

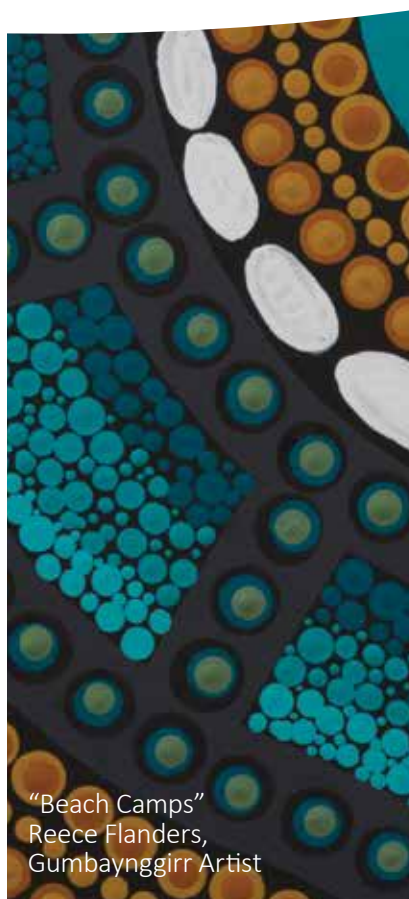
AUGUST 2019



Yandarra

SHIFTING CAMP TOGETHER

A GUIDE FOR ABORIGINAL CULTURAL
AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT



"Beach Camps"
Reece Flanders,
Gumbaynggirr Artist

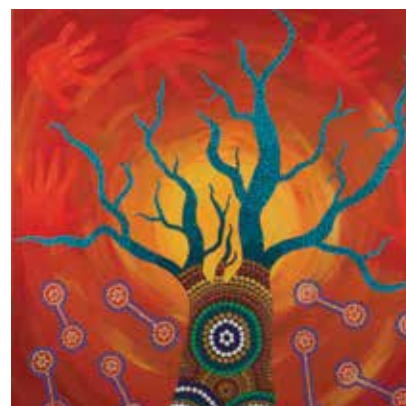


COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Coffs Harbour City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Gumbaynggirr people, who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and commit ourselves to a future with reconciliation and renewal at its heart.



ARTWORK BY REECE FLANDERS

Beach Camps

This painting represents the coastline, where there are camps that the old people would sit and eat shellfish leaving behind middens. The designs show the ever-shifting coastline & dune as well as, the through tide & wind that shape our coasts.

Bush Life

This painting was inspired by knowledge passed to me from one of my elders about how life was in the bush, in the old days, the coastline is represented in the top left corner, with camps scattered through the painting, each one was responsible for preserving that animal so that they weren't taking too much from the land.

Spirit Tree

This painting represents my version of a family tree, showing connection with all family even those who have passed, represented by the ghost style hand prints.



Developed by Murawin Consulting, Gumbaynggirr consultants Carol Vale and Matthew Hammond.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Coffs Harbour City Council is committed to working in partnership with local Aboriginal communities.

The **North Coast Regional Plan 2036**¹ supports the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values and engagement with Aboriginal communities and lists a number of actions under Directions:

- 16: Collaborate and partner with Aboriginal communities;
- 17: Increase the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities; and
- 18: Respect and protect the North Coast's Aboriginal heritage.

The **MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan**² identifies as a strategic objective that the Coffs Harbour City Council 'recognise and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Coffs Harbour local government area' and through this:

- Our Gumbaynggirr culture and heritage is honoured and acknowledged;
- We walk together with our local Aboriginal community to honour, share and acknowledge their stories, heritage and culture.

The Office of Local Government has prepared a guideline for all Councils in NSW about the scope of their responsibilities for engagement with Aboriginal people in their communities, and strategies for the positive and effective engagement, called 'Engaging with Local Aboriginal Communities' (2007). The guideline identifies four responsibilities, as follows, which apply across all Council functions:

- consult and negotiate comprehensively with Aboriginal communities about their needs and aspirations;
- ensure that Council services are adequate and equitable in meeting the needs of Aboriginal people and their communities;

- ensure that services are developed in a way that is culturally appropriate and develops the potential of Aboriginal people; and
- promote a partnership approach with local Aboriginal communities.

Coffs Harbour City Council recognised the need to produce a guide that could assist Council staff, Councillors and Council volunteers (including Advisory Committee members) with an understanding of the importance of cultural understanding and protocols when carrying out their duties and responsibilities as Council representatives.

This guide contains information as a starting point for staff to refer to when consulting and collaborating with local Aboriginal communities. For example, prior to the development of policies and procedures or at the start of projects, it is expected that staff will check to see if there are any cultural or Aboriginal issues that need to be considered. This guide is to be used to complement not replace any statutory and legislative requirements.

The guide was developed by Murawin Consulting, Gumbaynggirr consultants Carol Vale and Matthew Hammond. Consultations were undertaken by Murawin with local Aboriginal Elders, Community Members and Aboriginal Organisations, Yandaarra Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Council staff.

The guide will be used for staff training and induction purposes and updated as required.

1 <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/North-Coast>

2 <https://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/Your-Council/Publications-and-Forms/Pages/MyCoffs-Community-Strategic-Plan.aspx>

2. ABOUT CULTURAL AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

2.1 What does this Guide to Cultural Awareness and Engagement mean to local Aboriginal people?

This guide will assist Council to undertake activities with respect to the customs, lore and codes of practice that recognise the cultural ways of others.

“Being mindful of culture and acknowledging practices, giving recognition and properly representing the different nations and embedding culture throughout the LGA.” (Aunty Glenda Perkins Elder, Garby Elders Group)

“It’s a commitment that all culturally significant things will be done appropriately.” (Aunty Desley Flanders, LALC)

2.2 Benefits of having a guide to Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Engagement

This guide will benefit the Council and broader community to:

- Assist Councillors, staff and volunteers to provide a consistent and respectful approach to engaging with the Aboriginal community through strong relationships and effective communication;
- Assist in the protection of Aboriginal culture in the local government area;
- Provide social and cultural understanding for the local community by acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal perspectives and worldviews;
- Promote a partnership/collaborative approach with the Gumbaynggirr people.

