



Australia Day celebrations in the Longreach Region



Australia Day was proudly celebrated across the Longreach Region, with festivities held in each town and strong community participation throughout the day.

A range of events - including award and citizenship ceremonies, cricket matches, pool activities, community games, and complimentary seniors' lunches - created a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere.

The theme "Reflect, Respect, Celebrate" set the tone for the day, with residents and visitors coming together to acknowledge Australia's history, recognise shared values, and celebrate community spirit.

At the Citizenship Ceremony, the region warmly welcomed three new Australian citizens: Dr Katherine Lynch, David O'Brien, and Claire Bartley who now proudly call the Longreach Region home.

The Australia Day Awards recognised outstanding individuals and groups who make a meaningful difference in their communities. This year, the Australia Day Awards have been reviewed and refreshed. The awards are now presented across two levels: Regional and Local.

The Regional Awards include Citizen of the Year, Senior Achievement, and Junior Achievement. Nominations for these categories are drawn from across all four towns and are assessed together.

We have also introduced two new Local Awards: Local Legend - Individual and Local Legend - Organisation. These awards recognise outstanding contributions within each individual town and are assessed locally.

The 2026 award recipients were:

- ◆ Citizen of the Year: Liz Turner
- ◆ Senior Achievement of the Year: Tommy Littlewood (Isisford)
- ◆ Junior Achievement of the Year: Xander Flanagan (Longreach)
- ◆ Local Legend - Longreach: Ben Palmer
- ◆ Local Legend - Ilfracombe: Mark Tysoe
- ◆ Local Legend - Isisford/Yaraka: Bob and Kathy Long
- ◆ Local Legend - Organisation: Longreach Junior Rugby League - Matt Scott
Outback Shield Rugby League Carnival

Congratulations are extended to all award recipients and nominees. The Longreach Region is fortunate to have communities filled with dedicated individuals and organisations whose efforts continue to make a positive and lasting impact.



I to r: Mayor Tony Rayner, Citizen of the Year - Liz Turner, Junior Achievement of the Year - Xander Flanagan, Local Legend Individual (Longreach) - Ben Palmer and Australia Day Ambassador - Jodie Browning.



I to r: Mayor Tony Rayner with our newest Australian citizens - Claire Bartley, Dr Katherine Lynch and David O'Brien.



I to r: Local Legend Individual (Ilfracombe) - Mark Tysoe and Cr Nikki Gay.



I to r: Local Legend (Isisford/Yaraka) - Kathy & Bob Long (Yaraka) with Cr Dale Bignell



I to r: Cr Dale Bignell with Senior Achievement of the Year - Tommy Littlewood (Isisford)



Rayner's *Rundown* - with Mayor Tony Rayner

I trust everyone had a good Christmas and New Years break, whether you stayed in our region or went elsewhere.

I know many locals will be returning now having gone away for the holiday season. It's good to welcome everyone back, and we look forward to another great year in our region. This is also a time of year when many new locals arrive to take up jobs and begin their lives in our community - to them I also extend a warm welcome.

Of course, we spare a thought for our neighbours in Winton and the North-West, who have been impacted by flooding. Primary producers have been hard hit, and early counts suggest significant livestock losses across northwest Queensland, and damage to fencing and private roads is widespread in that area. There's been good state and federal support announced, and as ever, we stand ready to support recovery efforts across the region.

Congratulations to everyone who received an Australia Day Award this year. I'd also like to thank everyone who took the time to nominate someone for an Australia Day Award. We rely entirely on nominations from the community,

and it's always a busy time of year when we're calling for them, so we appreciate those that took the time to complete a nomination.

Australia Day saw free pool entry and activities right across the region. Longreach enjoyed a bumper morning in the Civic Centre with a Citizenship Ceremony, followed by an address from local ambassador Jodie Browning, then the presentation of the Australia Day Awards. This was followed by a free BBQ breakfast for the community. The Longreach Aquatic Centre also had fun activities for the whole family and a sausage sizzle for lunch.

Isisford started the day with a free community breakfast, followed by their awards ceremony. Afterwards the community enjoyed fun activities at the pool including a water slide.

Ilfracombe enjoyed free pool entry in the morning, followed by their traditional cricket starting at 3pm. Later in the evening Ilfracombe had its awards ceremony, during the innings break, and a free BBQ dinner.

The free BBQ dinner and pool activities in Yaraka also proved popular, as did our free seniors' lunches in Ilfracombe,

Isisford, and Longreach. Thank you to everyone who made these activities across the region possible.

