

## **Shelter SA and Reconciliation**

### **Shelter SA's role in the process of Reconciliation:**

Reconciliation is understood as a process of 'working together' and therefore is an issue for all Australians.

- As an organisation that works closely with local and regional communities, government organisations and other housing support agencies, Shelter SA has an important role to play in promoting the values of Reconciliation.
- Shelter SA has a strategic role in educating, researching and campaigning for local and regional housing agendas and is therefore ideally placed to advocate for, and demonstrate leadership in creating tolerance, understanding and increased awareness of the housing needs and issues of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Shelter is able through research and consultation, to gain awareness of Aboriginal housing needs and therefore contribute to a body of knowledge and increase understanding of how capacity building may be progressed in Aboriginal communities
- The Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Branch of Shelter SA promotes the process of Reconciliation, develops partnerships between other organisations and through lobbying, educating and research is ideally placed to increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' housing needs

**The purpose of Shelter SA's Reconciliation Statement is to promote these three principles:**

### **Recognition and acknowledgement**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first people of Australia
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been disadvantaged by loss of their lands, the forced removal of their children, and the loss of cultural heritage through discrimination and dispossession
- The Kurna people are the traditional owners, custodians and caretakers of the Adelaide plains and have an enduring spiritual relationship with their lands

### **Diversity**

- Shelter SA values diversity. We accept and value the right of Aboriginal people to practice their cultural traditions consistent with Australian law and democratic freedoms

### **Participation**

- Shelter SA is committed to encouraging participation and improving the access to our services by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

## **Partnership**

- Shelter will develop appropriate partnerships between Shelter SA, other organisations and agencies that support and meet the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

## **Shelter SA's Policy Platform**

The purpose of this policy is to identify ways in which Shelter SA can promote the recognition and acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their culture and heritage and, in so doing, bring about progress towards Reconciliation, which is:

*A united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all.*

## **This will be progressed by:**

- Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through observing culturally respectful practices and protocols in Shelter SA's service delivery to, and interactions with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- The commitment to creating an office space and culture within Shelter SA that is welcoming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- The adoption of the Kurna greeting as an agreed protocol at formal Shelter SA events, forums and official meetings. Where a Kurna Elder is not available to offer a greeting the following statement will be delivered:

*We would like to acknowledge that this land we meet on today is the traditional land of the Kurna people and we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the Kurna people as the custodians and caretakers of Kurna country which incorporates the Adelaide Plains. We honour their on-going cultural and spiritual connections to this country.*

- The development of appropriate partnerships between Shelter SA, other organisations and agencies that support and understand the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- The encouragement of participation and the improvement of housing access and services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Aboriginal representation on the Board of Shelter SA

## **Shelter SA's Reconciliation Statement**

Shelter SA is committed to both the spirit and the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the non-Indigenous population of Australia. In making this commitment we:

Embark on a journey of healing and justice.

Recognise and acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the First Australians and the original custodians of this land.

Acknowledge the loss of lands, children and kin, languages and cultural identity and the continued impact of this on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health and well-being today.

Recognise that to move forward, all Australians must better understand the shared past and how it affects the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Accept that reconciliation involves both a symbolic recognition of the honoured places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, as well as the practical measures required to improve the health and whole of life experiences for all of our children, families and communities.

Value the unique opportunity for all Australians today to embrace and to learn from the cultural richness of an ancient living heritage which belongs to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Believe that all Australians deserve a fair go.