

Reconciliation with First Nations People



Our Reconciliation Journey

Southern Grampians Shire has a rich and diverse heritage, with Traditional Owners maintaining their spiritual connection to the land. The original inhabitants, the Gunditjmara, Tjap Wurrung and Jardwadjali people are today represented through Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Barengi Gadjin Land Council.

Southern Grampians Shire Council has progressed community partnerships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to support and encourage a culturally inclusive community. Council is actively engaging with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to ensure that there is an open channel for communication occurring, particularly about the areas of opportunity for Council to improve cultural awareness and develop cultural protocols that could be implemented with project development and community engagement.

Council collaborates and consults with Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation, for guidance and advice on First Nations cultural matters, community-based activities and events. Council is working on strengthening partnerships with Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Barengi Gadjin Land Council to strive for better reconciliation outcomes and engagement to improve Council and community understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, practises, experiences, and histories.

Council is committed to reconciliation and has chosen to develop a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan as part of its initial steps along the reconciliation journey. In the development of this plan, the organisation commits to identifying practical actions that will contribute to reconciliation and improve relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

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Truth Telling

Gunditjmara country has many stories stretching back more than 30000 years. Over time, Gunditjmara Elders and people have told stories of creation; the relationship between people, animals and plants; abundant natural resources; settlement and aquaculture; the devastating impacts of colonisation; the stolen generation and of ongoing intergenerational trauma.

Truth-telling has been understood as being central to reconciliation since the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was established 30 years ago, and even prior to this. More recently, this long-held desire for truth telling was articulated as one of three critical components needed to achieve political transformation in the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart, which called for Voice, Treaty and Truth. The Yoorook Justice commission has heard countless stories of the atrocities committed by colonists on Gunditjmara country, noting that approximately 60% of the massacres of First Nations peoples in Victoria occurred in the South West.

Survivors of the Stolen Generations have significantly contributed to truth-telling and education about their experiences. Many have taken the initiative to publicly share their stories, raising awareness and understanding. They have pioneered new truth-telling methods, such as reclaiming historical sites for healing and creating educational projects and digital archives. Sustained funding and support are crucial to enhance this vital work and prevent the burden from falling solely on those who have been traumatised.

The Ask:



Funding to support development and creation of a permanent truth-telling place on Gunditjmara country in the Southern Grampians Shire, to support reconciliation and healing of our first nations people.