



Mornington Peninsula Shire

INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan

June 2025 – July 2027



Acknowledgement of Country

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council acknowledges the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. Council acknowledges the Bunurong’s continuing relationship to the land and waterways and respects that their connection and spiritual identity is maintained through ancient Ceremonies, Songlines, dance, art and living Cultures. Council pays tribute to the invaluable contributions of the Bunurong and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders who have guided and continue to guide the work we do.

The journey ahead for Mornington Peninsula involves the land, the Traditional Custodians, local First Nations communities, the wider community, and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

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About the artwork

This artwork, inspired by the beauty of Bunurong Country, tells a story of renewal, respect, and responsibility. We see the coastline, sea and bushland captured through a harmonious blend of soft blue and green oceanic tones that are interwoven with the earthy, distinct colours of the surrounding bushlands and coastlines. The artwork's distinct softness evokes the rhythmic movement of the waves meeting the land, while the warm, earthy shades speak to the resilience of the bush. The Artwork represents the Morrington Peninsula Shire's determination and commitment to new beginnings. It symbolises their efforts to strengthen their foundations and deepen their relationships with First Nations communities, as well as their ongoing role in caring for the coastal shores, the sea, and the bushland and honouring the connection between Bunurong people and Country.

About the artist

The artist, Kamara Morgan is a proud Yorta-Yorta, GunaiKurnai, Dja Dja Wurrung, Boonwurrung, Taungurung and Baraparapa Aboriginal Artist specialising in contemporary Aboriginal art. Kamara grew up on Yorta-Yorta Country in Shepparton Victoria and is now living on Wurundjeri Country in Melbourne

Kamara expresses her Aboriginal culture and connection to Country through her artwork. Kamara is proud to have grown up around her culture and watching her family member's paint. This experience gave her the desire and confidence to pick up a paint brush herself to tell her story and the stories of her Country and culture. The process of painting on canvas gives Kamara an even stronger feeling of connection to her ancestors and culture and she is excited to share her rich tradition through her paintings.



Message from the Mayor

As the Mayor of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, I am proud to present this *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2025–2027*.

I would like to acknowledge the Bunurong Land Council, our partners at Willum Warrain, members of the Peninsula’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and members of our wider Peninsula community who have guided the creation of this plan.

Thank you for walking with us on our shared journey of reconciliation. Your guidance and collaboration enables us to take meaningful action to advance and champion reconciliation and truth-telling.

Among the actions proposed in this Plan is the creation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Advisory Committee. This committee will work in a similar way to our other advisory bodies, such as the Disability Advisory Committee, Triple A Housing Committee and the Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders. Council will seek feedback from the committee where appropriate and will carefully consider its perspective when making decisions that directly affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Council is dedicated to working in the best interests of all our residents and we continually strive to create a community where everybody feels they belong. This Reconciliation Action Plan is another step in ensuring every community member is valued and heard.

Cr Simon Brooks
Mayor
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

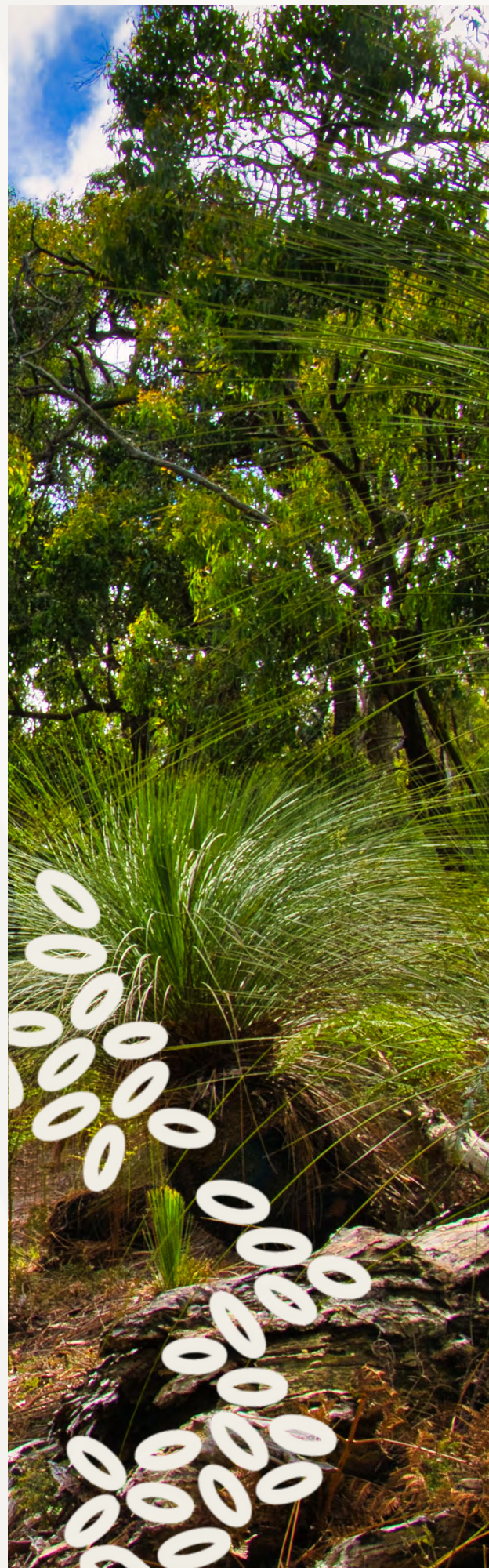
Message from the CEO

This Reconciliation Action Plan speaks to the Mornington Peninsula Shire’s commitment to developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation and developing strategies and opportunities that foster self-determination.

