

Ulverstone, Penguin and the Hinterland

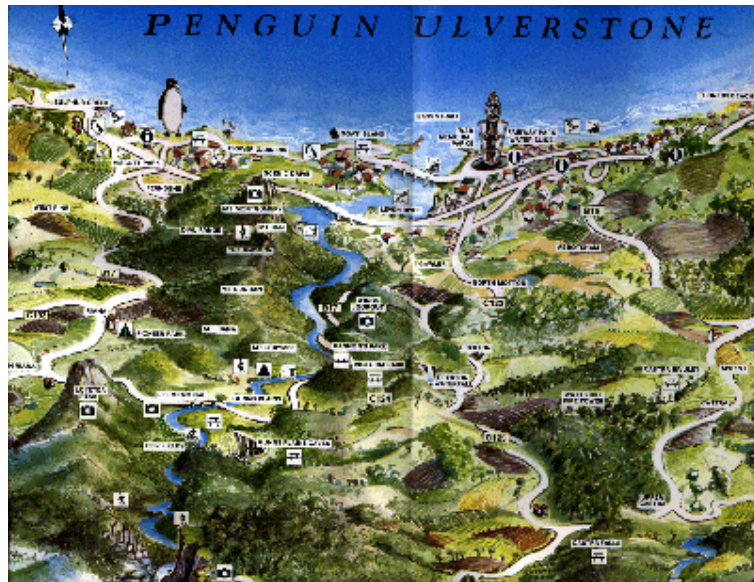


Welcome to picturesque Central Coast, strategically sited between the cities of Burnie and Devonport on the North West Coast and the demographic centre of the region.

The Central Coast area is blessed with spectacular scenery, clean rivers and streams, mountains and valleys, pristine uncrowded beaches and the richest most fertile farming land in Australia.

The area boasts a diverse range of accommodation from caravan parks and camping grounds to bed and breakfast establishments, motels, hotels and self contained apartments.

Our population of 21,077 is centred around the two largest towns of Ulverstone and Penguin providing a large range of shops, restaurant, hotels, banks, churches and other services.



Shopping is made much easier and more enjoyable with compact and level well planned centres and of course, our free parking!

The town of Ulverstone is built along the coast and on the banks of the Leven River, which is a favourite spot for all kinds of water sports including water-skiing, boating, fishing, sailing and jet skiing. A trip to Ulverstone is incomplete for the energetic members of your family without a visit to the giant waterslide. If that is a little too active for your tastes you could always sit on the banks of the river and enjoy some of the best freshly cooked fish and chips around and just watch the action.

Ulverstone is proud of its many attractive parks and adventure playgrounds with barbecue and picnic facilities. Situated on the banks of the Leven River are Ulverstone's unique war memorial parks that compliment the much photographed war memorial clock in the main street of the town. The concept of war memorial parks began in Ulverstone in the late 1970's with the aim of establishing lasting memorials of Australia's military history in pleasant parkland surrounds and is the venue for many national annual services re-unions.

Step back in time and relive a bygone era at the Ulverstone History Museum. The Museum presents a comprehensive and fascinating display of artefacts, manuscripts, tools and photography depicting the life and hard times of the pioneers. See how the area developed from a background of piling splitting and shipping to productive farmlands and thriving business centres.

Two kilometres East of Ulverstone you will find the Ulverstone Miniature Railway, which is open to the public every third Sunday of the month. Train enthusiasts, young and not-so-young can enjoy a ride on the miniature railway which features the only model railway in Tasmania with three gauges - 3 1/2", 5" and 7 1/4" and three separate track layouts.



Shrine of Remembrance

The coastline rocky headlands and secluded coves offer many hours of peaceful fossicking. Goat Island west of the town, accessed at low tide, has provided many a child and adult alike magical hours of exploring. Long stretches of safe beaches are perfect for swimming, surfing, kite flying, walking or just playing with a frizbee. Quietly watching the sun rise in the east or set in a blaze of colour in the west is highlighted by sighting the fairy penguins. Each October/November the penguins return to burrows in the sand dunes along the coast to breed and raise their young. In the early evening you can see them returning to their burrows after a day of feeding at sea.

