

# Cultural Diversity Plan 2019–23



## Acknowledgments

Cardinia Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land on which we are today and we pay our respects to their elders both past and present.

Council would like to express its sincere appreciation and thank all of the residents, community organisations, service providers, and Council staff who gave of their time to participate in the consultation process and the development of this plan. We hope that we have reflected your views accurately and that the material provided will contribute to creating an accessible, harmonious and socially cohesive community.

We express our gratitude to Council's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Committee members who delivered the shire's first multicultural forum and provided the opportunity for residents to participate in meaningful discussions about their new life in Cardinia Shire and their aspirations for the future. The findings from the forum have informed the new plan and provided direction for our work over the next four years. Our thanks also extends to Living Learning Pakenham who supported the consultation process through small group interviews in which new residents spoke freely about their experiences and the opportunities they are seeking.

We also acknowledge the insight, passion and the dedication our Councillors and staff who support our culturally diverse communities and ensure that they are welcomed into the shire. Thank you also to those staff who have provided their knowledge and expertise and will support the delivery of the plan.

### **Cover image**

*Strength in unity*

by Amir Tehrani

*The colourful roots represent our many cultures and languages that grow tall and strong together as our intercultural communities grow tall and strong.*

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## **Mayor's message**

At Cardinia Shire Council, we are proud of our shire's rich cultural diversity and are committed to ensuring an inclusive and connected community for one and all.

We have an important role to play in fostering an accessible and welcoming community for everyone and for providing support and opportunities for our residents from culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse backgrounds.

Our cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths and contributes to making our shire such a vibrant and welcoming community in which to live.

We can all play our part in promoting harmony, social cohesion and respect for human rights by continuing to support and welcome cultural and religious diversity in our community.

I am proud that our Cultural Diversity Action Plan 2019–23 builds on our commitment to our culturally and linguistically diverse communities by focussing on four key priority areas – welcoming diversity; building connections; promoting participation; and sharing outcomes.

We want our shire to be a liveable community where residents feel included and connected. Let us continue to work together to build a community where everyone belongs, where our differences and contributions are valued and celebrated and where our shire is a place that all residents, regardless of their cultural or religious background, are proud to call home.

**Cr Graeme Moore**  
**Cardinia Shire Mayor 2018–19**

## Census 2016 snapshot

Cardinia Shire is part of the Casey Cardinia growth corridor with seven new families arriving each day, many being of multicultural backgrounds. This data was collected in August 2016 so is no longer a true reflection of our growing cultural diversity but provides a snapshot in time of our changing communities.

<b>Total population in Cardinia Shire:</b> (at August 2016)	<b>94,128</b>
<b>Residents born overseas:</b> (In Cardinia Shire at August 2016)	<b>17,839 (19%)</b>
<b>Residents from overseas:</b> (Arrived five years prior to 2016)	<b>14%</b>
<b>Languages spoken at home</b> (Other than English in Central Ward)	<b>22%</b>
<b>Main languages spoken:</b> (Other than English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punjabi</li> <li>• Sinhalese</li> <li>• Italian</li> <li>• Arabic</li> <li>• Spanish</li> <li>• Filipino – Tagalog</li> <li>• Hindi</li> <li>• Mandarin</li> </ul>
<b>People reporting difficulty speaking English:</b> (Number of residents at 2016)	<b>1,194</b>
<b>Main religions:</b> (Other than Christianity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddhist</li> <li>• Hinduism</li> <li>• Islam</li> </ul>

**Figure 1. Communities with the highest population percentage increase over the past 10 years in Cardinia Shire.**

<b>Ancestry</b>	<b>Population 2006</b>	<b>Population 2016</b>	<b>% change</b>
Indian	207	2,117	923%
Sinhalese	198	1,212	512%
Chinese	242	1,065	340%
Filipino	171	852	398%
Mauritian	158	638	304%
Sudanese	15	565	3,667%

## **Our cultural diversity action plan**

Cardinia Shire Council's ongoing commitment to support our multicultural residents and promote an inclusive community is reflected in the Cultural Diversity Plan 2019–23.

