Footscray Welcome Crew

Place Management and Activation Model

1. Purpose

The Footscray Welcome Crew is a Council-led place management and activation model for the Footscray CBD.

The model provides a visible and practical Council presence in the city centre to support the day-to-day functioning of the precinct.

The Welcome Crew will assist by:

- supporting trader, visitor and community enquiries
- identifying issues affecting amenity, activity or public space use
- referring matters to the appropriate Council team, service provider or agency
- supporting events, activations and local business activity
- contributing to a more coordinated Council presence in the Footscray CBD.

The Welcome Crew forms part of Council's broader Footscray Revitalisation program and supports delivery of the Footscray CBD Place Plan.

The model is not intended to resolve all social, economic, safety or public space issues in the Footscray CBD. Its role is to provide a practical place-based function that supports earlier identification, clearer referral and improved coordination.

2. Model overview

The Welcome Crew will operate as an on-street Council presence across the Footscray CBD.

The model combines:

- place management
- trader and visitor support
- activation support
- public space observation
- issue identification
- referral and coordination.

The Welcome Crew will support the CBD by:

- maintaining a regular presence in public areas
- engaging with traders, residents, visitors, services and community members
- assisting people with information and local knowledge
- identifying issues that require Council or partner agency response
- referring matters through agreed pathways
- supporting events and public activity
- providing Council with improved on-ground intelligence about how the precinct is functioning.

The model will operate through five core functions:

1. Presence
2. Awareness
3. Early identification
4. Trader and activation support
5. Connection to response

3. Guiding principles

The Welcome Crew will be guided by the following principles.

Clear role and scope

The Welcome Crew will operate within defined responsibilities and referral pathways. Staff will not undertake functions that sit with other Council teams, statutory officers, Victoria Police or specialist service providers.

Practical place management

The model is focused on practical support in the Footscray CBD, including public space observation, information sharing, trader engagement, activation support and referral of issues.

Respectful engagement

Staff will engage with all members of the community respectfully and consistently, including traders, residents, visitors and people experiencing vulnerability.

Proportionate response

Matters will be assessed and referred according to their nature, urgency and risk. The Welcome Crew will not escalate matters unnecessarily where a lower-level referral or Council response is appropriate.

Service connection

The Welcome Crew will not replace specialist services. Where support needs are identified, staff will provide information or refer matters to the appropriate service or agency.

Safe practice

The model will operate with clear safety procedures for staff and the community. Staff will not be expected to respond to matters outside their role, training or authority.

4. What the Welcome Crew will do

The Welcome Crew will:

- maintain a visible Council presence in the Footscray CBD
- provide wayfinding, information and local knowledge
- respond to general enquiries from traders, visitors, residents and community members
- engage with traders and businesses
- identify issues affecting amenity, activity, safety, wellbeing or public space use
- refer maintenance, cleansing, graffiti, lighting, waste or public realm issues to the relevant Council team
- support events, activations and positive use of public space
- provide information about relevant Council programs and services
- refer matters to appropriate Council teams, service providers or agencies
- record observations, recurring issues and place-based trends
- support improved coordination between Council teams and external partners.

5. What the Welcome Crew will not do

The Welcome Crew will not:

- operate as a security service
- perform enforcement or compliance functions
- issue fines, notices or statutory directions
- replace Victoria Police

- replace Local Laws officers
- replace outreach, housing, health, mental health, alcohol and other drug, or clinical services
- provide case management or therapeutic support
- act as a dedicated complaints service
- intervene in matters that require police, emergency services, statutory enforcement or specialist support
- resolve broader structural issues such as homelessness, housing supply, substance dependence, mental health crisis, business viability or long-term economic revitalisation.

Where an issue sits outside the role of the Welcome Crew, staff will refer or escalate the matter to the appropriate Council team, service provider, agency or emergency service.

6. Core functions

6.1 Presence

The Welcome Crew will provide a regular and identifiable Council presence in the Footscray CBD.

This presence is intended to:

- make Council more accessible in the precinct
- provide a point of contact for general enquiries
- support public activity and visitor experience
- assist traders and community members with practical information
- improve Council's understanding of how the CBD is functioning.

The Welcome Crew presence is civic and service-focused. It is not a compliance, surveillance or enforcement presence.

6.2 Awareness

The Welcome Crew will maintain an active understanding of how the CBD is functioning.