Travelling west along the scenic coast road from Ulverstone, we discover the charming seaside town of Penguin, named after the occupants of the penguin rookeries in the area. Penguin's attractions range from beautiful parks and gardens through to mountain ranges and reserves and features what is believed to be the largest penguin in the world.



The area is a Mecca for bushwalkers with the spectacular Dial Range as the focus. Whether you choose to spend a relaxing hour or two walking beneath an impressive canopy of tree ferns, a more challenging walk of several days or anything in between, the Dial Range will not disappoint you.

Ulverstone's hinterland is blessed with spectacular scenery, from its mountains and valleys, clean rivers and streams, to the richest and most fertile farming land in Australia. The abundance of riches from the land include high quality vegetables, poppies and pyrethrum flowers which patchwork the rolling hills. The hinterland is dotted with tea rooms with fabulous gardens or wood and craft displays.

Accommodation can be found in Gunns Plains at a goat farm with fully self contained little cottage or camping/caravan park that offers self contained cabins and attractions include farm animal and wildlife displays and a reptile display. In Nietta at a farm stay guest house set amongst beautiful gardens including a newly developed waterfall garden. And a wilderness retreat who offer wildlife observations, platypus tours, glow worm grotto tours, caving and bushwalking. So whether you take a day trip or choose to stay in the hinterland there is a wealth of things to see and do.

Gunns Plains is a rich fertile valley along the Leven River, which has some of the most spectacular views of rural Tasmania. Dotted along the river bank are found many parks with picnic and barbecue facilities. The Leven River is renowned for its fishing and Gunns Plains is no exception. Fast water rafting can be experienced on the river as it winds through the valley. The Gunns Plains Caves are not to be missed with some of the largest limestone formations in the southern hemisphere. The caves are well lit and concrete paths ensure easy access for the young and not-so-young. The Preston Falls have easy access and are a delightful surprise.

Further south you enter Canyon country. The Leven Canyon is a spectacular limestone gorge where the Leven River has gorged its way through the hills, leaving raw limestone cliffs revealing the uplift and geological folding of the rocks thousands of years old. From delightful picnic grounds there is an easy 20 minute return walk to the lookout platform where the river roars 275m below. From the picnic ground you can also take the fern walk through the canopy of majestic manferns and rainforest trees. The Canyon floor track takes you to the footbridge where the river narrows to roar through the Leven Splits. For those experienced in walking continue on till you come to the Devils Elbow where great views of the cliffs and the lookout can be seen. Continue down the road past the canyon to Taylors flats picnic ground on the banks of the river at the base of Black Bluff Mountain. Hike to the summit (1339m) to alpine heathlands and winter snow plains passing Paddy's Lake for 360 degree views of mountains, lakes and coast line. Hike through ancient rainforest where 2000 year old King Billy Pines stand, to the Winterbrook Falls where they cascade 200m off the mountain side over the rock escarpments. Explore the historic tram way track and Pit Saw mill used by early timber getters.

The Central Coast Municipal area is the ideal base for your stay as other major tourist attractions of the region such as Cradle Mountain, Stanley and Sheffield are all easy day trips. For further information contact the Ulverstone or Penguin Visitor Information Centres.

How to get here....

15 minutes drive west of the Spirit of Tasmania Terminal Devonport

30 minutes drive west of the Devonport Airport

40 minutes drive east of Burnie-Wynyard Airport.

CENTRAL COAST COMMUNITY PROFILE

BACKGROUND

Location

The Central Coast municipal area is situated at the centre of the North West Coast of Tasmania, bound by a magnificent beach frontage to Bass Strait and a wilderness hinterland.

