



**Moreland**  
City Council

# Renaming City Council

A new Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung  
name we can all be proud of

➔ **Information toolkit**

## Moreland Language Link

|            |           |                     |           |
|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| 廣東話        | 9280 1910 | हिंदी               | 9280 1918 |
| Italiano   | 9280 1911 | 普通话                 | 9280 0750 |
| Ελληνικά   | 9280 1912 | ਪੰਜਾਬੀ              | 9280 0751 |
| عربي       | 9280 1913 |                     |           |
| Türkçe     | 9280 1914 | All other languages |           |
| Tiếng Việt | 9280 1915 | 9280 1919           |           |



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Local scarred tree

## Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit is for anyone wanting to learn more about Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung history of the area and about Moreland City Council's transition to a new name – one we can all be proud of.

In 2021 Council was approached by a group of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders and other community members. They told us that the name 'Moreland' is racist and painful. It's linked to global slavery and human rights abuses against First Nations people.

## Transitioning to a new name we can be proud of

At the 13 December 2021 Council Meeting, Council voted to change this name in response to this knowledge, in collaboration with Traditional Owners.

In May 2022, Council accepted 3 Woi-wurrung name options offered by Wurundjeri Elders at a special cultural ceremony.

**Wa-dam-buk, meaning 'Renew' (pronounced wah-dam-book)**

**Merri-bek, meaning 'Rocky Country' (pronounced merry-beck)**

**Jerrang, meaning 'Leaf of tree' (pronounced jer-rang)**

These Woi-wurrung words have been provided as proposed name options through detailed research and careful consideration by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. They reflect the significance of Country and culture as well as honour the opportunity this name change represents as part of the reconciliation and healing journey.

As a local community we have the opportunity to work together. We want our diverse community to be a part of this positive step towards a better understanding of and connection to local Aboriginal heritage and culture through understanding the history of land, its people and experiences.

If you want copies of this resource for your organisation, school, group or for personal use contact us here

✉ [communications@moreland.vic.gov.au](mailto:communications@moreland.vic.gov.au) ☎ 9240 1111

## Our shared Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung history



Our Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung history is often untold."



The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people continue to live and work on Country including in the municipality of Moreland which remains part of their unceded territory."

The area we know today as Moreland was for tens of thousands of years a sparsely wooded forest with native grasslands that was governed by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. The Merri Creek, also known as the 'Merri Merri' Creek, means 'very rocky' in Woi-wurrung, the traditional language of this Country.

The creek wound its way through a flood plain about 300 metres wide. Fertile soils in the area grew gum and paperbark trees, bottlebrush and tea-trees. The Moonee Ponds Creek – named after Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Ancestor, Moonee Monee – is older than the Merri Creek, and originally went as deep as 10 metres into the sandstone.

This was the original landscape which provided the basis for the cultural, spiritual, economic and social lives of the Traditional Owners of Country.

Contact between the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Europeans occurred in 1835. The resulting experience of colonisation and dispossession had devastating and ongoing consequences for the Wurundjeri people. The settlers introduced disease and violence and many Aboriginal people suffered and died.

The population of the Port Philip District then rapidly increased from 1,000 people in 1837 to over 75,000 people by 1851 – when Victoria separated from

New South Wales and the gold rush began.

Other settlers came down to the area from New South Wales and from overseas, hoping to make money and invest in land in this new colonial outpost.

The colonisation of Victoria was quick, with tracts of 'Crown land' (where the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people lived for millennia) sold to private investors in a few short years.

In 1863, Ngurungaeta ('Leader') Wonga and his maternal cousin William Barak, lead their surviving people across the Black Spur to the Upper Yarra and established Coranderrk Mission Station near Healesville on 2300 acres of land. Access to the land was granted, though importantly not as freehold. Many other Aboriginal Victorians also settled at Coranderrk Station.

The history of Coranderrk (1863 – 1924) is nothing less than extraordinary. Descendants of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people survived the very difficult decades immediately associated with colonisation and dispossession.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people continue to live and work on Country including in the municipality of Moreland which remains part of their unceded territory.



## Significant historical sites to visit in the area

Learn about the history of your local area to better understand the connection First Nations people have to traditional lands that continues today.



### Merri Creek trail interpretive signage

Visit the Merri Creek trail and learn about cultural connection to country of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples. You'll find a series of interpretive signs next to significant locations along the Merri creek.

