



Bellarine
Bayside
Coastal Management

Bellarine Bayside Coastal Management

Annual Report 17/18

About us



Our Management Area

Bellarine Bayside manages 17 kilometres of Crown land reserves along the foreshore of Port Phillip Bay from Point Richards to the southern edge of the St Leonards township, including natural and built assets, holiday parks, the Coastal Trail, playgrounds, community halls, boat ramps and boat sheds.

Our Mission

Bellarine Bayside, in partnership with local community groups and residents, sustainably protects, restores and enhances the northern Bellarine natural and built coastal environment for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities, holidaymakers and visitors.

Our Structure

Bellarine Bayside is a not-for-profit Committee of Management formed by the Victorian Government in 1994 to manage Crown land between Point Richards in Portarlington and St Leonards.

Committee members are selected through a public, skills-based expression of interest process and are appointed for a three-year term by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Bellarine Bayside has the equivalent of 26 full-time staff working within the organisation, including coastal planners, conservation officers, administration staff, and holiday park indoor and outdoor staff.

Our Funding

Bellarine Bayside currently generates around \$6.5 million in direct revenue annually, with approximately 86% of revenue received as income from the six coastal holiday parks. Other income is derived from a range of sources including lease, licence and permit fees. Revenue is often supplemented by grants that are used for specific projects.

All incoming funds are used to preserve and protect the natural coastal environment, while ensuring the local community and visitors have access to quality parks, reserves and facilities. No recurrent funding is received from state or local government.

Our Goals

- Understanding, protecting and enhancing the natural environment;
- Connecting communities and the coast;
- Facilitate access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast;
- Improving built environments along the foreshore;
- Developing Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others.

The *Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan 2012* outlines the vision and strategic goals for the region over the next 15–20 years.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Bellarine Bayside formally acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Northern Bellarine Peninsula land and waters, the Wadawurrung People, and pays tribute to their Elders, past, present and future.

Committee And Senior Management Team

The Bellarine Bayside Committee is currently made up of seven Committee members, with Dr Sandra Brizga as Chair. Committee members include John Hartigan (Deputy Chair), Melanie Rogers, Helene Cameron, Jennifer Lilburn, Gregory Lewis, Chris O'Neill (resigned during 2107/18) and Dr Kenneth Latta PSM.

The Committee delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer, John Nankervis, to work with staff to manage the day-to-day operations. The CEO is supported by the Senior Management Team:

- Justin Smith, Manager Planning and Environment;
- David Goldie, Operations Manager;
- Michael Hodges, Finance and Business Manager; and
- Rod Newnham, Holiday Parks Manager.

Further information on the Committee and Senior Management Team can be found at www.bellarinebayside.com.au/coastal-management/who-we-are.

Chair's Report



During this past year Bellarine Bayside has continued to deliver high quality projects and services along the 17 kilometres of coastline and within the six holiday parks.

The continued improvements have focused on responding to the needs of the many thousands of campers and users of the foreshore. This has resulted in continued positive feedback and assistance from volunteers.

The term of the former interim Committee concluded in July and in August 2017 the new Committee was appointed. I am very grateful for the valuable work of the interim Committee in such a short period of time that guided the organisation to become more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of the community. In this regard I wish to thank Diane James AM for her strong leadership of the Committee during the past two years.

I also wish to take the opportunity to thank the CEO John Nankervis and the Senior Management Team for their continued dedication and expertise in delivering quality results and engaging with the campers and community in a respectful and positive manner.

Thank you, too, to the officers of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria and the City of Greater Geelong, who continue to work closely with Bellarine Bayside on a number of key projects and initiatives.

The financial position of Bellarine Bayside continues to strengthen with a very positive result for the past year. This builds on the results of the previous two years, placing the organisation in a solid financial position from which it can build into the future.

A sample of our more significant projects over the past year have included:

- publication of the Camping and Accommodation Strategy;
- \$600,000 upgrade to the Point Richards boat ramp precinct including dredging of the ramp access;
- over \$200,000 of improvements to the Coastal Trail including associated seating and picnic tables;
- over \$500,000 of improvements to camper facilities within the six holiday parks;
- replacement of the Wrathall toilet block; and
- planting of over 5000 trees, shrubs and grasses.