As an organisation we are committed to doing all we can to create an inclusive, connected and safe environment on the Mornington Peninsula, as outlined in our Council, Wellbeing Plan and our 2040 Community Vision. This Reconciliation Action Plan will promote a greater understanding of the Shire’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities whilst fostering pride for what is the oldest continuing culture in the world.

We invite all community members to join us in this journey of reconciliation and help us forge a community that celebrates and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories and knowledge.

John Baker
CEO
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council



Xanthorrhoea (grass tree) located in Greens Bush, Boneo

Message from the Bunurong Land Council

Our organisation has a longstanding relationship with Mornington Peninsula Shire with 2025 marking our 20th anniversary of collaboration! The Mornington Peninsula Shire's Innovate RAP is a continuing commitment of Shire supporting the Bunurong communities' journey of self-determination, working on country together with Shire teams and staff with caring for country initiatives, working together in the social advocacy space and on cultural arts, public education, language and design projects. We are looking forward to continuing our on-country relationship collaboration with Mornington Peninsula Shire and Shires network of community and environmental organisations.

Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Mornington Peninsula Shire Council on the formal endorsement of its second, Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Mornington Peninsula Shire Council continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Mornington Peninsula Shire Council will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Mornington Peninsula Shire Council using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships*, *respect*, and *opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Mornington Peninsula Shire Council's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Mornington Peninsula Shire Council on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Our vision for Reconciliation

To walk together with courage to understand, respect, value and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, arts and cultures as part of the intrinsic identity of the Mornington Peninsula for the benefit of the whole community.

In the spirit of Reconciliation, the Mornington Peninsula Shire:

- Acknowledges that the Bunurong people are the First People of the land on which we work and live, with a deep and enduring connection to the land and water
- Acknowledges that this land was colonised without consent of the original inhabitants
- Commits to consultation on matters of mutual concern with representatives of the Bunurong people and any other legitimately constituted groups representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cultures and heritage
- Recognises the distinctive relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with local land and waters, including trees, hills and valleys, creeks and foreshore of the Mornington Peninsula
- Acknowledges the responsibility of non-Indigenous people to understand the ongoing impacts of colonisation as a foundation for moving forward together strives for a community that acknowledges and takes pride in First Nations Peoples as the oldest continuing cultures in the world
- Promotes the fundamental human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including self-determination, cultural rights and equality
- Strives for a community that celebrates the diversity of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, arts and cultures
- Respects Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)
- Acknowledges the ongoing resilience, strength and resourcefulness of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, commits to listening to and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build strong sustainable relationships on the pathway to reconciliation
- Supports Treaty and Yoorook Truth-telling Commission processes as vital to progressing reconciliation
- Commits to listening to and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build strong sustainable relationships on the pathway to reconciliation.

Our Business

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is a local council with responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic) including to 'provide governance and leadership for the local community through advocacy, decision making and action'.

Council has three main Corporate Centres located in Hastings, Rosebud and Mornington, as well as various other work locations throughout the municipality including: libraries; maternal and child health centres; a bush plant nursery and eco centre; and activity delivery centres.

The Shire's organisational vision is to 'value, protect and improve the unique characteristics and way of life on our peninsula'. To achieve this vision, Council provides services across a wide range of areas including:

- Arts and culture
- Cleaning and waste
- Community development
- Economic development
- Emergency management
- Environment protection
- Family and children
- Health and safety
- Local laws and permits
- Parks and gardens
- Pets and animals
- Planning and building
- Roads and transport
- Sport and recreation
- Youth services

The Mornington Peninsula Council employs an estimated 1,062 staff members, with two Indigenous identified roles.

The Mornington Peninsula Council employs an estimated 1,062 staff members, with three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified roles.

Currently the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this.

This RAP aims to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enjoy the same life opportunities and outcomes as the broader community, to support the Shire to achieve its vision for the benefit of everyone.

