

THE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE N^o1



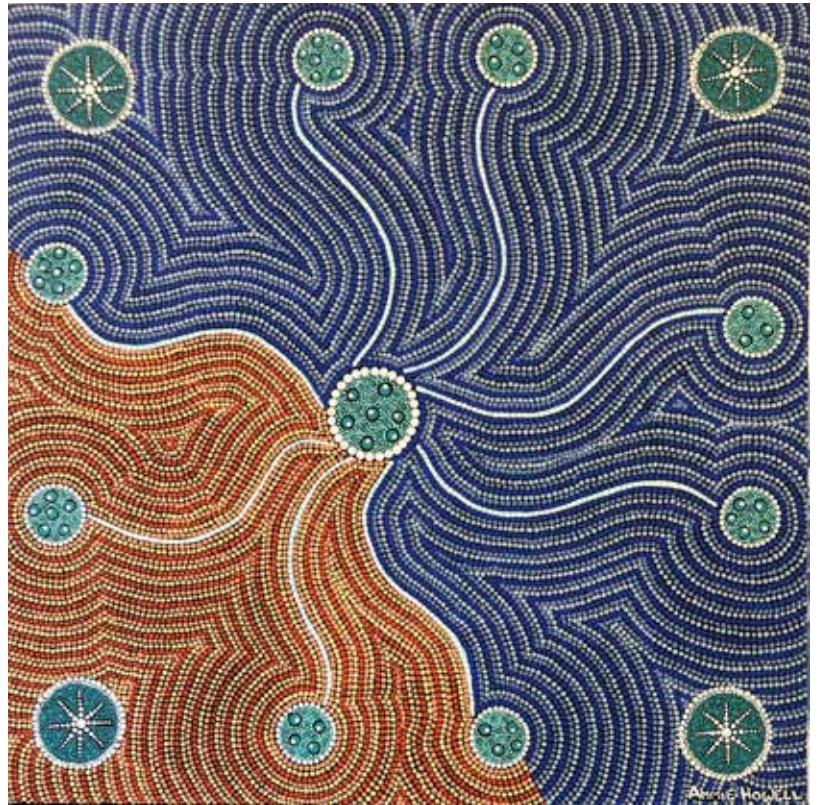
EMPOWERING THE CENTRAL COAST ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY THROUGH A UNIFIED VOICE.

Barang Regional Alliance Ltd (Barang) is a not-for-profit Aboriginal organisation supporting the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Darkinjung Land on the Central Coast of New South Wales.

We advocate to reform current thinking, systems and processes to deliver more effective service delivery outcomes and accountability to the Central Coast Aboriginal community.

We achieve this through our participation in the innovative Commonwealth Government Empowered Communities (EC) initiative which is being piloted in 8 regions across Australia. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet provides funding to Barang to lead the design and delivery of this major Aboriginal reform agenda.

Barang is also supported through our participation in the NSW Government 'Local Decision Making' (LDM) initiative which aims to increase local Aboriginal involvement and decision making in the services being delivered to the community by NSW Government service providers.



BARANG'S ARTWORK AND LOGO



Barang's artwork and logo is sourced from an original painting by Ammie Howell. This represents community groups coming together on Darkinjung Country working and uniting towards our future. Ammie is a Penangke Skin woman from the Arrernte people, Alice Springs, who lived on Darkinjung Country for many years.

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MESSAGE FROM CHAIR

I've been the Bara Barang Director on Barang Regional Alliance Board since November AGM and elected as Deputy Chair at that meeting. When Sean Gordon resigned as Chair in March I became the Acting Chair until our next AGM.

"I'm very excited to be involved in Barang Regional Alliance. We are uniquely positioned as the only Region in Australia with both State and Commonwealth Government support for our Regional Alliance, to pioneer how Government does business with our community.

We understand where we are now and where we want to be - empowering our people through community led decision-making and reform".

The Board are looking forward to continuing to work closely with our community and all levels of Government this year to progress these exciting initiatives.

I'd like to acknowledge some achievements of some of our Board Directors:

- Aunty Di O'Brien - when in Sydney keep an eye out for a BIG picture of her at Central Station. Aunty Di has been nominated as a strong black woman under the NAIDOC theme "Because of her

we can". Aunty Di is our MINGALETTA Director.

- A big shout out to Kim Walker for his 10 years of leadership as NAISDA CEO and building the organisation to where it is today. Kim is our NAISDA Director
- Suzanne Naden, CEO of Bungree recently attended the UN Permanent Indigenous forum in New York. Suzanne is a member representative for Bungree.