Communication and community engagement continues to be a priority and the Committee has sought to further build relationships that are based on open communication, trust, and increased accessibility to the Committee, CEO and Senior Management Team. These have been facilitated through a number of forums, such as the Annual Community Meeting and Camper Connections sessions, as well as digital communications via our social media and website, and updates in the local newspaper. The results have been greater transparency of the organisation and a significantly improved relationship with the wider community. Moving forward, this Committee will continue to focus on working with the community and key stakeholder organisations within a wide variety of programs.

I am excited about the coming year and the opportunity to continue to serve the community in the delivery of an improved coastal environment. We look forward to providing even better facilities for all campers and users of the foreshore reserves in this beautiful part of Victoria.

Dr Sandra Brizga
Bellarine Bayside Chair



Goal 1:

Understanding, protecting and enhancing the natural environment



Environmental Conservation

Bellarine Bayside is committed to the ongoing care, conservation and rehabilitation of our local environment. Our focus is on works that will limit erosion, enhance the appearance of our foreshore and augment natural habitat for birds and wildlife. We are fortunate to have enthusiastic support from volunteer groups including the Friends of Point Richards group, Bellarine Green Army Team, local community members and groups, correctional services crews and St Leonards and Portarlington Primary Schools.

Habitat homes for local wildlife

A special project for the year included the placement of bird and bat boxes at Lower Bluff St Leonards and Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve resulting in a variety of birds and micro bats using the boxes. An initiative of the Bellarine Landcare Group, the boxes were made by St Leonards Men's Shed and installed by Bellarine Bayside, and provided learning opportunities for St Leonards and Portarlington Primary Schools.

Coastal Protection

Through its active management of the 17 kilometres of coastline on the northern Bellarine, Bellarine Bayside protects and enhances the natural environment and provides a safe, clean and accessible foreshore for the benefit of the local community, visitors and holidaymakers.

Coastal monitoring and mapping

Bellarine Bayside works on an imperative of consistent improvements to our understanding of how our coastal environment changes. Whether those change drivers are natural or man-made, we ensure that our management responses are informed, adaptive and effective to enable a suitable action. We have great support networks in our community who also contribute to our knowledge base.

BeachWatch is a citizen science program involving a group of dedicated volunteers who measure sand profiles of our beaches between Point Richards and St Leonards, and submit data every month. The program collects valuable long-term data at specific locations to observe changes over time.

Bellarine Bayside, in partnership with Deakin and Melbourne Universities, is contributing to an innovative program of monitoring and mapping of our coastline. "Citizen Science with Drones for Bayside Beaches" has provided the equipment and training for local volunteers in the latest drone technology. The data will enable informed,



effective management decisions for the protection of the beach and dune habitats of Port Phillip Bay, both now and in a future, warmer world.

Winter storms

Over the months of June and July the northern Bellarine Peninsula was subjected to prolonged periods of very strong westerly and easterly winds which stripped considerable amounts of sand from our beaches and deposited the sand offshore and up and down the coast. This has resulted in a number of locations being damaged. Innovative methods to respond to these "hot spots" are still being investigated.

Key coastal protection, environment and community engagement projects for the year included:

- construction of two new groynes and an all abilities access ramp at Anderson Reserve;
- new timber groynes and an upgrade of the existing rock groyne at Taylor Reserve;
- placement of bird and bat boxes at Lower Bluff St Leonards and Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve;
- creation of artworks by the students to aid in the environmental understanding, and which were utilised for the production of signage along our coast;
- 5000 plants planted along our Foreshore by community members, school groups and BB Staff; and
- the highly successful Community Environmental Programs including the Bellarine Nature Cadets.



Goal 2:

Connect communities and the coast

Bellarine Bayside has created many meaningful opportunities for the community to share knowledge and experience of this significant coastline. Some of our programs operate to engender an appreciation and understanding of the local environment; others allow us to work together to achieve crucial oversight, management and outcomes. All are important to this community and we are proud of the range of programs we offer.

Environmental Partnerships

This year, we have partnered with many organisations including: Conservation Volunteers Australia, Caring for our Bays, Bellarine Catchment Network, Portarlington Neighbourhood House, WaterWatch, Bellarine Landcare Group, St Leonards Men's Shed, Geelong Sustainability Group, Geelong Field Naturalist Group and Birdlife. Working collaboratively creates a wonderful sense of community sense of community and included:

- Community Planting Days at Portarlington, St Leonards and Indented Head;
- Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve;
- WaterWatch, Birdlife and BeachWatch partnerships;
- Citizen Science with Drones for Bayside Beaches program in partnership with Deakin and Melbourne Universities with funding from the Port Phillip Bay Grant Program with input from BeachWatch; and
- Bellarine Nature Cadets with Portarlington Neighbourhood House which has run three programs with 30 cadets and their families.

