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Darryl's Community Garden

Darryl lives in an inner-city block in Sydney. He applied for a community garden grant to create a green space in his building for all tenants to use. Darryl volunteers twice a week with a local community organisation where he is involved with a kid's education program. Currently, he is working on a project to build a garden for children using recycled material.

Tell us about the garden in your block which you helped create:

It was built in 2014 with plants from many of the tenants living here. It's a self-sustainable garden which requires a little pruning. I built the bench chairs myself. The big white umbrella provides



Darryl

great shade and when it rains, the water trickles down to the plants. We put mirrors on the wall behind the plants to make the garden appear deeper.

What does this environment mean to you and tenants?

It's a relaxed environment for everyone who lives here. A space to move around and enjoy. I'm very proud of it, this garden replaced an ugly space filled with garbage.

How did the idea come about?

I wanted to do something in this space and it's a small space. I did some research and found a few pictures of small gardens online. I knew what I wanted this space to look like. I explained it to my neighbours with drawings of what I had in mind.

How did Bridge Housing help?

Bridge funded and backed my idea. They connected us with Philip Pettitt from the Botanical Gardens who helped with the garden bed. We had to lay heavy stones at the bottom of the beds to allow for draining. Philip was awesome and provided much support and help.

So how long did it take to create?

The whole thing took 3 months to complete, from when I had the idea, through to having this garden. I built the seating, bought the wood from Bunnings and built it myself in about a week.

What tips can you give to tenants who are thinking of creating a community garden?

Don't fear your idea! If you have the space and you think you can do it, then do it! Follow through. Draw up a plan, a detailed plan and use the internet to research ideas.

Are you thinking of creating a community garden in your block? Give the Communities Team a call and find out how you can get started. Phone 8324 0800 or email community@bridgehousing.org.au

General Enquiries - 8324 0800
customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au

Repairs - 8324 0886
repairs@bridgehousing.org.au

Community - 8324 0827
community@bridgehousing.org.au

Housing Pathways Applications
8324 0890
pathways@bridgehousing.org.au

Housing Team & Tenancies
8324 0885
customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au

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CEO Update

Welcome to the autumn 2019-20 edition of Our Place, It's hard to believe that the summer is over! It is a time of moving through phases and growth; we build on experiences, some successful and some an opportunity to learn.

In 2018 we launched Bridge to Work, a program in partnership with CoAct, to improve employment outcomes for community housing tenants in Sydney. With the end of the pilot phase and an independent evaluation report completed, I am thrilled with the feedback from tenants about the program. 47% of participants were placed in employment or returned to full time study and participants generally had a strong sense of self-agency and increased confidence. I am sure, as we step in to the second phase of Bridge to Work, that future participants will too benefit from the program.

I was very pleased to attend the ATTAG picnic where I met with Elders in the community and launched our second Innovate RAP. This second phase will see us focusing more closely on our core service delivery, strengthening relationships with stakeholders and services that support the provision of housing assistance and successful tenancies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants and applicants.

March is a great month to reflect and celebrate your diverse community and your neighbours. It was wonderful to see the nominations come through for Good Neighbour Champions. Keep in mind Harmony week, 15-21 March and Neighbour Day on Sunday 29 March. Will you be engaging with your neighbours? How will you celebrate?

John Nicolades, CEO



Yabun Festival

Yabun, meaning 'music to a beat' in Gadigal language, was held at Victoria Park, Sydney on Sunday 26 January 2020. Yabun is a free event featuring live music and performance, art, a corroboree ground and much more. Held on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people in Sydney, Bridge Housing held a stall at the festival and spoke to many visitors about our housing services while celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as the longest living cultures.



Eileen and Kamal

ATTAG Picnic

The annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group (ATTAG) Picnic was held on Saturday 22 February at Redfern Oval. The picnic is a way for the



ATTAG picnic 2020

ATTAG to meet and greet new Bridge Housing tenants in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Tenants and their families enjoyed a picnic lunch and we welcomed faces old and new. A big thank you for those who were able to attend and to ATTAG members for volunteering their time.

Good Neighbour Workshop Narraweena

Residents from Narraweena and surrounding suburbs gathered for the first Good Neighbour Workshop in the Northern Beaches. Residents had the opportunity to discuss challenges and issues which might arise in their community and think about how they could contribute to resolving them.



