

ADOPT A WORKER CAMPAIGN LAUNCH TO TACKLE STAFF AND ACCOMMODATION SHORTAGES

A NEW match-making campaign will connect Douglas locals with a spare room in their house and potential holiday workers for the upcoming tourist season.

Tourism Port Douglas Daintree (TPDD) is today launching Adopt A Worker, an innovative campaign aimed at addressing the issue of rental shortages for workers in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Based on a campaign in Lorne, Victoria, Adopt A Worker is asking the Douglas Shire community to open their homes for the busy season, housing anyone from baristas, kitchen hands and chefs, hotel workers, cleaning staff, and tour guides struggling to find accommodation while working in the region.

TPDD Chief Executive Officer Tara Bennett said the community needed to get creative to overcome the housing challenges. "We are asking the Douglas community to step up and assist the tourism industry by putting forward any space they may have to accommodate our much-needed seasonal workers," she said. "If you have a spare room, granny flat, vacant land suited to a tent or van we're urging you to Adopt A Worker. Not only will you be helping those businesses who are there for you year-round, it is an opportunity to earn some extra dollars."

Potential hosts could range from families on acreage to empty nesters with space aplenty, anyone with room to house a worker and benefit from expanding the close-knit community, whilst also forming beautiful relationships across the board.

Port Douglas local Sharon Timms has done exactly this.

"I had a spare room and don't mind a chat, so rather than seeing the space go unused, I'm more than happy to house someone while here on their tropical adventure," she said.

Iconic venues like Salsa Bar & Grill in Port Douglas, PK's Jungle Bar in Cape Tribulation, and Daintree Discovery Centre are three examples of venues that are looking for temporary staff over the next six months but are unable to operate at full capacity due to accommodation shortages.

Salsa Bar and Grill Owner Rhys Bawden said his business has felt the issue firsthand.

"We have staff members that have lived and worked in Port Douglas for over 15 years losing their homes to increased rent making them unaffordable, or properties that are being taken out of the rental pool to become holiday homes," he said.

Douglas Shire Mayor Michael Kerr said it was great to see people being creative at a time of need.

"Adopt A Worker is an excellent way for everyone to assist by renting out a room and working with local community groups to help out where they can," he said.

"Douglas Shire has always dug deep in the past when help was needed, and I hope that they will again."

"Council has done plenty of work in this space, but unfortunately most of it is not a quick fix to the problem.

"For example, we are also pushing for more controls over Airbnb to reduce an onslaught of mini resorts in our residential neighbourhoods."

If you're interested in renting your extra space, get onboard, adopt a worker, and register here now:

<https://www.visitportdouglasdaintree.com/corporate/adopt-a-worker>

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For more information, please contact:

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