

# Ngadluko Yerta (Our Land)

## Research Paper for the City of Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan

Prepared by: Janet Taylor  
Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity Officer  
City of Port Adelaide Enfield

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# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	
Introduction .....	1
Background.....	2
<b>Objective 1</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1. The Importance of Culture.....	8
1.1 Kaurna Cultural Heritage Survey .....	9
1.2. Aboriginal Input into Development .....	12
1.3 Language.....	12
1.4 Disempowerment of Aboriginal Males.....	13
1.5 Aboriginal Cultural Centre.....	13
1.6 Diversity of Aboriginal Population .....	14
Council Role .....	14
<b>Objective 2</b> .....	<b>16</b>
2.1 Reconciliation .....	16
Council Role .....	17
2.2 Participation/Governance/Representation .....	17
2.2.1 Aboriginal Advisory Panel .....	18
2.2.2 Representation on Council.....	21
2.2.3 Voting.....	22
Council Role .....	22
2.3 Culturally Appropriate Consultation .....	22
Council Role .....	23
<b>Objective 3</b> .....	<b>24</b>
3.1 Who are our population - demographic profile.....	24
3.1.1 Population numbers .....	24
3.1.2 Transient Population numbers .....	27
3.2 Population distribution.....	28
3.3 Age Profile .....	33
3.4 Implications of population disttruibition and age profile on the provision of services .....	36
Council Role .....	36
<b>Objective 4</b> .....	<b>37</b>
4. Health/Wellbeing .....	37
4.1 Appropriate Community Health Services .....	39
4.2 Early Intervention/Causal pathways to health and social problems .....	41
4.3 Wellbeing/Mental Health.....	42
Council Role .....	44

<b>Objective 4 Health/Wellbeing (continued)</b> .....	
4.4 Family Violence .....	44
Council Role .....	44
4.5 Men's Health/Wellbeing .....	45
Council Role .....	46
4.6 Aged Care Services .....	46
Council Role .....	46
<b>Objective 5</b> .....	48
5. Housing .....	49
5.1 Rental Stress .....	49
5.2 Household Overcrowding.....	50
Council Role .....	51
<b>Objective 6</b> .....	52
6. Employment, Education and Training.....	52
6.1 Where we are at - demographics.....	53
6.1.1 Education/Training .....	53
Council Role.....	58
<b>Objective 7</b> .....	59
7. Safety and Crime.....	59
7.1 Victims of Crime.....	60
7.2 Issues of Concern highlighted within Port Adelaide Enfield area .....	61
7.2.1 Alcohol consumption in public spaces.....	62
Council Role.....	62
7.2.2 Behavioural issues relating to young people at libraries and other Council facilities. ....	62
Council Role .....	63
7.3 Operation Mandrake/To Break the Cycle.....	63
Council Role .....	64
7.4 Inter-racial Violence .....	64
Council Role .....	65
<b>Objective 8</b> .....	66
8. Sports and Arts.....	66
Council Role .....	67
8.1 Sports .....	68
Council Role .....	68
8.2 The Arts .....	69
Council Role .....	70
Reference List .....	71

## TABLES

Table 1	Strategic areas for action - Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage .....	7
Table 2	Aboriginal Population as percentage of total City of Port Adelaide Enfield Population .....	26
Table 3	PAE suburbs with greatest numbers .....	29
Table 4	Underlying causes of death for Aboriginal South Australians (2006) ...	38

## FIGURES

Figure 1	.....	10
Figure 2	Port Adelaide Enfield Karna Contextual Framework - Cultural Landscape .....	11
Figure 3	Proportion of Indigenous people .....	25
Figure 4	Aboriginal Population as a percentage of total population .....	26
Figure 5	Indigenous Population PAE .....	31
Figure 6	Indigenous Population PAE relative to SEIFA Index.....	32
Figure 7	Age profile Indigenous v total population .....	33
Figure 8	Life Stage Indigenous and Non-Indigenous - Port Adelaide.....	34
Figure 9	Sizes of Generations Indigenous and Non-Indigenous - Port Adelaide ...	35
Figure 10	Tenure of Dwellings .....	48
Figure 11	Overcrowding in Housing.....	50
Figure 12	Education Attendance .....	54
Figure 13	Current Education .....	56
Figure 14	Tertiary Qualifications .....	57

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield acknowledges that we meet on the traditional country of the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land.

We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to the Kurna people living today.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is the result of literally hundreds of conversations over a number of years. These conversations have provided insights which have then been bounced across other members of the community to see if they are reflective of other peoples' opinions.

There are far too many individuals and groups that have provided this information to name them individually so to avoid leaving anyone out acknowledgement is made to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, particularly the Elders, who live, work, play, or have a role within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield area. There are also numerous non-Aboriginal people who either work within services and agencies or who share a commitment to our Aboriginal community who have provided input.

At the commencement of the project in 2007 a Steering Group met. This group comprised:

Jay Weatherill MP	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
John Wright	Senior Policy & Programs Officer, Dept Premier & Cabinet representing Monsignor David Cappelletti, Social Inclusion Unit
Cherie Watkins	Community Elder and Chairperson of the City of Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal Advisory Panel
Patricia Waria-Read	Community Elder
Michael O'Brien	Community Representative
Mark McShane	City of Port Adelaide Enfield Director Community Development
Brett Hill	City of Port Adelaide Enfield Manager Recreation and Community Development
Rosa Gagetti	City of Port Adelaide Enfield Manager Strategic & Corporate Planning Unit
Janet Taylor	City of Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity Officer and Project Officer

Throughout the consultation phase several workshops and many one to one meetings were held with service providers. The Project Officer also attended a range of workshops that were facilitated by other agencies and service providers.

Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Panel (past and present during the time of this project) have provided invaluable input and support throughout the project;

Aunty Cherie Watkins (Chairperson)

Michael O'Brien

Faye Blanch

Terry Stewart

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Cheryl Axelby

Tricia Maling

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Lindsay Bassani

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as have Elected Members and staff at the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Acknowledgement is given all of these individuals and groups for without the information provided, this paper and the resultant strategic plan would not be possible.



## INTRODUCTION

The title of this paper, Ngadluko Yerta, recognises that the land on which we meet is traditionally that of the Kurna people. The land is shared by all who live, work, visit or have a relationship with the area. As such the area is one that we all, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, have an interest in and responsibility for what happens – it is ‘our patch’.

Throughout this paper the word ‘Aboriginal’ will be utilised to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield has a great deal to be proud of in the way in which Council and the community as a whole embrace their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. In many areas Council demonstrates a leadership role within the State in the initiatives that it undertakes to work with and for the Aboriginal population. Examples include:

- the formation of an Aboriginal Advisory Panel in the late 1990’s
- a commitment to involve Aboriginal people in consultation relating to new developments
- the completion of an Aboriginal Heritage Survey
- positive relationships with members of the community, particularly with local Elders
- the level of support for Aboriginal services and agencies within the area
- the emphasis on incorporating the Kurna heritage through public art, walking trails and, signage
- flying of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags at all times on Nile Street and in Council Chambers
- the acknowledgement of Kurna Land at all Council meetings and events
- the annual Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards ceremony
- the instigation of Nunga Week celebrations in November in recognition of the need to promote reconciliation throughout the year rather than just within Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week

However if the region and Council in particular, are to maintain this role as leaders it must continue to examine and review progress and be prepared to accept new and often challenging proposals. In this way Council can truly claim to be an exemplar not only to the local community but also to the whole of State.

## BACKGROUND

In 2008 the total Australian Aboriginal population is estimated to have reached 500,000, a figure which equates to the lower end estimates of population of the continent in 1788. John Taylor from the Australian National University states that *“you could look at this, in a way, as saying we’ve arrived back at the beginning, so to speak”*.

The Port Adelaide Enfield Council area lies within the traditional country of the Kurna people which stretches from Crystal Brook and Port Wakefield, across the Adelaide Plain to the southern tip of Cape Jervis and to the western edge of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Oral histories and selected historical records of local Kurna imply a rich history of Kurna presence prior to European settlement particularly in the Port Adelaide area. The Port Adelaide (Yertabulti) region constituted the western extremity of the territory belonging to the Wirra Kurna (northern group within the Kurna nation). This group is thought to have extended between Angaston, Lyndoch, Port Adelaide (Yertabulti), Yatala (Yertalla) and Tea Tree Gully (Kirraungdingga).

Relationships between the Kurna people extended to neighbouring Aboriginal nations, in particular the Narungga of Point Pearce Mission on Yorke Peninsula and the Ngarrindjeri at Point McLeay Mission/Raukkan on the Coorong.

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield is one of the largest Councils in South Australia covering an area of approximately 91.7 square kilometres from the River Torrens to the coast. The Port Adelaide Enfield Council was established in 1996 and has a total population of almost 103,000 residents and approximately 7,000 businesses.

The Council region is one that reflects a widely diverse community and is currently undergoing a period of rapid change with residential and industrial developments taking place that will impact on both the social and economic profile of the region.

As a community we must ensure that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island population are involved in and gain from changes and development opportunities both economically and socially.

As at the 2006 Census the City of Port Adelaide Enfield area had approximately 2,260 residents who identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This equates to approximately 2.2% of the Council's total population, a representation almost twice that of the Adelaide metropolitan area as a whole. Added to this there are a significant number of Aboriginal people who come to the region as short term visitors for a range of reasons.

Council has the opportunity to be the leaders in the way we work with and for the Aboriginal community

Most social indicators of Aboriginal wellbeing tend to reflect a 'deficit' model, highlighting problems and the extent of disadvantage experienced over a lifetime and between generations. While there is an imperative to illustrate the unmet need for appropriate resources and services, this approach overlooks the strengths, capabilities and passion that the majority of Aboriginal peoples demonstrate in caring for their family, community, their environment and their lands, and fails to represent the holistic nature of Aboriginal cultures and histories.

The contribution and achievements of the Aboriginal population in our community to the broader community are considerable with many within the population achieving in education, employment, the arts, sport and providing excellent role models for the Aboriginal and wider community. The commitment of our local Elders to ensure that the knowledge and culture of particularly the Kurna people lives on for future generations is demonstrated by their work with the younger people and in the initiatives that are being undertaken to learn and preserve language.

It is however well documented that Aboriginal Australians are among the most disadvantaged people in Australia. The life expectancy for Aboriginal people is seventeen years lower than that of non-Aboriginal people. They experience homelessness at a far greater rate than non-Aboriginal Australians, have higher levels of social, economic, health, housing and educational disadvantage than any other population group in Australia and are over-represented in the justice system, youth suicide and domestic violence.

Given the multiplicity of Aboriginal groups and different needs, there is a strong requirement for clarity in Council's direction and role in relation to services, facilities and activities. A proposal to undertake the development of a plan that would provide strategic direction for working with the Aboriginal community was first approved by Council in February 2004.

Ongoing consultation and research commencing with several workshops held in 2007/08 has been undertaken to inform this plan and the findings from this consultation and research are outlined within this paper. The focus throughout the consultation phase has not been "What are the issues for Aboriginal people" as it is considered that the 'issues' are well documented. The key questions asked have rather focussed on "Why do these issues continue to exist" and "What is an appropriate response", particularly on behalf of Council. It was felt that unless we as a community start to look at the "why's" and explore avenues that need to change, things will not change and the Aboriginal population will become further disadvantaged and marginalised.

A highly significant comment that came from consultation with Aboriginal Elders was that answers need to be driven by the Aboriginal community but that they need to be able to access research and resources. One Elder stated that “*We can’t pull ourselves up by the bootstraps if we don’t have boots*”.

Much of the focus of both the State and Federal initiatives for the Aboriginal community is on the remote and rural regions. With a relatively high proportion of its population being of Aboriginal descent, it is arguable that many of the issues that are evident within those remote and rural regions exist within our suburban regions, particularly Port Adelaide Enfield, however these regions do not receive the same level of support.

Council has the opportunity to ensure that our local population is in a position to take advantage of shifts in social opinion together with funding opportunities that may emerge from this.

## **Council Role**

Local Government, with its grass roots connections to the community, has the ability to work with the Aboriginal community to address some areas of disadvantage. This role may take a variety of different forms –

- As a **service provider** in which Council may provide direct services of programs, services, community development activities and facilities
- As a **funding provider** by funding programs and activities provided by other community service agencies and community groups through its community grants program
- As an **information source** providing community and other service providers information relating to developments and changes within the community that may impact on the Aboriginal population
- As a **partner** in working with other service providers, agencies and community groups and individuals
- As a **promoter**, acknowledging and highlighting the many and varied positive aspects of our Aboriginal population and in encouraging the community and others to build on those strengths
- As an **advocate** on behalf of community for the provision, maintenance and development of services to meet identified priorities
- As a major **employer** within the region combined with a significant volunteer program

It must also be acknowledged that in some areas Council may have no actual role to play but that knowledge and understanding of an issue is important.

## Linkages with other Plans

Council's commitment to working with our Aboriginal community is recognised within the City Plan with Objectives including;

- To reflect community needs by understanding the composition of the community, community preferences and the relationships of people to place.
- To harness the opportunities provided by community and cultural diversity and indigenous culture.
- To reflect the needs of the community and the principles of equity and accessibility through an appropriate mix of service responses.
- Maintain a network of open space and facilities that provide outlets for the expression of community culture.
- Improved public health and safety;

and within the Corporate Plan with strategies/goals including;

- Encourage and support the participation and self-determination of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (CD8).
- Provide a range of opportunities for the community to have input into the planning and evaluation of facilities, services and activities (CD7).
- Provide community facilities, opportunities and programs to address the social, recreational and cultural needs of the community (CD11).
- Integrate social and cultural considerations into Council projects (CD3).
- Provide opportunities and encouragement for the community to express, explore and celebrate local culture and diversity (CD6).

Linked with this are Council's responsibilities under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 which provide an external context for developing a comprehensive approach to planning and working in partnership with the Aboriginal community

Many of the issues that relate to our local community are strongly influenced or impacted by State Government decisions and it is therefore important that any Aboriginal Plan links with and complements strategies incorporated within the SA Strategic Plan. Likewise, at a Federal level, greater recognition and emphasis is being placed on the inequalities of the Aboriginal population, particularly following the Federal Government apology to the Stolen Generation.

Table 1 outlines the Strategic areas for action outlined in Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage 2009 (OID) report, developed to align the OID framework with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) six high level targets for Closing the Gap in Indigenous outcomes. Those areas that are highlighted represent areas in which Council can have a level of influence through a range of strategies that will be highlighted within this paper and the resultant Strategic Plan.

The proposed Objectives within this paper have emerged from the community consultations, conversations and observations that have occurred during the period of development of the paper, literature research and linkages to other strategic documents including Council, State and Federal Government Plans. Following consultation within the community and with key agencies, these Objectives will then form the basis for the development of the City of Port Adelaide Enfield Strategic Plan.

**Table 1. Strategic areas for action - Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage**

Source: "Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage. Key Indicators 2009 - Overview" Steering Committee for the Review of Govt Service Provision 2009

Early child development	Education and training	Healthy lives	Economic participation	Home environment	Safe and supportive communities	Governance and leadership
<p><i>Maternal health</i>  <i>Teenage birth rate</i>  <i>Birth weight</i>  <i>Early childhood hospitalisations</i>  <i>Injury and preventable disease</i>  <i>Basic skills for life and learning</i>  <i>Hearing impediments</i></p>	<p><i>School enrolment and attendance</i>  <i>Teacher quality</i>  <i>Indigenous cultural studies</i>  <i>Year 9 attainment</i>  <i>Year 10 attainment</i>  <i>Transition from school to work</i></p>	<p><i>Access to primary health</i>  <i>Potentially preventable hospitalisations</i>  <i>Avoidable mortality</i>  <i>Tobacco consumption and harm</i>  <i>Obesity and nutrition</i>  <i>Tooth decay</i>  <i>Mental health</i>  <i>Suicide and self-harm</i></p>	<p><i>Labour market participation (full/part time) by sector and occupation</i>  <i>Indigenous owned or controlled land and business</i>  <i>Home ownership</i>  <i>Income support</i></p>	<p><i>Overcrowding in housing</i>  <i>Rates of disease associated with poor environmental health</i>  <i>Access to clean water and functional sewerage and electricity services</i></p>	<p><i>Participation in organised sport, arts or community group activities</i>  <i>Access to traditional lands</i>  <i>Alcohol consumption and harm</i>  <i>Drug and other substance use and harm</i>  <i>Juvenile diversions</i>  <i>Repeat offending</i></p>	<p><i>Case studies in governance</i>  <i>Governance capacity and skills</i>  <i>Engagement with service delivery.</i></p>

**Objective 1. Port Adelaide Enfield will be a region which exemplifies pride in and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.**

## **1. THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE**

*"When an Aboriginal person speaks about their struggles, their triumphs, and everything that matters to them, and their community - it is worth so much more than words of an observer, who sits outside looking in on us. When the Aboriginal voice speaks it represents Our spirit, coming from a heart connected to what it is to be an Aboriginal person. This is a phenomenon without description, except to say it cannot be learned, it is a birth rite. So, to the Observer, I say, sit, listen, allow the Aboriginal voice to penetrate every environment whenever the opportunity arises, for not only does it serve you well, it represents true empowerment" (Nancy Bates, singer/songwriter)*

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield is extremely fortunate to have a significant number of Elders and other Aboriginal community members who are willing to share their knowledge and spirit with those who are willing to listen to ensure that the Aboriginal culture will survive.

