

Unity Housing Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

April 2022 to March 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

Unity Housing operates across many of the traditional First Nations lands in South Australia.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout the lands on which we work and live, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land.



Message from our Chair and CEO

We are delighted to present our 2022 Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Since Unity Housing's formation in 2008 we have proudly provided safe and affordable homes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples in South Australia. Around 12% of our tenants identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Unity Housing is continually seeking to improve the quality of the services we provide. We pride ourselves on strong governance and a leadership that supports continuous improvement and ensures that we promote inclusive and culturally-safe values and practices for all of our stakeholders. We are committed to the understanding and celebration of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories and the importance of reconciliation for all Australians.

Our Reflect RAP formalises Unity Housing's commitment to reconciliation and to ensuring that our services are culturally appropriate and accessible for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are proud to be an inclusive and respectful organisation that values the input and involvement of our culturally diverse communities in the design of our housing services.

Implementing this Reflect RAP is an important step in our reconciliation process. Unity Housing commits to deepening our organisation's cultural understanding and improving our practices. Through it, we will strengthen existing relationships and build new ones, respect and celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, and increase opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Leigh Garrett



Matthew Woodward



Leigh Garrett

Chairman
Unity Housing Company



Matthew Woodward

Chief Executive Officer
Unity Housing Company

Message from Aunty Yvonne Agius

As an Aboriginal Elder and Community Leader, and also as a tenant of Unity Housing, I have been pleased to provide cultural guidance and advice for the development of their first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Unity Housing provides homes for a large number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tenants in South Australia and they are striving to do it well. Through the commitments in this RAP, Unity Housing is seeking to work more closely with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to deliver better housing services and to support the cause of reconciliation. I am especially pleased with the RAP's intention to reach our younger Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, because they are our future.

I look forward to supporting Unity Housing and their staff to deliver their RAP commitments and for this to result in better housing services for our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aunty Yvonne Agius

Cultural Advisor and Tenant Representative

Message from CEO Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Unity Housing to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Unity Housing joins a network of more than 1,100 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 Unity Housing 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 Unity Housing, 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



Karen Mundine





Jordan Lovegrove

About the artist and our story

The artwork depicted in this document has been specially designed and produced for Unity Housing to highlight local Aboriginal art and culture. We are delighted and proud to feature this bespoke artwork created for our Reflect RAP.

The artwork by Ngarrindjeri artist Jordan Lovegrove of Dreamtime Creative shows people on a housing journey from homelessness to safe short-term accommodation to a long-term place to call home. The large central meeting place represents Unity Housing providing safe places for people to live. The meeting places on the bottom left are homeless people and communities at the start of their housing journey. The meeting places on the upper right show these same people and communities after receiving support from Unity Housing.



Our business and our sphere of influence

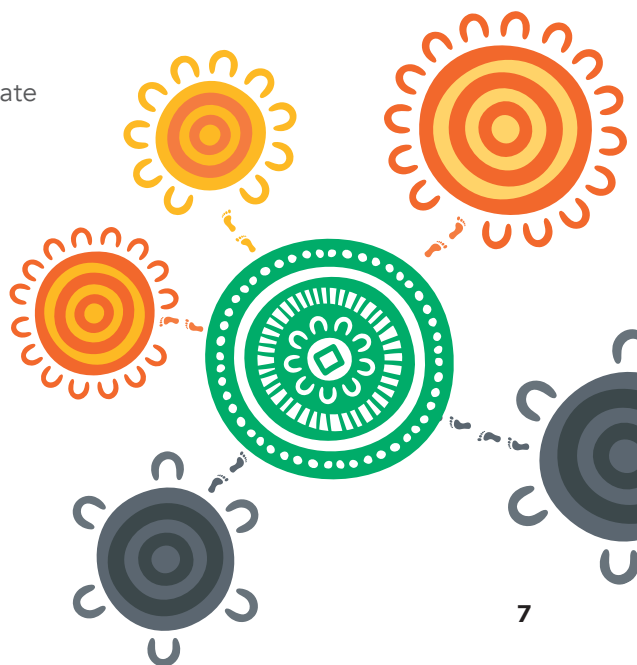
Unity Housing is the largest community housing organisation in South Australia, providing around 3,200 homes for around 4,600 people, including more than 530 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We employ 110 staff based in seven regional offices who deliver our housing services across metropolitan Adelaide and many regional areas of the state. At this time no staff have identified to Unity Housing as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and we will seek to determine culturally appropriate ways to address this through the implementation of this Reflect RAP.

