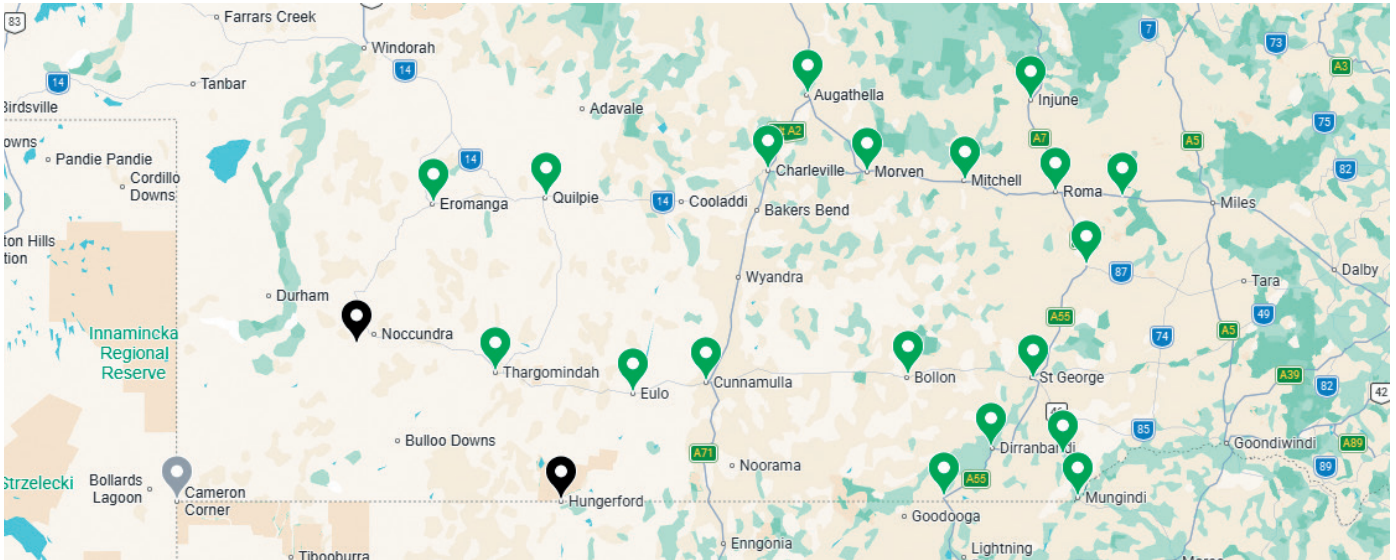


# Balonne Bulletin

THE NEWSLETTER OF BALONNE SHIRE COUNCIL

ISSUE 59 | 12 MAY 2026



## COUNCIL ACTS TO SUPPORT TOURISM OPERATORS AMID FUEL SUPPLY ISSUES

Together with other members in the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, Council has developed a Fuel Tracker Dashboard to allay concerns regarding fuel availability in the region.

The Dashboard was developed off the back of concerns being raised by tourism operators that visitors were asking questions about fuel availability as a result of Middle East tensions, as opposed to just fuel price concerns.

Each Council is in regular contact with local fuel stations to ensure the information on the Fuel Tracker Dashboard is up-to-date, so that travellers can have confidence in the information provided.

Information from the Fuel Tracker Dashboard is also being displayed on the Emergency Dashboards of South West Queensland Council's.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole said Councils acted immediately to support our local tourism operators through this difficult period.

"Our local tourism operators have been hit hard by cancellations due to fuel prices and concerns around fuel

availability," said Mayor O'Toole

"Obviously there is nothing Council can do about publicly available fuel prices, but we can help to promote certainty around fuel availability and did so with almost immediate effect.

"At this time of year, we want to see caravans not cancellations, as tourism is a vital contributor to our local economy.

"In many ways, we led the way in this space as Councils across the State have also now opted to use the newly developed link in their Emergency Dashboards to communicate fuel availability.

"Council is also communicating a range of initiatives to support businesses and attract tourism to our region throughout this challenging time."

To view the Fuel Tracker Dashboard go to [fueltracker.swqroc.com.au](http://fueltracker.swqroc.com.au) or scan this QR Code:



Do you have a community story, event or notice for the next edition of the *Balonne Bulletin*?

Let us know here ▶



# A message from the Mayor



## What's On

### MUNGINDI BORDER BATTLE

Proudly Maroon or Passionately Blue? Pull on your colours and cheer on your side!

**When:** Wednesday 17 June

**Where:** Mungindi River Park (QLD side of the border)

Free Event

### IAN MOSS LIVE

Soak up the spectacular live music and experience Hebel at its best!

**When:** Friday 3 July

**Where:** Hebel Hotel

Ticket Fee

### MUNGINDI RACES

Enjoy a day of races, food stalls, jumping castles and foot races – don't forget to dress your best for Fashions of the Field!

**When:** Saturday 4 July

**Where:** Mungindi Racecourse

### BOLLON POLOCROSSE CARNIVAL

This multi-horse Carnival will be a great day out with entertainment that all will enjoy! Camping available.

**When:** Saturday 4 – Sunday 5 July

**Where:** Bollon Showgrounds

It is hard to provide an update on recent happenings without covering the fuel supply issues gripping our nation, and to a greater extent impacting rural and regional areas.

As a regional and rural Shire, we are heavily reliant on an affordable and readily available fuel supply, which underpins our agricultural economy and keeps the tourists travelling through our region.

Recently the Federal government commenced a \$20 million advertising campaign titled 'Every little bit helps', which was squarely focused on life in the big cities, but its emphasis on calling for less fuel consumption would have devastating impacts for our tourism operators who rely on visitors to our area.

I penned an Open Letter to the Prime Minister to raise awareness of impacts, which was met with overwhelming support from tourism operators right across the nation and I have been advised that the message was received.

Fuel is also a considerable operating cost for council's day-to-day work providing essential services to the community and Council has undertaken a range of actions to limit the impacts these high fuel price rises will have on our operations.

As this fuel supply issue continues, Council will be communicating updates on Council's actions, as well

as coordinating and informing local businesses and tourism operators about where to get support and help while they endure these elevated fuel prices.

Recently, we hosted the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils Board Meeting in St George and it covered topics on a range of matters that we are all facing as Councils.

The meeting included stakeholder and project partner updates and discussions to progress key priorities for the south west, including insurance, air services, BOM weather radar delivery, connectivity, and regional drought resilience planning.

It also included an Insurance Roundtable, which included representatives of the insurance industry with each Mayor raising concerns from their constituents about the excessive and exorbitant insurance premium price rises our residents are currently receiving.

