Mount Alexander Shire Council

Reconciliation Plan
2023–2026

Walk together with courage and purpose

Working together for a healthy, connected shire

Mount Alexander
Shire Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Mount Alexander Shire Council acknowledges that the traditional custodians of this land, the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung peoples, proudly survive. We acknowledge their continued practise of custom and their close cultural, spiritual, physical, social, historical and economic relationship with the land and waters that make up their Country, which includes Mount Alexander Shire.

Council recognises the Victorian Government's Recognition and Settlement with both the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and the Taungurung Land and Waters Council.

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Native wreath – Boorp Boorp Boondyil exhibition launch

Front cover: Sculpture by Artist Alvin Darcy Briggs – 2022 Pyrography on wood
Depicting the three sacred leaves of the Dja Dja Wurrung- Bulortj (Cherry Ballart) represents community, the Dju Wurrk (Manna Gum) represents Elders, wisdom and knowledge and the Warrarrak (Silver Wattle) depicts the resources of the land. For information about the Boorp Boorp Boondyil exhibition visit: www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Explore-the-shire/Our-exhibitions-and-event-venues/Boorp-Boorp-Boondyil.

Inside cover acknowledgement artwork by local artist Dja Dja Wurrung artist Daikota Nelson.

Mayor's message

Councillor Rosie Annear
Mayor
Mount Alexander Shire Council

On behalf of Council, I am proud to share our Reconciliation Plan 2023-2026 with our community.

This plan commits us to continue working with our First Nations community with courage and dedication, and walking beside them for a shared vision of reconciliation here on beautiful Djaara Country.

We know that by working together, and remaining open and curious, we can help shape a better and more inclusive future for all.

Some of the ways we are already working together include listening to and being guided by our Traditional Owners and First Nations community, working in genuine partnership locally, not shying away from truth-telling, and always trying to be inclusive, rather than divisive.

On a personal note, it has been an honour during my Mayoral year to co-chair the Indigenous Roundtable with Uncle Rick Nelson, and on occasion Aunty Kerri Douglas, to be part of the co-design for our yearly Australia Day - Survival Day event, and to speak from the heart on Sorry Day.

Through these meetings and events, I have learned so much from our First Nations Elders and community, about how to really listen, about how to feel sorry in a way that helps, about how to reflect on painful things, about how to put myself and my own feelings aside and make space for others, about the many different things reconciliation means to different people, and about what I can do to be an ally and a leader in this space. I thank all those who have contributed to this journey, and who have shared knowledge, patience, forgiveness, and grief with me.

Council is lucky to have such strong relationships with our local First Nations community and will continue to nurture these relationships, and learn and grow from them.

As identified in this plan, we will:

- Continue to listen, respond to, and be led by local Traditional Owners and First Nations community in the way we work with and for them.
- Lead a culturally safe community, with a shared vision for reconciliation.
- Continue to provide opportunities for our whole community to learn about local indigenous culture, and to walk together towards reconciliation.
- Foster wellbeing and opportunities for First Nations kids and young people, and ensure all kids and young people have opportunities to care for Country and learn about local First Nations culture.

I look forward to being a part of this work, as Mayor, Councillor, mum, ally, community member – whatever my role may be.

CEO's message

Darren Fuzzard
Chief Executive Officer
Mount Alexander Shire Council

On behalf of the staff of Mount Alexander Shire Council, it gives me great pleasure to commit us all to delivering the Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan 2023-2026.

This is our Council's second Reconciliation Plan and builds on the outstanding work of staff and community members over many years that has created meaningful progress towards reconciliation with First Nations people in our community.

Importantly, this plan was developed through many conversations with Traditional Owners, First Nations community members, reconciliation partners and members of the Indigenous Roundtable. Feedback from the wider community has also helped to ensure that the actions we have committed to will have a strong positive impact in our community. In addition, I am very proud to say that the plan has been met with great energy and commitment throughout our organisation. The plan has been structured around three central themes:

1. Partnership

2. Recognition

3. Empowerment.

Underneath these, we have 11 objectives, and 45 actions to deliver on those objectives.

