



# FLINDERS ISLAND

Destination Action Plan 2018-2021

October 2018



# Acknowledgements

The development of the Flinders Island Destination Plan has been facilitated by Tourism Northern Tasmania (TNT) with the support of the Department of State Growth and in partnership with Flinders Island Business Inc (FIBI) and Flinders Council.

The process brought together representatives from all stakeholder groups that benefit from the visitor economy; local government, state government agencies, industry and the community, to develop a plan. This Plan seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Flinders Island and to establish achievable affordable priorities that if delivered would increase Flinders Island competitiveness.

Specifically, we would like to thank the individuals that participated in the plan development process:

## Facilitator

Chris Griffin, CEO – Tourism Northern Tasmania

## Coordinator

Sonia Mellor – Tourism Northern Tasmania

## Destination Action Plan participants

### Flinders Island Business Inc

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### Flinders Council

Peter Rhodes  
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### Nautilus

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### Flinders Island District High School

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### Palana Retreat

Daryl Butler

### Flinders Island Cabin Park

Mick Rose

### Belinda's on Flinders

\*Belinda Quick

### Faraway

\*Andrew Thomson

### Parks and Wildlife Service

\*Wayne Dick

The Leadership Group self-nominated and \*indicates a commitment to an on-going role. New members will also be welcomed.

## Destination Action Plan Review participants (March 2018)

### Flinders Island Business Inc

Michael Buck  
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### Flinders Council

Gerald Willis  
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# Introduction

Tourism Northern Tasmania is supporting the Destination Action Plan process for Flinders Island in recognition of the potential of the region, and to build on the key pillars of the Northern Tasmanian Destination Management Plan.

The Destination Action Plans are an implementation initiative of the *Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy 2015-2020 (T21): Priority #4: Building capability, capacity and community*.

A core strategy is to recognise that visitors to the region are primarily attracted to destinations and experiences. Therefore, the development, marketing and management of the region's destinations are pivotal to the success of the whole region.

The Destination Action Plan for Flinders Island identifies priority strategies and actions which if implemented over three years will enhance competitiveness of Flinders Island as a primary visitor destination of the region. These strategies will also facilitate regional collaboration and cooperation.

The Plan has been prepared by a facilitated workshop process involving business and community representatives who considered and reached consensus on tourism development, marketing and management opportunities and challenges. The group then identified and agreed on the key priorities and actions that would make a positive difference to the growth and sustainability of the Flinders Island visitor economy and experience.

# Objectives

The common objectives for tourism are:

1. To increase visitor numbers
2. To increase visitor length of stay
3. To increase visitor expenditure
4. To increase visitor dispersal (geographically and seasonally)
5. To increase visitor satisfaction.

## The visitor economy

Indicator of performance	Year end January 2014	Growth comparison vs 2008-2009 period
<b>Visitor numbers</b>	5,692	+24%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holiday</li> <li>▪ Business/working</li> <li>▪ Visiting friends and relatives</li> <li>▪ Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36%</li> <li>31%</li> <li>26%</li> <li>7%</li> </ul>	
<b>Visitor nights</b>	34,500	+28%
<b>Average length of stay</b>	6 nights	
<b>Average spend per visitor</b>	\$546	
<b>Visitor expenditure</b>	\$3.1 million (\$5.1 million including airfares)	+2%*

\*Although comparisons are possible from the previous surveyed period of 2008-09, caution must be used when interpreting these given variations in survey methodology.

Additional insights for 2018 were gained by surveying 833 passengers on Sharp Airlines:

- 37% of visitors were from Tasmania; 35% from Victoria; 13% from NSW; 7% from Queensland; 1% from WA; and 3% from overseas

The majority of visitors (73%) stated they would return to Flinders Island within the next two years.



## Statistics and general description of Flinders Island

Flinders Island within the Furneaux group is known as a place to escape to – an inspiring world of sparkling beaches, rugged ranges, abundant wildlife and flora and clear sapphire waters. It is a ‘complete nature-based destination’ that is different to any other island in Australia. With a temperate maritime climate throughout the year, Flinders Island has much to offer with activities such as walking trails, art, culture, history, boating, climbing, fishing, and local events.

Flinders Island is one of Australia’s largest islands. Located in Bass Strait and approximately 60 kms from Cape Portland in Tasmania and approximately a 1 hour flight from Wilson Promontory in Victoria. Whilst covering 1,333 square kms, Flinders Island is home to only 800 residents.