3. YANDAARRA ABORIGINAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Coffs Harbour City Council originally set up an Aboriginal Consultative Committee in late 1998 under section 355 of the Local Government Act 1993 which states: A function of Council may, subject to this Chapter, be exercised: (b) by a committee of the Council. Yandaarra provides a pivotal role in promoting cultural understanding both within Council and the general community.

The Aboriginal Consultative Committee officially changed its name to Yandaarra in August 2003 meaning, “Go as a group, travelling together,

shifting camp together”. (Source- Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative) Yandaarra is a mechanism for maintaining an ongoing and productive relationship between Council and the Aboriginal community and as a forum to provide advice to Council.

To find out more about Yandaarra please contact Council’s Aboriginal Community Planning & Engagement Specialist in Council’s Community Planning and Performance Section.

4. UNDERSTANDING ABORIGINAL IDENTITY

An accepted definition of an Indigenous Australian proposed by the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs in the 1980s and still used by some Australian Government departments today is:

A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.³

It is important however, to note that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also have their own laws and customs to determine the membership of their group. It is advisable to ask people themselves how they would like to be described. This may include where they come from or which community or clan they identify with.

4.1 Terminology

In Australia, there are two identified cultural groups (people) who are the Australia's First Nations to the land – Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, each with their own unique histories, beliefs and values.

In New South Wales (NSW), the term 'Koori' is often used, which can be used to refer to Aboriginal people of NSW and Victoria. 'Murri' is the term sometimes used when referring to Aboriginal people in Queensland (QLD) and North-West NSW.

This document uses the term 'Aboriginal', rather than 'Indigenous' or 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of New South Wales.

Murawin discussed terminology with stakeholders and Aboriginal or Gumbaynggirr is preferred.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

If you are unsure of the preferred term to use, it is always best practice to ask the people with whom you are interacting.

4.2 Gumbaynggirr people

The Gumbaynggirr Nation is one of the largest coastal Aboriginal nations in New South Wales. The Gumbaynggirr people believe that they have occupied the land and seas in this area since the Yuludarla or the Dreaming. Science has been able to date Aboriginal use of lands in this area approximately 60, 000 years ago when the sea levels were significantly lower. This meant the Gumbaynggirr lands extended out to the Continental Shelf, an area now covered by the sea.

The geographical area of the Gumbaynggirr Nation stretches from the Nambucca River in the south, to around the Clarence River in the north, and up on the Great Dividing Range in the west.⁴ The Gumbaynggirr Nation also includes the sea, the islands off the coast and stretches to the sky above.

There are a number of recognised clan groups within the Gumbaynggirr Nation that share the same language. They are bordered in the North by the Yaegl people who live around the mouth of the River, and speak a language close to Gumbaynggirr. Throughout this document,

³ Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies 2014, Indigenous Australians: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, viewed 31 October, <<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/indigenous-australians-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people>>

⁴ Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative, n.d., Gumbaynggirr, Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative, viewed 31 October 2018, <<http://muurrbay.org.au/languages/gumbaynggirr>>.



this Gumbaynggirr spelling is used, which has been suggested as the preferred spelling from those Aboriginal stakeholders consulted as part of this project.

Prior to European settlement the varied landscapes of the Mid North Coast including forests, open grasslands, swamps, rainforests, estuaries, headlands and open beaches, combined with a mild climate to provide an ideal living environment for the Gumbaynggirr people. Seasonal movement between the coast and the ranges took advantage of resource availability and abundance with travel routes following low-gradient ridgelines. Aboriginal land use patterns were substantially modified after European incursion to the area.

In the 1860s, European settlement commenced in Woolgoolga and Orara and in the 1870s continued in other areas within what is now the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area. In the 1880s there was a massacre at Red Rock where Europeans are said to have chased the Gumbaynggirr people from their camp at the river to the headland. Many innocent people lost their lives. Red Rock is referred to as 'Blood Rock' by

the Garby Elders, who regard this as an extremely sacred site and a place for reflection. A memorial has been established on the headland to mark the event and the brutality that occurred at the site.

As land was given as freehold to new settlers, and as fences, farms and houses were constructed, Gumbaynggirr people found it more and more difficult to travel from camp to camp as they had done for thousands of years. Many Gumbaynggirr people were forced onto missions and reserves.⁵

In the mid-twentieth century, the banks of the Coffs Creek were used as a camp and became one of the main Aboriginal camps in Coffs Harbour. During the 1940s, young Aboriginal men came to Coffs Harbour searching for work on the banana plantations. They were later joined by their families and built 'humpies' (shelters made out of waste timber, sugar bags and old tin sheds) along the banks of the creek.

The main camps were across the creek at Fitzroy Oval and the Old Camp, Yaam Nguura Jalumgal close to the centre of Coffs Harbour. Aboriginal families also camped at the showground, and on the other side of the creek past the cemetery, around the botanical gardens and across the industrial area.⁶ In the 1940s, Happy Valley camp was formed along the railway line near the Coffs Harbour Jetty, at a time when the sugar, timber, farming and fishing industries were growing and the population increasing. People from Bundjalung and Dainggatti language groups settled in and around these camps, as they were often seen as gathering places that connected Aboriginal families to the area.

⁵ Arrawarra Sharing Culture https://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact_sheets/pdfs/01_Gumbaynggirr_Nation.pdf

⁶ Hill, T. 2003, Proposed performance venue, Coffs Harbour Showground: Aboriginal heritage impact assessment, a report by Integrated Cultural Heritage Management, Sandy Beach.



Some Aboriginal families from the Coffs Creek and Happy Valley camps were forced to relocate into public housing at Wongala Estate or Housing Commission homes in the 1950s. This context and other Government and Local Government decisions are important to take into consideration when consulting with the Aboriginal community.

Each year Council in conjunction with Yandaarra, host the Grace Roberts Community Development

Awards. Aunty Grace was a well-regarded Aboriginal woman who fought passionately for housing, sanitation and other basic rights for the Aboriginal community of Coffs Harbour.

People who identified as an Aboriginal person in the 2016 Census make up 5% of the Coffs Harbour LGA population, compared to 2.9% for NSW.

