pirates Tavern
- Point Gellibrand Coastal Heritage Park
- St Johns Ambulance Museum
- Sailing clubs, including Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, Hobsons Bay Yacht Club, Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club and Williamstown Sailing Club
- Seaplanes
- Sea Shepherd (Seaworks)
- Seaworks Maritime Discovery Centre
- Self-guided walking tours
- The Morgue
- Timeball Tower
- Titanic theatre restaurant
- Williamstown Bay and River Cruises
- Williamstown Beach (including matting and beach wheelchairs)
- Williamstown Botanic Gardens
- Williamstown Charters
- Williamstown Croquet Club
- Williamstown Football Ground (Downer Oval)
- Williamstown Historical Museum and Society
- Williamstown Library Heritage Room
- Williamstown Lifesaving Club
- Williamstown Mechanics Institute
- Williamstown Town Hall

Williamstown North

- Accommodation (Quest Williamstown North)
- Classic Car Museum
- Lost Ark Antiques
- Railway Museum
- Williamstown Cemetery

STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strengths

- strategic location and proximity to the CBD
- coastal location and panoramic waterfront vistas
- established activity centres
- public transport access
- village feel (local authenticity)
- significant wetlands and open spaces
- high quality walking/cycling paths and trails
- Bay West Trail Scenic Drive links
- events and festivals
- heritage (maritime, rail)
- Visitor Information Centre (VIC)
- opportunities for fishing and water-based activities
- sailing clubs and marine building activity
- major attractions (including Scienceworks, Seaworks and The Substation)
- recent influx of quality hospitality providers
- accessible beaches (Altona and Williamstown)
- Punt from Port Melbourne
- ferries from the city
- proximity to other key attractions in the west including Werribee Open Range Zoo, Avalon Airport

- engaged local resident community
- trader groups
- partnership with Western Melbourne Tourism and the wider western region
- relationship with Visit Victoria and Tourism Australia

Challenges

- limited ability to measure visitation aside from at VIC
- limited wayfinding signage
- residents leaving Hobsons Bay to visit cafes/retail in surrounding areas
- retention and dispersion of visitors to Scienceworks/Seaworks/The Substation
- infrequent ferry and punt services
- geographic location/dispersal of attractions
- inconsistent opening hours of attractions
- visitation subject to weather
- no caravan park/budget accommodation options
- limitations of accommodation outside of Williamstown
- conflicting information online – Visit Hobsons Bay, Visit Williamstown, etc

- limited visitor dispersal beyond key attractions
- consistency of customer service across municipality
- no clear identity for activity centres
- low overnight visitation levels
- limited public transport options
- unreliable public transport schedules
- competition from surrounding municipalities
- increased competition for local accommodation providers from Airbnb (and lack of control)
- local impact during peak tourism season
- limited cooperative product packaging among tourism operators
- limited parking during peak times
- perception of the west
- minimise impact of increased visitation on fragile ecosystems
- climate change



Altona beach - Altona

Opportunities

- encourage coordination of attraction opening hours
- identify tourism offering and unique selling proposition (USP)
- strengthen digital and social media presence and engagement
- stronger destination marketing
- capture Chinese visitors to Melbourne
- Avalon Airport and securing Air AsiaX
- increase yield of existing visitor markets
- advocate for additional ferry services
- encourage local residents to shop and explore local
- reach and engage new residents
- leverage and build on heritage strengths
- capitalise on major events
- encourage Scienceworks visitors to stay in Hobsons Bay
- increase overnight stays on weekends to address high vacancy rates
- improve signage on cycling paths
- encourage cyclists to stop and experience Hobsons Bay
- raise awareness of natural attractions
- advocate for better utilisation of coastline/ support of water-based activities
- tap into sailing clubs
- introduce tourism signage across Hobsons Bay
- support businesses in improving customer service
- Western Melbourne Tourism partnerships
- develop identity for all activity centres
- advocate for improved infrastructure and integrated transport
- create better connections between tourism operators
- facilitate business networking and collaboration
- cross promote between attractions
- package attractions into themes for promotion
- increase storytelling across all channels
- tap into sharing economy (Airbnb, Uber etc)
- encourage businesses and trader groups to lead/drive visitor attraction
- identify opportunities to reduce seasonality
- encourage local community to explore and promote the local area
- promote accessible tourism

THE HOBSONS BAY VISITOR ECONOMY

Tourism is an important component of the Hobsons Bay economy, with the potential for significant growth in future years.