Given that 5 of our 7 communities are protected by flood levees, as is the case within other SWQROC Council areas, it is completely unacceptable for the price increases our community has been enduring over recent years.

We also took these insurance industry representatives on a tour of our St George Levee in an effort to explain to them just how frustrating their actions are in the face of all the flood mitigation measures we have in place to protect our residents' homes.

I hope our actions will in some way influence the insurance industry to change their ways, so that our community can get the fair insurance cover it deserves.

*Mayor Samantha O'Toole*

# FUEL SUPPLY ISSUE UPDATE

## Council's actions to reduce impacts to its operating costs

Elevated fuel prices are impacting our entire economy at the moment and, if not addressed in the short term, it poses a significant challenge for every industry that depends on an affordable and readily available fuel supply.

Council is acting to reduce the impact of elevated fuel prices on our operating costs as our fuel supply is an essential and central cost component of servicing a Shire that spans over 31,000 square kilometres.

We are currently in the process of securing a bulk fuel supply, which will lower the cost of fuelling our fleet for the essential services we provide.

We have also changed internal procedures to limit fuel usage at this time by undertaking virtual meetings where possible, increased car-pooling to essential meetings throughout the Shire and reviewing the need to attend external meetings that involve long-distance travel.

Increased fuel costs are also impacting our third-party contractors and, in an effort to maintain already secured contracts for services, we are looking to implement a potential fuel levy payment to external contractors to ensure we can continue to

provide the essential services we deliver for our residents.

As crude oil is also a base component for other products we rely on such as bitumen, PVC piping and other products, we are in the process of assessing ways we can reduce cost increase impacts from the purchase of such products.

We are acutely aware that elevated fuel prices are impacting our local businesses and tourism operators in the Shire and will be communicating free government services available for business assistance and are joining with other tourism bodies to boost the promotion of tourism to our region.

As Council is currently developing the 2026/27 budget, we are factoring in what the potential impacts an extended elevation in fuel prices may mean to our Council and are reviewing internal efficiencies that may help to mitigate impacts to our operating costs.

### COMMUNITY CATCH-UP

2 JUN	<b>HEBEL</b> Hebel Pub 11am - 12:30noon	With Transport & Main Roads Consultation
2 JUN	<b>BOLLON</b> Walter Austin Park 3pm - 5pm	With Flood Studies Transport & Main Roads Consultation
3 JUN	<b>THALLON</b> Town Park 1pm - 2:30pm	With Flood Studies Consultation
17 JUN	<b>MUNGINDI</b> Mungindi River Park 7:30am - 9am	Aligns with Border Battle

## Blue Light Shearing Program Providing Pathways for Youth

Queensland Police Service held another session of their Blue Light Shearing program just before Easter drawing 22 participants from Dirranbandi, Cunnamulla, Charleville and St George State High Schools.

This program runs three sessions per year across South West Queensland and aims to support young people by giving them real-world experience in the field of shearing.

The participants worked hard in the sheds all week, crutching and shearing 206 Sheep to an industry standard and processed and pressed two bales of wool.

They also had the opportunity to hear from guest speakers from Balonne Shire Council, the Balonne Country Universities Centre and experienced shearers on opportunities for employment, the shearing industry and broader topics about how to handle and overcome bullying and isolation.

Thank you to Duncan and Gerry Banks for hosting the group at Dunwold.



# PLAN IT. APPROVE IT. BUILD IT. SAVE COSTS!

Council is reminding residents who are planning building or renovation work that seeking approvals before construction begins can significantly reduce costs and potential impacts on community safety.

Unapproved structures may not meet building codes designed to ensure stability, fire safety, drainage and access, which can increase risks not only to occupants, but to neighbours and emergency services.

Retrospective applications also carry a higher risk of delays, additional information requests, or required changes to completed work, potentially adding further expense for owners.

As outlined in Council's Fees schedule, applications lodged prior to building attract the standard assessment fee, while retrospective approvals submitted after work

has already started or finished are charged at double the cost.

Applying first allows issues to be identified early, before money is spent on construction, which is a simpler and more cost-effective process.

If any residents are needing information on attaining approvals and certification, they can contact Council's Planning and Development Manager by calling (07) 4620 8888 or emailing [council@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@balonne.qld.gov.au)



## Development Incentives Policy Creates Greater Certainty for Property Investors

Council is committed to attracting high-quality, sustainable development across the Shire and has adopted a Development Incentives Policy to support this commitment.

The Policy reflects Council's commitment to encouraging investment that improves quality of life, supports housing supply, enables reuse of existing buildings, and strengthens strategic sectors such as tourism, agriculture, health, and education.

Council-led incentives outlined in the Policy such as rate rebates, fee reductions and infrastructure charge relief can be the crucial factor that moves potential development projects from 'not viable' to 'full steam ahead'.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole said the Development Incentives Policy is about providing certainty for property investment to be advanced right here in Balonne.

"We understand that a persistent challenge in regional and rural development is not lack of interest, but project feasibility due to higher upfront costs, lower margins, which puts a great emphasis on the need for project certainty.

"Regional investment is not bound to our Shire alone and this policy helps

the Shire compete with larger and better resourced Councils to secure a greater portion of regional development investment.

"Having greater predictability and certainty can be the difference between a project proceeding here or watching the funding redirected to some other Shire.

"This policy creates greater certainty for property investors by clearly outlining the types of incentives available and the outcomes Council is seeking, which gives investors' confidence that Balonne Shire is proactive, competitive and open for business.

"The policy is also aimed at generating more business development and supporting existing business renovations in the Shire."

If you have a property development you would like to advance, please feel free to view the Development Incentive Policy by scanning the QR code, going to [www.balonne.qld.gov.au](http://www.balonne.qld.gov.au) or speaking with our Planning & Development Manager by calling (07) 4620 8888.



### Proposed change to approval

Make a submission from  
**5th May to 27th May**

**Change proposed:**  
Material Change of Use -  
"High Impact Industry"  
(Sand Screening - up to 5,000 tpa)

**Where:** 46-56 Buchan Bypass,  
St George

**On:** Lot 31 on SP340426

**Existing approval:** High Impact  
Industry - Concrete Batching -  
MCU243

**Application ref:** MCU251

**You may obtain a copy of the  
application and make a  
submission to:**

Balonne Shire Council  
118 Victoria Street, St George  
Email: [council@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@balonne.qld.gov.au)

Public notification requirements are in  
accordance with the *Planning Act 2016*

# South West Councils Meet In Balonne

Representatives of the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils were in St George in April for their latest in-person board meeting.