Narraweena Workshop

Speakers from Bridge Housing, Community Justice Centres, Community Care Northern Beaches and Upskill Mental Health provided insight into local programs, mediation options and mental health support.

Calling artists National Reconciliation Week Art Exhibition

We're seeking resident artists for an art exhibition to celebrate National Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June). This year's Reconciliation theme is **In It Together** and we want to bring people together to learn about our shared histories, cultures and responsibility to build the relations we want to see in our community. The exhibition is an opportunity to showcase work and share stories by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, alongside the unique and diverse experiences of all Bridge Housing's residents.



If you are an artist and interested in being part of this exhibition, please register your interest by calling Laura or Kamal on **8324 0800** or via email at **community@bridgehousing.org.au**. We will ask you to send photos of your work as well as provide you with further information about the exhibition including when you will need to finalise and submit your artwork.

Bridge To Work Update

The Bridge To Work program continues to grow from strength to strength. An evaluation report was recently published and can be found on our website: <https://bit.ly/3apWQOL>. The report found that during the program's first 15 months, almost half of participants found work or returned to study, and in half the time when compared to a control group. There have been 10 placements over the past two months, bringing the total number of people who have found work or returned to full time study, to 48. If you are interested in finding out more about the program or you want to have a chat about returning to work, study or what options might be available for you please call Sam on **0447 092 194** or by email: **S.Belhajji@bridgehousing.org.au**.



Thomas, a participant

Complaints - you said, we did!

Accordingly to the results of our 2019 Tenant Survey, tenant knowledge about Complaints and Appeals fell by 10 percent from the industry benchmark. At a follow-up workshop in July 2019, tenants told us that it can be confusing to understand the difference between how Bridge Housing manages service delivery complaints or appeals versus neighbourhood disputes.

How we manage service delivery complaints and appeals

A complaint is when you tell us you are not satisfied with the way we have provided our service to you. An appeal is when you disagree with a decision we have made. When you complain about our services or appeal a decision we have made, we record this centrally. The complaint or appeal is investigated by a manager and the outcome reported to you and the senior management team and Board. When you complain about your neighbour we manage this as part of your tenancy and record it on your tenancy file.

How we manage a neighbourhood dispute

Some tenants have told us that they don't feel we consistently manage neighbourhood complaints. We have heard your feedback and are revising our procedures for staff and developing a new tracking system to better manage and respond to neighbour complaints centrally.

Neighbour complaints include when you report repeated noise or nuisance being caused by your neighbour. The new process means when you complain about a neighbour issue, a staff member will:

Listen to your story. We will talk to you about managing the issue, record the details in our system and ask you to provide further evidence if it is required - like completing a neighbour noise diary

Listen to your neighbour. To offer them the opportunity to respond and report their story

Investigate. We will seek other evidence from other parties for example other neighbours, witnesses and the NSW Police and record any actions taken.

Refer and Mediate. Where possible seek assistance from other services like the Community Justice Centre to resolve conflict or seek support services to address negative behaviours.

Determine any breaches of tenancy. Review the legislation to see if there has been a breach of tenancy and take action if there has been.

Advise you of the outcome of our investigation and our actions.

Bridge Buddies

Do you want to make new friends? Are you a new tenant and might benefit from speaking to existing tenants about what it's like being a Bridge Housing tenant? If so, you might be interested in the Bridge Buddies program. Bridge Buddies matches you with another tenant according to interests, availability and preferred contact methods (telephone, email, in person, etc). Contact the Community Team for more information on **02 8324 0800** or **community@bridgehousing.org.au**.

What's On?

Children - get ready to launch in to ORBIT!

Hey kids, are you looking for a day of fun with your family? We've partnered with The Settlement to bring you ORBIT! We're planning a special day with loads of activities and food for the whole family. Make sure your parents save the date and look out for the invitation!

When: Wednesday 22 April 2020
Time: 10.30am to 2.30pm
Where: The Settlement, 17 Edward St Darlingston
Cost: it's free!!



Harmony Week 15-21 March 2020



Bridge Housing celebrating Harmony Day 2019

There are over 270 cultures in Australia, including the world's oldest continuous indigenous culture. 50% of Bridge Housing residents were born overseas and 57% speak languages other than English.