One of the saddest and most destructive elements of white settlement and policies such as the removal of Aboriginal children through the Stolen Generation has been the breakdown of traditional culture.

Local Elders highlight that this breakdown of culture impacts on the Aboriginal community in numerous ways including a lack of understanding of traditional ways and respect from younger people for their heritage and pride in being Aboriginal.

The breakdown of cultural knowledge and respect for culture extends beyond the Aboriginal community. If one asks members of the general community "What is Australian culture" generally responses revolve around sports, mateship, the beach and multi-culturalism with Australia representing a blending of populations from all continents however very few mention Aboriginal culture or history.

Within our education system, until recently history taught within our schools started at the time of European settlement and the teaching of Aboriginal languages is almost non-existent until students enter tertiary level education.

A non-Aboriginal Year 12 student commented after having been on a camp at Coorong that she picked up on a parent bragging about how their Year 2/3 child was doing so well learning Indonesian. Having had experience of Aboriginal culture through the camp, the student had reflected that it was sad that the child had no knowledge of any Aboriginal language.



The traditional culture of any population represents the core of its existence, the basis for social and spiritual health of the individual and community. One of the major difficulties in raising awareness of Aboriginal culture is that this is often attempted by non-Indigenous people and as such is framed within a non-Indigenous context.

Aboriginal culture and history is oral and pictorial, handed down through generations through the telling of stories. The lack of a written history emphasises the importance of rebuilding, documenting and maintaining this oral history.

Early white settlers saw the beliefs and practices of Indigenous Australians as 'magic' rather than religion. It is now recognised that Aboriginal culture incorporates a sophisticated and complex spirituality based on a 'geosophical' or earth-centred philosophy rather than a 'theosophical' or 'God-centred' philosophy. Thus the earth, or country or terrain of particular groups is believed to be impregnated with the power of the Ancestor Spirits which humans draw upon as their saving grace. Figure 1 provides an outline of the three dimensions of the Human World, Physical World and Sacred World that form the basis of Aboriginal culture.

### 1.1 Kurna Cultural Heritage Survey

In 2006 Council commissioned a Kurna Cultural Heritage Survey of the area with the aim to facilitate the recognition and ongoing preservation, enhancement and celebration of Kurna cultural heritage. The survey of sites of Kurna cultural heritage significance was developed to consolidate existing knowledge and to identify and document additional knowledge of local Kurna heritage that has yet to be formally recognised. The project provided representatives of the local Kurna descendants the opportunity to paint their own historical picture of the Port Adelaide region based on their memories, cultural stories/histories and their spiritual connections to family and 'country'. The Kurna Cultural Heritage Survey report is available on Council's website ([www.portenf.sa.gov.au](http://www.portenf.sa.gov.au))

In addition to providing information on specific sites within the region that have cultural significance the report highlights the spatial and spiritual relationships between Aboriginal people and country. Figure 2 depicts a Cultural Landscape of the region developed as a product of discussions held during the workshop process. This landscape highlights the cultural significance of the area and the connectivity of family relationships, cultural practices and traditions, spiritual rituals and beliefs and social constructs and teachings with the land.

This document is a valuable resource and it is important that it be utilised as a planning and teaching device.

Figure 1.

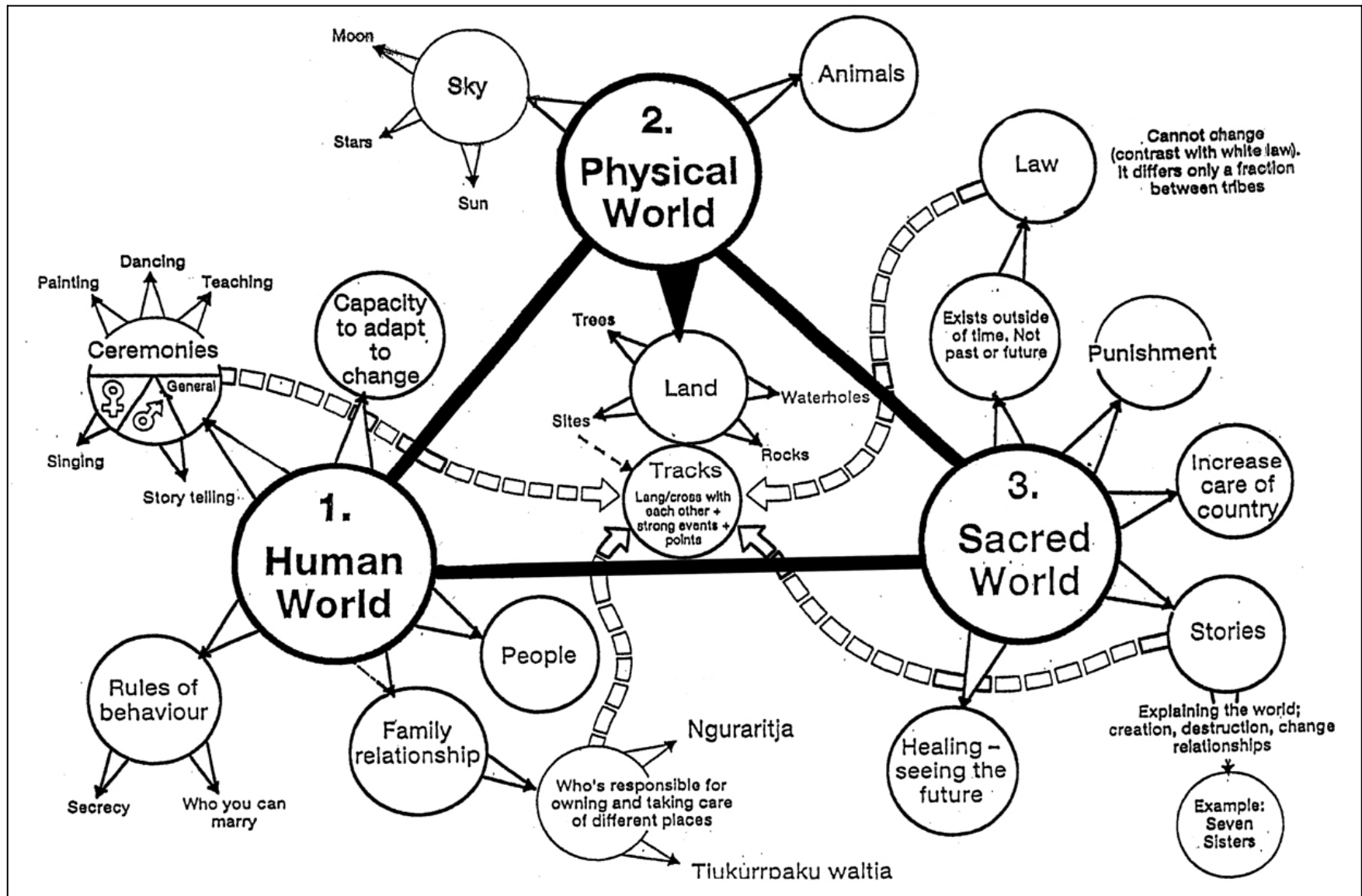
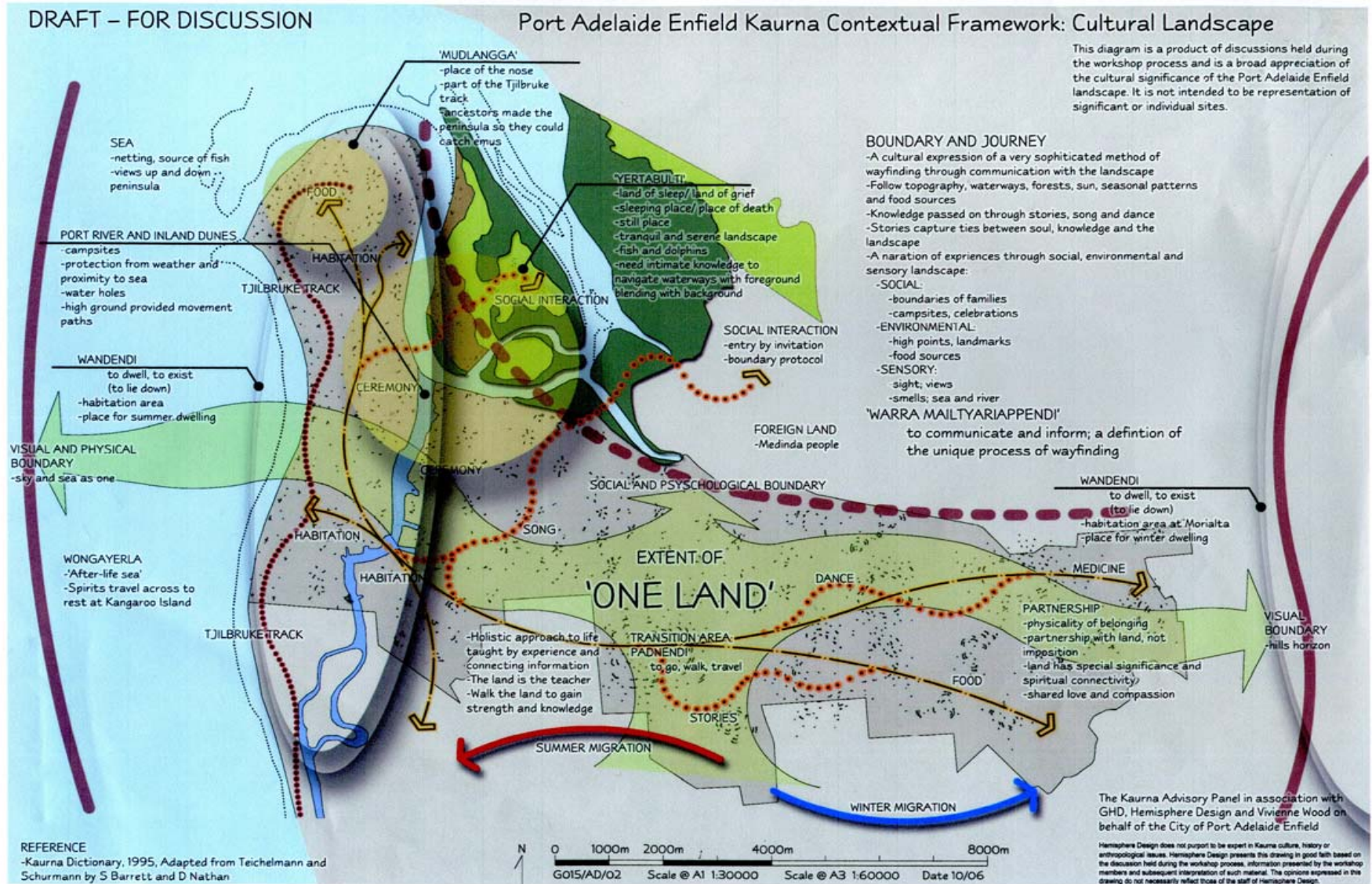


Figure 2.



Similarly the development of Lartelare, a park developed to recognise Lartelare and her descendants within the Port Waterfront development has resulted in an area that has the potential to be a site of learning for both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population. Margaret Brodie, one of Lartelare's direct descendants, has already conducted a number of guided tours of the park, providing an insight into the significance of the area for the local and wider Kurna community and there is greater potential for the use of the park as an educational tool.

Discussions with families traditionally connected to the Port River environment continue to highlight the concerns relating to the alarming rate of environmental degradation impacting for instance on the Port River, the mangroves, the watercourses, marine and animal life, including the dolphins and the fish nursery.

It is through projects like Lartelare that Council and the wider community, including in particular developers, have an opportunity to gain an insight and understanding of the relationship and significance of Land and the natural environment to Aboriginal people.

## 1.2 Aboriginal Input into Developments

Early consultation with representatives of the local community around land development enables the Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge to be seriously considered in all matters pertaining to policy and decision-making regarding the impact of development of the natural landscape and environment.

The Kurna Nation Cultural Heritage Association (KNCHA) remains the recognised authority that is required to be contacted relating to heritage. In addition by linking the developers through the Aboriginal Advisory Panel with the wider local community, particularly early within the process, there is an opportunity for the community to work with Council and the developers to resolve any potential conflicts. This process has been implemented over the past 2-3 years with the Council advising developers to meet with the Advisory Panel when they first start their planning and the outcomes of developing this early relationship have proven to be extremely positive.

## 1.3 Language

Roy Amery from the University of Adelaide, School of Linguistics emphasises the role of language as fundamental to the survival of Aboriginal cultures and identity. Council has the ability to facilitate the furtherance of utilising and supporting the resurrection of language, particularly the local Kurna language through areas such as incorporating Kurna naming of streets, the utilisation of dual naming of parks and reserves, incorporating Kurna Welcome into Welcome Statements to the City, and supporting the use of Kurna language in interpretative signage in new developments.

#### 1.4 Disempowerment of Aboriginal Males

One of the consequences of the breakdown of culture has been a disempowerment, real or perceived, by the men within the Aboriginal community. The Port Adelaide Enfield region has some very strong women Elders however the traditional roles of men within culture and the passing on of knowledge is more at threat.

Groups such as the Zebra Finch Men's Group and the Pulgi Woodwork Group have utilised the traditional practices of woodcarving as a means of providing an avenue for men to discuss issues and problems that they may not be able to talk about elsewhere and also as a means of building cultural awareness and connecting to the younger generations to pass on stories, skills and knowledge.

The Mari Yerta Men's and Young Men's Corporation meet at Holden Hill on a weekly basis to come together to address their issues and develop programs and activities within the local community.

Council have supported each of these groups through various grants and recognition through Aboriginal Awards for the work they do within the community.

#### 1.5 Aboriginal Cultural Centre

One of the strongest points highlighted throughout the consultations was the need expressed by members of the Aboriginal community for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre located in the Port Adelaide area. The Centre would provide a focal point for a range of Aboriginal cultural activities together with a central point for the location of services. The Centre was initially mooted in the mid-1980's and in November 2004 Council commissioned a feasibility study to be undertaken by Kristine Peters. This study affirmed the level of support from the community and highlighted activities that could be accommodated within such a facility. The preferred site for a Cultural Centre identified through this study was Western Regional Park, a site under Council care and control which, while having a dedicated Trust, could potentially be allocated for such a Centre.

In 2008 the Land Management Corporation funded a Business Case Study on behalf of State Government. This Study was presented to the State Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in 2009. A recent request by the Aboriginal Advisory Panel for an update on the status of the Centre resulted in a response from the Department that funding was not currently available for such a project.

There may however be other sources of funding and Council and the Aboriginal Advisory Panel, in conjunction with the State Government, are in a position to support the community in pursuing and advocating for such a Centre.

## 1.6 Diversity of Aboriginal Population

The Aboriginal population within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield is highly diverse with people representing many different tribal/language groups. The cultural mix of the different groups represents a similar diversity as that which is evident within other societies where there exist a multitude of differing cultural backgrounds, languages and traditions; however the meeting of the different groups through trade, inter-marriage etc has developed commonalities. Likewise, the broader Australian population features people from many different countries and cultures who now are referred to as 'Australian'.

These commonalities do not negate the differences and respect for original cultures. It is important for Council to recognise that the Aboriginal population does comprise these many differing populations and support Aboriginal people from other areas in maintaining their cultural ties.

### **Council Role**

There is a wide range of ways in which Council can support and celebrate our Aboriginal culture -

- Cultural awareness training for all staff and Elected Members including session during induction training program.
- Language:
  - Utilisation of Kurna language in street naming, dual naming of parks and reserves,
  - Support for programs which focus on the reinstating and maintenance of language,
  - Incorporating Kurna Welcome into welcome statements to the City ,
  - Support for the use of Kurna language in interpretative signage in new developments.
- Libraries maintaining Aboriginal collections, particularly relating to local Kurna history, art and language.
- Planning/development:
  - Consideration of Aboriginal links to Land in planning processes,
  - Referral of proposed developments to Aboriginal Advisory Panel (AAP) for input,
  - Planning staff to receive cultural awareness training to enable them to understand the significance of land to Aboriginal people,
  - Preservation of significant sites.
- Vegetation within the Council region to be, wherever possible, reflective of native vegetation and incorporation of bush tucker.
- Support for community arts and events through sponsorships and/or grants
- Interpretative trails, e.g. Kurna Walking trail.

- Support and promote the use of Lartelare as an educational tool for the wider community with guided tours led by relevant family/community members.
- Specific parks, e.g. Mikawomma and Lartelare, with interpretative signage.
- Support for programs/projects that will further Aboriginal culture, e.g. Adymanthana Language program at Tauondi College – it would be positive to have a similar project for Kurna and other languages.
- Support for Elders groups, particularly for men's groups to pass down knowledge. The local community particularly in Port Adelaide area is highly matriarchal. This may include support for young males to attend Bush Camps etc.
- Continued participation in ILUA negotiations relating to Land Rights negotiation within the Council area.
- Support and advocacy for the development of a Nunga Centre in the Port Adelaide area.
- Support for local Aboriginal organisations Kurruru, Kura Yerlo, Tira Appendi and Tauondi College.
- Celebrations – e.g. Nunga Week and ATSI Awards provide opportunities for celebration and happy times versus sorry times.
- Promotion of Cultural Walking Trail, Lartelare, Mikawomma, Mangrove Park, Hillcrest Walking Trail etc through the Visitor Information Centre.
- Utilisation/training/promotion of Aboriginal tour guides to provide guided walks through above and utilisation of such venues to hold workshops on weaving, bush tucker utilising on-site vegetation.

