Edition | December 2025

Monthly Community Newsletter

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Message From Your Mayor

As the Festive Season rolls in, it's a good moment to slow down, look back, and say thanks to the people who make our lives meaningful, our family, friends, and the wider community.

We also know this time of year can be tough for some. If the holidays are hard for you, I hope you feel the support of a caring community around you. Behind every smile, there may be a story we don't know, and a small act of kindness can make a big difference. My wish is that the New Year brings brighter days, fresh starts, and renewed optimism for all.

This year, Council has been proud to stand alongside our community on initiatives that reflect the heart and soul of our district and strengthen the sense of belonging we all value. None of this happens without your dedication and the partnerships we share, thank you to everyone who contributed your time, ideas, and energy.

Over the break, please look out for one another, take care on the roads and in our shared spaces, and check in on a neighbour if you can.

On behalf of Elected Members and Council staff, I wish everyone in our community a safe, joyful holiday season.

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Council Decisions



Future Growth, Investment and Visitor Economy Plans Endorsed

At Council's most recent meeting on Monday 15 December 2025, the final Growth, Investment and Visitor Economy Framework was endorsed.

The Framework was developed to guide how Council supports local investment, business growth and visitor experiences, while working alongside regional partners.

In October 2025, Council released the draft Framework for community consultation. Seven submissions were received during the consultation period and feedback highlighted strong interest in future growth opportunities and potential projects for the district.

Community input was carefully considered by staff and Elected Members at the meeting with agreed changes incorporated into the final document.

Road Closure for Twin Peaks Hill Climb

Council approved to support the Twin Peaks Hill Climb by allowing temporary closure of Surfers Way and a section of Finger Point Road during event hours.

The popular two-day motorsport event hosted by the South East Automobile Club of SA in Port MacDonnell will occur on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 February 2026.

The South East Automobile Club will engage a certified traffic control company to manage the road closures on Council's behalf, helping to minimise disruption while prioritising safety for participants and the community.

More information about these projects and other Council matters can be found in the Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes section of the District Council of Grant website.

The website also includes Council's complete yearly meeting schedule so community members can easily see when upcoming meetings are planned.

www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au/council/meetings/ordinary

MAYOR



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Next Ordinary Council Meeting:
Monday 19 January 2026 at 5:30pm

Art-Ability Wins Regional Award

The District Council of Grant is proud to announce that its Art-Ability Exhibition has been named the Regional Winner of the Minister for Health and Wellbeing's Excellence in Public Health Award.

The annual award recognises local government projects across South Australia that make a real difference to community wellbeing, social connection and inclusion. Council's Art-Ability Exhibition stood out for showcasing how creativity can bring people together to support inclusion and promote positive health and wellbeing for people living with disability.

District Council of Grant Mayor Kylie Boston said the award reflects Council's ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive and connected community

"Art-Ability has brought together creativity and community in such a powerful way and we are incredibly proud to see this recognised at a state level," Mayor Boston said.

"This award is a celebration of our district's diversity and highlights how art can create connection. All participating artists have put a lot of effort and heart into their work which has brought so much joy to everyone who has visited the exhibition."





The exhibition was an initiative of Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel (AIAP) as a meaningful way to celebrate International Day of People with Disability on 3 December 2025. The day aims to increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of people living with disability.

Now on display in The Hangar Gallery at the Mount Gambier Regional Airport, the Art-Ability Exhibition features 38 artworks created by artists from across the Limestone Coast. Each artwork is accompanied by a personal biography, allowing visitors to connect with each artist's unique story and helping to shift focus from disability to ability by highlighting the strengths of each artist.

To further support participating artists, Council facilitated direct sales of their artwork through its own channels to remove barriers often faced in navigating sales and negotiations. This service is provided free of charge with artists retaining 100% of proceeds.

The exhibition space and its official opening event also provided valuable public health benefits with visitors and artists enjoying meaningful social interactions that help reduce isolation and support mental wellbeing. Council ensured the space was welcoming and accessible which encouraged participation and community connection.

AIAP Presiding Member and Councillor Katherine Greene said the Excellence in Public Health Award acknowledges the benefits of inclusive initiatives to the community.