We have recently completed our CEO recruitment process and would like to welcome and introduce Dale Keehne to the team (see his story in the newsletter) as our new CEO who will start at the end of June. I'd like to personally thank Russell Irving for ably covering this vacancy for the past 9 months.

With the buy in from both Federal and State Government with our Alliance we work both locally and on a State and National level. This gives us access, and also responsibility, to meet the needs of our community now at both levels as well as accountability for current services being delivered on the Coast.

This is a long term process and the role of Barang Regional Alliance is to ensure that the voices of the community are being heard in such



a way that it results in changing the way the Government interacts with us.

Corinne Hodson, our Community Engagement Manager is always interested in what you think about how things can or need to be changed. This information tells us what we need to say and how to influence the people who make the decisions.

Thank you for allowing us to walk with you as we seek a better future for our peoples here on Darkinjung land.

With the greatest of respect
Kate Kelleher

MESSAGE FROM GM / ACTING CEO

This has been our first newsletter in over twelve months as our focus for most of 2017 was the strengthening of our internal Board structures, policies and procedures and to engage with the broader Central Coast Aboriginal Community to listen and understand the key issues they want us to focus on.

The focus of this newsletter is to report back on the results of this community engagement which has provided the community driven mandate for our Board to endorse 'Empowered Youth' as our first regional reform priority (refer to page 4).

We will now take this mandate to the Commonwealth and State governments to formally negotiate regional reform agreements and to build the partnerships to improve the services and funding allocations to tackle these issues. The "What's Next" section on page 5 provides further details on this.

Finally, our small team (see picture) has recently expanded with 3 new appointments (CEO, Youth Development Project Officer, Capacity Development Manager) which will significantly increase our capacity to support our smaller community organisations and



young people across the Coast and implement our reform agenda.

Regards
Russell Irving

OUR COMMUNITY ARE THE EXPERTS

RESULTS FROM OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Barang was very busy during 2017 connecting with the Aboriginal community.

- Over 400 surveys with our young people
- 5 Community Workshops across the region
- Attending many Community Events
- Ongoing consultation with 7 'Opt In' Aboriginal Organisation members

CULTURE IS CRITICAL

In the surveys, we asked young people and community separately what they identify as the most important issue for young people. A majority of young people said Culture was most important. Our young people are talking and we are listening!

WHAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAY...

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE...

A majority of young people rated **Culture** as the most important issue for young people (38%) followed by **Health & Well-Being** (27%) and **Education** (19%)

BEST WAY TO GET INFORMATION...

Facebook - **60.25%**
Phone - **17.39%**
Text/SMS, Email, Mailbox and posters were selected by under 10% of young people

AGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RESPONDED...

12 or under - **4.94%**
13 - 15 yo - **46.30%**
16 - 18 yo - **27.16%**
19 - 21 yo - **10.49%**
22 - 24 yo - **6.79%**
25 or older - **4.32%**

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST HEALTH CONCERN...

Mental Health - **50.32%**
Addiction - **24.22%**
Physical Health - **18.01%**
Other Health Issues - **7.45%**

BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE HOUSING SITUATION...

Living with parents or relatives - **85.80%**
Independently - **12.35%**
Homeless - **1.85%**

ON A SCALE OF 1 - 10, HOW CONNECTED DO YOU FEEL TO:

Your Aboriginal Culture & Identity - **7.6**
The Aboriginal Community on the CC - **6.8**
To your Family or Mob - **7.9**

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR EMPLOYMENT SITUATION?

Studying FT - **52%**
Working PT/Casual - **24%**
Looking for Work - **17%**
Working FT - **10%**
Studying PT - **6%**
Unable to find work - **5%**

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Wyong/Watanobbi - **22.64%**
Bateau Bay/The Entrance - **13.84%**
Gorokan/Lake Haven - **12.58%**
Terrigal/Avoca - **11.95%**
San Remo/Blue Haven - **10.69%**
Gosford - **9.43%**
Budgewoi/Lake Munmorah - **8.81%**
Woy Woy/Peninsula - **5.66%**
Kariong/Mangrove Mountain - **4.40%**

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY SAYS ...

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE...

A majority of community members rated **Employment** as the most important issue for young people (31%) followed by **Health** (28%) and then **Culture** (25%)

PEOPLE IDENTIFIED AS...

Aboriginal - **76.12%**
Torres Strait Islander - **0.75%**
Both Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander - **1.49%**
Don't identify as either - **21.64%**

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Wyong/Watanobbi - **18.69%**
Gosford - **17.76%**
Woy Woy/Peninsula - **15.89%**
Bateau Bay/The Entrance - **14.10%**
Gorokan/Lake Haven - **10.28%**
Terrigal/Avoca - **8.41%**
Budgewoi/Lake Munmorah - **7.47%**
Kariong/Mangrove Mountain - **3.73%**
San Remo/Blue Haven - **3.73%**

BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE HOUSING SITUATION...