This includes awareness of:

- pedestrian movement and activity patterns
- trader and business issues

- public space use
- amenity and cleanliness issues
- activation opportunities
- recurring locations of concern
- visible vulnerability
- emerging safety or wellbeing issues
- visitor experience
- community feedback.

This information will support Council's place management, operational coordination and activation planning.

6.3 Early identification

The Welcome Crew will identify issues early and refer them through the appropriate pathway.

This may include:

- graffiti, waste, damaged infrastructure or lighting faults
- public realm issues affecting access or amenity
- repeated trader or community concerns
- situations where a person appears distressed, unwell or in need of support
- tensions or conflicts in public space
- recurring locations requiring a coordinated response.

The Welcome Crew is not responsible for resolving every issue directly. Its role is to observe, assess, record, refer and follow up where appropriate.

6.4 Trader and activation support

The Welcome Crew will support traders and local business activity through regular engagement and connection back into Council.

This may include:

- checking in with traders
- identifying common issues affecting the trading environment
- helping traders understand relevant Council processes
- referring amenity, cleansing, graffiti or maintenance issues

- supporting events and activation
- sharing information about relevant Council programs
- strengthening communication between traders and Council.

The Welcome Crew will support trader engagement as part of a broader place management role. It will not act solely on behalf of one stakeholder group.

6.5 Connection to response

The Welcome Crew will connect people and issues to the appropriate response.

This may include referral to:

- Council maintenance, cleansing, graffiti, waste or public realm teams
- Local Laws, where a regulatory response may be required
- Victoria Police, where there is criminal activity, violence, threats or immediate safety risk
- outreach or support services, where a person may need assistance
- health, housing, mental health, alcohol and other drug, or community services
- activation, arts, culture, business support or other relevant Council teams.

The value of the Welcome Crew is in supporting clearer connection and coordination, not replacing the role of other services or authorities.

7. Supporting people experiencing vulnerability

The Footscray CBD is used by people with a wide range of needs and circumstances, including people experiencing homelessness, mental ill health, alcohol and other drug issues, social isolation or other forms of vulnerability.

The Welcome Crew will take a respectful and proportionate approach when engaging with people who may be experiencing vulnerability.

Where safe and appropriate, staff may:

- engage respectfully
- check whether immediate assistance is required
- provide information about available services
- refer matters to outreach or support services
- notify Council’s Community Development function
- escalate welfare or safety concerns through agreed pathways.

The Welcome Crew will not provide clinical support, case management or specialist outreach. Its role is to connect, refer and coordinate where appropriate.

Where a matter involves immediate risk, violence, threats, serious welfare concerns or urgent medical need, staff will escalate to the appropriate emergency service, Victoria Police, health service or support agency.

8. Operating boundaries and referral pathways

The Welcome Crew will operate within agreed pathways that identify:

- what staff can respond to directly
- what must be referred to another Council team
- what may require service provider involvement
- what may require Local Laws
- what may require Victoria Police
- what requires emergency services.

The following table provides an operational guide to common circumstances.

Scenario	Welcome Crew role	Referral or escalation
Visitor asks for directions or local information	Provide wayfinding, local knowledge and practical assistance	No referral required
Trader reports graffiti, waste, lighting or amenity issue	Record issue and refer to the relevant Council team	Maintenance, cleansing, graffiti, waste or public realm team
Trader reports repeated antisocial behaviour	Gather basic information and identify whether a pattern or risk is present	Relevant Council team, Local Laws, Victoria Police or services depending on issue
Person appears distressed, unwell or in need of support	Engage if safe, check whether immediate assistance is required and provide service information	Community Development, outreach provider, health or support service
Person appears to need urgent medical assistance	Prioritise safety and seek emergency support	000

Scenario	Welcome Crew role	Referral or escalation
Violence, threats or immediate safety risk	Prioritise staff and community safety	Victoria Police / 000
Event or activation requires on-ground support	Provide information, wayfinding and place support	Activation, events, arts and culture or relevant Council team
Person seeks housing, food, health or welfare support	Provide information and connect to appropriate service	Outreach, homelessness, housing, health, AOD, mental health or other community service via Council's Community Development team

These pathways will be supported by internal procedures, training and supervision.

9. Roles and staffing

The Welcome Crew will be delivered through a small Council team connected to the broader Footscray Revitalisation program.

Footscray Revitalisation Lead

The Footscray Revitalisation Lead provides overall coordination of the model.