"Art-Ability is about more than just showcasing artwork, it's about breaking down barriers and creating a space where everyone is truly seen. Every artwork speaks with heart and that's what makes this project so special," Councillor Greene said.

"The success of Art-Ability highlights why accessible art initiatives are so important and we hope this is just the beginning,"

"Council looks forward to hosting more exhibitions like this in the future to keep celebrating creativity and inclusion across our district."

The Art-Ability Exhibition will remain on display at The Hangar Gallery until the end of February 2026.

An online gallery is also available to view at Council's website.

www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au/services/mount-gambier-regional-airport/the-hangar-gallery

Citizen of the Year Winners



The District Council of Grant is delighted to announce the 2026 Australia Day Citizen of the Year Award recipients.

A number of high-quality nominations were received for a range of groups and individuals demonstrating outstanding contributions including, but not limited to, long standing community group committee members and volunteers, local business owners and community events coordinated by volunteers.

The 2026 Australia Day Citizen of the Year Award winners comprise:

- Citizen of the Year: Cary Jennings - a long-standing community volunteer across local motorsport and BMX;
- Young Citizen of the Year: Jackson Richards – a dedicated emergency services volunteer and youth leader;
- Community Event of the Year: Port MacDonnell Anzac Day Services - community-led event bringing people together to honour veterans and celebrate ANZAC traditions; and
- Active Citizenship Award: Generations In Jazz Tuesday Volunteer Team - a passionate group whose year-round efforts are critical to a major event's success.

District Council of Grant Mayor Kylie Boston said the Awards highlight the dedication and generosity of people across the community and how even small acts can create meaningful change.

"The Australia Day Citizen of the Year Awards are a wonderful opportunity to recognise those who go above and beyond to strengthen our community. It is important that our community members are celebrated for their commitment over the past year and in most cases over many years of service," Mayor Boston said.

"We are so proud to celebrate our community members efforts and hope their examples encourages others to get involved and make a positive difference in the District Council of Grant."

Following careful consideration, all winners will be awarded at a private sit-down lunch event on Australia Day Monday 26 January 2026. Nominees will also be invited to attend the event and be presented a certificate.



This format ensures a comfortable atmosphere where stories are shared, speeches are heard and connections are strengthened.

By bringing together nominees, their families, community leaders and dignitaries Council shines a light on the volunteers and everyday heroes who help shape the community.

During the 2026 event, attendees will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the overall experience which will help shape future events and ensure the heart of the celebration continues to recognise those who make a real difference across the district.

Watch the Australia Day Citizen of the Year Awards live on the District Council of Grant Facebook page.

Follow the page to also stay up to date with Council's latest news, announcements, event photos and consultation opportunities.

Community Spotlight

Country Fire Service - Region 5

The Country Fire Service (CFS) Region 5 covers the entire Limestone Coast supported by 12 staff and approximately 1900 volunteers. The region is split into 9 groups with Mount Gambier and Kingsley CFS Groups sitting in the District Council of Grant area.

During the 2024-2025 Fire Danger Season, brigades within Kingsley and Mount Gambier CFS Groups attended more than 230 call outs including 75 grass or forest fires.

CFS volunteer firefighters also respond to structure fires, road crash rescue, hazardous material incidents and more. Our brigades are always looking for more volunteers.

However, did you know that being a CFS volunteer doesn't just mean you have to get on a truck and fight fires?



Brigade Operational Support members provide non-fire ground support such as radio operations, logistics, and administration services.

For more information on volunteering, contact the Regional Volunteer Officer on 8762 7100 or email.

CFS.Region5Membership@eso.sa.gov.au

If you are unable to volunteer, you can help in many other ways, including preparing your property, learning about Bushfire Safer Places, ensuring you have a written and practiced Bushfire Survival Plan, and staying informed.

The CFS Community Engagement offers a range of free information and empowerment programs including:

- Bushfire Ready – learn about your area's bushfire risk, bushfire behaviour, how to protect your house and property, and personal safety.
- Write a Bushfire Survival Plan Workshop - work out when to enact your plan, when and where you will go and how to reduce your risk, and who to include in your plan.
- Stay Informed – a practical session to assist in setting up your phone with useful apps and understanding CFS warning messages and the CFS website.
- Community Fire Safe – encourages groups or residents in bushfire risk areas to form small action groups to help each other during emergencies.