The group came together with an agenda including stakeholder and project partner updates and discussions to progress key priorities for the south west, including insurance, air services, BOM weather radar delivery,

connectivity, and regional drought resilience planning.

Chair of SWQROC and Balonne Shire Mayor Samantha O’Toole said these board meeting are a great chance to discuss solutions to similar issues our Councils and residents are facing.

“As a combined body of Councils, we have a much greater capacity

to solve issues we are facing and to lobby for support from other levels of government”, said Mayor O’Toole.

“It was great to have all of the representatives in Balonne for this board meeting and to have an opportunity to show them around some of the infrastructure that has been working for us and our residents.”



# Insurance Roundtable Held in Balonne

The South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils held another Insurance Roundtable on Wednesday 29 April, with representatives of the insurance industry to discuss the excessive insurance premium prices throughout the region.

After the roundtable, the Councils seized the opportunity to take the insurance industry representatives for a tour of the St George Flood Levee.

The representatives were shown the mix of earth levees and brick levees and were given a detailed overview of how the gates and penstocks function to keep the community safe from flooding.

They were also shown the flood marker displaying the historical flood

heights, which would all have been under the height of the existing levee.

Hopefully this roundtable will help to

change the excessively high insurance premiums some residents have been receiving.



# THE LIBRARY LENS



## Council Welcomes New Librarian

The Balonne Shire Libraries team is pleased to welcome Courtney, who has recently commenced in the role of Library Officer at Thallon Library.

Courtney has already been busy supporting the local school by reading to students, supplying books for teaching programs and engaging older children with non-fiction texts.

You can reach Courtney at Thallon Library via the information below, or feel free to drop in, say hello and find your next great read!

Wednesday: 9:00am – 12:30 noon  
and 1:30pm – 4:00pm  
Closed: Thursday to Tuesday  
Phone: (07) 4620 8864  
thallonlibrary@balonne.qld.gov.au



## Cuddle Bed Donated to the St George Hospital

Thanks to a very generous donation totaling nearly \$20,000 from local community groups and associations, the St George Hospital now has a brand new Cuddle Bed.

A Cuddle Bed is designed to allow people to get close to their loved ones while they are being treated at hospital and this one was installed in the Jacaranda Room for palliative care patients, along with anyone needing extra support for a young child that needs a parent to stay with them.

The donation came from the St George Lions Club, the Queensland Country Women's Association, Cotton & Vineyard tours, the St George Cotton Growers Association, along with a number of other smaller donors.

The donations were made out to the Belinda McGowan Foundation, which is committed to enhancing the quality of end-of-life care by equipping hospitals with purpose built Cuddle Beds.

In addition to this, a community member has also donated a special lounge that is also a bed with drawers and on big castors for the room, which came in at a cost of \$6,391 and will be a great addition to the room.

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who was involved in coordinating these new additions, which will make life much easier for people in their time of need.

## St George Chinese Memorial Unveiled in Parliament House

Our region has a strong historical connection to the Chinese community, which is encapsulated in a memorial in the St George Cemetery that commemorates the Amoy Shepherds who came to our area in the 1800's and never returned to their homeland.

On 23 April 2026, a replica of the Chinese memorial was unveiled in the Queensland Parliament at a special ceremony, which further signifies a unified effort to commemorate the contributions these Chinese settlers

made to our region.

To this day, their unmarked graves remain in the St George Cemetery, with the memorial standing as a vigil to their existence.

The replica memorial will be used at ceremonies until a final location is confirmed, and used to remind all who see it of the collaboration and



cooperation between our two cultures to never forget the sacrifices made by these Chinese settlers.

The replica memorial was created by the St George Chinese Community Memorial Committee and Council was proud to support their efforts with attendance at the Parliamentary event.



## Youth Summit Opens New Horizons

Country Universities Centre Balonne were thrilled to welcome 168 students to the 5th Annual Youth Summit on Wednesday 18 March 2026.

This year's Summit titled 'Exploring Horizons: Grow Your Future!' attracted students from across the region to explore future pathways, taking part in 11 interactive workshops and hearing from five inspiring panelists who shared their unique career journeys.

A standout moment of the day was the keynote speaker, Bollon local Annie Henwood - nurse and founder of the Pieces of the Mind podcast, who spoke passionately about strengthening rural communities and highlighted the diverse and rewarding opportunities available across regional and remote Australia.

This event would not have been possible without the generous support of Balonne Shire Council, the St George State High School who hosted the summit, and the broad range of organisations that attended the event.

The Youth Summit continues to grow each year, and we are excited to keep building opportunities that empower young people to explore their futures with confidence and ambition.

## Dirranbandi Post Office Granted New Lease of Life



Following months of speculation regarding the future of the Dirranbandi Post Office, it now has a secure future with a new lease and location inside the Dirranbandi Rural Transaction Centre.

New Dirranbandi Post Office Licensee

Jane Steiger is thrilled to be taking on the role and securing the local post office.

"I feel so privileged to be playing a role in supporting the local community of Dirranbandi", said Ms Steiger.

## ENVIRO-COLUMN

### CORAL CACTUS



Coral cactus (*Cylindropuntia fulgida* var. *mamillata*) is a highly invasive, spiny plant that forms dense thickets, outcompeting native vegetation and reducing pasture productivity. It injures livestock, wildlife and people, and can restrict mustering. Coral cactus spreads easily attaching to animals, machinery and clothing, or carried by floodwater.

In Queensland, it is mainly found in western regions and is a category 3 restricted invasive plant, making it illegal to sell, give away or release into the environment.

To avoid its spread, never plant or move it, remove infestations carefully, and follow your general biosecurity obligation.

If you have noticed any occurrences Coral Cactus, please contact the Environment team on 4620 8888.

For further information on Coral Cactus contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).



"It is pretty special to be part of a tight-knit little community that really rallied behind efforts to save the Post Office."

(Photo Courtesy: ABC Southern Queensland)

# Local Student heading to State Squash Championships

Local Squash ace Josie Beeson is heading to Cairns in May to represent South West Queensland in the Junior Squash State Championships.

Josie started playing at the popular St George Squash Club in 2025 and was selected to compete at the State Trials after competing at the South West Squash Trials in Crows Nest in March 2026.

St George Squash Club President Harry North said the club is thrilled that Josie has the opportunity to represent the region in the State Squash Trials.

"Josie is a regular down at the



courts during the on-season and it's been great to watch her continue to improve her game each and every week", said Mr North.