The development of the Cultural Diversity Plan 2019–23 builds on a commitment by Council to its culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. As the Shire's population grows so too does its rich cultural and religious diversity and spirit of celebration. Council recognises that with our growing diversity comes opportunities and challenges and we will continue to work towards inclusiveness and community harmony.

The plan is underpinned by the Draft Council Plan 2019 priorities to support a variety of needs and lifestyles through programs and activities that promote and develop wellbeing and foster a strong sense of connection between Cardinia Shire's diverse communities<sup>1</sup>

It aligns to Council's Liveability Plan's vision for liveable, resilient community where the environment flourishes and residents are healthy, included and connected. This affirms a model of social cohesion fostered through partnership building, and improved communication and engagement with our culturally diverse community.

The process to develop this plan involved extensive consultations with our residents through a multicultural forum, community groups, the CALD Advisory Committee and the Shire's Interfaith and CALD Networks.

Consultations to develop the plan were also held with a range of Council staff and managers who play a key role in ensuring that information provided is in a format that is accessible and economic and community participation opportunities are inclusive of our new and emerging communities.

## **Cultural Diversity Action Plan 2015–19 outcomes**

Council's first Cultural Diversity Plan has achieved a broad range of outcomes over the past three years.

In an ever-changing environment, that has seen a significant increase in our multicultural communities. Outcomes achieved include:

- The establishment of Council's first CALD Advisory Committee to provide a voice for our multicultural community
- School student tours of places of worship to increase young people's understanding and acceptance of cultural and religious diversity
- The *Changing Faces of Cardinia* a series of 20 portraits from residents from a range of cultural backgrounds. The exhibitions showcases the history of settlement in Cardinia Shire from our First Peoples to our most recent new and emerging communities
- Council became a *Racism. It stops with me* signatory. The campaign is part of the National Anti-Racism Partnership led by the Australian Human Rights Commission to assist communities to respond to prejudice and racism.
- Contracts and service agreements between Council and Sport and Recreation providers that are inclusive of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Council's website has a translating function in the Shire top ten languages other than English
- Translating and Interpreting (TIS) workshops are available to staff to improve communication with residents
- The new Aboriginal & CALD Sports Assistance Program has been developed
- Contribution to *No one teaches you to become an Australian* a 2017 Commonwealth Government report.
- The establishment a Police Youth Leadership Engagement Team (PYLET) made up of residents from African backgrounds and local police is underway
- The new Cardinia Shire Council Social Justice and Equity Policy that takes and intersectional approach to diverse communities and promotes an inclusive environment and social, cultural and economic participation
- Eight new community based projects have commenced with support through Council's Social Support and Wellbeing Program

## **Ongoing implementation of actions from first action plan**

Many of the initiatives above will continue during the implementation of Council's second Cultural Diversity Action Plan

## Priority 1. Welcoming diversity

Our residents have told us that they face significant challenges when settling in Cardinia Shire. These challenges include language and communication issues, complex needs arising from their arrival and many feel that the broader community does not accept them<sup>2</sup>. Working together to support the expression of all cultures, languages and faiths is an important first step and Council will continue to build a welcoming community through local leadership, promoting inclusion and addressing racism and discrimination to create a richer and more vibrant community for all of our residents.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Celebrate and foster our Shire's growing cultural and religious diversity	1.1 Deliver an annual Harmony Day event during Cultural Diversity Week	Annually 2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	1.2 Support Cardinia Shire's Interfaith Network to deliver events	Annually 2019 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Cardinia Interfaith Network</li> </ul>
2. Strengthen Council's commitment to providing an inclusion community	2.1 Promote the Shire as a Refugee Welcome Zone in community facilities	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	2.2 Deliver an annual Refugee Week event in partnership with community organisations	Annually 2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
3. Create a greater understanding of our new and emerging communities	3.1 Facilitate internal cultural insight workshops	Annually 2019 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture Manager</li> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	3.2 Provide opportunities for interactive staff workshops to increase cultural awareness	Two per year internally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People and Culture Manager</li> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	3.3 Promote cultural and religious events through internal communication forums	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	3.4 Provide Translating Interpreter Service (TIS) workshops	Annually 2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
4. Promote Racism. It stops with me through everyday anti-racism measures	4.1 Deliver two community workshops to support residents to respond safely and effectively when they encounter racism	October 2020 October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>



## Case study: Harmony Day Cardinia Shire

Now in its fourth year Harmony Day Cardinia Shire provides an opportunity for the whole of community to come together and celebrate the richness of our country's ancient past and colourful multicultural present. Harmony Day Cardinia Shire began as an initiative of Cardinia Shire's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Network to support successful settlement and promote social cohesion during Cultural Diversity Week.

