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New Beswick store has community and its artists celebrating

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Beswick artists Peter Lindsay and Bruce Hall in front of a mural they created for Beswick's new store

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Beswick's new community store has not only improved access to fresh food for locals but has proven to be a wonderful artistic outlet for some of Beswick's best artists.

Beswick, also known as Wugularr, is a community of around 500 people located 120 km south east of Katherine in the Northern Territory. Their old store was showing signs of age and the local Wuduluk Progress Aboriginal Corporation successfully applied for funding for a new store through the Australian Government's Aboriginals Benefit Account.

The new store has improved dry and cold store facilities, a commercial-grade kitchen fitted out with new equipment and a new large storeroom and freezers allowing fresh food to stay fresh for longer.

And, importantly for Beswick, store closures from flooding will become a thing of the past, with their new store built on high land

above the flood zone.

Beswick is well known for its resident artists, and Peter Lindsay and Bruce Hall were employed under the project to paint murals on the exterior of the new store.

Peter has been a resident of Beswick for twenty years and is proud to make a contribution to the store mural.

"I was inspired by the red, orange and black used in the rock paintings from the Port Keats area from where my ancestors come from," Peter said.

"My paintings reflect the animals from the local river and billabong which we traditionally eat," he said.

In addition to Bruce and Peter and other artists engaged to paint the murals, nine locals were employed in various roles in the construction of the store, five of whom have completed nationally accredited training.

Although the new store has been open for less than two months, revenue has increased markedly. Tourists and others making the long trip between Katherine to Nhulunbuy are calling in to the new store and checking out the murals. The extra custom has allowed the store managers to employ five additional staff from the community while others may be employed in the future in the new kitchen and take away.

All this is good news for a small community looking for jobs and fresh food for locals.

Find out more

Working with leaders, communities, individuals and employers to foster local businesses and get adults into work is one of the [Australian Government's key Indigenous Affairs priorities \(http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/about\)](http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/about).

The Australian Government is facilitating the construction of stores in remote communities across the NT, with funding from the [Aboriginals Benefit Account \(ABA\)](#).
