A 10 Year Plan for Sustainable Tourism in Byron Shire
Kitchen Table Discussion Handbook 2019
Designed to support the development of the 2020-2030 Byron Shire Sustainable Visitation Strategy.

For more information or copies of the Handbook, contact
Byron Shire Council Tourism Officers
Email: tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au
Phone: 02 6626 7000

Link - online survey
www.surveymonkey.com/r/TalkingTourismByron19

Important dates
Feedback opens on 6 March 2019, with all submissions to Council by 14 April 2019.

Byron Shire Council would like to thank all contributors, including stakeholders, Straight Talk, Truth Serum Research and the Byron Shire Tourism Team for developing this Guide.
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Acknowledgement of Country
In the preparation of this document Council acknowledges and pays respect to the Bundjalung of Byron Bay – Arakwal People as Traditional Custodians of the land within Byron Shire, and form part of the wider Aboriginal Nation known as the Bundjalung.

In addition, Council acknowledges and respects the Widjabal and Mindjungbul people as Traditional Custodians within the Byron Shire.

Council acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who now reside within the area.

The handbook is printed on Australian Made 100% recycled acid free paper, is FSC certified (No. is C010628) and carbon neutral.
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Introduction

Background

With over two million visitors per year, we all agree Byron Shire is well-loved. We’re consulting with you, our community, to find out how we can best shape the future of tourism, so that we can all benefit.

Council and our community have been struggling to keep up with the impact of ever-growing visitor numbers over the last 10 years or more. While visitors bring much needed investment and vitality to our economy, it is important to also understand the challenges that the growth of tourism brings.

We’re fortunate to have passionate and committed residents who bring a wide range of life experiences and skills to the table when considering decisions about the future of our hinterland, towns and villages. Together we can arrive at a trusted decision on the key issues brought about by the exponential growth in tourism, and how to work through solutions.

We’re aiming to engage with our entire community on the Byron Shire Sustainable Visitation Strategy (SVS), through a variety of activities including Kitchen Table Discussions, workshops and focus groups for both visitors and residents. The findings and recommendations will then be presented to a group of randomly selected residents known as the Community Solutions Panel (CSP) who will then recommend a vision and prioritise actions to inform the Strategy development, ultimately for Council to endorse.

A Sustainable Visitation Strategy ensures that environment and culture are considered during the development of the strategy, as well as the economic factors. The Sustainable Visitation Strategy framework is administered by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

Our Byron Shire Sustainable Visitation Strategy must:

- Reflect the values that the community wants to see from visitors and the industry
- Strike a balance between private benefits and wide-ranging scope of community expectations
- Explore community understanding of the visitor economy and how this works in the delivery of every day and core services
- Explore the ways that Council can respond to and influence the visitor economy and future tourism growth
- Understand the community’s vision for the visitor economy and Council’s ability to deliver.

A draft strategy will be placed on exhibition and is expected to be finalised in the third quarter of 2019.

We are looking for your feedback from the Kitchen Table Discussion topics on meaningful ways to become a leading environmentally, socially and culturally responsible destination and how we can deliver this balance.
What is a Kitchen Table Discussion?

The idea behind Kitchen Table Discussions is to give members of a community the opportunity to learn from and share with each other, and discuss options and alternative solutions.

A Kitchen Table Discussion is held by a host who invites a small group of between 6-8 people to get together to talk about an issue. In this case guests will be talking about the future of tourism in Byron Shire, the challenges and opportunities, in a setting of their choice—it doesn’t have to be at the kitchen table, just somewhere quiet and comfortable.

The host will act as the facilitator which means:

- providing everyone with a Handbook
- laying the ground rules
- encouraging respectful listening to those with different opinions
- guaranteeing everyone has the opportunity to contribute
- ensuring everyone submits their responses to the questions.

If you would like to know more about Kitchen Table Discussions, go to https://participedia.net/en/methods/kitchen-table-conversations.

Using this Handbook

This Handbook will walk you through the process step-by-step plus there are checklists, information and questions to answer, so please read it thoroughly before starting. We have divided the Handbook into sections, to make it as easy as possible:

1. PREPARATION: what you need to do before the discussion
2. TIME TO TALK: how to facilitate the meeting and guide discussion around the topics
3. COMPLETION: what you need to do after the discussion including submitting the responses.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Byron Shire Council Tourism Officers on 02 6626 7000 or email tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au.

Registering to be a Host

We hope this introduction has given you the information and motivation to become a host. Become a host by emailing the following information to tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au:

- your name
- address (if you want us to mail out packs)
- phone number
- let us know if you want us to send you out hard copies of the Handbook (packs of 8) or if you want us to send you out a link to an online copy of the Handbook - that you will need to print out for your guests
- indicative date of your Discussion.

Now you are ready to go. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and how you enjoyed the process.

