

Queensland Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships  
The Honourable Desley Boyle  
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### **Helping Hands to promote Indigenous culture**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Minister Desley Boyle has commended a unique educational project which aims to give South West Queensland children and visitors to the region an insight into local Indigenous history.

"I am really pleased to be supporting the Paroo Shire Council's *Helping Hands* initiative which will help capture and exhibit significant dreamtime stories and Aboriginal culture from this part of the country," she said.

"The region is rich in dreaming stories, many with a powerful message for children, about caring for the earth and respecting others.

"Indigenous people believe that ancestral spirits have a spiritual connection with animals, with many stories linked to these urdies (animal symbols) who are integral to the Indigenous dreamings of the region."

Ms Boyle said the exhibit would be a significant collaboration between council and traditional owners in the shire, and will feature a timeline, dreamtime stories and life-like sculptures of each tribe's urdie.

"The Budjiti, Kunja, Mardigan, Kooma and Kullilli people will each choose a dreamtime story to tell, which is pertinent to their country, and this will be narrated through their urdies, including the kangaroo and goanna.

"These stories have been handed down through the ages and are an important part of educating Aboriginal children and keeping Indigenous culture alive."

Ms Boyle said the Bligh Government had provided \$20,000 to the Paroo Shire Council for the project which aims to create stronger families and stronger cultures.

"The *Helping Hands Project* will share the region's Indigenous culture with the entire community, allow tourists to spread the message and encourages parents to get together and talk about their cultural heritage with their children," she said.

"It's important to remember that while the Indigenous culture stems from the past, it's still vitally important today and to tomorrow's Queensland.

"I congratulate the Paroo Shire Council and traditional owners for working in partnership and helping to keep Indigenous culture alive in the community."

The *Helping Hands Project* will be part of the shire's Q150 celebrations.

For more information, contact the Paroo Shire Council on 4655 8400.

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