It was formed following the amalgamation of the whole Penguin and Ulverstone municipal areas and the adjoining areas of Forth and Leith on 2 April 1993.

The new Central Coast municipal area spans from the Blythe River in the west to the settlement of Leith in the east. It extends back from the coast to encompass the rural areas of Gawler, North Motton, Castra, Kindred, Sprent, Forth, Gunns Plains, Cuprona, Howth, Riana, Nietta and Preston.

Size

- Central Coast covers a total area of 924 km².
- Approximately 4.5% of the Tasmanian population reside in the new municipal area.

Population density

- At the time of proclamation as a new municipal area, Central Coast had a population estimated at 21,070. The estimated population density was 22.8 persons per sq. kilometre.
- The areas of greatest density are along the coastal strip, with 85.5% of the population living in the towns of Ulverstone and Penguin.

Forth 347

Gawler 248

Leith 213

Sulphur Creek 350

Heybridge 341

Penguin 2,910

Turners Beach 1,259

Ulverstone 9,515

Balance 5,894

(Population figures form 2001 Census)

Climate

The Central Coast municipal area enjoys a temperate maritime climate:

- average monthly temperatures range from 12 degrees Celsius to 21 degrees Celsius
- average monthly rainfall from 40mm (January) to 125mm (July)
- average total rainfall of 965mm

General information

The municipal area boasts many miles of beautiful sandy beaches and rugged coastline. The Dial mountain range, behind Penguin, is an impressive feature that can be seen from all over the Central Coast municipal area. The spectacular Leven Canyon and the caves at Gunns Plains are more evidence of the outstanding natural beauty of the area. Penguin and Ulverstone are both seaside towns with safe beaches and extensive park areas for the enjoyment

of residents and tourists alike. The Central Coast municipal area has a mild climate, good rainfall and rich soils that combine to make it one of the most productive agricultural areas in Tasmania.

History

The abundant supply of timber in this coastal region was what attracted first settlers in the 1850s. Many of the settlers became involved in the lucrative 'paling' trade. Palings and other timber products were produced in both the Penguin and Ulverstone areas and shipped in small craft to markets in Melbourne.

Penguin also had silver and iron mines that were worked in the early days. In the boom years of the 'Gold Rush' the wharfs in both areas were very busy, and provided a focal point for the communities.

The Leven River provided a safe shelter for the small boats when loading and unloading, whilst craft using the wharf in Penguin were less protected, which probably accounts for the greater development that took place in Ulverstone. At the turn of the century the introduction of rail transport resulted in products from Penguin being taken to the wharves at Burnie and Ulverstone for shipment.

Once the timber was removed and the land cleared, pioneers began planting crops. It soon became clear that this region could produce food crops in abundance. One of the principal crops grown was potatoes and, with the rapid increase in production, the growing and export of potatoes quickly became a major industry in the area.

For further information contact:-

The Ulverstone Visitor Information Centre

13-15 Alexandra Road (PO Box 220)

ULVERSTONE TAS 7315

Phone (03) 6425 2839 Fax (03) 6425 5926

Email ulv_visitorcentre@centcoast.tas.gov.au

Website www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au

Open 9.00am to 5.00pm Daily

(closed Christmas Day, Anzac Day and Good Friday)

Be assured of a warm welcome at the Ulverstone Visitor Information Centre. Visit our centre for information on local, regional and state tourist attractions, venues, sightseeing trips and accommodation details, church services and other community information, tea/coffee facilities, internet access, souvenirs and local art and craft for sale, clean toilets including toilet for disabled and a baby change table.

The Penguin Tourist Information Centre

78 Main Street

PENGUIN TAS 7316

Phone (03) 6437 1421 Fax (03) 6437 1465

Open 9.30am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday

9.30am to 12.30pm Saturday

Experience friendly service from our volunteer run centre. We can help you with directions and local information and while you are here take a photograph of The Big Penguin in the park adjacent, or just browse through our souvenirs at the Centre.