The Rip is the narrow waterway entrance connecting the Bass

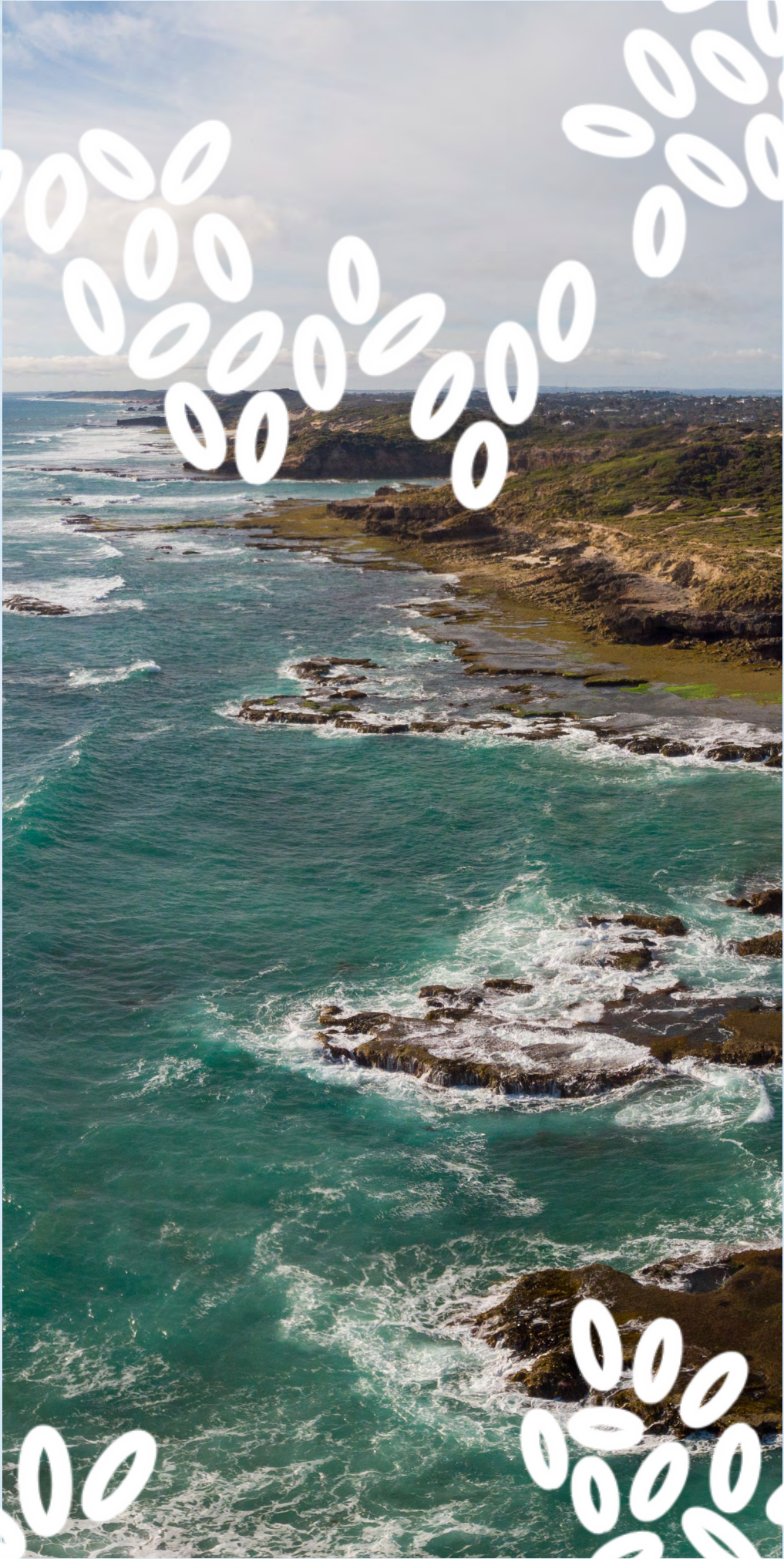
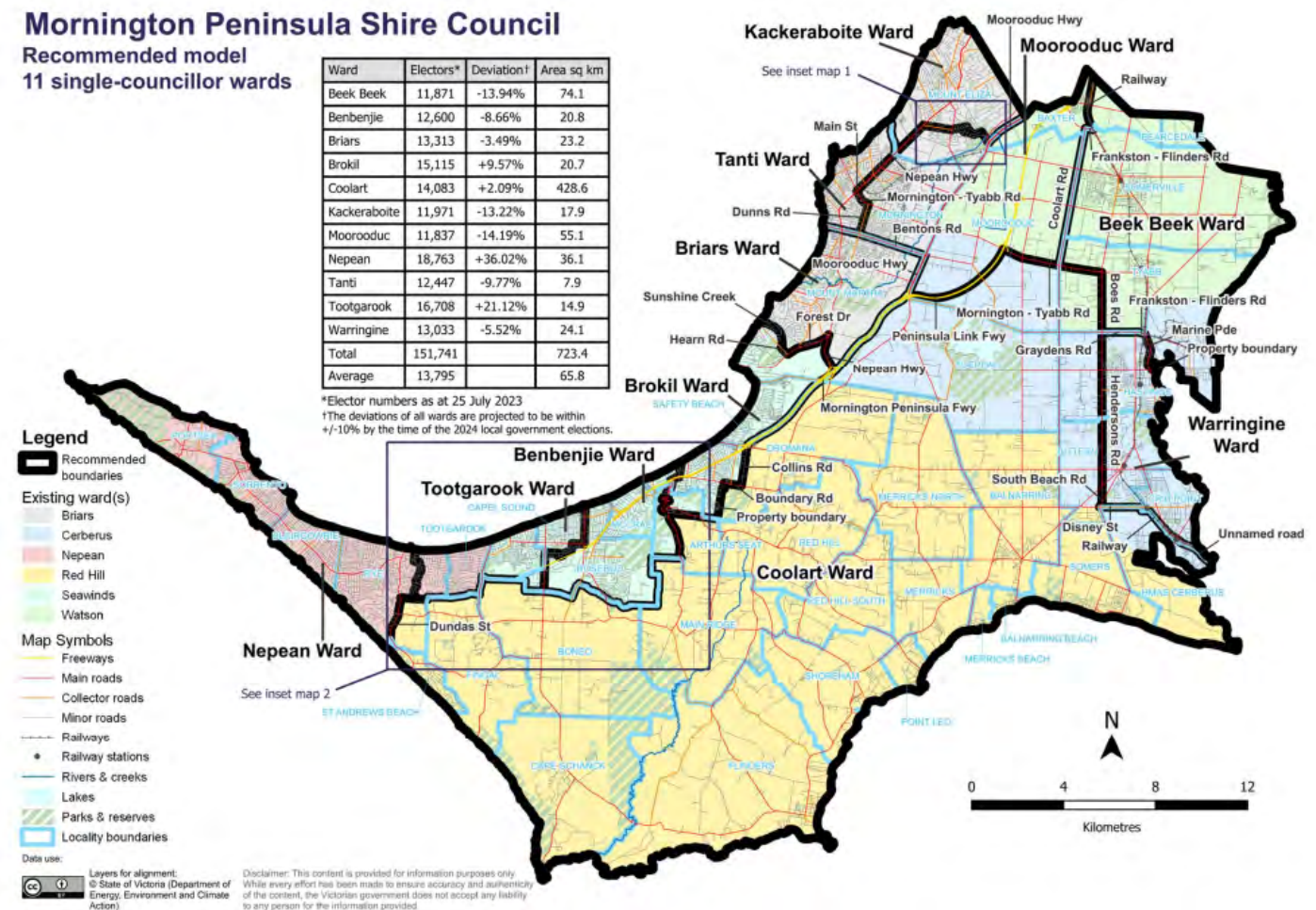
Our Mornington Peninsula

