



---

## North Coast News & Views No. 174

---

### Council Votes To Move Forward On Byron Shire Rail Trail

Byron Shire Council this week moved a step closer to creating a rail trail in the Byron Shire that will link to the Tweed Shire rail trail in the north and Booyong, at the Lismore Local Government Area border.

Council resolved to proceed with the planning, approval process and preparation of an application for funding after considering investigative reports on the rail corridor in the shire.

As well as resolving to proceed with the planning and approval process for a rail trail on the railway tracks, the resolution sets out to seek a lease over as much of the corridor as possible to help:

- Ensure the corridor remains in public hands.
- Enable investigation of options for diverse housing within the corridor.
- Enable the activation of unused space, infrastructure and buildings for community use.
- Allow council to receive income for trail maintenance.
- Allow environmental rehabilitation, including wildlife corridors.
- Other options for public transport.

[Read media release.](#)

---

### DNC Board In Region

The Destination North Coast Board and team enjoyed a recent trip into region and meeting with Bellingen Shire Council and National Parks and Wildlife Service with a particular focus on the new Dorrigo Arc Rainforest Centre and Dorrigo Escarpment walk currently under planning. The investment of \$56 million in this significant project will see improved and expanded opportunities for people to experience nature in ways that are positive and meaningful.



DNC Board and team on the Dorrigo Skywalk (left) and Artistic rendition of the draft concept for the proposed new Dorrigo Arc Rainforest Centre (right) **Credit:** DPE

---

### DNC Small Business Month In-region Workshops

Destination North Coast have been successful in an application for a [Small Business Month](#) grant to run a series of in-region workshops in October 2023.

These workshops aim to improve overall knowledge and business performance and encourage greater adoption of online booking technology for improved efficiency. They will support small tourism businesses to build an online strategy, map their customer journey and select an appropriate booking system.

The four workshops will be held as follows:

- 9.00am - 12.00pm - Monday 23 October 2023 - The Tweed
- 2.30pm - 5.30pm - Monday 23 October 2023 - Ballina
- 11.00am - 2.00pm - Tuesday 24 October 2023 - Coffs Harbour
- 9.00am - 12.00pm - Wednesday 25 October 2023 - Forster

Please note these times in your diaries with more details to follow over the coming weeks.

These workshops compliment Destination NSW's NSW First programs.

---

### Industry Insights

#### New China Visitor Data Released

Tourism Research Australia (TRA) data shows China was Australia's number five visitor market in the year ending May 2023. The majority of Chinese travellers were aged 15-29 (43 per cent), followed by 45-59-year-olds (21 per cent). NSW welcomed 58 per cent of visitors. TRA forecasts Chinese arrivals will return to pre-pandemic levels by 2026. [Find more information here.](#)

#### Overseas Arrivals For June

There were 203,410 short-term visitor arrivals to NSW in June 2023, an increase of 112,070 compared to June 2022. New Zealand lead recent growth in short-term visitor arrivals (32,970 trips), followed by United States (24,040) and China (16,140). There were 542,080 short-term visitor arrivals to Australia - an annual increase of 266,780 trips. [Find more information here.](#)

---

### Around The Region

#### Australian Distilled Spirits Awards

Check out the diversity of North Coast Award Winners at the recent Australian Distilled Spirits Awards.

Winding Road Distilling, Cape Byron Distillery, Clarence Distillery, Husk Distillers and Wharf Street Gin all got a gong with other North Coast distillers also placing.

With 975 entries, this is Australia's largest and most prestigious distilled spirits award. To be recognised at this level is an exceptional achievement. Congratulations to all award winners. [See all Australian](#)

[Distilled Spirits Award results.](#)

#### Australian Gin Awards

[Lord Howe Island Distillers](#) landed a gold medal in the 2023 Australian Gin Awards with their Wild Lemon and Hibiscus Gin. Congratulations too, to Clarence Distillery, Yamba for a silver and bronze and also The Farmer's Wife, Allworth for their silver and bronze medals. [See a full list of winners across all categories here.](#)

#### Lismore Occupancy On The Up And Up!

Lismore's CBD is edging closer to pre-February 2022 occupancy rates, the latest CBD business occupancy audit conducted by Lismore City Council has found.

