

# Welcoming Cities Symposium April 2019

Regional Case Study: Greater Bendigo





# Greater Bendigo – A Snapshot

- Located in North-Central Victoria, with a population of 114,111 (2017)
- 7% of residents born overseas
- 2% of households speaking a language other than English at home
- In 2016, 5% of people came from countries where English was not their first language
- Supporting refugee settlement, particularly Karen, Karenni and Hazara
- First Karen family arrived in 2005 → today an estimated population of 2,500 Karen
- 250 Afghan and 100 South Sudanese

# Key Projects

- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2016-2019)
- Refugee Welcome Zone and Refugee Week
- Welcoming Cities Accreditation
- Community Refugee Sponsorship
- Annual Community Human Rights Forum, Zinda Festival, Interfaith Conference
- Karen Language and Culture Hub
- Refugee Settlement Network
- Key Strategic Partnerships



# The Regional Difference (and its challenges..)

- Council area contained to the City and some all rural hubs = influence!
- Local gathering hub and distance from closest metro area
- Pride in Greater Bendigo
- Same faces new topic...champion burnout
- Multicultural community leader fatigue
- Local media and story pitch opportunities and challenges

# Case Studies

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## Welcome Resource, Letter and Mayoral Presentation



# Case Studies

## Cane Ball Tournament



# Case Studies

## Inclusive Multicultural Libraries Project



# Case Studies



## Targeted Media Projects Celebrating stories during Refugee Week



Elspeth Kernebone

Local News



Myo Chit Oo came to Australia aged 13 with his family. Picture: GLENN DANIELS.



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# Case Studies

## Regional Visits – Home Among The Gumtrees and SHEV Visits

### Rural Australians For Refugees



# Key Questions

- How does your city or town consciously and proactively welcome people?
- How well does your city welcome people from multicultural backgrounds?
- What are three areas that could be done better?
- What can a proactive and innovative regional or rural city achieve – both realistically and also ‘dreaming big (unrealistically!)’?



# Thank You

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<https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/Services/Community-and-Care/Cultural-diversity>

