



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

JANUARY 2023 - JANUARY 2024

Home
in **Place**



Message from **Reconciliation Australia**

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Home in Place to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Home in Place joins a network of more than 2,200 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.

A portrait of Karen Mundine, a woman with curly brown hair, wearing a black blazer over a black top with a white floral pattern. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is blurred, showing other people in a professional setting.

This Reflect RAP enables Home in Place 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 Home in Place, 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 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners

Home in Place acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the many lands on which we work.

We recognise the traditional custodians of the of the land and waterways and celebrate the First Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationship to Country.

We also acknowledge the significance of First Nations cultures in Australia and pay our respect to elders past, present and emerging in all the lands identified below.

Awabakal Newcastle

Biripi Taree

Eora Sydney

Wiljakali Broken Hill

Wiradjuri Dubbo

Darkinjung Central Coast

Wonnarua East Maitland

Wonnarua Cessnock

Wonnarua Muswellbrook

Worimi Port Stephens

Turrbal Brisbane

Yugambah Logan



MUTAWINTJI
CULTURAL CENTRE



Terminology

Throughout our Reconciliation Action Plan, we use the terms **First Nations** and **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**. However, Home in Place acknowledges that some people identify with other cultural names and the terminology used in this document may not reflect the diversity of all First Nations people.

Abbreviations

FTE	Full-time equivalent
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
NRW	National Reconciliation Week
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
SDA	Specialist Disability Accommodation



The front cover of this RAP features a young girl who attended the Dreamtime Stories event at the 123 Community Hub as part of NAIDOC Week 2022.

Our Organisation

Home in Place is one of Australia's largest non-government social housing providers with over 35 years' experience in providing secure and affordable housing, delivering housing for people who have difficulties sourcing adequate and affordable housing.

Our organisation was established in 1985, as Newmacq Community Housing Company Ltd, originally funded to manage 92 tenancies in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie local government areas. This has grown to the management of over 7,600 tenancies and diversification to manage disability group homes and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) under the national NDIS scheme in New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand.

We are an enterprising and socially committed not-for-profit organisation that undertakes all aspects of tenancy and property management, including allocations and wait-list management and have extensive experience in providing tailored tenancy services and tenant development initiatives.

There are 254 FTE employees, 4% identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Our Head Office is located in Newcastle West with Branches in Newcastle, East Maitland, Sydney, Central Coast, Taree, Upper Hunter, Dubbo, Muswellbrook, Brisbane and New Zealand.

As a geographically dispersed organisation, Home in Place has worked hard to contribute to our local communities and neighbourhoods through a comprehensive community participation program supported by eight Community Participation Officers.

In April 2022 Compass rebranded to become Home in Place to better describe our expanded range of activities in Australia and internationally and to reflect our ethical commitment to our P5 framework which commits us to work for People, Place, Planet, Partnership and Performance.



HOME IN PLACE STAFF AT THE BROKEN HILL HOMELESSNESS WEEK EVENT | AUGUST 2022

The Current Landscape

Housing plays a critical role in the health and wellbeing of Australians. While one of the primary benefits of housing is shelter, the absence of affordable, secure and appropriate housing is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including poor health, higher levels of psychological distress and lower rates of employment and educational participation.

First Nations people comprise 3 per cent of the total Australian population but are over-represented in social housing at 13 per cent of the total Home in Place tenancies. We strive to provide culturally sensitive, flexible, accessible, responsive, and participatory services. Elements include:

- Pathways Policy – application of extra bedroom for kin to stay
- Flexible application of overcrowding and unauthorised occupants' policy
- Absence from dwelling, for example, Sorry Business
- Supporting First Nations residents living by strict cultural code, for example, specifically providing either a male or female staff member
- Working closely with tenants at risk, bringing in culturally appropriate support services
- Celebrating NAIDOC and other important cultural events
- Engaging a local Elder to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events/activities

Home in Place supports the national reconciliation movement and has developed this RAP to contribute to reconciliation within our organisation, within the communities in which we operate and the broader Australian community.



HOME IN PLACE TENANT FEONA BATES IN FRONT OF THE MURAL SHE CREATED FOR THE 123 COMMUNITY HUB



We have been supported by Everywhen, a Supply Nation certified Aboriginal management consultancy, that works with non-First Nations bodies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities, to create sustainable change. Everywhen specialises in facilitating cultural learning journeys for individuals and organisations to ensure commitment to reconciliation is led by truth and knowledge of First Nations people ways of knowing, doing and being.





Our Reconciliation Journey

In September 2019, as Compass Housing Services, we developed our first 'Reflect' RAP from aspirations to deliver our housing services in culturally appropriate and safe ways to our First Nations residents.

Regrettably, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly frustrated our ability to meet with partners and our residents and many of the intentions of that first RAP were unfulfilled.

Taking the opportunity of revitalising our approach, in 2021 we established a new internal RAP Workgroup and in early 2022 engaged with Everywhen consultancy to guide us through the development of a new Vision and a further Reflect RAP to take us to the next stage of this vital journey for the organisation.

We are very grateful to Everywhen for the leadership, insight and support they have provided our Workgroup and organisation enabling us to arrive at our new RAP Vision.



DRUMBEAT WORKSHOP AT THE 123 COMMUNITY HUB AUGUST 2022

Our RAP Vision

Our Vision is to create an environment where meaningful connection occurs between our organisation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, families and individuals.

We support this vision of reconciliation through everyday behaviours that reflect our commitment to cultural safety.

We find opportunities to prioritise First Nations engagement through employment, leadership and supplier diversity, co-creating a culture of authentic partnerships and co-designed housing solutions.

Our proposed actions are detailed in the following pages.

Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	March 2023	Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability and eight Community Participation Officers Chief Operating Officer Branch Executive Managers and Tenancy Relations Officers in all locations RAP Workgroup members
	Identify where we can build close relationships and partnerships that are place-based through partnership agreements or MOU's.	March 2023	Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability and eight Community Participation Officers Chief Operating Officer Branch Executive Managers and Tenancy Relations Officers in all locations RAP Workgroup members
	Develop awareness of First Nations agencies and organisations we work with across the sector.	March 2023	Branch Executive Managers Tenancy Relations Officers in all Branches
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	March 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer Executive Manager Business and Public Affairs Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and events.	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff through our communication team and identify diverse modes for impact.	February 2023	Executive Manager Business and Public Affairs Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability with eight Community Participation Officers
	RAP Workgroup members to participate in an external NRW event.	3 June 2023	RAP Workgroup members
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	3 June 2023	Executive Manager Business and Public Affairs Marketing and Customer Communications Manager



HOME IN PLACE TENANTS AND STAFF | TAREE NSW

3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff through launch activities, ensuring the wider sector is aware of our commitment.

January 2024

Executive Manager Business and Public Affairs
Marketing and Customer Communications Manager

Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey, particularly First Nations agencies across the Housing sector.

March 2023

RAP Workgroup members
Specialist Community Participation Unit
Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer

Identify RAP like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.

March 2023

Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
Executive Manager Social And Environmental Sustainability
Branch Executive Managers

4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.

March 2023

Group Executive Manager Human Services
Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer

Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.

January 2023

Group Executive Manager Human Services

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.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	March 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	January 2023	Group Executive Manager Human Services
	Research dates of significance (local and National) Events calendar for First Nations people and families	January 2023	RAP Workgroup Branch Executive Managers Tenancy Relations Officers Community Participation Officers
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	January 2024	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer Specialist Community Participation Unit Branch Executive Managers Events and Community Relations Manager All staff
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country	January 2024	Group Executive Manager Human Services
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week and wider events	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	March 2023	Community Participation Officers
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area	July 2023	Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability RAP Workgroup Community Participation Officers
	RAP Workgroup to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2023	RAP Workgroup



Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention strategy.	June 2023	Group Executive Manager Human Services
	Identify any access issues and pathways into employment with Home in Place, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	March 2023	Group Executive Manager Human Services
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development.	March 2023	Group Executive Manager Human Services
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	March 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer Group Chief Finance Officer
	Investigate Supply Nation membership, and state-based and regional alliances.	March 2023	Group Chief Finance Officer
	Identify First Nations companies we can align with/support ie. NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce, Yarpa.	March 2023	Group Chief Finance Officer
	Engage an Aboriginal business to deliver cultural competency training.	February 2023	Group Executive Manager Human Services

Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Workgroup to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RAP Workgroup to govern RAP implementation.	January 2024	RAP Workgroup and Workgroup Chair
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RAP Workgroup.	February 2023	RAP Workgroup and Workgroup Chair
	Establish and maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Workgroup.	January 2023	RAP Workgroup and Workgroup Chair
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2023	RAP Workgroup and Workgroup Chair Group Chief Finance Officer
	Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	January 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
	Review and maintain appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer Group Executive Manager Human Services
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	January 2024	Group Executive Manager Human Services
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
	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 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	June 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2023	Group Chief Strategic Engagement Officer



Contact Us

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HOME IN PLACE

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