



**Bellarine  
Bayside**  
Coastal Management



Bellarine Bayside



**Annual Report 19/20**



Bellarine Bayside acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the northern Bellarine Peninsula land and waters on which we work, live and play. We pay tribute to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and commit to walking alongside them to progress their aspirations.



*Bellawiyin* by Billy-Jay O'Toole (Papul Art) a proud Wadawurrung man.  
2020, acrylic on canvas



## About Bellarine Bayside

Bellarine Bayside is a not-for-profit, Category 1 Committee of Management established by the Victorian Government in 1994 under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* to manage 17 kilometres of coastal Crown land reserves on the northern Bellarine Peninsula between Point Richards in Portarlington to the southern edge of 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. The Committee delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to work with staff to manage the day-to-day operations. Bellarine Bayside employs 22 permanent staff across the functions of management and planning, grounds, administration and holiday parks. With the addition of casual employees, our staff numbers increase to 52 over the peak summer season.

## Our Work

Bellarine Bayside is responsible for management of the coastal reserve in accordance with the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*, the Statement of Expectations issued by the Minister and related subordinate legislation and policy set by the Victorian Government. The reserve includes natural and built assets, holiday parks, the Coastal Trail, playgrounds, community hall, boat ramps and boat sheds.

We work collaboratively with a range of government departments, organisations and industry experts to deliver projects along the coastal reserve in consultation with the community, campers, agency stakeholders, local businesses and key user and community groups.



## 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 Goals

Bellarine Bayside's five goals, along with associated actions, were developed to implement our current key strategic plan, the *Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan 2012* (the Foreshore Plan). The Foreshore Plan was developed under the requirements of the *Victorian Coastal Management Act (1995)* and took into account relevant legislation and policy, as well as extensive community and agency stakeholder consultation. The goals are:

- Understand, protect and enhance the natural environment.
- Connect communities and the coast.
- Facilitate access, enjoyment and sustainable use of the coast.
- Improve built environments along the foreshore.
- Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in partnership with others.

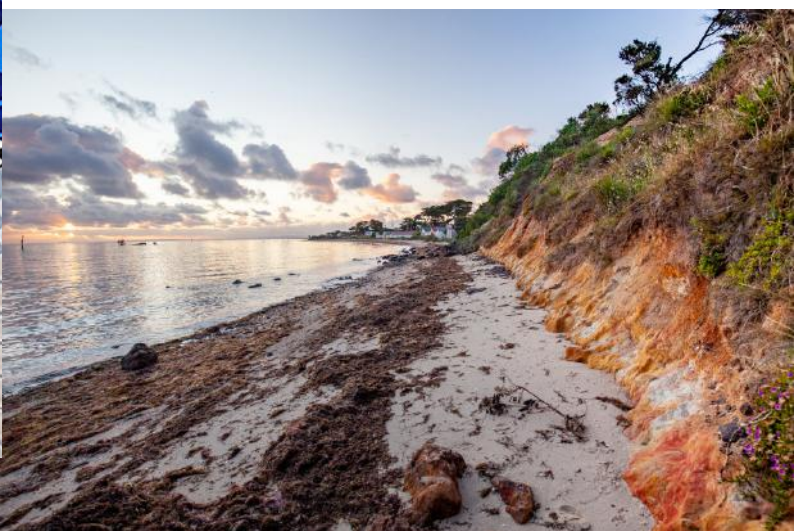
The *Victorian Coastal Management Act (1995)* has now been superseded by the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* and Bellarine Bayside is currently working towards completion of a new strategic plan.

## Our Funding

Bellarine Bayside generates around \$7 million in direct revenue annually. Approximately 90% of this revenue is derived through fees from the six coastal holiday parks run by Bellarine Bayside. Other revenue is derived from a range of sources including lease, licence and permit fees, and supplemented by grants for specific projects.

No recurrent funding is received from government.

All incoming revenue is reinvested into achieving the five goals of the Foreshore Plan.



# Caring for our coast

## About us



**22** permanent staff increasing to **52** staff during peak holiday season with the addition of short-term employees



Managing **17** kilometres (approximately **200** hectares) of coastal Crown land reserve including one of the largest areas of remnant bushland on the Bellarine Peninsula

## Revenue



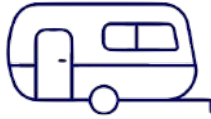
**\$7 million\***  
reinvested into the coastal reserve

## Leases and Licences



**39** leases and licences issued to community clubs, commercial venues and private boat sheds allowing activities, goods and services to be delivered to an appreciative and engaged local community

## Holiday parks



**484** year-round tourist and **378** seasonal tourist sites



**384** Twelve Month Permit sites



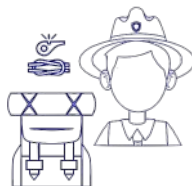
**20** tourist cabins



**118,000+\*** visitor nights provided accommodation for **17,000+\*** visitors to the northern Bellarine Peninsula who added approximately **\$15million** to the local economy



