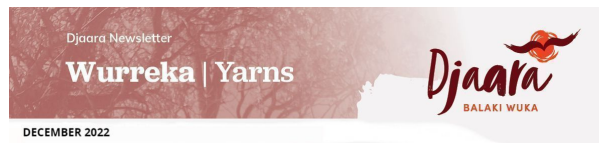


[View this email in your browser](#)



SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE!

Unique agreement a milestone in peacemaking



L-R: City of Greater Bendigo CEO Craig Niemann, DJAARA General Manager Cassandra Lewis, City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Andrea Metcalf, DDWCAC Board Chair Trent Nelson, City of Greater Bendigo Director Andrew Cooney, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter.

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC) and the City of Greater Bendigo signed a unique agreement, *Yilingga Marna* ("shake hands"), in a ceremony at Wanyarra Dum (Frog Ponds) by the Bendigo Creek on 5 December.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter described the 12-month agreement – the first of its kind in Australia – as a milestone in peace making, and a model that may be used in future agreements with other jurisdictions.

"This agreement lifts the relationship between DJAARA and the City out of the 19th century and to something that is respectable in the 21st century," Rodney said.

"The existing Land Use Activity Agreement in our 2013 Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the State of Victoria was cumbersome to work with – for the City and for DJAARA.

"Together, we have worked collaboratively and in genuine partnership to come up with our own unique solution, which we believe will work better for both of us and the communities we service.

"The relationship that this agreement reflects and enables means we can renegotiate as required to make sure it continues to work for mutual benefit.

"Yilingga Marna will create more efficiency and more certainty for both organisations. Instead of holding a separate negotiation for each individual land-use proposal, we've negotiated one single agreement for all council-led projects over the next 12 months," Rodney said.

The Yilingga Marna agreement contains a range of other benefits around land rehabilitation, employment, language, signage and Cultural Heritage protection.

Read [Rodney's full speech](#) for more detail.

As part of the ceremony, DDWCAC Board Chair Trent Nelson presented City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Andrea Metcalf with a possum skin cloak, reflecting the trusting and respectful relationship between the two organisations.





TOP: Yilngga Marna signing. L-R: City of Greater Bendigo CEO Craig Niemann, City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Andrea Metcalf, DDWCAC Board Chair Trent Nelson, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter. LEFT: Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter. RIGHT: DDWCAC Board Chair Trent Nelson presents City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Andrea Metcalf with a possum skin cloak.

[Learn more](#)

Forest Gardening Strategy launched to heal Country



L-R Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter, Traditional Owner Engagement Officer and strategy co-contributor Jacinta Douglas, University of Melbourne School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, and Forestry Australia Victorian Branch Chair Professor Rodney Keenan, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Chair Trent Nelson

DJAARA was thrilled to launch its anticipated Forest Gardening strategy *Galk-galk Dhelkunya* ("to care for/to heal, many trees") 2022-2034 at Larni Garingilang ("Home of Growth") in Bendigo on Tuesday.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter called on the state government to reform the regulatory framework around the management of *Djandak* (Country) so it is empowering and enabling for First Nations People.

"It is essential that Dja Dja Wurrung People are supported to manage Country and apply their principles of Galk-galk Dhelkunya," Rodney said.

"For two centuries the forests have lost Traditional Owner specialist knowledge and hands-on tending. Today is the start of nurturing Country.

Galk-galk Dhelkunya empowers DJAARA and others to heal Country, heal Dja Dja Wurrung People, and improve the economic health of local communities.

"The term 'Forest Gardening' communicates how Dja Dja Wurrung People interact with the environment – it's a contemporary approach to caring for Country that is deeply rooted in traditional knowledge and practice.

"It is our response to threats such as land clearing, climate change, biodiversity loss and species extinction.

"Everyone benefits when DJAARA leads on Country. But we cannot do this alone," Rodney said.

DJAARA has developed a five-year business case and is looking to establish partnerships with organisations working in land management.

Galk-galk Dhelkunya includes a Forest Gardening toolkit for healing Country, which includes:

- Cultural thinning – restoring culturally recognisable structures to our forests
- Revegetation & rehabilitation – healing ecological functions across Djandak
- Regenerative practice – working in partnerships with private landholders
- Djandak Wi (Country Fire) - cultural burning
- Gatjin (water) - restoring, healing, and protecting our rivers and waterways

DJAARA's *Dhelkunya Dja* (Healing Country) Policy Team led the development of the strategy, in consultation with DJAARA Members, and land management practitioners.



LEFT: L-R DJAARA General Manager Cassandra Lewis, Melbourne University School of School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, and Victorian Branch Chair Forestry Australia Professor Rodney Keenan, Traditional Owner Engagement Officer and strategy co-contributor Jacinta Douglas, DDWCAC Chair Trent Nelson, City of Greater Bendigo Mayor Andrea Metcalf, Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter, Forest Gardening Project Manager Oli Moraes, Manager Partnerships & Policy Mark Costello. RIGHT: Smoking ceremony with Rodney Carter (left) and Trent Nelson (right).