The event brings residents of all ages and cultural backgrounds together to foster a sense of belonging and showcase our growing cultural traditions with performances, arts and food. It also provides opportunities for cross-cultural learning and the forging of new friendships for our residents from all around the world.

*Let's work together to create a future that is welcoming, accepting and safe.*



## Priority 2. Building connections

Isolation and a lack of access to key services and physical infrastructure has been identified as a significant issue for our new communities<sup>3</sup>. Supporting our residents from culturally diverse backgrounds to successfully participate and contribute in their communities requires a strong partnership approach across a range of settings. Through platforms that provide for collaboration and learning from each other we will enhance our capacity to respond more effectively to our new communities.

Action	Deliverable	Timeframe	Responsibility
<b>Community partnerships</b>			
5. Support our new and emerging communities to grow traditional foods in a community setting	5.1 Identify suitable accessible land in the Shire to establish inter-cultural community gardens	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Food Circles</li> </ul>
	5.2 Source equipment and resources required to maintain the gardens	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Food Circles</li> </ul>
	5.3 Develop a financially viable <i>paddock to plate</i> distribution system to sell excess produce	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Food Circles</li> <li>Southern Migrant &amp; Refugee Centre</li> </ul>
<b>Business partnerships</b>			
6. Identify mentors to participate in a Learn Local program supporting people from multicultural backgrounds to gain employment	6.1 Source two Council leaders to participate in the mentor program	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Inter-agency partnerships</b>			
7. Develop a sustainable model to collate and disseminate information and deliver programs to our multicultural communities	7.1 Establish an inter-organisational working group	March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Living Learning Pakenham</li> </ul>
	7.2 Produce an information newsletter annually for new communities	September 2020-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Casey Cardinia Library</li> </ul>

Action	Deliverable	Timeframe	Responsibility
	7.3 Co-design deliver and evaluate the programs	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Living Learning Pakenham</li> </ul>
	7.4 Secure funding to continue the programs	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Living Learning Pakenham</li> </ul>
8. Support Victoria Police to gain a better understanding of our new and emerging communities	8.1 Co-deliver annual cultural competency workshops with local police officers and community leaders	June 2020 June 2021 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victoria Police – Pakenham</li> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	8.2 Provide opportunities for community leaders to spend time with local police officers	2019 - 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victoria Police – Pakenham</li> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
9. Provide professional development opportunities for support agencies	9.1 Lead the Cardinia Shire CALD Network	Bi monthly meetings 2019 - 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
10. Deliver the South Sudanese Project	10.1 Support project worker	October 2019 to June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	10.2 Comply with project reporting requirements	January to July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>

## Case study: The Hub

Council's community facilities play an important role in achieving positive outcomes for residents by providing settings to deliver locally based services and community development opportunities.

Community hubs can provide a valuable link and central location for residents to access local services, activities, support structures, learning options and social opportunities.

The Hub is located at Living Learning Pakenham and provides a welcoming first entry point to a range of services, programs and information. It has created a unique and dedicated space in the Shire for intercultural development, dialogue, engagement, participation and celebration. It also provides a point of contact for residents to access services and information on a range of topics including family support and employment, settlement services, financial counselling, financial and housing support services and cultural development programs.

