

AUGUST 2023 – JANUARY 2025

RECONCILIATION
REFLECT
ACTION PLAN

WEST COAST TAS



**The Tasmanian First Nations
People's story began more than
sixty thousand years ago...**

West Coast Council recognises the ancient and ongoing histories of the Mimegin, Palawa and Pakana Tasmanian Aboriginal People and we recognise their Traditional Ownership and Custodianship of lutruwita/Tasmania.

We recognise their ongoing survival and their custodianship of the West Coast region, which stretches from kurina – ruyinrim/Pieman River, out to wulinantikala/Cradle Mt – down the coast through maynpatat/ Trial Harbour, and paralungatik/ Macquarie Harbour – south to wirarawn near Port Davey and west through timkarik country near Queenstown, and to tuynti/ Frenchmans Cap and beyond.

We recognise their traditional ownership and custodianship of these lands. We recognise and respect the enduring histories and stories of this Country's First People.

We recognise that Palawa and Pakana life, culture and language, was, and always will be, based on a deep and continuous connection to family, community, land, sea and waterways. We recognize these deep spiritual connections, and we value the Palawa and Pakana's unique ability to care for Country.

We acknowledge the injustices and trauma that colonisation has caused to the Palawa and Pakana and acknowledge that their lands were never ceded.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and future, who hold the memories, traditions, culture and knowledge of Country.





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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are our connection to this Country, to its skies, waterways, histories and lands. I am honoured to be the presiding West Coast Mayor who adopts our first Reconciliation Action Plan, which recognises the traditional custodians of this land and promotes the values and vision of reconciliation.

As with all strategies, this Reflect RAP will evolve as each action item is achieved. I look forward to continuing the journey of creating and maintaining partnerships, developing greater trust, and respect and in celebrating our community's unique diversity.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The West Coast Council (Reflect) Reconciliation Action Plan outlines the foundational frameworks that will guide Council in more deeply engaging with First Nations Peoples and the wider community to assist in promoting important healing processes, raising awareness and partnering where possible in health, wellbeing and community development projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

For us, reconciliation symbolises fostering positive relationships, showing greater respect and developing more opportunities for First Nation's People by reducing significant barriers and ensuring access to equal and equitable opportunities.

Reconciliation is also a process of 'bringing together' and through the actions outlined in this RAP we hope to bring together and unite our community in celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, sharing of stories, caring for Country, and learning from one another.

This RAP signifies our commitment to reconciliation and to the five dimensions of reconciliation, which Reconciliation Australia's vision is based on. These five interrelated dimensions are Race Relations, Equality and Equity, Institutional Integrity, Unity and Historical Acceptance.

This RAP also shares Council's unique vision for reconciliation. This vision has been formed by listening to our community and honouring and representing its truths, needs and wishes and it has been the community's wish that a RAP be created.

The core action items of this RAP are to be completed by Council within the next 18 months and will be aided by the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG). It is a strategic document that outlines practical actions that will drive Council's contribution to reconciliation both internally and within the wider community.

RAP FRAMEWORK

A Reflect RAP is used to lay the foundations and prepare for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives. It is a public commitment and is formally endorsed and published on Reconciliation Australia's website. The RAP framework consists of three pillars: Relationships, Respect, and Opportunities and several mandatory action items sit under each of these pillars. The Reflect RAP is a live document for the 12-18 months it takes to implement. Following on from the Reflect RAP will be our Innovate RAP.



STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

West Coast Council recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as being the original owners and custodians of this land.

In this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, West Coast Council commits to developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders for the collaborative design and creation of this and future RAPs and to advance the principles of reconciliation in the community.