Confidentiality:

Please note that your details will be kept to record the distribution of the Handbooks and to provide numbers of discussion groups. No identifying information will be associated with the answers submitted, and all information will be dealt with in accordance with the professional standards of the Australian Market and Social Research Society www.amsrs.com.au/professional-standards/code-of-professional-behaviour.
Tips for Hosting a Kitchen Table Discussion:

You’re now registered for your Discussion; thank you and congratulations on your commitment to engage and assist us. Now all you need to do is follow the steps as they are laid out below and if you have a question then send it through to tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au and we will get back to you ASAP.

You are not limited to hosting just one Discussion – you can host as many as you like (with different guests of course) and if you have been a guest, you can choose to host your own Discussion. Please just ensure that all feedback forms responses are submitted to Council by the 14th of April 2019.

Step 1 Review the Handbook

Review this Handbook thoroughly and ensure you have received copies of the Handbook for your guests (or downloaded and printed online copies).
Step 2  Discussion Logistics

Decide on the details:

- **Date** – deadline for submissions is the 14th of April 2019
- **Time** – chose a time that suits you and your guests either to share a meal, morning/afternoon tea or in the evening
- **Duration** – allow between 1.5 or 2 hours
- **Provide Wi-Fi and password** – for electronic response submissions – although you can choose to use pen and paper and send back the responses to Council
- **Location** – choose a location that allows for relaxed conversation and limited interruptions.

So that you don’t forget anything, a table and checklist follows on from these steps for you to complete.

Step 3  Invite Your Guests

Once you have the details confirmed, it’s time to invite your guests.

- **Who to invite?** We encourage you to invite members of your family, friends and community. You might want to talk to people at your workplace, social, sporting, recreational club, church or peer group. It is great if the group reflects a wide diversity of ages and experiences, however, it’s your discussion, so you decide who to invite.

- **How should I invite them?** Face to face, Facebook, a call, or email. It will be helpful to email this link https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Business/Business-in-Byron/Tourism before the discussion.

- **What should I say when I invite them?** Here are some examples of what you can say, but remember, the best thing to say is what comes naturally to you.
  - Would you have some time to join me and my friends at my place to discuss tourism in Byron Shire? It will be a great opportunity for Council to hear our opinions on what matters to us.
  - I’d like to invite you to have your say on tourism in the Byron Shire. Would you join me and a group of my friends to discuss where tourism is going and what we can do to make the best of our Shire?

Step 4  RSVPs

**RSVP and Reminders:** It’s always helpful to ask people to confirm that they are attending, and to send them a reminder a day or so before the event. It’s a great time to advise your guests to bring their reading glasses and iPad/tablet/laptop, if needed.
Step 5  Additional Information to Make Your Discussion Go Smoothly

Additional considerations:

- **Why should you and your friends be involved?** Of course, we know that Byron Shire has a highly engaged community and so we expect many people want to have a say in the future of tourism in the Shire. Tourism does impact everyone, in some way, so it is important that we all contribute.

- **Catering:** Do you want your guests to bring a plate? Check with them if they have a food allergy.

- **Questions and comments before the Discussion:** That’s great! It’s nice to see that your guests are interested in the subject. We suggest that you ask them to remember their points and to raise them again with the group at the Kitchen Table Discussion.

- **How to manage conflicting views:** Don’t worry about inviting people who you know have conflicting views. Again, we encourage robust and interesting discussions, and each guest is responsible for recording their own feedback, so it’s ok to have a difference of opinion. However make sure you set the ground rules at the commencement of the Discussion, so that everyone realises that they need to be respectful.

- **Time/overall commitments:** You will need to set time aside to invite your guests, send them information, follow up with them and of course, host the Discussion. We suggest that you plan at least two hours to host the meeting.

- **Posting photos of your Discussion:** Make sure you get permission from everyone and also don’t forget to post them on the Byron Shire Council Facebook site https://www.facebook.com/byronshire.council/ or if you want to send them direct to us for inclusion in the final report, then send them to tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au along with permission for us to include in our report.

- **Getting more Handbooks:** We have prepared packs of 8 printed copies of the Handbook, so that each person you invite can have their own feedback pages. Please contact the Tourism Team if you need more copies, otherwise use this link to download a PDF www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Business/Business-in-Byron/Tourism.

We hope we have covered everything, but we will be updating the Council website regularly if there are any further hints or tips. www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Business/Business-in-Byron/Tourism.
Step 6: Kitchen Table Discussion Preparation Details and Checklist

Host Name:
Date of Discussion:
Time and Location:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Attendance (y/n)</th>
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Checklist
- [ ] Sent out invitations
- [ ] RSVPs back
- [ ] Stopwatch/smart phone
- [ ] Food & drinks organised
- [ ] Dietary requirements
- [ ] Handbooks received or downloaded
- [ ] Wi-Fi password
- [ ] Guests reminded of what to bring: reading glasses; iPads/tablet/laptop; pen & paper
- [ ] Chairs/seats
- [ ] Permission to take photos

Additional information:
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this Kitchen Table Discussion on the future of tourism in Byron Shire. We will use this Handbook as a guide throughout the process as it contains data, opinions from stakeholders and discussion questions. Let's make sure we all turn to this page as we will have some reading to do in the next section.

