



Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meeting

Thursday 31 October 2024

The Board of Directors of Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) held their eleventh Board meeting for the calendar year on Thursday 31 October 2024.

Annual Report

The Board considered and approved the text for AHV's 2023-24 Annual Report, which will now be finalised for presentation at the Annual General Meeting on 7 November 2024. It will then be made available publicly via our website and sent to stakeholders via email.

As in previous years, a hard copy summary of the Annual Report will be produced for circulation to AHV renters.

Privacy policy and processes

The Board received a presentation from a privacy consultant on privacy law reforms. The consultant has been engaged by AHV to ensure that our policies and processes in relation to retention and disposal of personal information not only comply with legislative requirements but ensure that we always respect the security and confidentiality of personal information.

Purchase of 8 units in the Western Metro region

The Board approved the purchase of 8 units (5x 3 bedroom units and 3x2 bedroom units). The purchase was possible through a funding allocation from Homes Victoria under the *Housing for Aboriginal Victorians* Rounds 1 and 2, and our partnership with Housing Choices Australia. This purchase is part of AHV's pathway to increase stock through partnership with other community housing agencies and will provide much needed additional housing opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians in an area of high demand.

Cultural visit to Budj Bim by AHV Board and Staff

In early October, 6 of our Board Directors and 57 AHV staff had the privilege of visiting Eastern Maar Country and Gunditjmarra Country to learn about the history and rich cultural heritage of the region.

During our visit to Budj Bim Cultural Landscape, a UNESCO World Heritage site, we learnt about the traditional aquaculture systems of the Gunditjmarra people, including eel traps, fishponds and smoking trees. The experience at Tae Rak (Lake Condah) and neighbouring Kurtonitj demonstrated the Gunditjmarra peoples' deep connection to the land and environment and told us about the strength of culture and power of self-determination. Our team also visited the site of the Lake Condah Mission, which highlighted the fight of all First Nations peoples, both historically and to

this day, and the enduring determination of the Gunditjmara people to remain connected to their culture and land.

The event was a powerful reminder of the importance of respect, connection, and ongoing learning with community. We are committed to carrying these lessons forward in our work and beyond, ensuring that our actions honour the rich cultural heritage of the lands we live and work on.

A heartfelt thank you to the Elders, community members, and organisers who made this experience possible. Special thanks to:

- Shane Harrison for the Welcome to Eastern Maar Country;
- Aunty Eileen Alberts for the Welcome to Gunditjmara Country;
- Sandra and Melissa Aitken for hosting the traditional weaving activity;
- Tyson Lovett-Murray for leading our tour of Lake Condah Mission; and
- AHV Director Damein Bell for his assistance in planning and connecting with organisations during the coordination and delivery of this event.

AHV Scholarship Program

In November 2023, the Board approved the implementation of the AHV *Renter Getting into Work and Training Scholarship* as a pilot program.

Following its success, the Board has now approved the Scholarship Program on an ongoing basis. AHV receives a small commission when renters use the 'Your Porter' platform to organise their utility and other connections, when moving into AHV properties. The funds available from these monthly commissions, will be used to fund the program moving forward.

Renters can find out more about the Scholarship Program on the AHV website [here](#).

Final Board meeting for Rob Leslie

The Chair, Daphne Yarram, noted that this was Rob Leslie's last Board meeting, after 9 years of service to AHV. On behalf of the Board, the Chair acknowledged Rob's generosity and expertise, and thanked him for his significant contributions in helping to develop the organisation we are today. She stated that Rob has been a great asset and support to the Board and to the organisation more broadly and will be greatly missed.

The CEO, Darren Smith also acknowledged the valued support he has received from Rob over the last 9 years and recognised Rob's assistance and contribution in helping to steer the organisation through significant challenges and periods of change.