Council met for its first ordinary meeting of the year in Longreach. As always, the minutes and agenda are posted on our website and we give a brief rundown in each edition of our newsletter. Council's ordinary meetings are open to the public, so if you're curious and want to see how Council makes its decisions, why not come along to one and see for yourself?

My thanks again to everyone across the region who continues to work together, support one another, and keep us moving forward with purpose.

As always, I'm here to answer your questions or share more about what Council is doing. My contact details are available at longreach.qld.gov.au/elected-members. Alternatively, reach out to Council on (07) 4658 4111 or via email to council@longreach.qld.gov.au.



Minutes in a Minute

January 2026 Council Meeting

Council met for its Ordinary Meeting at the Council Chambers in Longreach on 22 January. Among other matters, the meeting:

- ◇ Received reports from the Mayor and CEO;
- ◇ Adopted an official position against the declaration of Buffel Grass as a Weed of National Significance;
- ◇ Approved a Siting Variation for the construction of a shed;
- ◇ Awarded funding to Round 1 recipients of Council's Small Business Friendly Grant;
- ◇ Received monthly financial reports; and,
- ◇ Received various Director reports, including a Project Management update

Our monthly Council meetings are always open to the public, and you can find the full agenda and minutes online at: longreach.qld.gov.au/meetings-agendas-minutes.

CRRO community initiative

The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety has provided funding to Longreach Regional Council to employ a Community Recovery and Resilience Officer (CRRO) until the 31st of March 2027.

The CRRO will work at the community level in addressing the immediate to medium/long-term needs of the event impacted communities to ensure a locally informed response and long-term sustainability.

The CRRO initiative is part of a Community Health and Wellbeing package and will support long-term recovery and resilience of disaster affected communities following the Western Queensland Surface Trough and Associated Rainfall and Flooding, 21 March - 19 May 2025. Craig Neuendorf has been appointed to this position.



Keep Our Town Neat & Tidy Initiative 2026

Council is committed to maintaining a clean, safe, and attractive environment for all residents. The Regulatory Services Department will be running the "Keep Our Town Neat & Tidy" initiative from 7th January to 30th March 2026.

Things to remember

Amenities, unsightly properties & accumulation of material and unsightly property may include:

- ◇ Excessive rubbish, scrap metal, old machinery, or discarded household items.
- ◇ Conditions that attract pests or create health hazard, and public safety.
- ◇ Broken down or discarded vehicles, uncontained building materials.

Your Responsibilities

- ◇ Store good materials neatly and safely off the ground.
- ◇ Dispose of waste, rubbish or material at approved facilities.
- ◇ Remove discarded household items and objects in disrepair.
- ◇ Maintain property to community standards.
- ◇ Remove stored materials from Council - controlled areas (e.g. nature strips, alleys or laneways).

From 31 March 2026. Regulatory Service Officers will commence compliance checks. Breaches may result in notices, impounding of items posing safety risks, and cost recovery for clean - up services under Local Law No.1

For more information, please contact Longreach Regional Council Regulatory Services Team on 4658 4111 or, visit our website www.longreach.qld.gov.au

Council Adopts 2023-24 Annual Report

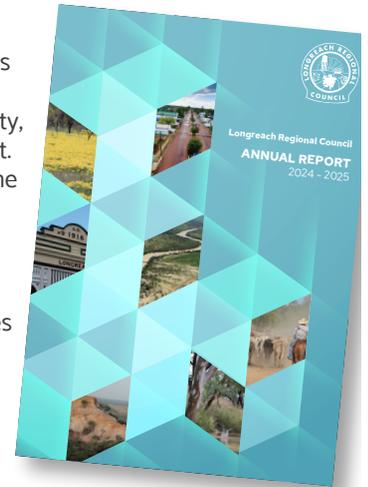
At its November meeting last year, Council formally adopted its 2024-25 Annual Report, providing an overview of the year's achievements, challenges, and financial performance. The report reflects Council's commitment to transparency and celebrates progress across the region.

The Annual Report highlights our focus on sustainable growth, financial responsibility, and community engagement. Key achievements include the completion of infrastructure projects and enhancements to community liveability.

We know that sound finances and governance mean better services and a more secure future for everyone in Ilfracombe, Isisford, Longreach, and Yaraka.

The Annual Report outlines operational achievements aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028, emphasising collaboration and advocacy to meet community need.

The 2024-25 Annual Report is available on Council's website and at Customer Service Centres in Longreach, Ilfracombe, and Isisford. For more information, visit longreach.qld.gov.au/strategy or contact us directly.



Digital Water Meter Longreach update

Stage 1 of Digital Water Meter installations was completed early December 2025 (800 new meters in the ground)



It's always a good time for water conservation!