**Over 50\*** kids' activities including movie screenings, treasure hunts and craft activities



**4** large/group accommodation bookings for schools, a scout group and a caravan club

## Coastal access and facilities



**More than 1900 hours** spent mowing maintaining **57,600,000m<sup>2</sup>** (5760 ha) of turf



**14,000** bollards and **8** km of fencing



**14 playgrounds** including the largest public playground on the northern Bellarine



**20 public BBQs**



**5 boat ramps**



**410 bins** emptied approximately **30,000\*** times



**27 amenity blocks** in our public and holiday parks cleaned **4,500\*** times



**190 picnic tables**

## Natural environment



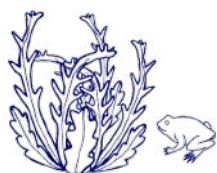
**Over 10,000** native trees, shrubs and grasses planted including **20** endangered Bellarine Yellow Gums



**62 hectares** mapped for rabbit, fox and cat activity



**More than 1900\*** volunteer hours facilitated on the coastal reserve through our volunteer groups, community planting days and the support of external organisations (Conservation Volunteers Australia, Birdlife Australia and Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program).



**20** Activities were run throughout the year engaging more than **290** people in environmental and cultural activities

## Community engagement



### Key consultation topics

- CMMP development
- Walking trails and tracks
- Trees



### Key media topics

- W.G. Little Reserve playground
- Chainsaw art
- Red-capped plovers



More than **45 topics and projects** discussed in monthly media updates



### Hot topics

Our community was interested in finding out more on seagrass wrack, Coastal Trail maintenance, erosion and COVID-19 response

## Social media



**5088**  
Facebook  
followers



**1411**  
Instagram  
followers



**350**  
Twitter  
followers

## Events and permits



### 18 vendor and activity services

facilitated through the issuing of permits and hall hire to commercial and community groups who provide services to the local community and visitors



**29\*** public events including large annual events and regular markets on the coastal reserve



**7\*** weddings

*\*Numbers impacted by COVID-19*



**Bellarine  
Bayside**  
Coastal Management



# Chair's Report



The past year has been described in many ways; unprecedented, challenging, unique or just plain difficult. We will all look back on 2020 as one where we were challenged to be more agile and adaptable. It is easy to forget that COVID-19 did not impact Victoria until March, as it seemed to dominate the whole year.

2019-20 has been a busy and eventful year for Bellarine Bayside in many other ways. This report features the many projects and works we have successfully achieved. Key are:

- A major project to update aged power infrastructure in Portarlington Holiday Park;
- On-going upgrading and improvement of facilities and the environment in the coastal reserve parks; and
- Further improvements to the Coastal Trail.

A personal highlight for me was the opening of the Portarlington & Drysdale Community Bank Branches Play Space at W.G. Little Reserve. It is a testament to strong partnerships and I thank the major funders, the Portarlington & Drysdale Community Bank branches of Bendigo Bank and the City of Greater Geelong, for supporting Bellarine Bayside in this project. I also extend my thanks to the staff for delivering such a high-quality facility that brings great joy to many.

The drafting of the Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) provided us with opportunities to engage with many from our communities and interested partners to better understand their aspirations and visions for the foreshore and inform Bellarine Bayside's five-year priorities. What we heard from this has deeply informed the draft plan and we look forward, in 2021, to gaining Ministerial approval for the CMMP and to being able to implement it. Our intention is to keep the community updated on our progress once we have formal approval.

On 1 July, we were joined by four new Committee members appointed by the Minister; Cam Quinten, Nicole Newman, Richard Davies and Sheena Walters. These new members have brought a wealth of experience to the Committee and have further broadened our perspectives and decision-making. I would like to acknowledge our departing member Jen Lilburn's insightful contributions to the Committee's strategic thinking and community engagement was highly regarded by many of us. I'd also like to give a huge thank you to my predecessor as Chair, Dr Sandra Brizga. Her work has made my job so much easier and her continuing expert advice and participation on the Committee has been invaluable.

It was a year of change. In November, we said farewell to our longstanding Business and Finance Manager, Mike Hodges. Mike's knowledge, persistence and capacity to put in place strong systems and controls were critical drivers in turning around Bellarine Bayside's financial position. We welcomed Wayne Coots to our Senior Management team, who is now building on Mike's solid foundation.

Also in February, our CEO, John Nankervis informed the Committee of his intention to retire at the end of the financial year. John had provided five years of strong leadership to the team and dependable support to the recent Committees. He established a vision for the organisation and built positive relationships across the communities and with adjacent land managers. He formed a financially sustainable and responsive organisation with robust systems, planning and accountability and management processes and placed Bellarine Bayside as a trusted part of the northern Bellarine community.

The notice John gave us allowed us to undertake a thorough nationwide search for a new CEO. Bruce Elliot joined us from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on 11 July as our new CEO. I look forward to working with Bruce to carry Bellarine Bayside into the next stage of its development.

As we move forward into the next year, and we learn what the new "COVID normal" will mean for us, there is still much to look forward to. We anticipate that with decreased international mobility, there will be greater domestic and intrastate travellers who we would welcome to our beautiful Bellarine.

