

Barwon Regional Partnership

At a glance

Our story so far

Since 2016, the Barwon Regional Partnership has been listening to the voices of our community and to stakeholders from across our region.

Through three widely-attended Regional Assemblies and numerous smaller meetings across the region, the Partnership has heard what is important to people in Barwon and it has taken these priorities directly to Government.

Government has listened and, as a result of the Partnership's efforts, a range of projects have been funded.

For example, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments agreed the Geelong City Deal in March 2019, ensuring over \$370 million for the region, and realising a number of the Partnership's priority projects including the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre and funds to further revitalise central Geelong.

But the Partnership has achieved much more than simply winning funding.

As well as advocating for our region, the Partnership has also played an important role in synthesising regional data, and bringing together diverse groups and stakeholders from across governments, departments and sectors, to validate issues and work together to find solutions.

It has led to a focus on local issues and Government policies, and their impact, at the local place-based level.



Transport connectivity is a Barwon Partnership priority

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BARWON

The outcomes we are striving to achieve
Our region is striving to achieve the following long term social and economic outcomes for the individuals, families and communities who live in and visit the Barwon region. The roadmap outlines the challenges we face in achieving these outcomes, the actions we are taking and what success looks like for our region.

Our Outcomes Roadmap

- Transport Connectivity**
An integrated, accessible and progressive transport network
- Liveability**
Vibrant, liveable cities and towns
- Climate Change**
Protected environments and prepared, resilient communities
- Business & Innovation**
A flourishing culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and growth
- Equity & Wellbeing**
Supported, fair and nurturing Barwon communities
- Education**
Strong education futures for our young people
- Tourism**
A thriving and sustainable Barwon tourism economy

This roadmap reflects the views of the Barwon Regional Partnership. The roadmap is a living document that will be updated regularly by the Regional Partnership.

Our priorities

Early in 2019, after hearing from hundreds of people from across our community, the Partnership published its first Outcomes Roadmap – a summary of the key, long-term strategic areas of focus for the Partnership moving forward.

The Roadmap is a summary of where the Partnership is looking to make a real difference.

The long-term outcomes the Barwon Regional Partnership is striving to achieve are:

Transport Connectivity – An integrated, accessible and progressive transport network

Liveability – Vibrant, liveable cities and towns

Climate Change – Protected environments and prepared, resilient communities

Business and Innovation – A flourishing culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and growth

Equity and Wellbeing – Supported, fair and nurturing Barwon communities

Education – Strong education futures for our young people

Tourism – A thriving and sustainable Barwon tourism economy.



What difference is the Barwon Regional Partnership making on the ground?

The Barwon Regional Partnership has been involved in driving projects across our region, drawing on data and consulting with the community. This map shows a small selection of initiatives with which the Partnership is involved.

Rail improvements:

The Partnership is one of a number of groups advocating for improved rail links between Geelong and Melbourne. In Budget 2019/20, the Victorian Government announced funding to facilitate the separation of regional and metropolitan services on the Geelong line to reduce crowding, support population growth and enable fast rail. The Partnership also successfully advocated for better mobile coverage on trains to Geelong.

Raising the leaving age for Out of Home Care from 18 to 21:

The Partnership shone a light on the need to increase the leaving age for Out of Home Care from 18 to 21. The Victorian Government has now commenced a \$11.6 million trial to give young people the option of remaining with a carer until the age of 21.

Barwon Digital Plan: The Partnership is working with the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) to develop an evidence-based regional digital plan to address demand for digital infrastructure, services and skills in the region. Once complete, it will be used as a call-to-action across all tiers of Government.

Great Ocean Road Authority:

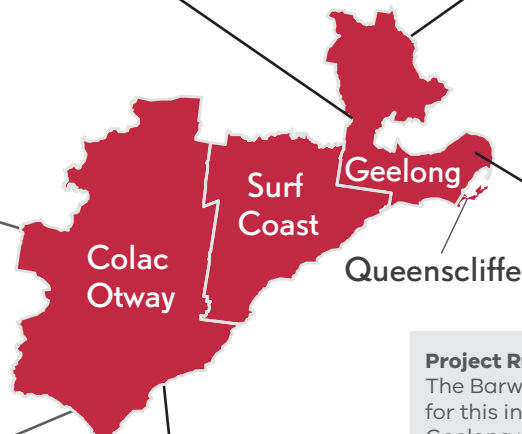
The Barwon and Great South Coast Regional Partnerships were among many who advocated for a Great Ocean Road Taskforce to improve governance along this iconic coastal road. As a result, the Great Ocean Road Authority is set to be introduced in 2020, following extensive consultation and recommendations led by an independently chaired Great Ocean Road Taskforce.

The Geelong Project:

The Partnership advocated to the Victorian Government about this Geelong focused initiative which works to address student wellbeing, homelessness and disengagement. The Geelong Project provides an integrated, cross sectoral place-based approach to improving school and education outcomes, reducing anti-social behaviour and homelessness, and is focused on early intervention. The Government provided additional funds in Budget 2018/19 so that the initiative can operate in the seven most disadvantaged secondary schools in Barwon.

Project Runway:

The Barwon Partnership advocated for this initiative led by Runway Geelong which received \$1.3 million in the 2018/19 Victorian Budget. The funding was used to support the creation of new programs to assist Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) to scale up and become more competitive. The new programs, which have been extended across other regions, are designed to assist SME owners in developing their operations by harnessing the use of digital technologies, integration of agile work practices and adoption of start-up methodologies to maximise business success and sustainability.