Bayside Alive!

Bellarine Bayside's environmental engagement program Bayside Alive! was launched in 2018 to create recognisable branding for Bellarine Bayside's community engagement and environmental activities.

Primary School Environment Days

Bellarine Bayside's annual Primary School Environment Day events at St Leonards Primary School and Portarlington Primary School are always fun! With whole-school activities including planting, bug hunting and frogs, these are popular with everyone involved.

Community Environmental Days

Bellarine Bayside's annual community planting days were a success with a great turnout for all three, including the very popular National Tree Day event. Guest speakers included Victorian Fisheries Association, WaterWatch, Geelong Field Naturalist Club and our own conservation officers. An enjoyable get together saw the planting hundreds of indigenous plants to contribute to the health of our coastline.

The Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve

The Friends Group has been working in the reserve for 17 years and has grown considerably in membership in the last 12 months. The Group's long-standing Convenor, Steve Boothroyd, stepped down in August 2018. For his service to the community, he was awarded the Victorian Premier's Volunteer Champion Award. Heather Williams is the new Convenor and, in partnership with Bellarine Bayside, the group continues its work, protecting and restoring the biodiversity of the 62 hectare reserve.

Annual Community Meeting

Close to 50 community members attended our Annual Community Meeting on 30 November 2017 at the Indented Head Community Hall. The evening began with a Welcome to Country by Corrina Eccles representing the Wadawurrung people, the traditional owners of the land Bellarine Bayside manages. Bellarine Bayside Committee's new Chair, Dr Sandra Brizga, was introduced and provided a detailed update of Bellarine Bayside activities for the previous financial year. The guest speaker for the evening was Murray Rance, CEO of Port Phillip Ferries.

Major Community Events

Bellarine Bayside continues to connect the community and the coast via its sponsorship and support of major community events held throughout the year. The Portarlington Mussel Festival was a success with 25,000 visitors to the area and 300 volunteers working hard to stay dry in rainy conditions.

The third annual Flying Brick Bellarine Sunset Run was staged on 3 February 2018 in conjunction with the ninth annual Jack Rabbit Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim at Indented Head the following day and attracted more than 1000 runners and 300 swimmers. Other major events supported by Bellarine Bayside in 2017-18 were the Around the Bay cycling event and the Portarlington Gatorade Triathlon.



Goal 3: ~

Facilitating access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast



Landscaping and Coastal Facilities

The 17 kilometres of foreshore reserves that are managed by Bellarine Bayside offer accessibility, safety and enjoyment to our local community, holidaymakers and visitors to this region. Our aim is to attract users to this beautiful coastline and experience the many beautiful views whilst being active and healthy.

Tree health, maintenance and forward planning

Every year, and after severe weather events, Bellarine Bayside commissions an audit of our trees by professional, independent arborists to assess tree health, condition and any consequent risks. This informs our ongoing Arbour Plan for over 2000 trees in our holiday parks and along the coast. This results in a number of trees that are a potential risk to the community being removed. It is a key objective that when a tree is removed, over five trees/shrubs are planted which will result in a greatly enhanced reserve experience.

Major Projects

During 2017–18, the following improvements were made to our foreshore reserves, from Portarlington to St Leonards. These projects were inclusive with community engagement and consultation phases to ensure the best possible outcome for the community, local users, holidaymakers, and key stakeholders.

Some of these projects will continue into 2018–19:

- completed the \$500,000 Point Richards Precinct Development Project;
- Point Richards boat ramp dredging;
- landscaping in the Portarlington Pier area and installation of a new Welcome to Portarlington tourism sign;
- development of the Coastal Trail in front of Portarlington Holiday Park;
- over \$200,000 of Coastal Trail and furniture upgrades throughout the coastal area;
- construction of a \$150,000 new toilet block at Wrathall Reserve in Indented Head;
- significant numbers of coastal trees and shrub plantings throughout the six holiday parks and along the coast;
- fish-cleaning tables installed at Point Richards and Indented Head boat ramp;
- development of draft Dog Orders with CoGG; and
- water risk signage program for launch in late 2018.





