

# Tourism Strategy Status Report

## Year 2 Activities

### 1. Evolving Tourist Friendly Towns

**1.1** Develop a procedure to capture visitor statistics in Yarriambiack to support community and business enterprises that operate in the visitor servicing sector.

**1.2** Implement the findings of Wimmera Mallee Tourism's feasibility project on redeveloping more eclectic accommodation (adding to the example set by Hopetoun's Powerhouse artist-in-residence and self-contained apartment) including the delivery of the Warracknabeal Courthouse Project. Proactively search for funding opportunities to support identified projects, including historic railway stations and pub hotels.

**1.3** Encourage and support all visitor servicing businesses within Yarriambiack to adopt a service culture of giving visitors a positive experience and structuring their operations to take account of visitor's expectations. Mentoring, industry forums, workshops and short courses for new staff are possible mechanisms for implementation.

### 2. Enhancing Existing Attractions

**2.1** Develop packages of Yarriambiack attractions in a way that enables visitors to pre-plan and book by type of experience and by tour routes. Utilise existing hero attractions including, but not limited to Silo Art, Waterways, Historical and Heritage Attractions and local Sporting Facilities to form anchor points of trails to celebrate Yarriambiack's tourism potential.

**2.2** Enhancing historic and heritage attractions across the Shire by facilitating connection between organisations and venues. Provide these groups with data and statistics to inform a collaborative approach.

**2.3** Work with regional tourism boards and visitor economy partnership bodies to promote identified trails and attractions outside of the municipality with the aim of increasing visitor expenditure and length of stay within Yarriambiack. This initiative includes aligning to region wide promotions, leveraging the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse and having increased digital exposure on a regional level for local businesses, events and community groups.

Role	Timeframe	Comments
Management	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	Data AU available on YSC website to generate Tourism specific reports. GWM Tourism provide regional insights with Localis.
Delivery Management	Year 2 – Year 3 On Track	Warracknabeal Courthouse project completed with installation of external ampitheater and modular space. Wonder Cabinette completion and installation expected end of 2025.
Facilitation	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	Working with GWM Tourism to utilise industry tool kits and capability development. Industry Forms held quarterly across GWM regions. Development workshops ongoing and point of contact for marketing support.
Management	Year 1 – Year 4 On Track	Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee working with Officers to build on the Heritage Trail idea and create themed travel itineraries to be housed on YSC website or printable upon request at Tourist Information locations.
Facilitation	Year 1 – Year 5 On Track	Heritage Trail project established the beginning of an informal YSC Heritage Group with individual action plans. YSC Officers continue to guide attractions through development opportunities identified.
Management	Year 2 – Year 5 On Going	Visitor Economic Partnership formalised March 2024. YSC Representation on regional project working groups and workshop attendance to leverage regional opportunities that support local tourism enterprises and event organisers. ATDW advocacy remain ongoing.

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### 3. Exploring the Next Wave of Visitor Attractions

**3.1** Support all events that are held in Yarriambiack so that event organisers meet required compliance obligations, such as traffic management plans, signage, local laws permits, planning permits and Place of Public Entertainment requirements. Provide additional support for registered events through undertaking radio advertising, newspaper and social media advertising and additional waste services.

**3.2** Meet with traditional owner organisations, at times that suit their development plans, to consider ways in which First Nations culture, history and interpretive information can be added to visitor experiences in Yarriambiack and the potential for Aboriginal enterprises or partnerships in developing new attractions.

**3.3** Develop Australia's biggest 'outdoor performing arts stage'. Facilitate a calendar of events that connect organisations in each town across Yarriambiack, where their Progress Associations, Committees of Management, Historic Societies or Service Clubs are responsible for holding one event per year.

**3.4** Pursue the potential to work with Seymour Heritage Rail to schedule rail trips to Yarriambiack Shire, with itineraries that include linking visitor servicing activities and initiatives across the shire. Identify optimal timing based on existing Yarriambiack event calendar.

### 4. A Council Who Values Tourism

**4.1** Appointment of an in-house staff team as tourism concierges. These staff will be from the community strengthening and engagement team, with occasional support from building and planning areas of Council (if and when land use and/or construction is involved).

**4.2** Provide executive support to the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee (agenda, meeting minutes, correspondence, letters of support, briefing papers)

**4.3** Represent Yarriambiack Shire where relevant on regional working parties and steering groups.

Role	Timeframe	Comments
Management	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	CYSC Event registration process administered by Council Officers. Ongoing improvements identified to streamline low risk & repeat events while maintaining safety and compliance.
Facilitation	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	Reconciliation Action Plan and Local Government Engagement Strategy developed. Bi-monthly meetings with BGLC partners to discuss local projects and upcoming strategy development.
Management	Year 2 – Year 5 On Track	Events calendar located on YSC website. Annual events identified throughout Event Registration process. Promotion of local events through Councils media channels. Coordinating with GWM Tourism to assist with marketing of YSC Major events.
Management	Year 1 – Year 3 On Going	Discussions regarding private charter experiences throughout YSC. Discussions to develop new itineraries to encourage SHR to return for new product offering.
Facilitation	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	Community Strengthening team available as first contact to industry to assist where required. Robust relationship with GWMT for further support.
Facilitation	Year 1 – Year 5 On Going	Ongoing administrative support to YTAC. Agenda pack developed to include briefing notes sent out to members prior to meetings to stimulate discussions. Next term scheduled to begin May 2026.
Representation	Year 2 – Year 4 On Going	Ongoing representation when required.

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### 4. A Council Who Values Tourism

**4.4** Review the cost-effectiveness of promotional and marketing materials provided by Council with a view to more streamlining of printed materials and a move towards digital options. The review should include potential use of QR boards at Yarriambiack attractions.

**4.5** Continue with Council's program of streetscape and signage improvements, focusing on: consistency and theming in signage and main streets beautification native vegetation.

**4.6** Support community led events that attract visitors through the allocation of a specific events stream of funding through Council's community funding program – Share Grants.

### 5. Regional Tourism Collaboration

**5.1** Participate with the state government direction of the Visitor Economy Partnership Framework, including transitioning Wimmera Mallee Tourism to the new Visitor Economy Partnership.

**5.2** Actively participate in regional tourism projects, including appointment of a staff member, councillor or Yarriambiack Tourism member to reference groups, development of regional destination management plans and associated local area action plans.

#### Role

#### Timeframe

#### Comments

Delivery

Year 2 – Year 3  
On Track

Move to digital platforms as preferred method of promotions. *Discover Yarriambiack* used for brand recognition to post-arrival travellers. Working with GWM Tourism to utilise their printed materials to reduce in-house printing costs for pre-arrival travellers.

Delivery

Year 1 – Year 5  
On Track

Council support to community lead signage projects including tourism signs in Hopetoun, and also Rupanyup through SHARE Grant, assisting WAG with Round 3 TT application for streetscape works, and Yaapeet TT project including streetscape and new bus shelter.

Management

Year 1 – Year 2  
On Going

A dedicated Events stream remains included in Council's annual SHARE Grant program. Approx. 20% of funds allocated to Events in the 2025-25 SHARE Grant Funding Program.

Representation

Year 1 – Year 2  
Completed

The 2-year VEP establishment funding is scheduled to conclude March 2026. Next steps in discussion regarding funding model.

Representation

As New Projects  
Arise

Ongoing representation when required. Completion of the Visitor Inspiration Project achieved, with the direct benefit of a Traveler App using ATDW.