Harmony Week celebrates this diversity and promotes inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging.

We want to know how you'll be celebrating! Send us photos of you and your community and we'll share as much as we can on Facebook. Please include your culture and who is in the photo. You can send your photos to community@bridgehousing.org.au or via SMS to Kamal on **0427 601 709**.

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

Bridge Housing encourages tenants to stay up to date with information about the coronavirus from the following reliable sources. You can call your GP, the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080** or visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx. We encourage you follow NSW Health's advice including to wash your hands effectively (for at least 20 seconds using soap), sneeze or cough into your elbow and visit your GP if you start feeling unwell. Be mindful and consider your neighbours and let us know if you are concerned about someone's wellbeing.

West

COOKING FOR TWO CLASSES

We've partnered with the Benevolent Society to deliver a five week cooking course for people over 65 in Western Sydney. Classes will be held on a Saturday throughout June and August. For more information, or to register your interest, call Kamal on **8324 0800** or email community@bridgehousing.org.au.

STEPPING ON

Stepping on is a free exciting and friendly 7-week program for seniors that combines gentle exercise with education sessions. It is designed to build knowledge, strength and confidence to prevent falls, stay active and remain independent. It is run by the Canterbury Earwood Caring Community Centre and starts 14 May. For more information, call the Stepping On - Access Care Team on **1300 722 276**

North

BE CONNECTED

Digital Discoveries Program, run by Bridge Housing and Link Housing. This six week program offers you the opportunity to learn how to use your smart phone or iPad, learn about the internet and get you connected with family and friends. Our very patient tutors, will help you set up social media accounts, create an email address or help you get set up on mygov.com.au. Courses are starting in May and will be available in Narraweena and Manly. Please contact Laura on **8324 0800** or email community@bridgehousing.org.au to register.

PIONEER CLUBHOUSE

Pioneer Clubhouse is a safe, supportive, respectful environment for people living with mental illness. It's a place you can go to meet other people with lived experience of mental illness, take part in activities and find the help you need on your mental health journey. Pioneer Clubhouse is open Monday to Friday. Office hours are 9 am - 4 pm. Lot 2 Quirk Road, Balgowlah NSW 2093 P. **02 9907 9999**

East

MEDITATION CLASSES

The Sahaja Yoga Meditation technique is very easy to learn. There are no difficult exercises or special clothing required and it can be done while sitting on a chair. All Sahaja Yoga classes are free and no booking is required. Classes are held every Monday from 11am -12.15pm at Mill Hill Community Centre, 31-33 Spring Street, Bondi Junction.

SEASIDE SINGERS

A monthly informal singing group for adults and Lionel Bowen Library Members. Held on the last Friday of each month at the Lionel Bowen Library, 669-673 Anzac Parade, Maroubra. Call **9093 6400** for more information

Bridge Housing Tenant Advisory Groups (TAG)

Tenant
Advisory Group
Be involved, have your say!



Cantonese Time to Talk Session

In early March tenants from the Cantonese speaking community gathered in Burwood to discuss issues relating to their tenancies in their first language. The day provided the opportunity for tenants to share information, a meal and build community connections.

The Tenant Advisory Groups (TAG) are made up of Bridge Housing tenants who volunteer their time to give back to the tenant community and provide feedback to help Bridge Housing improve the way we do things.

Would you like to attend a TAG meeting? Come along and participate. Details of the next meetings are:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG (ATTAG): 23 April 2020
Redfern Community Centre Activity Room, 29-53 Hugo St, Redfern, 4.30PM to 6.30PM
RSVP to the Community Team on **8324 0800**

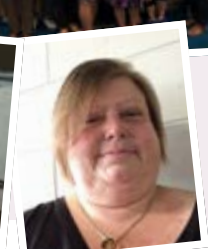
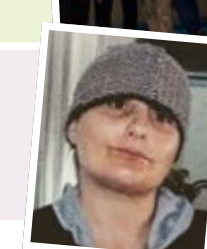
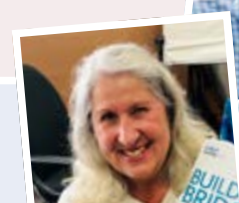
Bankstown TAG Meeting: 12 May 2020
Yagoona Community Centre, 176 Cooper Road, Yagoona from 11AM - 1PM
RSVP to The Community Team on **8324 0800**

