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MEDIA RELEASE

Goolwa Visitor Information Centre recognised as the best in 2020

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With Goolwa and the wider Alexandrina district continuing to prove itself as the place to be for regional tourism in recent times, its attraction has been further recognised by the announcement of the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (VIC) being awarded 'Visitor Information Centre of the Year.'

The acknowledgment was made at the South Australian VIC Conference, held at Clare on Tuesday 4 May, which saw the Goolwa VIC take the top award ahead of other finalists including the Barossa and Adelaide VICs.

The award recognises the Goolwa VIC for its ability to adapt and demonstrate resilience to the community and tourism operators throughout the past 12 months, resulting from the impacts of COVID-19, whilst providing on-going services to visitors. The submission identified a clear direction to rebound from the pandemic, which was a key feature in it being recognised for the award.

The multi-award winning centre is located on Cadell Street near the Goolwa Wharf Precinct. Its team operates an extensive souvenir gift shop and provides a personal and professional information and booking service with specialist knowledge of Goolwa and the whole of the district.

Operated by Alexandrina Council, with a large team of passionate volunteers, the Goolwa VIC has played a significant role in growing the visitor economy and reinvigorating life into local tourism based accommodation and experiences since the outbreak of the pandemic and in the months since.

Council used the pandemic period last year, when intrastate travel was also affected, to review the way visitor servicing was operating and identified a clear direction was required for the future. The review identified a need to adapt to changing visitor expectations and how they access information in a digital world, among other strategic directives.

Alexandrina Mayor Keith Parkes congratulated the staff and volunteers involved in securing the accolade.

“It is great to have our Goolwa Visitor Information Centre staff and volunteers recognised for their hard work and foresight over the past twelve months. We have had to adapt the way we do things, and they have thought outside the box to ensure Goolwa and the region remain a popular visitor destination. Through their initiatives, we are future-proofing our visitor economy, ensuring it grows as we emerge from the pandemic related restrictions,” he said.

Some of the standout activities addressed in the award submission included:

- The provision of ‘takeaway’ style information through the VIC window.
- The provision of up-to-date information on which hospitality businesses were open for delivery and takeaway during restrictions (which also led to the creation of ourlocalalexandrina.com.au).
- The production of new tourism publications focusing on natural attractions.
- The sale of souvenirs and gifts in the Council foyer for visitors to purchase during restrictions when the VIC couldn’t remain open.

Besides the prestigious accolade of being crowned SA’s best Visitor Information Centre, membership fees for National Accreditation and the SAVIC network are covered for the next 12 months, as sponsored by the SA VIC Network group and the South Australian Tourism Commission.