

QUEANBEYAN AGE COLUMN 18JULY 2008

Cittaslow – a new way of thinking – My thanks to Kate Shelton of Benedict House who has noted big changes in Katoomba, a recent Australian Cittaslow (pronounced ‘Chitta Slow’) member.

To give an idea as to what this international movement is all about, Kate has sent the following welcome information from Cittaslow UK -

<http://www.cittaslow.org.uk/> :

“**Cittaslow**, which is Italian for "slow city" or "slow town" is an international network of towns. A Cittaslow signs up to working towards a set of goals that aim to improve quality of life, and needs to pass an assessment before being admitted as a member of the Cittaslow network.

Cittaslow is a way of thinking. It is about caring for your town and the people who live and work in it or visit it. It is about protecting the environment, about promoting local goods and produce, and about avoiding the ‘sameness’ that afflicts too many towns in the modern world. **The Cittaslow** movement has strong links with Slow Food, and began life in October 1999, during the food festival in Orvieto, Italy. While Slow Food is open for individuals to join as members, membership of Cittaslow is open to towns, which must have a population under 50,000. Organisations can also join as Cittaslow Supporters.

There are now Cittaslow National Networks in England, Wales, Germany, Norway, Poland and Portugal, with other countries working towards setting up their own national networks.

Cittaslow UK is 'led' by Ludlow, the first town in the UK to be admitted to the Cittaslow network; Aylsham in Norfolk was the second Cittaslow in the UK. Diss, also in Norfolk joined the Cittaslow UK network in March 2006. Mold became the first Cittaslow in Wales towards the end of 2006, and Perth the first Cittaslow in Scotland. Berwick-upon-Tweed, Cockermouth and Linlithgow complete the current roster of Cittaslow towns in the UK, with Perth and Kinross Council the first Cittaslow Supporter”.

Goolwa (South Austyralia) and Katoomba are the first Australian, and indeed the first non-European towns to join this movement which has the potential to benefit local producers, retailers and tourism alike.

This will be an agenda item on QBC’s Tourism Retail sub committee meeting next week – contact Simon Mitchell-Taverner on 02 6299 7152 or admin@queanbeyanbusinesscouncil.com.au for more information.

Gateway to the Australian Alps – Federal Tourism Minister Martin Ferguson announced at a breakfast in Canberra on Monday that Tourism Australia will spend in the order of \$90 million to promote Australia’s natural tourism regions to overseas markets.

Beneficiaries will include Kakadu, Uluru, The Great Ocean Road, Flinders Ranges, Blue Mountains, the 'Green Cauldron' area of northern NSW and Southern Queensland and the Australian Alps.

As a major gateway to the Australian Alps (or Snowy Mountains), this can only be good news for Queanbeyan. Let's hope we can gear up to welcome many overseas visitors from around the world in the next couple of years.