Key responsibilities include:

- strategic coordination of the Welcome Crew model
- alignment with the Footscray CBD Place Plan
- coordination across Council teams
- stakeholder relationships
- escalation of recurring or systemic issues
- reporting and review
- integration with activation, public realm, trader support and revitalisation initiatives.

Footscray Precinct Officer

The Footscray Precinct Officer provides the core on-street place management presence.

Key responsibilities include:

- maintaining a visible presence across the CBD
- assisting with information and wayfinding
- engaging with traders and businesses
- observing how public spaces are functioning
- identifying emerging issues
- referring issues to the appropriate Council team, agency or service
- supporting events and activation
- recording themes, patterns and observations.

Community Development Officer

The Community Development Officer provides capability to support coordinated responses involving people experiencing vulnerability.

Key responsibilities include:

- supporting appropriate engagement with people experiencing vulnerability
- strengthening links between Council, outreach providers and support services
- supporting implementation of Maribyrnong Zero
- identifying service gaps, recurring issues and coordination needs
- advising the Crew on support-based referral pathways
- supporting escalation where wellbeing, vulnerability or service coordination issues arise.

The Community Development Officer will not provide clinical support, case management or specialist outreach through this model.

10. Service area

The Welcome Crew will operate across the Footscray CBD, with deployment guided by activity levels, public space use, trader interface, visitor movement and known place management issues.



The team will primarily operate on foot to support visibility, accessibility and direct engagement.

11. Hours of operation

The Welcome Crew will operate within a roster designed to provide presence during key periods of public activity in the Footscray CBD.

Ordinary hours will generally fall within the spread of 7.00am to 7.00pm, Monday to Friday, with some Saturday presence.

Coverage will be prioritised around:

- commuter movement
- daytime retail activity
- trader engagement

- visitor activity
- public space use
- events and activations
- early evening activity where required.

The roster may include:

- weekday daytime coverage
- selected early evening shifts
- selected Saturday shifts
- flexible deployment in response to events, activations or emerging place management needs.

The Welcome Crew is not a 24-hour service and will not replace after-hours emergency, police, security or crisis response functions.

12. Stakeholder relationships

The Welcome Crew will require active relationships across the CBD.

Key stakeholder groups include:

- traders and businesses
- residents
- visitors
- people experiencing vulnerability
- service providers
- Victoria Police
- Local Laws
- Council operational teams
- multicultural organisations and community networks
- public transport partners.

The model will be supported by a stakeholder relationship map identifying:

- what each group may need from the Welcome Crew
- what the Welcome Crew may need from each group
- relevant communication channels

- referral points
- escalation pathways
- risks or issues requiring monitoring.

The Welcome Crew will support communication and coordination between stakeholders but will not replace the formal responsibilities of Council teams, service providers or agencies.

13. Partnerships and coordination

The Welcome Crew will work alongside existing Council programs, service providers, agencies and place-based initiatives.

Key relationships include:

- Council cleansing, maintenance, graffiti, waste and public realm teams
- Local Laws
- activation, events, arts and culture teams
- business and trader support functions
- Community Development
- homelessness, housing, mental health, alcohol and other drug, and outreach services
- Victoria Police
- public transport partners
- multicultural organisations and cultural community networks
- traders and business groups
- residents and community groups.

The Welcome Crew will help identify issues, support referrals and improve coordination across these functions.

14. Recruitment, training and supervision

The success of the Welcome Crew will depend on staff capability, judgement and adherence to role boundaries.

Recruitment will prioritise staff who can demonstrate:

- clear communication
- sound judgement
- cultural awareness
- ability to work with diverse communities
- de-escalation capability
- local knowledge or willingness to build it
- ability to follow procedures and referral pathways
- ability to work within defined responsibilities.

Training will include:

- human rights and Charter obligations
- respectful engagement
- cultural safety
- homelessness awareness
- mental health awareness
- alcohol and other drug awareness
- de-escalation
- referral pathways
- safety and escalation procedures
- local services and Council programs
- scenario-based practice.

Staff will also require:

- regular supervision
- debriefing where required
- clear safety procedures
- access to employee support

- opportunities to review and improve practice.

15. Communications

Clear communication will support public understanding of the model.

Council will prepare plain-language information explaining:

- what the Welcome Crew is
- what it can and cannot do
- who it supports
- how it connects with services, Council teams and agencies
- how traders, residents, visitors and services can engage with the Crew
- how feedback can be provided.