"We are all wrapped that Josie is heading to the State Championships and we wish her all the very best in her

upcoming games there.

"Whether locals are competitive like Josie, or just keen on the social connection that comes from playing at our popular little club, we are always ready to welcome new players."



# CUC Bursaries Help Students

The Country Universities Centre (CUC) Balonne recently awarded seventeen bursaries to students studying higher education and who are registered with the CUC for Semester 1.

The bursaries are offered as part of CUC's higher education support program, which enables students to study and work within the Balonne Shire without having to leave their family and community.

CUC Board Chair, Alex Benn said the bursaries couldn't have come at a better time.

"Everyone is struggling with the cost of living and high fuel prices at the moment, so our bursaries will help students with the travel and resources associated with their studies", Mr Benn said.

"It could be travelling to undertake course placement, or upgrading technology, equipment and reference books. There are many components to a higher education course.

"The bursary fund has been supported for the past few years by a fundraising ball, first initiated and run by the Balonne Shire Council, and then organised by the CUC last year.

"The CUC Board is extremely grateful for the work undertaken by the Shire, the community and CUC staff in raising funds for student bursaries for the past few years.

"We are keen to maintain community and business support this year in the form of direct sponsorship for our student bursaries.

"This move will more closely link the local community and businesses with the students themselves and highlight the diverse careers that support regional Queensland."

Please email: [centremanager@cucbalonne.edu.au](mailto:centremanager@cucbalonne.edu.au) to be part of our student bursary sponsorship program.

**BORDER BATTLE**  
AT THE BRIDGE

STATE OF ORIGIN  
**QLD MAROONS** VS **NSW BLUES**

STATE OF ORIGIN

**CHEER FOR YOUR STATE ON TV!**

**Mungindi River Park**  
**17 June | 7:30am - 10am**

Come in your Origin colours and join us for a Free BBQ Breakfast

St George Shire Council | Balonne Shire Council | Tourism Moree | Moree Plains



# RSL Improvement Works Moving Forward

The St George RSL Sub-Branch is moving ahead with the development of the new RSL clubhouse in St George.

In early 2022, the Sub-Branch acquired the old Scouts building at 1-3 Church Street after leasing it for several years.

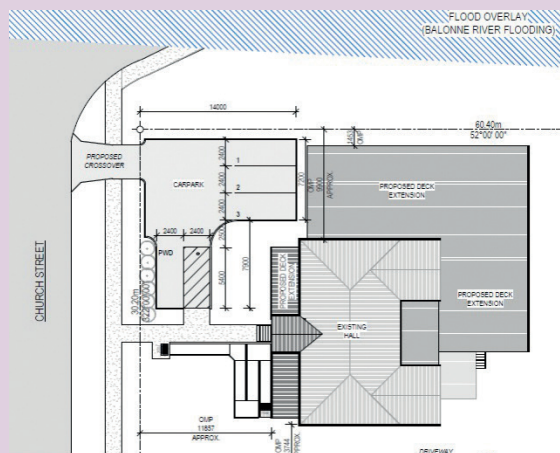
Renovations to date, through grant funding, have included new toilets, exterior painting and the installation of solar panels and electrical works.

The RSL Sub-Branch has diligently raised more than \$44,000 over the past 3 years with raffles, donations and other fundraisers to go towards further renovation of this facility.

Plans are in place for building a new deck across the front of the building with disability access, putting in a kitchen and adding a covered deck on the back and side of the building overlooking the river, as well as converting a storeroom into a memorial display room.

The Sub-Branch is calling on local veterans to join in their cause to get the extra facilities off-the-ground, which will support the welfare needs of veterans, their families and the broader community.

Anyone wanting to join the RSL Sub-Branch to help with this fund-raising can contact Terry Salmon via email [secretary@stgeorge.rslqld.net.au](mailto:secretary@stgeorge.rslqld.net.au)



# Columbarium Set to be Installed at Dirranbandi Cemetery

In line with Council's 2025/26 budget, a new columbarium is set to be installed in the Dirranbandi cemetery.

The columbarium is being constructed of maple leaf red granite with black granite plaques.

Council's Parks and Gardens Committee has identified two potential locations for the placement of the columbarium and will be sending all Dirranbandi residents a letter seeking their opinion on its final placement.

Council is planning to install similar styled columbaria to the Bollon and Thallon cemeteries over future budget cycles.

Anyone wishing to utilise a place in the columbarium can contact Council on 4620 8888.

# New Cancer Care Coordinator

Balonne Shire has a new Cancer Care Coordinator at the Goondir Health Services Jen Thornton, who has 34 years of perioperative nursing experience, time spent in private plastic surgery rooms specialising in skin cancers, and a strong background in oncology nursing.

Jen Thornton said she is honoured to take on the role of new Cancer Care Coordinator for Goondir Health Services in St George and the Southwest.

“Stepping into this position gives



me the opportunity to support our community through education, health promotion, early cancer detection, and holistic, culturally safe care”, said Ms Thornton.

“My goal is to walk beside our families, yarning about prevention, screening, and treatment in ways that make sense for our people.”



# Gamilaraay Celebrates Native Title Determination

There are six main Indigenous Peoples in the Shire of Balonne and recently the Gamilaraay people celebrated the recognition of their native title consent determination.

The celebration took place in the Thallon Town Hall, which is located around the centre of the Gamilaraay determination that extends from around Nindigully down to the border and from around Talwood in the east to around halfway between Noondoo and Thallon.

This has been years in the making and we extend our congratulations to the Gamilaraay people for receiving their native title consent determination.



## AI IN THE OUTBACK

FREE and practical online AI workshops

DIGITAL AND YOU

**Join us for**

**AI for Volunteers and Community Organisations**

Learn how to confidently use AI for everyday tasks and hobbies

**AI for Day-to-Day Practical Use**

Feel more confident exploring AI tools, understand practical everyday uses, learn how to ask better questions and gain awareness of safe and responsible AI use.

**AI for Older Australians**

A friendly introduction to using AI for everyday tasks like writing, planning and hobbies

**AI for Small Business**

Learn how to confidently use AI for everyday tasks and hobbies



No experience needed.  
Just bring yourself and a bit of curiosity.  
Bring a device if you like - not essential.

Scan the QR code to explore booking dates and times.



SCAN HERE

As all workshops are delivered virtually, check with your local library to confirm if they are screening your workshop of choice.

