



## Media Release

Friday, 19 March 2021.

### **Making the Central Victorian Goldfields region the happiest region in the world!**

An Australian first is being launched on March 20, the International Day of Happiness, across the thirteen local government areas that make up the Central Victorian Goldfields region.

The *Happiness Index survey* – a powerful global tool that asks communities about their quality of life – is helping put the region’s communities front and centre in tourism planning for the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid.

Deployment of the survey is a partnership between the World Heritage bid’s thirteen local government partners, Planet Happiness and the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

Co-patron for the World Heritage bid, The Hon. John Brumby AO, said the survey is an insightful way of finding out about how our communities are doing. “We know that the goldfield’s communities are strong communities, but we also know that many have faced unprecedented challenges due to the impacts of COVID-19. Tourism plays a critical role in supporting this region’s local economies. Governments at all levels have recognised that we need to invest and invest quickly to help the visitor economy recover.”

Co-patron for the World Heritage bid, The Hon. Denis Naphine AO, said it’s important that as many local people as possible take the survey to make sure investment priorities for the World Heritage bid target the areas of greatest need. “In deploying the Happiness Index Survey, decision makers will have the data needed to understand where investment in tourism can have

the biggest impact on the community's quality of life. This is great opportunity for regional Victorian communities to lead the way".

"The central highlands region is a great place to live, work and visit. We are very excited about the World Heritage Bid for the Goldfields, an important part of the Hepburn Shire's history. By completing the Happiness Index Survey this will allow us to understand what contributes to our well-being and focus investment to improve our quality of life," said Mayor, Cr Lesley Hewitt.

"Planet Happiness is pleased to be supporting the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid, by partnering to deploy what is perhaps the best, most progressive, adaptable and easy to use Happiness Index survey on the planet," said Laura Musikanski, author, lawyer and co-founder of Planet Happiness, a project of the [Happiness Alliance](#), a non-profit organisation with ten years' experience in happiness and well-being measurements.

Simon Ambrose, CEO of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), said, "The National Trust is thrilled to support the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid, and the Happiness Index survey. This important and innovative work puts Goldfields communities at the heart of the movement to recognise and celebrate the heritage of this internationally significant region."

Community members are being asked to help make their community the best it can be by taking the survey online at <https://goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au/get-involved/happiness-index/> Survey takers can access their personal happiness scorecard and see how they compare to others. The survey opens on Saturday 20 March 2021 and will be open for one month. It is available in over twenty languages and it takes most people around 12-14 minutes to complete.

The Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid Local Government partners are: Ararat Rural City, Campaspe Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Ballarat, City of Greater Bendigo, Golden Plains Shire, Hepburn Shire, Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Moorabool Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Northern Grampians Shire and Pyrenees Shire Councils.

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