

ADVENTURE AIRLIE BEACH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Adventure is back in Airlie Beach

Remember the good old days?

Well in Airlie Beach they're back – thanks in part to a new group focused on putting the fun into the WhitFUNdays.

Airlie Beach Backpacking Association (ABBA) comprises members from the marine, hostel, bar, nightclub, retail, transport and van park sectors, and is supported administratively by Tourism Whitsundays and the Whitsunday Charter Boat industry Association (WCBIA).

The group's committee is predominantly led by some of the Whitsunday region's top marketing professionals, all actively working in the youth and adventure tourism space, with the overarching purpose to collectively market the fun to be had in the Whitsundays under the #AdventureAirlie brand.

WCBIA President, Tony Brown, said it was great to see young people who were passionate about the Whitsundays taking such a proactive step.

"This is about giving those people an opportunity and allowing the innovative youth who are already marketing our region through individual businesses to have more of a go," he said.

"These young people care about the region so much and want to see it thrive; it'll be really exciting to see what they come up with."

Prosail Whitsundays co-owner, Josh Wilde, said he was particularly looking forward to promoting Airlie Beach.

"We need people to understand that you don't just come here to go to the islands or do a little tour to Whitehaven Beach – there's so much more we have to offer as a region," he said.

"Yes, go out to the islands for sure – and I recommend staying out there and sleeping under the stars on a boat 100 per cent – but also stay in town, check out the restaurants, experience the nightlife, go up in a plane, jump out of it, take lots of photos, do some of the free walking trails, come and see the views – they're second to none. I feel like I could fill up a month-long itinerary, but these are just some of the things you have to do."

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Base and Nomads Airlie Beach Hostel Manager, Hannah Kneebone, said she was excited by the buzz that getting these messages across would create.

“We’re not just a stopover before or after going out on a boat trip,” she said.

“Yes, we’re the heart of the Great Barrier Reef, but there are so many beautiful places on the mainland too, and Airlie Beach is where people meet and forge friendships to enjoy those experiences together – there’s a real community feel.”

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Tash Wheeler, said the youth market was incredibly important to the regional, state and national economy.

“According to the latest International Visitor Statistics, the Whitsundays ranks fourth in the state for the number of youth travellers we attract, with close to 120,000 backpackers visiting the region in the year ending September 2018,” she said.

“This proves the youth market is an important part of our community that provides income for everyone, and besides that these people are vibrant – it’s fun to have youth travellers in town.”

The group’s first initiative will be a social media campaign featuring custom-created content promoting adventure travel in the WhitFUNdays.

To join Adventure Airlie Beach email youth@tourismwhitsundays.com.au.

For more information visit www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au/adventure or follow @AdventureAirlie on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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