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“Just find something you love and start doing it!”

Gerry is an inner Sydney tenant who felt very inspired over the last few months to fill his walls with artwork. We sit with Gerry who tells us a little about himself and his art.

**Tell us a little about yourself Gerry:**

I'm doing a retail course from home. It's a 26 week course and I complete it via correspondence. Studying keeps me busy. I used to work at the markets and was moved around to work through different warehouses. I even drove a three tonner truck for a while. That all stopped when I was diagnosed with epilepsy and as a result, haven't been able to drive for the last four years. I worked at a warehouse after that but couldn't sustain it; the medication to treat epilepsy was causing injury to the discs in my back.



Gerry and his favorite artwork

After the property I was renting was sold, I lived at the Matthew Talbot Hostel for about 12 months before moving in to community housing. I've been with Bridge Housing for three years.

**How did you get in to these art works?**

There is an Art Club which meet regularly in this block. Ray the organiser has always encouraged me to attend so I did once. But I didn't really participate, I just sat back and watched what the other participants were doing. During the lockdown period, I just got sick of my white walls and thought this place could do with a little colour.

**What is your process when completing these works?**

My art is all abstract. I've been using grid paper to make small patterns and drawings for a while. Then I just started doing bigger

pieces, mostly people. I start from the bottom without having a design in mind for the end product and I just go from there. The smaller pieces take a day to finish, the larger pieces can take three or four days. It was something to do during the lock down period, I have over 30 pieces. My friends are fascinated with the work.

**What would your message be to people who are thinking about how to occupy their time?**

Just find something you love and start doing it!



**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

I became a grandfather for the second time in August. My family were able to get together whilst physically distancing. It was a beautiful reminder that the world continues to spin even through a pandemic and that as a community we have adapted and made changes to keep safe and carry on.

I'm pleased to let you know that we received a tick of approval from the NSW Government. In a bid to help keep staff, tenants and the community safe, we completed a COVID-19 Safety Plan and are now registered officially as a COVID safe workplace.

The results from the 2020 Tenant Satisfaction Survey has been made available to us from CHIA and my team and I are keen to explore the results. The overall satisfaction rating of 82% is a strong response, however there are many areas where we have not performed so well and overall lower scores in the Northern Beaches warrant further attention. I would like to thank all tenants and family members who contributed to the survey results which make a significant contribution to the planning of our operational business activities over the coming year.

The NSW Government's released A Housing Strategy for NSW, a framework for a 20 year comprehensive whole of Government strategy which will cover homelessness to homeownership. Bridge Housing's submission argued for greater resources to increase the level of social housing in partnership with community housing providers. Bridge Housing's submission is available on the Bridge Housing website.

Lastly, it's great to see people are doing wonderful things for themselves and the community, be it drawings like Gerry or virtual concerts hosted by Yasmin. These are things which keep us engaged, connected and thriving in this ambiguous time.

**John Nicolades, CEO**



## Have you met Sam?

I'm Sam from Bridge To Work, a program to improve employment options for Bridge Housing tenants. As things are starting to pick back up following the COVID lock-down, it is a great time to give me a call to work out how I can help you. I've supported three tenants in July and two in August into employment and study opportunities. Since October, 14 tenants have been placed, nine into employment and five into full-time study. Since starting in 2018, 51 participants have found work or study through the Bridge To Work program. The next person could be you!



Maybe you currently work and want to adjust your hours? Perhaps you want to learn how to do well at an online interview. You could be unsure of your options and need some help to work out what might be next. Get job ready with interview practice, a tailored action plan and help with your resume and job applications. Contact me to arrange a time to come into the office or arrange for a time where I can call you. I can be reached on **0447 092 194** or via email on [samira.belhajji@coact.org.au](mailto:samira.belhajji@coact.org.au).

## Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Overall Satisfaction	Condition of Home	Repairs and Maintenance
82%	81%	76%

A huge thank you to tenants who took time to complete the 2020 Bridge Housing Tenant Survey. This year's survey was the first survey where we invited tenants from the Northern Beaches to participate and give feedback. There were over 1300 people who responded to the survey and we're working with CHIA NSW to complete the analysis. But it doesn't stop there! The feedback and insight collected from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey allows us to focus on areas we need to improve. What are the next steps? From here, we will take the findings to our tenants, staff and the board to workshop the actions we want to take as a business. Stay tuned! If you would like to be considered for future workshops addressing the results from the tenant satisfaction survey, contact the Community team on **8324 0800** or email [community@bridgehousing.org.au](mailto:community@bridgehousing.org.au).

## New Look Tenant Statement!

Following feedback from tenants, we have updated your quarterly tenant statement which you will find enclosed with this newsletter. The main changes to the statement include

- ▶ All payments and charges are included in one table
- ▶ Separate balances shown at the start and end of the statement
- ▶ Legend explaining different adjustments at the end of the statement.

The new statement has received the seal of approval from our Your Views panel. The Your View panel is a group of registered tenants who provide feedback via email on policy and procedure changes and updates.

To find out more about joining Your Views, or to provide feedback on the new statement, please contact the Communities Team on **8324 0800** or by email [community@bridgehousing.org.au](mailto:community@bridgehousing.org.au).

# Big Idea Grants

## Our Music... Our Stories Event

You're invited to attend Bridge Housing's first ever live virtual music experience, **Our Music...Our Stories**.

Talented singer and songwriter Yasmin will lead tenants through the event, offering the opportunity to engage virtually during the hour long event with post performance discussions. Yasmin has performed live at many events over the years and has designed this cross-cultural experience to connect with other tenants in an effort to help reduce social isolation. To register your interest and receive more information about the event contact the Community Team on **8234 0800**.

Yasmin is a tenant with Bridge Housing living in Southern Sydney who applied for a Big Idea Grant to fund **Our Music...Our Stories**. She hopes her idea will reduce social isolation, allow people to share stories, showcase musical talent and improve the confidence of people participating in virtual activities.



## Have you heard about the Big Idea Grant Initiative?

Our Big Idea Grants Initiative gives small grants to tenants for projects that bring people together in their neighbourhood or community, just like Yasmin's event above. These projects can include sewing or art skills exchange, an event for people in your street such as a BBQ, art project, cooking classes, or new garden furniture to create a gathering place in a common area. A successful Big Idea Grant will:

- ▶ bring people together in the neighbourhood and community
- ▶ create positive connections between people in the neighbourhood and community
- ▶ be inclusive as possible and open to all sorts of people
- ▶ allow support from neighbours and people in the community

### Do you have an idea to engage your neighbours?

Small grants of up to \$500 are available for individuals or groups. Larger grants of up to \$1000 are available if you partner with a community organisation to work on the project with you.

### How to apply?

Read the [Big Idea Grant Guidelines](#) and complete the application form. Talk to the community team about any projects you are interested in having funded. Call us on **8324 0800** or email [community@bridgehousing.org.au](mailto:community@bridgehousing.org.au).



## High energy bills?



Energy bills are going up as people spend more time at home during the recent colder months. Here are our top tips to help you save on your energy bills:

- ▶ **Access rebates** – concession card holders are eligible for a rebate of up to \$285 per year for electricity and \$120 for gas. Check your most recent bill to see if the rebate has been applied to your account or contact your energy company to provide them with your concession card details. You can call ServiceNSW on **13 77 88** for more information about the range of rebates available.
- ▶ **Ask for a better deal** – if you never ask, you never know. Contact your energy company to see if they can offer you a better deal on your electricity or gas account.
- ▶ **Shop around** – grab a copy of your last energy bill and head to <https://www.energymadeeasy.gov.au/> or phone **1300 585 165** to compare prices and see if you could save money by switching energy companies.
- ▶ **Help with a big bill** – the Energy and Water Ombudsman can help out if you're struggling with an expensive or overdue bill, or if you're having any problems with your energy company. Head to [www.ewon.com.au](http://www.ewon.com.au) or call **1800 246 54**.



