

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Attention: News Editor

### **Mount Barker centre meets needs**

Mount Barker residents are already reaping the benefits of the town's ambitious \$2.8 million Community Resource Centre (CRC) project, supported by \$140,000 of Royalties for Regions funding through the Great Southern Regional Grants Scheme.

An official opening ceremony will be held on Friday 18 November but most of the new facilities at the Baptist Church-initiated centre are now available and drawing enthusiastic responses from users.

Centre manager Stephen Shoebridge said Friday's opening will be performed by Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman via video link, demonstrating the centre's technological capabilities.

"We have all the communication capabilities of a Community Resource Centre but we are very different from most others because of the size and scope of services within the building," Mr Shoebridge said.

"People don't expect to find something of this size and scope in rural Australia, and we are getting a lot of interest and bookings.

"We can offer everything from a standard office up to an auditorium or a board room, and our commercial kitchen will become available early next year," Mr Shoebridge said.

The Mount Barker CRC was formerly a squash court, and has been adapted and extended to include the Shire of Plantagenet library, an auditorium, commercial kitchen, meeting rooms, a child activity facility, board rooms and nine offices for lease.

Community and government agencies use the centre as an office base and there is a strong emphasis on providing for youth and culturally diverse people.

Homework Clubs for primary and secondary school students run for four afternoons a week during term time.

Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) Chief Executive Officer Bruce Manning said the Centre was a great asset for Mount Barker.



*Building partnerships for regional prosperity*

“Thanks to the partnership between the GSDC, the Shire of Plantagenet and the Baptist Union, the centre is a well appointed and versatile building that can meet many community needs,” Mr Manning said.

“Increasing the capacity of regional towns to meet the needs of residents is a key focus of the Royalties for Regions program and of the GSDC.

“Mount Barker’s upgraded community centre will provide the town with new options for the delivery of services and events that benefit local people,” Mr Manning said.

Foodbank will open at the centre in December.

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