Why has Council asked us to meet and talk about tourism in Byron Shire? Well the main reason is that Council is developing a new 10 year plan for sustainable tourism management in the Shire, and must capture the opinions of as many people from within our community as possible.

Stage 2 - Time to Talk

Discussion Procedure

This is the main part of the engagement and so this stage comprises a number of sections and instructions to make the delivery easy. What you’ll see:

- Instructions that appear in boxes are for the host to follow
- Information and data about tourism and tourism topics in Byron Shire
- Stakeholder comments
- Spaces for the host and participants to record their individual comments (this can also be done online by going to www.surveymonkey.com/r/TalkingTourismByron19 online survey).

If you are the host, you will need to follow the instructions and if you are a participant, then you follow the lead of your host. Let’s go!

Step 1 Welcoming Your Guests

Instruction
Meet and greet your guests and have everyone introduce themselves. Ensure that all guests are settled, have a drink, food, Wi-Fi, pens and a copy of this Kitchen Table Discussion Handbook.

Step 2 Overview And Introduction

Instruction
Host to read the following section to ensure that all key information has been conveyed to your guests. Ensure that people have turned to this page in their Handbook.
The other reason is for Council to provide an up-to-date picture of where tourism is now and where it is heading into the future; the data, trends and facts.

Before we get into the detail, let’s establish some ground rules so that this experience is a positive one for everyone with the aim of the discussion time to ‘understand a view’ rather than win the argument.

**Duration:** Stick to the time allocations and meeting finish time. As the host, I will keep everyone to time. Perhaps 3 to 4 minutes per person per topic.

**Read, discuss and record:** For every topic there will be information to read, a discussion and then time to record your thoughts.

**Open-mindedness and acceptance:** A discussion is a two-way street and requires everyone to respectively listen and share their views.

**Curiosity:** Seek to understand rather than persuade. If someone expresses a point of view that seems different from yours, see if you can ask some questions to gain clarity or understanding.

**Discovery:** Kitchen Table Discussions are designed to expose us to new ideas or possibly even to help us see old ideas in a new way.

**Sincerity:** Speak from your heart and personal experience.

**Be brief:** Go for honesty but don’t “go on and on”. Your time ends when your time is up.

**Take turns:** One person at a time, without speaking over the top of someone else.

With that brief introduction and established guidelines, let’s start. In your own time, read the next section.

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Byron Shire is one of Australia’s most well loved tourist destinations – 4th most visited in NSW (Tourism Research Australia, 2018). The love affair just keeps growing. Tourism increased drastically over the last three years, with a 60% increase, swelling the annual visitation figures to over 2 million people (Tourism Research Australia, 2018). The reality of these rapidly increasing tourist numbers has its own share of opportunities and challenges for you in our community.

Your contribution through this Kitchen Table Discussion will help Council to understand your opinion and make sure that your voice is heard. All feedback from our community engagement will be used to inform the Community Solutions Panel and ultimately the Sustainable Visitation Strategy. For more information what a Community Solutions Panel is, see page 4.
Why a Sustainable Visitation Strategy?

Our community has told us that sustainability is a priority, so we need a tourism plan that enables Council to deliver this. A Sustainable Visitation Strategy introduces the concept of sustainable tourism as a basis for decision-making within Byron Shire. The outcome will be initiatives that aim to maximise the benefits to environment, community, culture and business while minimising the negative impacts of over-tourism.

Many environmentally sensitive councils in Australia are moving to a Sustainable Visitation framework which is administered and certified by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). For more information on the GSTC go to www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/.

The four key destination standards covering the 41 different criteria are:

1. Demonstrate sustainable destination management;
2. Maximise economic benefits to the host community and minimise economic impacts;
3. Maximise benefits to communities, visitors, and culture; minimise negative impacts;
4. Maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts.

The natural influx of tourists to the Shire has had a range of positive and negative impacts for our local community. Council holds a strong position on sustainability and wishes to extend this to tourism management in order to achieve a balance between the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Community engagement is key to the development of the Strategy. Council will be running a number of engagement activities including Kitchen Table Discussions, online forums, workshops, focus groups and all culminating in a Community Solutions Panel.

What is a Kitchen Table Discussion?

Kitchen Table Discussions are informal opportunities for people to discuss and explore, with friends, relatives, colleagues and peers, important issues and, in a structured way, to capture and provide feedback to Council. We are not looking for a ‘vote’, or for agreement. You may have ideas, suggestions or solutions and we are interested in hearing these. You may all agree with each other or hold quite different views – that is okay. We are a diverse and varied community who is engaged and passionate about where we live.

The list of topics for discussion came from a number of sources including the 2018-28 Byron Council Community Strategic Plan community engagement, tourism workshops in May 2018 and the Sustainable Visitation Strategy criteria and they also happen to include a couple of the current hot issues.

