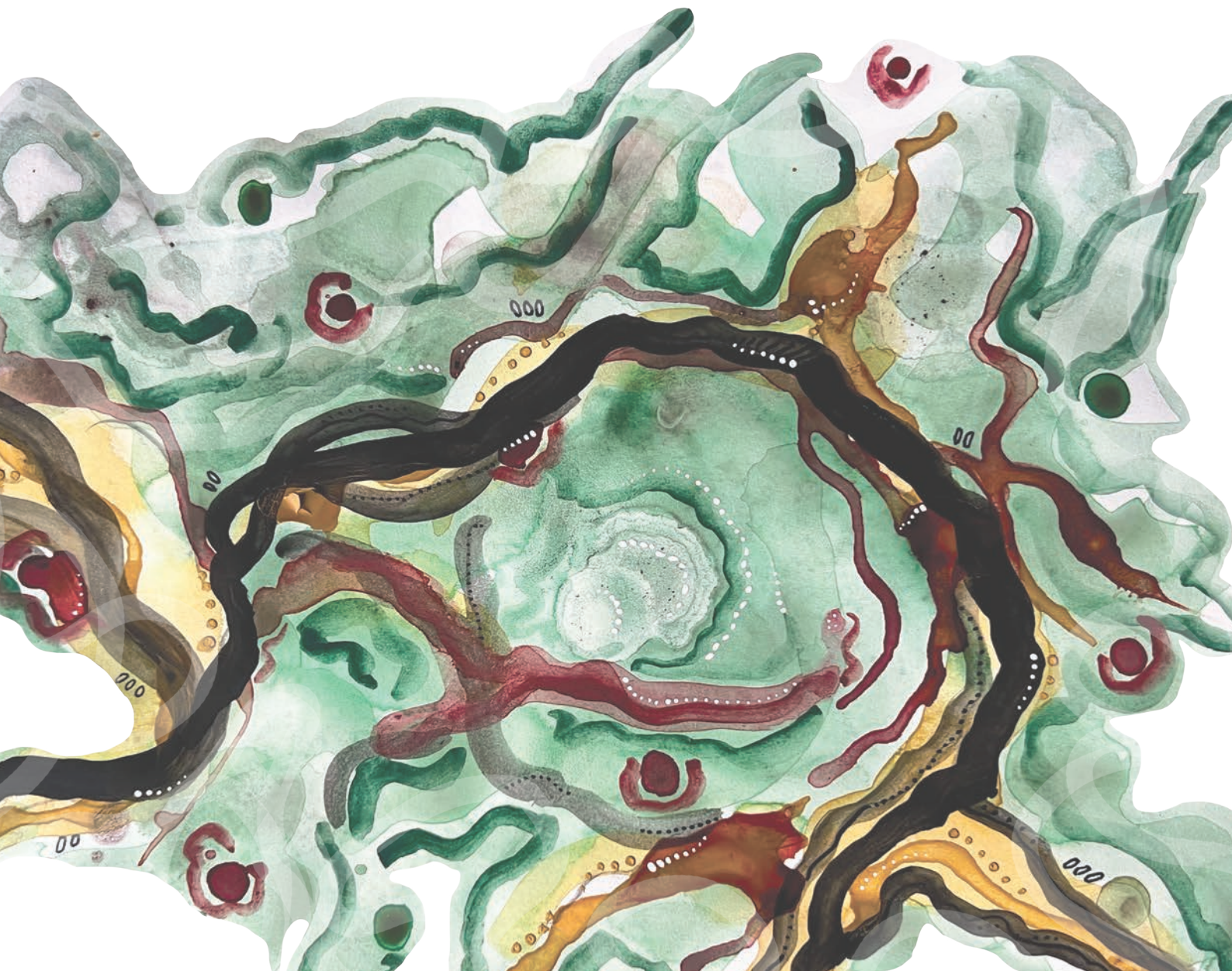




Wingecarribee Shire Council Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan July 2024 – July 2025



Wingecarribee Shire Council acknowledges the Gundungurra and Dharawal people as the Traditional Custodians of this land we now call the Wingecarribee Shire. We pay our respect to Elders both past, present and emerging.