Central TAG Meeting: 3 April 2020
Redfern Oval Community Hall, Chalmers St Redfern, opposite Woollies from 10AM- 12PM
RSVP to Rodney on **0419 260 366**

East TAG Meeting: 27 March 2020
Margaret Whitlam Centre, Waverley Park on Bondi Rd, Bondi Junction from 10AM - 12PM
RSVP to Julia on **0423 451 188**

Vietnamese (VNTAG) Meeting Dates: 8 April 2020
Bridge Housing Office, L9, 59 Goulburn St, Haymarket from 11AM - 1PM
RSVP to the Community Team on **8324 0800**

West TAG Meeting: 8 May 2020
Granville Library Meeting Room, 8 Carlton St, Granville from 10:30AM - 12:30PM
RSVP to Amanda on **0457 715 542**



Interested in becoming a member?

If you are interested in becoming a member of the TAG, contact the Community Team to register your interest. Call **02 8324 0800** or email community@bridgehousing.org.au. You can also complete a Get Involved Brochure from our website: <https://www.bridgehousing.org.au/documents/975-bhl0155-tenant-participation-a4-brochure-v2/file>

Good Neighbour Champion Winners!

A very big thank you to everyone who nominated Bridge Housing tenants in their community who are making their neighbourhood special. We received wonderful examples of what people are doing. Here are the \$50 voucher winners:

Jim Mitchell of Brookvale – for creating a compost system and being a kind, quiet neighbour

Rodney Ellis of Yagoona – for being a bin legend

Frederick Tulk of Alexandria – for transforming the roof top gardens

Sunday 29 March is Neighbour Day, do you have an awesome neighbour to celebrate? Nominate them and let us know why they should be a Good Neighbour Champion.

Email community@bridgehousing.org.au or call 8324 0844.



Please help us improve our service by completing this questionnaire about your recent repair and returning it to us

Thank you for your feedback

My call was answered in a timely manner or my voicemail / feedback email was responded to promptly
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Bridge Housing staff were helpful and attentive
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Did Bridge Housing staff advise you of the repair timeframe? Yes No

Did the contractor make an appointment? Yes No

Did the contractor keep to that appointment? Yes No

Did the contractor identify himself? Yes No

Following your initial repair request when did the contractor attend your home?
 Within 4 hrs Within 24 hrs Within 5 days 21 days

The contractor kept dirt and mess to a minimum and left my property clean and tidy
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

The contractor was respectful & courteous to me and my home
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

How satisfied are you with the overall repairs service provided by Bridge Housing and the contractor?
 Very Satisfied Satisfied Neither Fairly Dissatisfied Dissatisfied

You can report a repair through our website: www.bridgehousing.org.au
 Our out of hours service is available for emergency repairs 24/7, all year round. Please telephone 02 8324 0886 and follow the prompts.

Any Further Comments:

REF #

Repairs Feedback Survey Winners!

All completed and returned Repairs and Maintenance Feedback Surveys are entered in to a monthly prize draw to win a \$50 gift voucher. To be in the running, complete and return the Repairs and Maintenance Survey after our contractor has attended your home. It's as easy as that!

Congratulations to the December, January and February winners: Joan from Queens Park, Francesco from Glebe, Barbara from Ashfield, Philip from Eveleigh, Vanessa from Randwick and David from Northmead.

BHL Opening Hours & Location

Goulburn Street Office

You can find our Head Office at Level 9, 59 Goulburn Street Haymarket. When visiting the Goulburn Street office, please use the lifts that face the street to get to Level 9.

We are open 9am - 4.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday.

Brookvale Office

You can find our new Brookvale Office at Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Road, and Brookvale. When visiting the Brookvale office you can take the lift or the stairs from outside Centrelink.

We are open 9am - 4:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday.

Outreach Times and Locations	Mill Hill Outreach	South Coogee Outreach	Glebe Outreach
	Waverley Council 1st Floor, 31-33 Spring St. Bondi Junction 2022 Hours: Monday 1:30PM - 4PM	3 Yamba Place South Coogee 2034 Hours: Tuesday 9:30AM - 12:30PM	3 Elger Street Glebe 2037 Hours: Wednesday 1.30PM - 4.30PM