5. ABORIGINAL CULTURAL INFORMATION

5.1 Welcome to Country

‘Welcoming’ visitors to their Country has been a part of Aboriginal cultures for thousands of years. Crossing into another people’s Country required a request for permission to enter. After visitors received permission, they would be welcomed by the hosting people and offered safe passage and protection during their journey through their Country. It was expected that visitors would respect the protocols and rules of the land owner group while on their Country.

Welcoming protocols have been adapted to fit modern day contexts, but the essential foundation of welcoming visitors remains in place. What is termed a ‘Welcome to Country’, can only be delivered by Traditional Owners or Aboriginal people who have been given permission from Traditional Owners, to welcome people onto their Country. The ceremony may include singing, dancing, smoking ceremonies or a speech in traditional language or English.

When to use:

- all significant or major Council events and meetings throughout the calendar year, including openings, launches or where it is appropriate to welcome people into the local community.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

A Welcome to Country should be organised as the first item of business for large, significant events where sizeable participant numbers are expected. Although a Welcome to Country is a formal occasion, there is no specific format, outline or exact wording for the speech.

Council staff should provide background and a brief as to the type of event or program that has been organised to Traditional Custodians or Elders involved. This brief should contain the important aspects associated with the event or program, including any VIPs in attendance.

Traditional Custodians or Elders should also be asked how they would like to be introduced and referred to i.e. Aunty, Uncle, etc., and must be seated alongside other dignitaries and speakers at the event.

The Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council (CHDLALC) and Council's Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist (ACPES) can assist with identifying local Traditional Custodians who can perform a Welcome to Country.

It is advised to commence event planning well in advance to allow time for decision making and discussion with the CHDLALC, Council's ACPES and Traditional Custodians.

A service fee will often be charged for providing a Welcome to Country ceremony. Aboriginal people are the owners of their cultural knowledge and expertise, and hence when engaged must be remunerated for their skill and time.

Council should encourage agencies organising large events in the community, particularly at Council venues, to arrange a 'Welcome to Country' through CHDLALC or Council's ACPES.

5.2 Acknowledgement of Country

An 'Acknowledgment of Country' is an opportunity to show respect for continuing connection to Country. It can be delivered by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. While there is no set wording, the following is a set of guidelines for Acknowledgement of Country that Councillors, staff and volunteers can use.

Statement of Acknowledgement

Coffs Harbour City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Gumbaynggirr people, who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and commit ourselves to a future with reconciliation and renewal at its heart.

When to use:

- Council meetings
- Official functions
- Significant one-off functions or high profile receptions
- Award ceremonies e.g. staff service awards
- NAIDOC Week/National Reconciliation Week events
- Sponsored community events
- When no Elder is available to deliver a Welcome to Country

Considerations:

This Statement is read aloud as the first item of business and read by the Chair or MC at the meeting or event.

Short Acknowledgement

“Coffs Harbour City Council acknowledges that we are meeting on the traditional country of the Gumbaynggirr people. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present.”

When to use:

- Small formal meetings where Aboriginal people are in attendance or Aboriginal matters are being discussed.
- Forums or workshops
- Small events or receptions
- Council team meetings
- Council Advisory Committee meetings

Considerations:

- This Statement is read aloud as the first item of business by the Chair or first speaker.
- This can be added as the first agenda item to standard agenda templates.

5.3 Language

Language is a very important part of Aboriginal culture. Gumbaynggirr people speak Gumbaynggirr language.

Muurrbay Language Centre at the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative at Nambucca Heads are at the forefront of the revitalisation of the Aboriginal language. Muurrbay liaise with Knowledge Holders within the Gumbaynggirr Nation and in neighbouring Aboriginal Nations to translate not just Gumbaynggirr, but other languages into texts and language classes.

They use these contacts to ensure that the final cultural translation will be accurate. Though many Aboriginal languages were lost after the devastating impacts of colonisation, strong language revival is happening in the region, largely as a result of the determination of Elders.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Council should encourage staff and Councillors to give an Acknowledgement of Country at all Council and team meetings and external meetings where there are non-Council staff present including Council Advisory Committee meetings. This acknowledgement should be included as an Agenda item and the acknowledgement on the previous page should be used.

Include Council's Statement of Acknowledgement in all public documents.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

The Muurrbay Language Centre should be the first point of contact for anyone seeking advice on incorporating Aboriginal words and language in to Council projects.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Gumbaynggirr language can be referred to the Muurrbay Language Centre.

5.4 Totems

Totems are animals and natural elements that have special meaning and purpose to Aboriginal people. There are varying levels of totems and they are central to the overall Aboriginal kinship system. A totem represents a person's nation, clan and family group. They are generally both passed down and inherited. Individual people can also be given their own personal totem. Hence, a person can have more than one totem. The purpose of totems is to ensure that everyone has a shared responsibility for each other and also to conserving the natural and physical environment.

The totem system is about identity and connection to one another and to the world around us; it recognises the need for ensuring people live in a way that is sustainable and creates balance in a society while recognising that people need to eat.⁷ People are taught about their totems through ceremonies, Dreaming stories, songs and dances.

During consultations undertaken by Murawin, stakeholders spoke of the sea being a shared totem of the Gumbaynggirr Nation. There are also particular water totems such as the Porpoise or Dolphin and land totems such as the Carpet Snake, Goanna, Echidna and the Gecko. There are also female and male totems such as the Tree Creeper (Woodpecker) and the Bat. Being a Coastal Region, Sea Turtles, Manta Rays and Fish appear as totems in much of the imagery of the Coffs Harbour Region.

⁷ of Sydney, viewed 31 October 2018, <<http://sydney.edu.au/kinship-module/learning/4-totems.shtml>>.

5.5 The Stolen Generation and The National Apology

In 1883 the Aborigines Protection Board was established to manage the reserves and control the lives of the estimated 9,000 Aboriginal people in NSW at that time. Under the Aborigines Protection Act 1909, the Aborigines Welfare Board had wide ranging control over the lives of Aboriginal people including the power to remove Aboriginal children from their families and place them into care under a policy of assimilation. This resulted in what is now referred to as the Stolen Generation.

On 13 February 2008, then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered a speech apologising to the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian Government (a copy of Rudd's speech is in Council's Chambers).