The six topics include:

1. Tourism in Byron Shire: the Facts, Figures and Trends
2. Economy & Infrastructure: Benefits and Impacts
3. Culture: Maintaining the Vibe.
4. Our Unique Environment: Protecting and Respecting
5. Events: Local, Emerging, Celebrations and Global Festivals
6. Short-Term Rental Accommodation (Holiday Letting)

Instruction: Everyone to stop reading here and Host ask if everyone is ok with the information provided so far and have everyone ready to move to the first topic. As host you can either read each topic out to your guests or have them read it. It's totally up to you.
Tourism in Byron Shire: the Facts, Figures and Trends

As you read through these facts and figures, please consider the following question:

Discussion Question One

Which of these statistics interested you the most and why?

Byron Shire has a history of over 100 years as a tourist destination. Daytrippers were first attracted to the area in the early 1900s, with camping and caravanning holidays becoming popular from 1930s. From the 1960s surfers were attracted to our shores by the excellent surfing conditions.

From the mid-1980s tourism and development activity increased rapidly, and in 2017/18, the Shire welcomed over 2 million visitors. The popularity of Byron Shire as a tourist destination, along with its attractiveness as a sea change locality has placed strains on the Shire’s infrastructure and services. Our residents are understandably concerned about this. The tourism and business sectors also support the need for a coordinated and strategic approach to the challenges our Shire is facing.

In order to fully appreciate tourism in our Shire, here are some statistics and analysis on our tourism industry.

- In 2016/17, Tourism and Hospitality generated 23% of Byron’s jobs (3,506 jobs) and 14.1% of output/sales ($463M) in 2016/17. As a sector it is Byron’s largest employer.
- Output and jobs generated by the sector were equivalent to Coffs Harbour which has an economy ($3.24B) and population (74,641) more than double Byron’s ($1.56B; 32,790).
- In 2017/18, Byron was estimated to have had 2.0 million visitors.
- Half of Byron’s visitors stay overnight (domestic and international), compared to only 37% for the NSW as a whole, totalling 4 million visitor nights.
- If the same methodology is applied to all LGAs, Byron’s ‘serviceable population’ is greater than Orange, Bathurst and Lismore.
- The cost of servicing this temporary population is estimated at $23 million per year.
- Recent growth has outpaced the state’s. Between 2014 and 2018, total visitation was estimated to have grown by 49%, compared to 11% for NSW.
- Daytrippers increased by 74% over the last decade, and domestic overnight visitors grew by 57%.
- Byron’s visitation is similar to much larger cities such as Launceston and Townsville.
- Byron has similar visitation to tourist destinations like the Great Ocean Road, but four times the amount of international visitors stay overnight.
- Byron Bay is the 4th most visited destination in NSW and the 11th most visited in Australia amongst international visitors.
- Ballina Byron Gateway Airport caters to half a million passengers each year and over the last five years was the fastest growing airport amongst Australia’s top 20.
- International visitor nights are forecast to grow by 900,000 over the next decade, domestic nights by 700,000.
- Private rental accommodation is more commonly used by visitors in Byron than elsewhere in NSW. In the three years to 2016/17, 17% of domestic overnight visitors used rental properties, double most benchmarks. Byron has more Airbnb listings than all but three Greater Sydney LGAs.
Substantial growth in domestic visitors

Day-trippers grew by 74% in the last decade, and domestic overnight visitors grew by 57%. International visitors haven’t grown by as much.

International visitor nights forecast to grow by 900,000 over the next decade, domestic nights by 700,000

Instruction
Host to ask question one on the feedback form and offer your opinion first for this question. Remember to keep to time, and then invite each to speak for a short time. Guests should then turn to the back of your booklet (page 27) or online to record their feedback.
Tourism and hospitality generated 23% of Byron’s jobs (3,506 jobs) and 14.1% of output/sales ($463M) in 2016/17 (total $1.7B). As a sector it is Byron’s largest employer.

As you read through these facts and figures, please consider the following question:

What changes around the Shire, that are tourism driven, have you experienced? Have these changes impacted you, and if so how?
Where does the visitors dollar go?

We know that the impacts of visitor spend is much wider than typically perceived tourist businesses such as accommodation providers or tour operators. Visitors use a variety of services such as supermarkets, restaurants, cafes, bars, petrol stations and even local retail. This creates jobs and supports our local economy.

The cost of servicing the visitor economy is estimated at $23 million per year. Council has been tackling the imbalance of 2 million plus visitors versus around 15,000 ratepayers for some time. We hear from our community that they have concerns about lack of public transport, potholes in our roads, the general wear and tear on our parks, beaches and public amenities. Congestion during peak periods also has a social cost; a 5 minute traffic delay in Byron Bay could generate almost $10,000 per day in travel time costs.