Tourism is important to Hobsons Bay as a local economic driver and improves the vibrancy, liveability and prosperity of the city by supporting local services, building civic pride and preserving and improving amenity and local character.

Tourism is identified as one of Australia's five super growth sectors by the federal government with growth of 4 per cent per annum expected up to 2033. In Melbourne alone, the visitor economy was worth \$15.3 billion in 2015–16, employing 126,800 people. Victoria's Visitor Economy Strategy goal of increasing visitor expenditure to \$36.5 billion by 2025 shows the scale of the growth potential in the tourism sector within Victoria.

Hobsons Bay is home to a thriving and diverse visitor economy, which generates approximately \$294 million in output, and supports approximately 1,400 local jobs. People visit Hobsons Bay for a variety of different purposes, including leisure and recreation, visiting friends and family, for business and major events.

Visitor attractions in Hobsons Bay are incredibly diverse. They include wetlands, heritage, bike trails, accessible beaches, hospitality sector, the arts, events, conferences and major attractions such as Scienceworks, Seaworks and The Substation.

Important to the visitor experience is the presentation of gateways and the activity centres of Altona, Laverton, Newport, Spotswood and Williamstown which provide a diverse range of destinations and visitor experiences and increasingly other shopping strips with specialist retail.

This diversity in visitor attractions, and the multitude of reasons people visit Hobsons Bay and thereby contribute to the economy, requires us to think in more broader terms than the traditional idea of 'tourism' and 'tourists'. The term 'visitor economy' is increasingly used to better capture and describe this depth and breadth of the sector and the underlying importance to the local economy.

The Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre

As the largest Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Melbourne's west and one of the largest in metropolitan Melbourne, the Hobsons Bay VIC plays an important role in providing a welcoming interface for visitors arriving into Hobsons Bay, as well as the ability to provide information more broadly through the VIC networks. Located in Nelson Place, Williamstown and staffed by a team of volunteers, the VIC delivers a range of services on site, from greeting people arriving by ferry at Gem Pier and providing maps and information on local sites and activities, to encouraging visitor dispersal across the municipality. The VIC captures visitor data which is used to improve the customer experience and identify new markets.



VISITOR EXPENDITURE

	Domestic day	Domestic overnight	International
Average stay (nights)	—	3	22
Average spend per trip	\$112	\$834	\$2,622
Average spend per night	—	\$302	\$119

BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THE HOBSONS BAY VISITOR ECONOMY GENERATE:



\$294M

in gross revenue



1,400

jobs

KEY DRIVERS OF VISITOR ECONOMY:



Accommodation



Cafes and restaurants



Cultural and recreational



Retail

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

Scienceworks



World-renowned museum, attracting approximately 500,000 visitors a year.



The Substation

Contemporary arts centre for the west, located in a 100-year old repurposed, industrial building.

Seaworks



State significant maritime precinct, in the heart of Victoria's historic seaport of Williamstown, as an events space attracts approximately 100,000 visitors each year, aside from its ability to host tall ships, the Sea Shepherd fleet and associated visitor value.

DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT VISITORS



64%

visiting friends and relatives

19%

business

13%

holiday

4%

other reason to visit

DOMESTIC DAYTRIP VISITORS



64%

visiting friends and relatives

19%

business

13%

holiday

4%

other reason to visit

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS



64%

visiting friends and relatives

19%

business

13%

holiday

4%

education

5%

employment

TOURISM IN HOBSONS BAY

Through its economic development function, Hobsons Bay City Council plays an active role in enabling tourism activity across the municipality, and in the wider western region.

