



OFFICIAL FIGURES CONFIRM THE DUBBO REGION GROWS IN POPULARITY

Sales of the Great Big Adventure Pass are up more than 126% compared to last Christmas holidays, and accommodation providers and tourism operators are feeling the flow-on effects of positive regional marketing and the school holiday buzz. Occupancy was up an impressive 36.1% across the whole LGA compared to December 2019, with a total occupancy of 79.2% in December 2020.

Mayor of the Dubbo Region, Councillor Ben Shields, says the latest Tourism Market Report compiled by Council shows that COVID-19 travel restrictions positively affected occupancy rates, and with timely and positive marketing has seen a continued interest in regional travel to the region.

“Quite a few of our accommodation providers noted that despite the travel restrictions, there were still people coming from Sydney and surrounds, and family groups were also choosing to meet in Dubbo over Christmas. We’re so pleased that the message is getting out there that

the Dubbo Region is a great place to visit, especially if you have a family,” said Councillor Shields.

Visitation at the Old Dubbo Gaol was high on peoples’ holiday agenda, with 5,130 people walking through the gates. That’s an increase of 105% when compared to the same period last year.

“The Old Dubbo Gaol is going gangbusters, but so are the other tourism facilities in our region. The Wellington Caves also had a 51% increase, despite still having to enforce COVID restrictions on tour groups with 3,138 visitors popping into our new state-of-the-art Visitor Experience Centre to head down underground,” said Councillor Shields.

That’s despite the Fossil and Phosphate mines at the Wellington Caves being closed for most of the month, up until 19 December, and even upon reopening, it was operating at reduced capacity.

Manager Economic Development and Marketing Josie Howard said the figures are pleasing and results for businesses are flowing from targeted and sustained marketing from Council’s campaigns.

“Council continued to be in market throughout 2020 to remain a consideration of the region’s target market, and I think that is paying off now as families look for safe and enjoyable holiday destinations over the Christmas break. The Dubbo region is positioned as a place for your family to adventure to metro markets and to our service centre towns, our latest campaign aimed to connect them back into the region as a place to shop, play and spend time – not just see your accountant or doctor, but to see Dubbo as a place to also reconnect with family and have some fun” said Ms Howard.

The positive visitation statistics are off the back of a successful November, where there was a 23.35% increase Visitor Local Spend, worth \$29.5 million to the local economy. This increase suggests a healthy growth in visitor economy activity. December's statistics are yet to be released; however, with such positive tourism figures for December, there's optimism that the economic spend for December will also be encouraging.

Last Edited: 17 Jul 2023