Being an Island ‘off an Island’ offers significant everyday barriers to residents and visitors and although serviced by a weekly sea freight and a regular passenger transport (RPT) service from Launceston and Essendon, the cost of travel and frequency of travel services from Essendon have created some difficulties for the island community, restricting growth and potential investment. Flinders and King Islands are the most remote places in south-eastern Australia, listed by the Australian Standard Geographical Classification-Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA), and developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.



## Our collective strengths



- Wombats and wildlife
- Pristine environment
- Skin diving, swimming
- Rugged weather and geology
- Walking, hiking, recreation
- Destination with a difference
- Safety, peace and quiet
- Niche, clean and green
- Being an island
- Natural values
- Essential oil production
- Island lifestyle and spirit
- Landscape
- Unique history
- Lack of pretension
- Arts and crafts
- Parks and reserves
- Adventurous
- Diversity and quality of produce
- 120 deserted beaches
- Unique characters e.g. 'Lettuce Lady', 'John the Juggler'
- Events – Furneaux and Running Festivals, Music in the Vines
- Interesting people visit interesting places
- Celebration destination (weddings, big birthdays etc.)
- Contained total experience
- Indigenous history and culture
- Hunter gatherer community
- Rat race escapism
- Remoteness, isolation
- Crayfish and crayfishing
- Fishing, hunting and shooting
- Easily accessible
- Family friendly
- 52 islands
- Solitude, space and silence
- Farming community
- Escape/disruption/diversity
- Relatively inexpensive
- Undeveloped
- Time warp
- Birds – Ramsar (wetlands) site
- Sailing
- Rock-climbing
- Water producer.



## Vision for the future – 10 years time

- Clean here, polluted there
- Quality world-class nature based
- Improved facilities – swipe card fuel; amenities well cared for
- Café in the north
- A population of 1,200
- Unique island – community pride
- Strengths unchanged – better facilities
- Events and attractions – wider marketing
- Well organised, cohesive community
- Significant increased visitors
- Full range of accommodation – boutique to high-end
- Lady Barron – maritime display
- Pristine, peaceful escape
- Friendly people
- Larger accommodation and facilities – for groups, conferences etc.
- Safe harbour – Lady Barron
- Quality produce – crayfish
- Guided nature/adventure-based tourism and infrastructure
- Renowned food destination – chefs for hire
- Flinders Trail
- Unspoilt landscape
- Not lost its character
- Better access to technology – on demand
- Unique strengths
- Fabulous visitor centre
- Food availability, better access to it – world class product, enabling infrastructure
- Re-planning walks to be more user-friendly
- Education and training = visitor satisfaction
- Memorable, undamaged
- Palana Road – sealed
- Airport upgraded
- Leadership education at school/RTO – specific to the Island.



## Our challenges

- Snake-skin shoe investment
- Airport
- Support to PWS on Island
- Marketing of activities/opportunities
- Protecting environment
- Safe harbour
- Limited skilled staff
- Access to finance for development
- Cleaning staff support services
- 'not in my backyard' NIMBY
- Car hire availability
- Scale of ability to supply demand
- Accessibility of services
- Accommodation availability
- Staff housing/rentals hard to find
- Population decline
- Airfares & schedules
- Youth pathways to jobs
- Airbnb confusion
- Unsuitable/sustainable development
- Cheaper destinations
- People not talking about us
- Providing for diverse adventure visitor
- Becoming like everywhere else
- Winter season 'service'
- Crowded market
- No fresh fish
- Telecommunications, blackspots
- Mixed cost housing (Staff & others)
- Maintenance of essential services
- Limited supply of quality trades
- Roads – unsealed
- Passenger friendly ferry
- Brand management/damage.



## Our opportunities



- Marketing plan
- Weddings market
- Arts trail
- Laundry service – commercial/hospital
- Adventure experiences
- Café in the north
- Skills training, skills audit
- Wombat Interpretation Centre
- Agricultural experiences
- Cheese making
- Sea & land focussed skills transfer – traditional practices preserved
- Indigenous tourism experiences, Wyballena, FIAA
- Wildlife including maritime
- Daily fishing experience
- Outer islands experience development/basic & luxury
- Geo-trail (QR scans narrative)
- Contract labour firm 'jobs pool'
- High-end sustainable tourism development  
Small cruise ships
- Writer in residence
- Food hub – Island produce, kitchen facilities & shop
- More walking trails
- Events coordinator & event attraction
- Better use of internet for awareness
- Planetarium – night skies
- More access to food across Island
- Visitor welcome person & planning – concierge service
- Better internet access points
- Accommodation service providers – more info on renters
- Fish & game processing & sales
- Technology hub
- Personal shopper service/hampers
- Swipe card petrol station
- Investor & incentive service, and buying housing. 'match-making' service – interview service
- Marketing Island as privileged access.



