



GLAMORGAN  
SPRING BAY  
COUNCIL

# GLAMORGAN SPRING BAY COUNCIL **Advocacy Initiatives 2025**



Please join our ongoing journey to achieve the aspiration of Glamorgan Spring Bay as 'prosperous, vibrant and inclusive, a place where people want to live, work and visit'



*Mayor Cheryl Arrol & Acting General Manager Peter Porch  
On behalf of the Council and Communities of Glamorgan Spring Bay*

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# Message from the Mayor and Acting General Manager

Glamorgan Spring Bay, situated on Tasmania's East Coast, includes two of Tasmania's most iconic national parks, Freycinet and Maria Island and also Douglas Apsley. It is also home to the towns of Orford/Triabunna, Swansea, Bicheno and Buckland, as well as many smaller townships and residential areas along the coastline.

Like coastal areas throughout the nation, we face increasing demand for development, with more people wanting to visit and experience our area. In turn, we must manage the 'tension' between a vibrant visitor economy and avoiding 'loving to death', the very things residents value, and visitors want to experience. We know that developing and managing infrastructure positively supports this significant management task.

However, Council cannot fund all the infrastructure needed to support increasing visitation and resident expectations. We need the support of both the public and private sectors to help fund the infrastructure required to protect our remarkable environment and ensure our community and visitors are safe and secure.

The initiatives in this advocacy document provide a mix of responding to our challenges and leveraging our opportunities. They also support our Community Strategic Plan and what our community values about our special place on the East Coast of Tasmania. The initiatives align with State and Federal strategies and policies. Above all, however, they are considered responses to the needs of our area and all who use and enjoy our place.

We present our Advocacy Plan 2025 for serious consideration and ask you to join our ongoing journey to ensure our area is 'prosperous, vibrant and inclusive – a place where people want to live, work and visit.'

