

STATEMENT OF RECONCILIATION – HORNSBY SHIRE

Hornsby Council acknowledges and regrets the havoc and destruction to the lives and culture of Indigenous people which occurred as a result of European colonisation of Australia. This Statement of Reconciliation is an acknowledgment of regret over practices and policies which have impacted on Indigenous people and an expression of hope in a future of peace and Reconciliation.

The land we now know as Hornsby Shire is home to the spirit of many generations of the Darug and Guringai peoples. We acknowledge and respect the ongoing strength of the spiritual presence of the Darug and Guringai people in the Shire. We acknowledge that this was their land and water and that they remain its spiritual custodians.

We also acknowledge that Darug and Guringai land was invaded and occupied and the people's association with their land was denied. This alienation continues and non-indigenous people have benefited from it. We further acknowledge that attempts were made to extinguish the culture and spirituality of the Indigenous people and destroy their family relationships through the forced removal of children.

We are truly sorry for the devastation this has caused in the past and which continues into the present.

In a spirit of Reconciliation we commit ourselves to:

- recognise Indigenous culture as an important part of our heritage;
- educate ourselves and our children in the culture and history of the Indigenous peoples of this land;
- protect and honour sites in the Shire which are of cultural and spiritual significance to Indigenous people;
- celebrate the survival of Indigenous people in our community;
- make welcome Indigenous people from other areas of Australia;
- undertake to consult the traditional custodians and Indigenous residents about actions which impact on Aboriginal people, their heritage, culture and custodianship of the land;
- uphold the legal and human rights of Indigenous Australians;
- listen to and respect the aspirations of Indigenous Australians and work with, them for a future based on shared values, social justice and cultural diversity.

This Statement of Reconciliation is offered in the confident hope that in the Hornsby Shire the spirit and practice of Reconciliation among all Australians will be nurtured and grow strong.