

Industry Update

Tourism East welcomes Mark Anderson as new Chair

Tourism East is pleased to announce the appointment of **Mark Anderson as Chair of the Board of Directors**, with his appointment taking effect following the organisation's Annual General Meeting on 21 October 2026.

Mark brings extensive tourism, governance and leadership experience to the role, with more than 17 years' experience as a Director and 15 years as a CEO.

Most recently, Mark has been General Manager, Tourism at Phillip Island Nature Parks, home to the world-renowned Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Reserve and Churchill Island. He will leave this role in November to focus on the Chair role at Tourism East.

Over the past three years, Mark has led a team of 130 tourism staff in a regional environment attracting more than one million international and domestic visitors each year. During this period, the organisation and tourism team have achieved record visitation and retail growth, while working closely with government and key tourism partners including Visit Victoria and Tourism Australia.

Mark also brings direct experience of regional tourism governance, having served for four years as a non-executive director of West by North West Tourism in Tasmania.

His international tourism experience includes working with the National Trust in England, which attracts 13.5 million visits each year from UK and international markets and generates more than £300 million in annual revenue.

Mark's broader leadership career includes CEO roles with three of Australia's major sporting organisations: Collingwood Football Club, Swimming Australia and Hockey Australia.

"It is a great honour to be appointed as the Chair of the Tourism East Board. It is an important region which contributes greatly to the Victorian visitor economy and contains a wide range of leading tourism attractions, businesses and passionate operators. I am looking forward to connecting and building relationships with each of them to grow visitation and achieve sustained success right across the region."

"It has been evident throughout this process that the Board contains talented Directors who are aligned about our future direction and opportunities. I am excited by the opportunity to work with members of the board and CEO, Louise Scott who has clearly made such a positive impact over the first year of her tenure to further build on the opportunities that exist."

"I would like to thank the current Chair, Leigh Harry for his generosity in sharing his vast knowledge and insights over this transition period and to congratulate him on his significant contribution to Tourism East over 10 years."

Mark was appointed following an executive search and recruitment process undertaken during July and August, which attracted more than 40 applicants. The Board's Skills and Nominations Committee, with the assistance of an external recruitment organisation, recommended his appointment, which was subsequently approved by the Board.

Thank you to Leigh Harry

Mark succeeds current Chair Leigh Harry, who is stepping down after ten years as a member of the Tourism East Board including the last four years as Chair.

Leigh has made a significant contribution during an important period of change for the organisation and the region.

During his tenure, Tourism East was established as the region's new Visitor Economy Partnership, the region's first 10-year Destination Management Plan was completed and CEO Louise Scott was appointed in 2025.

On behalf of Tourism East and our industry partners, we thank Leigh for his leadership, commitment and contribution over the past ten years.

Looking ahead

Tourism East CEO Louise Scott said Mark's experience would complement the organisation's next phase of work.

“Mark brings extensive experience across tourism, visitor attractions, regional tourism governance and major organisations. His recent experience at Phillip Island Nature Parks gives him a strong understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by regional tourism businesses and destinations.

“We have established the foundations for Tourism East and have a clear 10-year Destination Management Plan to guide our work.

“The next phase is about working collectively with industry, councils and government to deliver on those priorities and create greater opportunities for tourism businesses and communities across Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik and Cardinia.

“I am looking forward to working with Mark, our Board and our industry partners as we continue this work.”

Tourism East will welcome Mark to the role following the AGM on 21 October and looks forward to introducing him to industry partners across the region.

Please join us in welcoming Mark to Tourism East and thanking Leigh for his contribution to the region's visitor economy.