Communication materials may include:

- a one-page public explanation of the model
- frequently asked questions
- simple referral and escalation information
- internal briefing material for Council staff
- shared messaging for partner organisations
- website and Your City Your Voice updates.

The core message will be:

The Welcome Crew is a visible and practical Council presence in the Footscray CBD. It provides information, supports trader and visitor engagement, identifies issues early and connects matters to the appropriate response. It is not a security, enforcement, police, outreach or clinical service.

16. Monitoring and review

The Welcome Crew will be monitored during the first three to six months of implementation.

The model should be assessed against matters it can reasonably influence, including:

- number and type of public interactions
- number and type of referrals

- trader feedback
- resident feedback
- visitor feedback where available
- service partner feedback
- staff wellbeing and safety incidents
- issues identified, referred and resolved
- recurring issues requiring broader Council or partner response
- evidence of improved coordination across Council teams and partners.

The model should not be assessed as a standalone response to homelessness, policing, mental health crisis, alcohol and other drug issues, trader profitability or long-term economic revitalisation.

17. Continuous improvement

Council will review the model after the initial implementation period.

The review will consider:

- whether the purpose and scope are clear
- whether role boundaries are being maintained
- whether referral and escalation pathways are working
- whether staff are appropriately trained and supported
- whether stakeholders understand the model
- whether the model is supporting improved coordination
- whether any operational risks or gaps have emerged
- what refinements are required.

Feedback may be sought from:

- traders
- residents
- service providers
- Council teams
- Victoria Police and Local Laws where relevant
- Welcome Crew staff
- other stakeholders as appropriate.

The model may be adjusted based on operational experience, stakeholder feedback and Council priorities.

18. Matters outside the scope of the model

The Welcome Crew can support improved place management and coordination in the Footscray CBD.

It is not designed to resolve broader structural or specialist issues, including:

- homelessness
- housing supply
- mental health crisis response
- alcohol and other drug dependence
- policing
- statutory enforcement
- business viability
- long-term economic revitalisation
- complex public safety concerns.

These matters require broader responses from Council, State Government, Victoria Police, health services, housing providers, community organisations, traders and the wider service system.

The Welcome Crew will support connection and coordination where relevant, but it should not be positioned as a standalone solution to these issues.

19. Intended outcomes

Over time, the Welcome Crew is intended to contribute to:

- a more visible Council presence in the Footscray CBD
- improved communication between Council, traders, services and the community
- earlier identification of amenity, activity, safety and wellbeing issues
- clearer referral and escalation pathways
- improved coordination across Council teams and external partners
- support for events, activation and public space use

- improved visitor and trader engagement

20. FAQs

What is the Footscray Welcome Crew?

The Footscray Welcome Crew is a Council-led place management and activation model for the Footscray CBD. It provides a visible, practical Council presence in the city centre to support traders, visitors, residents and community members, identify issues early and connect matters to the right Council team, service provider or agency.

Why is Council introducing the Welcome Crew?

Council is introducing the Welcome Crew to support the day-to-day functioning of the Footscray CBD as part of the broader Footscray Revitalisation program. The model is intended to improve Council's visibility on the ground, strengthen communication with traders and the community, support public space activation and improve coordination between Council teams and partner agencies.

Is the Welcome Crew a security service?

No. The Welcome Crew is not a security service. It will not patrol as security, remove people from public spaces, physically intervene in incidents or replace Victoria Police. Where there is violence, threats, criminal activity or immediate safety risk, matters will be referred to Victoria Police or emergency services.

Will the Welcome Crew replace Victoria Police?

No. Victoria Police remain responsible for responding to crime, violence, threats and immediate safety risks. The Welcome Crew may observe and report issues, support communication and refer matters where appropriate, but it does not replace police.

Will the Welcome Crew replace Local Laws officers?

No. The Welcome Crew does not have enforcement powers and will not issue fines, notices or statutory directions. Where a regulatory response is required, matters will be referred to Council's Local Laws team.

Will the Welcome Crew move people on?

No. The Welcome Crew is not a move-on service. Staff will engage respectfully with people in public spaces and will only refer or escalate matters where there is a relevant safety, amenity, wellbeing or public space issue that requires a Council, service provider, Local Laws, police or emergency response.

What will the Welcome Crew actually do?

The Welcome Crew will provide wayfinding and local information, respond to general enquiries, engage with traders, identify issues affecting amenity or public space use, support events and activation, refer maintenance or cleansing issues, record recurring themes and connect matters to the appropriate response.