Geelong City Deal means Partnership's top priorities get the go ahead

Many of the Barwon Regional Partnership's top priorities have been given the green light with the recent funding agreement of the Geelong City Deal.

The City Deal, agreed by Local, State and Commonwealth Governments, will inject \$370 million towards new infrastructure projects across the wider region.

Major projects within the City Deal include:

- The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre
- Projects under Stage Two of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan (joint Barwon and Great South Coast priority)
- The redevelopment of the Apollo Bay harbour and
- Revitalisation of central Geelong.

These projects are expected to create new jobs, attract visitors from across the country, and boost the region's economy by \$1.1 billion each year.

"The Barwon Regional Partnership played a key role in getting regional stakeholders around the table to agree to priorities," explains Barwon Partnership Chair Kylie Warne.

"We're really excited to see the Geelong City Deal signed," she adds.





Next steps

With clear long-term priorities identified in the Outcomes Roadmap, the Barwon Regional Partnership is now entering a new phase; continuing much of its existing work but being agile and making some changes.

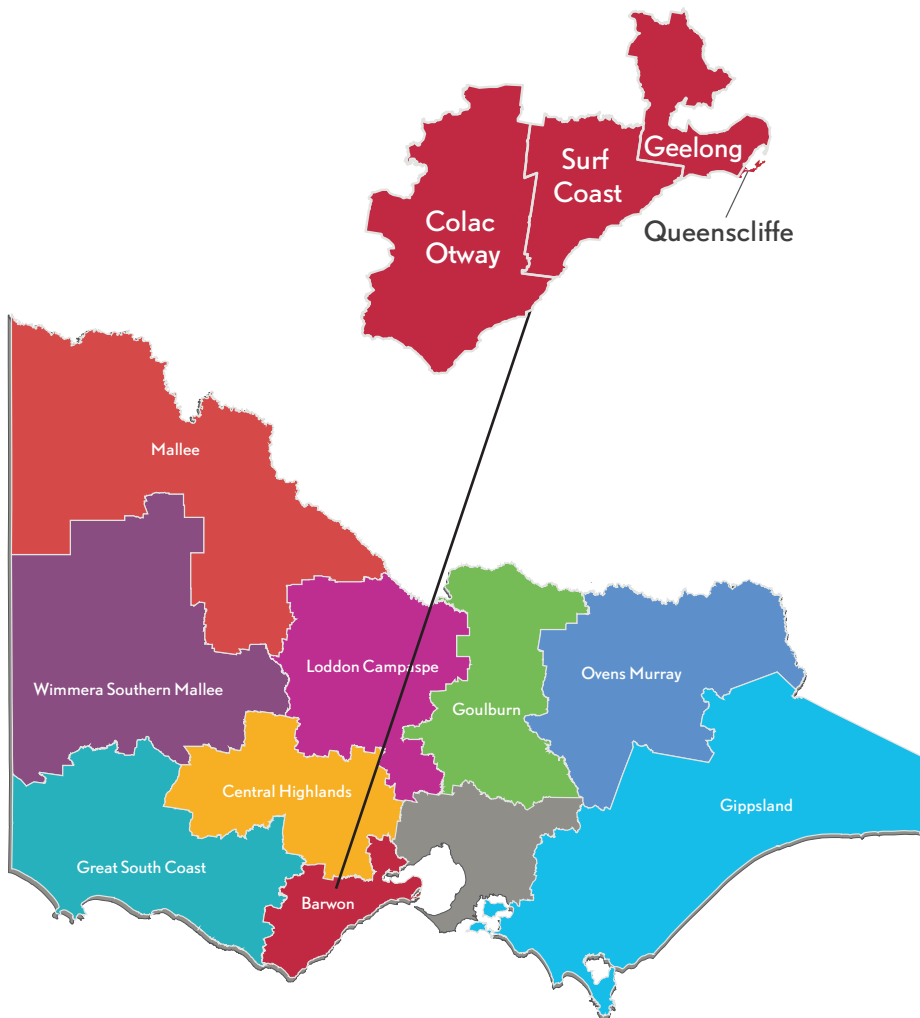
For example, over the next year, rather than holding a large-scale Regional Assembly as in previous years, the Partnership will undertake more focused, deep-dive engagements with key stakeholders in a small number of priority areas.

These areas will be:

- **Vulnerable young people and children**
- **Improving outcomes for people in north Geelong and**
- **Our coasts in a changing climate.**

Each of these areas align with the Partnership's long term priorities. These engagements will bring together experts from our region, and elsewhere, to understand the issues and how they affect the Barwon region.

It will lead to further focusing of effort to enable real change on the ground.



Who we are and how to find us

The Barwon Regional Partnership is one of nine Regional Partnerships working across the state. Each was established by the Victorian Government in 2016.

The Partnership has been led since its inception by Kylie Warne, former President of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce. She has run her own consultancy, Brand Bureau, for more than a decade, and is particularly passionate about supporting regional businesses and entrepreneurs.

Joining her on the Partnership are seven other community and business members, as well as the CEOs of each of the Barwon Local Government Areas (LGAs), a Victorian Government Deputy Secretary, and a representative of Regional Development Australia (RDA), ensuring local, state and Commonwealth Government involvement in the Partnership.

You can find more information on the Barwon Partnership on our webpage, <https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/barwon> and you can follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/BarwonRP/>