The Bunurong people are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Mornington Peninsula is located. The Mornington Peninsula is located on the fringe of Melbourne’s outer southern suburbs and covers 192km of coastline fronting Port Phillip and Western Port Bays and Bass Strait with a total area of 720 square kilometres.

Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges the historical and cultural significance of the land particularly the coastline has to the Bunurong people who journeyed to their meeting places, connecting to Country. For thousands of years Bunurong people have met at Arthurs Seat (Wonga), the men would head to Cape Schanck for men’s business and the women to Point Nepean (Monmar). Monmar was a special women’s place for birthing, women’s ceremony, and initiation of the younger women.

The Mornington Peninsula encompasses many townships from Mount Eliza to Portsea and on the Western Port side from Baxter, Hastings, Crib Point and Balnarring. These townships are characterised by unique and appealing villages, sandy beaches, coastal environments, lush parklands, quality residential areas, a vibrant arts scene and a proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history which is reflects in our Bunurong cultural heritage and significant sites.

Map of recommended structure



Rye Ocean Beach

Mornington Peninsula’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

In the 2021 census, 1,720 people identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander on the Mornington Peninsula (1.0% of the population). This was a significant 33% increase from 1,296 people who identified as

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the 2016 census.¹ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population on the Mornington Peninsula is also a young population with 64% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under 35.



Greens Bush, Boneo

¹ We recognise that the census data may not accurately reflect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population on the Mornington Peninsula including because some people choose not to complete the census or to identify as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Our strategic context

The Shire’s RAP is aligned with the Shire’s broader strategic framework including the:

- **Mornington Peninsula Shire Community Vision 2040**
- **Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025**

The RAP also exists in the broader context of the Shire’s policies and plans that relate to diverse communities including the Shire’s Inclusion Strategy ‘We All Belong’, Gender Equality Strategy and Access and Equity Policy which is about ‘facilitating the necessary conditions and opportunities to enable everyone utilising council services, programs and facilities to be treated fairly, free from any discrimination’.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Community Vision 2024

In 2021 the Shire empowered the community to help shape our future and develop a new Community Vision for the Peninsula to 2040. Over 3,000

were involved providing feedback via surveys, online workshops, township pop-ups, postcards and drawings.

Principle 3 Support an inclusive, connected and safe society

Connect and support the diverse social demographics, who live, work, and visit the Mornington Peninsula by facilitating universal access and social integration through safe social housing, services, and events within the community.