What won't the Welcome Crew do?

The Welcome Crew will not operate as security, enforce laws, issue fines, provide case management, provide clinical support, replace outreach services, replace police or act as a dedicated complaints service. It is also not designed to resolve structural issues such as homelessness, housing supply, substance dependence, mental health crisis, business viability or long-term economic revitalisation on its own.

Who is the Welcome Crew for?

The Welcome Crew is for everyone who uses the Footscray CBD, including traders, workers, residents, visitors, commuters, service providers, community organisations and people experiencing vulnerability.

How will the Welcome Crew support traders?

The Welcome Crew will check in with traders, listen to common issues affecting the trading environment, help traders understand relevant Council processes, refer amenity, graffiti, cleansing, waste, lighting or maintenance issues and share information about Council programs and activation opportunities.

Will the Welcome Crew only support traders?

No. Trader support is one part of the model, but the Welcome Crew has a broader place management role. It will also support visitors, residents, community members, services, events and the overall functioning of public spaces in the Footscray CBD.

How will the Welcome Crew support visitors?

The Welcome Crew will provide local information, wayfinding, practical assistance and support during events or activations. It is intended to help make the CBD easier to navigate and more welcoming.

How will the Welcome Crew support people experiencing vulnerability?

Where safe and appropriate, staff may engage respectfully, check whether immediate assistance is required, provide information about services and refer matters to outreach, health, housing, mental health, alcohol and other drug, or community support services. The Crew will not provide clinical support, case management or specialist outreach.

What happens if someone needs urgent help?

If there is an urgent medical issue, violence, threats or immediate safety risk, staff will prioritise safety and contact Victoria Police, emergency services or the appropriate urgent response pathway.

What types of issues can the Welcome Crew refer?

The Welcome Crew can refer issues such as graffiti, waste, damaged infrastructure, lighting faults, cleansing needs, public realm issues, recurring trader concerns, visible vulnerability, emerging wellbeing concerns, tensions in public space and locations requiring a coordinated response.

Will the Welcome Crew take complaints?

The Welcome Crew may receive feedback or hear concerns while on the ground, but it is not a dedicated complaints service. Where a matter requires formal follow-up, staff will direct it through the appropriate Council process or referral pathway.

Where will the Welcome Crew operate?

The Welcome Crew will operate across the Footscray CBD, with deployment guided by activity levels, public space use, trader interface, visitor movement and known place management issues. The team will primarily operate on foot to support visibility and accessibility.

When will the Welcome Crew operate?

The Welcome Crew will operate during rostered hours, generally within the spread of 7.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday, with some Saturday presence. Coverage may include weekday daytime periods, selected early evenings, selected Saturdays and flexible deployment for events, activations or emerging place management needs.

Is the Welcome Crew a 24-hour service?

No. The Welcome Crew is not a 24-hour service and will not replace after-hours emergency, police, security or crisis response functions.

How will staff know what to do in different situations?

The Welcome Crew will operate with agreed referral and escalation pathways, supported by internal procedures, training and supervision. Staff will be trained in respectful engagement, cultural safety, homelessness awareness, mental health awareness, alcohol and other drug awareness, de-escalation, referral pathways and safety procedures.

How will Council make sure the Welcome Crew stays within its role?

The model is based on clear role boundaries. Staff will not undertake functions that belong to statutory officers, Victoria Police, specialist service providers or other

Council teams. Supervision, training, procedures and review processes will help ensure the Crew operates within its defined responsibilities.

How will the program be monitored?

Council will monitor the Welcome Crew during the first three to six months of implementation. Monitoring may include the number and type of public interactions, referrals, trader feedback, resident feedback, service partner feedback, staff wellbeing and safety incidents, issues identified and referred, and evidence of improved coordination.

How will success be measured?

The model will be assessed against things it can reasonably influence, such as improved Council visibility, better communication with traders and community members, earlier identification of issues, clearer referral pathways, support for events and activation, and improved coordination across Council and partner agencies.

Will the Welcome Crew solve homelessness, public safety and mental health issues in the CBD?

No. The Welcome Crew can help identify issues, connect people to services and improve coordination, but it is not a standalone solution to homelessness, mental health crisis, alcohol and other drug dependence, policing, housing supply or complex public safety concerns. These issues require broader responses from Council, State Government, Victoria Police, health services, housing providers, community organisations and the wider service system.