

# BUSINESS & INDUSTRY



## Happy New Year!

We hope you had an enjoyable festive season with your family and friends.

This month, we welcome Alex Henley back to the Economic Development and Tourism Team and we say farewell to Ashley Gray as she wraps up her time with Kempsey Shire Council.

Since joining Council's Economic Development and Tourism Team in 2021, Ash has been instrumental in driving opportunities and attracting events that have boosted tourism and supported local businesses. We can't wait to see the remarkable contributions she will make in her new role.



## Catch up on the Vibrancy Reforms

The NSW Government's Vibrancy Reforms are designed to support and enhance the state's night-time economy by simplifying noise regulations, easing event hosting rules, supporting outdoor activities, updating the liquor licensing system, and more!

These changes are already underway and will continue to improve the NSW night-time economy, with the goal of making it world-class. Regional centres across the state have a great opportunity to leverage these reforms with changes to sound and licensing regulations and the removal of certain Development Application (DA) conditions.

If this sounds like something your venue or business could benefit from, make sure you stay informed or reach out to us for more information.

[Learn more about the Vibrancy Reforms](#)

## Changes for businesses from 1 January 2025

As 2025 begins, there are some changes that your business should be aware of.

These include:

- Criminalising intentional wage underpayments
- Changes to entry-level classifications in awards
- Engineered stone importation ban

[See the changes](#)



## Gift card program launches in Kempsey

**It's not too late to join the Kempsey Cash gift card program.**

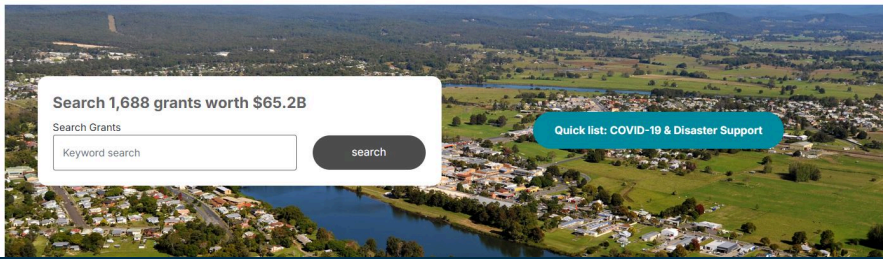
The Kempsey CBD Activation Group has launched Kempsey Cash, an exciting program to support local businesses and keep money in the community.

With Kempsey Cash, customers can purchase gift cards valued from \$10 to \$500 and use them at over 40 participating stores across Kempsey. Gift cards can be purchased at 6 Cats Arts & Crafts, Dee-Amber Rural, Echo Voice & Data, Macleay Valley Gems and Mahogany Collective, and the program is looking to grow!

If you'd like your business to become a stockist or accept Kempsey Cash, contact Tara at [hello@kempseycash.com](mailto:hello@kempseycash.com) today.

Please note this program is only available to businesses in Kempsey including West Kempsey, South Kempsey and East Kempsey.

[Learn more about Kempsey Cash](#)



## Macleay Grant Hub

Macleay Grant Hub is a free resource available to all local businesses, community groups, not-for-profits and individuals. This site provides a comprehensive list of grant and funding opportunities available to you.

Register to receive email alerts for new grants, save your favourites and access tips to help you apply for grants.

[Register for Macleay Grant Hub](#)



## Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program

The NSW Government is continuing work to ensure regional communities thrive, with \$50 million in grants becoming available for initiatives that promote regional economic development and support employment creation and retention. The second round of funding covers four key focus areas:

- Sustainable regional industries
- Aboriginal economic development and enterprise
- Community connection and capacity building
- Improving regional service delivery

### Examples of projects include:

- Tourism infrastructure which will generate regional tourism impact, for example, major nature-based tourism infrastructure, large scale event precincts and Aboriginal cultural centres.
- Investment in capital works programs for existing businesses to generate employment growth.

- Initiatives to support the attraction and retention of key workers into regional NSW.
- Tailored workforce skills development programs to support new and emerging industries including Aboriginal enterprises.

Applications close 20 February 2025.

[Find out more about this funding](#)

## More funding opportunities

### **DRIVEN Charger Rebate Stream**

The DRIVEN Charger Rebate Stream gives EV dealerships and repairers a rebate to assist in the funding of purchasing and installing eligible smart EV chargers on their sites.

[Learn more](#)

### **\$1,000 SafeWork rebate**

If you are a small business owner in NSW, this \$1,000 rebate will help you purchase safety items to improve work health and safety for you and your workers. Get in touch with us for assistance.

[Learn more](#)



### **Scholarship available for CSU students**

Kempsey Shire Council is offering a \$5,000 scholarship to both commencing and current students studying at Charles Sturt University's Port Macquarie campus, whether online or on-campus.

This scholarship is designed to support students in their university studies and career goals, while also helping to develop and grow the local community.

Students must reside in the Kempsey Shire Council local government area.

[Find out more about this scholarship](#)



## Tenders and EOIs

Council has the following Tenders and Expressions of Interest (EOIs) open.

### Management Lease and Operation of Kempsey and South West Rocks Swimming Pool/s

Closes Tuesday 28 January 2025.

### Design and Construction of Settlers Way Water Booster Pump Station

Closes Tuesday 4 February 2025.

[Find out more](#)



## Connect with your Local Business Chamber

[Macleay Valley Business Chamber](#)

[South West Rocks Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Macleay Valley Business Women's Network](#)



## Lessons learned in 2024

As the new year begins, take some time to reflect on everything you've learned in 2024.

Here are the key takeaways from 2024, as highlighted by [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au).

[Find out more](#)



## Service NSW Business Bureau

The Service NSW Business Bureau provides free, ongoing and personalised support for every stage of your business.

To learn more and speak with our local Business Concierge, please visit [Business Concierge service](#)

If you have any questions, please contact our Economic Development Team at [business@kempsey.nsw.gov.au](mailto:business@kempsey.nsw.gov.au)



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