This plan furthers the many successes of Council's Reconciliation Plan 2020-2023, and while it is important for us to recognise and celebrate our past achievements, it is equally important to look to the future and provide greater opportunities for First Nations people, families, communities and organisations to thrive within our shire.

Traditional Owner's Message

Uncle Rick Nelson
Djaara Traditional Owner, Co-chair of the Indigenous Roundtable

As a Djaara Elder and Traditional Owner, Mount Alexander Shire resident for over 50 years, and as the co-chair on the shire's Indigenous Roundtable for over 10 years, it is my honour to offer my personal endorsement of this plan.

Djaara people have been the custodians of the lands and waters of Mount Alexander Shire for 70,000 years. My ancestors practiced ceremonies and cared for Country for uncounted generations before white settlement.

More recently my father, Uncle Brien Nelson, pioneered cultural education and reconciliation between Djaara people and other Australians. I believe in that same culture of passing down knowledge to the generations who will step up and take up the mantle of reconciliation. It is the culture of our ancestors. In keeping with tradition, I continue my dad's legacy in this role as a Traditional Owner.

For over 10 years I have partnered with this Council to deliver important initiatives. Among many, we have seen the Indigenous Roundtable, Survival Day, Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week, and most recently the Boorp Boorp Boondyil exhibition in Castlemaine's Market Building.

The previous plan saw a long-held aspiration of my father's come to fruition when we completed Boorp Boorp Boondyil.

Under this new Reconciliation Plan this wonderful space will keep educating and inspiring residents and visitors alike. It is a place to share my culture, and pass down knowledge to the next generation.

After all this time working in partnership with the Council, I know how strong their drive for reconciliation is. The way that Council has stepped up again and again inspires me to recommit and pursue reconciliation in my community.

And that is the third piece of this reconciliation puzzle. We truly walk together on the journey. The whole community drives Reconciliation, not just Traditional Owners and Council. It is a unique three-way partnership.

We wouldn't have come this far without this partnership. We won't be able to do it in future without it either. This plan understands that connection. It harnesses the community energy I see every day. It's a great map as we walk together towards Reconciliation.

I look forward to the next three years of this journey, and I'm excited to see what comes next.

About the plan

The Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan 2023-2026 provides Council with a framework that brings together our reconciliation initiatives, reflects the various processes Council participates in with its partners, and also includes our responsibilities under the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Waters Council Recognition and Settlement Agreements.

Building upon the success of the Reconciliation Plan 2020-2023, it captures the reconciliation initiatives we are delivering as well as the aspirational goals of what we would like to deliver, both internally as an organisation and externally with our partners and for our community.

Our vision for this plan is to 'Walk together with courage and purpose'.

This vision has taken shape over time through reflection and discussion with our local Elders. It is a statement that we collectively believe captures the spirit in which we work: in partnership, facing the challenges unique to our own perspective, but always driven by a shared goal.

The Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan is structured around three core themes:

- Partnership
- Recognition
- Empowerment

Underneath these three themes are 11 key objectives and 45 actions to address them.

Some of the actions included in this plan are initiatives we are already implementing. These have been included to ensure we maintain our commitment to delivering them.

Uncle Rick Nelson, Welcome to Country ceremony – Australia Day - Survival Day event

Reconciliation artwork

The Reconciliation artwork on page 10 is by Dja Dja Wurrung artist Daikota Nelson. It represents the vision and themes of this plan.

The three symbols reflect the purpose and intention of each of the three themes: Partnership, Recognition and Empowerment.

Partnership – represents collaboration between First Nations and other Australians, in coming together to progress reconciliation.

Recognition – depicts history and cultural practice deeply rooted in Djaara Country.

Empowerment – represents tools and weapons traditionally used by First Nations people to hunt, gather, nourish and protect themselves.

The footprints, the gum leaves and the snake represent the people, plants and animals of the land, and together they make up the shape of a shield which represents the courage we draw upon to keep fighting for a more reconciled Australia.

Our reconciliation partners

The partners referred to in this plan are those groups we are working with on our reconciliation journey.

There are three main partner organisations referenced throughout the plan. Outlined below is a description of these three organisations and our relationship with them.