The approval of the CMMP will set our strategy and works programs for the next period. We will continue to implement projects and initiatives which will place the safety of our people and communities at their core and will improve the amenity and attractiveness of the foreshore and the facilities that support it. Ongoing upgrades and maintenance may be a little restricted due the financial impacts of lockdowns and travel restrictions, but we will continue to aim to improve these.



I look forward to our emerging journey with the local Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wadawurrung People, building upon the conversations we have had in 2019–20 and our greater understanding of Wadawurrung cultural values of the foreshore. The CMMP identifies a number of opportunities to work in partnership to showcase the indigenous values of the land we manage and to actively acknowledge the traditional custodians.

The challenge of responding to coastal erosion arising from storm surges and higher water levels will need to be addressed as a community over the next decade at a strategic level, meanwhile, in the short term, we will manage the impacts of this upon our assets and amenities as well as keeping people safe.

One of the greatest strengths of Bellarine Bayside is our staff team. It has been a challenging year for them, dealing with uncertainty, needing to be flexible and work in different ways, and also being the public face of some of the lockdown restrictions and decisions made far away from them. I thank each of them and have been so glad we have been able to retain them throughout this difficult period. The contribution of our volunteers allows us to achieve so much more and I thank them for the generous gift of their time, energy and expertise.

I would also like to acknowledge the staff of the Regional Office of DELWP, who have been tireless advocates for the coastal committees as we have grappled with the impacts of travel restrictions. As always, they have been wise sources of advice and counsel. The local coastal Committees worked together to develop common solutions and approaches to the issues presented by COVID-19, and I thank our colleagues along the Bellarine and Surf Coast for this. I also recognise the continuing professional support we have received from the City of Greater Geelong officers in the past year.

Finally, thanks to my fellow committee members, including John Hartigan, Deputy Chair and Greg Lewis, Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee. The careful and thoughtful consideration by all Committee members of the many challenging issues which faced the organisation over the year and their questioning and inquiring approach has made Bellarine Bayside a stronger and more accountable organisation.

**Melanie Rogers**  
Bellarine Bayside Chair



***In 2019/20 the Bellarine Bayside Committee consisted of 10 Committee members:***

Melanie Rogers – *Chair*  
John Hartigan – *Deputy Chair*  
Dr Sandra Brizga  
Helene Cameron  
Gregory Lewis  
Dr Kenneth Latta PSM  
Nicole Newman  
Sheena Walters  
Cameron Quinten  
Richard Davies

***Senior Management Team***

John Nankervis  
*Chief Executive Officer (retired 10 July 2020)*  
Bruce Elliot  
*Chief Executive Officer (commenced 11 July 2020)*  
Justin Smith  
*Planning and Environment Manager*  
David Goldie  
*Operations Manager*  
Michael Hodges  
*Finance and Business Manager (retired 14 November 2019)*  
Wayne Coots  
*Finance and Business Manager (commenced 23 December 2019)*  
Rod Newnham  
*Holiday Parks Manager*

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



# Goal 1:

## Understand, Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment



### Environmental Conservation and Habitat Protection

Conserving and enhancing the natural coastal environment is one of our key objectives with the goal of protecting of local heritage values, enhancing amenity and increasing biodiversity. Our conservation efforts in 2019–20 also had a strong focus on improving habitat connectivity and mitigating the impacts of coastal processes and erosion.

#### *Key environmental conservation works this year included:*

- Securing a Coastcare Community Grant through the Victorian Government;
- Completing fauna surveys using wildlife cameras and assessing nest box use throughout the reserves;
- Engaging a specialist to advise on management strategies, habitat quality and reducing impacts on the threatened Growling Grass Frog in Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve while undertaking fuel reduction and revegetation programs in the area;
- A pest animal management program, including continuing to monitor and manage fox and feral cat activity and the completion of rabbit warren mapping in the 62-hectare Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve;
- Partnering with Conservation Volunteers Australia, Community Corrections Victoria and the new Working for Victoria program to achieve over 1400 hours of conservation work within the reserves; and
- Planting of over 10,000 native trees, shrubs and grasses by community groups, volunteers and dedicated staff.

### Coastal Protection

Coastal processes and erosion continue to threaten values and assets on our coastline. Ongoing monitoring and management programs aim to mitigate the effects of erosion and inundation to ensure safe and accessible beaches, reserves, parks and facilities are available for the benefit of the local community, visitors and holidaymakers alike.

#### *Coastal monitoring and mapping*

Our projects and partnerships to monitor and map coastal processes continued in 2019–20. We are beginning to identify trends and erosion hotspots to allow us to better understand

what events affect our coastline and the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our BeachWatch program as it relies on citizen science volunteers to gather the data. The Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program also stood down their volunteers, however, staff from Deakin University and The University of Melbourne continued to undertake surveys and contributed to more than 160 hours of monitoring our beaches.

#### *Key coastal protection projects for the year include:*

- Two major repair and replacement projects completed on existing sea walls;
- Monitoring of known erosion hotspots throughout the year, with increased monitoring following king tides and severe weather events;
- Renourishment of erosion at locations where an immediate response was required to protect assets; and
- Planting along the primary dune system to stabilise these vulnerable areas.