We commit to implementing processes, practices and events that display respect and investigate future ways of working that promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

We commit to exploring and co-designing new opportunities that can bring into reality actions that help overcome social, economic and educational barriers and inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

We commit to working within our sphere of influence to promote the values and vision of reconciliation that in turn may assist in the national healing from past trauma and injustices and that this healing can assist in eradicating the social inequality experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

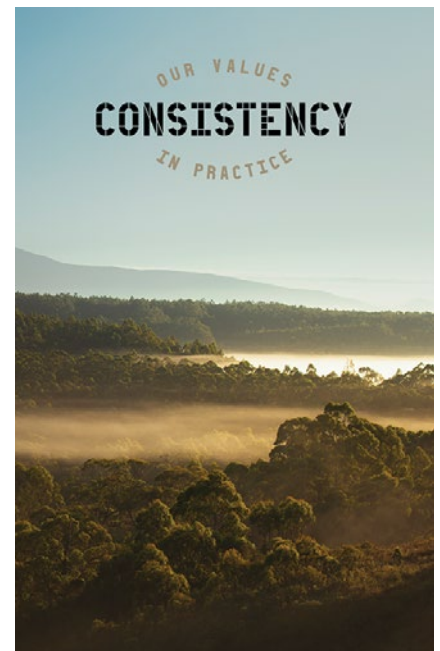
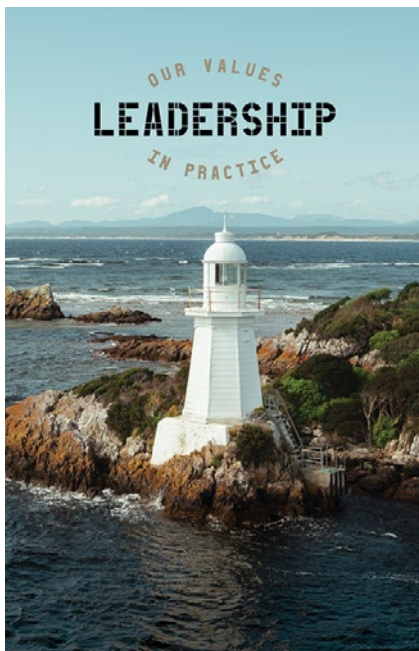
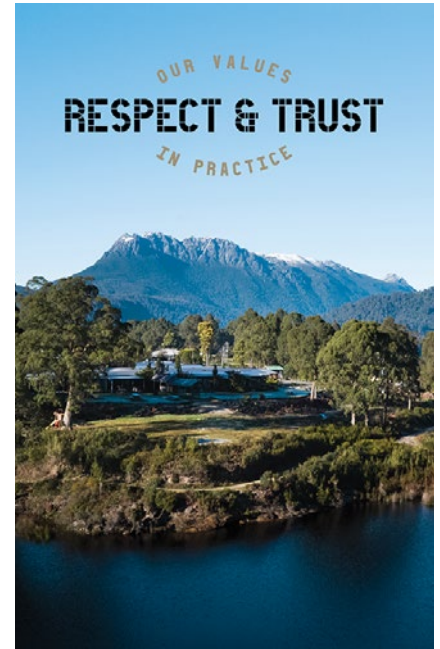
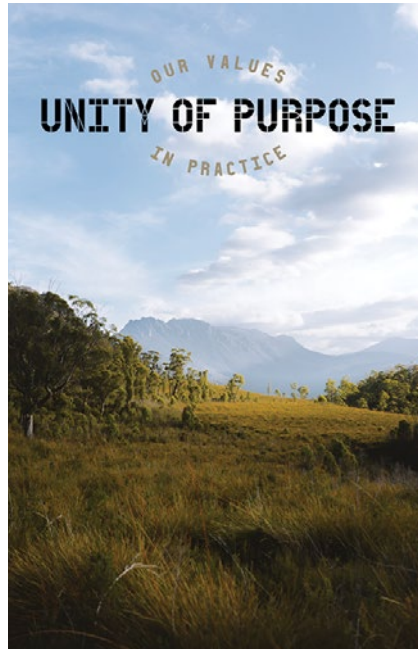
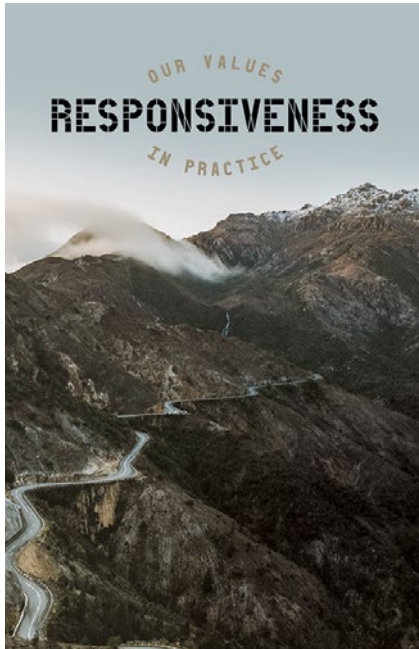
WEST COAST COUNCIL

