



**ELY TRUST**  
REACHING OUT  
GROWING STRONG IN UNITY

# NEWS LETTER

**February 2026** Shifting our focus towards the well-being of communities



## Message from Ely Trust Chairperson, Rex Burke

### Dear Community Members,

We hope this message finds you and your families in good health, and that you had a wonderful Christmas and festive new year.

On a more sorrowful note, I want to honour the passing of two cherished elders whose steady presence and years of devoted service helped shape the heart of the Trust. Their wisdom, kindness, and unwavering commitment enriched our community in ways that will continue to echo long after their time with us. We hold their memories with deep gratitude, and may they rest in peace.

This month's newsletter shares updates from the November 2025 Ely Trust meetings, a recap of the October 2025 community meetings, and highlights of the 2025 Paanja Festival community project.

### Ely Trust Meetings Update

Following on from the previous newsletter last September, monthly Directors' Meetings have continued, including the latest held via Teams on 28 January 2026.



# Message from Ely Trust Chairperson, Rex Burke

The End of 2025 was busy with in person meetings held in Cairns for the Directors and Shareholders meeting, a Director's meeting, and the Annual General Meeting held at the end of November.

## Directors and Shareholders meeting

Face to face meetings provide a valuable opportunity to connect and collaborate with Shareholders of the Trust.

During the November 2025 Directors and Shareholders meeting, the Trust held a workshop with Rio Tinto and EMM Consulting.

The workshop with EMM Consulting was invaluable as it allowed the Trust to be part of the process associated with the Social Impact Management Plan, and a voice for Trust beneficiaries and communities.

## Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Annual General Meeting in November 2025 was 'live' streamed by the Trust, a first for it and the beneficiaries generally.

Live streaming the AGM provided beneficiaries with the opportunity to watch the governance practices of the Trust in real time.

I am please to say that at the November AGM the finances for the Trust were passed. The Trust achieved an unqualified audit report or what is sometimes known as a 'clean' report which is the best outcome that can be achieved from an audit.

I would like to thank Directors and Shareholders for their involvement in the Trust over 2025 and look forward to continuing to serve Trust beneficiaries and help build a sustainable future for our people.

God bless  
Rex



## Grant Applications – Community Projects

---

### 2025 Paanja Festival

The Trust is pleased to share a recent community event, with funding provided by the Trust to Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council to hire an event coordinator for the **2025 Mapoon Paanja Festival**. This event was a success with a strong turnout from the community. The Paanja Festival is a special celebration for the Mapoon



community, as quoted from Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council program brochure, ***“The Paanja Festival holds deep cultural significance for the people of Mapoon. It marks the strength, resilience, and enduring connection of our people to this land, a place of history, healing, and homecoming. Through traditional dance, music, art, storytelling, and food, we share and celebrate the richness of our culture with visitors from near and far.”***

Photo credit to Phil Schouteten from **PHISCH Creative**. W: [phisch.com.au](http://phisch.com.au)



---

### Ingeous Studios – Leigh Harris

Leigh Harris from Ingeous Studios attended the recent Directors meetings in November, with a view to gathering information for the the new website that is coming in 2026. Leigh is helping the Trust to put together a website that will allow the Trust to provide and receive information from beneficiaries. Further information to come on this important matter.



## 2026 Directors Meetings & Grant Application Submission Dates

### Directors Meeting



25 February 2026

### Grant application submissions

Due by 4 February 2026

### Directors Meeting



25 March 2026

### Grant application submissions

Due by 4 March 2026

### Directors Meeting



29 April 2026

### Grant application submissions

Due by 8 April 2026

Please note the following available grant applications; Business Development Fund (BDF), Community Projects Fund (CPF) and Individual Projects Fund (IPF).

If you're interested in applying for any of the above grants, or you require any information regarding the application process, please email the Trust at [elygrants@elytrust.com.au](mailto:elygrants@elytrust.com.au).



### Individual Projects Fund

As per the previous Ely Trust newsletter, the Ely Trust has introduced a new initiative, the **Individual Projects Fund (IPF)**.

As a recap, the key objective of the **IPF** is to provide financial relief to disadvantaged beneficiaries which includes working for the relief of poverty or distress (such as sickness, disability, destitution, suffering, misfortune or helplessness).

The purpose of the **IPF** is to assist beneficiaries with:

- Sad news / sorry business expenses.
- Education and school camp expenses.
- Sporting / cultural initiatives.
- Outstation support.
- Whitegoods / furniture.
- Hospital / Medical / Accommodation associated with extended medical stays out of community.

This fund reflects our ongoing commitment to supporting the Ely Trust's beneficiaries in practical and compassionate ways. If you would like to learn more about this new fund, including requests for the new procedure documentation and application form, please email the Trust at [elygrants@elytrust.com.au](mailto:elygrants@elytrust.com.au).