In Gunyunggalung (The Dreaming), there lived one of the Burringilling (clever beings) called Gurangatch. His form was part fish and part reptile, and he had the power to cleave rocks to form rivers.

The artworks in this document were created by Gundungurra artist Helen L. Abbott, and they explore the waterhole and country at the junction of the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee rivers where Gurangatch camped.

A Message from CEO of Reconciliation Australia



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

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

Wingecarribee Shire Council joins a network of more than 3,000 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 Wingecarribee Shire 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 Wingecarribee Shire Council, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



A Message from the Wingecarribee Shire Council General Manager



Lisa Miscamble
Wingecarribee Shire Council
General Manager

I am pleased to present Wingecarribee Shire Council's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This Reflect RAP sets out the steps that Council will take towards reconciliation with First Nations communities in the Wingecarribee Shire.

Through the commitments made in this RAP, we aim to strengthen our existing relationships with First Nations communities and deepen Council's understanding of First Nations perspectives and cultures.

This RAP will help ensure Council's work is inclusive and meets the needs of everyone living in our Shire. The actions outlined in this RAP will support us in delivering our Community Strategic Plan: Wingecarribee 2041, which outlines our vision for the future of our Shire. Our community's vision for 2041 is for us to be a healthy, respectful and productive community, learning and living in harmony, proud of our heritage and nurturing our environment.

We recognise that this RAP is only as meaningful as the actions we take to implement it and are excited for the whole of organisation journey that we will go on over the next 12 months as part of our commitment to reconciliation.

Wingecarribee Shire Council is looking forward to working in partnership with First Nations people to understand more about the cultural significance of our area, to acknowledge and respect First Nations heritage, and contribute towards a culturally safe Shire for First Nations people.

Our business

Wingecarribee Shire Council is a local government authority in NSW responsible for providing services to residents, businesses, customers and visitors to the Wingecarribee Shire.

The current Wingecarribee Shire Council came into being on 1 January 1981 following the amalgamation of Mittagong Shire Council, Bowral Municipal Council and the former Wingecarribee Shire Council.

The Wingecarribee Shire local government area is located 75 km from the south-western fringe of Sydney and 110 km from Sydney's central business district. The Shire has a total area of approximately 2,700 km², 56 per cent of which is north of the Wingecarribee River. It is comparable in size to that of urban Sydney, averaging 55 km from east to west and 45 km from north to south, with its geographic centre north-west of Berrima and its demographic centre to the south-east of Bowral.

The main towns are Bowral, Moss Vale and Mittagong. The Shire also has smaller villages including Bundanoon, Hill Top, Yerrinbool, Colo Vale, Robertson, Berrima, New Berrima, Exeter, Burrawang, Penrose, Willow Vale, Alpine, Balaclava, Renwick, Wingello, Sutton Forest, Avoca, Fitzroy Falls, Balmoral, Medway, Wildes Meadow, Kangaloon, and East Kangaloon.

Wingecarribee Shire Council serves over 52,000 residents. 6.6% of Shire residents identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

We are committed to making a positive impact in our community. We do this by working closely with the local community.

Our core values are resilience, empathy, sustainability, pride, efficiency, courage and teamwork. Our values have been developed by our people, and we use them to guide our behaviours.

Wingecarribee Shire Council employs 478 full-time equivalent employees, 5 of whom identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our work includes providing and managing services, facilities, resources and supports to benefit the community, planning for the future and representing the interests of Wingecarribee Shire residents to other levels of government. We do this work across the Shire, including at our Civic Centre in Moss Vale, resource recovery centre, visitor information centre, depots, water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, saleyards and libraries.

Our RAP

Wingecarribee Shire Council is developing a RAP to prioritise and progress reconciliation in our local area. As a Council, we value, acknowledge and respect First Nations peoples in our community. Through this RAP, we want to focus on how we deliver services and build connections with local First Nations communities, with a view to improving how we support and engage with First Nations residents.

Our RAP Champion, who will drive internal engagement and awareness of the RAP, is our Director Communities and Place. One of the preliminary responsibilities of our RAP Champion is to support the formation of our RAP Working Group, ensuring good representation in the group of First Nations people living in the Wingecarribee Shire and Council staff from a range of departments. Invitations to join the RAP Working Group will be distributed at the Wingecarribee Aboriginal Community Cultural Centre. Representation will also be sought from members of the Woonjeegaribay Conciliation Group.