### Our Volunteers

Volunteers join us through established volunteer groups (the Friends of Pt Richards and BeachWatch) as well as at Bellarine Bayside hosted community environment days.

We are grateful to local group Woofers and Walkers who organise an annual Clean Up Australia Day event on the foreshore. This year, an outstanding 32 volunteers attended, including members of Drysdale Rotary, and collected litter from Portarlington Pier to Grassy Point.

In addition to our volunteer programs, we also receive volunteer support from Caring for our Bays, Birdlife Australia, the Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program, Conservation Volunteers Australia and WaterWatch

#### *Key volunteer achievements for the year include:*

- The Friends of Pt Richards dedicated more than 420 volunteer hours to removing weeds and planting native vegetation; and
- BeachWatch teams undertook in excess of 300 volunteer hours measuring the sand profiles at 19 priority locations.





Connecting our communities to the coast through engagement, interpretation and education is a role we value and thoroughly enjoy. Throughout the year we ran a number of meaningful sessions to engage community members in fun and hands-on education and awareness programs, as well as project consultation. Although a number of planned activities were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we developed alternative ways to continue to engage with the community, disseminate information and share local knowledge.

### Bayside Alive!

The Bayside Alive! program continues to be a key initiative to raise environmental awareness and appreciation of the northern Bellarine. It aims to provide fun, accessible and participatory community education and engagement activities.

#### *Activities in the last 12 months include:*

- 12 free summer activities held on the foreshore in January engaged over 200 people in Wadawurrung cultural activities, enviro craft, guided bushwalks, rock pool rambles and more;
- Installation of a Haiku Poem Trail, an initiative of the Port Arts Network, to encourage visitors to encourage exploration of the reserve with a different perspective; and
- Two community planting days were held with over 60 enthusiastic attendees planting a combined total of more than 2300 indigenous trees, grasses and shrubs.

### Bellarine Nature Cadets

Our spring session of the Bellarine Nature Cadets engaged 13 cadets and their families to learn about the local area through fun hands-on activities. The cadets learnt about a range of topics from the Victorian Fisheries Authority, the Friends of Pt Richards, Bellarine Birdlife, Caring for our Bays, Conservation Volunteers Australia and one of our tech-savvy drone volunteers.

The autumn session was off to a roaring start with 14 cadets learning about underwater creatures at the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre in Queenscliff. Unfortunately, the further five weeks of activities were called off due to COVID-19. Our passionate Coastal Projects Coordinator set up a Facebook group for enrolled families so we could continue to connect with them and inspire the cadets' learning.

### Environmental Partnerships

Bellarine Bayside continued many strong environmental partnerships this year, including those with: Conservation Volunteers Australia, Caring for our Bays, Bellarine Catchment Network, Bellarine Landcare Group, Victorian Fisheries Authority, Parks Victoria, Community Correctional Services, City of Greater Geelong, Coastcare Victoria, Deakin University, The University of Melbourne, Birdlife Australia, Zoos Victoria AGL Marine Response Unit, and St Leonards Primary School.

### Annual Community Meeting

Over 40 community members attended our Annual Community Meeting on 21 November 2019 at the Portarlington Bowls Club. Stephanie Skinner, a proud Wadawurrung Woman and Traditional Owner of the land managed by Bellarine Bayside, opened the evening with a Welcome to Country ceremony. Bellarine Bayside Committee Chair, Melanie Rogers, provided a detailed update of Bellarine Bayside activities, both past and future.

The guest speaker for the evening was Brett Ince, Executive Director at Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine (TGGB). Brett spoke about trends in the local tourism industry, what TGGB have identified as strong attractions in the region and the approach they were planning to take to diversify the tourism market while supporting local industry and retaining local values that the communities wish to protect.

### Major Community Events

Bellarine Bayside provides sponsorship and support to a number of community events throughout the year, both major and minor. The events held on the foreshore give attendees many and varied opportunities to connect with the coast and our communities. We again welcomed the Portarlington Mussel Festival, Flying Brick Bellarine Sunset Run, Portarlington Charity Carnival, Neville Richards Wreck2Reef Open Water Swim Classic, and Hooked on Bellarine. We also support the Portarlington Market which has grown over the last two years thanks to the Portarlington Drysdale Lions Club.

We welcomed Daniher's Drive, an annual fundraiser of FightMND, to the foreshore for the first time and it was wonderful to see the community turn out in support of Geoff Fary and family who campaigned for the drive to come through Portarlington in October 2019.

Unfortunately, the National Celtic Festival, one of the most anticipated events of the year for the northern Bellarine, was cancelled due to COVID-19. Our sympathies are with the dedicated festival committee who input enormous effort year-round to make the event a success. We hope to welcome them back again next year!



# Goal 3:

## Facilitate Access, Enjoyment and Sustainable Use of the Coast

Throughout the year we deliver a range of projects aimed at supporting safe, accessible and enjoyable coastal experiences for all. Our team maintain and upgrade existing facilities such as boat ramps, seawalls, playgrounds, the Coastal Trail, buildings, roads and car parking. We also seek to implement new facilities where possible that both benefit our coastal user groups and protect the fragile natural environment.