Each year, a suite of programs and initiatives are delivered to support local tourism operators, help them connect with other stakeholders, attract visitors to the area, and assist in the growth and sustainability of the local visitor economy.

Initiatives include:

- the development and management of an 'Experience Hobsons Bay' website
- operation of the Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre in Williamstown
- provision of visitor information services and collateral
- content in Melbourne Official Visitor Guide
- participation in Melbourne Tourism Industry Exchange (MTIE) including for operators
- guided walking tours
- tourism operator advice, support and workshops
- networking events and forums
- Discover Your Own Backyard
- the Hobsons Bay Business Excellence Awards
- major events support attracting local, domestic and international visitors
- advocacy for investment in key attractions and infrastructure
- funding contributions and support of four local trader associations

Council delivers initiatives to address the changing needs of the local tourism sector. However, with the rapid growth of the visitor economy, high consumer expectations, the rising influence of social platforms, and rapid advancements in technology, there is a need for a more strategic approach to identifying local priorities, and providing a solid foundation for ensuring the future growth of the local visitor economy.

Through the development of this strategy, and the implementation of an annual tourism strategy action plan, Hobsons Bay City Council endeavours to:

- improve recognition and awareness of the visitor economy
- improve the visitor experience in Hobsons Bay
- attract new and diverse investment to the municipality
- work with local, regional, state and national partners to maximise economic outcomes for the visitor economy within Hobsons Bay
- support existing and new tourism operators
- encourage the local community to be advocates for Hobsons Bay

LOOKING AHEAD

Our vision

The Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy will contribute to achieving the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision - *“By 2030, embracing our heritage, environment and diversity, we – the community of Hobsons Bay – will be an inclusive, empowered, sustainable and visionary community, led and supported by a progressive Council of excellence.”*

The following vision will guide the future of tourism in Hobsons Bay:

“Hobsons Bay is a place that locals are proud to call home. A place that is recognised globally for its rich experiences and visitor offering.”

Through the implementation of this strategy, Hobsons Bay will become a community that is characterised by:

- accessible, vibrant and diverse activity centres that are welcoming to visitors and residents
- excellent transport links and connections
- a well-connected and collaborative tourism industry
- increased visitation from both domestic and international visitors
- widely regarded tourism attractions and experiences

A regional approach

Hobsons Bay City Council works in partnership with Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham Councils. Western Melbourne Tourism (WMT) - which is cooperatively funded by local government and also includes industry representation on its board, including accommodation, attractions and Victoria University - is now well established and recognised as a catalyst for

industry and resources in the west. Through WMT the region has a collaborative focus, planning for long term growth, strengthening the existing visitor economy and advocating for further investment in the region.

A regional approach to marketing Melbourne’s west and sharing resources brings benefits to the Hobsons Bay community and provides operators access to a wider pool of resources, skill building and a broader customer base. Implementing initiatives to increase visitation, visitor yield, dispersal and satisfaction within the western region will remain a priority as this strategy is implemented.

Key partners

To implement this strategy, Council will work collaboratively with a variety of local and regional stakeholders, including:

- Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre
- Visitor Information Centres network
- Western Melbourne Tourism
- Visit Victoria
- Tourism Australia
- LeadWest
- VicRoads
- VicTrack
- Public Transport Victoria
- tertiary and training providers
- Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham Councils
- local tourism operators
- event organisers
- local business associations and trader groups
- major attractions



Theme 1

RECOGNISING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The location, heritage, environment, and cultural attractions of Hobsons Bay make it an appealing destination for visitors. However, there will always be opportunities to enhance and improve awareness of its offering with locals and visitors alike.

Delivering a suite of programs and services to tourism operators in Hobsons Bay will continue to be a priority, as Council works collaboratively with local operators and other stakeholders to strengthen and grow the local visitor economy.

By providing the resources required to ensure an engaged and inclusive visitor economy, and improving the accessibility and awareness of the information and assistance available to tourism operators, Council will aim to increase collaboration across the sector and ensure that Hobsons Bay continues to be recognised as a great place to visit and explore.