This cultural signage project was made with local community members and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders.



As you wander along the trail, look out for the signs and symbols of traditional life: tree carvings, rock painting and traditional ceremony."

### What is a cool burn?

Cool burns are conducted using traditional Aboriginal land management techniques. Also known as a cultural burn, a cool fire moves slowly through the landscape and burns a patchy mosaic, allowing wildlife plenty of time to move to safe ground.

Grassland species are then able to regenerate in the spaces opened by the fire.

Visit the grassland and look out for opportunities to learn about cool burns.

Learn more about the Merri Creek Management Committee at [mcmc.org.au](https://mcmc.org.au)



Under the guidance of Uncle Dave Wandin and the Wurundjeri Corporation's Narrap Team, Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) staff participated in their first cool burn at Bababi Djinanang Grassland, Fawkner in mid-July 2019

## Bababi Djinanang Grassland

Visit the Merri Murnong site close to the intersection of Merri Creek and Murray Road. MECCARG (Merri and Edgars Creek Confluence Restoration Group) a local community is working with Wurundjeri to foster connection and learn about how to look after the local Murnong Lily and other indigenous food, fibre and medicine plants with respect.

Visit

➔ [facebook.com/MECCARG](https://facebook.com/MECCARG)



Murnong Lily

One of these sites – Bababi Djinanang (meaning ‘Mother’s Foot’) grassland – is on the west side of Merri Creek, next to the end of Jukes Road in Fawkner. This was formerly known as Jukes Road Grassland. This is one of four grassland sites along Merri Creek that together form a Parks Victoria park to be called Marran Baba Galada Tamboore / Marran Baba Parklands, or ‘body of the mother.’



Since 2019 Moreland City Council has been conducting cool burn at Bababi Djinanang Grassland, Fawkner with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Narrap Team and Merri Creek Management Committee.

### Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021 – 2026

The Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy is an important resource for Victorian councils.

It guides councils across Victoria – helping embed the voices and priorities of Aboriginal communities at a local government level.

The Strategy includes a clear framework for shared

decision-making processes and actions for Aboriginal Victorians working together with local government based on mutual control, shared power and decision-making, fairness, respect, and trust.

Learn more and read the full document at

➔ [localgovernment.vic.gov.au](https://localgovernment.vic.gov.au)

## Council's Statement of Commitment to First Australians



Our City Council area is home to many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from diverse family and community groups from across Australia, and therefore peoples of many language groups.

In October 2021 City Councillors, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land we then knew as Moreland and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents signed a Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities of our City Council.

This statement sets out the Council's vision for reconciliation. It outlines what Council recognises, supports, and commits to.

Council made a commitment to the rights for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities supports their right to:

- » enjoy their identity and culture
- » maintain and use their language
- » maintain their kinship ties
- » maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters.



**Council committed to undertake cultural consultations with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and seek to include Woi-wurrung names in the process of naming and renaming spaces, places, roads and parks in the City of Moreland."**

This follows the naming rules for places in Victoria – statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities. These rules state that Traditional Owner languages are often based on location; languages are deeply rooted to the land and offer an ideal opportunity to connect a name to a place.



**The use of Traditional Owner languages enables the wider community to be educated about Traditional Owner history and shared culture."**

## Treaty now

Australia is the only country in the Commonwealth that does not currently have a Treaty with its First People. In 2018 the State of Victoria passed a legislation to progress Treaty with Aboriginal Victorians.

Aboriginal Victorians have long called for treaty. Victoria is leading the country through its work toward a treaty or treaties with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians.

**A treaty is an agreement between states, nations or governments. This can include an agreement between First Peoples and governments.**

There is no set form for what a treaty with First Peoples should contain. Each treaty is shaped by the history between the parties and the social and political context in which it is made. In Victoria, there could be one state-wide treaty or multiple treaties with individual Aboriginal groups.

For further information about the Treaty journey so far visit First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, go to [➔firstpeoplesvic.org](https://firstpeoplesvic.org)

### Coranderrk Mission/Station

Coranderrk Aboriginal Station (established in 1859) is located on Wurundjeri country, specifically on the Yarra Flats and is bordered by the Yarra River, Badger Creek, Watts River and the slopes of Mount Riddle.

