



Reconciliation Action Plan

Reflect July 2019 - July 2020

Our Business:

An Introduction to South Port Community Housing Group

South Port Community Housing Group would like to acknowledge that we operate here today on the land of the Traditional Owners of this land, the Yalukit Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We recognise and respect the significance of their cultural heritage and relationship with the land as we work from the historic meeting place of Emerald Hill.

Who are we?

South Port Community Housing Group (SPCHG) is a not-for-profit organisation that creates and manages affordable, secure, long term rental housing options in the City of Port Phillip for single adults and young people who have faced homelessness and social exclusion. As an organisation, we encourage our tenants to participate in the local community and share in the benefits of inner-city living. We work with people who are most in need of an affordable, supportive place to live, who have few housing options in inner-city.

The Housing Program manages 14 buildings of studio apartments and 2 buildings that have one-bedroom apartments across South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. Although our main function is to provide secure, safe, affordable and long term housing, we also believe that to ensure longevity of stay, it is important to create a sense of community in the South Melbourne and Port Melbourne area. To achieve this, we partake in community building projects throughout the year: BBQs on special occasions, art groups, social meals (in conjugation with Port Phillip council), an annual street party, and more.

The Youth Housing Support Program conducts outreach work with young people, aged 15-25, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Youth Housing Support Program assists young people to:

- obtain safe and secure housing,
- access employment, education and training program,
- solve problem with Centrelink benefits
- access affordable counselling and
- support services
- manage any other issues they may be facing
- access other services which may benefit them through referrals

Currently we operate out of a single office base in South Melbourne and employ twelve people. Our tenancy management workers are community and social workers, working alongside tenants in a collaborative manner to ensure the best outcomes for everyone. Currently none of our employees are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Throughout the implementation of this plan and successive RAPs, we hope that the number of employees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples increases.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Why are we developing a RAP?

We are developing a Reconciliation Action Plan because we believe that all people within the Australian community should have an equal level of opportunity to celebrate their culture and achieve their full potential. We are aware of the ongoing impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We are aware of a history of massacres, the forcible removal of communities from country, the destruction of culture, the removal of children from families and the ongoing discrimination faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise the unique strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in overcoming the traumas of the past. We recognise the unique contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in creating a more equal, inclusive and united Australia.

By developing a RAP, we hope to bring greater awareness of the strengths and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to allow for greater equality in the work place for everyone. Given that our current workforce does not employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we hope that by developing a plan, not only will we increase diversity in the workplace, but also provide a greater service to clients who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Our reconciliation journey so far...

A significant number of our tenants and clients are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are aware of the need for our services to be welcoming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and aim to provide a high level of cultural safety. So far, our current activities and partnerships, to aid in our journey for reconciliation are:

- Improving our office to be welcoming and inclusive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
 - We have placed cultural symbols and flags in the reception, to demonstrate our inclusive practice
- Developing an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples Values Statement
 - We developed an Aboriginal Values statement which informs the policies, actions and guidelines of how we support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as both clients and staff.
- Liaison with local Aboriginal organisations
 - Currently, we have connections with State and Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, however these connections could be greater and more active. We have contracted Bunjil Energy, a company whose primary mission is to create asset bases for First Nation People Groups

- Participation in 2018 NAIDOC Events
 - During NAIDOC week, staff participated in local events within the community
- Staff at SPCHG have undertaken Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training by a Mirri Mirri representative.
- Developing an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples Cultural Safety Framework
 - Our policy team developed a Cultural Safety Framework, to aid our staff members to identify inappropriate cultural practices and practise culturally appropriate safety practices, to provide a space that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel included and wanted within the organisation. The Cultural Safety Framework consists of:

ABORIGINAL VALUES STATEMENT

This is an overarching organisational statement setting out the commitment of SPCHG to provide services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are experienced as culturally safe. The statement has been adopted by the SPCHG Board.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)

The RAP sets out a series of actions that SPCHG will undertake in each financial year to improve the level of cultural safety experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who use SPCHG services. These include actions to increase the level of cultural awareness of SPCHG staff and improve levels of cultural competency. The first RAP will commence in July 2019.