Private (renting) - **43.08%**
Private (buying) - **32.31%**
Living with Family - **7.69%**
Housing NSW - **5.38%**
Community Housing - **4.62%**
Homeless - **3.85%**
Aboriginal Housing - **3.08%**

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST HEALTH CONCERN...

Mental Health - **53.6%**
Physical Health - **23.2%**
Addiction - **21.6%**
Other Health Issues - **1.6%**

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

18 - 24 yo - **0.75%**
25 - 34 yo - **23.88%**
35 - 44 yo - **32.09%**
45 - 54 yo - **21.64%**
55 - 64 yo - **16.42%**
65+ yo - **5.22%**

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR EMPLOYMENT SITUATION?

Working FT - **50.4%**
Unable to find work - **19.20%**
Working PT/Casual - **16%**
Looking for Work - **9.6%**
Studying FT - **8.8%**
Studying PT - **8%**

These survey have highlighted:-

The issues of most significance to our young people (162 surveys) were

- Culture (38%)
- Health and wellbeing (27%) – with 50% of those citing mental health as their biggest concern
- Education (19%)

The issues of most significance to our general community (240 surveys) were

- Employment (31%)
- Health and wellbeing (28%)
- Culture (25%)

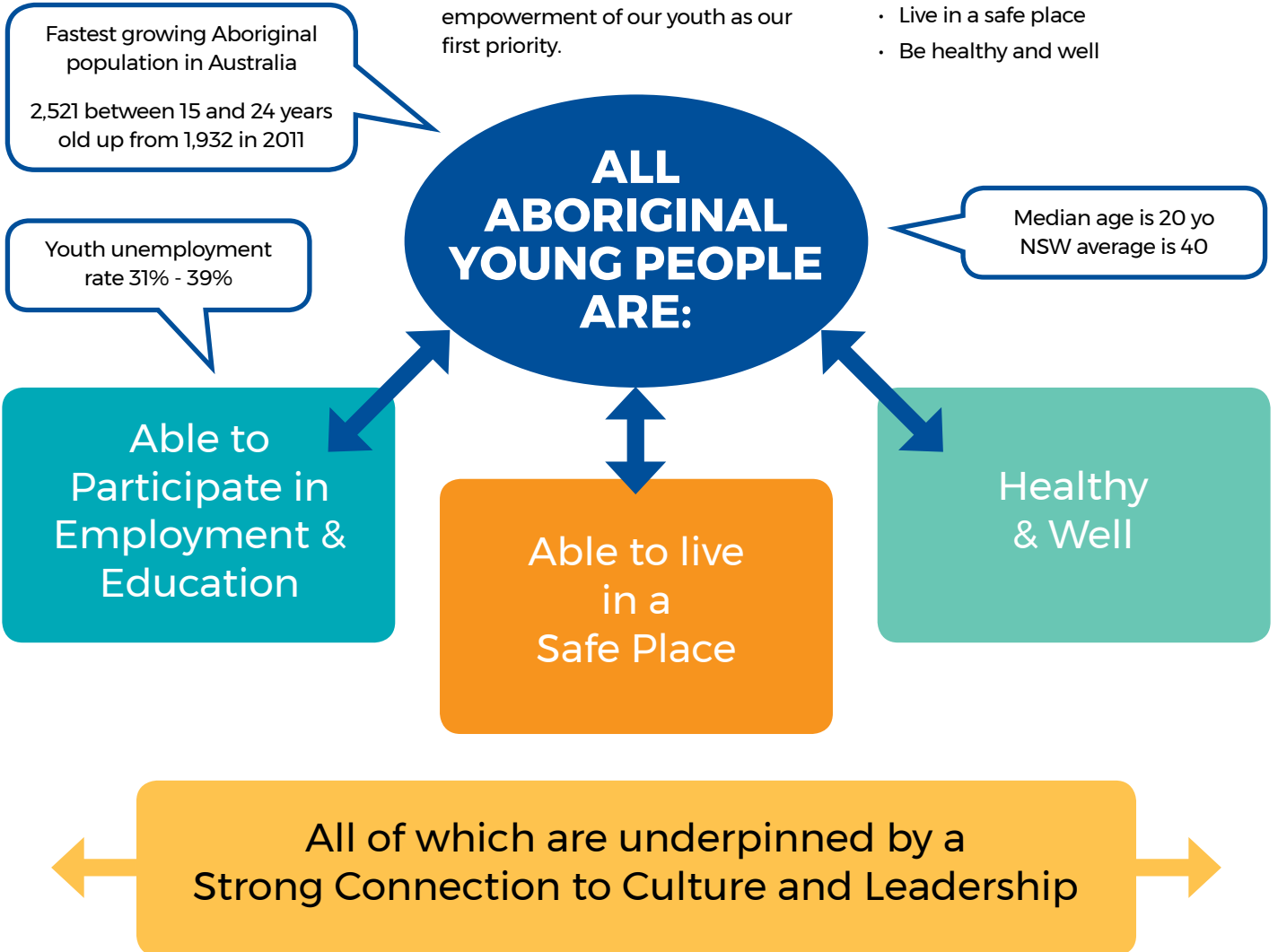
In addition, our Aboriginal controlled community backbone organisations who provide services to the central coast community have identified early childhood intervention and integrated parent & family support programs as having critical importance to the long term empowerment of our youth.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OUR PRIORITY