Principle 4 Innovative planning and development of the local economy

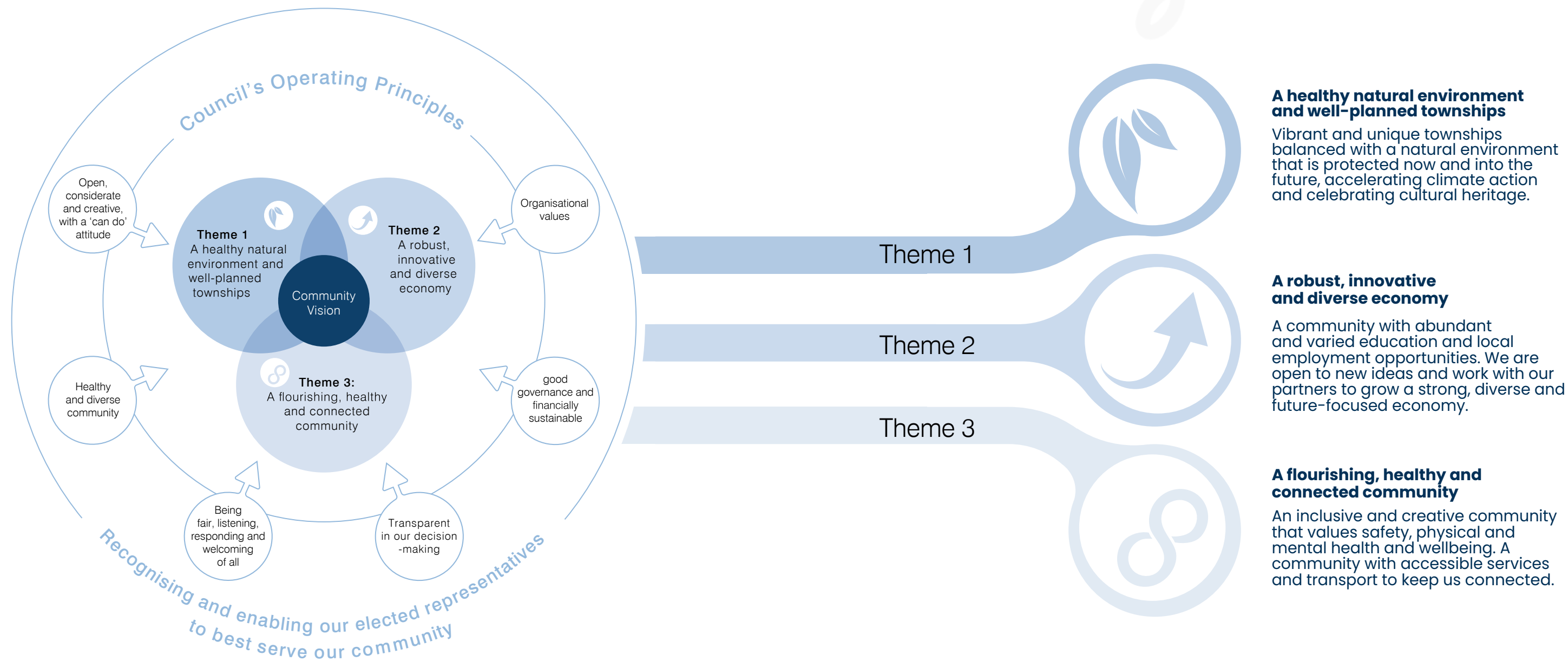
Innovative planning and adaptable development that enhances economic and employment opportunities for our dynamic and prosperous communities, townships and business.

Principle 6 Protect and enhance all elements of our natural land, sea and biodiverse environments.

To protect and improve green spaces, bushland, native flora and fauna, foreshore and wetlands. To preserve or increase the current amount and quality of green space. Responsible and sustainable farming practices foster a healthy environment.

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025

The Council Plan and wellbeing plan provides the framework for everything the Shire undertakes to enable the elected representatives to best serve the community. The Plan is set out under three themes:



Strategic Objective 1.3

A sustainable built environment that respects the natural environment and protects the community from the impacts of the climate emergency.

- 1.3.3. Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in all project planning and design.

Strategic Objective 2.3

A thriving entrepreneurial economy, with a vibrant tourism sector, that provides accessible employment to our diverse community.

- 2.3.6 Deliver on the Reconciliation Action Plan, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and employment opportunities.

Strategic Objective 3.1

A healthy and self-determined community where everyone feels valued, supported and safe.

- 3.1.2. Deliver the Reconciliation Action Plan, guided by the Traditional Owners, respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Strategic Objective 3.3

A community in which people from all generations, backgrounds and abilities can access local services.

- 3.3.5. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to self-determine community services and programs as required.

The policy context

The Shire’s work to progress reconciliation is also guided by external policies:

Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021–2026

The Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy is a framework developed by the Victorian Governments to help guide Victorian local councils work with Aboriginal

communities. It puts self-determination at the centre of their decision making to create trust and respect between the local council and local Aboriginal community.

Korin Korin Balit–Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017–2027

The Victorian Government’s Framework which sets out its vision and direction over the next ten years for improving the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal Victorians.

There are five domains in the Korin Korin Balit–Djak;

- 1. Aboriginal community leadership
- 2. Prioritising Aboriginal culture and community
- 3. System reform across the health and human services sector
- 4. Safe, secure, strong families and individuals
- 5. Physically, socially and emotionally healthy Aboriginal communities

Further policies Council operates within include:

- Victorian Child Safety Standards
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023
- Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013–2020
- Self-determination Reform Framework Aug 2019
- Local Government Act 2020
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 & Aboriginal Heritage Regulation 2018
- Native Title Act 1993
- Barring Djinang: Aboriginal Employment Strategy

Our role in self-determination

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) defines self-determination as the capacity of First Nations people to independently determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.

We recognise the four key enablers essential for achieving self-determination, as outlined in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 (VAAF) and the Self-Determination Reform Framework:

- Prioritise culture
- Address trauma and support healing
- Address racism and promote cultural safety
- Transfer power and resources to communities

The Shire’s vision for reconciliation is for a unified community that acknowledges and celebrates the histories, cultures, and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while fostering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to lead self-determined lives.

We will Partner:
with First Nations Leaders, local communities, businesses and Traditional Owners to develop trusted relationships to seek positive and lasting health and wellbeing outcomes.

We will Advocate:
to raise awareness of topics of importance to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and support activities that promote safer and inclusive communities.