Djaara
BALAKI WUKA

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA)*

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation is the registered legal entity that represents Dja Dja Wurrung people, now trading under the name DJAARA.

DJAARA was incorporated on 10 September 2004 and was granted RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) status in September 2008 over a large area of Central Victoria that encompasses the Mount Alexander Shire.

In 2013 DJAARA entered into a historic Native Title settlement with the State of Victoria called a '*Recognition and Settlement Agreement*' which secured a range of important rights for Dja Dja Wurrung people, some of which are the responsibility of Local Government to uphold. The agreement is a means by which Dja Dja Wurrung traditions and the unique relationship of Dja Dja Wurrung people to Djaara Country are recognised and protected.

We work with DJAARA as the Registered Aboriginal Party covering most of Mount Alexander Shire on cultural heritage, and as the Traditional Owner Group Entity on matters of land management, use of traditional language, enterprise opportunities, the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, cultural protocol and Dja Dja Wurrung rights.

We are committed to strengthening our partnership with DJAARA, and have commenced discussions to jointly explore the potential for a local Treaty-like agreement to be developed as part of their '*Balaki Wurrekang Nation Building*' project. The guiding principle of these discussions is an '*Opportunity to enter into a mutual agreement on equal footing*'. Through this agreement making process, we aim to develop a stronger relationship and identify opportunities to support the self-determination, goals and aspirations of DJAARA, in recognition that doing so delivers benefit for the entire community.

* Throughout the plan we refer to this partner as DJAARA, as distinct from 'Djaara' which is used when referring to the entire clan group or their Country.

Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation (NEAC)

'Nalderun' is a Dja Dja Wurrung word meaning 'all together'.

NEAC is an Aboriginal Corporation that operates holistic education, wellbeing and cultural services for First Nations people in Mount Alexander Shire. The work undertaken by NEAC is First Nations designed and led, centred on First Nations children and young people, the First Nations community and the broader community.

NEAC is led by a board made up of First Nations Elders and people living on Djaara Country, including our senior Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson, and trusted allies. The Friends of Nalderun committee is made up of volunteers and partner organisations, including Mount Alexander Shire Council.

We have enjoyed a meaningful and productive relationship with NEAC (previously known as Nalderun Aboriginal Services) for over 15 years, and prior to the formation of Nalderun Aboriginal Services, informally with its members since 2000. NEAC acts as both a collective body for First Nations people living on Djaara Country within the Mount Alexander Shire, and the primary Aboriginal Corporation delivering education services in the Shire.

This means we consult with NEAC on matters to gain First Nations perspectives, and also advocate for and support the vital work that NEAC does in our shire. NEAC Chairperson and Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson is also the Co-chair of the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable, alongside the Mayor of Mount Alexander Shire.

Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLAWC)

Taungurung Land and Waters Council is the registered legal entity that represents Taungurung people.

Previously known as Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, TLAWC was incorporated in 2003 and was granted RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) status in July 2009. The Taungurung RAP area covers a large section of north central Victoria to the east of the Mount Alexander Shire, including a small portion that overlaps with our shire boundary, encompassing the small township of Barfold.

In October 2018, TLAWC entered into a Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the state which has now been formalised.

In June of 2019, we participated in the TLAWC 'Permanent Councils' Forum'. The forum aimed to start the conversations with the Local Governments under the TLAWC RAP area and further develop partnerships.

The Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable

We also work in partnership with a range of other stakeholders through their membership of the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable:

- Dhelkaya Health
- Castlemaine Secondary College
- Bendigo District Aboriginal Corporation
- Castlemaine Police
- Castlemaine Community House
- Department of Education
- ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Recognition)

Our vision

Walk together with courage and purpose

Themes

Theme one: Partnership

Aim

Develop and maintain strong partnerships that foster a collaborative approach to reconciliation.