For more information, call St George Library on (07) 4620 8878







## CAMERATA

QUEENSLAND'S CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

LIVE IN ST GEORGE  
13 - 14 JUNE 2026

Camerata Concert  
Community Music Workshop  
Meet the Chamber Orchestra







JOIN IN  
FIND OUT MORE  
BOOK TICKETS

# Balonne's Newest Attraction – The Thallon Rail Interpretive Centre

Our Shire has a new attraction thanks to the diligent and tireless work of the Thallon Progress Association – the Thallon Rail Interpretive Centre.

On 28 March, locals and visitors were treated to a day of family fun at the Rail Centre's Grand Opening, which featured the first arrival of train passengers in 40 years, aboard the special Steam Train from Toowoomba.

The Rail Centre is contained within the old Thallon Goods Shed, which was relocated to a central town location and decked out with rail memorabilia and information stations that detail the town's historical connection to the rail industry.

Downs Steam also ran a Steam train shuttle from Thallon to Gradule on the day, which proved hugely popular, attracting over 130 passengers from the local area.

With another Steam Train journey currently open for bookings on 3-5 October 2026 and plans for six more similar journeys during 2027, this initiative signals an exciting new chapter for tourism in our Shire.

Leanne Brosnan of the Thallon Progress Association said it was a huge milestone for Thallon.

"Our town is a very proud railway town, and our Goods Shed was the perfect location to showcase this, so we moved it across town, gave it a scrub and filled it with amazing rail memorabilia and stories from the area," Mrs Brosnan said.

"It's our way of paying tribute to the region's strong rail history, which has helped the Balonne Shire prosper.

"It's been 40 years since passenger trains regularly pulled into town.

"We still have a strong freight train presence, as one of the busiest grain depots in the country, but there were plenty of locals who'd never seen a train with people on it in Thallon!

"So, it was a real thrill to host hundreds of visitors on the Steam Train trips."

Mayor Samantha O'Toole praised the Thallon Progress Association for bringing the Rail Centre to fruition.



"Tourism is such a vital industry for our Shire and Thallon really is leading the charge in turning their town into the envy of the region," Mayor O'Toole said.

"On behalf of everyone in Council and the Shire, I want to express our sincere thank you to the Thallon Progress Association for all of your efforts to bring more visitors to our Shire."

The Queensland Government's Building Bush Tourism Fund was a catalyst for the creation of the Thallon Rail Interpretive Centre.



## Bollon & Dirranbandi Sewerage Treatment Plant Upgrades

In line with Council's 2025/26 budget, Council is in the process of upgrading the sewerage treatment plants in Bollon and Dirranbandi.

These upgrades will take around 4 months to complete and will involve a refurbishment of existing facilities to improve the serviceable life of these plants.

There will not be any sewerage outages as a result of these upgrades.



**B Kinder Day**  
Monday 22 June 2026 7am - 9am  
Rotary Park | St George Terrace



Meg Kiddle - Vocals

Melissa Buchholz - Piano

TICKETS

**ST GEORGE CULTURAL CENTRE**  
**THURSDAY JUNE 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm**

Do you play an instrument or love to sing? We want to include you in our show!

Register here: [forms.gle/XptzscDNhkszkw1V6](https://forms.gle/XptzscDNhkszkw1V6)



\$15 ADULT \$10 CONCESSION \$5 SCHOOL AGE STUDENT - PARTICIPANTS FREE [WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/DLRLK](https://www.trybooking.com/DLRLK)

Mama Cass...Karen Carpenter...The Bees Gees...Michael Jackson And More

The Regional Arts Development Fund is a Queensland Government initiative through an Arts Queensland and Balonne Shire Council partnership in support of local arts and culture.





# LOCAL BUSINESS

Our Shire is abuzz with new beginnings due to a range of new businesses and business owners stepping in to enrich the region with new and improved services.

In many ways, it is a bold move to take a chance on setting up a new business or stepping into an existing enterprise and developing its next chapter and we are so thankful these businesses have chosen to do so.

As a community, we should embrace this reinvigoration and welcome our new residents with all of the support we can muster.

To celebrate Small Business Month, below is a snapshot of some of our new business owners and enterprises as a Local Business Spotlight.

## MERINO MOTOR INN

We welcome Johnno and Tam Harris as the new owners of the Merino Motor Inn in St George.

Since taking over the Merino, this dynamic duo has invested \$300,000 in upgrades to the rooms, a new grill and an exciting new attraction called 'George' the Merino sculpture who proudly stands guard at the front of the Motor Inn.

Visitors to the Motor Inn are invited and encouraged to take their picture with 'George' and thankfully he hasn't endured the same emasculating experience of his distant cousins, the Rockhampton Bulls, as his ramhood remains intact!

Welcome to the Shire Johnno and Tam and thank you for choosing to establish yourselves and your family in the region to reinvigorate the much-loved Merino Motor Inn and for bringing George into our lives.



## DIRRANBANDI FOODWORKS

New Dirranbandi Foodworks Store Manager, Mohammed Awais is looking to build on the store's legacy of service with a smile to Dirranbandi.

Originally from Pakistan, for 16 years, Mohammed has called Australia home with stops in NSW, WA, Brisbane and now Dirranbandi.

The new owners have further invested in Dirranbandi by purchasing the building next to Foodworks (formerly The Linen Cupboard) with relocation plans and repurposing of the store into a supermarket with a fresh new look in the coming months.



## THE OLD NEWSAGENT



When news of the old Newsagency being redeveloped started filtering through town, no one could've imagined it was going to be replaced by a hip new Barber shop, Café and Gelato store with a range of happening merch.

In a nod to the previous newsagent, the new establishment has taken on the name of 'The Old Newsagent' and held a grand opening on 11 April to the beats of a live band, food and free cuts.

Before moving to the Shire, owner Jamie Brady was a Social Worker and has combined this with his haircutting skills to support the local community.

"When someone's in your chair, they're more willing to open up and it's a more relatable way to help guide them along the different pathways of what they're going through," said Jamie.

Welcome to the Shire to Jamie and his family and thank you for bringing this new and exciting service to our Shire (especially the Gelato!)

# SPOTLIGHT

## THALLON CAFÉ

### NEW BAKERY - ST GEORGE

When the St George Bakery closed its doors at the end of 2024, it left a gaping hole in the town of St George with many locals and visitors alike lamenting at the lack of access to a good meat pie!

Since the bakery's closure, hope has risen again like a warm dough amongst locals at the news that two local heroes and Foodworks owner's Kym Webster and Cheryl Brimblecombe will be opening a new bakery in town.

Kym said it was something the town really needed and we were waiting for someone to step in and do something but that didn't come so we thought we'd better do something ourselves.