## DIAGNOSTIC RATING

Industry research has established that the following factors are present in successful destinations that are achieving the above objectives. The workshop participants considered these factors relative to Flinders Island in reaching consensus on the priority strategies and actions. A focus on continuous improvement of all these factors will contribute to the competitive growth and sustainability of the visitor economy of Flinders Island.

## Success factors

Characteristics	Rating	Comments
1. Strong local organisations focused on their core role of visitor servicing.	7	Flinders Island Tourism & Business Inc (FIBI)
2. Strong regional organisations focused on their core role of regional marketing and development.	6	Tourism Northern Tasmania (TNT)
3. Local government support.	6	Flinders Council
4. Strong, consistent and effective leadership by individuals or organisations.	7	
5. Strategic planning for the region with economic, social, environmental and cultural objectives supported by local destination plans.	5	
6. Consistent visitor service excellence.	6	
7. Research driven cooperative marketing.	7	
8. A breadth and depth of tourism infrastructure, experiences and events matched to market demand.	6	
9. Risk management plans in place.	7	
10. Supportive communities which understand the value of tourism.	6	



## Action Plan implementation

The following Action Plan outlines priorities and actions as a guide for Flinders Island to collaboratively and cooperatively implement the Plan. To facilitate this, an Implementation Leadership Group of representatives will be formed. While the Plan identifies primary organisational responsibilities and, in many cases, joint responsibility, it is reasonable to expect that the Implementation Leadership Group will consider and review this progressively. One key consideration will be the availability and securing of resources to progress the implementation of the Plan in a timely manner. It may also be appropriate and necessary to involve other organisations and to seek funding for specific projects.

The Plan does not commit any organisation to the actions proposed but is a guide to pursuing priorities and actions which will make a positive difference to the achievement of the tourism objectives noted above.

The priority actions have been assigned a KPI priority rating as a guide. These ratings are:

<b>HIGH</b>	within the first year
<b>MEDIUM</b>	within one to two years
<b>LOW</b>	within three years

Progress of implementation of the Plan will be undertaken annually by Tourism Northern Tasmania in consultation with the Implementation Leadership Group. This may result in a revision and updating of the Plan. Regardless, a new plan will be prepared in three years.



## PRIORITY 1

### Marketing Flinders Island effectively

Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1. Publish visitor web app.	FIBI	High – ongoing
2. Update Flinders Island website.	FIBI	High – ongoing
3. Design and erect airport signage.	FIBI	High – ongoing
4. Publish promotional material for Island events.	FIBI	High – ongoing
5. Work with influencers and ambassadors of Flinders Island to generate awareness and excitement for our target audiences as well as growing local business.	FIBI	High – ongoing
6. Host visiting journalists to showcase a wide range of Island experiences.	FIBI	High – ongoing
7. Seek to resource the professional coordination of Flinders Island social media marketing. Develop a Targeted Digital Plan including website review, research social media target audiences and identify app.	FIBI	High – ongoing
8. Establish an ongoing visitor survey and accommodation monitoring program to gain insights from visitors and measure visitor satisfaction.	FIBI	High – ongoing



**PRIORITY 2**

Support sustainable Indigenous tourism development in the Furneaux Group

Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1. Invite Aboriginal communities to work together with FIBI to identify appropriate shared cultural activities/experiences that can be developed.	FIBI/Aboriginal communities	High