**Objective 2. A partnership between Port Adelaide Enfield Council and the Aboriginal community which is respectful and collaborative, allowing an open and frank exchange of views to maintain a strong working relationship between both parties...**

## **2.1 RECONCILIATION**

The extent of disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people has framed a number of approaches in South Australia. "*Doing it right*" is the South Australian Government's policy framework for action; the Government's commitment to Aboriginal families and communities in South Australia.

The "*Doing it right*" policy framework:

- *"recognises and respects Indigenous people as the original owners of this land with continuing rights and responsibilities associated with traditional ownership and connection to land and waters;*
- *acknowledges the impact on Indigenous people of dispossession from the land and traditional culture and the need for this to be understood by all South Australians as a basis for genuine reconciliation*
- *respects the unique culture and customs of the traditional owners of the land and supports efforts to protect and promote cultural heritage as a cornerstone of family and community life;*
- *recognises that Aboriginal people represent the most disadvantaged group in our community;*
- *acknowledges that the high levels of poverty, unemployment and poor physical and mental health experienced by Aboriginal Australians are unacceptable and must be redressed if Aboriginal families and communities are to participate fully in the life of our state, and*
- *respects the cultural, social, political and economic rights of Indigenous peoples and affirms equity with other South Australians in citizenship entitlements and participation* (SA Dept for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAARE). "*Doing it right: The South Australian Government's commitment to Aboriginal families and communities in South Australia*" Adelaide: DAARE, 2003)

Within this framework, the following goals are outlined:

- *"That Aboriginal South Australians will have the same choices as other South Australians and the same opportunities to share in the social and economic advantages of living in our state;*
- *That all South Australians will continue to be enriched by Indigenous culture and values, with respect by the wider community based on a new understanding and mutual esteem.*
- *That engagement and partnership with Aboriginal communities will be the platform for sustained improvement in the well being of Aboriginal families"* (ibid)



The Hon. Paul Lennon MP Premier of Tasmania outlines Reconciliation as "*recognising the past, acting in the present and building a better future*".

The apology from the Australian Government to the Stolen Generations in 2008 was one important step in achieving the overarching objective of closing the unacceptable gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal outcomes. It was important because it removed a barrier to establishing a more respectful relationship as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal fellow Australians.

Closing the gap involves consistent, long term action by governments at all levels, and by all Australians, in health, education, housing, employment etc., as well as in building respectful relationships that generate better outcomes for us all.

Reconciliation is perceived as the next logical step following the Sorry Statement. Reconciliation can be defined as a process, learning about Aboriginal history, walking together and moving forward together, understanding the past. Aboriginal people must be part of, and take the lead role of their futures in decision-making.

Throughout the consultation processes that have been undertaken for this paper, the need for Council to develop a Reconciliation Statement and process has been reinforced strongly by both members of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community. A Reconciliation Statement will create a visible affirmation and statement of Council's commitment to the momentum instigated through the Apology Statement.

It is crucial that such a statement be 'real' and not tokenistic and be developed as a process of consultation with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. There is a range of different statements and actions that have been developed by other Councils in South Australia and nationally, together with examples from other Government and non-Government organisations. Reconciliation Australia has produced a template for a Reconciliation Action Plan.

### **Council Role**

- To facilitate the development of a Reconciliation Statement for the City of Port Adelaide Enfield

## **2.2 PARTICIPATION/GOVERNANCE/REPRESENTATION**

One of the major challenges for Council, and for government and the community as a whole is how to incorporate the voice of the Aboriginal community within the decision-making processes.

As with any population, the Aboriginal population is not an homogenous group. Within any sector of society differences, be they political, social, familial or personal are natural and should be celebrated. Within the wider community and particularly within the political realm, political factions and schisms are the norm. So it is within the Aboriginal community. Whilst in one way this may be seen to be problematic and cause higher levels of complexity in reaching decisions, without such differences in politics, debate and democratic decision-making would be impossible.

The challenge is how to ensure that Council, in its decision-making, reflects this diversity of character of our Aboriginal community.

One of the major impacts of white settlement and subsequent imposition of European systems and law has been the breakdown of the traditional societal structure based on The Dreaming. This tends to be highlighted in the rifts that are seen within the Aboriginal populations, particularly with regard to major issues such as land rights.

In an article published in the Journal of Population Research, Sept 2002, Ross and Taylor note that the existence of treaties between indigenous populations and government in America and New Zealand has, as a flow on effect, a positive impact on the status for the minority populations. In the presence of legal rights and obligations, an effective bargaining base and explicit recognition by the non-Indigenous majority, it is arguable that a sense of control over one's destiny increases with impacts beyond claims to resources such as land. In New Zealand when the links between health, power, economic prosperity, fair representation, control and autonomy were uncovered, the Treaty was seen to have major significance for health.

In the absence of such a Treaty, from a government perspective, be it local, state or federal, there is an obvious moral and practical requirement to firstly understand and then to negotiate what may at times appear to be a highly complex process to ensure that the Aboriginal population and their opinions are fairly and appropriately represented within the decision-making processes.

#### 2.2.1 Aboriginal Advisory Panel

Recommendation 35 from the "To Break the Cycle: Prevention and rehabilitation responses to serious repeat offending by young people" report recommends that

*"Local governments establish mechanisms to enable Aboriginal young people and community members to have input into issues that affect them, and the formulation of solutions. This could extend to the establishment of Aboriginal Advisory Boards".*

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield established an Aboriginal Advisory Panel in 1998. The role of the Panel is to

".....provide input to Council on matters relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and provide a mechanism for members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to communicate and raise issues with Council.

1.1 The Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal Advisory Panel shall meet on a regular basis and will be recognised by Council as a legitimate body to be consulted over issues of identified importance to the Aboriginal residents. The Panel will have a range of functions and broad objectives including:

- 1 Development of positive links and networks between Council and the Aboriginal community
  - 2 Provide a sounding board for Council on issues of importance to the Aboriginal community
  - 3 Provide advice to Council on policy decisions which directly or indirectly impact on the Aboriginal community
  - 4 Assist Council in developing and maintaining a clear picture of the needs of the Aboriginal community
  - 5 Promote and enhance the profile of the Aboriginal community"
- (AAP Terms of Reference Dec 2006)

Since its inception the legitimacy of the Panel as the major advisory group for Council on matters relating to the Aboriginal community has at times been questioned by the Aboriginal community. This has in part been a reflection of the aforementioned divisions within the community relating to who are the representative spokespeople of the community in relation to matters such as Kurna land rights and heritage.

In 2006 the Terms of Reference for the Aboriginal Advisory Panel were reviewed and the existing Panel was disbanded with all positions being declared vacant. Under the new Terms of Reference, membership of the Panel consists of:

- A minimum of eight and maximum of twelve voting members, all of whom are either of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent or represent an agency/service which provide services to that community
- The Mayor plus two Elected Members of Council who are nominated by Council (these are ex-officio members of the Panel and have no voting rights)
- Members of Council Administration including the Director of Community Development, Manager of Recreation and Community Development and the Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity Officer (once again these are ex-officio positions with no voting rights)

Under the current Terms of Reference, the Aboriginal Advisory Panel is the key body that provides advice to Council on matters including heritage. In the course of conducting its business the Panel will advise Council on who it should consult with on matters in which the Panel feels wider resources should be involved. This may include consulting with particular Elders or representative groups.

The matters dealt with by the Panel are extremely diverse. Over the past 12 months for example the Panel has had significant involvement in -

- Reconciliation Week activities
- Port Waterfront Development Master Planning and Northern Lefevre Peninsula Master Planning
- Panel/Elected Members/Senior Management event
- NAIDOC Week Celebrations
- Lartelare development
- Land Management Corporation Community Forum representation
- Port Adelaide Maritime Corp. Advisory Group representation
- Nunga Centre consultations and Steering Group representation
- Nunga Week Celebrations
  - PAEC Awards Program
  - Reconciliation Walk
  - Support for other agency/community projects

At the present time the Panel functions at a high level however there are a number of challenges that remain:

- How does Council ensure that the Panel is representative of the overall Aboriginal population
- The Panel tends to have strong representation from Port Adelaide and the Parks area. Given the demographics of the Aboriginal population within the Council region there remains a need for representation from the more eastern area of Council
- The composition of the overall population within the Council area reflects Kurna people and also a range of other Land groups. It is important that the composition of the Panel reflects this diversity. As an example there is currently no representation on the Panel of the traditional people from the APY Lands however this population is significant within the Council area, be it on a permanent or transitional basis.
- It is important that the Panel either has respected Elders within its membership or alternatively has access to and is accorded legitimacy by local Elders.

- As with any other Advisory group it is important that the younger population is represented. Council does not have an AYAC (Aboriginal Youth Advisory Committee) however both Kurruru and Kura Yerlo have well established AYACs. There may be potential for representatives from those AYACs to sit on the Aboriginal Advisory Panel.
- How is the business that is conducted within the Panel communicated to both the Council and the wider community?
- The existence, composition and function of the Panel are not widely known amongst the general Aboriginal community. Articles relating to the Panel are featured in the Council newsletter, the Pen 2 Paper, however the Panel and its role need to be more widely publicised.

### 2.2.2 Representation on Council

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield does not have an Aboriginal person on Council. In consultation with the community this is one of the key issues raised. Members of the community expressed the opinion that if there was an Aboriginal person on Council this would provide a more powerful voice for the local community.

One of the strategies suggested during consultations was for a designated position to be created on Council for an Aboriginal person to be elected by Aboriginal members of community. This person would be a representative elected 'at large', more comparable to the previous Alderman type of role than a Ward Councillor.

At the last Council elections held in 2006 two Aboriginal candidates stood for Council. Both candidates stood within the same Council Ward and as such were in competition with each other as well as other candidates.

For an Aboriginal person to gain a seat on Council in a position that would allow them to represent the Aboriginal population as a whole several strategies would need to be explored:

- Mentorship - Ideally a longer-standing Councillor would accept the role of mentoring a candidate
- Identification of potential candidates - It is important that candidates be selected by the community and be representative of the community as a whole. Council could provide support for the community to undertake this process.
- Investigations would be required to ascertain if it were possible to implement an "at large" type position within Council and models of how this might be furthered.

### 2.2.3 Voting.

Voting in Local Government elections is voluntary, unlike for State or Federal Government elections. The method for voting is via postal vote. For Aboriginal people to gain representation of their views within Council as a whole it is important for them to firstly be aware of the individuals who are standing for election in their Ward and what their stance is relating to Aboriginal issues, and then to vote for those who best represent their views.

In order to be eligible for voting in Local Government a person must be enrolled on the Electoral Roll as a resident within a postcode area in the Council region,

Prior to the last Council elections the Electoral Commission held a promotional campaign targeting Aboriginal people, aimed at encouraging them to enrol and then to exercise their right to vote. Such campaigns can be supported by Council.

#### **Council Role**

- Ensure that information relating to enrolment to vote and voting is available through Council e.g. through articles in P2P, display of posters through libraries and community centres.
- Work with Electoral Commission to distribute information through other Aboriginal organisations/agencies.
- Candidates for elections consider holding forum for Aboriginal residents at which they provide information on their views relating to the community.

### **2.3 CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE CONSULTATION**

Consultation is an on-going process that benefits all participants equally in helping to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives are effectively incorporated into planning and projects.

It involves establishing a respectful relationship with Aboriginal communities and demonstrating a willingness to share, to learn and to negotiate. The sharing of knowledge is a two-way process which involves Council getting to know members of the local Aboriginal community whilst at the same time enabling the Aboriginal community to be aware of what is happening in the wider community. Quality consultation requires respect, trust, honesty and openness.

It is critical that those consulting with members of the Aboriginal community recognise social and political issues including, among others, Aboriginal deaths in custody, the Stolen Generation, Reconciliation, Native Title, Land Rights, social dislocation, and racism as on-going matters that many Aboriginal people find it difficult to speak about, particularly to strangers.

It should also be borne in mind that there are sensitive Aboriginal cultural and spiritual issues and beliefs which are equally important in this context. Dreaming and Creation stories belong to Aboriginal communities and it is important that their custodianship be acknowledged. Aspects of Aboriginal spirituality need to be dealt with in the same sensitive manner as all contemporary religions, not presented as myths and stories. Different realms of information exist. One of these realms is public and accessible. The other is definitely secret and reserved for private discussion between privileged people within the community. (*Working with Aboriginal Communities: A Guide to Community Consultation and Protocols* Board of Studies NSW, 2001)

It is also important to note the difference between the participation of Aboriginal members in general community consultation processes and the use of Aboriginal people as 'consultants' to provide specific and expert advice. Many Aboriginal people, particularly Elders, are frequently asked to provide input into a range of projects etc. They feel, and Council supports the premise, that if their input is being sought as 'expert' knowledge, appropriate remuneration should be made in line with that that is paid to other 'experts' e.g. lawyers, environmental consultants, who may be used in consultations.

### **Council Role**

- Incorporate training in appropriate consultation within Cultural Awareness Training for staff
- Ensure that when other groups are undertaking consultations with members of community, e.g. developers, they have, through Aboriginal leadership, Elders and the Aboriginal Advisory Panel, an understanding of cultural factors and sensitivity involved
- Support and advocate for appropriate remuneration for Aboriginal people when they are requested to provide 'expert' knowledge in consultations.

**Objective 3. An understanding of the demographic profile of the Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community which allows access to and allocation of resources based on an accurate foundation.**

### **3.1 WHO ARE OUR POPULATION – DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

By having knowledge of who the Aboriginal population are, i.e. by knowing accurately how many live within the Council region, what ages they are, where they live, where they are from and how these figures may be changing in the short and longer term Council will be in a position to most effectively ensure that funding, services and programs are targeted appropriately within the region. Without accurate data it is not possible to know what the needs are, nor is it possible to know if strategies are effective.

#### **3.1.1 Population Numbers**

Census data for the Aboriginal population is subject to many influences including whether people choose to identify as Aboriginal and other factors such as form design, understanding of the questions and whether the question was completed by the person or filled in on their behalf. The ABS note that it is impossible to be completely confident in any measure of the Aboriginal population because of a lack of confidence in the quality of birth, death and migration data as well as the changing propensity of people to identify as Aboriginal.

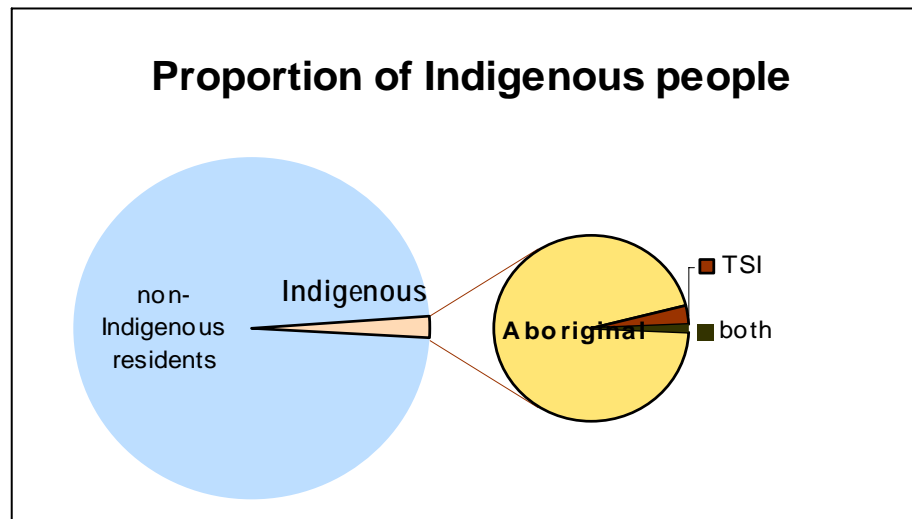
The impact of the stolen generation and other government practices means that some members of community either do not know of their Aboriginal ancestry or choose not to identify as being Aboriginal.

For some people there is still a high level of stigmatism and racism that exists with being Aboriginal and therefore they will not identify. This relates to what has emerged as a common thread that will be woven throughout this paper, that of cultural pride and knowledge.

As at the 2006 ABS Census, the City of Port Adelaide Enfield had a total population of 102,929 of which 2261 or 2.2% identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This proportion of the overall population can be compared to that of the Adelaide area as a whole at 1.1%.



**Figure 3. Proportion of Indigenous people**



Source. ABS Data

According to Census data, the actual number and proportion of the total population over the past 10 years reflects an upward trend (Table 2 and Figure 4)

There are a number of factors that may be reflected in this upward trend including:

- a rise in the number of children (a rise in actual population),
- a rise in the number of Aboriginal people who identify as such within Census data
- A migration of Aboriginal people from regional and rural areas to access education, employment and training, and health care
- the availability of housing opportunities within the Council region

Other external factors such as the Federal Government Northern Territory Intervention and access to medical treatments such as dialysis in Alice Springs have potential to influence the movement of Aboriginal people to the metropolitan area, including Port Adelaide Enfield.

