

## 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 in 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 of visit [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/About-Council/Financial-sustainability](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/FinancialHardshipPolicy) or call our Customer Relations team on 4993 4100



Over the past year, we've celebrated the completion of numerous exciting projects across our Local Government Area. Notable achievements include the construction of new pathways for the Wollombi Walking Trail and Paxton's Anderson Avenue, the South Cessnock Bund Wall, as well as road rehabilitations on Sawyers Gully Road (Stage 1) and Sandy Creek Road.

Council is also proud to be progressing a number of major projects in 2026, including Kurri Kurri's Netball Courts Facility at Booth Park, the Doyle Street Bridge, and Stage 1 of the Branxton CBD Upgrade. These projects represent important investments in community infrastructure that will deliver long-term benefits for residents and visitors alike.

In addition to infrastructure delivery, Council is focused on providing practical cost-saving options for residents. One such initiative is the opt-in fortnightly bin collection service, which offers a reduced charge and is now in effect.

On the topic of waste, our next allocation of Waste and Recycling Vouchers is now available. Residents can also dispose of old mattresses free of charge at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre by using a recycling voucher.

Looking ahead, Council remains committed to strong governance, responsible financial management, and thoughtful planning to ensure lasting success and great outcomes for our community. By delivering projects efficiently, supporting affordability, and listening to community needs, we are working to build a resilient, sustainable LGA for the future.

**Peter Chrystal**  
Interim General Manager

## 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, Heddton 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
- **Heddton 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, Heddton 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](http://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](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Integrated-planning-and-reporting)

## 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](http://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:

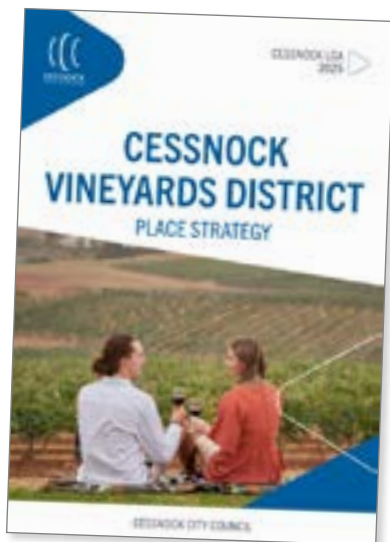
- **Know your risk:** Understand the hazards relevant to your property and area.
- **Make an emergency plan:** For your home, work, and loved ones.
- **Build an emergency kit:** Include essential items like medications, a torch, battery radio, and water.
- **Stay informed:** Follow official channels, 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](http://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](mailto:community@cessnock.nsw.gov.au)



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.

## 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 coups, 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](http://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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Seniors2026)  
PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

**ALADDIN**  
FRIDAY 22 MAY 7:30PM

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



# STAY IN TOUCH



CessnockCityCouncil



CessnockCityCouncil



02 4993 4100



[www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au)



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