⁸ Commonwealth of Australia 1997, Bringing them home, Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, Commonwealth of Australia, viewed 31 October 2018, <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf>

6. CULTURAL PRACTICES

6.1 Gender Protocols (Men's and Women's Business)

In Aboriginal culture certain customs and practices are performed by men and women separately. Further, certain sites are only allowed to be spoken of or visited by men or women. At times this may mean that Aboriginal Council staff are not able to go to certain places because they have been told it is a men's place or a women's place. This is often referred to as Men's and Women's Business; this is reflective of thousands of years of cultural practices in which men and women played different yet complementary roles in society.

It is important to be respectful to these cultural practices. For example, if a meeting is to be organised with community members, it is important to discuss with people whether or not the topic of conversation is suitable for everyone or if it falls into 'Men's' or 'Women's' business. In some instances, it may be preferable for men to speak to men and women to women. Offence should not be taken at this separation. At times you may be asked to leave a room or conversation. This simply indicates that a culturally-sensitive issue is being discussed

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

When organising any form of community meeting with local Aboriginal people, you should discuss first with people whether any of the topics to be discussed fall into 'Men's' or 'Women's Business'.

Respect the cultural boundaries of Aboriginal staff who may not be able to do certain things or go to certain places due to Men's and Women's Business.

6.2 Aboriginal cultural heritage


Currently the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) is responsible for protecting and conserving Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places in New South Wales (NSW). All Aboriginal objects and sites within NSW are protected under Part 6 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. Under Section 90 a person who, without first obtaining the consent of the Director General knowingly destroys, defaces or damages or knowingly causes or permits the destruction or defacement of or damage to an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place is guilty of an offence.

OEH also maintains the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) which includes:

- Information about registered Aboriginal objects and sites;
- Information about Aboriginal Places which have been declared by the Minister for the Environment to have special significance with respect to Aboriginal culture; and
- Archaeological reports.

There are a large number of registered Aboriginal sites across the local government area and these include: middens, stone artefacts, scarred trees, burials and sacred sites. Sacred sites are important for many reasons. They may mark a particular place in a song line (a path across the land or sky associated with the Dreaming) or be a part of a creation story. They may also be a place of historical significance as opposed to cultural significance. It is important to note that in some cases, talking or identifying a particular site may itself be a violation; the cultural intricacies surrounding sacred sites are complex and should always be discussed with the appropriate members of the Aboriginal communities.

Custodians of sites have specific responsibilities to care for Country which may include undertaking ceremonial actions, walking the land and singing the songs associated with a particular place.



All Aboriginal sites are important to the Aboriginal community as they provide evidence of their ancestors who lived here and cared for country, and this information about the land has been passed down through the generations.

Coffs Harbour City Council has an important role, as a land use manager and a consent authority in identifying, assessing and managing heritage objects and places in the Coffs Harbour local government area (LGA). Council fulfils this role through the preparation of local environmental plans, development control plans, strategic planning, development assessment and ongoing education. Careful consideration of the appropriate role or roles for the Council in the management of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is an important part of the process and with this in mind, Council is keen to establish a robust, formal process to inform decision making aimed at considering the broad goal of protecting Country.

In 2016, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) in partnership with Coffs Harbour City Council, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to undertake an overall *Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Planning and Assessment (ACHPA) Toolkit* (the Toolkit) project.

The aim of the Toolkit project is to:

- increase the knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage issues within Coffs Harbour City Council, and
- improve the management practices for Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Council's planning and assessment processes.
- a whole-of-council toolkit to support decision making in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Achieve broad community acceptance and confidence in the toolkit.

Contact the Local Planning team in Council's Sustainable Places Group for further information on this toolkit project or for advice around significant sites contact Council's Senior Environment Project Officer.

Some examples of well-known local sites include Jewfish Point near Red Rock, which is referred to as a place for the 'Saturday night dance and the Sunday market', a place where the brolga learned to dance, Arrawarra Headland, Giidany Miirarl (Mutton Bird Island) and Niigi Niigi (Sealy Lookout within the Orara East State Forest).⁹

When accessing or even just learning about Aboriginal sites, it is important to be aware of cultural protocol that surrounds the site and in particular, remember that sites can be 'Tangible' or 'Intangible'. In some instances, there may not be a physical element to the site, but rather, the site may represent something intangible or unseen to others, but is significant to the local people. If care is not taken, irreversible damage to sites can be caused unintentionally.

Aboriginal people retain links to some of the oldest spiritual belief systems in the world. For Aboriginal people, identity and culture are intertwined with 'Country', which is central to identity. Through experience, Aboriginal people grew to understand the inter-relationships of the environment and worked within its constraints. Everything in the landscape can have special meaning for Aboriginal people – from individual plants and animals to ecosystems. The land and waterways are associated with dreaming stories and cultural learning that links Aboriginal people with who they are and where they belong.

⁹ Information taken from the Arrawarra: Sharing Culture Project website. For more information, see www.arrawarraculture.com.au

Aboriginal cultural knowledge is not static, but responds to change through absorbing new information and adapting to its implications. Aboriginal cultural knowledge is bequeathed through oral tradition (song, story, art, language and dance) from generation to generation, and embodies and preserves the relationship to the land. Cultural places and landscapes 'embed' these stories and protection of these places and landscapes is key to the long-term survival of these stories in Aboriginal culture.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

If you come across what you think might be an Aboriginal site, mark the location and coordinates on a map if possible or record the general location (e.g. walking track name, approximate distance down track and any noticeable landmarks close by). It is important to not move or remove any part of the site, even in an attempt to preserve an artefact.

Once the location is noted, contact Council's Senior Environmental Project Officer or Officer, Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist or the Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council.

6.3 Sorry Business

"Sorry Business is mourning the loss of someone from the community. This person doesn't have to have a direct family connection to the deceased. Sorry Business also includes not using the names or photos of the deceased." (Aunty Deb Dootson, Garby Elder Group)

Sorry Business involves responsibilities and obligations to attend funerals and participate in other cultural events, activities or ceremonies during a mourning period. In many communities, there is an expectation that funerals involve the whole community and not just the immediate family and friends.