For further information about events in your area or to book a presentation call (08) 8762 7100, email or visit the CFS website.

Email: **CFS.Region5commengage@eso.sa.gov.au**

Website: **www.cfs.sa.gov.au/home/**

Region 5 CFS Staff take this opportunity to say thank you to our current volunteers and their families for continuing to prioritise the safety of our local communities. We are grateful for your efforts and dedication.

From the Archives

Christmas decorations displayed at Port MacDonnell in December 2024, hand crafted by the members of the Baytown Group.





Food Organics and Garden Organics

Service Trial #1 Outcomes

At the end of 2024, the District Council of Grant commenced a free Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside service trial for residents in Nene Valley, Port MacDonnell and the rural living area stretching from Crafter Road, Compton through to Kilsby Road, OB Flat.

The trial aim was to collect data on the feasibility of providing an ongoing FOGO service to residents across the district with participation rates, load contamination information and service costs helping to inform Council leading into the next budget period and shape a potential service.

Based on the trial data and additional written feedback collected throughout the trial period, Council approved an opt-in service in Nene Valley, Port MacDonnell and the rural living area stretching from Crafter Road, Compton through to Kilsby Road, OB Flat.

Council also approved the commencement of a second service trial in the areas of Tarpeena, Allendale East, Yahl, Kongorong and Racecourse Bay.



Service Trial #2 Has Commenced

In November 2025, participating households were issued with a 240L bin with a lime green lid for the duration of the second free FOGO kerbside service trial in Tarpeena, Allendale East, Yahl, Kongorong and Racecourse Bay.

The formal trial period commenced Monday 8 December 2025 and will end Friday 20 February 2026 with collection days coinciding with the existing yellow lidded recycling bin collections.

Participants can continue using the service free of charge until 30 June 2026, to allow Council time to evaluate the trial data and consult the community through the draft Annual Business Plan and Budget process. This approach will help to ensure service continuity to those residents likely to participate in an Opt-In service beyond the trial.

Participation rates, load contamination information and service costs will all be collected to help inform Council leading into the 2026-2027 budget period and shape a potential opt-in service.



Have Your Say on FOGO

Participants in the second trial are encouraged to submit written feedback on the trial and express their level in gaining an ongoing FOGO collection service. Those not involved in the trial also have an opportunity to express their interest in gaining a future FOGO service.

Have your say online at Your Say DCG or scan the QR code.

yoursaydcg.com.au/fogo

Feedback must be submitted by 5:00pm Friday 27 February 2026.

Disability Access and Inclusion



The District Council of Grant is inviting community members to have their say on the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2026–2030 which is now open for consultation.

The draft Plan details the things Council propose to do to ensure people of all abilities can access services, facilities and opportunities across the district.

District Council of Grant Mayor Kylie Boston said the draft Plan has been shaped by input from Elected Members, Council staff and the Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel.

"Our goal is to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, can participate fully in community life," Mayor Boston said.

All Councils are required to have a DAIP and Council's draft DAIP aligns with the State Government's Disability Inclusion Plan 2025–2029 which incorporates five key domains to support a more inclusive and equitable community.



The draft DAIP also includes accountability measures, such as annual reporting to the State Government, to ensure progress is tracked and strengthens Council's commitment to continuous improvement.

Chief Executive Officer Darryl Whicker said the draft DAIP reflects Council's ongoing commitment to ensuring a community that is accessible and inclusive for everyone.

"This process is about hearing from our community and breaking down barriers so everyone has the opportunity to participate, contribute, and thrive," Mr Whicker said.

"We encourage residents, organisations and people living with disability to provide their feedback to help shape the plan that will strengthen accessibility and inclusion across our district."

The draft DAIP highlights proposed initiatives for Council to pursue such as:

- Creating welcoming events and programs for people with disability
- Improving accessibility of buildings, footpaths, car parks, toilets, parks, and playgrounds
- Raising disability awareness across Council and the community
- Ensuring communication, documents and the website are accessible
- Supporting volunteering and employment opportunities for people with disability
- Partnering with organisations to enhance inclusion
- Supporting safety for people with disability in emergencies

The community is now invited to review the complete draft DAIP and provide feedback during the consultation period.

The draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2026–2030 can be viewed online via Your Say DCG, with hard copies available at Council's Principal Office and Port MacDonnell Community Complex.

yoursaydcg.com.au

Feedback must be submitted to the District Council of Grant by 5:00pm Monday 5 January 2026.

Have an event to share with the community?

Email info@dcgrant.sa.gov.au for the opportunity to feature in a future newsletter or online community events calendar.

Your community groups, event or not-for-profit organisation must be located in the District Council of Grant area.

Health and Wellbeing

For The Good of Their Wellbeing
Social Media Minimum Age Transition

The Australian Government has introduced a new law that will restrict social media account access for those under 16 years.

From 10 December 2025, you need to be 16 or over to have a social media account. It's part of a new law to keep under 16s safer online.

The changes aim to protect under 16s from pressures and risks they can be exposed to while logged in to social media accounts. These come from design features in the platforms that:

- encourage them to spend too much time on screens – for example, by prompting them with "streaks" or streams of notifications and alerts, and pressuring them to view disappearing content.
- increase the likelihood of exposure to negative, upsetting or manipulative content served up in their feeds by algorithms.

It is important for everyone in Australia, especially for parents and carers of young people under 16, to understand what the changes are, when they start, who they impact and why they are needed, so that you can best support your family and others through this change.

Find out more about the new law by visiting the eSafety Commissior website.

www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/industry-regulation/social-media-age-restrictions-hub

LiveLighter!

A new phase of the proven and evidence-based obesity prevention campaign, LiveLighter, is encouraging South Australians to break their sugary drinks habit.

Australians are among the highest consumers of sugary drinks in the world. In South Australia, 15.0% of adults and 10.0% of children report drinking soft drinks daily.

Consumption of sugary drinks is strongly linked to obesity and disease.

The sugary drinks LiveLighter campaign explores how drinking soft drinks, fruit drinks or energy drinks can lead to the build up of toxic (visceral) fat in the body, increasing risk of cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Delivered by Preventive Health SA and Cancer Council SA, the campaign is just one part of a multilayered strategy being supported by the South Australian Obesity Prevention Collaborative.

Visit **sa.livelighter.com.au** to access dietitian-developed meal plans, healthy recipes, a workout builder and a sugary drinks calculator!

To find out more about implementation, visit Preventive Health SA's website.

www.preventivehealth.sa.gov.au/obesity-prevention







Mosquito Proof Your Home

Keep those pesky mozzies away from your home with these simple tips:

- Cover up rainwater tanks, septic tanks, and any large water containers with mosquito-proof mesh.
- Clean out your gutters regularly so water doesn't collect and become a breeding spot.
- Clear the edges of any dams from weeds and grasses.
- Change the water in birdbaths and pets' water bowls weekly.
- Keep your swimming pool clean and disinfected.
- Empty out kiddie pools after each use.

Mozzies love stagnant water, whether it's fresh, salty, or just a puddle that's been hanging around, so make sure to drain it.

Christmas and New Year Reminders

Bin Collections

All Mobile Garbage Bins will be collected as normal on Christmas Day (Thursday 25 December 2025) and New Years Day (Thursday 1 January 2026).

Bins should be placed out the night before or prior to 6:00am on the day of collection.

For any missed bins, please call Cleanaway on (08) 8427 8204.



Waste Transfer Stations Openings

Christmas Day:
The Carpenter Rocks, Donovans and Port MacDonnell Waste Transfer Stations will be CLOSED on Christmas Day (Thursday 25 December 2025).

All sites will resume normal operations from Friday 26 December 2025.

Council apologises for any inconvenience caused.

New Years Day:
The Carpenter Rocks, Donovans and Port MacDonnell Waste Transfer Stations will be OPEN as normal on New Years Day (Thursday 1 January 2026).

Office Closures

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the District Council of Grant!

Council's Principal Office will be closed from 12:00pm Wednesday 24 December 2025 and re-open from 8:30am Monday 5 January 2026.