The Thomson River is full, and what better time to start tracking your water consumption and being water wise. With over 100 customers already signed up to the Council's Water Portal you can:

- Monitor your water consumption.
- Receive early leak detection alerts.
- Get notifications for unusually high usage.

Haven't had your water meter upgraded yet?

No worries, check out our water wise tips by scanning the QR code.



For assistance, please call council on 4658 4111.

Sign up now and control your water usage!
waterportal.longreach.qld.gov.au

The impact of real time data!

Access to timely data is empowering our community to keep on top of leaks; preventing property damage, excess water charges and wasted water. Here are some leak causes that customers have reported back to us.

- Faulty evaporative cooler float
- Leaking taps
- Leaking toilets
- Irrigation leaks
- Hot water system plumbing

Fun facts: (Totals recorded since October 2025)

156 Number of leaks

40 Leaks fixed by customers

9,127,000 litres
 Volume of water lost to leaks

Water lost from the date a leak was identified until the date it was fixed, including properties with unresolved leaks.

Data as at 19 January 2026.

This National Water Grid project is funded by the Australian and Queensland governments and delivered in partnership with Longreach Regional Council.

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland Government



25/26

Projects in Focus



◆ Longreach Showgrounds Accessibility Improvements

Council has now completed the new accessible car park for the Longreach Showgrounds on Sandpiper Street. The project included sealed accessible parking bays, new footpaths, and improved lighting to make access safer and easier for everyone.

Thanks to the community for your patience while these works were underway.



AMBER JOY POULTON & THE HOLY TWO PRESENT HONKY TONK QUEENS



PATSY CLINE | EMMYLOU HARRIS
LORETTA LYNN | LINDA RONSTADT
TAMMY WYNETTE | DOLLY PARTON & MORE

LONGREACH CIVIC CENTRE

SATURDAY, 21ST FEB

6:00PM | \$10 CASH ONLY



Longreach Regional Council
Ilfracombe Isisford Longreach Yaraka

AUSSIE DAY QUIZ

1. ON WHAT DATE IS AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATED EACH YEAR?

- A) January 20
- B) January 26
- C) February 1
- D) January 10

2. WHAT EVENT DOES AUSTRALIA DAY MARK?

- A) Federation of Australia
- B) Arrival of the First Fleet
- C) Opening of Parliament House
- D) Captain Cook landing at Botany Bay

5. WHICH TWO ANIMALS APPEAR ON AUSTRALIA'S COAT OF ARMS?

- A) Koala & Wombat
- B) Kangaroo & Emu
- C) Platypus & Echidna
- D) Kookaburra & Dingo

3. WHAT IS THE CAPITAL CITY OF AUSTRALIA?

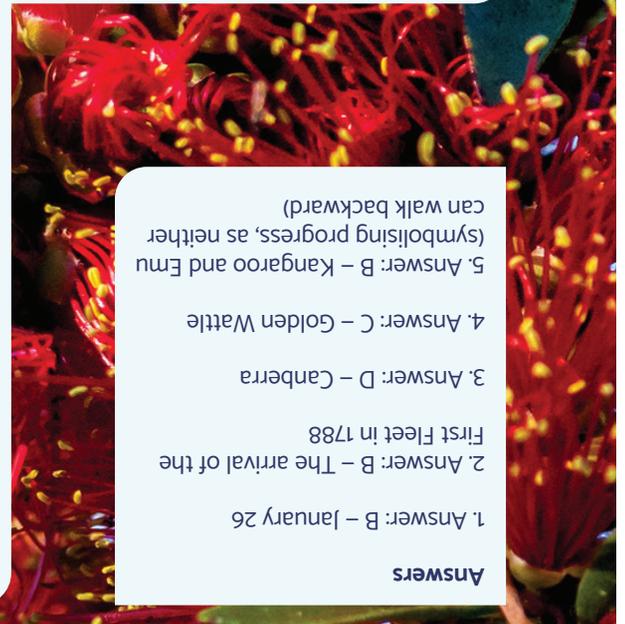
- A) Sydney
- B) Brisbane
- C) Melbourne
- D) Canberra

4. WHAT IS AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL FLORAL EMBLEM?

- A) Waratah
- B) Sturt's Desert Pea
- C) Golden Wattle
- D) Kangaroo Paw

Answers

1. Answer: B – January 26
 2. Answer: B – The arrival of the First Fleet in 1788
 3. Answer: D – Canberra
 4. Answer: C – Golden Wattle
 5. Answer: B – Kangaroo and Emu (symbolising progress, as neither can walk backward)



Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