Other Sorry Business-related protocols can include, but are not limited to:¹⁰

- Not using the name of a person who has passed away;
- Not broadcasting the voice of a person who has passed away;
- Restriction on participating in non-bereavement related activities or events;
- Prohibition to depict the image of the deceased person unless you consult with and gain approval of the family of the deceased person. A notice to community should be included on printed material and video recordings containing Aboriginal People, that this may contain images of Aboriginal people who may have passed away.
- Council flying the Aboriginal flag at half-mast when a significant member of the local Aboriginal community passes.

¹⁰ Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care 2018, Sorry Business, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care, viewed 31 October 2018, <<http://www.supportingcarensnaicc.org.au/connecting-to-culture/sorry-business/>>

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

It is important to be aware of the intricacies around the cultural protocols surrounding Sorry Business and it is always best practice to ask the family, community or Council's Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist (ACPES) if you are unsure about how to proceed with an issue.

Once notified of the passing of a significant local Aboriginal community member by Council's ACPES, Council will fly the Aboriginal Flag at the Council Chamber at half-mast.

It is important that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are aware of the Cultural Leave provisions in Council's enterprise award and are supported to be able to manage their community

6.4 Smoking Ceremony

Smoking ceremonies are an ancient practice that Aboriginal people have used to 'cleanse' places and people. They typically involve the burning of native plants to produce smoke; the smoke protects and allows people to acknowledge the ancestors and pay respect to the Country.

There is a great deal of variation in smoking ceremonies across the country; they can be used at burials, welcoming ceremonies, celebrations, births, and other significant times. Some groups also choose to use particular plants for the ceremony. When smoking ceremonies are performed, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can be invited to take part. This can sometimes include being invited to walk through the smoke to be cleansed. This can also be part of a healing ritual and can be necessary when an Aboriginal site is inadvertently disturbed. It is important to allow these cultural practices to occur particularly for those working on Country.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Time may be needed for arranging an Aboriginal person to perform the ceremony in certain situations. If a Smoking Ceremony is a part of an event you are planning, be sure to ask how much time is required to complete the ceremony.

Where possible turn smoke alarms off for Smoking Ceremony if there is provision for smoke alarms to be turned off.

7. FEE FOR SERVICE

In providing cultural services such as Welcome to Country, artistic performances, sharing of knowledge and other cultural ceremonies, it is important to acknowledge the intellectual property of the Aboriginal people through appropriate payment for their services. It is respectful to ensure that the remuneration considers issues such as travel to the event, time and complexity of the service as well as the profile of the event.

Aboriginal cultural knowledge has been passed down through the generations for thousands of

years, through an array of rich social practices like art, song, dance and storylines. It is important to note that there will be cultural rituals, traditions and even knowledge that will be inaccessible to strangers. Council recognises this, and respects and celebrates these intellectual and cultural property rights.¹¹

For advice on appropriate fees for service considerations contact Council's Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist.

8. ART PROCUREMENT AND CONSIGNMENT

People are often uncertain about how to respectfully deal with Aboriginal culture and art, particularly in terms of misappropriation. Misappropriation is the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing understanding or respect for this culture. This can be where someone benefits from another group's culture without permission and without giving something in return.

Council is finalising a Public Art Policy and set of public art guidelines that outline a consistent approach to delivering public art projects. Each

arts program or project involving Aboriginal people, organisations or cultural material has a unique set of circumstances and considerations. For additional practical information and best practice information for use in collaborative arts projects involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists see references below.

The Australia Council for the Arts has published resources on this topic, including an Indigenous cultural and intellectual property guide available at: <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/>

¹¹ Janke, T 1999, Respecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights, UNSW Law Journal 16, 22(2), viewed 31 October 2018, <<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/UNSWLJ/1999/16.html>>

9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

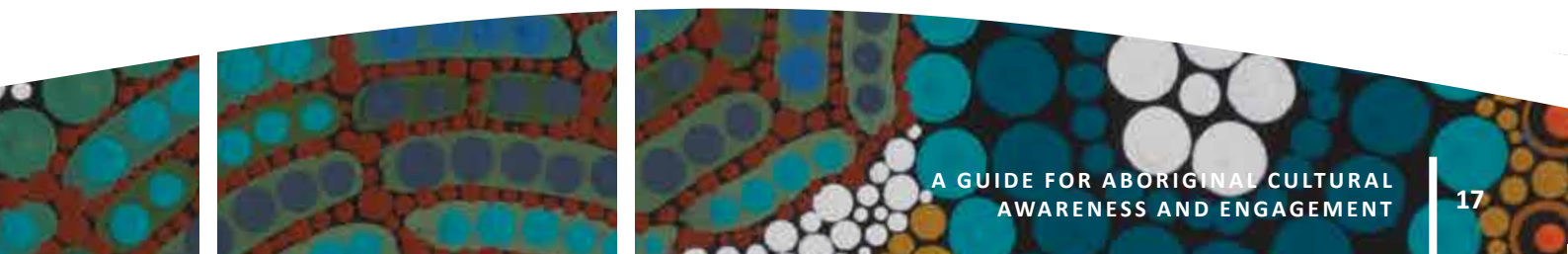
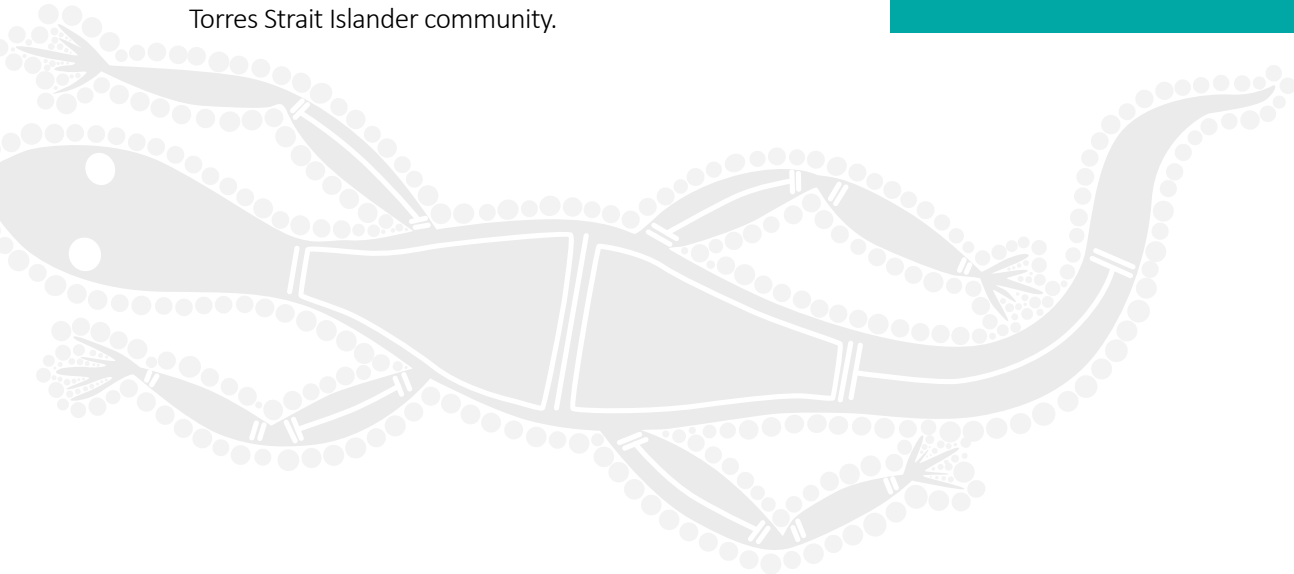
If Council projects relate to Aboriginal people, culture and/or heritage, or have direct or indirect implications for the Aboriginal community, it is important to engage the local Aboriginal community. Engagement needs to be consistent and on an ongoing basis rather than a 'one-off' when an issue arises. For this reason, it is important for Councillors, staff and volunteers to establish their own relationships with Aboriginal Community Members and for relevant staff to attend key Aboriginal meetings on a regular basis such as the Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Interagency (CHAI) and the Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Social Events (CHASE).