West Coast Council is located in the heart of the majestic wilderness of the Tasmanian World Heritage Area on the wild West Coast. Council works together with community, in partnership, to provide and continually improve the facilities, services and infrastructure that will serve the needs of our communities.

Covering 9,575sq kms and employing 76 locals including three who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, the West Coast municipality is the gateway to Tasmania's wilderness. Coastal populations include Strahan, situated on Macquarie Harbour, and the picturesque shack villages of Granville Harbour and Trial Harbour. The inland population centres of Queenstown, Zeehan, Tullah and Rosebery and the small townships of Gormanston and Linda, are all within a short distance from magnificent lakes, rivers, rainforests, mountains and historic sites. Council has one main office in Queenstown and five depots in surrounding towns.

The West Coast is celebrated for its tourism, mining, renewable energy, and fishing and has more recently become a focal point for the arts community. The clean air, mild climate and strong commitment to community makes the West Coast a fantastic and unique place to be.

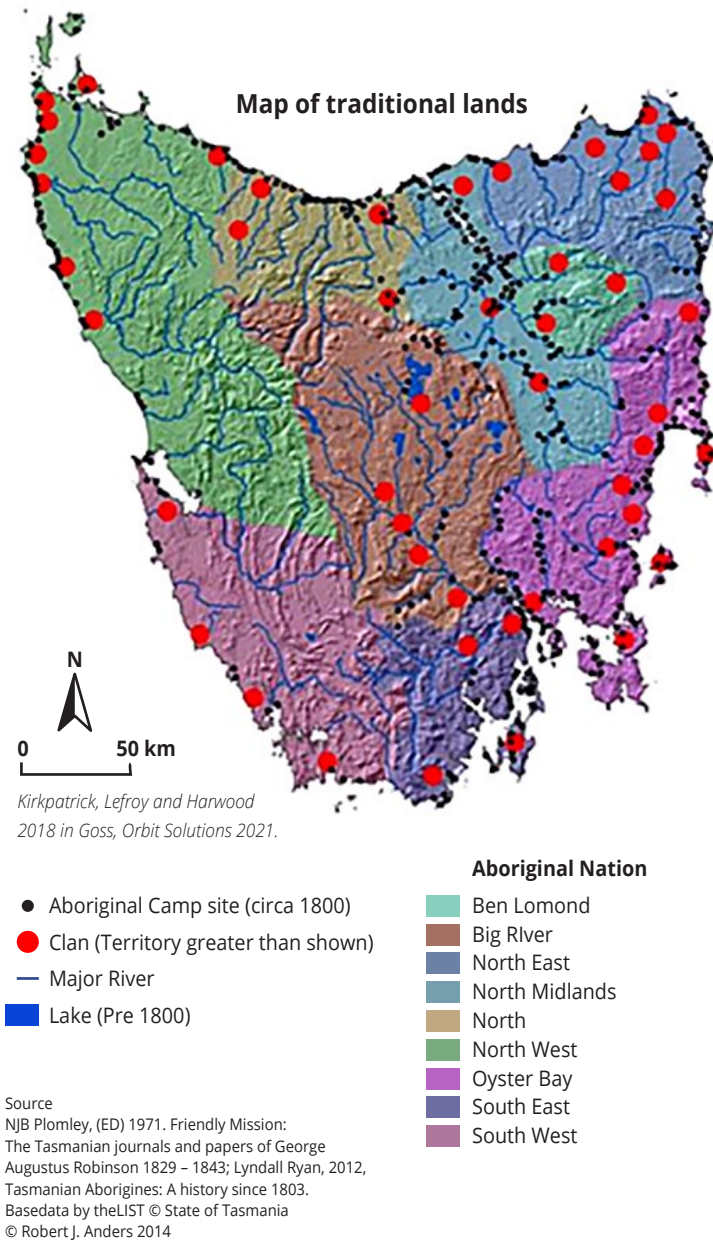
COUNCIL'S VALUES



OUR COMMUNITY

According to the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 8.1% of the West Coast population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is more than the average population percentage for Tasmania (5.4%) and greater than the proportion for Australia as a whole (3.2%). While on the West Coast 82.2% identified as non-Indigenous, a further 9.6% did not state either status.

2021 West Coast, Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)



OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

The *West Coast Community Plan 2025* identified a need for more connected and inclusive communities, with “strong partnerships and stronger communities”. Drawing from this foundational document, the *West Coast 2021–2022 Annual Plan* established directions for creating ‘A Vibrant Community’. A key priority action within this objective was the commencement of planning and engagement to begin development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

A working group consisting of key stakeholder organisations and individuals was convened and has guided the process of developing the West Coast Council’s first ever Reflect RAP. This partnership has been vital for ensuring appropriate representation of local First Nation People in the process, and to ensure their participation within the RAP Working Group (RAPWG). Council has also engaged expert assistance from Reconciliation Tasmania (RecTas) to help further ensure the integrity of the process and the RAP itself.

During this process all stakeholders in the Working Group have strived to ensure best practice and cultural safety when undertaking the actions required. The Working Group has also strived to ensure that the RAP is co-designed *with* the community rather than just *for* the community and they have aimed to ensure that everyone has been heard.

Undertaking a Reconciliation Action Plan has been a decisive step toward ensuring respect, recognition, developing positive relationships and to leveraging opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Palawa and Pakana. It is hoped that through the process of developing the RAP and through its future action items, that there will be further opportunities for truth, sharing, healing and greater unity within the whole of the West Coast community.

Council would like to acknowledge the support received from Reconciliation Tasmania, the ongoing support and guidance of our emerging Elders and the commitment from the RAPWG.



OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

West Coast Council recognises that healing from past injustices and the traumas inflicted may be a long and difficult journey for many First Nation People. We also acknowledge that in this country others have benefited from the stolen opportunities and wealth that originally belonged to the First Nation People. We acknowledge that there is much work to be done to redress these injustices, however, we believe that reconciliation is one of the best ways available to us with which we can assist to promote important healing processes, raise awareness and help close the gap within our sphere of influence.

We hope that through the reconciliation process positive relationships can be fostered, greater respect can be shown, more opportunities can be created and that stronger pathways are developed for First Nation's People to participate in decision making that can empower broader discussion and deliberation about their right to sovereignty and repatriation to their land.

Reconciliation is also a process of 'bringing together' and we look forward to developing more opportunities for coming together in celebration of culture, sharing of stories, mutual appreciation of culture and Country, learning from one another and learning how we can all better care for the environment.

This Reflect RAP signifies our commitment to reconciliation and to the five dimensions of reconciliation which Reconciliation Australia state are Race Relations, Equality and Equity, Institutional Integrity, Unity and Historical Acceptance.

Finally, we acknowledge the potential of the RAP process and its frameworks as a foundational mechanism for locally facilitating greater representation in governance and promoting the administration of justice for First Nations People, whether that may be in the form of a Voice to Parliament and/or Treaty.



REFLECT RAP COMMITMENTS

1.0 RELATIONSHIPS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 Establish mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1.1.1 Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	Review November 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.
	1.1.2 Research best practices and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Review November 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
1.2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	1.2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May annually	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	1.2.2 RAP working group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June, annually	Growth and Change Team Leader
	1.2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June, annually	Lead: GM & Management Team Support: RAPWG
1.3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	1.3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all our staff.	August 2023	Lead: GM & Management Team Support: RAPWG
	1.3.2 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Review November 2023, May 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	1.3.3 Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Review February 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
1.4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	1.4.1 Produce a fact-sheet and/or notice regarding the results of our research relating to best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	July 2024	Lead: Corporate Services Support: RAPWG
	1.4.2 Following the results of our previous review; Circulate information and resources regarding the identified areas of need in our existing HR policies and procedures.	July 2024	Lead: Corporate Services Support: RAPWG