Unity Housing is a not-for-profit community housing provider. We deliver a broad range of housing options including boarding house accommodation for people at risk of homelessness, social and community housing for people with a range of needs, and affordable housing for people on low to moderate incomes. We have a strategic focus on meeting the diverse needs of our tenants and creating sustainable communities by promoting engagement, inclusion and participation. We have long-standing formal partnership arrangements with more than 30 specialist support organisations which provide assistance to our tenants to enable them to successfully maintain their tenancy.

Our tenants include people affected by homelessness, people living with disability, older people, women and families affected by domestic violence, and people experiencing mental health issues and other challenges. We also provide homes for people who simply cannot afford appropriate housing in the private rental market.

...our sphere of influence is all of the individuals, organisations and communities that we can positively engage with regarding reconciliation.

In the context of this RAP, our 'sphere of influence' is all of the individuals, organisations and communities that we can positively engage with regarding reconciliation. Unity Housing's sphere of influence includes our tenants, staff, suppliers, supporters, support partner organisations, government collaborators, other community housing providers, corporate partners, and the many communities within which we work.



Our Purpose

We provide affordable, safe and secure homes for South Australians on low incomes. We build partnerships to create tenancies that promote independence and viable and sustainable communities.

Our Values



Respect and Social Justice



Innovation and Creativity



Collaboration and Partnerships



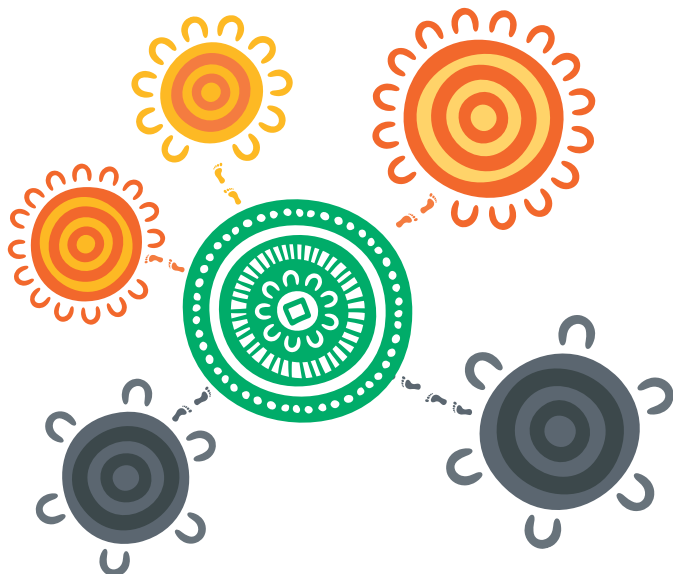
Transparent and Ethical



Leadership and Professionalism



Empowering and Respectful



Our RAP

Unity Housing has a long track-record in the provision of safe and affordable homes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tenants.

We currently provide a safe and affordable home for around 530 people who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander across metropolitan Adelaide and many regional areas of South Australia. For a number of years, Unity Housing has also provided transitional housing for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who travel from remote areas, in partnership with the Kurlana Tampawardli program.

Through the provision of these housing services, Unity Housing understands the importance of cultural awareness and the need to make our services culturally-safe and accessible for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Over the years we have formed partnerships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community leaders and organisations and, through these, we have learnt a great deal. We acknowledge that we need to continue our learning and support the cause of reconciliation in Australia. To that end, our Board, Executive, Leadership Team and all of our staff have committed to the Reconciliation Action Plan process.

In 2020 Unity Housing commenced the formal process of developing a RAP and established a RAP Working Group with a formal Terms of Reference to guide it. The RAP Working Group meets on a regular basis and comprises Unity Housing representatives from our leadership team and frontline staff, and two representatives from the Aboriginal community. We are delighted and honoured that Aunty Yvonne Agius and Vince Buckskin volunteered to join our RAP Working Group, bringing their tremendous wisdom, cultural knowledge and community connections to guide us through our reconciliation journey. As a senior leader within the business, Andrew Davis has been appointed to take on the role of RAP Champion, to be an ambassador and advocate for reconciliation and to ensure that the RAP remains high on the agenda for Unity Housing.

This Reflect RAP is the next very important step in Unity Housing's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and represents the voice of all of the Unity Housing Board, leadership and staff.



Unity Housing's RAP Working Group meeting on Kurna Country at the Kurna Learning Circle in Adelaide: Andrea Brunt (Housing Officer), Andrew Davis (Project Manager), Vince Buckskin (Aboriginal Cultural Advisor), Aunty Yvonne Agius (Aboriginal Cultural Advisor and Tenant Representative), Paul Reardon (Chief Operations Officer) and Trish Burden (Community Inclusion Manager).

Our partnerships and cultural activities

Unity Housing has established a strong foundation of partnerships and activities upon which we will continue to build. These have enabled our organisation to become better connected with our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tenants and their communities, and to become more culturally aware. We have established relationships at various levels with:

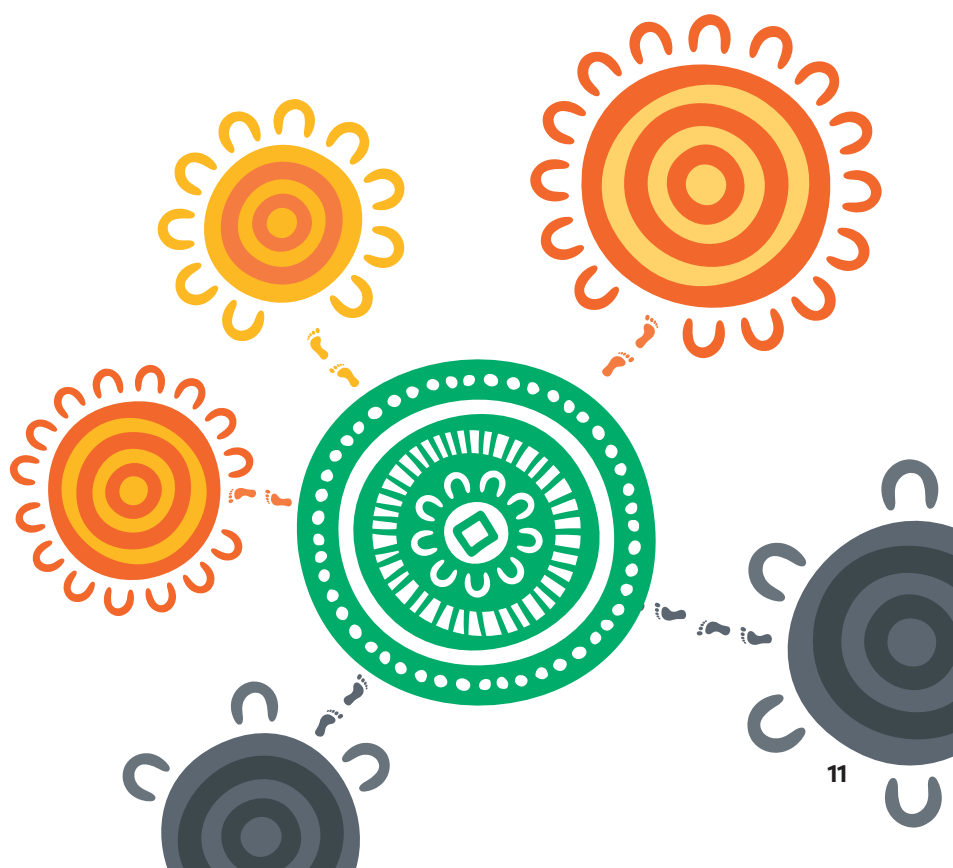
- Kurlana Tampawardli – transitional housing program for Aboriginal people visiting Adelaide from remote communities
- Tiraapendi Wodli Hub – an Aboriginal community support provider
- Aboriginal Sobriety Group – an Aboriginal community support provider
- Aboriginal Community Connect – a partnership with Uniting Communities to support Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal Health Council of SA – information and resources for staff and tenants
- Reconciliation SA – our membership promotes reconciliation and supports our reconciliation journey
- Reconciliation Australia – advising and accrediting our Reflect RAP
- Nunga Court – providing culturally appropriate pathways and support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
- David Liddiard Group – an Aboriginal-owned entity that provides cultural advice and assistance with our RAP
- Dreamtime Creative – design and production of publications (including the RAP) designed by Aboriginal employees



We also undertake regular staff and community cultural activities which have included:

- Participation in key events such as the Anniversary of the National Apology, National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week
- Sponsorship of the Kurna Sports Committee's Netball and Football teams
- Participation in the Gawler Reconciliation Event
- Cultural Awareness Training for all Unity Housing staff and Board members
- Circulation to all Unity Housing staff of relevant information to promote cultural awareness
- Aboriginal cultural educators and Elders presenting at staff forums
- Staff awareness-raising activities undertaken by staff at our regional offices
- Articles presented in our tenant magazine to support cultural awareness and reconciliation
- Display of Aboriginal artworks and artefacts in our offices

Through the actions outlined in this Reflect RAP, Unity Housing will broaden and deepen these partnerships and cultural activities to build our contribution to reconciliation.





Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually-beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	a. Research and develop a list of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence with whom we can engage on our reconciliation journey.	April 2022	PM
	b. Research, document and implement best practice and principles that support effective partnerships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Sept 2022	PM
	c. Collaborate with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to ensure the culturally appropriate delivery of relevant community and corporate events and activities.	June 2023	CEO
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	a. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and other reconciliation materials to all Unity Housing staff, tenants and other stakeholders through newsletters, website and social media.	May 2022	EMGS
	b. RAP Working Group members and a range of other Unity Housing staff from across different sites and functional areas to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May to 3 June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	c. Encourage and support all Unity Housing staff to participate in local external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May to 3 June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	d. Unity Housing to conduct NRW activities and register these NRW events on the Reconciliation Australia website.	27 May to 3 June 2022	COO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	a. CEO to formally communicate Unity Housing's commitment to reconciliation to all Unity Housing staff at least annually.	April 2022	CEO
	b. Identify like-minded support providers and community organisations with which Unity Housing can collaborate on our reconciliation journey.	April 2022	Chair RAPWG
	c. Inform external stakeholders and partners within our sphere of influence regarding Unity Housing's commitment to reconciliation and progress with the RAP.	April 2022	CEO
	d. Identify and develop a list of other like-minded community housing providers or related organisations (e.g. developers, local government etc.) that Unity Housing could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	April 2022	Chair RAPWG
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	a. Research and implement best practice and policies in areas of employment practices, race relations and anti-discrimination.	Sept 2022	EMGS
	b. Conduct a review of Unity Housing's HR policies, procedures and recruitment practices to identify unintended barriers to the potential employment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants and ensure that the required anti-discrimination provisions are incorporated and applied.	Sept 2022	EMGS



Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	a. Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	Sept 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Continue to foster increased understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation, through ongoing cultural awareness training for all staff.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	c. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	May 2022	EMGS
	d. Identify various training options available to fulfil the organisation's cultural learning needs.	June 2022	EMGS
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	a. Develop an understanding by all Unity Housing staff of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within their operational area.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Through cultural awareness training, ensure that all Unity Housing staff understand the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	June 2022	EMGS
	c. Investigate implementing Acknowledgement of Country on written communications, staff email signatures and Unity Housing's website in a culturally appropriate manner.	June 2022	EMGS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	d. Encourage that Acknowledgement of Country protocols are included on the agendas and appropriately observed before all formal internal meetings and relevant external Unity Housing events.	April 2022	CEO
	e. Encourage the delivery of Welcome to Country protocols by appropriate representatives of the Traditional Custodians of the land on which key internal and external Unity Housing events are conducted.	April 2022	CEO
	f. Investigate broadening the engagement of cultural ceremonies, such as Smoking Ceremonies and cultural dance, at significant Unity Housing events (such as staff forums, property launches, office openings etc.) to involve all our staff and key stakeholders.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	g. Prominently display Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander art and flags in public areas at all regional offices of the organisation.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	a. Raise awareness of the meaning and purpose of NAIDOC Week to all Unity Housing staff as a celebration of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Encourage all Unity Housing staff to participate in external NAIDOC Week events by providing information about events in their local area.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	c. RAP Working Group members and representatives of Unity Housing's senior leadership to participate in at least one external NAIDOC Week event.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	a. Develop a business case for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	Sept 2022	EMGS
	b. Build our understanding of current Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Sept 2022	EMGS
	c. Review Unity Housing's data collection system to provide staff with a choice to identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.	June 2022	EMGS
9. Increase Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	a. Develop a business case for increasing procurement from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Sept 2022	CFO
	b. Investigate current procurement across the organisation from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business suppliers.	Sept 2022	CFO
	c. Develop a list of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander suppliers from which Unity Housing can procure goods and services.	Sept 2022	CFO
	d. Investigate Supply Nation membership and ways of supporting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2022	CFO
10. Expand Unity Housing's digital reach to better support First Nations stakeholders.	a. Establish a dedicated page on Unity Housing's website and intranet with information about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander services to ensure that it is consolidated and easy to find.	Sept 2022	EMGS
	b. Explore the use of social media platforms (including Facebook, Instagram etc.) to reach Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tenants and stakeholders with information about relevant support services and opportunities, and in particular targeting young people.	Sept 2022	EMGS

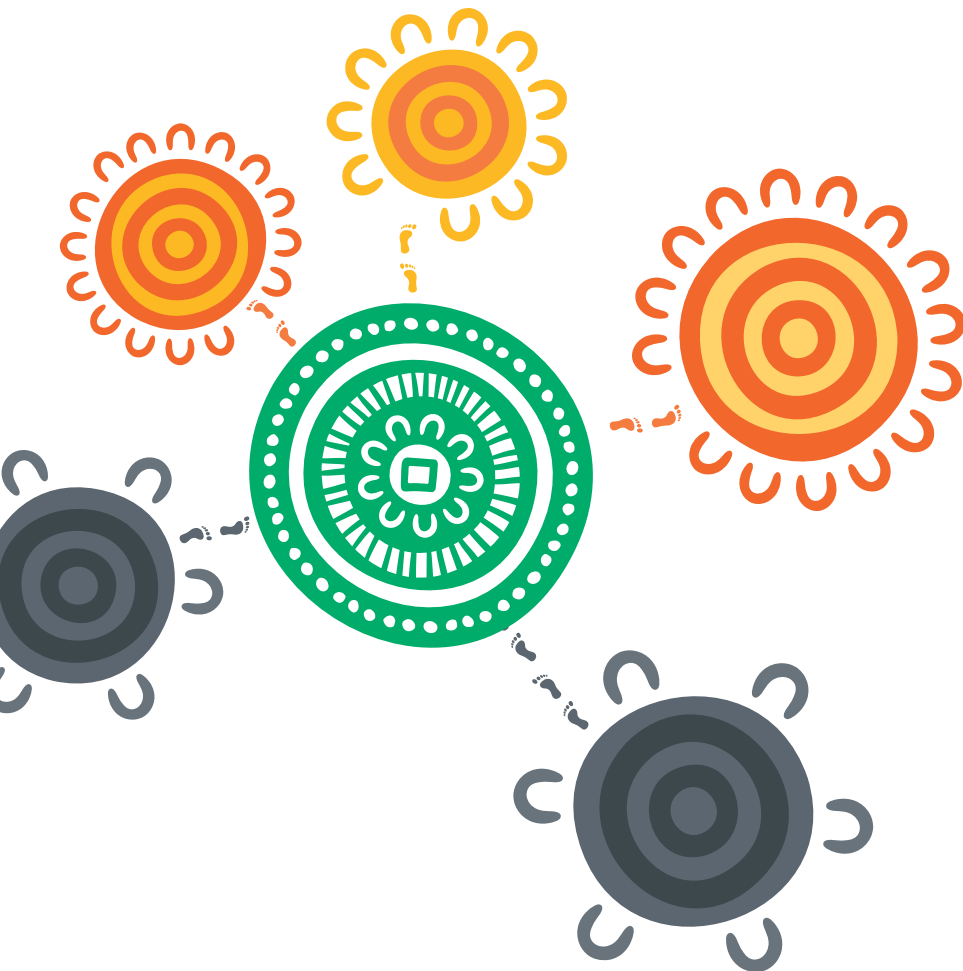


Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	a. Maintain the RAPWG, meeting at least quarterly to inform and guide the RAP implementation.	March, June, Sept and Dec 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Review the Terms of Reference and membership for the RAPWG.	April 2022	Chair RAPWG
	c. Maintain Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAPWG.	March 2023	Chair RAPWG
	d. Ensure that external members of the RAPWG are reimbursed for the contribution of their time and cultural expertise in line with relevant practice.	March 2023	Chair RAPWG
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	a. Identify the resources needed for the ongoing implementation of the RAP.	June 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Engage with the Unity Housing Leadership Group in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2023	Chair RAPWG
	c. Appoint a Senior Leader to champion Unity Housing's RAP across the organisation.	April 2022	CEO
	d. Define appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	April 2022	Chair RAPWG
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	a. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	Sept 2022	Chair RAPWG
	b. Report progress of RAP Commitments to Unity Housing's Executive and Board on a regular (quarterly) basis via Board Report.	June, Sept, Dec 2022 and April 2023	Chair RAPWG
	c. Update all Unity Housing staff regarding the progress of our RAP commitments in 'The Loop' staff e-news.	June, Sept, Dec 2022 and April 2023	Chair RAPWG
	d. Update all Unity Housing tenants regarding the progress of our RAP commitments via the 'Around the House' tenant magazine.	June, Sept, Dec 2022 and April 2023	Chair RAPWG
14. Continue Unity Housing's reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	a. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Dec 2022	Chair RAPWG

List of acronyms used in this document

PM	Project Manager
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
COO	Chief Operations Officer
EMGS	Executive Manager Group Services
HR	Human Resources
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NRW	National Reconciliation Week
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RAPWG	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group





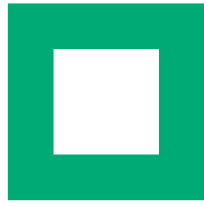
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