We will Plan:
to ensure that we can deliver on actions that are important to the First Nations communities related to Country, Culture and Connection.

We will Educate:
the wider communities and ourselves to increase understanding, respect and relationships with First Nations peoples and Country.

We will Research:
to ensure that we deliver sustainable and supported evidence-based projects and decision making.

We will Provide:
opportunities and activities that support the aspirations and goals of First Nations communities.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is committed to building respectful relationships and working together with community to create a better future for all. The Shire is committed to developing and implementing a RAP with the aims of:

- Building relationships between Council, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, businesses and the broader Mornington Peninsula community;

- Celebrating and acknowledging the unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage of the Mornington Peninsula; and
- Improving Council services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Shire also believes that taking tangible steps to progress reconciliation will support strong social, economic and cultural prosperity for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Shire's Reconciliation Journey –highlights from 2022 – 2024

The RAP builds on the Shire's previous Reconciliation Action Plan 2020–2022 and our achievements since committing to the reconciliation process including. Key highlights to date include:



Formalised partnership with Traditional Owners:

The Shire established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bunurong Land Council to formalise a strong, equal and respectful relationship. The MOU is designed to provide certainty in mutual engagement opportunities, improve pipeline communication and resourcing for upcoming Shire projects, and improve delivery of reconciliation measures for Council.



Created an Identified role created at the Shire:

In 2023, the Shire established an identified full-time position to work in the Community Inclusion Team as a First Nations Officer to support the development and delivery of the Reconciliation Action Plan.



Supported community events:

The Shire supported Our Survival Day in 2024 which is acknowledged as a date to practice culture and reflect on history. The day was delivered by Our Songlines, a 100% Aboriginal-owned and woman-led organisation that is passionate about making Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultured accessible to the whole community, in a supportive, safe environment.

The Womindjeka Balnarring Ngargee Festival was also supported by the Shire, which brought together First Peoples cultures and language to the Mornington Peninsula through music, dance, story- telling and art.



Championed the celebration of art and culture:

The Shire supported award-winning artist Iluka Sax Williams of Baluk Arts Public to create 'Seasonal Dial' – a sculptural artwork illustrating the Aboriginal seasons. This artwork was unveiled at the 2024 NAIDOC Festival.

A series of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational programs and healing sessions were supported by the Shire and hosted by Living Culture, a not-for-profit organisation based on the Mornington Peninsula. These sessions included guided walks and talks, sharing knowledge of traditional bush tucker and medicinal plants.



NAIDOC Week 2024:

The Shire held a NAIDOC Festival in 2024 at Flinders Civic Hall. The event included native-inspired canapes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HipHop group performances from IOPHipHop, an array of local First Nations stallholders and performances by Impakt Freeza First Nations committee representatives.

More highlights include:

- Collaborating with NBN Co. and six local Aboriginal groups on a project to wrap 16 NBN nodes with Aboriginal artwork across the Peninsula.
- Commencing the Junior Ranger program enabling the Shire to deliver experiences which support on-Country learning for First Nations children and young people. This innovative program will support the realisation of the Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Holding a series of NAIDOC Week celebration events for staff in 2023 at the Briars and Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, providing an opportunity to celebrate, engage with, and learn about First Peoples' culture and the importance of reconciliation. The activities included talks by Aboriginal artists Sammy Trist (Taungurung) and Yasmin Silveira (Palawa), and Bunurong Elders Uncle Shane Clarke and Jillian West.
- Supporting the Shire to host the exhibition, Layers of Blak, which showcased the work of 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and included Aboriginal-led art-making workshops for adults and children.
- Promoting a guided walk and meditation event for the public held at the Briars, in collaboration with local Aboriginal business, Living Culture.

What the community told us about why Reconciliation is important

Our engagement for the development of our RAP 2025-2027

A range of culturally appropriate community engagement methods were used to capture views from the diverse range of community members on the Mornington Peninsula. An online survey was released in addition to the Shire hosting a series of face to face yarning circles.

Key external First Nations stakeholders who provided and played an essential role in the development of the Plan include:

- Bunurong Land Council;
- Reconciliation Victoria;
- Willum Warrain Gathering Place;
- Nairm Marr Djambana;
- First Peoples Assembly;
- Our Songlines; and
- Living Culture

What we heard

1. **Acknowledgment of past injustices:** Recognising and addressing historical injustices, including colonisation, dispossession, and the impacts of government policies on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
2. **Promotion of Indigenous rights and culture:** : Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, the preservation of language and cultures, and ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in decision-making processes..
3. **Closing socioeconomic gaps:** Implementing initiatives to address socioeconomic disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous communities, particularly in areas such as health, education, employment, and housing.
4. **Truth-telling and education:** Incorporating accurate and comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories into educational curricula, promoting public awareness campaigns, and fostering understanding of culture and heritage.
5. **Genuine relationships and respect:** Fostering meaningful relationships, mutual respect, and understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous communities through dialogue, collaboration, and cultural competency training.
6. **Empowerment and community engagement:** Empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to lead and participate in initiatives, promoting community-driven solutions, and providing platforms for voices to be heard.



Mornington Peninsula Shire staff member at Bunurong smoking ceremony

“Being respectful of the Traditional Owners of the land and waters we use.”

“Telling the stories of our Traditional Owners, using native language and educating the community.”