Ensuring good representation of First Nations people and Council staff from across a range of departments on the RAP Working Group will help to embed reconciliation across the day-to-day activities of Council and ensure that reconciliation is understood to be everyone's responsibility. In implementing our RAP, responsibility for

deliverables has been assigned to members of the senior leadership team in acknowledgement of the strong support the RAP has from the Executive Team. This distribution of tasks amongst senior leadership will also support regular reporting on progress made towards our RAP deliverables.

Our RAP will support us to acknowledge and respect, listen and learn from First Nations communities locally as we work together to improve outcomes with First Nations peoples. With respect to our unique towns, villages and natural environment, we aim to identify, protect and promote places of significant cultural heritage, including First Nations heritage.

In developing this RAP, Council staff have been able to reflect upon our actions to date. We look forward, over the next 12 months and beyond, to strengthening our existing relationships with local First Nations people and working together to create a more culturally safe and inclusive Council for First Nations people in the Wingecarribee Shire.

Our partnerships/current activities

Wingecarribee Shire Council has a long history of working closely with Traditional Owners, Elders and First Nations community groups and community members to achieve a range of community outcomes.

Over the years, Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officers have worked collaboratively with Traditional Owners, the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, National Parks and Wildlife Services, Department of Planning Industry and Environment, Wingecarribee Aboriginal Community Cultural Centre committee, Wingecarribee Aboriginal Network and the local Aboriginal Community.

Council hosts an annual NAIDOC Flag Raising Ceremony to commemorate and celebrate the community's achievements

and connection to Country and culture. The Flag Raising has in recent years been accompanied by a NAIDOC Art Exhibition at the Council's Civic Centre, showcasing the diverse talents of local First Nations artists. This event, delivered in close partnership with Gundungurra Elders and First Nations community members, encourages the community to celebrate the talents of local Aboriginal artists, share advice and cultural knowledge, and reflect on the positive things happening in the community.

In partnership with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and services, Council also supports the delivery of services to local Aboriginal communities. Over 60 First Nations families are registered for Dhungung Food Share, which provides weekly food hampers to those who need it. Community members are also connected to Council, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and services through other avenues, like the Guula Ngurra National Park's initiatives and the new Mullyang Bushcare Group and community planning days.

An Acknowledgement of Country has been included on Council's website for some years, and our Council meetings commence with an Acknowledgement of Country. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags have been proudly displayed outside and within the Civic Centre for many years.

RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	August 2024	Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries Support: Community Development Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	September 2024	Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries Support: Community Development Officer
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	May 2025	Lead: Coordinator Communications and Engagement Support: Community Development Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week event. 	27 May-3 June, 2025	Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries Support: RAP Working Group Members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 	27 May-3 June, 2025	Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries Support: RAP Working Group Members
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff and to the Community, including publishing our RAP on Council's website. 	July 2024	Lead: Coordinator Communications and Engagement Support: Digital Communications Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	August 2024	Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries Support: Community Development Officer



RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	August 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. 	September 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Coordinator Human Resources</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	September 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Coordinator Human Resources</p>



RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. 	October 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group Members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	October 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Learning and Development Officer</p>
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. 	October 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	October 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Learning and Development Officer</p>
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Coordinator Communications and Engagement</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area. 	June 2025	<p>Lead: Coordinator Communications and Engagement</p> <p>Support: Coordinator Human Resources</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	July 2024 & 2025	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group Members</p>

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	November 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	November 2024	<p>Lead: Manager People and Culture</p> <p>Support: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p>
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	January 2025	<p>Lead: Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Support: Coordinator Procurement and Contracts</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	January 2025	<p>Lead: Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Support: Coordinator Procurement and Contracts</p>



GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	August 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	July 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: RAP Working Group members</p>

GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Survey. 	1 August 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Survey to Reconciliation Australia by 30 September. 	August 2024	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	March 2025	<p>Lead: Manager Community Life and Libraries</p> <p>Support: Community Development Officer</p>

For more information about this document, contact:

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