It is important that the Aboriginal community is provided with opportunities to openly share information and discuss issues that may impact on their community, culture, heritage and traditional lore. Community engagement must be undertaken from a place of cultural sensitivity, respect and flexibility across contexts. It should employ participatory engagement strategies which allow the community to fully engage and at all times feel culturally safe and respected. This consultation process assists Council to gain a greater understanding of the views, beliefs, sensitivities and insight of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The Coffs Harbour and District Aboriginal Land Council, many Aboriginal Non-Government Organisations as well as Departmental 'Liaison' positions within Government entities can also provide assistance across various matters. Within Council, advice regarding Aboriginal community engagement is available through the Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist and the Yandaarra Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Before work begins on Council projects relating to Aboriginal people, culture and/or heritage, or has direct or indirect implications for the Aboriginal community, it is important to engage the local Aboriginal community. A good starting point is to talk to the Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist and Yandaarra Aboriginal Advisory Committee.



10. ABORIGINAL BUSINESSES

The Aboriginal business sector is fast growing across the country and coupled with the growth of Indigenous Procurement Policies across the country at both government and corporate levels, there is great value to be gained by accessing and utilising local Indigenous businesses.

Supplier diversity has significant and long-term business benefits, and diverse supply chains are more sustainable, flexible and innovative. Through Supply Nation, you can access an online register of Indigenous businesses in your local area. Visit their website, www.supplynation.org.au, for more information.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Engage with Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce Directories or Aboriginal Employment Service to identify Aboriginal businesses that can be invited to quote and tender for works for Council.

11. RECONCILIATION

‘Reconciliation’ is about Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people walking and talking together to overcome the reasons that there is division and inequity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.¹² Reconciliation however, goes beyond simply building relationships and addressing issues such as discrimination and racism; it is a multi-dimensional picture that Australians are building in relation to:¹³

1. Race Relations- All Australians understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences, which results in stronger relationships based on trust and respect and that are free of racism.
2. Equality and Equity- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

- peoples are recognised and upheld.
3. Institutional Integrity- The active support of reconciliation by the nation’s political, business and community structures.
4. Historical Acceptance- All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of the past and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Australia makes amends for past policies and practices ensures these wrongs are never repeated.
5. Unity- An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared national identity.

¹² Reconciliation South Australia n.d., What is Reconciliation?, Reconciliation South Australia, viewed 31 October 2018, < <http://www.reconciliationsa.org.au/reconciliation> >

¹³ Reconciliation Australia 2017, What is Reconciliation?, Reconciliation Australia, viewed 31 October 2018, < <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/what-is-reconciliation/> >

The New South Wales Reconciliation Council is the peak representative body for reconciliation in NSW. Their vision is *“to create a reconciled, just and equitable community for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.”*

The **MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan** identifies as a strategic objective that the Coffs Harbour local government area ‘recognise and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Coffs Harbour local government area’ and as part of this that:

- Our Gumbaynggirr culture and heritage is honoured and acknowledged; and
- We walk together with our local Aboriginal community to honour, share and acknowledge their stories, heritage and culture

The Council also supports the “Racism: It Stops with Me” campaign, which is a national campaign led by the Australian Human Rights Commission and supported by over 400 organisations across Australia. It is a part of the National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy which was launched in 2012 and through this campaign, Coffs Harbour City Council pledges its support that racism has no place in Australia.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Council should participate in National Reconciliation Week annually in collaboration with the Yandaarra Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

12. ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FLAGS

Flags are an important symbol and should always be displayed with dignity and respect. The Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were proclaimed as official flags of Australia under section 5 of the Flags Act 1953 on 14 July 1995. The Aboriginal flag is flown each day at the main Coffs Harbour City Council administration building, alongside the Coffs Harbour City Council and Australian flags – all three are raised every morning and lowered every evening.

Council has Aboriginal flags available through the Customer Resolution Team/Council Reception.

Background Information

The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas, a Luritja man of Central Australia, in 1971. It consists of a coloured rectangle divided in half horizontally, the upper half black and lower red. A yellow circle sits at the centre of the rectangle. The colours of the flag represent:

- The Aboriginal people of Australia
- The red ochre colour of earth; and
- A spiritual relation to the land and the sun.

The Torres Strait Islander Flag was designed by Bernard Namok from Thursday Island in 1992. It consists of horizontal bands: two green and one blue, separated by black lines; a Dhari which is a distinctive traditional dance and ceremonial headdress; and a five-pointed star are central motifs of the flag.