In a positive sign for the local economy, the audit conducted at the end of June, found an occupancy rate of 70.1% across the inner CBD area, which includes street-front and upstairs premises. [Read media release.](#)



#### NSW's 10 Best Regional Pubs Of 2023

Sydney Morning Herald's Good Food has announced their [10 best regional pubs](#), with two North Coast establishments making the list. Congratulations to the [Billinudgel Hotel](#) and [The Eltham](#).

#### Byron Shire Business, Industry & Visitor Economy Strategy - Input Sought

Byron Shire is developing a Business, Industry and Visitor Economy Strategy to provide a clear direction for a resilient, adaptable, and sustainable economy. They are keen to share key elements of the strategy and seek feedback from local businesses, community and visitor economy stakeholders.

[Visit the website](#) to:

- Learn more about the project.
- Watch the short video summary.
- Download the Byron Shire Economic Summary.
- Provide your feedback via the short online survey.

Feedback closes Sunday 3 September 2023.

#### North Coast Winners At The Delicious. Harvey Norman Produce Awards

The Delicious. Harvey Norman Produce Awards celebrate the best produce that Australia has to offer, and honours and applauds the hard work, dedication and commitment to sustainability of our land's most impressive farmers, fishers, growers and makers.

A huge congratulations Producer of the Year, [Burraduc Buffalo Dairy](#), Bungwahl on the Mid Coast! What an amazing achievement. And to [Murwillumbah Farmers Market](#) who were awarded Outstanding Farmers Market (Australia) - Readers' Choice Award.

Thank you for representing the North Coast at such a high level. [See all winners here.](#)

#### Albert Park Lismore - The Home Of Baseball And Softball For The Northern Rivers

Lismore's redeveloped [Albert Park](#) is ready to host national sporting events following the rebuild of the popular baseball and softball complex that suffered extensive damage in the February 2022 natural disaster. With this rebuild, Albert Park once again meets international standard and is ready to welcome players from around the country. The facilities include new clubhouse, canteen, stadium, four playing fields and nets.

---

## Industry Development And Other Opportunities

#### Share Your News With Destination NSW

Destination NSW (DNSW) is seeking news and content from visitor economy stakeholders to help spread the word about the many reasons to visit NSW.

Tell DNSW about the new experiences your business, organisation or destination is offering that will wow visitors to your region - anything from nature-based activities to luxury stays, seasonal attractions, foodie finds or local favourites. The Destination NSW PR team will use this information to create captivating media pitches, produce inspiring content on the Destination NSW Media Centre and support planning of potential media familiarisations and media hosting opportunities.

[Find out how](#) to use the news/content template to maximise your chance of having this news published and shared.

#### Destination NSW Content Library

Are you using the content available via [DNSW's Content Library](#)? Here you can find images and video content showcasing the North Coast and various activities and experiences to support your promotional activities. You can search various galleries and search terms to narrow your focus and there's guidance on [how to access the content library](#) to assist you access this valuable visual content.

#### Caravan & Camping Lifestyle Expo

The Caravan & Camping Industry Association (CCIA) are [seeking new exhibitors](#) to amplify Regional Destinations, Food and Wine pavilion at the Expo in Canberra 20 - 22 October 2023. With an expected 18,000 visitors across 3 days, the ticketed event attracts the largest self-drive holiday market into one location. Visitors are keen RV/ Camping enthusiasts who love to discover places to see, regions to visit, to find out what is happening in local areas and to purchase food and wine, local arts, and crafts from regional centres.

