

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More Locals Given a Fresh Start in Warren Shire

Warren Shire Council welcomes new trainee as more opportunities open for early 2026

Warren, NSW — Thursday 20 November 2025

When Jerome Shepherd walked through the doors of Warren Shire Council for his interview, he was looking for a chance to learn new skills and build his confidence close to home. Now, as Council's Trainee Administration Officer, he is already discovering how the NSW Government's [Fresh Start for Local Government program](#) can open real pathways for locals ready to take the next step in their careers.

Jerome joined Council shortly before Fresh Start funding was confirmed for three additional trainee and apprentice roles that will create more pathways for locals in 2026. He is now working under the mentorship of Jody Burtenshaw, Executive Assistant to the Mayor and General Manager.

"This has been such a great start for me! I'm learning new skills every day and getting real experience that will help me build a strong career and improve my employability in the future."

"Being able to work and learn here in Warren takes a lot of pressure off. I can stay connected to my family, balance work and study and still earn an income. It's a great way to grow without the added stress of being away from home," he said.

Jerome said the support from staff has been one of the highlights of his traineeship so far.

"The best thing I've discovered is how supportive and friendly the staff are. No matter who you go to, they will always lend a helping hand."

Looking ahead, Jerome is excited to build his skills in teamwork, communication and community engagement across different Council departments.

Mayor Greg Whiteley said it's encouraging to see more locals stepping into Council roles through the Fresh Start Program.

"It's really positive to see young people like Jerome taking up opportunities that help them grow their skills and confidence. When locals get a chance to learn and work close to home it strengthens the whole community. That's what this Program is all about," Mayor Whiteley said.



General Manager Gary Woodman said Council is committed to supporting trainees from their first day through to completion.

“These traineeships give locals strong experience and steady support. Our staff are committed to helping people grow their skills and build confidence as they move through their traineeship.”

Three traineeship opportunities now available

Following Jerome’s appointment, Council is now inviting applications for three positions under the Fresh Start program. One role is available for an immediate start, while two new apprenticeships can begin from 1 January 2026. All positions must commence no later than **28 February 2026**.

1. Apprentice Heavy Diesel Mechanic (4 year apprenticeship)

A full-time role for someone interested in working across heavy and light machinery with hands-on training and accredited learning.

2. Apprentice Trade Gardener (4 year apprenticeship)

A full-time apprenticeship for locals who enjoy working outdoors and want to learn horticulture and landscaping while helping maintain the Shire’s parks and gardens.

3. Trainee Plant Operator (3 year traineeship)

A full-time opportunity for someone who enjoys outdoor work and operating machinery. This role can begin immediately or be secured now for a 2026 start.

Full position descriptions are available at: <https://www.warren.nsw.gov.au/council/employment>

Mayor Greg Whiteley said the new roles are another step in backing local talent.

“We want our locals to have every chance at building a good life here. These opportunities help people learn, grow and stay close to the community that supports them. That’s what matters most.”

- ENDS -

For more information, please contact:

Gary Woodman General Manager, Warren Shire Council

Email: gary.woodman@warren.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 02 6847 6600



About the Fresh Start for Local Government Program

The [*Fresh Start for Local Government Apprentices, Trainees and Cadets program*](#) is a landmark NSW Government initiative investing \$252.2 million over six years to create 1,300 new paid apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships across local councils statewide.

Designed to support regional workforce development, the program helps Councils provide hands-on training and meaningful career opportunities for locals at all stages of life. It supports school leavers, parents returning to work and residents seeking a new direction.

By funding these roles, the program aims to build skills, boost confidence and retain talent within communities, strengthening local economies and reducing the migration of young people to cities.