DUMAWUL officially launches

Bendigo's Capital Theatre was buzzing as more than 100 people came together to celebrate the launch of DJAARA's newest enterprise, DUMAWUL – a sister enterprise to DJANDAK – on 18 November.

DUMAWUL is a business support program that provides services for Dja Dja Wurrung People to build sustainable creative and culture-centred businesses aligned to their goals and needs. Dumawul means thank you between two people. It celebrates the sharing of Culture between Djaara and the customer in good murrup (spirit).

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter likened Dumawul to a mother holding her child with love and care, keeping them safe.

Dja Dja Wurrung artist Peta Hudson said that DUMAWUL had helped by believing in her when she doubted herself.

"I can see how much I've grown with that support," Peta said.

"And knowing it's local and it's safe. Something I've struggled with is that trust of systems and organisations. I feel I have the best kind of network of support for my business.

"My greatest thing now is I live a purposeful life. It's not fake, it's authentic, I get to be me, I get to earn a really good income. I'm doing stuff that I love – it's not work."

DUMAWUL'S activities include:

- assisting with starting or growing a business
- facilitating Cultural competency programs
- working with stakeholders to put Djaara back in the landscape through art commissioning
- working with Dja Dja Wurrung to develop Cultural tourism across *Djandak* (Country).



TOP LEFT: Artist Samantha Roberts. TOP RIGHT: Artwork by Neane Carter. BOTTOM LEFT: Products by Peta Hudson. BOTTOM RIGHT: Koori Art Designs by artist Kerri Douglas. Photography by Corey Noel.

Get in touch with DUMAWUL

Welcome Baby event brings community together



Smoking ceremony for the babies: mother Mirella Gavidia and child Luca Pasqualini.

More than 50 Dja Dja Wurrung and non-Indigenous babies and toddlers were welcomed to Country at a ceremony to honour and acknowledge their connection with Country on 16 November, in partnership with Bendigo Health.

The event at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens Garden for the Future began with a smoking ceremony followed by an official Welcome to Country from Auntie Marilynne Nicholls, and a song from Andrew Travis.

DJAARA General Manager Cassandra Lewis said the modern version of a Cultural practice for non-Indigenous babies was a brilliant way to bring community together and start the journey of education and reconciliation.

"Holding this ceremony here today is also helping to heal Dja Dja Wurrung People from the impacts of colonisation," Cassandra said.

"In practising Culture on Country, and passing our traditions on to a new generation, we

MC Rebecca (Bec) Phillips said the ceremony was important to 'acknowledge babies' belonging to the community and that they too would have a responsibility to look after Country and that Country would then look after them.

"It's great to have all the support we have here. It takes a community to raise a child and having all of those kinships and knowing you have a place in your community is vital for your health and well being," Bec said.

Bendigo Health Board Chair Dr Ewa Piejko thanked DJAARA for walking with Bendigo Health on the journey to reconciliation.

"We at Bendigo Health are humbled to be part of this event, to come together as a community to celebrate First Nation's culture," Ewa said.

"We acknowledge the importance of the child's sense of identity and belonging through the connection to the traditional lands they're born on."

Bec encouraged guests to call out "Murrun dheelk" (live well) to each baby as Auntie Marilynne and Ron (Thunda) Kerr presented them with Cultural gifts – possum skins, boomerangs for boys and coolamons for girls.



Top: Auntie Marilynne Nicholls and Ron (Thunda) Kerr present guest with certificate and gifts. Bottom left: Andrew Travis performs. Bottom right: Gifts for the babies.



SHARING WURRUNG | speaking/ lip/ tongue

*Our language connects us to water, land, animals, and People.
It calls us to ceremony and strengthens our identity.*

We are making sure our language, Dja Dja Wurrung language, is increasingly spoken; we share it in song and ensure it is placed lovingly back to Djandak, where it belongs, by us. Those that live and visit here in Central Victoria more and more want to support Dja Dja Wurrung reclamation of our rights and support our continued presence here. We hope that those who travel across, visit and reside on Djandak recognise our unique language and distinct culture.

Djaara | People, Dja Dja Wurrung People
Djandak | Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Country
Dumawul | Thank you between two people - the giver and receiver of culture in good spirit
Dhelkunya Dja | Healing Country
Galk-galk Dhelkunya | To care for/to heal, many trees
Larni Garingilang | Home of growth

Let us know what you think!

Do you like this newsletter?

What would you like to see more of?

We'd love to hear your feedback.

Get in touch



Copyright © 2021. Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation trading as DJAARA.
All rights reserved.

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 5:00pm

Our mailing address is:

PO BOX 1026 Bendigo VIC 3552

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).