Objectives

- Demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation
- Invest in our partnerships
- Be a strong and unified partner

Objective	Action	Responsibility
1.1 Demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation Ensure effective mechanisms and supports are in place to enable success	**1.1.1 Indigenous Roundtable** Host the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable to: • Work collaboratively with our partners and other relevant stakeholders to address the needs of the local First Nations community. • Progress Council initiatives that recognise and celebrate First Nations people, culture and history within the Mount Alexander Shire.	Chief Executive Officer
	1.1.2 Local Government Reconciliation Network Co-coordinate the delivery of the Central Victorian Local Government Reconciliation Network to inform the delivery of best practice activities that support reconciliation.	Community Partnerships
	1.1.3 Reporting structure Implement an organisational wide system for improved reporting, monitoring and reviewing of the Reconciliation Plan.	Community Partnerships
	1.1.4 Improved processes Develop improved processes to enhance Land Use Activity Agreements (LUAA) audit and record keeping.	Director Infrastructure and Development

Objective	Action	Responsibility
1.2 Invest in our partnerships Work with our partners in a way that is flexible and responsive to their needs.	**1.2.1 Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA)** Continue to meet our responsibilities under the Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement 2013 (RSA) Local Government Engagement Strategy in relation to strategic planning, procurement, initiatives and works undertaken within DJAARA's prescribed Recognition and Settlement Agreement area.	Whole of Council
	1.2.2 Explore the development of a local agreement between Council and DJAARA which fosters and strengthens a two way partnership.	Chief Executive Officer
	1.2.3 Host an event for Councillors and DJAARA Board members to strengthen relationships and build cultural understanding, once per Council term.	Governance
	1.2.4 Convene 6 monthly meetings between Council's Executive Management Team and DJAARA Executives to explore opportunities that deliver increased community benefit.	Chief Executive Officer
	1.2.5 Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation • Through continued partnership, deliver the support, initiatives and joint projects as determined within the *Mount Alexander Shire Council and Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation Memorandum of Understanding 2022 – 2025*. • Explore opportunities to support the strategic priorities of NEAC as outlined in the *Nalderun Education Aboriginal Education Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025*.	Community Partnerships
	1.2.6 Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLAWC) • Continue to meet our responsibilities under the TLAWC Recognition and Settlement Agreement in relation to initiatives and works undertaken within TLAWC's prescribed Recognition and Settlement Agreement area. • Participate in TLAWC Permanent Councils Forum.	Whole of Council

Objective	Action	Responsibility
1.3 Be a strong and unified partner Inform, educate and build the cultural competency of the whole organisation.	**1.3.1 Reconciliation Plan Working Group (RPWG)** Invest in the development of the RPWG and build the capacity of RPWG members to be reconciliation champions.	Community Partnerships
	1.3.2 Acknowledgement of Country Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol resource for a Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Community Partnerships
	1.3.3 Cultural competency Improve the cultural competency of Councillors and Council staff through delivery of a program of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and competency training with an emphasis on procuring training from our partners.	Organisational Capability
	1.3.4 Communications and Engagement strategy Implement a Communications and Engagement strategy that ensures First Nations people's rights, aspirations and perspectives are considered when developing Council plans and strategies. This includes ensuring First Nation representation on the reference group to guide the implementation of the strategy.	Communications and Customer Service

Children's activity, Council's annual Reconciliation Week program.

Aunty Kerri Douglas, Welcome to Country ceremony - opening of Council's Peace and Reconciliation playspace, Victory Park.

Theme two: Recognition

Aim

Acknowledge our history and celebrate our local Indigenous culture, past and present.

Objectives

- Acknowledge our history and enable truth telling
- Celebrate culture
- Protect our history
- Value and utilise knowledge

Objective	Action	Responsibility
2.1 Acknowledge our history and enable truth telling Explore our shared history and its lasting impacts to further healing, justice and reconciliation.	**2.1.1 National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day** In partnership with Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation continue to deliver the Mount Alexander Shire National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day program.	Community Partnerships
	2.1.2 Survival Day Continue to partner with Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation to shape the inclusion of Survival Day in Council's dual named Australia Day – Survival Day event each year.	Communications and Customer Service