#### Caravan, Camping, Manufactured Housing & Land Lease Living Industry Awards

The 2023 Awards of Excellence will celebrate the individual and collective achievements of the Caravan, Camping, Manufactured Housing & Land Lease Living industry in NSW.

These awards recognise businesses and employees that demonstrate best practice in customer service, product offerings, innovation, community engagement and business success.

Entries close on 13 September 2023 for a range of categories, including for Holiday Parks, Land Lease Communities, Manufacturers, Dealers, Repairers, Service Providers, Employee of the Year and Outstanding Contribution by a Young Achiever. [Find more information here.](#)

#### Dreamtime 2023

Tourism Australia's signature biennial incentive showcase [Dreamtime](#) provides the Australian business events industry the opportunity to connect with qualified incentive buyers from around the world, while showcasing Australia's best incentive experiences and products. Dreamtime 2023 will be held from 7 - 10 November 2023 in Adelaide/Tarntanya, in partnership with Business Events Adelaide.

#### Asia Pacific Incentives & Meetings Events (AIME) 2024

Expressions of interest are open to exhibit at AIME, the leading annual trade event for the business event industry. Held at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, AIME connects high quality event planners (buyers) with exhibitors from across the world. 2024 dates are 19 - 21 February. To learn more, partner with Destination NSW and showcase your region and businesses at AIME, [submit your expression of interest here.](#)

### **Delivering Exceptional Customer Service**

With rising customer expectations your business can't afford to fall short. Just one bad experience can be enough for a customer to go elsewhere. CCIA's online [Delivering Exceptional Customer Service workshop](#) on 7 September 2023 will teach your team everything they need to know about best practice customer service and how to provide exceptional service at every level of customer interaction.

### **SkillsEquipped - Jobs and Skills Council For Tourism And Hospitality Sectors**

SkillsEquipped is the new Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) for the Retail, Personal Services, Hospitality, Tourism and Arts sectors.

Established as part of the Government's Skills Reform agenda, JSCs are industry-led not-for-profit organisations that collaborate with industry, government, and education and training providers to ensure training products and delivery respond to skills needs and workforce challenges.

Find the [SkillsEquipped Information Pack](#) with tourism organisations encouraged to join [SkillsEquipped](#) to contribute.

---

## **Funding And Other Opportunities**

### **[Small Project Grants \(Quick Response\)](#)**

Small Project Grants (Quick Response) supports professional development opportunities for NSW-based professional artists, groups and arts and cultural workers (including museum workers) that are time sensitive and respond to short notice invitations with career-building significance. **Closes 27 November 2023.**

### **[Regional Arts Fund - Quick Response Grants](#)**

Assists regional NSW artists, arts organisations and communities with funds for professional or skills development, or small project opportunities, at short notice. **Closes 30 November 2023.**

### **[regional Precincts and Partnerships Program](#)**

The Australian Government's \$400 million regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (rPPP) seeks to support transformative investment in regional, rural and remote Australia based on the principles of unifying regional places, growing economies and serving communities. Unlike traditional grant programs, the rPPP will focus on a partnership approach, bringing together governments and communities to deliver regional precincts that are tailored to local needs and have a shared vision for how that precinct connects to the region. **Ongoing.**

### **[Small Business Rebate](#)**

SafeWork NSW's Small Business Rebate team has assessed over 10,000 applications this financial year. In all, SafeWork NSW has provided \$4.16 million in rebates to nearly 5,000 NSW businesses. If you are a small business owner in NSW, this \$1,000 rebate can help you purchase safety items to improve work health and safety for you and your workers. **Ongoing.**

### **[First Nations Futures Funding Platform](#)**

Redistributes wealth and collectively invests in First Nations initiatives creating intergenerational change. Delivers unrestricted funding, long-term investment and community-led impact. **Ongoing.**

---

## **North Coast Product & Experience Development**

### **[Uki Mountain Bike Park](#)**

Set against the stunning backdrop of Wollumbin/Mt Warning, the Tweed's newest outdoor recreation facility will welcome mountain bikers of all ages, experience and abilities when it officially opens on Saturday 7 October 2023.