This is a new and exciting chapter in pastry delicacies, set to tantalise the taste buds of visitors and locals.

Thank you to Cheryl and Kym for stepping in and filling the void that was left with the closure of the bakery – we are all looking forward to trying your pastry creations when the new bakery opens before the middle of 2026.



Thallon Café has a new owner who runs the business under the ethos that people will be greeted with a welcoming smile, genuine country town hospitality and the odd story or two.

The Café supplies to the locals and tourists, peaking during the harvest season with its famous hamburgers and steak sandwiches – and we suggest you go in hungry as the serving sizes are very generous!

Donna took over the business in October 2025 after previous owners continued to add to the business and building since 2019.

There are plans underway to further upgrade the building with new air conditioning, insulation and lighting to improve energy efficiency and Donna is looking for some tradies to help her out with the installation.

Welcome to the Shire Donna. Your hospitality is an asset to Thallon and the broader region.



### KAMAROOKA TOURIST PARK

The new leaseholders of the Kamarooka Tourist Park, John and Sharron Brotherhood have hit the ground running and are expanding into a range of other local enterprises and services.

Since arriving in the Shire, this power couple have taken on the baggage and flight services at the St George Aerodrome for Rex Airlines and are looking to launch a new car hire service in St George.

These new additions are on top of the past developments at Kamarooka that include a dog wash, Café, Laundry and the installation of energy efficiency for the cabins

Welcome to the Shire John and Sharron, we'd say we're looking forward to maybe seeing you around the traps, but with all you have going on, there is no doubt we'll be seeing you everywhere.



### NEW CREATION ART GALLERY

Visual Arts and crafts are a cornerstone of rural and regional life and Tjalara Draper and Sue Anderson have captured the essence of this pastime with the opening of the New Creations Art Gallery.

The Gallery showcases painting and other artwork from local artisans and is open to the public to browse and purchase.

It has also brought into fruition a regular calendar of fun and informative art courses and activities and introduced the new world of 3D printing to the Shire.

Thank you to Tjalara and Sue for bringing this new Gallery into our region to provide an additional attraction to visitors and locals alike.



### Balonne Backing Our Small Businesses



## FREE Business Support Services

Resources, Events & More



# Support For Local Businesses

ecoBiz coach Andrew Chamberlin has been helping Queensland businesses reduce their electricity costs for more than 20 years and is returning to Balonne on 25-27 May to support our local businesses.

Andrew notes that there are a range of actions from minimal cost to higher cost that businesses can implement to reduce their electricity use.

“Businesses should review their energy bills and determine the most optimal tariff for their business,” said Mr Chamberlin.



“We can also assist with all of this at no cost to Balonne businesses producing a report highlighting these actions to implement.”

If anyone is interested in having an ecoBiz coaching at their business,

please contact Council’s Economic Development Manager, Garnet Radford on 0418 168 824 or [garnet.radford@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:garnet.radford@balonne.qld.gov.au) for information and registration.

**CAREER & JOB EXPO**  
ST GEORGE & SURROUNDS  
20 May 2026  
7:30AM Breakfast | 8:00AM Open | 2:00PM Close  
St Patrick's School Hall, 36-44 Balonne Street

**LANDHOLDER CONSULTATION SURVEY**  
Balonne Shire Biosecurity Plan  
Balonne Shire Stock Route Management Plan  
TAKE THE SURVEY HERE  
Balonne Shire Council is inviting landholders and community members to share feedback on the Biosecurity Plan 2026-2031 and the Stock Route Management Plan for 2026-2031.  
Your input will help guide how pest plants and animals are managed, and how stock routes are used and maintained over the next five years.  
The survey is anonymous and closes at 5:00pm, on Wednesday 27 May 2026.  
You can view the draft plans by visiting the, Have Your Say page on Council’s website.

STUDENT SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS | STUDENT DINNER | BOOKSHOP  
SOMERSET **Storyfest** SOUTH WEST  
31 August to 02 September 2026  
MEET AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS | ADULT AUTHOR PANEL  
SCAN FOR STORYFEST SOUTH WEST UPDATES

HELP US WRITE THE NEXT CHAPTER | OUR FIFTH ANNUAL GIVING DAY  
Storyfest **givingday**  
SAVE THE DATE  
11 JUNE 2026  
OUR IMPACT, SINCE 2022  
905 events delivered  
120,000 young people impacted  
433 schools reached  
Imagine what we can achieve in the next five years!  
help us. #fundourfuture

# Council's Parks & Gardens Team Proud of Show Win



Council's Parks & Garden's team showed why they take such pride in our local parks with two entries in the flower display at the St George Show.

To their delight, the entries were given First and Second Place in their specific categories with one Yellow Rose and a container of Bougainvillea.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole said how privileged we are as a Shire to have a Parks and Gardens team in Council that takes such pride in their work.

"I know the team does such a great job at taking care of our public park and gardens and they truly do deserve their accolades," said Mayor O'Toole.

"Congratulation to them on their First and Second Places at the Show."

## Official Opening DES STEVENSON FOUNTAIN

DIRANBANDI RAIL & RIVER PARK

JUNE  
MONDAY **15** AT 5:00PM  
2026



## COMMUNITY FLOOD STUDIES CONSULTATION

**2 JUN** BOLLON  
Walter Austin Park  
3pm - 5pm

**3 JUN** MUNGINDI  
Barwon River Park  
10am - 12noon

**3 JUN** THALLON  
Town Park  
1pm - 2:30pm



## HAVE YOUR SAY: Shape Queensland's energy future

Now's your chance to influence what comes next



Part of Energy Queensland



Regional Development Australia (RDA) Queensland has partnered with Ergon Energy Network and Energex to understand the energy needs and key challenges for Queensland business owners and operators.

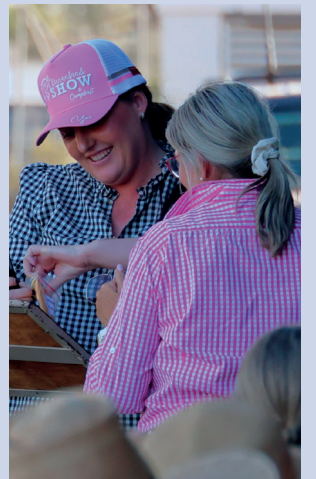
The 'Your Business, Your Energy' survey seeks to understand your business's energy requirements for your business activities to help build a clearer picture of the energy issues and opportunities that matter most for businesses across Queensland. To share your insights, current and future energy needs and reliability of supply and usage, scan the QR code.