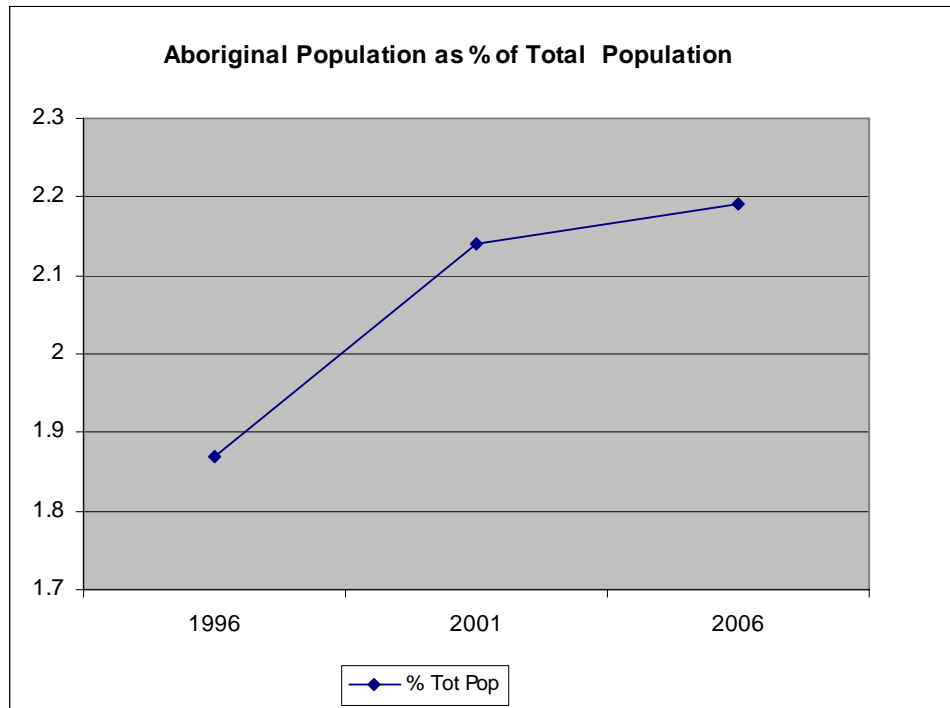
It is important that Council remains aware of any continuing upward trends as this will impact on the requirements for services for the community. Council also has a role in ensuring that other Government Departments are aware of such data in order to negotiate for an appropriate funding and service provision for these residents.

**Table 2. Aboriginal Population as percentage of total City of Port Adelaide Enfield Population**

Census Year	Total Aboriginal Popn	Total Popn.	% Aboriginal Popn vs Total Popn
2006	2261	102,928	2.19%
2001	2120	98,928	2.14%
1996	1832	97,826	1.87%
% Increase 2001-2006	6.65%	4.04%	
% Increase 1996-2006	23.4%	5.21%	

(Source: ABS Census data)

**Figure 4. Aboriginal Population as a percentage of total population**



Source. ABS Census data

### 3.1.2 Transient Population Numbers

The Census data does not include those Aboriginal people who come to the Port Adelaide Enfield area on a more short term, transient basis. Significant numbers of Aboriginal people will come to the area to stay with other family members who live here permanently, or stay in Aboriginal hostels in the area. These shorter term residents include those from other areas and traditional people who come down from the Lands to access medical treatments, attend funerals, to visit other family members who may be involved within the justice system or to escape the higher temperatures in the Lands over the summer months.

Other younger people will visit the area to access education and/or employment opportunities. The Wiltja Residential Centre which provides accommodation for high school students from the APY Lands through the Wiltja program at Woodville High School is located in Hillcrest.

In assessing the population of Aboriginal people in the Port Adelaide Enfield area it is usual to assume, based on estimates provided by service providers and agencies working with the community, that the actual numbers are between 2-3 times the ABS population giving a potential population at any given time of between 4,500-6,600 or 4.5-6.6% of the total population.

From a cultural perspective, the movement of population, visiting with other family and seasonal migration is a norm. The relationship between Aboriginal people and country and the boundaries as identified within Council and other government authorities do not coincide with the traditional tribal boundaries.

The lack of confidence in the actual number of Aboriginal people residing within the Council region at any one time may impact significantly on areas such as:

- Funding for programs and the allocation of services is often based on population size and geographical distribution, usually gained from ABS Census data and other administrative records such as births, deaths, migration. If the data on which this allocation is made is inaccurate the funding and service levels within the region may not be appropriate.
- The transience of the population raises a number of issues including housing/accommodation, school attendance, and service provision which will be addressed further throughout this paper.

There are methods by which a greater degree of certainty could be accomplished. The State Government, through the Safe Tracks project, proposes to identify groups of people when they leave the Lands to travel to the metropolitan area to ensure that they have appropriate accommodation and access to services. Access to early information relating to this movement of population may enable local agencies to ensure that services are available.

The ABS are undertaking promotion to encourage Aboriginal people to identify as such in Census collection and Council once again can assist in this process through providing information through libraries, community centres and Council publications and working closely with the ABS to promote awareness within the community.

### **3.2 POPULATION DISTRIBUTION**

As noted above, the Aboriginal population comprises approximately 2.19% of the total population of the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Table 3 outlines the suburbs with the greatest numbers of Aboriginal residents. This data is important in that it highlights that significant numbers of the population reside in the areas around Kilburn/Blair Athol and in the more eastern regions of the Council, areas where services are less likely to be located. The table also highlights that those areas with higher numbers of Aboriginal residents have proportional residential populations considerably higher than that of the average 2.19%.

The Table highlights the numbers of Aboriginal Housing properties within each of the suburbs identified. In addition to the Aboriginal Housing properties, there are two Aboriginal Hostels which provide short term emergency accommodation located in the Council area. The Gladys Elphick Hostel in Klemzig with 12 beds and the Luprina Hostel in Dudley Park with 22 beds. There is also the Wiltja Residential facility in Hillcrest which provides accommodation for young high school students from the APY Lands who are visiting Adelaide to participate in education.

**Table 3 Suburbs with greatest numbers**

<b>Suburb</b>	<b>No Aboriginal Residents</b>	<b>Aboriginal pop. as proportion of Total Pop. (%)</b>	<b>No. Aboriginal Housing Properties</b>
Northfield	147	5.98	19
Taperoo	135	5.49	17
Valley View	104	4.23	16
Mansfield Park	102	4.15	12
Kilburn	98	3.98	12
Enfield	96	3.90	21
Gilles Plains	94	3.82	21
Blair Athol	87	3.54	22
Largs Bay	85	3.46	11
Osborne	80	3.25	17
Greenacres	79	3.21	6
Rosewater	79	3.21	20
Semaphore South	77	3.13	1
Alberton	76	3.09	15
Windsor Gardens	73	2.97	11

Figure 5 outlines the Aboriginal population living in each suburb within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield Council area as a proportion of all Aboriginal people in the Council area.

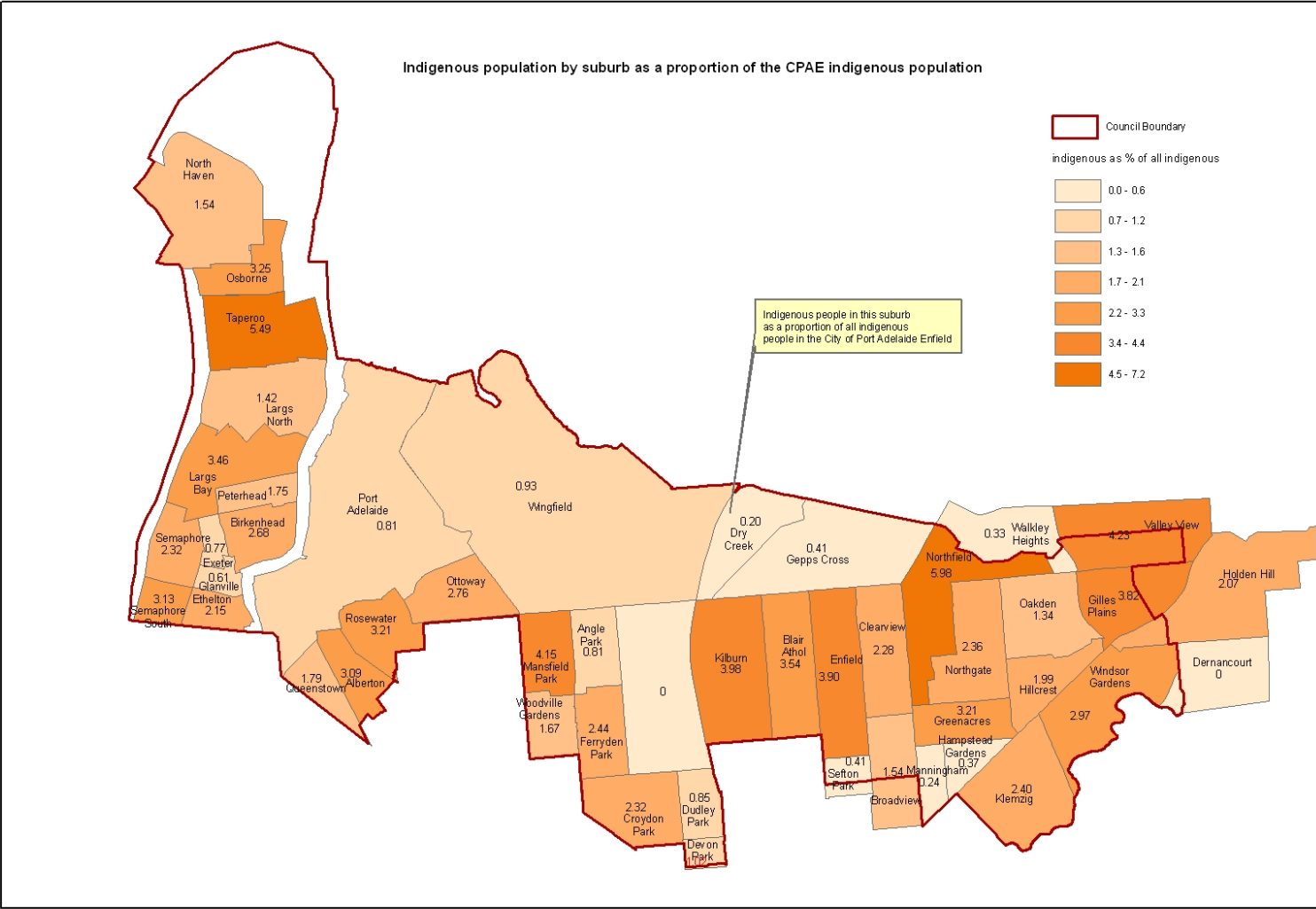
This pictorial representation further highlights the concentration of populations within the more eastern areas of the Council region, particularly around the Kilburn/Blair Athol/Enfield areas.

The majority of the Aboriginal population is concentrated in areas that have a relatively lower socio-economic profile. Figure 6 depicts Aboriginal residents as a proportion of all residents within suburbs throughout the Council area against the SEIFA Index of Disadvantage 2001. The SEIFA Index incorporates a range of data including income, housing type, transport, employment, education to come up with a rating for a specific area. Scores below 1000 are ranked as disadvantaged with lower scores being ranked as more disadvantaged.

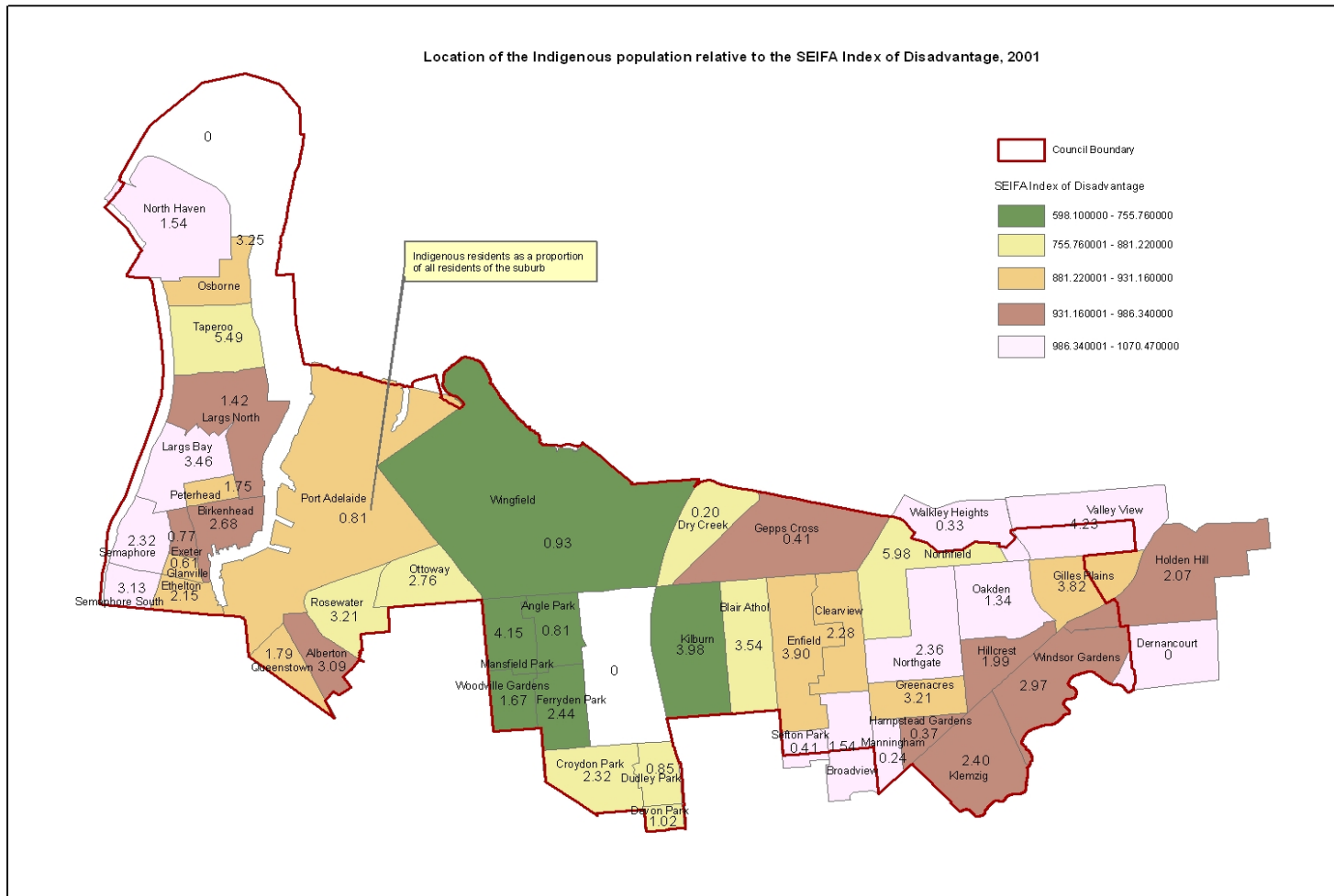
The areas around the Parks and Kilburn have the lowest SEIFA Disadvantage rating but have very high Aboriginal population representation, as have areas such as Taperoo, Rosewater and Ottoway. Figures for Northfield are likely to be skewed because of the location of the prisons within that area.

Kilburn Blair Athol and Enfield areas have a relatively high density of Aboriginal settlement. These areas also tend to be the major settlement areas for new arrival/refugee populations within the Council region. As will be discussed in more detail later in this paper, this concentration of two relatively high need population groups in an area that already depicts a low socio-economic status, may lead to a range of social problems. (Section 7. Safety and Crime)

**Figure 5. Indigenous population - Port Adelaide Enfield**



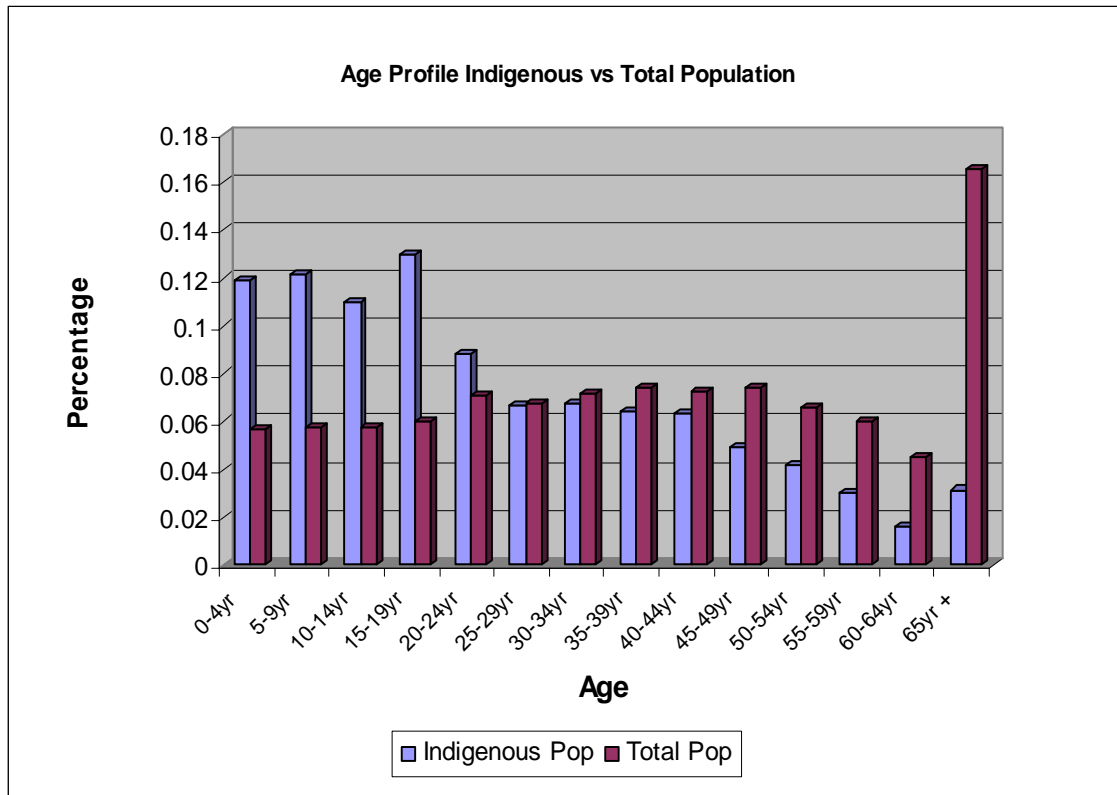
**Figure 6. Indigenous population PAE relative to SEIFA Index**





### 3.3 AGE PROFILE

**Figure 7** depicts the age profile of Aboriginal residents as a percentage against the profile for the total population.