Underpinning Council's commitment to improve service delivery The Hub provides for an early intervention and preventative approach to addressing needs through quality and integrated practice. It is also accessible, equitable and inclusive for all community members. Its partnership model with Living Learning Pakenham has ensured sustainability, with the resource allocated delivering the greatest benefit and value to residents. There are a number of community service organisations, support agencies and legal services from across the south east region are now based at The Hub on a weekly basis who are supporting the Shire's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) residents and the broader community,



## Priority 3. Promoting participation

Participation can take many forms and it evolves as new communities evolve. Council actively encourages all residents to participate in civic life and engage with their neighbours and local communities. Fundamental to achieving this goal is ensuring that information that is provided by Council is in a format that is accessible for all. It is also important that new communities have the opportunity to participation in decisions that will enhance their wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Provide a voice for the shire's multicultural residents	11.1 Facilitate Council's CALD Advisory Committee meetings	2019 - 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	11.2 Support projects delivered by the Advisory Committee	2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
12. Enhance Council's communication processes to reflect the shire's growing cultural diversity	12.1 Include the Translating Symbol in the contact panel of Council's publications	June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications team leader</li> </ul>
	12.2 Provide Communications with ongoing promotional opportunities for inclusion in communications campaigns	Meet bi annually 2020 - 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Communications team leader</li> </ul>
	12.3 Support staff developing community engagement plans to ensure our multicultural communities are consulted	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
13. Undertake a feasibility study to determine the most appropriate model for a multicultural hub	13.1 Identify an appropriate model for a multicultural hub based on Councils building pricing model	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> <li>Buildings and Facilities Manager</li> </ul>

## Case study: Tribes Basketball Club

The benefits of sport and recreational programs is well documented and for young people from refugee backgrounds these activities can be life changing. They provide a site for trust building and support, act as a diversion strategy, and provide an opportunity for young people to develop skills that are transferable to other parts of their lives.

For young people, whose families have experienced trauma as a refugee, sport and recreation can have therapeutic benefits, promote health and wellbeing and provide an opportunity to build understanding between and within communities. It also assists young people who are socially isolated and coping with the difficulties of becoming part of a new community.<sup>4</sup>

The Tribes Basketball Club was established in 2016 with one under 16 year's basketball team. In two short years the Club has grown to five boys teams ranging from under 10 years to under 18 years and four girls teams ranging from under 12 years to under 18 years.

The Club is now incorporated with the support of the Centre of Multicultural Youth and with a highly dedicated coach and a team manager the nine teams play weekly at Cardinia Life in Pakenham. The Club has created a supportive environment and provides positivity and a sense of purpose and direction for young people who regularly experience racism and discrimination.