The Port MacDonnell Community Complex will be closed from 12:00pm Wednesday 24 December 2025 and on Thursday 25 December 2025 only, with modified opening hours for the remainder of the holiday period as follows:

Date	Opening Hours
Wed 24 December 2025	9:00am to 12:00pm
Thurs 25 December 2025	CLOSED
Fri 26 December 2025	11:00am to 3:00pm
Sat 27 December 2025	11:00am to 3:00pm
Sun 28 December 2025	11:00am to 3:00pm
Mon 29 December 2025	9:00am to 5:00pm
Tues 30 December 2025	9:00am to 5:00pm
Wed 31 December 2025	9:00am to 5:00pm
Thurs 1 January 2026	11:00am to 3:00pm
Friday 2 January 2026	9:00am to 5:00pm



Other Reminders

Fire Danger Season

The Lower South East's 2025-2026 Fire Danger Season has been declared from 1 November 2025 to 30 April 2026.

During this period, restrictions apply to lighting fires to reduce the risk of large fires starting. These restrictions become even stricter on Total Fire Ban Days.

More information about how to prepare for the season can be found via the CFS website.

www.cfs.sa.gov.au/plan-prepare/

Free Boat Ramp Access & Permit Holder Update



As part of the State Government's Algal Bloom Summer Plan, they are providing free access to all South Australian boat ramps for both recreational and commercial users until 1 December 2026.

Boat ramps at Port MacDonnell and Blackfellows Caves are participating meaning all local ramp fees are suspended during this period. You will not need to purchase a permit to launch.

Council recognises that some community members have already purchased annual permits beginning 1 July 2025. To ensure fairness, existing permits will be extended after the free access period.

Visit Council's website to find out more.

www.dcgrant.sa.gov.au/services/infrastructure/boatramps

Dog and Cat Registration

Moving house over the holiday period?

Don't forget to update your details in Dogs and Cats Online so if your dog or cat goes walkabout, it has a better chance of getting back to you.

When Council's Rangers find dogs and cats (or one is handed in) they'll scan it for a microchip, then look up its record to get your pet back home with you.

Dogs

Did you know a dog's registration number stays with it for life?

When you register your dog for the first time, you'll get a grey plastic disc stamped with the registration number. You can engrave the number onto a more durable fancy metal disc if you wish.

If a dog needs to be rehomed, the original owner needs to transfer the registration number to the new owner in Dogs and Cats Online.

Cats

Dogs must be registered, desexed and microchipped. So do cats! Registering your cat is easy and free, and can be done online.

Find out more on the Dog and Cat Management Board's website.

dogandcatboard.com.au



Grant Funding and Support

Connecting Communities Events Grant

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is offering the Connecting Communities Events Grant as part of the Family and Business Support Program to support rural communities in South Australia affected by drought and other adversity.

The aim of this program is to support gatherings that encourage communities to come together, share experiences, and reinforce the unity and strength of rural areas.

Grants of up to $5,000 (GST exclusive) are available to industry, community, not-for-profit, local government and incorporated groups to host events that foster social connections and provide support during these times.

Eligible groups within South Australia include (but are not limited to):

- farmer groups, including Agricultural Bureau branches and farming systems groups
- industry organisations
- community groups such as agricultural show societies, progress associations, sports clubs, service clubs
- local government.

Applications close Saturday 31 January 2026.

Visit the PIRSA website to find out more and apply.

pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/apply-for-funding/connecting_communities_events_grant

Community Grants Scheme | Round 2

The District Council of Grant's Community Grants Scheme is for community groups to develop projects and events that enhance community wellbeing and increase participation in social and leisure activities.

Incorporated not-for-profit organisations based in or servicing the District Council of Grant who do not collect substantial income from other sources are eligible to apply.

Applicants can apply for a maximum of $3,000 with a 75% funding contribution or $5,000 with a 50% funding contribution under the Sporting Clubs and Community Group categories.

Organisations may also apply for a maximum of $500 with no co-contribution requirements under the Community Participation category.

Applications open Monday 19 January 2026.

Grant applications will be assessed on a rolling basis. Early applications are encouraged.

