



Tourism Development Strategy

A 5-year Action Plan

2014-19

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Introduction:

This Action Plan proposes a blueprint to guide the long-term sustainable planning and design of Kentish as a tourism destination, leading to growth of the Kentish tourism sector through the years 2014-2019.

The Plan assesses the current operating environment, proposes local objectives for this five-year period, then proposes a series of actions that achieve those objectives by leveraging existing assets and strengths, overcoming existing weaknesses and threats and developing new assets and strengths.

The goals and strategy were produced after community consultation, asset mapping, SWOT Analysis and data analysis of the industry in Kentish. Further, this Strategy embraces the *Cradle Coast Destination Management Plan*, and its objectives are aligned with the findings and objectives of that document. For data and assumptions, see *Kentish Economic Profile* (document 8).

This process resulted in six goals, to be achieved through the specific actions in this document.

Goals:

1. Develop the 5 pillars	2. Product development
3. Market development	4. Industry development
5. Visitor experience	6. Marketing

Actions:

<h3>1. Develop the 5 pillars</h3>
Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Grow and diversify the Kentish tourism industry based on five identified visitor experience types in which Kentish has a competitive advantage: Art, food, wilderness, history and adventure tourism.
Actions:
1. Art: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversify art experience into non-mural forms• Diversify mural experience, perhaps through different mural forms, mediums and subject matter• Explore new opportunities for local art and craft communities

- Improve monetary return from murals
- Develop local “art trail” including Railton, Sheffield, Wilmot and connect to Latrobe municipality

2. Food:

- Assist development of food and beverage-based tourism in product development, lobbying and marketing
- Support Cradle to Coast Tasting Trail and increase Kentish’s product offering within it
- Encourage farm gate experiences
- Encourage use of local food and beverages in region’s food and beverage outlets
- Assist to market Kentish’s food experiences

3. Wilderness/wildlife:

- Promote Kentish as having some of the most accessible wildlife in its natural environment, in Tasmania
- Increase and diversify means by which visitors can experience wilderness in Kentish
- Improve quality, signage and promotion of short walks and their destinations
- Assist development of new wilderness-based experiences
- Advance recommendations of *Mt Roland: Developing a Destination* report

4. History and culture:

- Assist development and diversification of Redwater Creek Steam & Heritage Railway into full-time historic-themed attraction
- Link and promote Kentish’s historic experiences: Sheffield Museum, Wilmot Museum, stories in murals, Dooleys Track, mining, pioneering forestry and turning bullocks in Railton’s main street, Redwater Creek Steam & Heritage Railway, aboriginal heritage, Weindorfer, highland trappers and cattlemen, geomorphology and Gondwana forests, Hydro electric scheme
- Embrace and express our indigenous history through public art
- Embrace the historic context of Kentish in product, experience & promotion

5. Adventure tourism:

- Explore and support development of an adventure hub in Kentish
- Develop international standard mountain bike facility in Kentish
- Network existing operations to create adventure tourism hub and attract new adventure-based experiences
- Assist to attract new adventure tourism experiences in Kentish
- Advance recommendations of *Mt Roland: Developing a Destination* report
- Market Kentish as Tasmania’s adventure hub

2. Product development:

Objectives:

- Support existing attractions, experiences and events and facilitate their expansion
- Develop new events, particularly in traditional shoulder and off seasons
- Develop new attractions and experiences, based on competitive advantages of art, adventure, food, wilderness and history
- Increase recreation opportunities and events
- Visitor-focused service
- Ensure infrastructure adequate to support tourism industry

Actions:

General:

- Identify gaps in existing product and service offering
- Identify products & services with competitive advantage in Kentish
- Exploit opportunities around products & services with competitive advantage in Kentish
- Analyse emerging opportunities and market trends and identify relevant opportunities in Kentish
- Assist existing attractions and services to achieve expansion or diversification potential
- Assist existing tourism businesses to diversify product/service and find new markets for existing product/service
- Identify and address barriers to economic growth in tourism

Events:

- Assist to grow existing annual and other periodic events
- Work with relevant committees to build 5-year development plan for each major event
- Develop new annual events
- Foster closer links between sport and recreation events and local businesses
- Assist periodic markets to grow and diversify
- Attract mainland and Tasmanian special-interest groups (e.g. car clubs, art & craft groups, history groups, food groups) for annual gatherings, tours and events

Attractions:

- Build collaborative networks around commonly themed experiences (e.g. family-based attractions; nature-based attractions; adventure-based attractions; art-based attractions; food-based attractions; history-based attractions; touring; fishing; grey nomads)
- Identify opportunities for new commercial attractions, particularly around adventure, food, art, wilderness, history and family-based local visitation
- Increase number of lookouts around municipality, particularly in “Valley of Views”

Services:

- Ensure visitors can access accurate and detailed information about the Kentish tourism experience, before they arrive in Kentish
- Provide accurate and relevant visitor information on local attractions, accommodation, facilities and services to visitors once they arrive in the Kentish region
- Ensure visitor information provision is visitor-focused, relevant and accurate, ensuring information required by visitors is available when and where they need it, and is the type of information required. Information provision should reflect changing visitor information needs, including the times and locations they seek to access that information, and their increasing desire to affirm intentions with knowledgeable locals
- Encourage more activities and services in late afternoon and evening in main tourist centres to reflect changing visitor demand
- Lobby for improved public transport to Kentish
- Research tourism service gaps and explore solutions
- Ensure Kentish Council is responsive to infrastructure needs
- Ensure Kentish tourism product meets needs and expectations of emerging visitor markets

Infrastructure:

- Ensure council-managed roads are adequate and safe for increased volumes of visitor traffic
- Build iconic entry points to major towns that announce to visitors their “arrival” at a destination. The entry features should be themed, and symbolically represent the town (e.g. topiary-based entry at Railton, mural or art-based features at Sheffield). They should include a “Welcome to” message and in themselves be a feature that draws attention, discussion and which would be spread via social media by visitors to their associates.
- Expand the lookout network in Kentish to showcase the diversity of splendour in a way that enables safe and easy-paced relaxed visitation
- Ensure free visitor facilities such as public ablutions, BBQs and shelters are adequate for increased visitor numbers, and responsive to their needs
- Support Parks & Wildlife Service objective to develop a new Cradle Mountain World Heritage Area visitor entry and service point
- Explore potential for free Wi-Fi in Sheffield, Wilmot and Railton
- Lobby for improved phone and digital coverage by telecommunications and IT providers
- Identify and address infrastructure gaps that curb tourism industry growth

3. Market development

Objectives:

- Increase visitation to the region;
- increase the municipality's profile as a visitor destination
- Identify market demographics that are likely to find Kentish an attractive destination
- Promote Kentish to demographic groups identified above

Actions:

- Identify and attract new visitor markets
- Engage emerging international markets
- Engage with North-West, Visiting Friends and Relatives, and broader Tasmanian markets
- Identify, understand, market to and engage specific market segments (e.g. motoring clubs, art and craft tourists, food tourists, nature lovers, adventure seekers, campervan and motorhome community, and those seeking a quiet retreat).
- Assist to improve stopover rates in Kentish from Cradle Mountain visitation
- Foster tourism and retail industry engagement with sport and recreation events

4. Industry development:

Objectives:

- Improved networking and collaboration among operators and stakeholders
- Skills development
- Improved knowledge dissemination
- Market-based focus: Match products to demand
- Advocacy

Actions:

Networking and collaboration

- Improve networking and information dissemination among industry participants and between the Kentish sector and external stakeholders
- Engage with local tourism associations in neighbouring municipalities
- Engage with regional groups Cradle Coast Tourism Executive and the Devonport-Cradle Marketing Group to maximise marketing and skills development opportunities and to foster a region-wide industry approach to common issues
- Assist businesses to develop a collaborative approach to mutual activities such as marketing, product development, supply chains and administrative activities
- Improve engagement between operators within Kentish's various geographic areas: Cradle Valley, Sheffield, Railton, Wilmot-Moina, Barrington and the rural districts
- Improve cross-promotion of attractions, goods and services in Kentish and nearby regions

Skills development

- Identify and assist to address skills gaps by connecting industry to skills development opportunities
- Assist industry to achieve industry-leading service standards
- Assist industry to become Asia-ready
- Assist business owners to engage with digital opportunities and embrace social media

Knowledge dissemination

- Connect industry to knowledge about emerging issues and opportunities
- Provide a central knowledge hub

Market focus

- Assist to source information and networks that can identify market changes and needs early, to ensure a pro-active rather than reactive local response
- Assist industry to adapt products and services to reflect changing market demand

Advocacy

- Council to advocate for Kentish tourism industry and its interests
- Ensure Kentish is represented in and engaged with external tourism groups and activities
- Assist to connect Kentish tourism businesses to government assistance and programs

5. Visitor experience:

Objective:

- provide a welcoming and engaging experience that visitors tell their associates about

Actions:

- Anticipate needs and expectations so visitors leave with great stories
- Engage visitors
- Leverage Kentish's distinctiveness and uniqueness in product development and marketing
- Provide service across all industry sectors that is welcoming, helpful, engaging and culturally understanding

6. Marketing:

Objective:

- Raise profile of Kentish as a tourism destination

Actions:

- Improve online presence including content on regional, state, public and private tourism websites
- Support development of regional website, including comprehensive Kentish section, or redevelop Kentish website if regional website proves inadequate for purpose
- Engage in digital media marketing opportunities and encourage operators to do same
- Increase knowledge of Kentish region outside Tasmania
- Market Kentish region to potential visitors before they get to Tasmania
- Participate in collaborative marketing activities, where beneficial for Kentish
- Develop collateral for Kentish's key attraction themes, key locations and key attractors
- Develop suite of collateral for attracting specific interest tour groups
- Engage with Tourism Tasmania to ensure Kentish is connected to Tourism Tasmania opportunities and programs
- Market Kentish as a location for film and photography
- Develop annual events to assist in marketing Kentish
- Identify and encourage opportunities for collaborative marketing with and between Kentish businesses

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