# Out and About in Balonne

*Thallon Rail Centre - Grand Opening*



# Dirranbandi Show



# FUN AND FITNESS IN BALONNE

## ST GEORGE SQUASH

Social comps held 6pm every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday during the school term. Grading has already occurred this term, but you can contact the club on the below if you'd like to get involved.

Open to anyone. Beginners Welcome! Courts available to hire \$12.50/hr.

Email – stgeorgesquash@outlook.com or on Facebook @ stgeorgesquashclub



To redeem a Come & Try membership valid for 4 weeks, visit [swimcentral.swimming.org.au](http://swimcentral.swimming.org.au)

All registrations are now done online by visiting the same link.

For more information, visit their Facebook Page @ stgeorgeswimmingclub



## BOXING

Sign up to be a member of In the Box Boxing Club! Work on your fitness or prepare for fights.

Training for Juniors - Mon & Wed 5:30pm - 6:00pm  
Training for Seniors - Mon & Wed 6:00pm - 7:00pm

For more information, contact Lisa Anderson - 0418 154 104



## ST GEORGE HASH HOUSE HARRIERS – SOCIAL RUNNING GROUP

Enjoy a social run or walk every Thursday evening! The group leaves from The Terrace in front of The Australian Hotel at 6:00pm on Thursdays for a 5km run or a 3km walk, this is not a timed event.

For more information, contact Peter - 0428 258 601



## GROUP TRAINING SESSIONS

Optimal Training group provides training sessions to improve your health and fitness on Mondays at 5pm, Tuesdays at 5:30pm, and Thursdays at 5pm at the Amphitheatre, St George.

Dates & Times can be subject to change, so check Facebook for updates.

For more information, contact Deanne - 0407 720 327



## LET'S DANCE – ST GEORGE COMMUNITY WELLBEING CENTRE

Every Friday night 6pm to 7:30pm at the Community Wellbeing Centre.

Free Entry – Gold coin donation for refreshments

Want to learn a few new dance moves? Come join us!

We are a group of people who want to learn various types of dances for fun! To find out what kind of dance we are currently teaching or for further information, visit our Facebook page at "Let's Dance St George"



## INSPIRED FITNESS WITH TJ

Inspired Fitness runs group training sessions. On Tuesdays at 6:15am, Pilates, then at 8:45am, Pilates with Mums & Bubs. On Thursdays at 6:15am, Tone Class, and on Fridays at 6:15am, Pilates Online at St Patrick's Church Hall on Balonne Street.

For PT inquiries and more information, contact Tori - 0447 080 872



## ST GEORGE CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Join the action at Rowden Park! Training runs every Wednesday from 5–7pm, and games kick off Saturdays at 9:30am - everyone's welcome to get involved!



## ST GEORGE AQUATIC CENTRE

Winter Hours: Tuesday to Sunday 11-4 Thermal Pool only

50 metre pool closed

For more information call 0400 633 519



## BERRY PILATES

Berry Pilates is a boutique studio in St George offering expert-led Mat and Reformer classes.

Small, supportive sessions follow classical Pilates with a modern approach to build strength and flexibility. Classes suit all levels, with movements tailored to individual needs.

Group classes run most Mondays to Saturdays, with private one on one sessions also available.

For bookings or info, contact [lauren@berrypilates.com.au](mailto:lauren@berrypilates.com.au), follow @ berrypilates.stg, or visit [www.berrypilates.com.au](http://www.berrypilates.com.au).



## PARKRUN

Do you love a social run to get in shape? Parkrun is free and held each Saturday morning at 7am along the St George foreshore, leaving from the boat ramp at the Western end of St George's Terrace.

For more information, visit [www.parkrun.com.au/stgeorge](http://www.parkrun.com.au/stgeorge)



## ST GEORGE GOLF CLUB

Enjoy a swing of Golf anytime at the St George Golf Club.

Regarded as one of the best sand greens courses in SWQ – why wouldn't you spend a day there?

For more information, contact Tom (0427 730 984) or Penny (0427 250 072)



## ST GEORGE SWIMMING CLUB

Catering for beginner to competitive swimmers, with a focus on personal improvement, for those aged from 5 years to adult. Season runs Term 4 & Term 1 (when the pool is open). Mid-season is now.

If you have a **FITNESS PROGRAM** or **CLUB** in the Shire that you would like posted here, please send the details to: [media@balonne.qld.gov.au](mailto:media@balonne.qld.gov.au)



# Roadworks UPDATE

## COMPLETED ROADS THROUGH MARCH AND APRIL:

### Unsealed Roads

- Ramalis Road
- Jaklewar-Goodooga Road North
- Eumerella South Road
- Runnymede Rd
- Satur Rd
- Thompsons Rd
- Cubbie Rd

### Sealed roads

- Bollon-Dirranbandi Road
- Bundoran Road
- Fernlee Road
- Hebel-Goodooga Road
- Jakelwar-Goodooga Road North
- Noondoo-Mungindi Road
- Noondoo-Thallon Road
- Nulky Road
- Talwood-Mungindi Road
- Thallon-Daymar Road
- Wanganui Lane

## WORKS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY:

### Kulki Rd

- Expected completion: early-May.
- Construction is ongoing, one crew working.
- Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.

### Koomalah Rd

- Expected completion: early-May.
- Construction is ongoing, one crew working.
- Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.

### Jakelwar-Goodooga Rd South

- Expected completion: end-September.
- Construction is ongoing, one crew working.
- Expected traffic delays less than 5 minutes.

## UPCOMING WORKS IN MAY:

- Wagoo Rd: early-May
- North Kulki Rd: early-May
- Cashel Vale Rd: mid-May
- Commissioners Point Rd: end-May
- Minnum Rd: early-May
- Booligar Rd: mid-May
- Middle Rd: early-May
- Unity Rd: end-May



CUBBIE RD



HEBEL-GOODOOGA RD



KOOMALAH RD



KULKI RD



RUNNYMEDE RD



SATUR RD

Balonne Backing Our Small Businesses

Join us for

# NETWORKING NIGHT

BUY YOUR TICKET HERE

Riversands Winery 6pm - 8pm
 Tuesday 19 May
 Welcome Drink Canapes

Connecting our **Careers Expo Exhibitors** with **Balonne businesses** and community to unlock **new opportunities** for everyone.

An informal evening of meaningful connections.