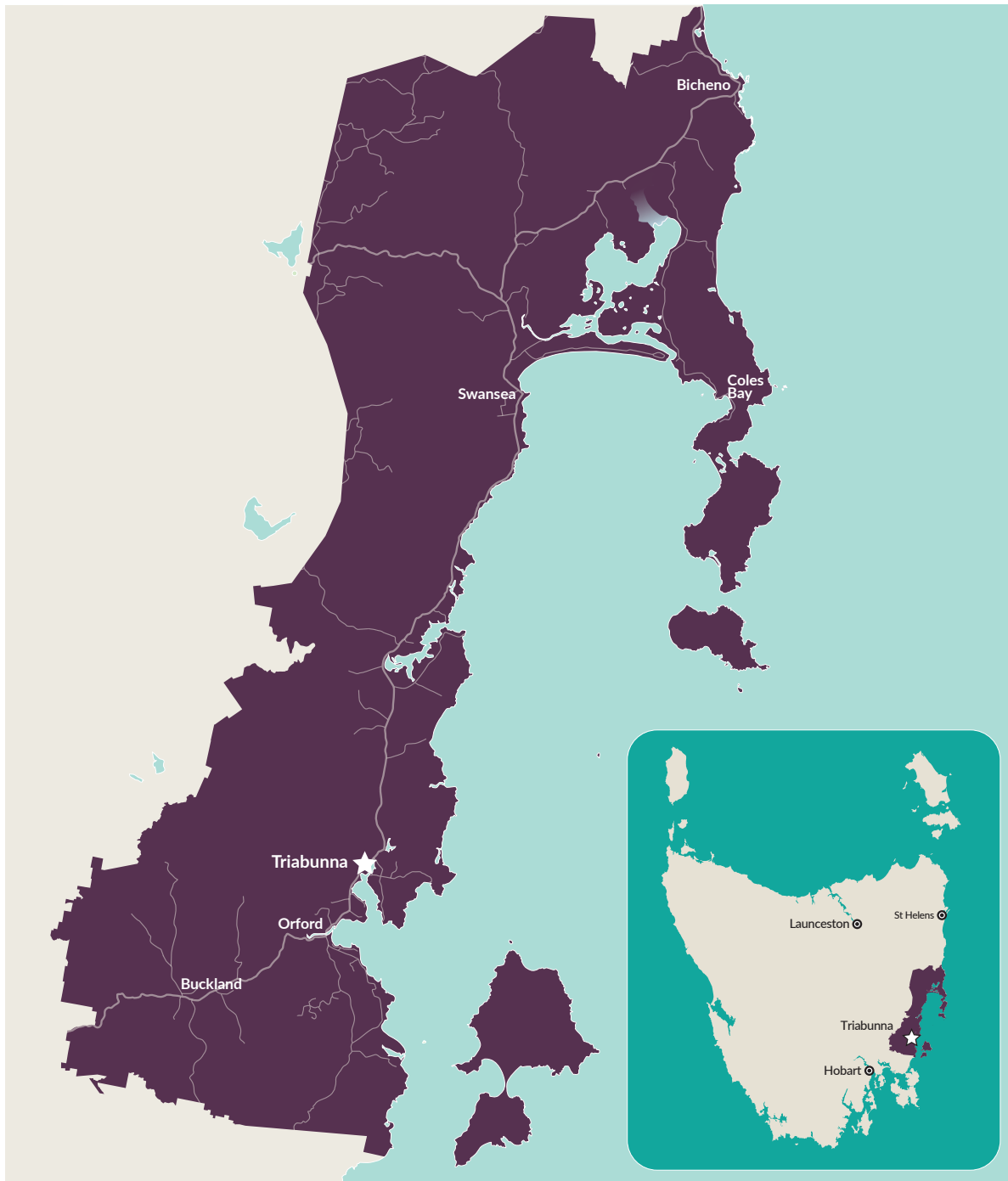
Clr Cheryl Arnol  
MAYOR

Peter Porch  
ACTING GENERAL MANAGER

The Glamorgan Spring Bay Council acknowledge the traditional owners of our region and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

# Our Area and Communities of Glamorgan Spring Bay



Glamorgan Spring Bay is an extraordinary place to live, visit and work. It has some of Tasmania's most spectacular landscapes and coastlines and strong, independent communities that know what they like and value about living here.

*Data sources 2021 ABS census data, Tasmanian Visitor Survey*

*Insight source: Council Strategic Planning Workshop, November 2024.*

# Our Area and Communities of Glamorgan Spring Bay

Bounded by the Denison River in the north and the start of Bust Me Gall Hill 160 kilometres to the south, the municipality covers an area of over 2,522 square kilometres, including the remarkable National Parks of Freycinet and Maria Island and also Douglas Apsley. The western boundary follows the ridgeline of the Eastern Tiers, and the eastern boundary is the low-tide mark of Great Oyster Bay and the Tasman Sea.

The municipality includes the townships of Bicheno, Coles Bay, Swansea, Orford/Triabunna and Buckland. The 2023 Estimated Resident Population is 5,237 (.91% of Tasmania), with a population density of 2.02 persons per square km. Triabunna/Orford has the highest population at 1720, Bicheno has the second largest population (1,049), followed closely by Swansea (997). Since the 2011 census, the population has grown by 1,058 persons.

Indigenous people comprise 4.4% of the population and live mainly in the Triabunna and Orford areas. The communities are ageing with a median age of 57 compared to 42 for Tasmania. Swansea and Orford have the highest median age at 62 years, and Coles Bay has the lowest at 38 years.

The 2021 ABS census data indicates that 23% of employed persons worked in accommodation and food services. The next highest area of employment was agriculture, forestry, and fishing, at 14%.

The median household weekly income in Tasmania was \$1,358, compared to \$1,005 for Glamorgan Spring Bay Council area. Five hundred and seventy-two people attended an educational institution, of which 24.2% were in primary schools, 14.5% were in secondary schools, and 17.8% were undertaking tertiary studies.