Each part of the flag has special meaning:

- Green: The two green lines represent the mainlands of Australia and Papua New Guinea.
- Blue: The blue between these two continents represents the Torres Strait Island waters.
- Black: The black lines represent the people of the Torres Strait.

- Central symbol: The Dhari or headdress.
- Five pointed star: The five-pointed star represents the five major Island groups of the Torres Strait as well as sea-faring navigation.
- White: Represents peace.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE:

Refer to Council's current Flag Raising procedure.

13. NATIVE TITLE

Native title is very important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It recognises their traditional rights and interests to land and waters. Under the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993, native title claimants can make an application to the Federal Court to have their native title recognised by Australian law. In essence, native title recognises a set of rights and interests over land or waters where Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander groups have practiced and continue to practice, traditional laws and customs prior to sovereignty (British occupation).¹⁴

For further information in relation to Native Title matters in the Coffs Harbour LGA area contact Property and Logistics Section of Council.

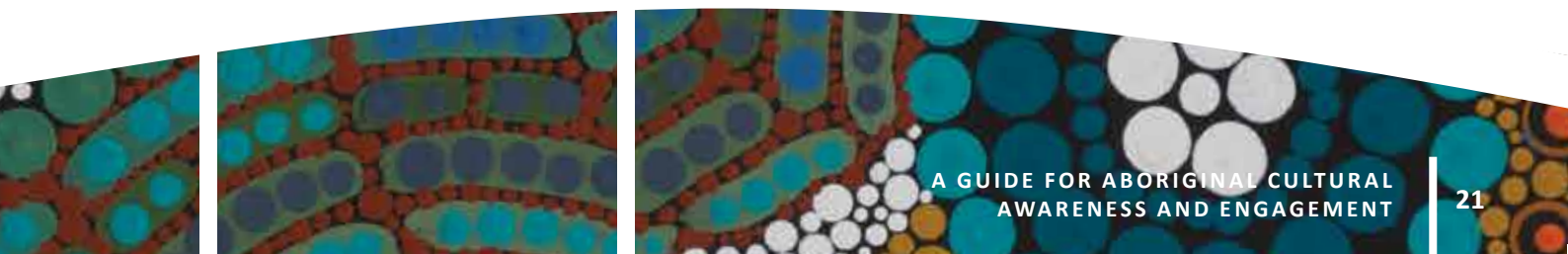
¹⁴ Aurora Project and Programs Pty. Ltd 2018, What is Native Title, viewed 23 November 2018, <<https://auroraproject.com.au/what-native-title>>

14. IMPORTANT DATES

The Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council maintain a calendar of local events on their website, including language classes, Elders gatherings, children's disco's and family fun days.

Some local dates of significance include:

- CHAI Meeting – Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Interagency Meeting, currently held on the last Tuesday of the month. Meetings are held at the Grace Roberts Community Hall, Wongala Estate.
- Grace Roberts Community Development Awards (annual) – These awards are a partnership between the Council and Yandaarra Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
- NAIDOC week – held in July
- Goori Christmas Party – 18+ Christmas party held by the Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- Gumbaynggirr Cultural Family Fun Day – Held in January, this event is a part of the Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council school holiday program.
- Police Aboriginal Consultative Meetings – Held at the Grace Roberts Community Hall, Wongala Estate



DATES OF SIGNIFICANCE

DATE	EVENT	FURTHER INFORMATION
January 26	Australia Day	Australia Day is sometimes referred to by some stakeholders as Invasion Day or Survival Day.
February 13	National Apology Day	The transcript of the Apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples given on February 13 th 2008 is available at https://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples
March 20	National Close the Gap Day	National Close the Gap Day is an annual awareness event that aims to close the health and life expectancy gap between the indigenous and the non-indigenous communities in Australia. Events marking this date occur across the country.
March 21	Harmony Day	www.harmony.gov.au
April 25	Anzac Day	Anzac Day is a day of many commemorations where Australia's ex-servicemen and servicewomen march the streets proudly. The Coloured Diggers march started in 2007 to highlight Australia's Aboriginal war veterans
May 26	National Sorry Day	National Sorry Day is held on 26 May each year to acknowledge and recognise members of the Stolen Generations. www.nsd.org.au
May 27 – June 3	National Reconciliation Week	National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is celebrated across Australia each year between 27 May and 3 June. The dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey—the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 May 1967- Marks the anniversary of Australia's most successful referendum and a defining event in our nation's history. The 1967 referendum saw over 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and recognise them in the national census.

DATE	EVENT	FURTHER INFORMATION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 June 1992- The High Court of Australia delivered its landmark Mabo decision which legally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a special relationship to the land—that existed prior to colonisation and still exists today. This recognition paved the way for land rights called Native Title. <p>www.reconciliation.org.au/nrw/what-is-nrw</p>
First week in July	NAIDOC Week	<p>NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.</p> <p>Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Aboriginal Australians.</p> <p>NAIDOC Week is held in the first full week of July each year. It is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements and is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander make to our country and our society. For more information see www.naidoc.org.au</p>
August 4	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day	www.aboriginalchildrensday.com.au



