

A message from your Mayor

As I reflect on my first year as Mayor, I'm truly honoured to serve this vibrant community. It has been a year of learning, growth, and most importantly, listening to you, our residents. Your feedback is invaluable and I'm committed to ensuring your voices continue to guide the decisions we make together.

I believe it's essential that we keep our community well-informed and involved in the direction we're heading, and it's vital that transparency is at the heart of everything we do. To stay up to date on Council's latest initiatives, I encourage everyone to connect through our Facebook page and regularly visit our website for updates and important news.

It was a joy to see so many local residents come together for our annual Newcastle Permanent Carols in the Park. The festival spirit was alive and well, and the stunning fireworks display was

spectacular as ever. Events like this remind us of the incredible bond across our community, and I was grateful to be a part of it.

Looking to the future, my focus remains on driving meaningful improvements across our Local Government Area. This includes strengthening connectivity, making our community more inclusive and accessible, supporting the success of our local businesses, and continuing vital upgrades to our road network and infrastructure. We're also taking important steps to ensure that our services are accessible to all. In November 2025, Council adopted an updated Financial Hardship Policy, providing a clearer framework to support residents facing genuine hardship with rate and fee payments.

As we move forward, I am excited about the year ahead and the opportunity to work together with you all. By continuing to



Cessnock City Mayor Dan Watton

listen, collaborate, and act in the best interests of our community, I am confident that we will build an even stronger, more resilient

future. Thank you for your continued support.

Dan Watton, Mayor



Financial Sustainability Update

Council has been in a conversation with the community about our financial sustainability. A decision on the next steps and whether to apply to IPART for a special variation was made at the recent January meeting (after our print deadline for this newsletter). Scan the QR code or visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/About-Council/Financial-sustainability for more information.

Your Guide to Waste Services & Recycling in 2026

As of 2026, we've introduced a new opt-in fortnightly red bin collection for households who want a reduced service at a reduced cost. This flexible option supports households looking to reduce expenses during ongoing cost-of-living pressures.

To opt-in, visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Opt-In-Fortnightly-Waste-Collection or call 4993 4100

- Kitchen Caddy Bags:** Next delivery in May 2026. Need more sooner? Free top-up packs at local collections points. Find locations by visiting www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/fogo
- Waste & Recycling Vouchers:** Next allocation available now! Find via your Waste App.
- Free Mattress Disposal:** Drop off your old mattress at Cessnock Waste Management Centre using a recycling voucher via Waste App.

2026 Key Dates:

- Free Mattress Drop Off Events:** 28 February in Cessnock & 27 June in Kurri Kurri.
- Household Chemical Collection:** 3 May.

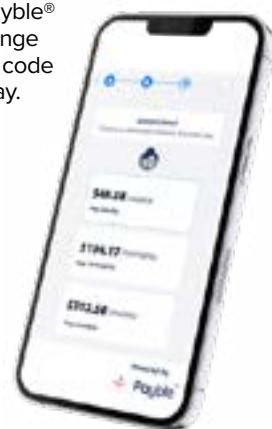
For information on waste services, your waste app, and more scan the QR code or visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Residents/Waste



Pay your rates easily with Payble®!

Council has a payment provider called Payble® to give you an easier and more flexible range of options to pay your rates! Scan the QR code found on your rates notice to sign up today. The benefits of this system include:

- ✓ Simple one-off payments or set up recurring card payments
- ✓ Ability to pay in weekly, fortnightly or monthly instalments
- ✓ Digital direct debit sign up
- ✓ SMS payment reminders
- ✓ Safe & secure



Financial Hardship Policy

In November 2025, Council updated its Financial Hardship Policy to introduce new financial support measures for both pensioner and non-pensioner ratepayers experiencing genuine financial hardship. Support may include a once-off rates credit for ratepayers facing temporary hardship due to illness or financial strain, and payment deferrals for eligible aged pensioners.