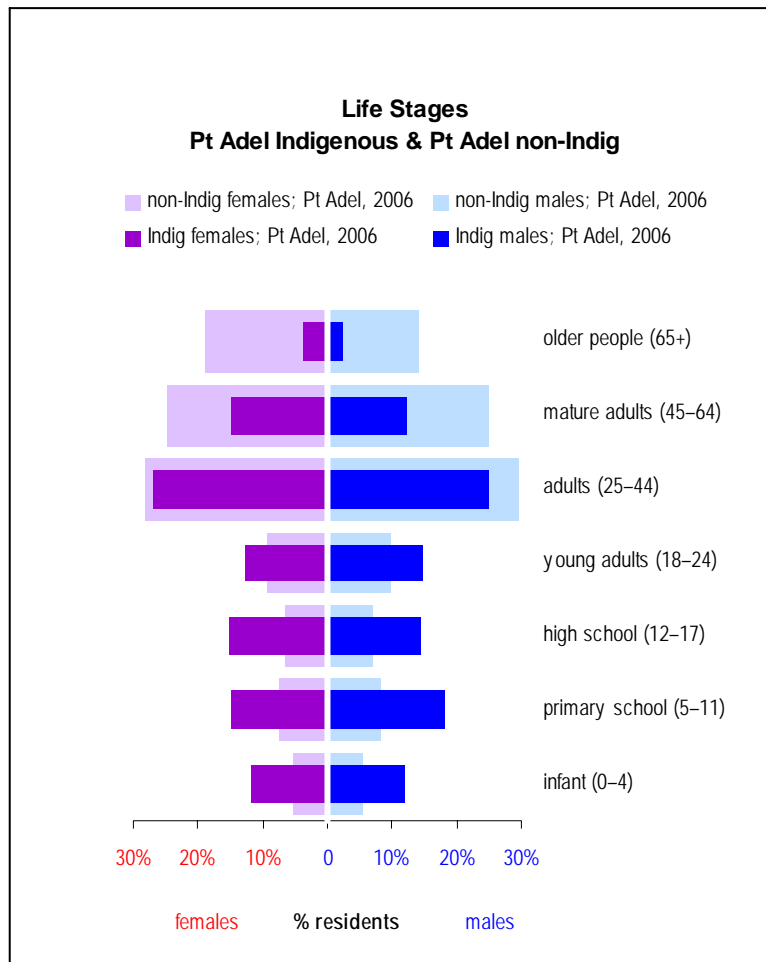


Source. ABS Census data 2006

This figure highlights a significant difference in the distribution of the Aboriginal population with far higher representation in the younger age brackets compared with that of the overall population. The percentage of the Aboriginal population under the age of 15 years is 38% compared to 17% for the total population. Whereas for the overall population the impact of the baby boomers is reflected in an increasingly aged population, for the Aboriginal community the representation in the over 50 years population is relatively low.

The proportion of population in key life stages gives a good indication of the types of services likely to be needed. There are seven life stages: infants (aged 0-4); primary school (5-11); high school (12-17); young adults (18-24); adults (25-44); mature adults (45-64); and older people (65+).

**Figure 8 Life Stages Indigenous & Non Indigenous - Port Adelaide**

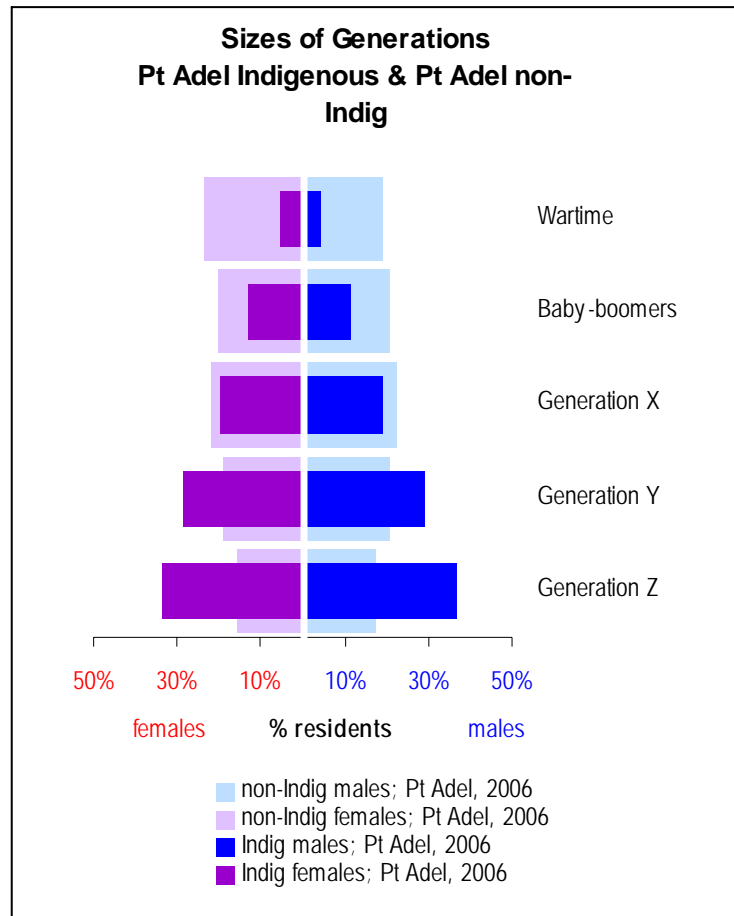


Source. ABS Census Data 2006

While a person's life stage changes as they age, they are always part of the same generation. A generation is all the people born in the same 15 year period. In a stable community, most generations would be of similar size, except for the oldest generations where mortality is high. The number of people in a generation can only increase if more people that age move into the area.

Statistically, generations are counted over the 15 years between four Censuses. The 'Baby-boomer' generation, for example, was born between 1946 and 1961. These people were 45–59 years old in 2006, and include many current Indigenous leaders. Before them was the Wartime generations who are now the elders in Indigenous communities aged 60+ in 2006. Younger adults are members of generations often called Gen X (born 1961 to 1976) and Gen Y (born 1976 to 1991). They are the parents of the latest generation, children born from 1991 to 2006, who might be called Gen Z. Gen Z is the only generation that increased in size between 2001 to 2006, because of new births.

**Figure 9. Sizes of Generations Indigenous & Non Indigenous - Port Adelaide**



Source. ABS Census data 2006

Children and the elderly place a level of financial burden on families and the community. The larger the younger age population, the greater the burden on families and on governments to supply childcare, education and other youth and family support services. The larger the more elderly population, the higher the cost of age pensions and the more significant the impact on health services.

An initial analysis of the above age profile would appear to indicate that an emphasis should be placed on the provision of support and services for the younger Aboriginal population. It is important to bear in mind however that the average life expectancy is lower and the ageing process through chronic disease and illness is evident at a younger age for the Aboriginal population than for the non-Aboriginal population.

### **3.4 IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND AGE PROFILE ON THE PROVISION OF SERVICES**

Whereas for the overall population the focus for service provision is shifting to the needs of the expanding aged population, within Aboriginal services there is an increasing need for services for the younger population, e.g. in childcare and support, lower primary schooling and youth services. In many families, the grandparents provide care for grandchildren. Many of our older grannies in particular are now ageing and unwell, and are less able to provide care for their grandchildren.

The Council area has two excellent Aboriginal focussed childcare service providers based in the Port Adelaide area, Kalaya pre-school and Childcare and Kura Yerlo Childcare program. Kura Yerlo also provides an after-school program for young people aged 5-12 years (the Extreme Team) based out of the Le Fevre Community Centre.

The Childcare Centre at the Parks services a high number of Aboriginal children and ensures that Aboriginal culture is integrated into their programs. However there are no Aboriginal specific centres similar to Kalaya in other areas of Council.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are few Aboriginal specific aged care facilities within the region. Regency Green in Regency Park has a specialised Aboriginal section however this is not sufficient to meet the needs of the number of aged people. Aunty Veronica Brodie was a strong advocate for the need for Aboriginal aged care facilities and expressed her desire for such a facility to be constructed on Lartelare. New developments such as those at Lightsvew incorporate aged care facilities and Council may be able to advocate for such facilities to provide specialised Aboriginal centres.

Other issues such as the potential impact of the 'super schools' on Aboriginal education services are discussed further in this paper under Employment, Education and Training. Likewise the location of appropriate health and wellbeing programs and services across the Council region are discussed in other sections.

#### **Council Role**

- Council has a key role in assisting in the collection, collation and dissemination of demographic data through community, all levels of government, service providers, developers, business etc
- To enable the above Council needs to be represented in a range of networks to gain information on population movement trends and their impacts on the community
- Council is in a position to advocate and lobby, on behalf of community and service providers, to ensure that Port Adelaide Enfield receives their fair share of funding and resources for the region
- Council is a user of information in the planning of social services etc.

**Objective 4. A healthy and active Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who have access to a range of appropriate health and wellbeing services.**

#### **4. HEALTH/WELLBEING**

A comment heard far too often within the community is *"There are too many sorry times"*.

The 1989 National Aboriginal Health Strategy states that:

*"Health to Aboriginal peoples is a matter of determining all aspects of their life, including control over their physical environment, of dignity, of community self-esteem, and of justice. It is not merely a matter of the provision of doctors, hospitals, medicines or the absence of disease and incapacity".*

*("A National Aboriginal Health Strategy" National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party 1989)*

One of the most significant indicators of the lower health status of Aboriginal people is that the overall life expectancy of the Aboriginal population is seventeen years less than that of the general population. The life expectancy for Australians overall has increased markedly since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century reflecting improvements in areas such as public health and medical intervention. **However, at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Aboriginal people had, on average, the same life expectancy as the total Australian population in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.** (ABS Australian Social Trends 2002) In other words, the life expectancy today for Aboriginal people is about the same as it was for non-Aboriginal people 100 years ago - before penicillin, flu vaccines, and the multitude of other medical breakthroughs that have occurred over that period.

In a recent speech delivered by Monsignor David Cappo at the launch of the "In our own backyard: Urban health inequities and Aboriginal experiences of neighbourhood life, social capital and racism" it was noted that in South Australia this difference is actually between 27-32 years.

Approximately thirty years ago life expectancy rates for indigenous peoples in Canada, New Zealand and the United States were similar to the rates for Indigenous peoples in Australia. However significant gains have been made in the past two decades in the indigenous populations in Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America. Australia has fallen significantly behind in improving the life expectancy of its Indigenous peoples. Data suggests Indigenous males in Australia live between 8.8 and 13.5 years less than indigenous males in Canada, New Zealand and the USA. Indigenous females in Australia live between 10.9 and 12.6 years less than females in these countries.

The differences in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians have been recognised by all levels of Government and both the Federal and State governments (see COAG 2007) have made commitments to lower this difference. Table 4 outlines the underlying causes of death for Aboriginal South Australians in 2005.

**Table 4. Underlying Causes of Death for Aboriginal South Australians (2005)**

<b>Cause of death</b>	<b>Total Aboriginal deaths %</b>	<b>Total non-Aboriginal Deaths %</b>
<b>Medical causes</b>		
Malignant neoplasms	12.0	28.1
Type 2 diabetes	7.0	2.6
Mental & behavioural disorders	2.1	3.3
Diseases of circulatory system	25.4	36.3
Diseases of respiratory system	9.9	9.2
Disease of the digestive system	4.9	3.5
Perinatal conditions	0.7	0.6
All other medical conditions	14.1	10.8
<b>External causes</b>		
Transport accidents	4.2	1.3
Intentional self-harm	12.0	1.7

Source: *"Environmental Health Management Plan - Stage 1 Research"*, Earthtech June 2006

Professor Fiona Stanley AC in her 2008 Annual Hawke Lecture "The Greatest Injustice: why we have failed to improve the health of Aboriginal people" noted that Australia has had access to a number of documents from Royal Commissions, inquiries, reviews and surveys with very similar sets of findings and recommendations. Some go back more than 10 years. Professor Stanley suggests that "we know what to do – why don't we do it?"

Improvements in Aboriginal life expectancy may be achieved by promoting positive health behaviours. Positive cultural, social and economic factors all help to make healthy choices viable. Alternatively, poor community functioning, poverty, disadvantage and stress can lead to unhealthy behaviours — smoking, insufficient physical activity, poor nutrition, risky alcohol consumption and illicit drug use. The role of local government in health is multi-faceted. Local government has a primary responsibility for monitoring and implementing public health legislation in most jurisdictions.

This is most often defined in terms of environmental health and engineering activities such as waste management, prevention of infectious disease and food safety.

Local government also has a role in influencing development through planning management which can enhance the physical, social and economic environment, improving the living conditions which determine a community's health.

There is now a greater acknowledgement of shared responsibility for public health across the three levels of government and a wide range of stakeholders. The Port Adelaide Enfield Council Public and Environmental Health Plan 2007-2012 notes that it is clear that information sharing, health promotion and collaboration and integrated strategic planning is required to achieve an effective and improved public health outcome.

The Council Environmental Health Management Plan notes that:

*"Indigenous people are the most disadvantaged and have the worst health in the Council region: improving Aboriginal health must be a priority for Council"*

The Environmental Health Plan outlines a number of strategies aimed at addressing these issues. A copy of the Environmental Health Plan is available through the Council website at:

[www.portenf.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Final\\_PublicandEnvironmentalHealthPlan](http://www.portenf.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Final_PublicandEnvironmentalHealthPlan)

In addition to these strategies Council can support a healthy community through other areas:

#### **4.1 APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**

The location of culturally appropriate and readily accessible community health and primary health care services within the local area is essential if the health and well-being of Aboriginal people are to be addressed.

Consultations for this paper, confirmed by findings of other research e.g. "In our own backyard" report (op.cit), note that services need to be easily accessed and as culturally appropriate and welcoming as possible. Aboriginal staffing is important but equally there need to be choice as some Aboriginal people consulted for this paper expressed concern about confidentiality around seeing or being seen by family at Aboriginal services and prefer to consult health professionals who are not related to their networks.

Barriers identified include transport, perceived unfriendliness, staff and style of service being culturally inappropriate, racist or judgmental behaviour from staff, lack of coordination and in some cases cost. Throughout the consultations undertaken for this paper many community people have indicated the 'shame' that can be involved in accessing services of a personal nature.

An example is an expressed concern from Elders within the community relating to the high incidence of cancers within the community and the need for support for particularly younger people to have regular screening such as PAP smears, prostate checks, breast screening etc.

A survey of approximately 80 young people who attended an Indigenous Youth Careers Expo in 2008 asked young people who they would approach to obtain information relating to health and personal issues. Almost 75% of participants stated that they would approach family or friends for advice. Only 5% said that they would approach medical or health services (including youth health services).

Research for the recently completed study into racism and the impact on Aboriginal health "In our own backyard" (op.cit) highlights that health services are one of the most trusted services.

However a recent report "South Australia: Our Health and Health Services", 40.1% of Aboriginal people living in the metropolitan area of Adelaide cite "personal" reasons which are defined as "too busy, discrimination, service not culturally appropriate, language problems, dislikes services, afraid, embarrassed, or felt service would be inadequate" as the primary reason for not going to a GP.

Members of the local community have expressed concern relating to recent changes to Nunga Health services in the region.

A review of health services as a whole within South Australia has resulted in a number of changes to how such services will be delivered in the Port Adelaide Enfield area. Linked with the government's promotion of GP Plus and GP Plus Super Clinics, the key sites with Aboriginal specific health services will be through Muna Paiendi Primary Health Care located at Lyell McEwin hospital in Elizabeth Vale, the Modbury hospital and Queen Elizabeth hospital. Outreach services for Aboriginal people will be provided, in conjunction with Nunkuwarrin Yunti through Kangawodli in Dudley Park and the Gilles Plains Aboriginal Outreach Health Service with a further outreach service being provided in the Port Adelaide area, possibly through Tauondi College.