### PRIORITY 3

Improve visitor access to services, experiences and produce to meet demand

Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1. Co-ordinate information pack for visitors.	FIBI	High – Year 1
2. Co-ordinate visitor information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chefs for hire – liaise with accommodation providers to obtain list and make information readily available on website</li> <li>▪ Consolidate ‘go-to-points’ across Island – consistent information provision.</li> </ul>	FIBI	High – Year 1
3. Encourage the accessibility of food and drink across the Island, examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete Café in the North process. Consolidate and reinvigorate</li> <li>▪ Promote mobile coffee/food van services</li> <li>▪ Assess existing market offerings and explore options to compliment or add.</li> </ul>	Private sector to lead	Medium – Year 1-2
4. Explore options to increase availability of local produce.	FIBI	High – Year 1
5. Maximise benefits of new public WIFI services on the Island.	Council	High – Year 1
6. Continue to expand and improve current community cultural festivals such as the Furneaux Festival and others.	Council/FIBI/arts organisations	High – Year 1
7. Explore high school students working with filmmakers to tell ‘Flinders Stories’.	Council/FIBI/arts organisations	Medium – Year 2
8. Investigate impact of camping/campervans on the Island and suggest management measures including information packs.	FIBI	Medium – Year 2



## PRIORITY 4

### Increase the availability of housing on the Island for lease and sale

#### Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1. Undertake an audit of property for sale on the Island and review previous studies for land use.	Council/FIBI	High – ongoing
2. Identify barriers for properties being made available for lease.	FIBI/Council	High – Year 1
3. Investigate the potential for a property management service to ‘match-make’ potential tenants with property owners. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rent-to-buy schemes</li> <li>▪ Rent while on market.</li> </ul>	FIBI	Medium – Year 2
4. Investigate incentives for building new housing, and buying property including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attracting groups of investors to underwrite new developments.</li> </ul>	FIBI/Council	Medium – Year 2-3
5. Build on housing report when released and look at possible actions based on the outcomes.	FIBI/Council	Medium – Year 2



## PRIORITY 5

Optimising education, skills and services on the Island

### Actions

	Responsibility	Priority
1. Develop youth pathways to future career opportunities on the Island, through tailored vocational training in Year 10-12.	Flinders School	High – ongoing
2. Audit the skills of islanders in hospitality and retail sector and produce a yellow pages for the Island.	Council/FIBI	High – ongoing
3. Identify gaps in the Island's skilled staff pool and ways to fill these gaps through training islanders and attracting skilled workforce. Discuss adult education with High school to address skills shortages.	Council/Flinders School	Medium – Year 2
4. Investigate how contracted services such as gardening, cleaning, laundry etc. for tourism businesses can be operated sustainably.	FIBI/Council CDO	High – ongoing
5. Investigate leadership development opportunities.	FIBI	High – Year 1

## PRIORITY 6

### Attract the right investment for the Island

#### Actions

Actions	Responsibility	Priority
1. Lobby for key enabling visitor infrastructure such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sealing of roads critical to the Island's economic development, safety and visitor industries</li> <li>▪ Upgrade of the Flinders Island airport</li> <li>▪ Development of a safe harbour at Lady Barron</li> <li>▪ Upgrading telecommunications infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Upgrading PWS services and trails.</li> </ul>	FIBI/Council/ PWS	High – ongoing
2. Create criteria for suitable sustainable commercial development and appropriate locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review past investment and land use studies.</li> </ul>	Council/FIBI	Medium – Year 2
3. Provide incentives to mitigate financial and physical barriers for commercial development on the Island, examples of barriers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mortgage insurance premiums</li> <li>▪ Bank loan restrictions</li> <li>▪ Protracted construction time frames and costs</li> <li>▪ Contact Office of the Co-ordinator General re Mortgage insurance and guarantee arrangements with Government.</li> </ul>	Council	Medium – Year 2-3
4. Establish an investor broker role to source and then connect appropriate investors with the Island.	FIBI	Medium – Year 2
5. Raise funds to create investment funding between investor and bank.	FIBI	Medium – Year 2
6. Investigate ways for seafood to be caught, processed and sold on the Island, solutions to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishing a fishing game process business</li> <li>▪ Licensing an entity or operator to fish and sell the catch on the Island</li> <li>▪ Providing a subsidy for commercial producers to supply locally vs export market.</li> </ul>	FIBI/Council	High – Year 1
7. Establish a wombat interpretation centre that allows visitors a hands-on experience supporting the environmental values of the Island and creates educational opportunities.	PWS/FIBI	Medium – Year 2



**PRIORITY 7**

Support sustainability of tourism on the Island

Actions

Responsibility

Priority

1. Investigate making FI 'plastic bag free' including exploring potential funding to facilitate the initiative.	Council/FIBI	High
2. Encourage businesses to stop using plastic straws.	FIBI/Council	High
3. Investigate ways to reduce road-kill on the Island.	FIBI/Council	