For more information, visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/FinancialHardshipPolicy or call our Customer Relations team on 4993 4100



Works Update

RECENTLY COMPLETED

- Doyle Street, Cessnock:** Bridge - Design and Investigation
- Bathurst Street, Abermain:** Bridge - Design and Investigation
- Ferguson Street, Cessnock:** Bridge - Design and Investigation
- Henderson Avenue, Cessnock:** Bridge - Design and Investigation
- Cessnock to Abermain:** Pathway - Design and Investigation
- Kurri Kurri to Testers Hollow:** Pathway - Stage 1 - Design and Investigation
- Dalwood Road, East Branxton:** Pathway & Road - Design and Investigation
- Middle Road, Paxton:** Road Rehabilitation - Design and Investigation
- Wollombi Walking Trail:** Pathway - Construction
- Anderson Avenue, Paxton:** Pathway - Construction
- Averys Lane / Clift Street, Heddon Greta:** Drainage and Roadworks - Stage 1 & 2 - Construction
- Sawyers Gully Road, Sawyers Gully:** Road Rehabilitation - Stage 1 - Construction
- Sandy Creek Road, Mount Vincent:** Road Rehabilitation & Safety Improvements - Construction
- Fleet Street, Branxton:** Kerb and Gutter - Construction
- Mount View Road & McGrane Street, Cessnock:** Pedestrian Refuge - Construction

CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

- Wyndham Street, Greta:** Bridge - Design and Investigation
- Bellbird Public School to Sparke Street, Bellbird:** Pathway - Design and Investigation
- Abermain to Kurri Kurri:** Pathway - Design and Investigation
- Richmond Street, Kitchener:** Pathway - Design and Investigation
- Heddon Street, Kitchener:** Pathway - Design and Investigation
- Apex Park, Cessnock:** Park Redevelopment - Design and Investigation
- Doyle Street, Cessnock:** Bridge - Construction
- West Street, Greta:** Pathway - Construction
- Kurri Kurri to Testers Hollow:** Pathway - Stage 1 - Construction
- Clift Street, Heddon Greta:** Drainage and Roadworks - Stage 3 - Construction
- Thomas Street, North Rothbury:** Drainage and Roadworks - Construction
- Black Creek, Cessnock:** Drainage - Construction
- Sawyers Gully Road, Sawyers Gully:** Road Rehabilitation - Stage 2 - Construction
- Maitland Street, Branxton:** CBD Upgrade - Stage 1 - Construction
- Wollombi Road, Wollombi:** T Intersection, Traffic Facilities Upgrade - Construction
- Booth Park, Kurri Kurri:** Netball Courts - Construction



You can keep up-to-date with Council's works at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/works



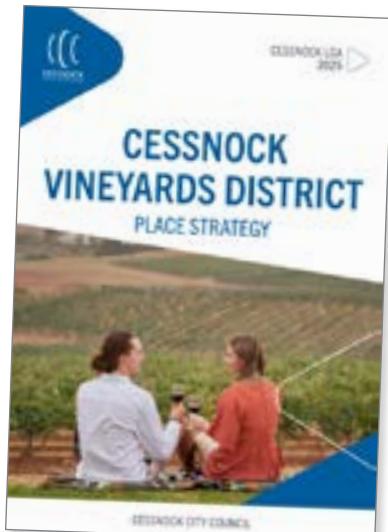
Operational Plan Community Update

Our strategic plans continue to guide our work across our city - shaping priorities, projects, and services that matter most to our community.

These documents reflect more than just intentions, they are our commitment for action. From infrastructure upgrades to community programs, they show how we are delivering our commitments and creating meaningful impact.

Are you interested to know what's coming up over the next 12 months? Our Delivery Program incorporating our Annual Operational Plan highlights key projects and services, helping you see how local efforts connect to our long-term goals.

Explore our plans on our website or at our Customer Service Building and either of our libraries at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Integrated-planning-and-reporting



The Cessnock Domestic and Family Violence Network, of which Council is a member, secured grant funding to launch a waste truck decal to raise awareness during the 16 Days of Activism. This initiative followed recent community events, including a peaceful domestic and family violence awareness walk, reflecting a shared focus on prevention and community collaboration.

Local Disasters: Are You Prepared?

Emergencies can strike suddenly without warning. It's vital to be ready for whatever nature may throw our way – whether it's bushfires, grassfires, floods, storms, heatwaves, earthquakes, landslides, or power outages.



Council has redesigned our emergency management webpages. Visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/disaster or scan the QR code for local risk information, downloadable household and business plans, recovery guidance, and support contacts.

What is Council's role in Emergency Management? Council works with emergency services and the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) to plan, respond to, and recover from disasters.

What is your personal responsibility? Your own actions count. Here are some practical actions to take:

- **Know your risk:** Understand the hazards relevant to your property and area.
- **Make an emergency plan:** For your home, work, and loved ones.
- **Build an emergency kit:** Include essential items like medications, a torch, battery radio, and water.
- **Stay informed:** Follow official channels, local radio, and Council's website.
- **Maintain your property:** Clear gutters, trim trees, and secure loose items.
- **Connect with neighbours:** Check in on those who may need extra help.