Goal 4:

Improved built environments along the foreshore

Foreshore Facilities

Bellarine Bayside is committed to the upgrade of built environments for the benefit and enjoyment of local communities and visitors to the foreshore.

One significant project included the development of the design to replace the existing W.G. Little Reserve playground. The new playground design has focused on a coastal theme which features many interactive elements, including a flying fox. The local community, including primary school children, provided extensive input into the final design. It is intended that the implementation of the playground in 2018/19 will be facilitated through the establishment of a community funding partnership.

Other works completed this year include the installation of picnic tables and drinking fountains along the foreshore, fish-cleaning facilities at the Indented Head and Point Richards boat ramps, upgrades to camping amenities and infrastructure, and the large-scale annual maintenance and improvement program.

Portarlington Holiday Park and Seasonal Camping Reserves

During the year, the Camping and Accommodation Strategy was completed and released to the community. A feature of the strategy was the extensive input provided by campers and members of the northern Bellarine community. Bellarine Bayside has responded to this input through the improvement of a number of infrastructure and camper services in all of the Holiday Parks. Some infrastructure improvements completed in 2017-18 were:

- installation of a second Kangaroo Jumper jumping cushion in the Portarlington Holiday Park (PHP)
- purchase of an inflatable Outdoor Cinema Screen in PHP. This resulted in weekly film nights in the park;
- entrances to Taylor Reserve and Bengalat Reserve Holiday Parks sealed and the Anderson campground carpark redesigned and sealed;
- installation of hand-dryers to some toilet blocks;
- painting and new furniture for cabins at PHP;
- tiling of shower units at a number of coastal holiday parks;
- storm and flood mitigation works at PHP;
- improved landscaping and tree plantings across most of the holiday parks;



- complete refurbishment of toilet block 10 in PHP;
- outdoor showers built on the beachfront at PHP;
- four BBQs replaced in the cabin area of PHP;
- the initiation of the washing machine replacement program with four new double stack machines replacing the oldest machines in a number of campgrounds;
- upgrade of a large number of power heads in PHP; and
- development of an upgraded booking system including an online booking function.

A significantly enhanced holiday activity program was implemented this year through the peak season with over 2,500 campers attending the range of activities. All activities were provided free of charge. A new state-of-the-art outdoor theatre system was purchased and proved very popular with campers with over 300 attending the movie night on the Labour Day weekend. Environmental education activities were also popular across all the campgrounds, as was the self-guided treasure hunt.

Just spent the weekend at Batman Park, Bellarine Holiday Park. Excellent amenities, really clean bathrooms and kitchen. Really impressed. Thank you!

Melissa Meili
Recent 5-star review on Facebook

Goal 5:

Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, accountable and adaptive organisation



The 2017–18 year again saw Bellarine Bayside implement a number of improvements to the management and governance of the organisation. This included the initiation of a range of projects, including:

- upgrading the RMS booking system for the holiday parks to version 9+;
- implementation of an online booking system for the holiday parks;
- a range of policies on staff management matters including staff induction procedures;
- completion of the new Dog Control Orders (in partnership with the City of Greater Geelong);
- completion of a risk audit of access along the coastline (in partnership with Life Saving Victoria); and
- completion of the important Camping and Accommodation Strategy.

Bellarine Bayside employed a new Customer Service Team Leader for the Holiday Parks as well as establishing a new position of Coordinator of Communications and Marketing with the aim to upgrade our social media presence as well as expand our marketing initiatives.

Each year, the Category-1 Committees of Management (including Bellarine Bayside) are required meet the management expectations of the Minister or Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP. This is called the Statement of Expectations. This SOE is available on our website.

The Committee has already reported back to the DELWP that the nine priorities within the SOE will be met during the agreed time period. The results of this compliance will be presented on our website at www.bellarinebayside.com.au.

Bellarine Bayside is so relevant to this community – you just have to see it when you see how they keep our area looking so beautiful – just superb – and there are many volunteers from the community involved too. Bellarine Bayside is very open. I find that any time I need to clarify something, I am always made welcome when I call in to talk to anyone there.

John Rae
Portarlington Business Association



Financial Overview

Bellarine Bayside has completed another successful year and reports an operating surplus of \$872k (FY2017: 528k).