Objective	Action	Responsibility
2.2 Celebrate culture Recognise our Traditional Owners, celebrate their culture and ensure our stories of place are captured.	**2.2.1 Signage** Support the development of shire entry signage and explore opportunities for funding to implement this initiative.	Communications and Customer Service
	2.2.2 Djaara History Support initiatives that showcase the historical presence of Djaara and acknowledge historical Djaara figures of significance.	Economy and Culture
	2.2.3 Boorp Boorp Boondyil Promote the educational aspect of the Boorp Boorp Boondyil exhibition and explore aligned opportunities to encourage community learning, training and resource development.	Economy and Culture
	2.2.4 Community initiatives Support community led initiatives that recognise and celebrate Djaara culture and amplify stories of place.	Community Partnerships
	2.2.5 NAIDOC Week Deliver a Council led initiative to acknowledge and celebrate NAIDOC Week annually.	Community Partnerships

Council's Reconciliation Stone, Civic Centre Castlemaine

Objective	Action	Responsibility
2.3 Protect our history Protect and preserve Country and culture for our future generations.	**2.3.1 Cultural Heritage** Support the ongoing management and protection of cultural heritage sites, and undertake Cultural Heritage Management Plans as required.	Whole of Council
	2.3.2 Strategic Planning Ensure relevant strategic planning tools and methods are utilised to recognise and protect places of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage.	Development Services
	2.3.3 Traditional Language Place Naming Advocate for the naming of new sites, and the dual naming of significant sites within the Mount Alexander Shire to include or reinstate traditional language place names.	Governance
2.4 Value and utilise knowledge Be guided by cultural knowledge, and recognise its worth.	**2.4.1 Utilise Cultural Knowledge** Explore opportunities to align our land management practices with the goals identified in *Dhelkunya Dja* – the DJAARA Country Plan 2014-2034 and associated strategies, and support DJAARA to see their vision and aspirations for managing Country realised.	Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
	2.4.2 Strategic Planning Encourage and enable early engagement with our reconciliation partners, and explore the co-design of place-based planning approaches.	Development Services
	2.4.3 Indigenous Burning In partnership with the member agencies of the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, continue to incorporate Indigenous burning practices into our fire prevention strategies.	Community Partnerships
	2.4.4 Remuneration and Consultation Ensure culturally appropriate consultation processes and remuneration is provided to the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) and Traditional Owners to participate in meaningful engagement.	Whole of Council

Nalderun Women's dancers, performing a cleansing of the ceremonial area

Theme three: Empowerment

Aim

Build an inclusive and empowered community where First Nations people can thrive.

Objectives

- Support self determination
- Empower First Nations children and youth
- Enhance and increase opportunities
- Engage the community in reconciliation

Objective	Action	Responsibility
3.1 Support self determination Using inclusive practice, support our First Nations people to freely determine their own economic, social and cultural development.	**3.1.1 Employment** Pursue opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace.	Organisational Capability
	3.1.2 Procurement Identify and implement measures that strengthen economic benefits for the Djaara community through the procurement program, and embed this into policy at the time of review.	Procurement
	3.1.3 Business Development Explore a First Nations led option within the Business Mentoring Program.	Economy and Culture
	3.1.4 Business Recognition Explore opportunities to increase recognition of First Nations enterprises through the Mount Alexander Business Awards program.	Economy and Culture
	3.1.5 Tourism Support the delivery of Djaara led cultural tourism products and initiatives.	Economy and Culture

Objective	Action	Responsibility
3.2 Empower First Nations children and youth Create opportunities for First Nations children and youth to be supported and celebrated.	**3.2.1 The Meeting Place** Continue to implement initiatives that support First Nations children through The Meeting Place program, in partnership with Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation.	Community Partnerships
	3.2.2 Engagement Establish processes to ensure First Nation children's voices are heard to help guide the development of Council plans and strategies that impact them.	Community Partnerships
	3.2.3 Celebrate First Nations children Deliver an event that celebrates National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day.	Community Partnerships
	3.2.4 Schools Encourage and support local schools to deliver initiatives that increase cultural safety and awareness.	Economy and Culture
	3.2.5 First Nations Youth Leaders Continue to support the First Nations Youth Leadership Program as a core part of Council's State Government funded Youth Development program *Engage! 2022-2024*	Community Partnerships
3.3 Enhance and increase opportunities Enhance and increase opportunities for First Nations people to benefit from the Arts, Cultural Development and Events programs.	**3.3.1 Opportunities** Provide a range of opportunities and platforms for First Nations art and culture to be recognised and celebrated.	Economy and Culture
	3.3.2 Public Art Support First Nations artists in accordance with the Public Art Policy	Economy and Culture
	3.3.3 Events Investigate opportunities to better support First Nations artists and enterprises through the Venues and Events program.	Communications and Customer Service