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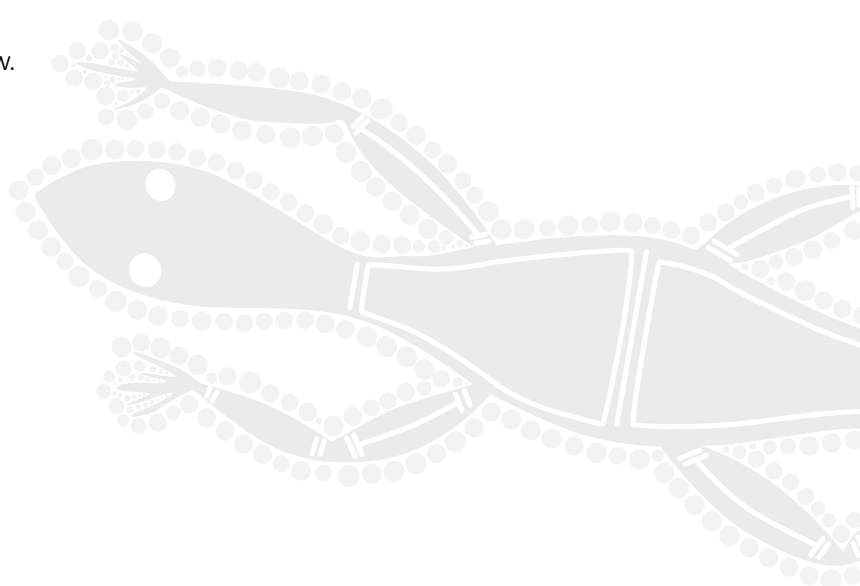
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APPENDIX 1 : LOCAL ELDER GROUPS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council	<p>The Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council (CHDLALC) was formed under the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1983. The CHDLALC was Constituted on the 2nd of February 1984.</p> <p>The CHDLALC boundaries extend from Red Rock (Dirty Creek Range) in the north to south of Urunga (Oyster Creek) and also encompass Glenreagh, Nana Glen, Ulong and Fernmount east of Bellingen. Originally the CH&DLALC leased office space in the Coffs Harbour town centre before relocating to a purpose built community centre in Wongala and acquiring the Wongala Housing Cooperative.</p> <p>Currently the CHD LALC owns and/or manages 55 dwellings for members of the Land Council within the Land Council boundaries.</p>	(02) 6652 8740
Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre	<p>Yarrawarra, meaning “happy meeting place”, is an Aboriginal cultural, conference and accommodation centre open to the public. The centre is owned and operated on a not-for-profit basis by Aboriginal people, predominantly from the Gumbaynggirr language group. Yarrawarra focuses on Aboriginal and Islander descendants maintaining their Cultural Heritage and integrity</p>	(02) 6651 6333
Muurbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative	<p>Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative, located in Nambucca Heads, is a leading regional language centre that provides strategic support to revitalise the languages of the seven Aboriginal communities, of central to northern NSW. The Co-operative works closely with Elders, local language, culture and educational organisations to conduct research, publish accessible grammar-dictionaries and develop engaging education courses and resources.</p> <p>Muurrbay began in 1986, when Gumbaynggirr Elders, particularly Aunty Maggie Morris, joined together to revive their language with the support of linguist, Brother Steve Morelli. They accessed old recordings of the language, analysed its grammar and produced the first Gumbaynggirr dictionary-grammar. Gumbaynggirr language classes began in 1997 and many graduates have gone on to teach Gumbaynggirr in schools and community groups.</p>	(02) 6569 4294

Galambila Aboriginal Health Service	Galambila is an Aboriginal Medical Service that provides culturally appropriate service to the local Aboriginal community. They have a range of clinics and services aiming to close the gap and ensure the Aboriginal community keep healthy and living longer.	(02) 6652 0800
Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Community Care Centre (Abcare) and Elders Group	Abcare provides foster care and social support services in Coffs Harbour and surrounding towns, south to Nambucca, west to Tyringham and north to South Grafton, encompassing 4 local government areas – Coffs Harbour City Council, Clarence Valley Council, Bellingen Shire Council and Nambucca Shire Council. The philosophy of the organisation is to provide a quality service to Aboriginal people that enhances cultural values and empowers the Aboriginal Community. Abcare also host an Elders Group at their premises.	(02) 5615 8300
Jagun Elders Groups	Jagun Aged and Community Care delivers aged care services that meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities, living between the Clarence and Nambucca Heads area.	Contact Coffs Harbour City Council Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist on (02) 6648 4850
Garby Elders Group	The Garby Elders are a tribal group who recognise the lands and seas from Moonee northward along the coast past Wooli and inland to the east bank of the Orara River. This group was established in 1997 to empower the local Aboriginal Traditional Custodians.	
Coffs Harbour Elders Group	The Garlambirla Guuya- Girrwa Elder Group are recognised as mostly local elders, representing the Coffs Harbour area. They meet on the last Friday of the month at 10:00am at the office of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in Duke Street, Coffs Harbour.	
Bularri Muurlay Nyanggan Aboriginal Corporation	“Bularri Muurlay Nyanggan” translates to “Two Path Strong” in the Gumbaynggirr language. The goal of the corporation is to ensure that the Aboriginal community, and in particular youth are “two path strong” – strong in culture and strong in education.	0409 926 747

Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance	<p>Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance is a 100% Aboriginal-owned and run organisation.</p> <p>Incorporated in June 2010, it is a not-for-profit organisation governed by a board representing ten Local Aboriginal Land Councils on the Mid North Coast of NSW. They include Karuah, Forster, Purfleet Taree, Bunyah (Wauchope), Birpai (Port Macquarie), Kempsey, Thungutti (Bellbrook), Unkya (Macksville), Bowraville and Coffs Harbour. The communities in our region cover the four language areas of the Worimi, Biripi, Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr. Saltwater Freshwater hosts the Aboriginal Design Agency, various arts sector development programs as well as the Saltwater Freshwater Festival.</p>	(02) 6658 1315
National Aboriginal Design Agency	<p>NADA is based in Coffs Harbour and is a leading champion in the field of Aboriginal art, design and best practice licensing services. NADA has a total of 25 artists on its fast-growing nationwide portfolio and has facilitated major public works both for government and corporate organisations.</p>	(02) 6658 1315
Kulai Preschool Aboriginal Corporation	<p>Kulai offers a preschool and a playgroup for Aboriginal children. The focus is on Aboriginal children in Garlambirla (Coffs Harbour) area, with children encouraged to become independent, culturally strong and academically successful. The preschool has been caring for and educating Coffs Harbour Aboriginal children since 1961. In fact some of the previous management committee members are former students of Kulai.</p> <p>The preschool was the first Save the Children Fund program for Aboriginal children in New South Wales. It was originally situated at Wongala Estate (the Aboriginal mission) and later relocated to its current premises at Myuna Place. In 1989 the school became self-managing, with a management committee comprising parents and family members.</p>	(02) 6652 4337
Council contacts	<p>Senior Environmental Officer</p> <p>Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Specialist</p>	<p>(02) 6648 4475</p> <p>(02) 6648 4850</p>