### *Tree health, maintenance and forward planning*

One of the biggest challenges we currently face along the coast is ageing trees, in particular the cypress. We continue to maintain a detailed tree database informed by contract arborists who assess tree health, condition and risk. The detailed audit is conducted annually on 1400 trees, with ad hoc assessments also conducted following significant wind events. The database has identified a number of threats facing our ageing trees including old age, drought, storms and fungal diseases such as cypress canker. A combination of these factors is driving an increase in the number of trees being flagged as an unacceptably high risk to the public each year.

In response to these trends, we implement a tree replacement program and have made this program a key action to continue under the new Coastal and Marine Management Plan.

### **Major Projects**

We undertook a number of improvement projects during 2019–20, consulting with foreshore users where possible. Utilising local knowledge helps us to reach the best possible outcome when balancing community need with protection of the coastal reserve.



### *Projects undertaken (some of which will continue into 2020–21) include:*

- Over \$200,000 of upgrades completed to the Coastal Trail;
- Construction of a \$25,000 connection track in St Leonards alongside Bluff Road to allow safer passage for pedestrians in this area;
- Refurbishment of the Indented Head Community Hall floor;
- Removal of unsafe BBQ/picnic shelters at Point Richards and replacement with new shelters in a rustic design; and
- Leasing of two foreshore buildings (the historic Sirens Boathouse & Kiosk and the Café/Restaurant near Portarlinton Pier) to new tenants following rigorous expression of interest processes.

In addition to the above, the State Government announced a \$47.2 million investment to upgrade six priority boat ramps across Victoria. Point Richards Boat Ramp was selected as one of the six and we worked closely with Better Boating Victoria, a new entity of the Department of Transport, throughout the year. The works at Point Richards Boat Ramp will result in expansion of car and boat trailer parking capacity and improvements to vessel access and egress at the facility by reduction in the build-up of seagrass and sand.

The carpark extension has been designed and is planned for delivery in 2020/21. A preliminary design to reduce seagrass and sand build-up on the boat ramp has been developed with input from the boating community and a coastal processes study.



# Goal 4:

## Improve built environments along the foreshore

The built environment along the foreshore consists of a large range of infrastructure and amenities that provide benefit and enjoyment to local communities and visitors. We undertake a large-scale annual maintenance and improvement program to upgrade existing or install new facilities. This includes improvements to camping facilities in both the Portarlington Holiday Park and the five seasonal camping reserves.

### W.G. Little Reserve Playground Partnership

The \$550,000 upgrade of the new Portarlington & Drysdale Community Bank Play Space at W.G. Little Reserve was completed, culminating in a successful launch event. An estimated 300 community members were in attendance, all excited to finally test out the new play equipment.

The new main playground for the northern Bellarine features a balance of traditional play equipment alongside nature based and imaginary play opportunities. Features include a dry creek bed and water play area, balancing logs, climbing ropes, swings, a trampoline and a flying fox. Art installations and play sculptures in a coastal environment theme complement the play zones as do native plantings and upgraded picnic facilities.

### Portarlington Holiday Park and Seasonal Camping Grounds

We continued our implementation of the Camping and Accommodation Strategy, improving a number of infrastructure and camper services in all of the Holiday Parks. Unfortunately, a number of planned works and upgrades were delayed due to COVID-19.



#### *Some of the improvements completed in 2019–20 were:*

- Refurbishment of epoxy floor in two Portarlington Holiday Park amenity blocks;
- External painting of ensuites and amenity blocks;
- Internal refurbishment of the Holiday Parks reception including installation of sneeze guards;
- Complete redesign and upgrade of boom gates at Portarlington Holiday Park to allow for larger vans and improve ease of use;
- Upgrade of 15 street lights in Portarlington Holiday Park to energy efficient and reliable LED lights;
- Four washing machines upgraded as part of a continuing replacement program;
- Replacement of aged decking boards with a slip resistant mesh on the boat ramp jetty in Portarlington Holiday Park; and
- Refurbishment of cabins in Portarlington Holiday Park including external painting of four cabins, replacement of all bunk mattresses and internal light upgrades.

We continued the \$900,000 upgrade of the power supply network in the Portarlington Holiday Park. This is one of the largest holiday park projects we have undertaken to date and will replace our low voltage overhead supply with an underground high voltage supply. Initially due to be complete late 2019, the project was delayed by the late delivery of infrastructure and so the final steps of the project were put on hold until after the peak season (Easter 2020).

Our holiday activity program was expanded yet again this year with a range of new free activities planned. Unfortunately, the weather was not always favourable and a number of activities were rescheduled or cancelled. The food vendor program continues with the Portarlington Demons Football Netball Club once again raising money through their coffee van, local food van the Fresh Meal Fairy a popular option and Giuseppe's Wood Oven Pizza is always a hit!