Linked with this is a lack of services that target wellbeing/mental health issues for the Aboriginal community, particularly in areas where the need has been identified as particularly high, i.e. in the areas around Kilburn/Blair Athol and the more eastern areas of Wandana, Gilles Plains, and Klemzig.



The primary Aboriginal community controlled health service providers are Nunkawarrin Yunti based in the city. Services such as ACIS do not provide specific services targeted at the needs of Aboriginal people within the region.

There are examples of successful strategies within the area which support the provision of information and contact with various services. One of the most successful is the Tauondi College Health Days in which the College provides a 'festival' type day which incorporates information from a variety of health service providers. Council supports these days by attendance of the Immunisation Officers, offering immunisation and vaccination for those attending. This is an example of where by taking the services to where the community are rather than expecting the community to come to a service, providers are more likely to have contact with those who may feel uncomfortable in attending clinics etc. This model could be duplicated at other venues across the Council area.

The focus of provision of Aboriginal health services is also moving from community health/primary health care services which work closely with and have a more intimate knowledge of their local populations to provision of services within mainstream services. This approach incorporates a shift from early intervention and preventative strategies to treatment of acute medical conditions.

#### **4.2. EARLY INTERVENTION/CAUSAL PATHWAYS TO HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

The significance of early intervention cannot be understated. In her address for the 2008 Annual Hawke Lecture, Professor Stanley notes that many pathways to a range of child, youth and adult problems (health, mental health, substance abuse) commence in pregnancy and early childhood. Professor Stanley provides some examples:

- "(i) poor maternal health/infection/malnutrition/ in pregnancy > low birth weight plus poor childhood environments > dramatic increased risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart disease and renal failure > premature death,
- (ii) poor maternal health/overcrowding/maternal smoking > repeated ear infections > deafness > poor language skills > poor school performance > behaviour problems > delinquency, incarceration, drugs, suicide etc,
- (iii) poor living conditions/lack of hygiene > skin sores > kidney and heart infections (rheumatic fever/glomerulonephritis) > renal and heart failure > premature death".

During 2007, 29 of the 123 children (23%) who died in South Australia were from families who had had some form of contact with the child protection department within the three years preceding their death.

Aboriginal children were particularly over-represented in this group: of the 29 children who died in 2007 and whose families had had some form of contact with Families SA within three years prior to their death, 10 were identified as Aboriginal. (Fatal child abuse, Mel Irenyi and Briony Horsfall Aug 2009)

These are just a few examples of the need to take a holistic approach to health and wellbeing strategies.

### **4.3 WELLBEING/MENTAL HEALTH**

The alarming statistic noted above relating to the percentage of Aboriginal deaths attributed to intentional self harm (12.0% compared to 1.7% for the overall population) is a stark example of the level of poor individual wellbeing and mental health within the Aboriginal population.

Whilst specific data is not available, anecdotal evidence indicates that the levels of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and grief amongst the community are extreme. The on-going effects of a history of invasion and dispossession linked with the "taking away of our land, culture and spirituality" remain

The impact of the Stolen Generation on those who were part of this generation and were separated from family and for their descendants who are affected through the breakdown of culture and identity is not historical. It is part of the living memory of our Aboriginal people today

A study undertaken in Western Australia "*The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young Children*" ([www.ichr.uwa.edu.au](http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au)) found that associations exist between the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal carers and their children (aged 4 to 17 years) and the past policies and practices of forced separation of Aboriginal people from their natural families.

Effects on carers in Western Australia were identified within the study as:

- More likely to live in households where there were problems caused by overuse of alcohol or gambling
- almost twice as likely to have been arrested or charged with an offence at some time in their life
- less than half as likely to have someone with whom they could discuss their problems
- one and a half times more likely to have had contact with Mental Health Services in WA prior to the survey,

The children of Aboriginal carers in Western Australia who had been forcibly separated from their natural family by a mission, the government or welfare;

- were 2.3 times more likely to be at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties after adjusting for age, sex, level of relative isolation and whether the primary carer is the birth mother of the child.
- were more likely to be at high risk of clinically significant emotional symptoms, conduct problems and hyperactivity.
- had significantly higher rates of overall emotional or behavioural problems in the 6 months prior to the survey
- had levels of both alcohol and other drug use that were approximately twice as high as children whose Aboriginal primary carer had not been forcibly separated from their natural family.

Individual's experiences of racism are also often manifested in responses of feeling ashamed/humiliated, anxious/fearful or powerless/hopeless/depressed The "In Our Own Backyard" study notes that "*almost two-thirds of people in the study experienced racism often or very often in at least one formal or informal setting. Only 7% reported never or hardly ever experiencing racism*"

The impact of such low levels of wellbeing and mental health is reflected across all areas of disadvantage. Unless the mental wellbeing of the community is improved, decreases in the levels of disadvantage across other areas will be difficult to achieve.

The conventional bio-medical approach to mental health may not be appropriate in working with Aboriginal people. This model of health services dissects the human being into component parts whereas the Aboriginal cultural view stresses the whole human being (including the physical, spiritual, mental, cultural, emotional and social dimensions).

One model that has been suggested as promoting a holistic approach is through Healing Centres which provide residential and other services for individuals (plus their family) and take a preventive and early intervention approach with referrals to other services as required. The staff would come from different traditions and disciplines, including Ngangkari and Aboriginal health workers. The teams would work together to heal spirit and body by working to understand the way in which history had 'got under people's skin' and resulted in a range of physical and mental health problems. They would also work with people in the context of their families and communities, ("*In Our Own Backyard.....*" Gallaher, Ziersch et.al)

Narrative approaches to mental health which incorporate the use of stories and history linked with the strengths, skills and knowledge of families appears to be effective (see <http://.dulwichcentre.com.au/>) and Nunkuwarrin Yunti has developed and delivered the accredited Diploma in Narrative Approaches for Aboriginal People for several years.

## **Council Role**

- Whilst the provision of direct health services is not a function of local government, Council can have a key role in highlighting the issues and needs for the region and lobbying for appropriate services.
- Council can also act as a facilitator in bringing together appropriate services to provide services.
- Council grants can be targeted to projects that address areas of wellbeing for Aboriginal people.
- Libraries, community centres and Council publications can provide information to community members relating to available services.

## **4.4 FAMILY VIOLENCE**

A recent study undertaken by Flinders University in conjunction with CNAHS ("*CNAHS Family & Community Healing Project Evaluation Report 31 Mar 2008*" Inge Kowanko & Charmaine Power) notes that in some areas Aboriginal women are 45 times more likely to experience violence and ten times more likely to die as a result.

*"High rates of Family Violence help to effectively disable many communities and deny future generations a basic chance for health, happiness and prosperity".*

Consultations for this paper confirmed that family violence was one of the major concerns for women. Furthermore service providers within the health and domestic violence areas noted that the reporting levels for Aboriginal women were very low however they were aware anecdotally of high levels of victimisation.

The Flinders University study notes that Aboriginal concepts of family violence are much broader than mainstream definitions of domestic violence and the term Family Violence better reflects Aboriginal experiences -

*Family Violence involves the use of force, be it physical or non-physical, which is aimed at controlling another family or community member and which undermines that person's well-being. It can be directed towards an individual, family, community or particular group. Family violence is not limited to physical forms of abuse and also includes cultural and spiritual abuse. There are interconnecting and trans-generational experiences of violence within Indigenous families and communities".*

## **Council Role**

Council can support the alleviation of Family Violence in a number of ways:

- The Reconnect Program works with young people aged 12-25 years where there is a risk that the young person may be at risk of homelessness. Through this program a range of special programs are established and there is potential for specific programs to be developed to address violence within Aboriginal families.

- Projects such as the Elders Group operating out of Kurruru target Aboriginal women who may otherwise be more isolated within the community. This group empowers women to talk about issues such as family violence and to come up with their own solutions. The group was initially supported through a Council Community Development grant and there may be potential such support to be provided for future specific projects.
- Housing SA are working with Council and other agencies to investigate the possibility of establishing a Young Mums Group on the Le Fevre Peninsula which could provide a linkage with a range of services and younger Aboriginal mothers in the Le Fevre area.
- Support for projects such as the Mud Hut facilitated by MAYFS at the Parks which provides a range of supports for women coming from the APY Lands including opportunities to challenge the need for women to accept violence within their households. Likewise Dale Street Women's Health work closely with urban Aboriginal women through Nunga Mi: Minars Women's Shelter

#### **4.5 MEN'S HEALTH/WELLBEING**

Aboriginal men are less likely than non-Aboriginal men to seek medical interventions or advice relating to health problems.

Groups such as the Zebra Finch Men's Group which has recently relocated to Kura Yerlo having previously operated out of the Gilles Plains Nunga Health Services provide an opportunity for men to meet together, to discuss issues that they may not be able to talk about in other environments and to learn new skills. Attendance at the group is reported as being significant in reducing social isolation, developing identity and confidence, learning new skills, building cultural awareness and connecting to the younger generations to pass on stories, skills and knowledge. Talking circles, led by an external facilitator have become a regular part of the men's group and have proved beneficial in men's healing journeys. In discussions with the group all participants stated that their overall well-being had benefited from their participation. A similar project, the Pulgi Woodwork program, facilitated by Anglicare operates out of the Parks Community Centre Woodwork workshop.

The Mari Yerta Men's and Young Men's Corporation based out of Holden Hill is a good model with its focus on the provision of, in particular, activities for young males which encourage cultural pride. This is one of few services that are provided for Aboriginal people in the more eastern area of Council and therefore fulfils a high need. Other projects that have proven highly successful in addressing men's health issues include the Bush Mechanics project established through the Aboriginal Health Team and the Man Alive event held annually at Semaphore. Such initiatives provide avenues to connect with males within the community in a non-threatening environment and would ideally operate across the Council region. Such programs are however at threat of closure due to the change on focus through government health programs towards direct clinical care provision.

## **Council Role**

Council has provided support for each of the above programs in the past through the provision of grants through the Council Grants Programs, promotion of various events through display of posters in libraries, community centres and articles in Pen2Paper, and recognition of the programs through the Council Aboriginal Awards program.

### **4.6 AGED CARE SERVICES**

It has been noted elsewhere within this paper (Sec 2.3.2) that aged care facilities for Aboriginal people are required within the Council area.

Much of the current focus of aged care is on the provision of home and community care programs to support older and disabled people to remain in their own homes and communities. Funding for this type of support is provided through the Federal Government Home & Community Care program (HACC).

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield receives funding to provide HACC services. Supports available through HACC include minor home maintenance, home support and social support.

Council also received funding for an Aboriginal Support Officer to provide Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA). In 2004 funding restrictions and queries relating to the appropriateness of Council acting as a service provider for this program led to the funding being transferred to Uniting Care Wesley Port Adelaide to be incorporated within their Wellbeing Programs.

Whilst for the wider community eligibility for HACC services is generally restricted to persons over the age of 65. Aboriginal people can access the service from age 45. Data for the program suggests however that the number of Aboriginal people who access the program is extremely low particularly in the social support program. This may reflect that community members are either unaware of the program or that the program is not perceived as being culturally appropriate.

The Council HACC social support program is currently being reviewed and this review should include an examination into the reasons for low utilisation by the Aboriginal community.

## **Council Role**

In addition to the strategies outlined within the Environmental Health Management Plan there are a number of ways in which Council can support initiatives to improve the health status of our Aboriginal community including:

- As an information provider - through ensuring that information is available through a range of areas including articles in P2P, at libraries and Community Centres and on the Council websites on health related issues.
- Through the implementation of a range of specific initiatives - for example Council have recently applied for funding to undertake three specific projects which have the potential to impact on the health of our Aboriginal community -
  - A project aimed at improving Aboriginal access to immunisation by peer mentoring particularly targeting those who may not have received their tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough vaccinations
  - The Healthy Homes project which, through starting with putting strategies in place to manage waste disposal in Aboriginal Housing properties, will link Environmental Health Officer with the families to provide more focussed interventions including pest eradication, immunisation, household hygiene etc.
  - The OPAL project which looks at reducing obesity through encouraging and supporting residents to participate in active recreation
- As a funding provider through targeting Council grants to projects that support Aboriginal health
- Encourage healthy eating by provision of nutritious foods at meetings and events attended by Aboriginal people
- Incorporate an examination into the low utilisation of HACC services by Aboriginal people within the current HACC review and investigate opportunities for the services to meet the needs of this population.
- As a facilitator Council has an opportunity to bring together and develop partnerships with other service providers to meet specific needs, e.g. in the area of provision of services for families of prisoners Council could facilitate an investigation into a joint response between agencies such as APOSS, Families SA, CNAHS and the Education Department.
- Through the presentation of needs and barriers to access to services to various funding sources, Council can advocate and lobby for accessible and culturally appropriate services for our community.
- Promotion of drug and alcohol free environments for community events within the Council region.
- Continued participation in health days such as those hosted by Tauondi College and support for such days to be held in other areas of Council.

**Objective 5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield will have access to a range of housing options that meet their needs with relation to affordability, size, safety and access to services.**

**5. HOUSING**

In the foreword for the 2008 White Paper “The Road Home: A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness” Prime Minister Kevin Rudd opens with the statement

*“In a country as prosperous as Australia, no one should be homeless”*

Homelessness does not refer purely to those who are sleeping rough. It includes those who are staying in temporary, unstable or substandard accommodation.

The 2008 White Paper notes that local governments are becoming increasingly involved in providing services to people who are homeless particularly partnering directly with state and territory governments and business to deliver affordable housing opportunities and homelessness prevention services. and that it is clear that local government will play an increasing role in responding to homelessness.

Aboriginal people are more likely to access accommodation in the public rental sector, while non-Aboriginal people are more likely to own or be purchasing their own homes. This reflects their greater economic disadvantage and also highlights the presence of racial discrimination in sectors of the private rental market.

*(“Understanding Educational Opportunities and Outcomes: A Social Atlas, Glover, Hetzel et.al. Jan. 2010)*

In the Port Adelaide Enfield area, 68% of Aboriginal households lived in rented accommodation (ABS 2006). Another 19% lived in dwellings which were being purchased and 7% in ones that were fully owned. Figure 10 depicts the tenure of dwellings for Aboriginal households in comparison with non-Aboriginal households in the Council area Aboriginal households in Adelaide and Aboriginal households in the Council in 2001,

**Figure 10 Tenure of dwellings** (Source. ABS Census 2006 and 2001)

#Tenure of dwellings	Indig. h'holds, Pt Adel	non-Indig. in Pt Adel	Indig h'holds in Adel	Indig. in Pt Adel, 2001	
	% all dwgs	dwellings	% dwellings	% dwellings	Indig. diff
Fully owned	7%	66	7%	31%	23% less
Being purchased	19%	176	19%	31%	11% less
Rented	68%	616	68%	34%	34% more
Unknown	5%	47	5%	5%	1% more
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>SD= 25%</b>
rented, real estate agent	12%	113	12%	9%	4% more
rented, public housing	43%	386	43%	13%	29% more



As part of the 2009 Federal Government Budget, \$6.4 billion was allocated to improve Australia's social housing stock as part of the Economic Stimulus Plan. It was proposed that Aboriginal people living in urban and regional areas would benefit from this injection of funds.

Throughout community consultations there was a common theme relating to the availability and affordability of housing. Issues such as overcrowding and concerns amongst the Elders about how the younger generations will be able to access housing were outlined.

The "In Our Own Backyard" Paper (op.cit) notes that discussion around the impact of the gentrification of areas of the city that had traditionally been home to higher than average numbers of Aboriginal people, e.g. Port Adelaide and the Parks area, resulted in Aboriginal people being displaced with resulting negative impacts on their sense of place and social connections.

Other points highlighted include:

- The lack of suitable housing available for Aboriginal people with disabilities, together with access to culturally appropriate supports to enable those people to remain in independent housing
- Racism experiences in accessing rental, particularly private rental, properties

## **5.1 RENTAL STRESS**

A household is likely to be in housing stress when they pay over 30% of their income in housing costs. Households with low incomes paying rent feel this stress more acutely than higher income households. In Port Adelaide Enfield 25% of Aboriginal rental households and 13% of all Aboriginal households were in this category as at the 2006 Census,

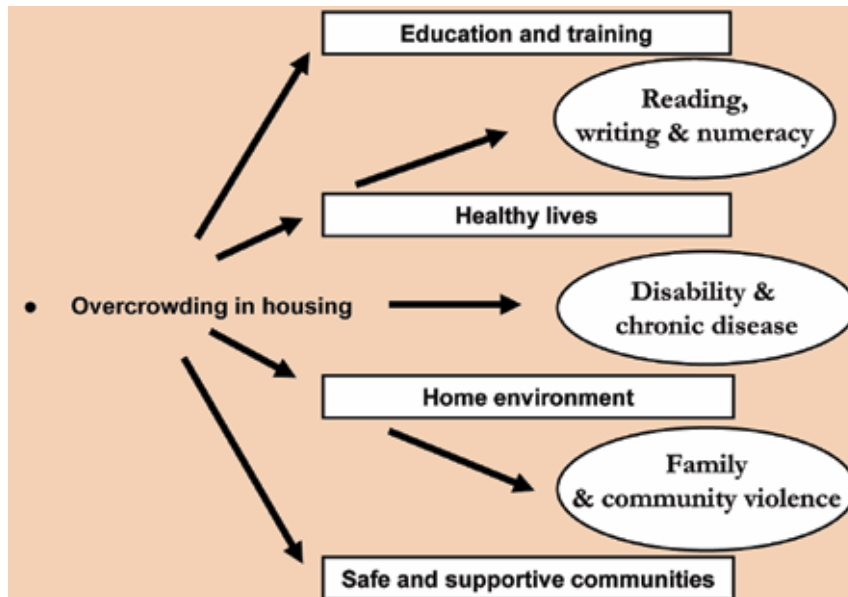
The impact of the global financial crisis is likely to see a rise in the number of households in general experiencing rental and mortgage stress through loss of employment, with a potential movement of those in privately owned accommodation having to move into rental accommodation. This places further pressure on low cost rental accommodation. Likewise, through the recovery phase interest rates will once again rise placing further stress on those who may be struggling to meet mortgage repayments.