Operations generated revenues of \$7.057m, slightly down (\$24k) or less than 1% on the previous year's revenues of \$7.081m. The holiday parks contributed \$6.066m or 86% of total revenues (FY2017: \$5.970m). Grants and subsidies from State Government and other sources totalled \$751k, 10.6% of total revenues (FY2017: 571k) and revenues from other sources – foreshore leases, licence fees, permits and investments were \$240k, 3.4% to total (FY2017: \$540k). Last year's other income aggregate included \$355k from the sale of the rights to licence boatsheds.

Operating expenses for FY2018, excluding depreciation, totalled \$5.266m, down (\$276k) or 5% on the previous year's aggregate of \$5.542m which included \$400k for the removal of Monterey Cypress trees from PHP. Expenses for FY2018 increased by an average of 2.4% [\$5.266m/\$5.142m]. Strong cost management and budgetary controls were a feature in containing the overall impact of rising costs, particularly in employment (2017 National Wage Case increase of 3.3%) and electricity costs which jumped 27%, coming off lower-cost tariffs following the expiry of supply contracts set in 2014. The asset depreciation expense for FY2018 was \$0.920m (FY2017: \$1.011m).

Other financial highlights included:

- continuing strong cash flow from operations with trading for FY2018 generating \$2.108m (FY2017: \$1.199m);

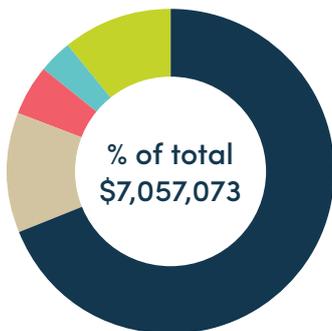
- end of year cash holdings (cash and financial assets) rising \$940k to \$4.003m (FY2017: \$3.063m); and
- a condition assessment of assets resulted in the write-down of asset values to the extent of \$1.859m. Of this, \$0.110m was classified as an operating loss and arose from the decommissioning (scrapping) of some assets. This cost is included as part Operating expenses for FY2018. The balance of the asset value write-downs, \$1.749m has been charged directly against, and therefore reducing, the asset revaluation reserve in the equity section of the balance sheet.

During the year, \$1.793m of funds were applied to project works (both operating and capital). This was up \$0.345m or 24% on the FY2017 outlays of \$1.448m. Funding for this volume of works came from a combination of grants and the strong operating result. Significant works and outcomes are outlined in other sections of this report.

In the words of Mike Hodges, our Finance and Business Manager, our financial position "has never been better". With the increase in revenue, control of costs and an increase in cash, we continue to build a healthy buffer to deal with contingencies and have every reason to be positive about the future.

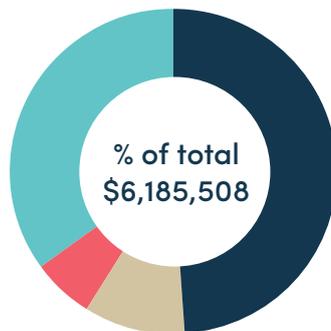
To view the full financial statements for 2017–18, please visit www.bellarinebayside.com.au.

Revenues 2017-2018



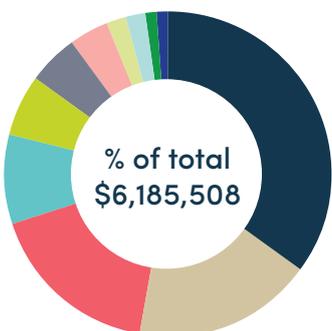
- Portarlington Holiday Park: 69%
- Indented Head Holiday Park: 12%
- St Leonards Holiday Park: 5%
- Foreshore Reserves & Assets: 3.4%
- Grants: 10.6%