## Goal 5:

*Develop Bellarine Bayside as a sustainable, adaptive and accountable organisation that takes up its role in Partnership with others*

COVID-19 had a significant impact on our project delivery in 2019-20 and a number of projects planned to start following the peak season were put on hold due to a downturn in revenue. The break in project planning and delivery saw staff shift their focus towards applying for grant funding. Most notably, we were successful in securing funding through the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning and the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes program for significant works to the Coastal Trail and foreshore corridor revegetation, both projects which had been placed on hold due to COVID-19.

Throughout 2019-20 Bellarine Bayside implemented further improvements to the management and governance of the organisation. Among the projects initiated were:

- Cultural awareness training for all permanent staff conducted by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation;
- Implementation of recommendations from the sustainability audit commenced with replacement of power hungry lights with LEDs in our offices;
- Development of our draft Sustainability Plan;
- A Business Clean Up Day event for staff resulting in six large bags of rubbish collected from a 350m stretch of foreshore;
- Trial use of two new 100% biodegradable tree guards;
- Transition of our website to an efficient hosting platform for improvement of use; and
- Introduction of a limited release of a summer mini-season camping package which proved very popular.

### Staffing

We welcomed Wayne Coots into the role of Business and Finance Manager in December 2019. Wayne has a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting and IT) and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. Wayne has over 30 years' experience working in the not-for-profit sector within Australia and overseas, with his most recent role as the Finance Manager for the Give Where You Live Foundation in Geelong. Originally from Geelong and educated at Deakin University, Wayne has a strong affinity for the Bellarine Peninsula.

Bruce Elliot commenced as Chief Executive Officer in early July 2020 following the retirement of John Nankervis. Bruce has an extensive background in executive leadership roles in the public sector, most recently as a General Manager at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for 12 years across all areas of park management and service delivery. Bruce brings a wealth of experience to Bellarine Bayside to lead the organisation into a new phase, including the implementation of the Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) when finalised.



Additionally, we appointed new staff members into the vacated roles of Coastal Conservation Crew Member, Coastal Reserve Maintenance Officer and Coastal Conservation Coordinator. The new staff members bring significant experience and skills that will allow us to continue and expand upon previous works to improve the coastal reserves.

Each year, the Category 1 Committees of Management (including Bellarine Bayside) are required meet the management expectations of Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. Details are provided in the Statement of Expectations (SOE) document, available on our website.

The Committee has reported back to the DELWP that the nine priorities within the SOE will be met during the agreed time period and these results will be presented on our website at [www.bellarinebayside.com.au](http://www.bellarinebayside.com.au).





# Coastal and Marine Management Planning

As an appointed coastal Crown land manager, we have a responsibility to demonstrate to the community and the Victorian Government how coastal Crown land is managed and to highlight a vision for the future. Additionally, under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* and the *2018 Statement of Expectations for Category 1 Coastal Committees of Management* issued by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, we are required to develop a Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP).

## The CMMP

Our CMMP will provide direction for the future management of coastal Crown land reserves on the northern Bellarine. The CMMP will be a high-level, strategic document that will highlight priorities, outcomes, initiatives and programs for the next five years in line with a longer-term vision and goals. It does so by setting the vision and goals guiding the management of the reserve through strategic actions and an implementation plan detailing works for the next five years. Traditional Owner, community, partner agency and stakeholder consultation is an important aspect of developing the CMMP and we are actively seeking it at key stages along the way.

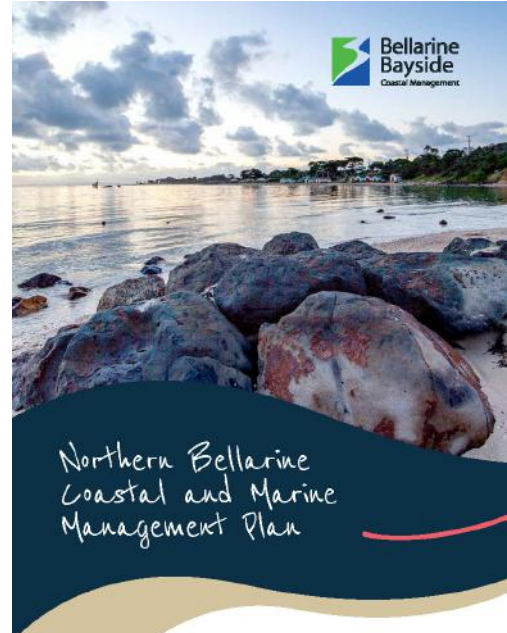
Community and stakeholder consultation is an important aspect of developing the CMMP, allowing Bellarine Bayside to understand what the community values along the coast. Additionally, we sought feedback on what challenges the community think the coastline faces and proposed solutions to these challenges, as well as the direction the community believes Bellarine Bayside should take in the management of the foreshore.

### 2018–19: Foreshore Plan review and community feedback

In 2018–19, we commissioned an independent review of the Northern Bellarine Foreshore Plan 2012 and the associated Northern Bellarine Foreshore Master Plan (together known as the 'Foreshore Plan'), with the view to develop a new CMMP. This included reviewing the works proposed in the Foreshore Plan and identifying those not yet started to determine which actions will be adopted for inclusion within the Draft CMMP.