## **5.2 HOUSEHOLD OVERCROWDING**

Housing overcrowding is calculated by comparing the number of bedrooms with the number, sex and age of people in a dwelling. However, particularly in larger households, the number of and condition of bathrooms and toilets, and the size of kitchens, bedrooms and other living spaces, may be as important as the number of bedrooms.

If a house is not appropriate for the number of residents, or has inadequate facilities, it may be more difficult to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Cramped living conditions can increase domestic tensions and contribute to domestic violence. Overcrowding also affects the ability of children to do homework or study, and even to gain sufficient sleep and relaxation.

**Figure 11 Overcrowding in housing.**



Source. "Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage 2009"

Several families within the area have significant numbers within the household as a result of the families providing foster care or respite care for other family members. The cost of large 4-5 bedroom homes suitable to accommodate larger families is prohibitive either as rental or purchase and the 'low cost' housing options are usually not of sufficient size for larger families.

There are a number of properties within the Council region, either SA Housing or private rental, where the tenancy is put at risk because of high numbers of people staying at the house on a short to medium term. This is due to families having other family members or friends coming down, often from the APY Lands, to stay to undergo medical treatments (which anecdotally is becoming more of an issue with the restricted access to dialysis treatments at Alice Springs), to visit other family who may be undergoing such treatments, for Sorry business or just to get down to the city.

Traditional Aboriginal people cannot refuse to provide accommodation for other family or their friends but it does place enormous strains on households.

This may result in up to 30 people staying in a 3 bedroom house which, in addition to the factors highlighted above, create a range of problems:

- Financial stresses: Visitors will run up significant debt through use of utilities etc but not make financial contribution which then puts the tenant under considerable financial stress. The visitors may have financial obligations at home and be unable to contribute. Under the Northern Territory Intervention, visitors may be unable to access their finances.
- Waste management issues: One of the key issues that Anangu people raised at a forum discussing household overcrowding was rubbish/waste management. SA Housing also note that tenancies may be at risk due to high levels of waste which cause complaints from neighbours and also a health risk encouraging rodents etc. A recent pilot project targeting this issues in which Council provided additional bins with advice on use in Anangu language, combined with the provision of a skip to support an initial clean up of the property, rodent/pest removal and then the intervention of Environmental Health Officers to work with families on issues such as headlice and scabies, household hygiene, food preparation etc, proved to be successful. Funding for the continuation of such a project is being sought.
- Inappropriate Behaviours: Some such tenancies are placed at risk due to high levels of alcohol consumption by people visiting. This may result in complaints from neighbours relating to noise etc. **It must be noted that excessive drinking and resultant inappropriate behaviour is in no way an issue purely for Aboriginal people – it is a common experience across most of our society.** However it does, when it occurs within the Aboriginal population, tend to reinforce the negative stereotype that sadly is held by some of the wider community.

### **Council Role**

- To work with developers and State and Federal governments to ensure that housing of appropriate size and affordability is available for those more disadvantaged within the community
- To support initiatives that will address the impact of rental stress through measures such as financial counselling, budget management
- Continue to highlight the wider impacts of household overcrowding
- Liaise with other agencies, i.e. Housing SA, to identify properties that experience problems with waste management and develop joint projects to address these issues
- Seek funding to continue projects such as the pilot project around waste management and for the employment of Aboriginal Environmental Health Officers
- Work with other agencies, i.e. SA Police and Housing SA, Families SA, Disability Services, to address inappropriate behaviours that may place tenancies at risk.

**Objective 6. Participation in education, training and employment that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander the opportunity to benefit from economic growth and personal well-being.**

## **6. EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The importance of education can not be understated. Research among Indigenous people in Canada for example has established that for every extra year of education we provide to a whole community of young women we add up to four years to the life expectancy of their first child and reduce the chance of them losing their first baby by 7-10%.

In the Foreword to “Understanding Educational Opportunities and Outcomes 2010”, Elaine Henry, the CEO of the Smith Family notes that:

*“As a nation, our social and economic prosperity depends upon our children being able to access a world class education - not just to prepare them for future jobs, but to ensure they are able to participate effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge era.*

*Over the past decade, the South Australian Government, the Australian Federal Government, businesses and the community as a whole have embraced education and understand its importance for individuals, particularly in the critical developmental years of early childhood. However, it is clear that the quality and quantity of educational opportunities remain very different for children around Australia, with those living in disadvantaged communities having access to far fewer resources or support for their learning. Without appropriate interventions, these children are likely to grow up facing the same barriers to their participation that their parents faced in the past, and that their own children will face in the future.”*

Education is an area where a "deficit" model can potentially be most damaging. Chris Sarra, in an article in The Australian (June 12, 2009) highlights the impact of "watered-down" beliefs and expectations about who he was as an Aboriginal student and questions how many other Aboriginal students were located in, and unwittingly colluding with, watered-down perceptions of themselves and what they could be. Strategies that encourage and support particularly our younger population to embrace and strive to achieve their highest potential in education and employment will enable the whole of the community to participate and thereby benefit from economic growth in the region.

The COAG Framework notes that employment contributes to individual living standards, self-esteem and overall well-being. It is also important to the family. Children who have a parent who is employed are more likely to attend school and stay on past the compulsory school age. They are more likely to enter into post secondary education and gain employment. Where people are employed, benefits also flow on to the wider community.

Council, as one of the peak employers within the region with approximately 480 staff, has a key role to play in employment, education and training. Currently Council has 16 apprentices/trainees and over the past two years has taken on nine Aboriginal School-based New Apprentices. In addition to the paid staff, Council has approximately 250 volunteers who play an integral part in the provision of services to our community. Council does not have a specific target for employment of Aboriginal people or specific designated Aboriginal positions, however the number of Aboriginal people on staff would equate with the proportion of Aboriginal people within the community. This is in line with the South Australian Government target of 2%.

Council also has strong representation on Advisory Committees for bodies such as the SA Works Western Region Advisory Committee and the ICAN Advisory Group through which it lobbies for programs to be established in the Council area that will support employment, education and training opportunities for local residents. The representative on the SA Works Committee is the Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity Officer which ensures that projects targeting Aboriginal residents are given a strong profile.

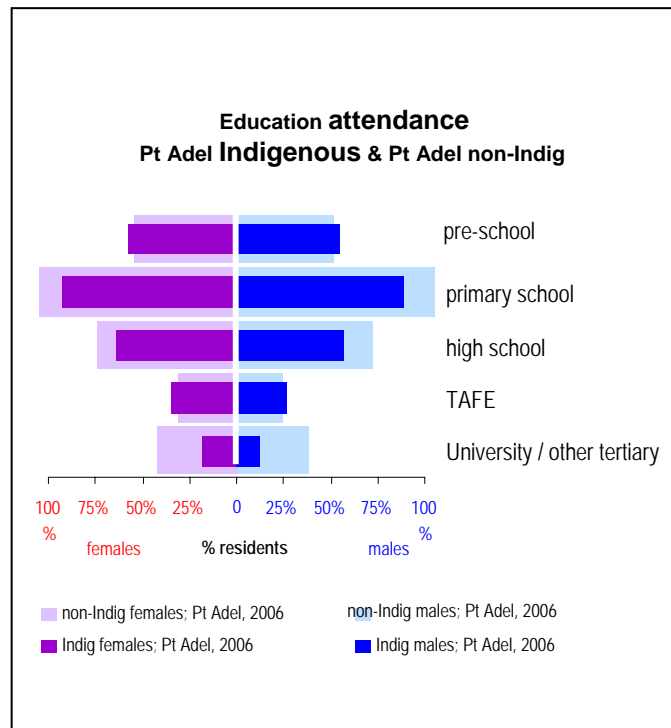
## **6.1 WHERE WE ARE AT – DEMOGRAPHICS**

### **6.1.1 Education/Training**

Education participation is an important component of community development, and is indicated by comparing the number of students with the number of residents of student age.

Figure 12 outlines educational attendance for the Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal population as at the 2006 Census compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

**Figure 12. Education Attendance**



Source.

The early childhood period is crucially important in developmental terms, representing untapped learning potential which, if nourished and nurtured can transform an individual child’s outcomes. Children’s experiences in their early years influence lifelong learning, behaviour and health. The OID Report notes that “high quality early childhood education can help develop the social and cognitive skills necessary for achievement at school and later in life. Early childhood education can be particularly important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and can provide an opportunity for early detection and treatment of hearing, language, visual and behavioural problems “

Within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield pre-school education there were 62 students in 2006, equal to 56% of the 3-4 year olds. This rate was 3% larger than the Aboriginal community in Adelaide; 3% higher than among non-Aboriginal residents (it does need to be noted that Aboriginal children are eligible to start kindergarten at 3 years, 1 year earlier than non-Aboriginal children) and 20% more than in 2001. Council is fortunate in having quality Aboriginal pre-school facilities such as the Kalaya Children's Centre and Kura Yerlo which both provide early childhood learning and care within a culturally appropriate setting. Both of these centres are located in the western region of Council and similar centres are required across the region.

In looking at higher levels of education however, Port Adelaide Enfield had 339 Aboriginal primary students resident in 2006, equal to 91% of the 5-11 year-old population. This rate was 15% lower than that among non-Aboriginal residents. It was 7% less than it was in 2001.

Likewise the ABS data shows that there were 205 Aboriginal secondary students living here in 2006, equal to 61% of the 12-17 year old population. This rate was 12% lower than among non-Aboriginal residents whilst the level of school retention amongst Aboriginal students has improved over recent years, there remains a significant difference in the level when compared with non-Aboriginal students.

Another 96 local Aboriginal people attended TAFE and 47 attended university or other post-school colleges. These students could be any age over 15 but their numbers equated to 31% of those aged 18-24 being at TAFE and 15% being at university or other tertiary training. The combined tertiary rate was equal to 46% of those aged 18-24 which was 22% less than that for non-Aboriginal residents, 1% less than the average for the Aboriginal community of Adelaide and 26% lower than in 2001.

In all, 45% of Port Adelaide Enfield's Aboriginal adults had some form of post-school qualification while 44% of non-Aboriginal adults had one. The Aboriginal rate here was 4% higher than in the Aboriginal community in Adelaide but 7% more than it was here in 2001. It is interesting however to note that of the 45% Aboriginal residents in the Council area, 24% claiming to have the higher level qualification had "unstated qualifications".

**Figure 13.**

#Current education	Indig. residents of Port Adelaide Enfield			non-Indig. in Pt Adel		Indigenous in Adel		Indig. in Pt Adel, 2001	
	people	gender ratio	% age group	% age group	Indig. diff	% age group	local diff	% age group	change 01-06
pre-school	62	1.1 F:M	56%	53%	3% more	54%	3% more	36%	20% more
primary school	339	1.0 M:F	91%	105%	15% less	99%	9% less	98%	7% less
High school	205	1.4 F:M	61%	73%	12% less	62%	1% less	57%	4% more
TAFE	96	1.3 F:M	31%	28%	3% more	26%	5% more	58%	27% less
University / other tertiary	47	1.5 F:M	15%	40%	25% less	21%	6% less	16%	1% less
<b>Total</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1.2 F:M</b>						<b>804</b>	
The comparison age groups are: pre-school = 3-4 yrs; primary = 5-11 yrs; high = 12-17 yrs; TAFE/ Uni = 18-24 yrs;. Source: Census 2006 Table I010; 2001 Table I04.									
Public / private choices	people	gender ratio	% students	% students	Indig. diff	% students	local diff	% students	change 01-06
public primary	293	1.1 M:F	86%	58%	28% more	86%	1% more	86%	0% more
Catholic primary	36	1.6 F:M	11%	32%	22% less	8%	2% more	10%	1% more
private primary	10	1.5 F:M	3%	10%	7% less	6%	3% less	4%	1% less
public high school	174	1.4 F:M	85%	57%	28% more	81%	4% more	87%	2% less
Catholic high school	25	1.5 F:M	12%	33%	20% less	12%	1% more	9%	3% more
private high school	6	=	3%	10%	7% less	8%	5% less	4%	1% less

Source: ABS: Census 2006 Table I010, 2001 Table I04.



**Figure 14**

#Tertiary qualifications residents over 15	Indig. residents of Port Adelaide Enfield			Indig. in Pt Adel, 2001		Indigenous in Adel		Indig. in Pt Adel, 2001	
	no. with qual	gender ratio	% age group	% age group	Indig. diff	% age group	local diff	% age group	Change 01-06
Postgraduate	10	2.3 F:M	1%	2%	1% less	1%	0% less	0	1% more
graduate diploma	3	M	0%	1%	1% less	1%	0% less	1%	1% less
bachelor degree	51	2.9 F:M	3%	9%	5% less	4%	0% less	3%	1% more
Diploma	46	1.2 M:F	3%	6%	3% less	4%	1% less	4%	1% less
Certificate	186	1.1 F:M	13%	17%	4% less	15%	3% less	12%	1% more
unstated qualification	359	1.1 F:M	24%	10%	15% more	16%	8% more	19%	6% more
<b>total aged over 15 with qualifications</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>1.1 F:M</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>0% more</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>4% more</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>7% more</b>

## **Council Role**

### Education

- Potential to offer scholarship for Aboriginal student
- Liaise with tertiary education providers to provide opportunities for Aboriginal students to enter higher education e.g. through provision of information sessions on studying at higher levels, allocated placements for students from Council area who are significantly disadvantaged etc
- Support for and partnerships with Tauondi College
- Support for ICAN
- Support through Youth Development projects
- Homework support through community centres/libraries
- Computer access through libraries/community centres
- Projects that will support literacy/numeracy

### Employment

- Employment within Council
  - Mentoring/support
  - School-based new apprentices
  - Trainee to work with ACDO
  - Traineeships and employment opportunities in all other areas e.g. Environmental Health Services, Customer Services
  - Work experience placements
  - Increase participation for Aboriginal people in Council's volunteer program
- Advocate for employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in development projects
- Linkage of vocational educational projects into developments, e.g. Lartelare project

**Objective 7    A community that is recognised as being safe, welcoming and inclusive for all.**

**7.            SAFETY AND CRIME**

Any discussion relating to safety and crime amongst the Aboriginal population is highly sensitive, particularly due to the highly negative portrayal within the media. There is however a need to acknowledge the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and the impact this has on the Aboriginal families/community and the broader community.

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) reported in 1991. At that time, Aboriginal people made up 14% of the total prison population and were up to 15 times more likely to be in prison than non-Aboriginal people. The Commission made a large number of recommendations to address this issue but despite this the number of Aboriginal prisoners increased over the decade to June 2005. At that time Aboriginal people represented 22% of the total prisoner population.

Australian Institute of Criminology data indicate that the number of offences per individual in South Australia was significantly different for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in 2004.

- In 2004 there were six times more Aboriginal offenders than non-Aboriginal offenders as a proportion of the total population.
- Aboriginal people are more likely to be apprehended for multiple offences than non-Aboriginal people. Apprehensions across age groups for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons were similar for the adult population, however there were significantly more Aboriginal people aged 10-17 apprehended by Police in 2004 and a higher proportion of non-Aboriginal people aged 45 years and over
- The imprisonment rate of Aboriginal people in 2004 was twelve times higher than that of non-Aboriginal people. According to the SA Dept of Correctional Services there were 250 Aboriginal people in custody in 2004, representing 18.0% of all prisoners. This upward trend is continuing with 22.10% of all prisoners as at June 2009 being Aboriginal.

There are complex reasons for these high rates of contact with the criminal justice system, reflecting policing and judicial practices as well as the history and life experiences of Aboriginal people. Factors that increase the likelihood of offending behaviour include low income, high unemployment, low educational achievement and other social issues.

The impact of this over-representation of Aboriginal people in the judicial system has a further negative impact on the wider community. One young man who participated in recent consultations relating to inter-racial violence stated

*“I am tired of hearing about my people being involved in bad stuff. Don’t they see that when they do that they make my life harder too. Other people hear all this shit and think that because I am Aboriginal and young I must be involved”*

## **7.1 VICTIMS OF CRIME**

There is minimal data available on the extent to which Aboriginal people are victims of crime, primarily because Aboriginal status is not recorded in crime reports. This is an area which is often neglected when discussions are held relating to crime. The State Government “Indigenous Profile” notes that the absence of such an indicator is a critical issue that needs to be addressed in the future.

Figure 15 outlines Australian Institute of Criminology 2004 data on the age and gender profile of Aboriginal victims of physical or threatened violence in 2004 which highlights high level of representation of young people (15-24 year old) and women in the 35-44 year groups.