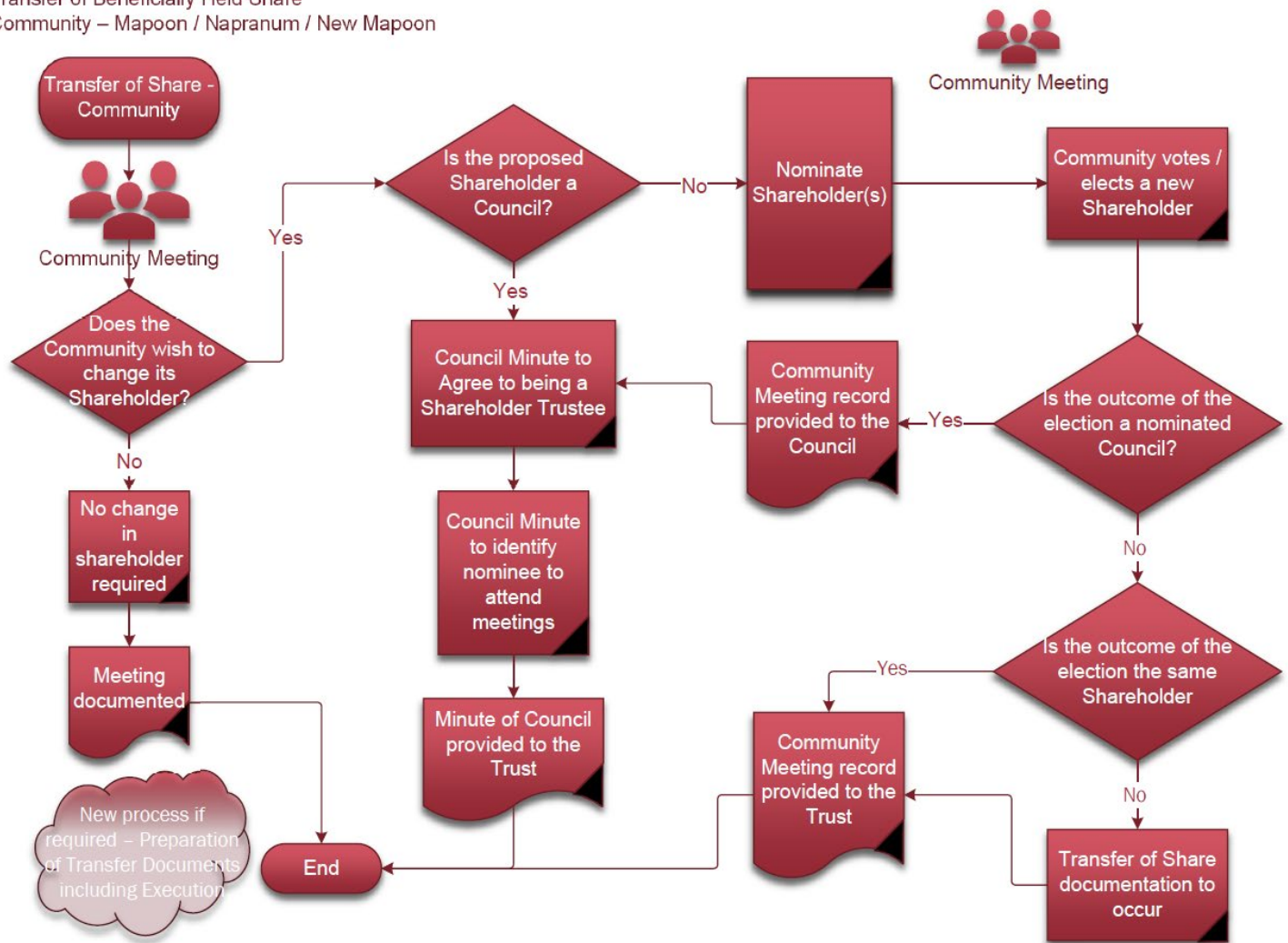
## Resources and Support

### ✦ Share Transfer Process – Transfer of Beneficially Held Share

The Trustee share transfer process was discussed at the Community meetings held last year. Given the interest shown, the process of transferring a share is provided for below:

Transfer of Beneficially Held Share

Community – Mapoon / Napranum / New Mapoon



## Message from Ely Trust Financial Controller

### Finance Update

- Financials for **2024/25** were completed, audited, and presented to the AGM on 26 November 2025.
- July 2025 – January 2026** financials are up to date and within budget.
- All Statutory obligations are up to date.
- July 2025 – January 2026 Ely Trust has paid the following grants:**
  - Business Development Grants (BDF): \$571,538
  - Community Project Grants (CPF): \$265,546
  - Individual Project Grants (IPF): \$46,135

## 2025 Community Meetings

---

Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend the Mapoon and Napranum community meetings on 8 and 9 October 2025. These meetings are an important opportunity to share Ely Trust updates, listen to community feedback and continue to work together in a transparent and collaborative way.



Below is a summary of key topics discussed;

- Grants
- Trustee Share Transfer Process
- Governance

If you would like to share feedback, have any questions or if there are topics you would like to see covered at future meetings, please let Officers of the Trust know via email on [admin@elytrust.com.au](mailto:admin@elytrust.com.au).

**2026 Community Meeting** dates will be confirmed and communicated in the coming months.

---

**Thank you for reading.**

If you have feedback or would like to contribute to the next newsletter, we welcome your ideas.

For questions about the content mentioned in this newsletter, feedback, or other matters, please reach out to your local Directors: Rex Burke (Chairperson), Gina Nona, Linda McLachlan, Sandra Woosup, Irene York and Gwen Toby or email [admin@elytrust.com.au](mailto:admin@elytrust.com.au). For grant related matters please email [elygrants@elytrust.com.au](mailto:elygrants@elytrust.com.au).



**ELY TRUST**  
REACHING OUT  
GROWING STRONG IN UNITY

## Contact us

---

[elytrust.com.au](http://elytrust.com.au)

**Michelle Countouris, Executive Assistant**

**Email:** [michelle@elytrust.com.au](mailto:michelle@elytrust.com.au)

**Phone:** 0437 462 364