It was established for the people of the Kulin Nation, an alliance formed by five language groups – Woi-wurrung/Wurundjeri, Boon Wurrung, Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung – but was home to many other First Nations groups as well.



**Missions, reserves and stations were areas where Aboriginal people were placed in after being forcibly removed from their traditional lands."**

### Treaties in other countries

There has never been a treaty between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and colonial governments in Australia. In other British settler colonies (where the colonisers came to stay), such as Aotearoa/New Zealand and Turtle Island/North America, there have been treaties negotiated with First Nations Peoples.

It can be useful to understand what has happened in other countries to know more about what may be included in treaty for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to see the historical context of treaty making.

Find out more at [➔deadlystories.com](https://deadlystories.com)



## Why are we renaming City Council?

The name 'Moreland' is linked to 2 examples of racism: global slavery (as used on McCrae's family's sugar plantation – where the name 'Moreland' comes from) and the dispossession of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the land we live on today called Moreland. Read more about the history of the name 'Moreland' in the next section.

### There are 2 important reasons for a name change:

- » changing the name of our City Council is an important step to reconciliation
- » the removal of a name that is racist and painful will be beneficial to our community

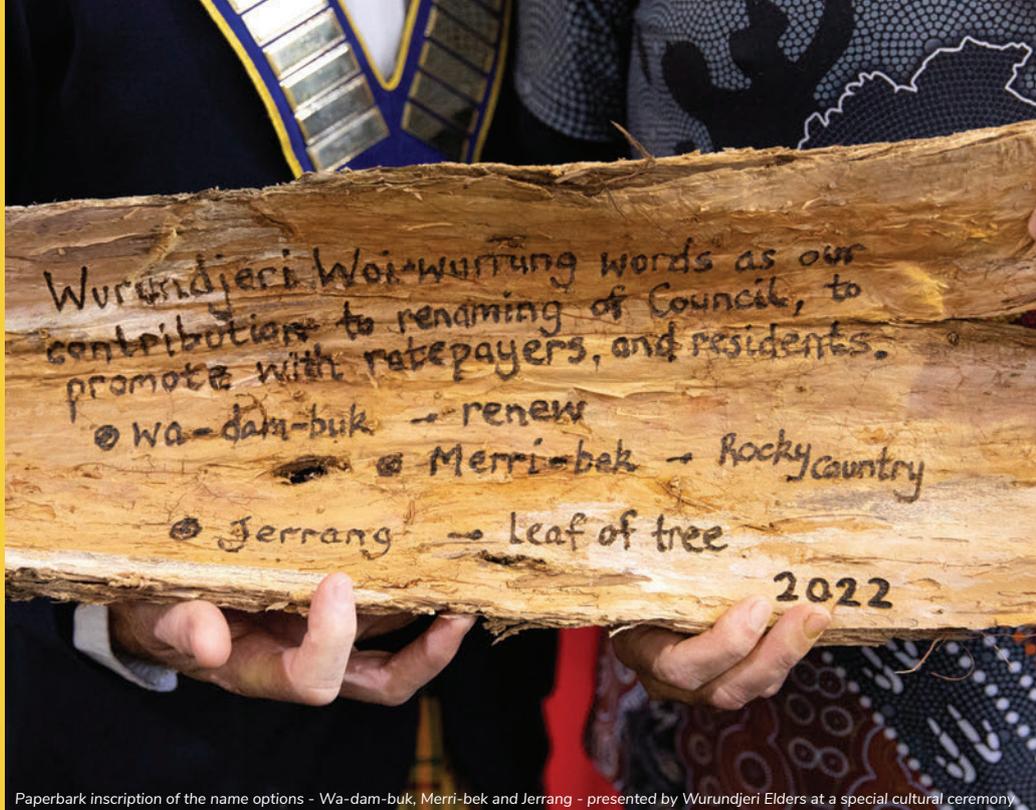
The Traditional Owners have been connected to this land for thousands of years.

The opportunity to work closely with Wurundjeri Elders to design a process to select a new name will connect people from all cultures and diverse backgrounds in our community to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung history and culture.



**Our City Council needs a new name which we can be proud of."**

Cr Mark Riley  
Mayor of Moreland 2021-22



Paperbark inscription of the name options - Wa-dam-buk, Merri-bek and Jerrang - presented by Wurundjeri Elders at a special cultural ceremony

## History of the name 'Moreland'

As recently as 1994 – when the Brunswick and Coburg councils, and part of Broadmeadows, were combined – the State Government named the new local government area 'Moreland'.