Community infrastructure includes much of the Shire’s critical infrastructure and essential services which are provided and maintained by Council. It includes water, sewerage, waste, roads, pathways drainage, open space and buildings and are used every day by homes and business alike. In some areas, Council does not have the resources to maintain assets at the level expected by the community. This includes roads, stormwater assets and buildings.

The NSW State Government has not supported Byron Shire’s request to introduce a ‘bed tax’ or a business levy (as the Gold Coast or Noosa have). Council has developed its own Byron Shire Visitor Fund. The Fund plans to collect set amounts from accommodation providers, as well as major festivals. The fund is up and running from January 2019 and the contributions have started to roll in. The Fund is a voluntary scheme for organisations and it’s based on a simple idea: if every visitor left an additional dollar or two, millions could be raised for community projects. Council has no legal way to make the scheme mandatory.
What is Council’s resolved position?

Council resolved at the Ordinary meeting held August, 2018 the following:
18-556
- That Council initiate a Voluntary Visitor Fund utilising the framework and governance structure - which shows Council as the administrator of the fund, with an industry led Steering Committee.

Council resolved at the Ordinary meeting held December 2018 the following:
18-842
- Note the update on the Voluntary Visitor Fund with the following amendment to the fee structure:
  Festivals - $1 per ticket per day.

Below are some opinions of stakeholders in relation to the current and future position of tourism in Byron Shire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carly Wieland</th>
<th>Mick Webb</th>
<th>Michael Thurston</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballina Byron Gateway Airport</td>
<td>Byron Visitor Centre</td>
<td>Destination North Coast</td>
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The key to blending the needs of locals and avoiding a situation where locals are ‘anti-tourism’ in our opinion is the investment by the Shire in attracting and marketing to the ‘right’ type of visitor. Using a mix of events that attract different demographics and building on the already strong brand the destination has, will ensure that both tourism and locals happily co-exist.

Through leadership in tourism and investing in marketing and branding in partnership with existing and new tourism related businesses, the Shire can promote positive tourism experiences and destination management.

The issue of Byron becoming a victim of its own success is very real and prevalent - especially in recent years. Without some form of management plan to mitigate the increasing numbers of visitors and the effect this has on infrastructure, community morale etc, tourism in Byron Shire will, in my opinion, begin to have a very detrimental effect on the area on the whole - resulting in not only a negatively affected tourism industry but a flow on of consequences for the local population as well.

Clearly identifying target markets and shaping the visitor experience to suit these audiences will ensure the right mix of visitors.

The optimum mix of high value international markets, business event visitors and domestic tourists will deliver visitors more sustainably throughout the year and increase the value of the visitor economy without having to increase the quantity of visitors to the shire.

Instruction
Host to guide the opinions and discussion. Remember to keep to time, and then invite each to speak for a short time. Then turn to the back of your booklet (page 27) to complete your feedback or go to the online survey.
Byron Shire has a dynamic culture that is unique to the region and Australia; one that attracts new residents and visitors each year. Byron Bay and its hinterland are internationally renowned for community, creativity and connection to place. With this attraction and growth comes the challenge of meeting the needs of a diverse community. This includes access to and supporting local services and facilities and helping to ensure other levels of government provide the Shire with education, health, transport and other services.

Culture in the Byron Shire is the expression of the history, heritage, customs, arts, recreation, sport, creativity and values of a community. The community is diverse and colourful, which is why people love to visit. Each town, rural village and their localities have their own distinctiveness and mix of cultural values; embracing both traditional and alternative lifestyles and philosophies. There is strong respect for Aboriginal heritage and custodianship, and the value in understanding our link to country.

The Discussion Question for this final topic is, as per below:

Discussion Question Three

What do you consider to be the key values that make people want to visit Byron Shire? Do you have examples where tourists reflect or not, those values in their behaviour?
One of our challenges is how to preserve our culture while encouraging our visitors to engage and interact with us.

Byron Bay, in particular, is well-known for its nightlife and bars. This leads to issues related to noise, anti-social behaviour and crime while being a fun and attractive place to “party”.

Byron Shire is also becoming the Northern Rivers hub for clean, green produce and food. This supports small farms, spray-free and organic horticulture that lives alongside macadamia and dairy farms.

Below are the opinions of stakeholders who engage with our visitors on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sharon Sloane</strong></th>
<th><strong>Detective Inspector Matt Kehoe,</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bundjalung of Byron Bay</td>
<td>Byron Bay Police Station,</td>
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<td>Aboriginal Corporation (Arakwal)</td>
<td>Tweed Byron Police District</td>
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<td><strong>BOBBAC (Arakwal) feels that tourism is</strong></td>
<td>Presently I see tourism going in a</td>
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<td>an important part of the economy here</td>
<td>direction that encourages home owners to rent out their homes or rooms</td>
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<td>locally and that tourism benefits the</td>
<td>for significant sums of money whilst failing to consider their</td>
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<td>community by ways of income creation</td>
<td>neighbours and the broader community. I don’t see such a trend as</td>
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<td>and generation of jobs, although Byron</td>
<td>sustainable as there will be increasing anti social issues within</td>
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<td>is not affordable for most to live in.</td>
<td>the Byron township and disharmony within the communities these tourists</td>
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<td>The negative to tourism is the town’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>divided social classes and that tourism is</td>
<td>a future positive direction for tourism within our shire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than likely the major cause as well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as deterioration of the environment for our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>area in which we live.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dylan Orchard,</strong></td>
<td>Tourism in our shire is on the rise and if it is left to rapidly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW State Emergency Service -</td>
<td>grow the tourism industry could become like the Gold Coast,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone North</td>
<td>except without providing the necessary infrastructure for Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and local Emergency Services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instruction**