Following this, a comprehensive Issues and Options Discussion Paper was released alongside a community survey to gauge what the community value along the foreshore, as well as gather local knowledge on issues the community feels need to be addressed.

You can keep up to date on how we are progressing with the development on the CMMP on our website – [www.bellarinebayside.com.au/coastal-management/projects/northern-bellarine-coastal-and-marine-management-plan/](http://www.bellarinebayside.com.au/coastal-management/projects/northern-bellarine-coastal-and-marine-management-plan/)



### 2019–20: Development of the Draft Northern Bellarine Coastal and Marine Management Plan

The Draft Northern Bellarine Coastal and Marine Management Plan was developed and released for consultation during December 2019–January 2020 following extensive workshops and preparation by staff and Committee members earlier in the year. Community aspirations, legislative requirements and Victorian Government policy framework are reflected within the Draft CMMP, having guided development of the vision, goals and strategic actions. Extensive consultation was also held with Traditional Owners, neighbouring land managers and key partner agencies prior to release to take into consideration management priorities and resources when developing strategic directions and actions. A total of 61 individual submissions were received through the Draft CMMP survey along with six submissions from key stakeholder groups. Additionally, Traditional Owners and partner agencies provided feedback.

### Current Situation

With the ongoing COVID-19 situation, we have been unable to progress a majority of projects/actions highlighted in the Draft CMMP for commencement in 2020–21. Additionally, completion of the final CMMP has been delayed.

We are currently working through incorporation of feedback, including extensive feedback received from DELWP. Once any changes are incorporated and approved by our Committee, we will update Traditional Owners, key stakeholder groups and partner agencies and submit the final CMMP to DELWP and the Minister for approval.

As the CMMP will not be finalised in the short-term, we will continue with the initiatives as detailed within the Draft CMMP Implementation Plan.

# Financial Overview

Bellarine Bayside has completed another successful year and reports an operating surplus of \$646k, an increase of \$32k on the previous year (FY2019: \$614k).

FY2020 operations generated revenues of \$6.75m, a decrease of \$686k or 9% on the previous year's revenues of \$7.44m. The holiday parks contributed \$5.96m or 89% of total revenues (FY2019: \$6.53m). The decrease in holiday park revenue can be attributed to the Victorian Government's COVID-19 Non-Essential Business Closure Directive with Bellarine Bayside's holiday parks and coastal reserves closed from 23 March 2020 to 31 May 2020. Grants and subsidies from state government and other sources totalled \$567k, 8% of total revenues (FY2019: \$603k) and revenues from other sources – foreshore leases, licence fees, permits and investments – was \$219k, 3% of total revenues (FY2018: \$308k).

Total expenditure for the year (excluding depreciation charges) was \$4.95m (2019: \$5.89m). This was a decrease of \$944k or 16% on the previous year. The decrease in expenditure was largely attributable to an asset write-down expense of \$668k that was incurred in 2018/19 as part of the annual asset impairment review and the revaluation processes. In addition, the closure of Bellarine Bayside's holiday parks and coastal reserves from 23 March 2020 to 31 May 2020, resulted in operational cost savings.

Cash flows from operations for the year were \$833k (2019: \$2m). The decrease is largely due to the decision to extend the due date for 2020/21 Twelve Month Permit contracts to 31 July 2020 due to the uncertainties caused by COVID-19. Traditionally, contracts are required to be completed and returned by 30 June.

The completion of the year's operations saw total cash and investments of \$4.37m held at 30 June 2020 compared to \$5.27m held at 30 June 2019, a decrease of \$898k. The entity remains well placed to meet the funding demands of the new financial year.

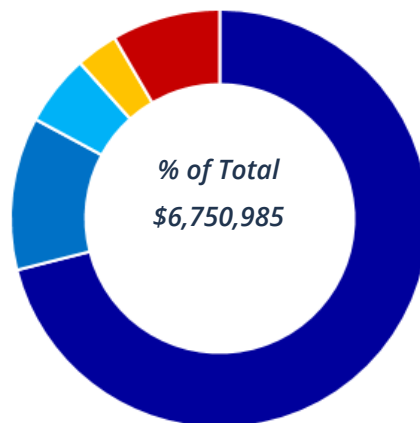
During the year, \$2m of funds was applied to project works (both operating and capital) an increase of \$671k or 49% on the previous year (FY2019: \$1.38m). Funding for this volume of works came from a combination of grants and the strong operating result. Significant works and outcomes included the completion of a new playground at W.G. Little Reserve, Portarlington (\$541k) and the upgrade of the power network at Portarlington Holiday Park (\$905k).

## COVID-19 Impact

COVID-19 caused a global pandemic, which impacted Australia from March 2020. Significant government restrictions were imposed to assist in stopping the spread of the disease, and these restrictions are still in place at the time of writing this report. These restrictions have had, and may continue to have, a significant impact on revenues. Bellarine Bayside has received cashflow boosts from the government, but has not received any other financial assistance. Bellarine Bayside's role in maintaining parks and the coastline of the northern Bellarine Peninsula has meant that close to normal expenditure has remained.