Moreland City Council was named after land, between Moonee Ponds Creek and Sydney Road, that Farquhar McCrae acquired in 1839 – taken from the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people (the Traditional Owners) who were dispossessed from their land.

McCrae named the land 'Moreland' after a Jamaican sugar plantation his relatives had operated, that used slave labour.

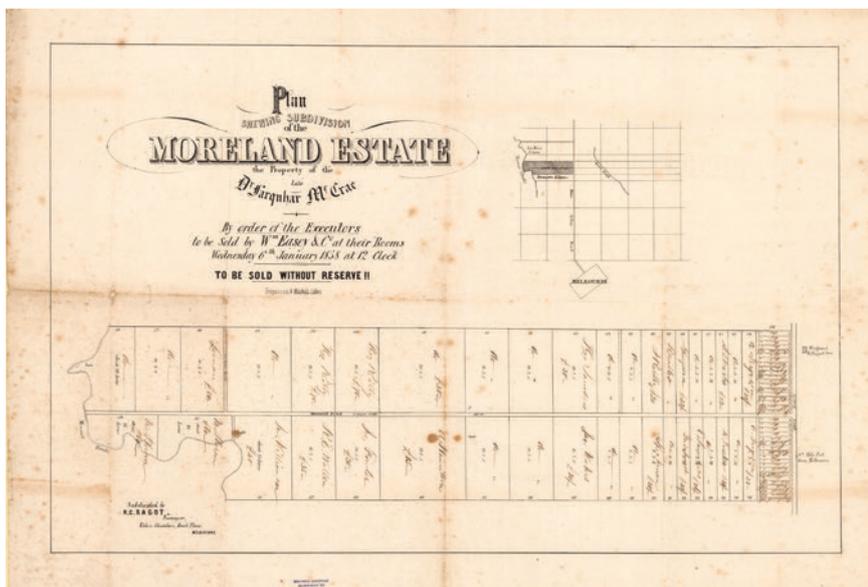


Corner of Moreland and Melville Roads, Brunswick West. Image by Dr James Lesh.

### Our shared history

Throughout decades of colonisation and dispossession, descendants of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have survived.

The area now known as the City of Moreland remains part of the unceded territory of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people.



'Plan showing subdivision of the Moreland Estate: the property of the late Dr Farquhar McCrae'. Cartographic material. Melbourne: Fergusson & Mitchell, 1858. [catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3425830](https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3425830)

Contact between the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Europeans occurred from 1835. This contact had severe and ongoing health, cultural and livelihood consequences for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and other First Nations Victorians.

"We live in an unspoken shadow of catastrophic dispossession," Uncle Andrew Gardiner has said.

The name 'Moreland' is believed to have been selected by the State Government 28 years ago because it was familiar to locals. Most locals recognised the name 'Moreland' as they used Moreland Road – a major road which runs through the middle of Moreland. This is how we inherited the name 'Moreland'.



In less than 2 years, most of the current city area was declared the private property of just 29 men. This destroyed our civilisation that had been in harmony with this country for tens of thousands of years."

With our culture and community shattered, echoes of this devastation still reverberate today."

Uncle Andrew Gardiner, Wurundjeri Elder, and Deputy Chair of the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation



We now have an opportunity to choose a name that is inclusive, meaningful and hopeful."

## 5 actions to take in support

- Educate yourself about our shared history
- Support local First Nations Business
- Attend First Nations events
- Listen, read, watch, learn
- Donate to First Nations organisations

### Educate yourself about our shared history



Learn about First People's culture and history and how colonisation has and continues to impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Victoria has made a commitment to truth-telling through the establishment of the Yoo-rrook Justice Commission. Learn more at

→ [firstpeoplesvic.org/our-work/truth-telling](https://firstpeoplesvic.org/our-work/truth-telling)

Visit the Koorie Heritage Trust in person.

Learn more at → [korieheritagetrust.com.au](https://korieheritagetrust.com.au)

Visit the Bunjilaka Melbourne Museum.

Learn more at → [museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka](https://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka)

Seek out resources about topics such as the Frontier Wars by visiting → [deadlystory.com](https://deadlystory.com) and the the Stolen Generations at → [healingfoundation.org.au](https://healingfoundation.org.au) and learn more about the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Engage in respectful conversation with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours about what 26 January, Sorry Day, or NAIDOC Week signifies to them and the different perspectives surrounding these significant days and how it should be commemorated.