By preparing ahead, staying informed, and looking out for each other, we can build a safer, more resilient Cessnock. Let's all play our part in protecting our community.

Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy

The Cessnock Vineyards District, located northwest of the Cessnock Town Centre, is the major component of the Hunter Valley Wine Region; Australia's oldest continuous wine-growing area, internationally recognised for producing premium wines.

On 15 October 2025, Cessnock City Council adopted a Place Strategy for the Cessnock Vineyards District. The development of the Place Strategy followed several years of extensive community engagement. The Strategy provides a planning framework that sets out land-use principles to guide future development. It aims to achieve a harmonious balance between agriculture, scenic amenity, biodiversity, and tourism-related and other non-agricultural uses across the District.



Community Directory

Council's Community Directory is a listing of non-profit, community-based organisations, services and facilities operating in the Cessnock Local Government Area. The directory can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Residents/Community-services-support/Community-Directory

All details are provided directly by members of the local community. If you would like your service or organisation included please email community@cessnock.nsw.gov.au



School Environment Grants are open!

Council's School Environment Grants are open for all of term 1 2026 (closing 4pm Friday 11 April, 2026). Schools are encouraged to apply if they're planning or undertaking a project that has an environmental focus.

Eligible past projects include:

- Vegetable, sensory, bush-tucker and native gardens, chicken coops, compost or worm-farms
- Native animals and birds habitat projects
- Waste reduction, energy or water saving projects
- Environmental competitions, excursions or teacher training



Grants are for a maximum amount of: \$200 for preschools, \$500 for primary schools and \$1000 for high schools.

Grant guidelines and application forms can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Forms-and-documents/Forms/Community-Sporting-and-Environment-Grant-Forms

Key 2026 Events

Seniors Festival: 2 – 15 March 2026

Youth Week: 16 – 26 April 2026

National Reconciliation Week: 27 May – 3 June 2026

NAIDOC Week: 5 July – 12 July 2026

School holidays programs:

- Autumn 7-17 April 2026
- Winter 6-17 July 2026
- Spring 28 Sep-9 Oct 2026
- Summer 18 Dec 2026 through January 2027

Carols in the Park: First Friday in December

Have Your Say



We have a number of projects open for feedback and would like to hear from you!

Scan to QR code or visit together.cessnock.nsw.gov.au to read more and have your say.

Keep Yourself in the Loop



Want to get the latest updates on infrastructure projects, roadworks, strategic planning, waste services and exciting events in your area? Stay connected and sign up for our specific e-newsletters by scanning the QR code or visit www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/News/Cessnock-City-newsletters

Join your local library



Join Cessnock City Library today for unlimited access to free books, magazines, audiobooks, eBooks, eMusic, eFilms, eMags, WiFi, computers, tech help, exhibitions, school holiday activities, and a range of events for all ages.

Membership is FREE and there are no overdue fines or reservation fees. It's also never been easier to join – simply sign up online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/libraries.



WHAT'S ON IN 2026



Australia Day
Citizenship and Awards Ceremony
Performance Arts Culture Cessnock 26 January 2026

FREE POOL DAY
CESSNOCK AND BRANXTON POOLS
10AM - 4PM AUSTRALIA DAY 26 JANUARY
FREE SAUSAGE SIZZLE, LAMINGTONS, ICY POLES AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS IN 2026

VIEW OUR CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS AT: WWW.CESSNOCK.NSW.GOV.AU/SE2026 OR SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE

CESSNOCK CITY YOUTH WEEK 2026
APRIL 16 - 26
CESSNOCK.NSW.GOV.AU/YW2026

MATTRESS DROP-OFF
Drop off your old mattresses and ensembles for FREE

SAT 28
8am - 12pm
Basin Carpark Cessnock

For more info, search "mattress drop off" at cessnock.nsw.gov.au

CESSNOCK LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA SENIORS FESTIVAL 2026
2-15 March
Live Life in Colour
in this annual festival for the community

cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Seniors2026

Proudly supported by:

ALADDIN

FRIDAY 22 MAY 7:30PM

UNFORGETTABLE
Legends of the 50's & 60's with NATHAN FOLEY and his 7 piece band



STAY IN TOUCH



CessnockCityCouncil



CessnockCityCouncil



02 4993 4100



www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au



council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au



62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock