



Reconciliation Action Plan

Argyle Community Housing Ltd
2015-2016

About the Reflect RAP

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is about organisations from every sector turning good intentions into real actions and rising to the challenge of reconciling Australia. A RAP is a business plan that uses a holistic approach to create meaningful relationships, enhanced respect and promote sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The RAP program includes four types of RAPs, each offering a different level of engagement and support. In developing a Reflect RAP, Argyle Community Housing Ltd commits to completing the following actions over the next 12 months to ensure we are well positioned to implement effective and mutually beneficial initiatives as part of future Reconciliation Action Plans. Our future RAPs will identify relationships, respect and opportunities actions specific to our business and our sphere of influence.

This Reflect RAP will allow Argyle Community Housing Ltd to focus on building relationships both internally and externally, and raise awareness with our stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of our RAP within our organisation. Development of our future RAPs will involve consultation with staff across our organisation including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or stakeholders to achieve our vision for reconciliation.

Our Business

Argyle Community Housing Ltd. (Argyle) is a community-managed, not-for-profit, housing organisation. Our main objective is to provide and manage secure, sustainable housing for people on low to moderate incomes who would otherwise struggle to find accommodation and for disadvantaged and marginalised people who need support in order to maintain independent living. Argyle is responsive to local needs and is committed to building sustainable communities in areas of need.

As a community housing provider, Argyle actively encourages its tenants to be involved in the organisation's activities and decision making processes. This involvement helps our clients build social capital, reduces isolation and teaches new skills. It also provides Argyle with a valuable source of knowledge and information about the communities we operate in and how we can better service these communities. Regardless of our future growth or corporate structure, this inclusive legacy will remain.

Argyle is a Registered and Accredited Tier 1 community housing provider and manages over 2,300 properties from its offices in Bowral, Campbelltown, Queanbeyan, Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Young and in the ACT. We also have outreach services available at Yass, Crookwell, Goulburn and in the Wollondilly. The organisation currently employs 63 staff members, four of whom identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons.

Argyle's Vision for reconciliation

'Argyle Community Housing Respects the Traditional Custodians of Australia & values their rich culture & historical significance.

We are committed to building genuine Relationships & Partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to help create Opportunities in the communities in which we live. Argyle will do this by providing sustainable housing as the foundation to assist our tenants & communities in achieving a brighter future.'

Our RAP

Argyle Community Housing first started its reconciliation journey in January, 2013. With support from the Board of Directors, Argyle signed a Statement of Commitment to develop an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Following an internal organisational restructure in early 2014, the development of a RAP became a priority for Argyle. The CEO and RAP Project Officer met with Reconciliation Australia and it was agreed that Argyle needed to go back to basics and develop a Reflect RAP. Following this meeting, an expression of interest to join a RAP working group was circulated to staff and Board members. Consequently, an enthusiastic RAP working group was formed. The members of the RAP working group are:

- The Chief Executive Officer who is also the Argyle RAP champion
- A Board Director (to champion the RAP at Board level)
- The Project and Training Officer, CEO office – RAP Project Manager
- The Senior Accountant (Finance Department)
- Five Client Service Officers:
 - Wagga Wagga office (our Aboriginal representative)
 - Young office
 - Queanbeyan office
 - Campbelltown office
 - ACT Office

At Argyle's All Staff planning day in November 2014, staff were invited to provide feedback on the draft RAP Vision Statement and to nominate to join either the RAP working group or to assist the RAP working group members to organise and run events such as NRW celebrations. There was an excellent response to this invitation with four staff members (including an Aboriginal client service officer from Young) nominating to join the RAP working group and eight staff members offering to lend a practical hand if required.

Relationships

We believe that building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples will allow us to better understand and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants, applicants and communities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
Establish a RAP Working Group	CEO	April 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A RAP Working Group has been formed and will meet once a month to monitor progress of the RAP. 2. Membership of the working group will be reviewed yearly by the CEO or when a group member resigns or steps down
Develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations	RAP Project Officer	September 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Argyle will develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders within our local area or sphere of influence. Argyle plans to work in partnership with these organisations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities • Provide opportunities and pathways of independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities • Sustain tenancies that are at risk by linking tenants and applicants to appropriate support services and agencies
Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	RAP Project Officer	27 th May- 3 rd June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Argyle staff will celebrate NRW by participating in a local NRW community event • NRW activities will be included in our tenant newsletter and local events will be advertised on our website • We will continue to celebrate NRW by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships and find out more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements

<p>Raise internal awareness of the RAP</p>	<p>RAP Project Officer/CEO</p>	<p>November 2015 September, December 2015 & March, June 2016 March 2016 April 2015</p>	<p>4. Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness across the organisation about our RAP commitments, particularly with key internal stakeholders. We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a report on RAP activities, plans and progress at the Argyle all staff planning day each year (November) • Provide a quarterly RAP report to the Board in September and December, 2015 and March and June, 2016 • Introduce the RAP concept and information in regard to the RAP as part of the new staff induction program • Introduce a KPI in performance reviews on staff contribution to the RAP • Include a statement of commitment to reconciliation in the Argyle Code of Ethics and Conduct
<p>Provide access to information on community services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples</p>	<p>RAP Project Officer</p>	<p>April 2015</p>	<p>5. Argyle will include a dedicated link on its website to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with information relevant to their local area. This information will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support agency contact information • Tenancy advice and advocacy • Medical and child care facilities • Training opportunities • Upcoming cultural events • Community notice board • Anything else that may be of assistance or relevance

Respect

Argyle acknowledges and respects the Traditional Custodians of Australia & values their rich culture & historical significance. We actively seek and value their input into the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in NSW and the ACT and in the wider community.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
Investigate the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training program	CEO/Project Officer	June 2015 September 2015 December 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. We will capture baseline data on our employee's current level of understanding around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions to inform the development of our cultural training programs. 7. A business case for cultural awareness, capability and development based on our core business will be developed and presented to the Board in September, 2015 8. We will develop a robust First Australians Cultural Awareness training program. This will include identifying training resources, including trainers, across all Argyle office areas. Ideally, the training program will include genuine opportunities for staff to learn about the history, culture and traditions of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The program will be included in the Argyle training calendar and will be a mandatory training requirement for all staff
Celebrate NAIDOC Week	RAP Project Officer	July 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and our RAP working group will be granted leave to participate in local NAIDOC Week events 10. Argyle will distribute and advertise local NAIDOC Week events to all our tenants via post and on the Argyle website 11. All staff will be offered an opportunity to attend NAIDOC Week events in their local area
Raise internal understanding of protocols	RAP Project Officer	April 15 – May 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. We will invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at the Annual General Meeting, Board meetings in regional areas and at special events. An Acknowledgement of Country will take place prior to all other Argyle meetings and

		April 2015	events
		March 2016	<p>13. Information on the significance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country ceremonies will be provided to all staff at induction and via the Argyle intranet</p> <p>14. All Argyle offices will display the Australian and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags</p> <p>15. We will investigate opportunities to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural practices at the Annual General Meeting and when celebrating special events. This could include performances by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander dance groups or musicians.</p>

Opportunities

We believe that working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples enriches our organisation and enables us to provide culturally appropriate information and support to our tenants, applicants and communities

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within Argyle Community Housing	CEO/HR Officer	April 2015	16. Capture baseline data of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees within Argyle
	HR Officer	March 2016	17. Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention plan to inform future developments
		April 2015	18. Update HR policy to ensure all job advertisements include a statement to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to apply for positions
	RAP Project Officer	March 2016	19. In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, investigate and report on whether Argyle workplaces are culturally welcoming and supportive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and develop a plan to implement changes where required
	HR Officer	March 2016	20. Scope training and development opportunities which will provide employment opportunities/apprenticeships/traineeships for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
Consider supplier diversity	GM Assets & Acquisitions	April 2016	21. Scope a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity and develop a plan to procure services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
	RAP Project Officer	April 2016	22. Prepare and submit a proposal to senior management to commission or purchase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork for all Argyle offices. This submission will be included in the budget for 2016/17

Tracking Progress

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
Argyle will review the Reconciliation Action Plan	RAP Project Officer	September 2015 August 2015 March 2016 April 2016	<p>23. RAP progress will be reported each year to Reconciliation Australia in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire</p> <p>24. The RAP working group will hold a workshop to review the successes and key learnings of our RAP. The results of the workshop will be reported to the September Board and at the all staff planning day in November, 2015</p> <p>25. Investigate opportunities to publically report on RAP achievements, learnings and challenges</p> <p>26. Review, refresh and update Argyle's RAP based on key learnings, challenges and achievements.</p> <p>27. Submit new RAP draft to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsements</p>

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