Health census data also reflects the ageing population, with 24 % of persons having one long-term health condition. 9% report having two long-term conditions, and 5.5% have 3 or more.

The area is popular as a holiday destination for locals and visitors. Many people have holiday homes in the area, evidenced by 53% of private dwellings being unoccupied at the 2021 census compared to 11.8% for Tasmania.

75% of occupied private dwellings were either owned outright or with a mortgage, which was higher than for Tasmania as a whole. The average number of persons per household is 2.1, and the average number of children per family is 1.7. A high percentage of couples/families without children reflects the ageing nature of the community.

The September 2024 Tasmanian Visitor Survey estimates that the East Coast of Tasmania receives 429,000 visitors a year, which is 33% of all visitors to Tasmania. Bicheno attracts 245,000 and Coles Bay 244,310. The Freycinet National Park is a key attraction, with 269,233 visitors.

# Our Present Challenges and Opportunities

During recent strategic planning, Councillors and Directors highlighted the following internal and external challenges and opportunities.

Like many areas, the municipality struggles to attract and maintain a skilled workforce, with competition from other sectors offering greater remuneration. Budget restraints mean that managing risk on larger projects can be challenging, and resources of funds, technology, and people are needed to address this.

Externally, visitor numbers have and continue to rise, impacting the very things loved by residents and the experiences visitors seek to enjoy. The impacts, particularly on infrastructure and challenging seasonal economic activities, concern residents. Funding for infrastructure development and maintenance is an urgent need in our area.

We are also experiencing increased natural disasters such as fire, flood, and drought, which impact the safety, health, well-being, and livelihood of our farmers, wine growers and makers, health sector, emergency services, and visitor economy. We need to build capabilities and resilience to mitigate climate change impacts and effectively respond to these devastating events.

Our opportunities respond to these challenges. We have achieved stable and productive governance and operations through focused and disciplined financial and corporate management. We are developing and 'growing our own' workforce with much success. We are involving our community in working on things that matter to them, including relocated professionals who freely offer insights into projects.

Community and economic development are key foundations of our strategic and operational work, with an emphasis on relationship building, the Visitor Economy, and the potential of the Silver Economy.

We have undertaken planning with our community around asset renewal, infrastructure needs, township growth and development, emergency management responses, natural resource management, climate mitigation and key strategic projects.

***Our need now is funding support for our priority advocacy projects.***

# Introducing Our Advocacy Priorities...

## Overview

Below is a summary of our priority initiatives and funding requests. Each one supports the foundations of our Community Strategic Plan around community, environment, infrastructure and services, and economy; some cover more than one. These initiatives respond to community needs and aspirations.

Advocacy Initiatives	Funding Ask
<b>Developing our Place Naturally</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bicheno Triangle and Gulch Stage 2</li><li>• Orford Foreshore Master Plan Stage 1</li></ul>	\$1.5M \$1M
<b>Come on Board:</b> Triabunna Marina Precinct Development	\$35M
<b>Another Way East to South:</b> Wielangta Road seal and bridge replacement.	\$26M
<b>Connecting our Communities on Shared Pathways – Feasibility Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coles Bay to Swanwick Shared Pathway</li><li>• Swansea to Dolphin Sounds Shared Pathway</li></ul>	\$160k
<b>Building our Community's Health and Wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spring Bay Health Hub</li></ul>	\$15M

## Priority Initiatives – Details

### Developing our Place Naturally: Bicheno Triangle and Gulch Stage 2

#### Opportunity:

To create a vibrant township and community centre by enhancing amenities, social infrastructure, and ensuring connection and access to beaches and the waterfront.

#### Description:

Stage 2 of the initiative to develop Bicheno's recreational and commercial offerings focuses on two key areas: The Triangle (Triangle Park), which serves as the natural 'center' of the township, and The Gulch, a local port facility that supports recreational and commercial fishing.