Host to guide the opinions and discussion. Remember to keep to time, and then invite each to speak for a short time. Then turn to the back of your booklet (page 27) to complete your feedback or on-line survey.
Byron Shire is one of the most environmentally rich and diverse regions for fauna and flora in Australia. A combination of high rainfall and mild climatic conditions and variation in topography, geology and altitude support a range of ecosystems and landscape features: forests, grasslands, creeks and rivers, paper bark swamps, mangroves and wetlands, coastal dune systems, sandy and rocky cove beaches and headlands. These are all prime environments for tourists, surfers, bloggers, businesses and celebrities.

Council is developing the Net Zero Emissions Strategy for Byron Council Operations 2025 and within this framework opportunities for industry to engage and innovate is highlighted. By Council moving to a Sustainable Visitation Strategy, the tourism sector will have the opportunity to gain certification and promote the destination as sustainable for responsible tourists. Byron Shire will then be identified as a ‘responsible tourism’ destination which in essence:

- minimizes negative impacts on the economy, environment and society
- generates economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life changes
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural, social and cultural heritage
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- provides access for people with disabilities and the disadvantaged; and
- is culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.

For more information visit www.gstcouncil.org/for-travelers/.
Byron Shire Council has already taken a number of steps down the path to carbon neutrality and 100% renewable energy. To date, Council has installed over 215kw of solar on its assets and has plans to install a further 7.8MW. Other key projects include electric vehicle charging station and strategy, a bike plan, as well as support for Community Gardens and food grown on footpaths. Council also supports sustainability events such as Renew Fest, World Environment Day and Sustainable House Day.

We need to find a balance, to encourage visitors to engage with our natural environment without causing damage, and ideally to be able to sustain and improve our environment.

What is Council’s resolved position?

**Council resolved at the Ordinary meeting held March, 2017 the following:**
17-086
- To achieve 100% net zero emissions by 2025 in collaboration with Zero Emissions Byron (ZEB)
- Sourcing 100% of its energy through renewable sources within the next 10 years (2027).

**Council resolved at the Ordinary meeting held October, 2018 the following:**
18-680
- To declare that we are in a State of Climate Emergency that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including by local councils.
- To develop a Shire-wide Community Climate Emergency Plan to further enhance resilience and reduce climate impacts in a timeframe that is as fast as practicably possible.

**Instruction**
Host to guide the opinions and discussion. Remember to keep to time, and then invite each to speak for a short time. Now turn to the back of your booklet (page 27) or online survey to complete your feedback.
Byron has become a favourite destination for weddings and events. World class events attracting hundreds of thousands of attendees and weddings bring large numbers of visitors to our Shire. More than 5% of Byron’s domestic visitors come to Byron to attend an event. In the three years to 2017/18, Byron supported an estimated 3.3% of the states events-based trips, including 8.3% of events-based overnight travel.

With the success of such events as Splendour in the Grass, Bluesfest, Falls Festival, Byron Writers Festival, Mullum Music Festival and the Byron International Film Festival, the choice for locals and visitors is year-round and world class. These larger festivals and events have created an environment that has fostered the emergence of an active creative scene.

Events travel is a key market for Byron

More than 5% of Byron’s domestic visitors come to Byron to attend an event.

In the three years to 2017/18, Byron supported an estimated:

- **3.3%** of NSW’s events based trips, including
- **8.3%** of NSW’s events based overnight travel

This has a significant positive impact on our region as well as providing residents with world-class acts on our doorstep which leads to an unmatched local creative scene. Many household names in music, arts, film and entertainment live and perform in our region. Events also provide a wide-range of jobs and other economic benefits to our small and medium sized enterprises.

These events can bring with them noise and environmental pollution, antisocial behaviour, increased need for accommodation and a burden on existing services and infrastructure. Unlicensed events and activities also add to this mix with the need for compliance action.

In addition to entertainment-based events, with the introduction of the Byron Business Events Bureau in 2017, Byron Bay in particular, is now considered one of the key locations for the meetings and conferencing market. Corporates fill the gap in the mid-week and out of season accommodation and tourism product market.
What is Council’s resolved position?