Through this engagement and with close to half of the Aboriginal population on the Central Coast being under 18 years of age and with an Aboriginal youth unemployment rate of 31-39%, our community has asked Barang to focus on the empowerment of our youth as our first priority.

Empowered through culture and leadership, we want ALL young people to have access and opportunities to:

- Meaningful employment and education
- Live in a safe place
- Be healthy and well



Empowered Youth First Priority Regional Reform Priority

EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

Barang Regional Alliance is currently in the process of designing a program that is aimed at providing local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island leaders of tomorrow with a structured leadership program that will include formal academic qualification, cultural training as well as personal development in order to prepare them for future leadership and community life.

This program has been informed by a local young leadership group, as well as leaders of influence in

the local community and is being driven by Corinne Hodson, our Community Engagement Manager. We are currently in the process of

refining the program, and once this has been completed, our plan is to hold forums across the community in order to attract future leaders who

will benefit from this program. Please feel free to contact us if you want some more information about this program, and the development of our future leaders.



Image from the Healing Forum. Front row left to right - Amanda Shields, Rubi Bourke, Talara Freeman, Jessica Wheeler. Back row left to right - Anthony Freeman, Gary Field, Tyson Samuel, Tyson Adams.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR BARANG?

Formal Regional Agreements with Government

Inspired and directed by this united community mandate and informed by their ideas on how to empower our youth, we will now be seeking formal regional reform agreements with the Commonwealth and State governments. These agreements will seek direct community involvement

in the decisions Governments make on the funding and design of services that are delivered so that priority is given to those that invest in building the capability and aspiration of Aboriginal people and organisations as core business activity so that lasting empowerment is achieved.

This will include seeking Commonwealth and State government support to fund Aboriginal controlled 'youth and family' community hubs in Umina, Gosford and Wyong where cultural

affirmation, family, youth and parent support programs can be expanded. We will seek to establish transitional accommodation services linked to these hubs for young people transitioning from out of home care, juvenile detention or with mental health care arrangements.

You can find out more by downloading our 'Statement of Claim' document from the News and Events section on our website barang.org.au/latest-news-events



Gary Field (Youth Development Project Officer), Kate Kelleher (Chair), Russell Irving (GM / Acting CEO), Dale Keehne (newly appointed CEO), Corinne Hodson (Community Engagement Manager), Andrew Malloch (Capacity Development Manager), Glenda Simpson (Admin & Finance Officer), Monak Morris (Trainee, inset)

ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DRIVING OUR WORK

As community, we ask you to join us on this journey!

Here are some ideas of how you might take part...but we'd also love to hear your ideas!

- Have a chat with us – give us a call on (02) 4351 3225.
- Share with us passions/hobbies that you'd like to contribute to the community.
- Send through good news or stories about something that's happening in the community.
- Lots of Feedback! Please tell us what we can do to better capture the voice of our community and support community wide action, change and systems reform.
- Join us in conversations with community: Tell us what you want for your community and your ideas on what it will take to make it happen.
- Facilitate conversations with community: ask your friends, family, service users, community members what they want for their community. We'll provide you with the questions and we'll support you to make it happen.
- Hand out community conversation questions to your friends, family, service participants and/or community members.
- Answer our quarterly survey: every quarter we will be asking the Aboriginal Central Coast Community questions which we'll track over time to see whether you think things are getting better. Please help us to get as many responses as possible.
- Please get involved – let us know how you'd like to get involved, contributing your passions and gifts with community.

We look forward to hearing from you and your mob!

