

Spotlight on Sustainable Gloucester



Tourism a long-term winner for Gloucester

Domestic Overnight tourism is now worth over \$36 million annually to Gloucester and Daytrip visitors \$8 million. That's a total of **\$44 million annually, being churned back into local economy**, brought in by 175,000 visitors. Our region has a strong skew to nature-based holidays so our tourism value is directly linked to our scenic value. (Source: Four year annual average 2013 compiled by Australian Tourism Research www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/facts-and-figures/local-area-profiles)

The sector currently **employs over 240 people** (Source: Gloucester Visitor Information Centre survey, Oct 2012) and at least one local operator (Barrington Outdoor Adventure Centre) is celebrating over 30 years of adventure tourism in the region. Tourism is a steady and sustainable industry that provides employment and growth for any region that has something very special to offer. Gloucester is lucky to be such a region, with our scenic beauty and high-value environmental areas; essential components of Gloucester's brand. Protecting these key components protects our tourism businesses and therefore the economic sustainability of our town.

Gloucester, with its specialist farms, farm stays, food and wine trails, regional food brands, food festivals and successful Farmer's Market, is set to benefit from the growing food tourism market. The successful Bucketts of Garlic event in January 2014 was an example of how joining forces with regional food growers is not just good news for our future food security but it's also the perfect marriage of two sustainable industries: food and tourism.

Thomas Davey, Chairperson, Tourism Advancing Gloucester

100% renewable electricity is here! Red Energy (131806) and Momentum (1800 SWITCH) are already supplying NSW customers with electricity generated from **100% renewable** sources.

Check them out to see if you can save money now and do something great for our shared future.

Solar panels with no cash outlay

You may be able to lease solar panels and save money, depending on your current usage. Check it out: www.ingenero.com.au or call **1800 99 33 34**

Good News! Australia has too much gas!

Australia has so much gas that we are set to become the world's largest exporter. The downside is that Australia's gas supply is now linked to the international market and international prices.

The upside is that gas, like many other products, has been supplied across state lines for decades and the oversupply means there's no reason for this to change. 'Because of pipelines between the states, how much gas a state produces has nothing to do with the prices its households and businesses pay...**In truth, there will be no shortages of gas in any state**' (Gittens in SMH 9 Oct,2013).

BHP also states it can continue supplying the Eastern seaboard with gas sourced from Bass Strait for the entire Eastern seaboard for decades to come (SMH May 15, 2012).

The good news for Gloucester and NSW is that new CSG fields in our food-growing and high-value scenic areas are not needed.

Gasfields and rural jobs

If the gasfield goes ahead, AGL says it may employ as few as 12 people when operational. This fits with The Australia Institute's independent analysis of government figures on CSG and employment. The TAI reports found that Bunnings, a single hardware chain, employs more people than the whole oil and gas industry. The Arts and Recreation sector employs 10 times more than the gas and oil industries combined, and agriculture employs even more; the very sectors most threatened by new gasfields. Check out the full report at <http://www.tai.org.au/content/fracking-future>.

Gloucester's coal seams contain hydrocarbons, some heavy metals and radioactive materials, 'BTEX' chemicals such as toluene and high levels of salt (AGL's Phase 2 Groundwater report Jan 2012). When this is brought to the surface during gas extraction, it is called produced water, which can also include leftover fracking fluids. The quantity of salt brought up from the coal seams is up to about 3000 tonnes with current conditions, but could be up to 6500 to 9700 tonnes per year based on actual levels of salt in produced water (calculations based on Pells May 2013). AGL plans to blend it with fresh water and irrigate crops with it. While irrigating crops with produced water is banned in NZ, AGL's produced water is being sprayed onto crops at the Tiedman Irrigation site. A pond was installed at the Tiedman site to prevent run-off entering the Avon River however this **pond overflows into the Avon River after 25mm of rain**. During fracking AGL will pump chemicals, sand and water into water-bearing coal seams. Research estimates 50 – 85% of fracking fluid could be left in the coal seams and connected surrounds (Interim Report by Chief Scientist and Engineer, May 2013). AGL plans to store the fracking fluid they do extract in an open dam on the bank of the Avon River, before transport to a licenced facility. Two facilities, Hunter Water and MidCoast Water, have refused to accept it. For more info, including a review of discrepancies in AGL's public information and references, check out [Exposing the Risks](http://www.groundswellgloucester.com/info) at www.groundswellgloucester.com/info

Toxic chemicals in AGL's fracking fluid

AGL wants to inject chemicals into our water bearing coal seams as part of their fracking plans at Waukivory. One chemical is biocide Tolcide PS75. The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) says this chemical is **toxic to reproduction**; sensitising, irritant; very toxic to aquatic life. The data sheet warns "**avoid release into the environment**".

Read about this chemical and others in AGL's REF Vol 7, Appendix A.



Are you safe from AGL's stage 2 and 3 gas wells?

Many Gloucester-area families, farms and properties will not be protected by the 2km exclusion zone. CSG exploration includes drilling and fracking gas wells. AGL's exploration area covers a range from Bowman Farm to Stroud Road. To see maps of exploration and exclusion zones, check the window display at Groundswell's shop in the Majestic Arcade or at <http://www.groundswellgloucester.com> Meanwhile there is no protection from the proposed stage 1 gasfield, due to its conditional approval just prior to the advent of exclusion zones, allowing wells to be fracked and flared as close as 200m from family homes.

The law allows CSG companies to force entry onto private property.

AGL has agreed not to force entry for drilling gas wells without landholder permission but this doesn't cover entry to construct gas pipelines or other infrastructure.

If you would like a 'No entry for coal and gas companies' sign just stop by our office in the Majestic Arcade, or email info@groundswellgloucester.com

Groundswell Gloucester is a non-profit, incorporated body created by a group of locals who want the right for our community to have a say in the decisions that determine the economic, social and environmental future of the Gloucester Valley.

Contact: www.groundswellgloucester.com Email: info@groundswellgloucester.com