Objective	Action	Responsibility
3.4 Engage the community in reconciliation Lead an inclusive and culturally safe community with a shared vision for reconciliation.	**3.4.1 Build Community Capacity** Provide and promote opportunities for the wider community to develop a deeper understanding of First Nations culture and help to build the community's capacity to address reconciliation.	Community Partnerships
	3.4.2 Showcase our work Explore opportunities to showcase and celebrate our reconciliation journey and share our stories with the broader community.	Community Partnerships
	3.4.3 Resource and Inform the Community Promote resources and educational opportunities that enable the community to be well informed about State and Federal Government treaties.	Community Partnerships
	3.4.4 Combat Racism Establish Council's role as a leader in combatting racism within the community, by producing and publicising anti-racism protocols.	Economy and Culture

Attendees at Council's Australia Day - Survival Day event

Glossary of terms

Throughout our Reconciliation Plan we refer to our First Nations Peoples in a number of ways. This reflects the gradual evolution of what is considered to be the most appropriate terminology, and our desire to be respectful of the preferences of our local Elders at the time, or the different roles within cultural structures. Here is an outline of the different terminology used throughout the plan, including definitions, and why we've used these terms in the plan.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' refer to different groups of peoples. Aboriginal refers to the original peoples of mainland Australia. Torres Strait Islander refers to the original peoples of the 274 islands located north of Australia, in the Torres Strait. This term is used when referring to the title of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, and when referencing employment and training related actions, as this aligns with the terminology used in those sectors.

First Nations People

In recent times, 'First Nations People' has emerged as a name that recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples of Australia. Using the term 'First Nations People' recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the sovereign people of this land, and beyond that, it also recognises various language groups as separate and unique sovereign nations. This term is now widely considered to be the preferred term for respectfully referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Guided by conversation with our local Elders throughout the development of this plan, when referring to people, as distinct to culture and Country, we will use the term First Nations.

Indigenous

The true definition of 'Indigenous' means 'belonging or occurring naturally in a particular place' but the term became popular in Australia as a convenient all-inclusive term to describe both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

However, we now understand that some First Nations People consider the term 'Indigenous' to be offensive, because of the scientific connotations which have been used historically to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of the 'flora and fauna' rather than the human population of Australia. Sometimes, it is also seen as a problematically homogenising label for what are, in reality, highly diverse identities.

In our plan we make reference to the Indigenous Roundtable. The Indigenous Roundtable was named in collaboration with our local senior Elder in 2013, when the use of this term was not understood to be offensive to some, and considered to be inclusive of all First Nations people.

Traditional Owners

A 'Traditional Owner' is an Aboriginal person directly descended from the original Aboriginal inhabitants of a culturally defined area of land or country, and has a cultural association with this country that derives from the traditions, observances, customs, beliefs or history of the original Aboriginal inhabitants of the area.

Our plan uses the term Traditional Owner when referring to direct descendants of the clan groups within Mount Alexander Shire, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung clans, who hold the authority to speak on behalf of their clan group.

Elder

An 'Elder' is defined as a significant person within Aboriginal communities who is respected and consulted due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background and insight. Often described as the "custodians of knowledge" of a community. Elders are chosen and accepted by their own communities and are highly respected. The term Elder does not necessarily equate with age.

Our plan refers to our senior Dja Dja Wurrung Elder, which has been the customary term we use as an alternative to Traditional Owner.

Uncle Rick Nelson, Survival Day Dawn Ceremony on Liyanganyuk Banyul (Mt Alexander)

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