The relatively high representation levels of young people as victims of crime are similar to that for non-Aboriginal youth.

A study conducted in NSW in 2001 reported that in comparison with non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal people were:

- 5.5 times more likely to be a victim of domestic violence assault
- 3.4 times (rising to 5.2 times for Aboriginal females) more likely to be a victim of assault
- 2.8 times more likely to be a victim of sexual assault
- 2.5 times more likely to be a victim of murder
- 1.4 times more likely to be a victim of sexual assault against a child aged 0-15 years.

(Source “A Statistical overview of ATSI peoples in Australia” Australian Human Rights Commission Aug 2006)

Aboriginal people were less likely to report as a victim of robbery. The study reported that victimisation in violent crimes is predominantly the result of offending by other Aboriginal people. This identifies a challenge to find solutions for Aboriginal people being victims of crime within the context of addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system processes.

## **7.2 ISSUES OF CONCERN HIGHLIGHTED WITHIN PORT ADELAIDE ENFIELD AREA**

### **7.2.1 Alcohol Consumption in Public Space**

The *"In our own backyard: Urban health inequities and Aboriginal experiences of neighbourhood life, social capital and racism"* 2009 study notes that 45% of the Aboriginal people surveyed said they did not drink at all compared to 22% of the general SA urban population, i.e. compared to the general population twice as many people in the study did not drink at all.

The negative perceptions of some of the wider community of Aboriginal people are however potentially influenced by an extremely low number but visible group of Aboriginal people who congregate in open space areas within the Council area.

With the exception of declared Dry Zones which, in the Port Adelaide Enfield area comprise of the Port Mall Shopping Centre, Port Canal/Joyce Snadden Reserves, portions of the Semaphore foreshore between Hall Street and Derby Street, the carpark north of the Palais and the Timeball Tower, there is no restriction on any adult consuming alcohol in public spaces. The issue arises however when those affected by excessive alcohol consumption, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, harass other members of the public utilising that open space.

There are two specific areas of concern that arise:

- The safety of those Aboriginal people involved
- The need to address the concerns of other residents and visitors resulting from the behaviour of this group.

The complaints received by Council relate primarily to people being harassed and the amount of refuse left by this group. The group is often enlarged by other family members/friends, often from the APY Lands, who visit the area and with the ready access to alcohol compared to on the Lands take advantage, also staying nearby with other family members creating overcrowding as outlined previously in this paper.

The State Government is working with a range of Departments and agencies, including Local Government, to develop strategies to address these issues including projects such as "Safe Tracks" and "Return to Country". Much of the emphasis by State Government tends to be focussed on the /CBD area and it is important that similar issues within the Council region be included in any interventions.

## **Council Role**

This issue is primarily one for SA Police and SA Housing however Council does have a role:

- As an information provider to liaise with SA Police to provide information to assist their actions
- To work with SA Police, SA Housing and other key organisations/Departments to identify and implement strategies to address the needs of the drinkers together with the wider community
- Encourage members of the public who have concerns relating to inappropriate behaviours or concerns relating to safety issues for the drinkers, to report such incidents to Police for action.

### **7.2.2 Behavioural issues relating to young people at libraries and other Council facilities:**

Over the past five years there have been a number of instances identified by Council staff at libraries and other Council facilities such as the swimming pools at the Parks Community Centre relating to inappropriate and sometimes violent behaviour involving young Aboriginal children and youth.

These incidents have included groups of children and youth threatening staff, not responding to instructions or conforming to the general rules of library use, damaging property and fighting with other young people in the area.

The major concerns relating to this involve the age of those Aboriginal people involved which range from 5-15 years, the effects on other patrons and issues relating to Occupational Health & Safety for staff.

The incidents tend to occur outside of normal business hours when other programs/services are closed, and during school holiday periods. A range of strategies have been implemented which include:

- Linking staff at the various sites with other supports and agencies
- Employment of specific Aboriginal workers to develop programs for the young people involved
- Liaison with local SA Police and other agencies to identify families and carers to notify them of the problems and work with them around ways that they can be addressed.
- Cultural awareness training/support for staff at the sites

## **Council Role**

- Continue to implement strategies such as those outlined above
- Council youth and child workers to work with staff at the sites to develop appropriate responses and to work with other key agencies including MAYFS and Attorney General Dept, to develop early intervention strategies to work with particularly the young children

### **7.3 OPERATION MANDRAKE/TO BREAK THE CYCLE**

Operation Mandrake was established as a typical problem-solving approach to policing in which a pattern of particular crimes is identified, people who have previously been involved in this type of offending are identified, and surveillance of those 'persons of interest' helps to identify the more likely suspects who then become 'targets' of the operation.

The focus of Operation Mandrake involves vehicle offences, in particular;

- Vehicle assisted serious criminal trespass
- Illegal use of motor vehicle
- High risk driving offences

As a result of the operation Police noticed that these kinds of offences tended to reduce significantly when some of the individuals were in custody or detained and increase again when they were released.

It was evident that the number of people identified was very small and not all were under 18 years of age. More than half are over 18, though the majority would seem to be under the age of about 22. Not all of the young people that Operation Mandrake focussed on are serious repeat offenders. Many, but not all, of these young people are Aboriginal.

Some of the young people identified either live in the Port Adelaide Enfield or neighbouring Council areas, or have family who live in the area and the offences committed occur within our region.

Monsignor David Cappo, the head of the Social Inclusion Unit, was requested by the Premier to undertake community consultations and make recommendations to address this issue. The result of this was the "To Break the Cycle" report. Community consultations undertaken included a forum held at Tauondi College.

The full report is available at [www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/files/breakthecycle2007.pdf](http://www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/files/breakthecycle2007.pdf) and contains 46 recommendations based on a framework of initially preventing young people becoming involved in offending in the first place or, where they have offended, to provide the care, correction and guidance to prevent further offending and support the young person's development.

A number of the recommendations of the report incorporate a role for Local Government and/or because of the recognition for a holistic approach, include measures noted under various other sections of this paper.

### **Council Role**

- Support the implementation of recommendations contained within the “To Break the Cycle Report”.

## **7.4 INTER-RACIAL VIOLENCE**

The City of Port Adelaide Enfield has a long history as a settlement area for refugee populations typified in the post-WWII era with the arrival of refugees from Europe, through the 1980-90’s with refugees from South East Asia and more recently with significant numbers of new arrivals from the African and Middle Eastern regions.

As noted previously within this paper, many of the areas with a high level of Aboriginal population within the Council area are also areas where new arrival/refugee populations are settled. They also tend to be areas with low SEIFA scores, i.e. areas of significant socio-economic disadvantage.

Over recent years there have been a number of incidents where conflict has occurred between Aboriginal people and new arrivals. This has been particularly evident amongst Aboriginal and African youth where the level of the violence has been extreme.

As a response to this Council are undertaking a project with Stephen House, a respected script writer, director and actor to develop a live drama which will examine the causes of the violence. When completed, performances of the drama will be offered to schools and agencies within the region.

As part of developing this production consultations have been undertaken with young people from both the Aboriginal and African communities.

There are a number of factors that these young people have outlined that have led to an escalating level of violence including –

- A perception by members of the community that whilst Aboriginal people have faced high levels of disadvantage and have had to fight for entitlements for many years with minimal support, the newly arrived populations receive very high rates of funding, support and a high focus to assist them to settle within the community



- A breakdown of connection to traditional culture amongst both populations
- Exposure to levels of violence in other areas of their lives
- A lack of understanding of each other's culture.
- Relationships between young men and women from both populations particularly where Aboriginal females are attracted to African males
- The use of weapons within conflict situations. It is disturbing that young people from both cultures are using knives, baseball bats and other weapons in these situations.
- Inter-generational distrust of people from other backgrounds

If we are to have a community in which people from all backgrounds are able to live in harmony, respecting and valuing the variety of cultural backgrounds and contributions that all of our residents can make, a commitment to creating an environment of mutual respect and understanding needs to be supported. This will involve, amongst other initiatives, Elders from the various communities working co-operatively to address the problems.

### **Council Role**

- To support and facilitate initiatives that will address conflict between various cultural communities
- To facilitate opportunities for Elders from a variety of backgrounds to develop greater understandings and partnerships

**Objective 8 The City of Port Adelaide Enfield will lead in promoting and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' participation in sports and the arts.**

**8. SPORT AND THE ARTS**

The importance of sports and the arts cannot be underestimated, providing benefits in areas such as a means for cultural expression and learning, health and fitness and opportunities for social interaction as well as a means for addressing social problems within the community. As an example, Heather Agius, an Aboriginal Elder notes that providing positive activities centred around sport, art and learning about their culture is one method of addressing youth crime.

The areas of sport and the arts are two in which both the Aboriginal community and the City of Port Adelaide Enfield notably achieve highly.

In sports we have a number of Aboriginal sportspersons who achieve at the highest level in their chosen sports and these individuals and teams are often seen as role models for the rest of the community.

Sporting clubs, particularly the Australian Rules Football clubs of the Port Magpies and Port Power Clubs, with their bases located in Port Adelaide have a significant number of Aboriginal current and past players who are recognised throughout Australia as amongst the best. Likewise there are many Aboriginal netball, soccer, cricket, athletes, and tennis players etc who achieve at the highest levels both nationally and internationally.

Many of the top sportspeople are actively involved in the community through projects such as those implemented through the Port Adelaide Magpies and Port Power in working with Aboriginal youth both within the local area and in regional centres.

Council grants have supported a range of sporting activities including teams such as the Black Panthers Netball team, a team of Aboriginal young mothers who have formed a netball team which is performing extremely well within competitive netball and is now looking at establishing other teams for younger girls and also mixed teams.

Within the arts the City of Port Adelaide is the major contributor to Aboriginal public art with 23 Aboriginal public artworks in the Council area. The importance of such art is immeasurable as an expression of pride in culture, an educational tool, public acknowledgement and recognition of the role this area plays in Kurna culture, and as an attraction for bringing visitors to the region.

We are fortunate to have Kurruru Youth Performing Arts Inc, a nationally and internationally recognised and respected youth performing arts company located in Port Adelaide. One of the aims of Kurruru is to showcase and support the ongoing development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists through all aspects of performance and production and many of their young people have bright futures ahead within the arts sector.

Better World Arts, located at Port Adelaide, works with artists, particularly those from the APY Lands, to produce and sell their artwork as a commercial and international enterprise.

Tauondi College has courses available in arts and houses a gallery with exhibits of Aboriginal artwork. Tauondi provides accredited training in cultural tourism and has worked in partnership with Council on a range of Aboriginal community artwork projects.

The Parks Community Centre, through its gallery and art and craft spaces, provides opportunities for members of the community to participate in workshops and to exhibit their artwork. An exhibition of work by Delwyn Mannix, a local Aboriginal artist, held during Nunga Week in 2009, resulted in the highest number of sales from such exhibitions.

The arts provide opportunities for older Aboriginal community members and those with disabilities to participate. The Karrarendi Program operating out of Kura Yerlo for example provides Aboriginal people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a range of arts, crafts and performance. Elsewhere in this paper mention has been made of men's groups such as the Zebra Finch and Pulgi who utilise woodcarving as a means of socialisation and cultural practice.

Council holds a number of events and festivals each year which highlight Aboriginal art. An example is the Port Festival which features many Aboriginal performances and exhibitions.

### **Council Role**

- Council has an Arts and Cultural Plan and a Sports and Recreation Plan which incorporate strategies for our Aboriginal community. These plans are both available through Council's website [www.portenf.sa.gov.au](http://www.portenf.sa.gov.au)

In addition to the above there are some areas where Council can provide specific assistance in these areas.

## 8.1 SPORTS

One of the major barriers for participation in sports is the cost involved. Heather Agius notes:

*“One of the big issues is the lack of money to do things for these kids. I have not got the money to help get these kids to sport, families don’t have the money to keep the kids in sport” (The Advertiser, 10/04/2010)*

Council recognises that costs can be an impediment to involvement in recreation and sport. Accordingly it provides one of the lowest charge rates for facilities in South Australia. Council provides a Junior Sports Grants program that provides up to \$500 per year for clubs to access uniforms and equipment

There remains however the costs for parents/family members to support transport, membership fees, uniforms and equipment that are not provided by the Club etc and these costs can be significant, particularly if there is more than one young person within the family.

Sporting Clubs face challenges in maintaining junior sports programs. In order for these programs to operate clubs rely on volunteer support from parents and other community members however legal requirements around mandatory notification and police clearances, together with time constraints have led to lower numbers of parents providing this type of support.

Many sporting activities for younger people were previously provided through school teams and competitions however these are no longer provided. The local sporting clubs now provide most opportunities for people to play competitive sport.

The closure of State government schools and loss of open space poses a significant challenge for Council to provide sufficient grounds for organised and social sporting opportunities and recreational activities.

### **Council Role**

- To work with other agencies and government to investigate opportunities to support young Aboriginal people to participate in sporting opportunities
- To support sporting clubs to provide on-going junior sporting programs
- To continue to investigate opportunities to access open space for sporting activities
- To work with major sporting groups to identify joint projects targeting young Aboriginal people at risk
- To examine ways that non-competitive sports can be supported to provide opportunities for Aboriginal people.

## 8.2 THE ARTS

The arts provide an excellent medium for the provision of a variety of programs focussing on showcasing our Aboriginal population.

As noted previously in this paper, Aboriginal culture is an oral and visual culture in which culture is handed down through stories, dance and art. The celebration of this culture by the wider community will enable greater levels of pride within the Aboriginal community.

The arts represent a great opportunity for both the community and Council in the region to participate in cultural tourism opportunities. As the major port within the State and with an increasing number of cruise liners coming into port, Port Adelaide in particular has the potential to further develop as a focal point for cultural tourism ventures.

Integral to this would be the development of a Cultural Centre as discussed previously in Section 1.1.5 of this paper, which would provide opportunities for the exhibition of Aboriginal artwork and the holding of workshops after tours which would raise awareness of cultural connections between Port Adelaide and Aboriginal people.

Such workshops could include practices such as the harvest and utilisation of the reeds grown in public areas such as Lartelare to be used in weaving workshops. Parks such as Lartelare and walking trails can be promoted as opportunities for visitors from the local area, interstate and overseas to be given a cultural guide to interpret cultural connections.

In Northern Queensland there is a tourism trail linking Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Centres along the northern coast ([www.dreamtimetracks.com](http://www.dreamtimetracks.com)) there may be potential to provide a similar linkage within Adelaide through Port Adelaide, Tandanya and Warriparinga.

These links would provide an opportunity for cultural exchange, not only for 'artists' within the Adelaide area (similar to a recent project supported by Council, "Port to Port" in which artists from Port Adelaide and Port Noarlunga participated in weekends of workshops at each locale) but also with artists from other regions and States. This would encourage the cultural practices of the past of ceremonial gatherings where stories and new dances could be shared and people could exchange information, settle disputes and share language.

One area of great concern is the on-going funding for projects such as Kurruru Youth Performing Arts. Kurruru, as the only Aboriginal performing arts company in Australia has developed a reputation both nationally and internationally and provides an excellent opportunity for young aspiring performing artists to access an entry point into further studies within the arts area.

However Kurruru has recently lost significant funding support from Arts Council of Australia. This has significant impact on organisations such as Kurruru which is example of a highly successful Aboriginal run organisation that is providing invaluable services for Aboriginal young people and their families.

Council produces a Cultural Calendar each year and within this there are features on significant Aboriginal people within our community. This, together with special awards within the Council Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Awards program, provides opportunities for members of our community who may not be high profile but contribute highly to the community to be recognised and acknowledged.

### **Council Role**

- Continue to support the community in their advocacy for an Aboriginal Cultural/Interpretative Centre in the area
- Promote Aboriginal culture through the Port Festival
- Support legitimate arts providers e.g. Better World Arts
- Support through grants programs Aboriginal performances in the region (e.g. theatre, music, Aunty Josie's choir)
- Promote and advocate on behalf of Kurruru Youth Performing Arts
- Continue to provide Aboriginal themed public art/art in public spaces and parks such as Mikawomma, Lartelare
- Display of Aboriginal artwork within Council venues e.g. Council offices, libraries, community centres
- Interpretative signage
- Aboriginal Art exhibitions at Parks gallery
- Support for Workshops on weaving utilising reeds from Lartelare
- Investigate opportunities for the promotion of Aboriginal Arts as a means of cultural tourism
- Investigate potential to work more closely with Tandanya to bring exhibitions to Council area
- Support for cultural exchange projects e.g. with artists from other regions/States

## References

The key Australian and State Government Documents referred to within this paper are:

- "Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage - Key Indicators 2009" Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision Commonwealth of Australia 2009
- Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data 2006 and 2001
- "Doing It Right: The South Australian Government's Commitment to Aboriginal Families and communities in South Australia" South Australian Dept for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (May 2003)
- "To Break the Cycle: Prevention and rehabilitation responses to serious repeat offending by young people" Report by Monsignor David Cappo AO, Commissioner for Social Inclusion 2007
- Australian Bureau of Statistics SEIFA Data 2001
- "A National Aboriginal Health Strategy" National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party 1989
- Australian Bureau of Statistics "Australian Social Trends 2002"
- "The Road Home: A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness" 2008 White Paper
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