## Priority 4: Sharing outcomes

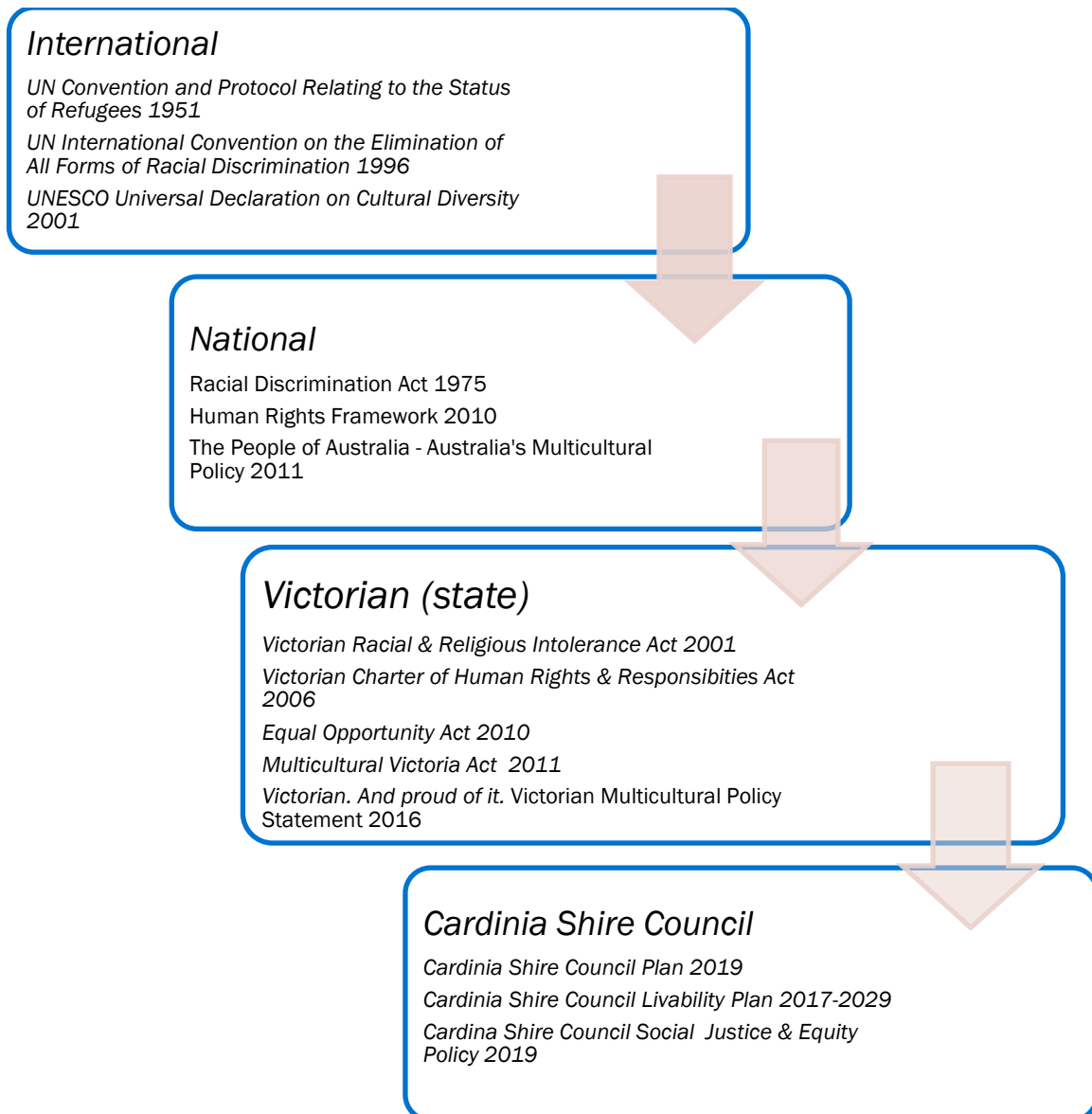
While respecting our differences is necessary in an open and inclusive community, it is also important to acknowledge that we have much in common. We have much to gain, individually and collectively by working together to build a positive and progressive future in our growing municipality. Sharing stories and celebrating the successes of the Shire's growing cultural diversity will provide for a greater understanding of our new communities and an insight to our commonalities, which are much greater than our differences.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Showcase the achievements of the shire's multicultural communities	14.1 Promote events and initiatives in Council's Connect magazine	Bi annually 2019 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	14.2 Provide media releases to local media outlets	Quarterly 2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	14.3 Contribute stories internally through Council's communication outlets	Quarterly 2020 to 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
15. Review, refresh and update the current plan	15.1 Report the plan's progress	June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>
	15.2 Ensure the plan is proactive and maintains responsive to the needs of the shire's multicultural communities	August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Strengthening Manager</li> </ul>

## Legislative context

There is a wide range of international, national, state and local instruments and initiatives that aim to promote and enhance the rights and needs of our culturally diverse communities. These initiatives also direct the manner in which services and programs are planned and delivered to support cultural diversity. They include international conventions legislation, policies, plans and strategies which provide an important framework for the development of Council's Cultural Diversity Plan.

**Figure 2. International, federal, state and local government legislative framework in respect to cultural diversity**



<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/downloads/download/1381/draft\\_council\\_plan\\_2019-20\\_-\\_cardinia\\_shire\\_council](https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/downloads/download/1381/draft_council_plan_2019-20_-_cardinia_shire_council)

<sup>2</sup> Cardinia Shire Multicultural Community Forum Report 2018

<sup>3</sup> Cardinia Shire Multicultural Community Forum Report 2018

<sup>4</sup> Playing for the Future 2009: the role of supporting young refugee people settle in Australia <https://www.cmy.net.au/publications/playing-future>