



The Riesling Trail

Every season, another reason

Chairman's report

Riesling Trail Management Committee AGM, 8th October, 2020

I am pleased to present my Chairman's report for the past twelve months. In what has been a rather odd year, use of the trail was understandably down in April but then surprisingly high in mid-winter. The number of trail users exceeded 10,000/month in July, which is nearly double the number for that time of year. For the three months from July to September the number of trail users has been 73% above that for the same period last year. Accommodation and bike hire businesses in the region have also reported large increases in visitors numbers.

Riesling Trail developments

Completion of the final section of the Riesling Trail into Auburn was celebrated with a grand opening ceremony on 19th of November. This completion has really enhanced that section of the trail and has made it much more convenient and safer to access in Auburn. The much-photographed archway near the start in Auburn really sets it off. Around native 150 trees have been planted along this section of the trail with help from the Upper Wakefield Landcare Group and students from the Auburn Primary School.

Our next major project is to widen the Quarry Road bridge, from 1.5 metres to 3 metres, so that it is much safer for trail users. Rest assured we will be keeping the same archway profile. This is no small job and will require removal of the existing bridge for several weeks to take off the sides and fit to the new frame, then re-paint it before installation. All being well, this will be before the end of this year. We are most grateful to Greg Pulford Architects, Mace Engineering and Clare Metal Fabrications for their support with this project. We are also very grateful to the SA Government, Office for Recreation, Sport & Racing, and to the Grosset Gaia Fund for their financial support.

Other projects along the trail completed in the past twelve months include replacing eight of the interpretive signs and the four large maps (at Clare, Sevenhill, Watervale and Auburn). Sue Wurst has done a great job with the interpretive signs, with the painstaking task of locating photos and checking the texts with local groups. We are grateful to the Clare Rotary Club for funding this project.

We are also continuing with the clean-up of olives and Aleppo pines along sections of the trail and in the Watervale Station yard, in part funded by Northern and Yorke NRM (now Landscapes). This will prevent further encroachment of these pest species and will allow greater regeneration of native species and associated bird life.

Other facilities being planned for the next 12 months are a table and shelter next to the southern end of the showgrounds and a re-created station platform with a sculpture near the northern end of the showgrounds.

Maintaining the trail

A critical part of the maintenance of the trail is to ensure that the surface is in good condition. The new trail surface, completed in 2018, has made this job much easier. This is in excellent condition and, so far, we have not had any erosion and rutting issues that we had with the older flatter surface.

We are grateful to the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing for on-going financial support. This includes shelters, installation of drainage pipes and guard rails as well as weed control along the edges of the trail.

Supporting the Riesling Trail

There are many supporters of the Riesling Trail, both financially and in other ways. Annual donations from our Business Partners and Friends contribute significantly to improving facilities along the Riesling Trail. We are also very grateful to the volunteers who help with the many projects to maintain and develop the trail further.

I am also grateful for the many watchful eyes who report any hazards or abuse of the trail. I am amazed how quickly we are notified when there is something amiss and so we can then act quickly to rectify the situation.

Finally, I wish to thank members of the Management Committee for their great work in helping to improve the trail so it continues to be valued and enjoyed by trail users and the wider community.

Allan Mayfield, Chairman, Riesling Trail Management Committee