“Listening to the voices of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. ”

Community members identified wanting to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, listen to stories from Elders and opportunities to read stories from Elders. Having friendships within local Aboriginal communities was also something identified throughout

the consultation, along with wanting to see celebrations of culture and acknowledgement of the impact of colonisation & Stolen Generation families. “More cultural events, the history is rich let’s promote and celebrate this more.”

Reconciliation Action Plan Governance

Reconciliation Action Plan Internal Working Group

The Shire’s RAP Working Group is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and monitoring of the RAP. The RAP Working Group is chaired by the First Nations Officer and co-chaired by the Team Leader Community Inclusion. The Working Group encourages participation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees whilst mitigating risks associated with cultural loading. Currently 1 staff member on the RAP Working Group identifies as Aboriginal. Membership of the RAP Working Group includes:

- First Nations Officer (Identified role)
- Manager of Community Partnerships
- Manager of Governance and Risk
- Manager of Destinations, Recreation and Community Connection
- Team Leader of Community Inclusion
- Team Leader of Culture and Employee Experience
- Team Leader of Advocacy, Communications and Engagement
- Team Leader of Youth Services
- Coordinator of Natural Systems Opetions
- Coordinator of Arts and Heritage
- Coordinator of Procurement and Fleet Operations
- Coordinator of Early Years and Best Start
- Business Partner of People and Culture

In addition, to the RAP working group the Director of Community Strengthening has been nominated as project sponsor and RAP Champion for implementing the RAP.

External Reconciliation Advisory Committee

The Shire is currently in the process of forming an external Reconciliation Advisory Committee. The purpose of the advisory committee is to help guide the implementation of the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. The committee will provide guidance on how best to achieve the actions and deliverables outlined in the RAP. The committee members will also have opportunities to highlight topics affecting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and will provide guidance on how best to resolve them.

Willum Warrain Gathering Place

Willum Warrain Gathering Place was established in 2014 in Hastings with support from the Shire and funding from the Closing the Gap program. Willum Warrain is a whole-of-organisation charity that relies on a combination of volunteers, philanthropic funding, and government support to keep its doors open.

Willum Warrain is from the local Boon Wurrung language and means ‘Hut by the sea’. It is a gathering place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders come together to explore their goals, ideas and identity.

Managed by a community-led board, Willum Warrain is a place of hope and healing for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living on the Mornington Peninsula and surrounding areas. Its main strategic focus is cultural strengthening, and it is a destination for reconciliation and welcomes visits from the broader community.



Bunurong man preparing fire for smoking ceremony, Mornington

Bunurong Land Council

Bunurong Land Council are a Traditional Owner organisation that represent the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation. They provide archaeological field assessments as part of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan

(CHMP) process, cultural heritage advice, and information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people, Bunurong culture, and the environment.

How to read the Action Plan

Action

The action outlines the objective that the Shire is aiming to achieve. The action is the left-hand column.

Deliverable

The deliverable outlines how the shire will be working to achieve its actions. The deliverables are next to the action column on the right. There are often multiple deliverables for one action.

Timeline

The timeline outlines the expected start and end dates for each deliverable or as a point of review for any ongoing work. The timeline may be different for each deliverable under the same action item. This is found to the right of the deliverable column.

Responsibility

The responsibility column outlines the staff member responsible for overseeing the implementation of a certain deliverable. This column is the last column and is right of the timeline column.

Measuring success

The Reconciliation Action Plan will be monitored and its progress reported on annually to the Shire and annually to Reconciliation Australia through the RAP Impact Survey. This allows the Shire to ensure each deliverable’s relevance to the local community and navigate any barriers that may be preventing the successful completion of a deliverable.

Working towards reconciliation is an ever-evolving journey that requires the Shire to critically reflect on its progress to allow for continuous learning and evaluation.



Relationships are the foundation of success to a RAP, facilitating trust, collaboration, cultural understanding and long-term commitment to advancing reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples.

The Shire is committed to focusing on having meaningful, respectful, sustainable ongoing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, services and their networks.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with Traditional Owner Groups and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	November 2025	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2025	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2026	Manager – Community Partnerships
	Continue to build the Friendly Council Partnership between the Shire and Roper Gulf Regional Council with annual meetings.	December 2025, 2026	Manager – Governance and Risk
	Advance reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations and environmental and heritage networks.	March 2027	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Facilitate quarterly meetings with the Bunurong Land Council to ensure the Shire's projects and programs align with cultural heritage protocols.	July 2026	Coordinator – Arts and Heritage
	Collaborate with the Bunurong Land Council to maintain the management of cultural spaces and systems.	September 2026	Manager – Destinations, Recreation and Community Connection
	Establish and facilitate biannual meetings with the Bunurong Land Council. I.e. Caring for Country.	December 2025	Coordinator – Natural Systems Operations
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May– 3 June 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Organise at least one staff NRW event each year.	27 May– 3 June 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	27 May– 3 June 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2025, 2026	Team Leader – Advocacy, Communications and Engagement
	Support an external NRW event.	27 May– 3 June 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
3. Promote Reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Hold public event or film night to celebrate NRW including inviting a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country and engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest speakers and entertainers.	27 May– 3 June 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	September 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	June 2025, 2026	Team Leader – Advocacy, Communications and Engagement
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	January 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	February 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Participate in inter-Council reconciliation initiatives through local government networks.	January 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	December 2025	Manager – People & Culture
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	February 2026	Manager – People & Culture



Respect acknowledges the unique culture and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It involves actively listening to, valuing the contributions, and honouring Traditional knowledge and practices of First Nations people.

