

## SWAN Supporting First Nations (SFN) group 2020-21

In March 2020, SWAN established a Supporting First Nations Group. The rationale that underpinned this is outlined in [Reasons for SWAN becoming an Indigenous Ally](#). Priority was given to engaging with local Indigenous organisations to learn about their work, achievements and the challenges they face; and determine how SWAN might best support them in their endeavours and campaigns.

SFN provided SWAN members with information and resources about how they can learn more about the historic and current day issues faced by our First Nations peoples, including in our local area. [SFN newsletter May and July 2020](#) [SFN newsletters 2021](#)

Examples of actions undertaken by SFN during 2021 and 2020 include:

- Liaison with MPSC *Warringineer Group* in response to specific requests for support and on how SWAN can help to achieve the outcomes in the Shire's Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Participating in 'Change the Date' events held by *Willum Warrain* Aboriginal Gathering Place and *Nairm Marr Djambana* Aboriginal Gathering Place in conjunction with Our Songlines over the 26 January weekend.
- Lobbying politicians and local councillors in support of the three pillars of The Statement: Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling following NAIDOC week events, 2021 (with local Elder, Aunty Helen Bnads) and 2020 (with guest speaker Teela Reid).
- Building alliances with MPSC women councillors in support of First Nations concerns.
- Writing letters to the Editor of MP News to support truth-telling about our colonial past.
- Developing the SWAN Truth-Telling Resource to support our members to share information about our colonial history, current injustices faced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to advocate against racism. This resource can be accessed from the right hand top of this page.
- Submitting a written response to Government's Indigenous Voice Co-design process: [SWAN Submission on Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process](#)
- Lobbying politicians to hold a referendum to enable the Australian people to vote to enshrine an Indigenous Voice to Parliament and to conduct a bipartisan community education campaign guided by First Nations people about a) why a referendum is being held; b) why this constitutional change is necessary; and c) what it will mean.
- Supporting local campaigns that led to MPSC a) naming the new aquatic centre in Rosebud: 'Yawa', the local Indigenous word for 'swim', thereby acknowledging a language over 40,000 years old; and b) agreeing to replace the derogatory term 'Blacks Camp' on a road, preschool and bushland reserve in Somerville.
- Advocacy with MP Shire Council on cultural heritage, signage and information.
- Advocacy for the protection of remote communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Writing letters of protest to the Government and media concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Deaths in Custody, Black Lives Matter and age of incarceration.
- Providing written input for the Willum Warrain Masterplan.
- Canvassing the views of candidates in the MPSC elections on First Nations issues.