### **[Dark Horse Espresso - Casino](#)**

A new addition to South Casino, Dark Horse Espresso offers delicious coffee, mouth-watering sweet treats, light lunches and snacks.

### **[The Smoking Camel - Byron Bay](#)**

This late-night bar and restaurant inspired by a love for bright, bold and flavourful food that leans into the intricate tapestry of the Middle East, brings a modern twist to traditional cuisine.

### **[Tweed Eco Cruises](#)**

Award-winning Tweed Eco Cruises launches new tour 'Ales and Sails.' The 4-hour tour cruises the Tweed River from Tweed Heads to Chinderah including transfers to Earth Beer Co for a guided tasting paddle of local ales. A live musician will keep you entertained as you cruise back while enjoying a grazing board.

### **[Steam and Cedar - Gladstone](#)**

Located in The Garden of The Gladstone Hub, Steam and Cedar is coffee central in this beautiful, riverside town brimming with creativity, history and culture.

### **[Fair Dinkum Motel - Lismore](#)**

The Lismore Fair Dinkum Motel (formerly known as The Dawson Motor Inn) is back in business with fully refurbished rooms, comfortable new beds and set in a beautifully tranquil rainforest garden setting just two blocks from the town centre.

### **[Wallum Cottages - Crescent Head](#)**

Set on 70 beautiful acres on the Mid North Coast, Wallum Cottages offers a haven for people who want some time to chill and relax. Being just 300m from miles of untouched beaches, guests can sit on the deck of the cottage or studio and enjoy the sounds and tranquillity of nature at its best with the sound of the ocean in the background.

---

## **North Coast Events**

To aid your planning and to support local events, please note these upcoming events on the North Coast or find [all events on DNSW's website](#).

### **[Sample Food Festival 2023](#)**

The 11th Annual Sample Food Festival returns to the Bangalow Showground with the festival showcasing the diverse local food economy and celebrating the best restaurants, passionate producers and farmers, innovators and chefs of the Northern NSW region. **2 September 2023.**



### **[Coffs Harbour Running Festival](#)**

The C.ex Group Coffs Harbour Running Festival is a community event for people of all ages and abilities and consists of a 21.1-kilometre Half Marathon, a 10-kilometre Fun Run, five-kilometre Fun Run and a three-kilometre Family Fun Run/Walk. **10 September 2023.**

#### **Rotary Duck Race**

For more than thirty years, Rotary has been conducting the Great Duck Race on the banks of the Richmond River. Fawcett Park will be the hub of great food, entertainment and children's games from 11am to 3pm. **10 September 2023.**

#### **Tortuga -- Port Macquarie**

A daring new arts festival for the Mid North Coast with an exceptional programme of arts and entertainment hosted in a beautiful, art-deco Spiegeltent venue set on the Port Macquarie coastline. Showcasing high-energy, high-quality acts from touring and regional performing artists, Tortuga will be a celebratory experience for locals and visitors to come together and be inspired by the finest in Australian circus, comedy and cabaret. **22 September - 8 October 2023.**



#### **Malibu Classic - Evans Head**

The annual Malibu Classic will host a range of age and event categories with a variety of different board events. **29 - 30 September 2023.**

#### **Coffs Harbour International Buskers and Comedy Festival**

The Coffs Harbour International Buskers and Comedy Festival is a five-day festival featuring street theatre, family shows, children's events and adult shows in and around the city of Coffs Harbour. The event is a feel-good festival that has laughter and community involvement as two of its core themes, appealing to all ages and demographics. Most shows are free to the public but as always, bring some money for the hat! **5 - 8 October 2023.**

---

This email was sent to [admin@dncnsw.com](mailto:admin@dncnsw.com) by [admin@dncnsw.com](mailto:admin@dncnsw.com).  
Click [here](#) to unsubscribe.