Visit the District Council of Grant's Your Say DCG website to find out more.

yoursaydcg.com.au

Grant application support is also available by contacting (08) 8721 0444 or info@dcgrant.sa.gov.au.

Face to face support can be given by making a booking with staff at Council's Principal Office.






Junior Sports Assistance Fund

The City of Mount Gambier will host an Information Session early in the new year for Member organisations and prospective new Clubs.

The session is a valuable opportunity to learn about the funding available for your Club and representative junior athletes.

Details on the Information Session will be provided in due course.

In the meantime, if any juniors have been selected to represent South Australia at a sporting event, they may be eligible for funding.

An application form and further details can be found on the City of Mount Gambier website.

www.mountgambier.sa.gov.au/services/events-sponsorship-grants/junior-sports-assistance

Out and About with Council



Meeting with Greens Senator

Mayor Kylie Boston and Chief Executive Officer Darryl Whicker met with Australian Greens Senator Barbara Pocock to discuss Council's advocacy items.



bp Adelaide Grand Final

Mayor Kylie Boston joined Tatiara District Council Mayor Liz Goossens at the recent Adelaide Grant Final motorsport event.



Mount Gambier Family Truck Show

Mayor Kylie Boston attended the 2025 Truck Show event with committee members Aaron Mattner and Michelle Nicholls.

The annual show aims to create a fun and memorable experience for everyone, while also raising funds for local charities and helping out families in the Limestone Coast region who are less fortunate during the holiday season.







Stay up to date with Council activities on social media.

Follow the District Council of Grant on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to be the first to see photos from events and reminders.

Community Events

Would you like to

PLAY OR REFEREE

WALKING FOOTBALL



Researchers at Flinders University are seeking **men aged 55+ years to PLAY or REFEREE in a free walking football (soccer) program** in Mount Gambier from February to September 2026.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Complete a pre-exercise screening questionnaire to ensure it is safe for you to participate
- Participate in weekly 2 hour walking football sessions at Wulanda Recreation & Convention Centre for 24 weeks
- Complete 3 short surveys and 3 physical health assessments
- Referees will receive training from Walking Football Adelaide

SIGN UP NOW

https://tinyurl.com/WF-EOI

PROJECT PARTNERS

Government of South Australia – Supported by Office for Ageing Well

WFA Walking Football Adelaide

Adelaide United F.C.

Connected and Active Communities | Limestone Coast

BREAKTHROUGH mental health research foundation

Flinders University

FOR MORE INFORMATION

sarah.crossman@flinders.edu.au

This project has been approved by the Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee (no. 9032)

Lifeblood

Roll up your sleeves, Mount Gambier.

Flex that community spirit and get ready to give blood.

20 January - 5 February

Look for the big red bus
Mount Gambier
Marketplace Car Park,
182/248 Penola Rd.

Book a donation 13 14 95

life IS THE REASON

SUMMER SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM 2025-2026

15th - 17th Dec Mon-Wed Beaded Christmas Ornaments	18th - 21st Dec Thurs-Sun Christmas Cards Making	22nd - 24th Dec Mon-Wed Reindeer, Gnome & Gingerbread Man	26th - 28th Dec Fri-Sun Canvas Art with Shells	29th - 31st Dec Mon-Wed Disk Spinners	2nd - 4th Jan Fri-Sun Photo Frames
5th - 7th Jan Mon-Wed Lighthouses	8th - 11th Jan Thurs-Sun Bedroom Door Name Disk	12th - 14th Jan Mon-Wed CD Fishies	15th - 18th Jan Thurs-Sun Pencil Case & Bookmark Decorating	19th - 21st Jan Mon-Wed Friendship Bracelet	22nd - 25th Jan Thurs-Sun Australia Day Masks

Plus decorate a Christmas bauble to put on our recycled tree all throughout December!

Storytime each Tuesday @ 10.30am (except 23/12 and 30/12)

Port MacDonnell Community Complex
For more information please call 8738 3000

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 9am-5pm
Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays: 11am-3pm
Christmas Eve (24 Dec 2025): Open 9am - 12 noon
CLOSED: Christmas Day

District Council of Grant

Port MacDonnell Community Complex