CORRIE'S STORY

I am a proud Wiradjuri woman with family links to the Riverina region of New South Wales.

I have lived on the Central Coast for the past 5 years, and I now call it home. I love living on Darkinjung country and I feel so much connection to the bush, the waterways and the beaches in this beautiful part of the world.

Since I moved to the coast, I have become really involved with the local community, and I am currently the chair of Bara Barang Corporation, as well as on the board of Yerin - Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Medical Centre. I was lucky enough to gain employment as the Community Engagement Manager with Barang Regional Alliance in May 2017, but I was previously involved as a board member prior to this.

I have lived and worked in Aboriginal positions for the whole of my

working life, but coming back to Barang to work directly in community is definitely my dream job and community engagement and working to reach the whole of our community is definitely what drives me and is something that I am incredibly passionate about

My work background has been in project management and community engagement - working in both Government and not for profits for the past 20 years. In this time I have lived and worked in many regions across Australia including Sydney, Newcastle as well as Perth and the Pilbara region in regional WA.

My major focus is to push for the development of Aboriginal youth leadership and providing avenues for all people to have connection to Darkinjung culture.



DALE'S STORY

I have dedicated most of my working life to the empowerment of Aboriginal people, families and communities - in the Northern Territory, as well as Western Australia.

Much of my experience has been directly engaging with, representing and advocating for local Aboriginal people with major whole of

government reform processes.

I look forward with a sense of gratitude, excitement and anticipation for what collectively we can achieve through the historic opportunity before us here - to create a genuine and lasting shift in power and agency from government to the people.



KATE'S STORY

I am a proud Palawa Trouwunna woman from the Pyemairrenner mob in Tasmania, which includes the Trawlwoolway and Plairmairrenner and related clans. Pictured here at Manalargenna Day, I'm creating a traditional water carrier made from bull kelp endemic to the land of my ancestors, Tebrakunna country.

I moved up to the land of the Darkinjung people in September 1994 to be near my ageing parents and other members of family including sister Avron and her family.

It's really since launching out on my own that I have found my voice as an Aboriginal woman and, as my sisters would say, picked up their baton of working with community. It looks and feels different to their path but I'm very aware that I stand on their shoulders as I do on many that have come before us.

I've deliberately chosen to work with and for our mobs in my business. I have a passion for change management processes that allow self-determination and authentic partnering with our mobs to live and work in ways that are meaningful and culturally appropriate to us whilst navigating our 21st century world. I've found myself in many paddocks over the past 8 years. I was very pleased to be given, for the first time, the opportunity to work with my local community here on the Central Coast.

I'm investing my time and energy in Barang Regional Alliance because I've witnessed the experience of many where the current systems just don't empower our people. We need to be at the decision making tables and determining our own paths, in our own ways.

Here on the Central Coast we have a unique opportunity through the Empowered Communities model (Federal) and the Local Decision Making Model (State) to influence how funding is most effectively distributed and used. We are the only region in Australia to have both.

For our landscape to change here locally not just in delivery of services but responding to the full spectrum of community needs - whether its business; parenting; early childhood development or elder care will take courage, resolve, curiosity and a willingness to lift our head from where we have been. For those in a leadership capacity it will be a willingness to develop a new way of walking together. Casting off the old survival patterns of fighting over the crumbs that fall off the table of the current systems.



I am personally committed to systemic reform. It's not enough that a few individuals here and there shine. All our mob need to be able to pursue life free from the effects of colonisation. A big call... Not gonna happen overnight ... It will take years of determination, resilience, pushing ahead together. It will take everyone to care, to bother, to put aside our own agendas for the greater good.

I believe we can and will do it! That's what inspires me!

Our current Board is comprised of the following member REPRESENTATIVES :-

<p>Kate Kelleher <i>Director & Acting Chair</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Bara Barang</p>	<p>Adam McEwen <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Bungree Aboriginal Association</p>	<p>Suzanne Naden <i>Representative</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Bungree Aboriginal Association</p>	<p>Tina West <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Darkinjung LALC</p>
<p>TBA <i>Representative</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Darkinjung LALC</p>	<p>Rowena Lawrie <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Gudjagang Ngara Li-dhi (GNL)</p>	<p>Simone Hudson <i>Representative</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Gudjagang Ngara Li-dhi (GNL)</p>	<p>Dianne O'Brien <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Mingaletta</p>
<p>Kim Walker <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation NAISDA</p>	<p>Mark Colless <i>Representative</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation NAISDA</p>	<p>Michael Pittman <i>Director</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Yerin</p>	<p>David Myers <i>Representative</i></p> <hr/> <p>Opt in Organisation Yerin</p>

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