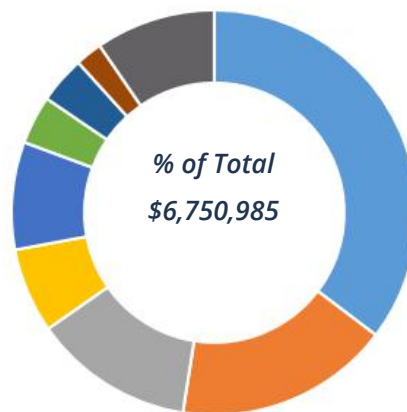
To view the full financial statements for 2019-20, please visit: [www.bellarinebayside.com.au](http://www.bellarinebayside.com.au)

## Revenues 2019-2020



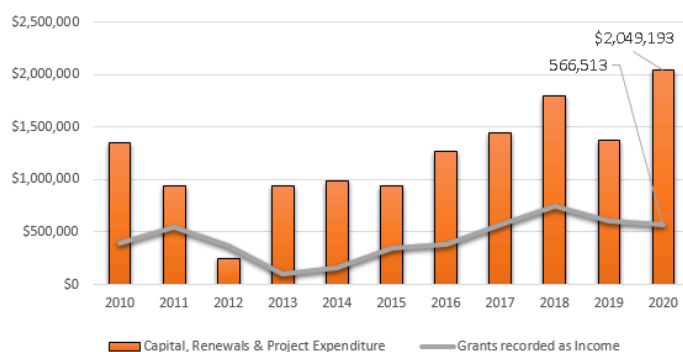
- Portarlington Holiday Park: 71%
- Indented Head Holiday Park: 12%
- St Leonards Holiday Park: 6%
- Foreshore Reserves & Assets: 3%
- Grants 8%

## 2019-2020 Revenue Distribution



- Staff employment costs: 35%
- Depreciation: 17%
- Repairs & maintenance: 13%
- Electricity, gas, water: 7%
- Coastal management (admin): 8%
- Waste, garbage: 4%
- Cleaning: 3%
- Motor vehicle operating: 2%
- Asset replacement funds: 10%

## Capital, Renewals and Project Activity





# The Year Ahead —

In 2020–21 we will build on our existing foundation to further enhance the environmental, social and heritage values of the coastal reserve. This includes further enhancing environmental protections while improving access and amenities for the enjoyment of visitors and the community.

We will continue to work closely with partner agencies and build strong relationships with our customers and the broader community including through the development of a community engagement charter. This charter will demonstrate our commitment to undertake engagement and outline what you can expect during interactions with us.

A major focus starting next year will be commencing implementation of our Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP), which will guide our management of the foreshore for the next five years. Key initiatives detailed in the CMMP that will commence next year include:

- Implement all abilities access from the beach to the Coastal Trail and carparks;
- Increase interpretive material and information signage along the Coastal Trail;
- Develop a five-year conservation and rehabilitation program;
- Develop a Coastal Hazards Response Strategy; and
- Finalise a Sustainability Plan for Bellarine Bayside.

We will continue to improve visitor infrastructure at a number of key locations along the northern Bellarine foreshore including:

- Refurbishing the Indented Head tennis court;
- Reviewing car parking arrangements on the Portarlington foreshore;
- Upgrading sections of the Coastal Trail to a consistent standard and to improve accessibility;
- Improving our coastal furniture;

- Monitoring for coastal erosion and developing protection measures in response;
- Promoting and facilitating public events on the coastal reserve;
- Protecting environmental values through a range of conservation activities; and
- Undertaking two major projects at Pt Richards boat ramp: the project led by Better Boating Victoria will firstly design an expansion of the parking area and secondly investigate measures to reduce the prevalence of weed and sand build-up.

We will continue to provide high quality holiday experiences at the Portarlington Holiday Park and seasonal camping reserves to the best of our ability while remaining consistent with government requirements relating to COVID-19.

COVID-19 may, unfortunately, impact on holiday park upgrades. Measures we plan to undertake to improve visitor experiences include:

- Finalising the \$900,000 power supply network upgrade in Portarlington Holiday Park;
- Continuation of our tree-risk-management program to ensure the safety of our visitors; and
- Continuation of our planting and grass replacement program to establish a connected coast.

Above all else, we will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our staff, customers and the broader community through implementation of COVID-19 response measures consistent with government requirements and the latest health advice. Our staff have shown incredible adaptability and cohesiveness as a team throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This gives us great confidence that we will continue to achieve great results for the coastal reserve, which is in no small part due to the dedication of our staff.





**Bellarine  
Bayside**  
Coastal Management

**Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee  
of Management Incorporated**

**ABN: 12 722 496 556**

2 Sproat St, Portarlington, Victoria • Telephone: 03 5254 4000  
PO Box 40, Portarlington VIC 3223 • Free Call: 1800 222 778



[contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au](mailto:contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au) • [www.bellarinebayside.com.au](http://www.bellarinebayside.com.au) • [www.facebook.com/bellarinebayside](https://www.facebook.com/bellarinebayside)