2.0 RESPECT

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
2.1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	2.1.1 Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	Review February 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.
	2.1.2 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	Review February 2024	Lead: Corporate Services Support: RAPWG
	2.1.3 Cultural Safety Workshop for Councillors and non-Aboriginal Community	Completed Review feedback November 2023	Lead: Corporate Services
2.2 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	2.2.1 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Review December 2023	Lead: Corporate Services Support: RAPWG
	2.2.2 Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	Review January 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.
	2.2.3 Develop formal acknowledgements for Council use with guidance from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members for Council to use in print, electronic media and during Council functions and events.	September 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	2.2.4 Conduct Council workshops to prepare email signatures and support and encourage Council staff to prepare email signatures that include personal perspectives and acknowledgements.	October 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.
2.3 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	2.3.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June annually	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	2.3.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June annually	Lead: Corporate Services Support: RAPWG

2.0 RESPECT *CONTINUED ...*

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	2.3.3 RAP Working Group to participate in external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, annually	RAP Working Group
	2.3.4 Conduct an Aboriginal Flag Raising Ceremony displaying the Aboriginal Flag at Miner's Siding, opposite West Coast Council Chambers Queenstown.	First week in July, annually	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
2.4 Undertake a research project to compile and document West Coast Aboriginal history (Prof Ian McFarlane)	2.4.1 Engage with suitably qualified historian/ researcher to commence research project and once complete, review findings with RAPWG.	Review October 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	2.4.2 Use findings from this research project to complete West Coast Aboriginal history boards within the West Coast Visitor Information Centre's 'Reflection Exhibition'.	July 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Team Support: West Coast Visitor Information Centre

3.0 OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3.1 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	3.1.1 Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	Review October 2024	Lead: Corporate Services
	3.1.2 Build an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Review October 2024	Lead: Corporate Services
3.2 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	3.2.1 Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Review October 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	3.2.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Review October 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team

4.0 Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4.1 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	4.1.1 Maintain a RAPWG to govern RAP implementation.	Review April 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	4.1.2 Review and update a Terms of Reference for the RAPWG.	Review April 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	4.1.3 Maintain and Strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAPWG.	Review April 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.
4.2 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	4.2.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	August 2023	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	4.2.2 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Review January 2025	Lead: GM & Management Team
	4.2.3 Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2023	Lead: Growth & Change Dept.
4.3 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and leanings both internally and externally.	4.3.1 Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	June 2023 and annually	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	4.3.2 Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2023 and annually	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team
	4.3.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023	Growth & Change Dept.
4.4 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	4.4.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	October 2024	Lead: Growth and Change Manager Support: Growth and Change Team.

Contact: Skye Thompson-James – Team Leader, Growth and Change

Jaben Golledge – Team Member, Growth and Change

growthandchange@westcoast.tas.gov.au | (03) 6471 4700 | PO Box 63, Queenstown TAS 7467



DANNY GARDNER

ya, I am Danny Gardner, a palawa man, born in Launceston in 1985.

My art is influenced by my Aboriginality. It is a means to express the pride and respect I have for my culture.

My Aboriginality flows deeply through my father. My Grandmother, Furley Gardner came from truwana/Cape Barren Island as was her parents, linking back to

Manalakina; Chief of the Truwulway people and renown warrior from the north-east of Lutruwita.

I hold a deep connection to our country and all our spiritual ancestors. I have strong beliefs. I respect my culture. I am guided by its lore.

My artwork is a gift to you. It is an insight into my life journey.

Danny Gardner (Lutruwita Man)

This artwork was created by, and with, First Nations students of the West Coast and represents the sharing of knowledge. The central handprint represents the knowledge holder and giver, the circles represent the yarning circles in which knowledge is shared, and the outer handprints represent those that knowledge is shared with.



Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia Inaugural Reflect RAP

Reconciliation Australia welcomes West Coast Council to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

West Coast Council joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables West Coast Council to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations West Coast Council, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