**CAREER & JOB EXPO** **GUEST SPEAKER**

How local businesses can access government and major project work; A practical approach to be **READY, VISIBLE & COMPETITIVE.**

Thomas Pollock  
Owner - Gov Ready

This Queensland Small Business Month event is proudly supported by the Queensland Government.

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND

# St George Region SCAVENGER HUNT

SOMETHING BIG IS COMING & YOU'LL BE

# Hooked

# Balonne Shire Job Opportunities

May 2026

Centre Manager CUC Balonne St George	<p><b>CUC BALONNE</b> Full Time \$90 - \$120k / annum Seeking an exceptional Centre Manager to oversee the operations of the Country Universities Centre Balonne in St George and Dirranbandi. You will play a pivotal role in supporting students and driving the strategic objectives of the CUC, along with managing the facilities, resources and technology. Apply on Seek</p>	Environmental Service Worker St George	<p><b>CHURCHES OF CHRIST WARRAREE AGED CARE</b> Permanent Part Time A hands-on role to help create a clean, safe and welcoming environment for our residents. Previous experience in cleaning, catering, hospitality or laundry services (aged care experience desirable), good communication skills and a respectful approach with residents and colleagues. Shifts across day, afternoon and night. Apply on Seek</p>
Technical Agronomist - Cotton St George	<p><b>RIMFIRE RESOURCES</b> Deliver high quality variety trials in the region Cotton agronomy Field trial program - research and development Location - St George region (SW Qld) View job listing on <a href="http://rimfireresources.com.au">rimfireresources.com.au</a> or call Al Kellaway at Rimfire Resources on 1300 380 701</p>	Registered Nurse St George	<p><b>CHURCHES OF CHRIST WARRAREE AGED CARE</b> Permanent Part Time You will deliver safe, high quality, person centred care, provide clinical guidance and support to care staff. You are instrumental in maintaining clinical standards, managing medication administration and clinical documentation and conducting baseline and focused clinical assessments. Apply on Seek</p>
Cook/Chef St George	<p><b>MERINO MOTOR INN</b> Looking for a passionate cook / chef to join a locally owned growing motel and restaurant. If you love creating delicious meals and bringing great food to life, we want to hear from you. Potential for opportunities to grow into other roles across the business from kitchen leadership to broader hospitality management. We offer competitive pay, flexible hours and supportive team environment. Apply by email: <a href="mailto:bookings@merinomotorinn.com.au">bookings@merinomotorinn.com.au</a> or drop in to introduce yourself!</p>	Home Care Worker St George	<p><b>ANGLICARE</b> Contract Temporary You will offer essential assistance to clients, aiding them in daily tasks to maintain independence and comfort at home. Responsibilities include personal care, medication assistance, transportation, domestic duties, and assisting clients to meet social needs. Driver's licence and own vehicle required. Apply on Seek</p>
Early Childhood Educators St George	<p><b>NCC EARLY LEARNERS</b> Part Time Full Time Supporting the room Lead Educator in the development and delivery of the learning program as per the Early Years Learning Framework and service philosophy. Flexible working hours and ongoing opportunities for professional development. Certificate 3 in Early Childhood or Diploma and a current Blue Card/ Working With Children check. Apply via email: <a href="mailto:roslyn.coaker@ncc.qld.edu.au">roslyn.coaker@ncc.qld.edu.au</a></p>	Administration Officer St George	<p><b>SOUTH WEST HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE</b> Casual / Vacation To provide a high standard of administrative support to the different functional areas within the St George Hospital. This is an opportunity to leapfrog your career as we can offer experience in a wider scope of practice. Apply on Seek</p>
Dairy Department Supervisor St George	<p><b>CORNETTS IGA</b> Contract Temporary until September 2026 Looking for a highly motivated, passionate retail leader for our St George store to cover maternity relief. This is a hands-on role requiring physical work. Previous supervisory experience and working in a Fresh department is desirable. A rotational roster which may include nights, weekends and public holidays. Apply on Seek</p>		<p><b>SOUTH WEST HOSPITAL &amp; HEALTH SERVICE</b> Recreational Officer   Dirranbandi Permanent Part Time Design, implement and evaluate a variety of recreational, diversional and social activities to improve or maintain the physical and mental function of the residents. Apply on Jora GP - Emergency Medicine / SMO   Dirranbandi \$2,500 / day Locum cover required for 10 June - 17 October and 13 December ongoing. Travel and accommodation included. Apply on Jora GP Visiting Medical Officer   Dirranbandi \$2,500 / day Working at the GP Clinic Monday to Friday with shared on call for the hospital. Dates in July, September, October and 13 December ongoing to 2027. Flights, car and accommodation. Apply on Jora</p>
Office Administration St George	<p><b>DEPENDABLES PANEL WORKS</b> Part Time (about 18 hours / week) Local family-owned panel shop is looking for a friendly, reliable and trustworthy administration officer to join our team. Answering telephones, booking jobs, liaison with customers, typing up quotes and invoicing, and general office duties. Apply on email: <a href="mailto:admin@dpanelw.com.au">admin@dpanelw.com.au</a>, Fiona M: 0427 255 504</p>		<p><b>ABS GOVERNMENT CENSUS 2026</b> On Tuesday 11 August 2026 everyone in Australia must be counted.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Engagement Officers</li> <li>Field Manager</li> <li>Mobile Field Representative</li> <li>Field Officer</li> <li>Community Field Officer</li> </ul>           Apply at: <a href="http://census.abs.gov.au/jobs">census.abs.gov.au/jobs</a></p>
Housekeeping St George	<p><b>PELICAN REST</b> Casual Looking for a housekeeper who is dedicated to cleanliness and outstanding customer service to become part of our friendly team. On the job training available. Apply via email: <a href="mailto:stay@pelicanrest.com.au">stay@pelicanrest.com.au</a></p>		
Allied Health Assistant St George	<p><b>VITAL HEALTH</b> Casual / Part Time (3 days / week; option to transition to full time) Seeking a motivated and compassionate individual to work under allied health clinicians to deliver tailored programs that support health, wellbeing, and independence across a diverse range of clients. Full training and ongoing upskilling provided and experience in health, aged care, support work or working with children is highly regarded. EOI Applications via email: <a href="mailto:stgeorge@vitalhealthqld.com.au">stgeorge@vitalhealthqld.com.au</a></p>		



For more information  
on local jobs  
SCAN THIS  
QR CODE



If you have a position you would like placed in this section, please contact Balonne Shire Council's Workforce Development Officer: Robyn on 4620 8839 or 0456 644 203.

This Balonne Shire Council initiative is proudly supported by the Queensland Government through its Growing Workforce Participation Fund.