The Triangle Stage 2 project will feature new landscaping, improved lighting, additional seating, shelters, picnic tables, and footpaths. This detailed design aims to meet the needs of an aging population as well as visitors to Bicheno, providing clear orientation for accessing beaches, the coastline, and attractions.

The area's commercial development has been hindered by the divide created by the Tasman Highway running through the

township, along with a lack of wayfinding and difficulties in activating the space. The proposed development of The Triangle seeks to provide urban design solutions to address these challenges.

The Gulch Stage 2 includes the construction of a new parking area for boat trailers and vehicles, relocation of public restrooms, and extended walking trails and footpaths to connect with the Blowhole, a significant local icon and visitor attraction.

**Investment: 1.5m**

**Support Documentation: Bicheno Structure Plan, August 2024 and Landscape Concept Design Package, February 2022**

### Developing our Place Naturally: Orford Foreshore Master Plan Stage 1

#### Opportunity:

Improvements that protect the natural environment and facilitate local and visitor access and experiences.

#### Description:

The Orford Foreshore Master Plan, developed through comprehensive community engagement, including the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, conserves and protects the natural values of the Orford Foreshore and Prosser River Mouth while developing naturally inspired tourist and visitor experiences that complement this beautiful location. The area covers the Raspins Beach conservation area, Orford Beach bird sanctuary and Prosser River, Millington Beach conservation area and public reserve.

It is a significant environmental area and popular beach destination that needs considered management to balance accessing the area without harming it.

Stage 1 would include:

- Widening the shared trail to better meet high and increasing use

- Defined layout of car parks to address safety, Universal Access and connectivity
- Defined beach access points for safety and to reduce erosion caused by lack of clearly defined entries
- New interpretation signage to raise awareness of the conservation area and bird sanctuary
- Public toilet upgrades to DDA compliance that are appropriate to the amount of use.

**Investment: \$1m**

**Support Documentation: Orford Foreshore Master Plan, November 2022**

## Come on Board: Triabunna Marina Precinct Development

### Opportunity:

The approval of a comprehensive feasibility study escalated through the Federal Government Precincts and Partnerships program via RDA Tasmania. This study will guide and inform the Triabunna Marina Precinct Development, an estimated \$35M transformational initiative.

### Description:

The Triabunna Marina Precinct Development is a significant proposal to explore funding options for the expansion of the Marina, strengthen Triabunna as a regional hub, gateway to Maria Island, boating mecca, and commercial maritime centre. The Marina strengthens the locality's strong connection to our maritime heritage, witnessed by our Maritime museum and seafarers memorial with connections to industry, military and recreational activity, deep sea port capability and emerging technology in asparagopsis and kelp farming.

Council has endorsed the Triabunna Marina Master Plan and Spring Bay Harbour Master Plan vision to transform the infrastructure of the Triabunna Marina and Maria Island ferry terminal, with expanded berthing, mooring, service capability, new multi-purpose commercial hub, loading and unloading facilities, seafood markets

and fish processing. Part of the planning includes the transformation of the foreshore and entrance to the marina and ferry terminal wharf to build amenities and reinforce the town's regional centre status for locals and visitors.

The staged project includes facilitating private investment and partnerships with all levels of government. The first step is funding the comprehensive feasibility study, lodged by East Coast Tourism through RDA Tasmania.

**Total project Investment: \$35M representing a mix of private and public funds.**

**Supporting Documentation: Spring Bay Harbour Masterplan 2018, Orford/Triabunna Structure Plan, 2024, Triabunna Tomorrow Streetscape Plan 2016**

## Another Way East to South – The Wielangta Road Development

### Opportunity:

To secure access between Southern Tasmania (the Tasman Peninsula and Copping) and the East Coast (Orford) via an alternative route to the Tasman Highway.