Expenses 2017-2018



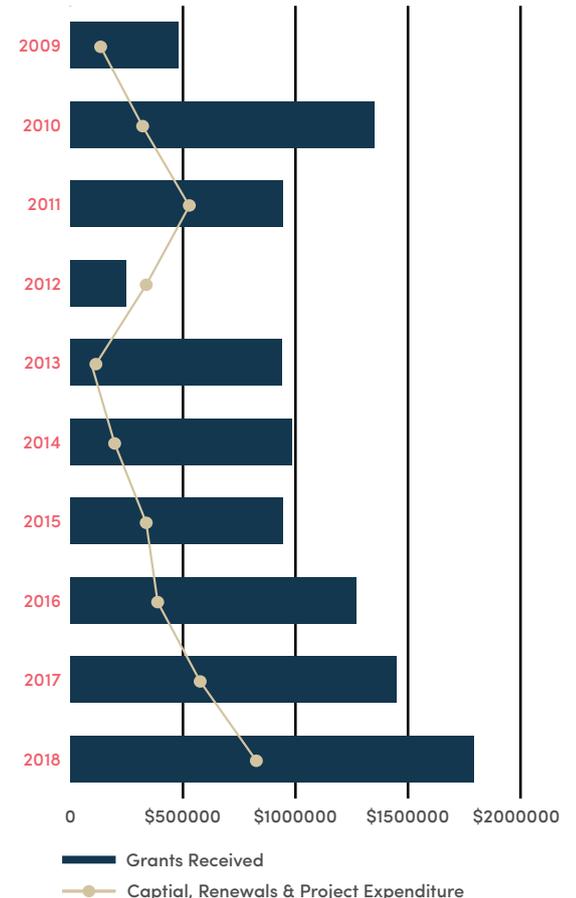
- Portarlington Holiday Park: 49%
- Indented Head Holiday Park: 10%
- St Leonards Holiday Park: 6%
- Foreshore Reserves & Assets: 35%

Expenses 2017-2018



- Staff employment costs: 35%
- Repairs & maintenance: 18%
- Depreciation: 17%
- Electricity, gas, water: 9%
- Coastal management: 6%
- Cleaning: 5%
- Waste, garbage: 4%
- Motor vehicle operating: 2%
- ICT: 2%
- Security: 1%
- Insurances: 1%

Capital, Renewals & Project Activity



The Year Ahead ~



Bellarine Bayside is aiming for 2018–19 to be another year of achievements and success.

We are proud of our continued positive progress in improving the environmental condition of the northern Bellarine foreshore, increasing the quality of infrastructure and services that we provide, and consolidating our positive financial position.

We will continue our strong commitment to connect with our community and work closely with our partner agencies. We are aware, too, of our responsibility as a major employer on the northern Bellarine and our significant contribution to the local economy.



With the completion of the Camping and Accommodation Strategy we are now exploring options for the provision of alternative accommodation options that will meet the needs of the future generations. The focus in 2018–19 will be on the implementation of the strategy, with an emphasis on making our holiday parks more attractive to the wider public.

The year will also feature the development of a new Coastal Management Plan (CMP). This will commence with a review of the existing Foreshore Plan and associated Master Plan. The community will have numerous opportunities to input into the development of the new CMP.

An ongoing focal point for the year will be improving visitor infrastructure at a number of key locations along the northern Bellarine foreshore and this includes:

- spending over \$150,000 to continue to upgrade the popular Coastal Trail to a consistent standard making it more accessible;

- implementation of the Dog Control Orders (in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong);
- implementation of the aquatic risk signage in accordance with Life Saving Victoria standards;
- subject to establishing a successful funding partnership, commence works on W.G. Little playground replacement;
- commence the upgrading of the power supply network to the Portarlington Holiday Park;
- continue our program of providing improved foreshore seating and picnic tables;
- development of coastal protection measures i.e. groynes to assist in responding to coastal erosion at any “hot spots”;
- upgrading our key public places through improvements to garden beds etc;
- continued promotion and facilitation of public events to facilitate greater access to the foreshore;
- continuing our efforts to protect the foreshore reserve’s environmental values, including the removal of invasive weeds and an ongoing planting program; and
- install a food vendor operator in the Sirens boatshed at St Leonards pier.

We will also continue our involvement in the Our Coast multi-agency project investigating the impacts of climate change on the entire Bellarine Peninsula coastline.

In the Portarlington Holiday Park and seasonal campgrounds, we will continue to respond to the needs of our customers. This will include continuing:

- our program of upgrading the amenity blocks, including new paint colours;
- to expand the very popular summer activity and food vendor programs
- our tree risk management program to ensure the safety of our visitors;
- our planting and grass replacement program; plus
- upgrading internal holiday park paths and roads; and
- installing more outdoor showers, drinking fountains and security lighting.

Works to our marine assets will include repairs to a number of piers in accordance with our Asset Management Plan.

Throughout all our work we will continue to build strong and positive relationships with our customers and the broader community. It is critical to our success that we continue to respect their views and encourage them to participate in our key decision-making processes.





**Bellarine
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Coastal Management

**Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee
of Management Incorporated**

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