Objective 1.1

Increase community awareness of, and participation in local tourism attractions and activities.

Objective 1.2

Raise awareness of the Hobsons Bay visitor offering through cohesive branding

Objective 1.3

Work with tourism operators to enhance their understanding of the visitor economy and visitor service standards.

Objective 1.4

Recognise achievements and celebrate success



Theme 2

RICH EXPERIENCES

Hobsons Bay is home to a diverse visitor offering, characterised by vibrant activity centres, tourism assets of state significance, and a growing number of experiences for locals and visitors alike.

People visit Hobsons Bay for many different reasons, however their willingness to linger in the area or return, is influenced substantially by their experience. Enhancing and expanding the local visitor offering also has the ability to attract more visitors to the area.

Through the implementation of this strategy, Council aims to enhance the entire visitor journey, and ensure that locals and visitors have a wide variety of quality experiences to choose from, enjoy and share.

Objective 2.1

Strengthen and support new and existing tourism experiences.

Objective 2.2

Increase visitor awareness of opportunities to extend and/or enhance their visit.

Objective 2.3

Encourage diversity in local visitor offering and align the local visitor offering with community needs.

Objective 2.4

Improve the visitor journey by investing in service offering.

Theme 3

CITY IMAGE AND PRESENTATION



Council recognises the important role that it plays in creating an environment that makes locals and visitors feel welcome, and enhances their experience of the area.

Further investment in city image and presentation will allow Council to influence how the area is perceived, and how the story of Hobsons Bay is shared.

Objective 3.1

Strengthen the local sense of welcome, place, character and amenity.

Objective 3.2

Support the further development and promotion of existing activity centres, to support a network of vibrant commercial areas across the municipality.

Objective 3.3

Establish Hobsons Bay as an accessible and diverse visitor destination in which all local residents and visitors can access attractions and experiences.

Objective 3.4

Support and advocate for investment in infrastructure that will enhance the visitor experience.



Theme 4

LEADERSHIP

Hobsons Bay City Council acknowledges the important role of tourism and visitation in improving the vibrancy, liveability and prosperity of the city, and is committed to being recognised as a progressive Council of excellence, and achieving the vision of this strategy, namely that

“Hobsons Bay is a place that locals are proud to call home. A place that is recognised globally for its rich experiences and visitor offering.”

Achieving the best results for Hobsons Bay will require collaboration with local, regional, state and national partners. Council will also need to take a proactive role in advocating for investment and support for the local visitor economy.

Objective 4.1

Ensure Hobsons Bay is represented at a regional, state, national and global level by establishing and fostering strategic partnerships which will benefit the local visitor economy.

Objective 4.2

Encourage collaboration between tourism operators and stakeholders.

Objective 4.3

Advocate for investment and support for the tourism industry across Hobsons Bay and Melbourne’s west.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This strategy will guide the future tourism development activity of Hobsons Bay City Council. To ensure the effective implementation of the strategy objectives, an annual Tourism Strategy Action Plan will be developed to outline the key priorities and actions that will be delivered, and a process of ongoing review and evaluation will be undertaken.

The tourism development outcomes delivered by Hobsons Bay City Council are currently measured through the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), which ensures consistency in reporting across all Victorian councils. Through this reporting process, Council will use pre-determined indicators to measure business participation, industry growth and service delivery.

A review of the state of the tourism sector will be conducted half way through the strategy implementation. This review will assess the ongoing relevance of the strategy and ensure that objectives remain reflective of the Hobsons Bay tourism climate.

The outcomes of the strategy will also be measured in a number of ways including:

- tourism operator feedback captured through business engagement
- number of tourism development programs delivered
- level of stakeholder participation in Council activities
- annual review, reporting and development of strategy action plans
- local community and economic outcomes identified by Census data
- process indicators and outcomes identified in annual action plans



Nelson Place – Williamstown



Tenacious Tall Ship



Timeball Tower - Williamstown





Kororoit Creek Trail - Altona North

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**HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE**

9932 1212

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粵語	Македонски	普通话