Council resolved at the Ordinary meeting held June, 2018 the following:

18-404

Forward the Planning Proposal with the following amendment to 6(10) 2 (c) and (d), to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment for a Gateway determination, to amend Byron Local Environmental Plan 2014 to permit function centres in the RU2 Rural Landscape Zone with development consent and subject to appropriate controls relating to site suitability and management.

- 6(10) 2 (c) ensure that all amplified music will cease no later than 8.00pm; and
- 6(10) 2 (d) ensure that all event attendees will be off-site no later than 8.30pm; and

In keeping with the commitment to value, protect and enhance farming in the Shire, not proceed with allowing function centres in the RU1 Primary Produce Zone.

Agree that staff can proceed to public exhibition of the Planning Proposal and government agency consultation based on the Gateway determination issued by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, and report back to Council as part of post-exhibition reporting.

Investigate the possibility of implementing a registration system for approved rural function centres, and report back to Council as part of the post-exhibition reporting.

Below is a snapshot of the different views regarding events in the Shire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mat Morris</th>
<th>Jane Magnus</th>
<th>Anonymous Community Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Byron Parklands</td>
<td>Byron Bay Luxury Weddings</td>
<td>Submission received as part of Rural Wedding Community Engagement 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Festivals play an integral role in the promotion of music and arts, and are responsible for attracting many people to the Shire to attend these events. Many residents are either directly or indirectly dependant on flow-on effects from tourism, however it is recognised that negative impacts can be experienced by some residents if the sector is not well managed.

The wedding industry plays an important role to allow sustainable living for small business and our young local employees in the way of hospitality jobs in particular. Accommodation owners benefit from longer stays and greater spending. However we need to have certainty for our industry and we need to learn how to co-exist; the events industry and the community.

When a wedding occurs on a given weekend trucks start arriving days prior to the event to set up catering, marquees, sound systems etc. On the day of the wedding there are potentially hundreds of people arriving. There’s noise in the evening and into the night from buildings and tents spreads over a wide area disrupting everyone for miles around. In the following days there is more traffic to pack everything up. The on-site sewage systems on rural properties are not set up to cope with the added use by hundreds of people which will result in pollution of our waterways. Many of the roads are single lane, unsealed and pot-holed, and are inadequate for the traffic they have to deal with now and cannot safely cope with all the extra traffic.

Instruction

Host to guide the opinions and discussion. Remember to keep to time, and then invite each to speak for a short time. Then complete your feedback.
Short-term rental accommodation is the leasing of residential properties for the purpose of temporary holiday accommodation for visitors, which until a few years ago was mainly approved properties managed by real estate agencies. This now includes many unapproved properties listed through online platforms such as Airbnb and Stayz. These platforms and the listings were the most divisive and inflammatory issue raised at our engagement workshops in May 2018.

Holiday letting is not a new issue. Council resolutions, brought about due to the rise in complaints, on the subject of short-term rental accommodation date back to 2003. Complaints then included:

- prohibited development in residential areas
- loss of neighbourhood amenity
- noise and antisocial behaviour, particularly from late-night parties
- excessive numbers of people and cars
- cars blocking driveways
- traffic impeding visibility and traffic movement
- excess or poorly managed garbage and bins.

Of course, visitor numbers have increased dramatically since 2003, and with this, the impact that short term letting is having on our Shire is affecting more and more residents with on average an additional 11,100 overnight visitors staying in the Shire every night.

Private rental accommodation is more commonly used by visitors in Byron than elsewhere in NSW. In the three years to 2016/17, 17% of domestic overnight visitors used rental properties. Byron has more Airbnb listings (almost 3,000) than all but three Greater Sydney Local Government Areas. It clearly shows that visitors to Byron enjoy staying in homes and homesharing near the beach or in the hinterland.

The Shire’s accommodation industry is estimated to generate almost $100m year. However, it is estimated to have less registered accommodation providers and bed spaces (hotels, hostels, caravan parks) than other areas. Private Airbnb listings generate considerable revenue that is not necessarily able to be taxed under traditional rate based methods and therefore contribute to servicing costs.

According to Inside Airbnb data, Airbnb listings in Byron Shire likely generated almost $62.7m in revenue in 2017/18. This compares to only $15.6M for Tweed Shire.
Other issues linked to short-term holiday letting include a high level of unoccupied homes; upward pressure on house prices and rental rates; the removal of housing stock from long-term rental to short-term; traffic issues; impacts on infrastructure and waste; and the high costs associated with servicing up to three times the permanent population.

Council has considered and lobbied the state government on the issue of holiday letting for a number of years, and most recently at the 21 June and 22 November 2018 meetings.


Most recently on 15 February 2019, in recognition of the high concentration and unique impacts of short-term rental accommodation on some parts of Byron Shire, the Minister for Planning and Housing issued Ministerial Direction (3.7). This Direction invites Council to prepare a Planning Proposal to amend our Local Environmental Plan. The proposal could introduce a 90 day threshold in the most impacted areas of the Shire where the host does not reside in the premises during the provision of the accommodation. Council will be preparing the Planning Proposal in the coming months and this will include impact assessment and consultation with affected communities and property owners.