### Listen, read, watch, learn



Our libraries have a range of books on offer. We've put together some lists of books available at our libraries below. Join for free at

→ [moreland.vic.gov.au/libraries](https://moreland.vic.gov.au/libraries)

#### Read more about local First Nations history

**Brunswick: one history, many voices**

by Helen Penrose

**Coburg: between two creeks** by Richard Broome

**Almost pretty: a history of Sydney Road**

by Laura Donati

#### Read more about broader First Nations history

**The little red yellow black book: an introduction to indigenous Australia** by Bruce Pascoe

**Indigenous Australia for dummies**

by Larissa Behrendt

**First Australians: an illustrated history**

by Rachel Perkins and Marcia Langton

#### Junior titles

**Welcome to country** by Aunty Joy Murphy (she is a Wurundjeri elder!)

**Young dark emu: a truer history** by Bruce Pascoe

**Indigenous Australia for kids** by Larissa Behrendt



Victoria Reeves, Kimba Thompson and Millie Caitlin from Blak Dot Gallery



Left Uncle Ringo with Mayor Cr Mark Riley in Coburg

## Support local First Nations Business



Blak Dot Gallery is a contemporary Indigenous-run art gallery and performance space showcasing modern and traditional artworks from world Indigenous cultures. Visit [👉 blakdot.com.au](https://blakdot.com.au)

Clothing The Gaps is a Victorian Aboriginal-led and controlled, and majority Aboriginal-owned social enterprise and B Corp. The fresh and dynamic fashion label is uniting Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people through fashion and cause for action that creates social change. Your tee creates impact in Aboriginal Communities across the country at the Clothing The Gaps Foundation. Go to [👉 clothingthegaps.com.au](https://clothingthegaps.com.au)

Search the Kinaway, the Victorian Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce business directory Kinnaway is the leading Victorian organisation dedicated to supporting Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business owners. Visit [👉 kinaway.com.au](https://kinaway.com.au)

## Attend First Nations events



National Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia. Search the calendar of events [👉 nrw.reconciliation.org.au/calendar](https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/calendar)

## Donate to First Nations organisations



The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation that provides a platform to amplify the voices and lived experience of Stolen Generations survivors and their families. Visit [👉 healingfoundation.org.au](https://healingfoundation.org.au)

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) is a national charity working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote Communities across Australia. Visit [👉 indigenousliteracyfoundation.org.au](https://indigenousliteracyfoundation.org.au)

The Dhadjowa Foundation provides culturally appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families whose loved ones have died in custody. See [👉 dhadjowa.com.au](https://dhadjowa.com.au)

The Pay The Rent Campaign calls for people to act in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by committing 1% of their income in rent, or what people can afford. Read more and make a contribution to the campaign at [👉 paytherent.net.au](https://paytherent.net.au)

NAIDOC Week celebrations will be held from 3-10 July 2022.

Find out more and join in at [👉 naidoc.org.au](https://naidoc.org.au)

## Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung today

Despite the impacts of colonisation, the strong bonds between Wurundjeri families and clans could not be broken and the Wurundjeri remain active in the community today – practising culture, performing ceremonies and passing on knowledge to younger generations.

A central hub for this cultural activity is the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council, established in 1984 today known as Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

The Wurundjeri Corporation has succeeded in improving opportunities for the Wurundjeri community by building a strong, vibrant and inclusive community organisation.

The primary aim of the Corporation is to provide opportunities for Wurundjeri people to connect with and preserve cultural heritage and to manage Wurundjeri land, including sites of significance.



The Wurundjeri Corporation's growth has been partly funded by projects which actively engage Elders and community members. These projects create employment opportunities, engender a greater sense of wellbeing within the Wurundjeri community and provide the local community with opportunities to engage with Traditional Owners.

As at 2022, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation resides in the Abbotsford Convent, a heritage-listed building by the Yarra River, also known as Birrarung, or River of Mists, which has great cultural and spiritual relevance to the Wurundjeri people.

Learn more at [wurundjeri.com.au](https://wurundjeri.com.au)

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03 9240 1111 | [moreland.vic.gov.au](https://moreland.vic.gov.au)