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL SAFETY POLICY

This policy sets out the specific service practices that SPCHG will adopt in providing services that are experienced as culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Like the RAP this policy will evolve over time.

Who are the internal champions of our RAP?

Our RAP was developed and supported by the whole SPCHG team, including the SPCHG Board. The lead person in the development and implementation of our RAP is the CEO, Janet Goodwin. The RAP working group will consist of members from each SPCHG team, and include: CEO Janet Goodwin, Housing Program Staff Member, Youth Program Staff Members, Policy and Corporate Services Staff Members and an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Client/Tenant

Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	OCT 19	Manager, Corporate Services
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	NOV 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
2. Establish a RAP Working Group (RWG)	Form a RWG to support the ongoing development and implementation of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation.	JULY 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	RAP Working Group will meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on the implementation of the RAP	SEP 2019, APRIL 2020	Manager, Corporate Services
	RAP Working Group will establish a Terms of Reference	JULY 2019	Youth Worker (BL)
3. Build internal and external relationships	Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area that we can connect with on our reconciliation journey.	AUG 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we can approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.	SEP 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Approach RAP Organisations and build relationship	OCT 2019-DEC 2019	CEO
	Approach local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations	OCT 2019-DEC 2019	CEO

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
4. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Encourage and provide space for our staff to attend a NRW event.	27 MAY- 3 JUNE 2020	CEO
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 MAY- 3 JUNE 2020	CEO
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	MAY 2020	Administration Coordinator
	Host a morning tea for staff members in recognition of NRW.	27 MAY- 3 JUNE 2020	Team leader (Youth Housing Program)
	Run an event for clients and tenants during NRW week	27 MAY- 3 JUNE 2020	Manager Housing Operations
	Raise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local community	27 MAY- 3 JUNE 2020	Manager Housing Operations
5. Raise internal awareness of our RAP	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments.	JULY 2019	CEO
	Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	JULY 2019	Manager, Corporate Services

Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples cultural learning and development	Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	AUG 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation.	AUG 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation.	AUG 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
7. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities.	7 JULY – 14 JULY 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.	7 JULY – 14 JULY 2019	Administration Coordinator
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.	7 JULY – 14 JULY 2019	Manager, Housing Operations
8. Create culturally appropriate communications and marketing material	Develop Communications and Marketing material in accordance with culturally appropriate language, style and imagery	OCT 2019	Manager, Corporate Services

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area.	SEP 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence.	SEP 2019	Youth Worker (BL)
	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols).	SEP 2019	Manager, Corporate Services
	Invite Traditional Owners to provide a Welcome to Country and explanation of Emerald Hill at our Annual Community Festival	MAR 2020	Manager, Housing Operations
10. Develop and Implement clear cultural safety practices	The RWG will use the cultural safety framework to develop and implement specific practices to provide a space that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can feel safe within SPCHG	MAR 2020	CEO
	Coordinate with local organisation, employees and tenants to investigate how to improve the level of cultural safety within our organisation	APR 2020	Manager, Corporate Services

Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples employment within SPCHG	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	MAY 2020	CEO
	Work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to aid in the recruitment process	MAY 2020	CEO
	Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities.	JUNE 2020	CEO
12. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples business supplier diversity	Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	JULY 2019	CEO
	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	MAY 2020	CEO
13. Explore best practice for community housing organisations	Meet with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to discuss a best practice guide.	MAR 2020	CEO
	Encourage Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) and Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) to develop a best practice guide for providing community housing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	JUNE 2020	CEO
14. Investigate future opportunities for RAP	Develop a paper outlining future opportunities as have been identified throughout our consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This paper will assist in defining actions for subsequent RAPs for our organisation.	APR 2020	Manager, Corporate Services

Governance And Tracking Progress

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
15. Build support for the RAP	Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	MAR 2020	CEO
	Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.	SEP 2019	CEO
	Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	30 SEP 2020	Manager, Corporate Services
16. Review and Refresh RAP	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	MAY 2020	CEO
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review	MAY 2020	CEO
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	JUN 2020	CEO

Contact Details for Public Inquiries About Our RAP

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