Despite the issues surrounding holiday letting, we have many friends and family that lease their homes on a temporary basis for additional income and recognise the benefits that this brings us and our local economy.

If you would like to read more about the impacts of holiday letting in Byron Shire and Australia, the following research provides further insights:


Below are some opinions of stakeholders in relation to short-term rental accommodation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colin Hussey</th>
<th>David Jones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Perfect Stay Holiday Lets</td>
<td>Destination Byron</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is little doubt that Byron could be “loved to death” and the Short Term Rental industry is part of an overall solution to the accommodation demand allowing us to maintain our village atmosphere and continue to keep development appropriate to our towns.

Un-controlled short-term holiday letting remains the Shire’s greatest threat to community vitality. The Shire will need a collective approach to avoiding the gentrification and homogenisation of its visitor economy.

Instruction

Host to guide the opinions and discussion. It is important that your guests understand that we are after different perspectives on this issue, therefore try and direct the question into new or different perspectives. Remembering to keep to time, invite everyone to speak for a short time. Then turn to the back of your booklet (page 27) to complete your response or go to the online survey to record your individual feedback.

Thank you for your feedback on these important topics that impact the future of our community.
Thanks

Thank you for hosting this important community engagement activity. It is important for Council to speak to as many of our community members as possible. Your contribution is valued.

Instruction

So now you’ve done all the hard work, make sure you collect all the printed responses from your guests and put them into the reply paid envelope, or make sure that those guests submitting their responses electronically have completed them.

Make Sure Your Opinion Counts

Important information about returning the feedback form – so that they arrive BEFORE the 14th of April 2019:

1. Send feedback via online submission www.surveymonkey.com/r/TalkingTourismByron19
2. Use the pre-paid envelope that came with your pack to send back the printed feedback forms
3. If you want scan and email to tourism@byron.nsw.gov.au
4. If you have a response that you need to mail back individually post it to:

   **Kitchen Table Tourism Discussion**
   Byron Shire Council
   PO Box 219
   Mullumbimby NSW 2482

What’s next?

Below is the checklist to make sure you have covered everything:

- Follow up with thanks to your guests and provide a link to the Council ‘Have Your Say’ section.
- Encourage your guests to host their own Kitchen Table Discussion with another group of family or friends
- Send us your photos, so we can include them on Facebook and in our report.

The information you provided to Council will remain confidential, and will now be collated into a report that will inform a Community Solutions Panel and the Byron Shire Sustainable Visitation Strategy 2020-2030.

We look forward to communicating the next steps and outcomes of the engagement with you, and the Byron Council’s website will be kept up-to-date.
www.surveymonkey.com/r/TalkingTourismByron19

Instruction
Remove these pages from the back of this book, and send back in the enclosed postage paid envelope.

1. **Topic One: Tourism in Byron Shire: the Facts, Figures and Trends**
   Which of these statistics interested you the most and why?

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

2. **Topic Two: Economy and Infrastructure: Benefits and Impacts**
   What changes around the Shire, that are tourism driven, have you experienced?
   Have these changes impacted you, and if so how?

   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
3. **Topic Three: Culture: Maintaining the Vibe**
What do you consider to be the key values that make people want to visit Byron Shire?
Do you have examples where tourists reflect or not, those values in their behaviour?

4. **Topic Four: Our Unique Environment**
What can Council do to encourage visitors to respect our environment?
5. **Topic Five: Events: Local, Emerging, Celebrations and Global Festivals**
What’s needed to balance the interest of community and those who run and attend events?


6. **Topic Six: Short-Term Rental Accommodation (Holiday Letting)**
Do you have another perspective on the Short-Term Rental Accommodation discussion that has not been covered? If so, what is it?
We would also like to hear any other views you have regarding tourism in Byron Shire, so please use this space to collate your thoughts.

Complete the following information in order to go into the draw to WIN Bluesfest VIP passes.*

See back page for details on how to enter.

Full Name:
Email: Phone:

* required for entry into draw
If you would like to read further on any of the topics raised, then here is a list of documents used to develop this Discussion Guide.

- **Byron Shire Council – Tourism Scale and Impact Analysis November 2018 by idProfile**
- **Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)**: [www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/](www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/)
- **Kitchen Table Discussions Explained**: [participedia.net/en/methods/kitchen-table-conversations](participedia.net/en/methods/kitchen-table-conversations)

NB: links correct at 4 February 2019
By participating in a discussion on tourism, and submitting your completed feedback to us by 14 April 2019, you will be entered into a draw to win two one-day VIP passes plus parking to Bluesfest 2019.* LTPS/19/32367

These special tickets give you access to the Bluesfest VIP Lounge - enjoy the ambience of Bluesfest in the VIP Lounge, relax on comfortable lounges, purchase premium drinks straight over the counter and have access to extra restrooms. It’s the ultimate chill out area, the perfect place to hang out and also enjoy the secluded garden area.