### Description:

Wielangta Road is a 50km unsealed road between Copping, a town on the Tasman Peninsula in Southern Tasmania, and Orford on the East Coast. It is popular with locals and visitors seeking a drive in a more natural environment.

Tasman Highway is the main route between East and South Tasmania. However, it has a history of closures due to severe crashes and rock falls. In 2021, the Tasman Highway was closed for almost two months due to rock falls and stabilisation work.

Residents, visitors, and businesses were warned not to use Wielangta Road as it was unsuitable for the increased traffic of cars, campervans, four-wheel drives, vans and heavy vehicles the highway closure would attract. Many ignored this advice as the alternative was a lengthy drive north, making the connection north to east via the Lake Leake Highway. This significant incident reinforced the need for an alternative southern route.

The State Government commissioned Pitt and Sherry engineering

specialists to undertake an options analysis and concept design for sealing the Wielangta Road. The estimated cost for a complete seal was \$92m, something no government could, at that time, consider. However, Pitt and Sherry offered an alternative that included sealing a 7km middle stretch of gravel road and two bridge replacements to ensure access South to East during a Tasman Highway event like the 2021 closure.

The total price for a 7km seal in the middle of the Wielangta Road and replacement of the Griffith Rivulet Bridge and Seventeen Acre Creek Bridge is \$32m.

**Investment: \$32m in total – Federal Government \$26m and \$6m State Government**

**Support documentation: Pitt and Sherry Option Analysis and Concept Design Wielangta Road**

## Connecting our Communities on Shared Pathways – Coles Bay to Swanwick and Swansea to Dolphin Sands

### Opportunity:

To connect emerging residential areas with established townships while promoting health and well-being through active lifestyles and transport and environment protection.

### Description:

Cycling and walking are increasingly popular among people of all ages for recreational activities and health and well-being outcomes. These activities also provide the ideal way for those who live and those who visit to experience our natural and breathtaking environment at a slower pace. By containing the two activities on a purpose-built path, they also protect the environment.

Cycling and walking are also ways to connect communities, particularly close to, new or emerging residential areas. The Swanwick community continues to grow, yet there is no shared pathway between this residential area and the established township of Coles Bay. Similarly, the Dolphin Sands community both needs and calls for a connecting shared pathway to the established township of Swansea.

Community members highlighted and endorsed these desirable connections during engagement sessions to guide and inform Glamorgan Spring Bay's Walking and Cycling Strategy. Each however, requires consideration and investigation before capital funds are considered. The priority is to test feasibility and cost estimates.

**Investment: \$160,000 for Feasibility Study**

**Supporting Documentation: Glamorgan Spring Bay Walking and Cycling Strategy 2024**

## Building our Community's Health and Well-Being: Spring Bay Health Hub

### Opportunity:

Development of aged care facilities and multi-purpose medical services for the under-served population of Triabunna and Orford townships and surrounds.

### Description:

Spring Bay is Glamorgan Spring Bay's main population base, with the oldest average age in Tasmania. The Spring Bay resident population is nearing 2000 people, and dramatically expands over holiday periods. The resident population continues to expand, as a sought after retiree destination. Spring Bay lacks an integrated health service, as exist in many Tasmanian townships with far smaller populations.

MPS offers a fit for size model for rural townships across Australia – with MPSs already in place in three far smaller Tasmanian townships. The MPS arrangements involve both State and Commonwealth funded services, allowing for the best integration and sustainability of health and aged care services.

Council has developed a proposal for the capital infrastructure funding to establish a Spring Bay MPS. Commonwealth, State, Local governments and community would be involved in determining the MPS service model for Spring Bay.

**Investment: \$15m capital infrastructure funding, with ongoing operational costs met through existing, State and Commonwealth government health and aged care program funding.**

**Supporting Documentation: GSBC Spring Bay Health Hub Proposal 2024.**



## CONTACT

If you would like more information or to speak to someone about our priority initiatives please contact our Acting General Manager on the details below.

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