Respect is crucial for building meaningful and sustainable relationships based on equality, empathy and mutual recognition. It forms the foundation for reconciliation and understanding from past injustices and promote social cohesion and harmony.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	June 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	August 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	June 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Develop, communicate, and implement digital and face-to-face training modules, for new and ongoing staff.	August 2026	Manager – People & Culture
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Review and increase awareness of our cultural protocol document, that includes protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	December 2025	Manager – People & Culture
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	June 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important meetings.	June 2025, 2026	Director – Community Strengthening

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Conduct an audit of cultural safety practices within Council in consultation with First Nations consultant and/or staff.	March 2027	Manager – People & Culture
	Update all Formal Council documents to include An Acknowledgement of Country as well as education opportunities about the significance of other culturally significant dates.	March 2027	Manager – Governance and Risk
	Add protocol to Council's Flag Policy to acknowledge significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and leaders.	January 2027	Manager – Governance and Risk
	Investigate naming or renaming Council buildings, parks, reserves using Bunurong Language in consultation with Traditional Owners.	June 2026	Manager – Governance and Risk
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff participating in NAIDOC Week and other significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events.	July 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Ensure that information about NAIDOC week activities as well as external events are shared with the community.	July 2025, 2026	Team Leader – Advocacy, Communications and Engagement
	Hold an internal NAIDOC week event for all staff.	July 2025, 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Consult with the community on options for acknowledging the significance 26 January.	March 2026, 2027	Team Leader – Community Inclusion
	Raise awareness of Treaty progress and developments within our community.	June 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
8. Highlight the importance of Education, Treaty and Truth telling through engaging with the community.	Produce and promote Council media about Victorian Treaty advancement developments.	June 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion

Opportunities

Morrington Peninsula Shire Council is committed to creating opportunities for advancing equity and empowerment with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Opportunities create access to education, employment, economic development, and leadership roles.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	December 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Review and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	October 2025	Manager – People & Culture
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Attract, recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers through inclusive recruitment practices aligned to the implementation of our Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Workplace Plan.	March 2027	Manager – People & Culture
	Develop a professional development strategy including leadership pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	June 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Create an identified traineeship position and develop a plan to create more identified roles.	February 2026	Manager – People & Culture

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	January 2027	Coordinator – Procurement and Fleet Operations
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	December 2025	Coordinator – Procurement and Fleet Operations
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	March 2026	Coordinator – Procurement and Fleet Operations
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	January 2027	Coordinator – Procurement and Fleet Operations
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	May 2027	Coordinator – Procurement and Fleet Operations
11. Provide networking opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Establish an internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	June 2026	Manager – People & Culture
	Create an ally network for non-Indigenous staff to strengthen the Shire's commitment to Reconciliation.	June 2026	Manager – People & Culture
12. Establish an Advisory Committee for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to share their voices.	Endorse the Terms of Reference for Advisory Committee.	July 2026	Manager – Legal & Governance
	Hold quarterly meetings to assist the Shire with the development and implementation of the RAP.	August, December 2025 March, July, August, December 2026 March 2027	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Provide culturally safe systems and engagement strategies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, young people, Elders and community members	Deliver the Koorie Kids Shine and Best Start programs to promote access to high quality Kindergarten.	July, September, December 2025 February, June 2026	Coordinator – Early Years and Best Start
	Maintain the Child Safe Policy to provide a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people who live or visit the Shire are respected and valued.	September 2027	Child Safety Coordinator – People & Culture
	Connect young families to the Gathering Places through central Kindergarten registration.	December 2025, 2026	Coordinator – Early Years and Best Start
	Host quarterly yarning circles with Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) and Frankston City Council.	July, September, December 2025, February, June 2026	Coordinator – Early Years and Best Start
	Host an event to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Childrens Day.	August 2025, 2026	Coordinator – Early Years and Best Start
14. Provide culturally safe and accessible spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live and visit the Shire.	Facilitate programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to learn and connect to culture.	July 2027	Team Leader – Youth Services
	Investigate more locally accessible specific spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Including options for Gathering places, business hubs and cultural centres.	July 2027	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Investigate the reinvigoration of cultural spaces within the municipality providing opportunities for cultural education.	September 2026	Manager – Destinations, Recreation and Community Connection



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September, December 2025 March, June, September, December 2026 March 2027	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	January 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	March, June, September, December 2025 & 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
16. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2025	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	June 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
17. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 2025 June 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	April, July, October, January 2025, 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	July 2025, 2026	Team Leader – Advocacy, Communications and Engagement.
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia’s biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	February 2025	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
18. Continue our Reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	August 2026	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion
	Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.	March 2027	First Nations Officer – Community Inclusion

Contact details

Position: First Nations Officer
Email: reconciliation@mornpen.vic.gov.au
Phone: 1300 850 600



Aunty Shirley and Uncle Peter speaking at an event



Mornington
Peninsula Shire