# Food Markets!

If you're struggling to make ends meet or need support purchasing food, take a look at these low cost markets and grocers available around Sydney.



## The Link Community Care

**Ph:** 02 9999 0475

**Email:** Info@Link.org.au

**Web:** Link.org.au/Communitycare

The Link Community Care is based at Unit 6/3 Vuko Place, Warriewood.

### Shop operating hours

Thursday nights: 6.30pm - 8.00pm.

Tuesday-Friday by appointment:  
Check the Link Community Care website or call Link Community Care for available 30-minute booking spots where you can pack your own hamper.

### CareHampers

Carehampers are available for \$10-\$15 and include staples, bread, fruit box and meals. CareHampers can be collected through the Warriewood drive through Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3pm-5pm.

### Mobile Foodcare Pop Up

Mobile Foodcare Pop Up is located in Dee Why every Thursday and in Cromer and Narrabeena every Friday. Check the Link Community Care website for Mobile Foodcare Pop up locations.



## Oz Harvest Market

95 Wellington St, Waterloo

The OzHarvest Market is a food market with fresh produce and pantry essentials. Open from 10am to 2pm every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.



## Grace City Care

902 Pittwater Rd Dee Why

**Ph: 9971 0222**

Community Foodcare - access groceries at a low fee and to get bread, fruit & vegetables free of charge. Open every Wednesday from 10am-1pm



## The Staples Bag

449 Canterbury Rd, Campsie

**Ph: 9787 6832**

A wide range of grocery staples at affordable prices. Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and Sat-Sun 9am-2pm. The Staples Bag also have a pop up store only doing deliveries at the moment. Contact The Staples Bag for more information about the drop offs. Camperdown Pop Up on Wednesday's call **9509 7200** and Parramatta Pop Up every second Friday call **9891 2277**.

## Anglicare's Mobile Community Pantry

Anglicare's Mobile Community Pantry provide grocery or fresh food items at very low cost. The Pantry is run in partnership with local churches and visits each location on a fortnightly basis. Make a small contribution and fill a bag with items of your choice from the stock available. \$10 for groceries and \$2 for fresh food (bring along your Pension, Health Care or Immigration Card).

### Available at many locations including:

Canterbury St Paul's Church  
33 Church St **ph: 9789 5991**

Granville Anglican Church  
39 Jamieson St **ph: 9637 1073**

Leichhardt All Souls Anglican Church  
Cnr Norton and Marion St **ph: 9569 2646**

Malabar St Marks Anglican Church  
cnr Franklin St and Victoria Lane  
**ph: 9311 0309**

Petersham All Saints Anglican Church  
325 Stanmore Rd **ph: 9569 4735**

Riverwood Anglican Church  
9 Littleton St Riverwood **ph: 9153 7624**

South Coogee St Paul's Church  
1 Gregory St **ph: 0407 891 306**

Yagoona Anglican Church  
213 Auburn Rd **ph: 9793 3062**



# Bridge Housing Tenant Advisory Groups (TAGs)



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

## TAG Elections

Would you like to represent your TAG or know another tenant who can? Nominate today! In line with the TAG – How TAG Works Guidelines, elections for the Chair and Vice-Chair roles are held every two years. If you are interested, tell us in 100

words or less on why you should be the Chair or Vice Chair. We can offer you training and support you in the role! Your nomination will be included in a letter to all TAG members who will then be asked to vote. To find out more information

or to submit a nomination, contact the Community Team on **02 8324 0800** or email **community@bridgehousing.org.au**. Nominations must be received by Friday 02 October to be included in the ballot.

## Join a TAG

Would you like to join a TAG? Below are the current Tenant Advisory Groups you can join which meet 5 times a year. Email **community@bridgehousing.org.au** if you would like to find out more, or complete a 'Get Involved' brochure which can be downloaded from our website <https://www.bridgehousing.org.au/documents/975-bhl0155-tenant-participation-a4-brochure-v2/file>.

- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG (ATTAG)
- ▶ Central TAG
- ▶ Vietnamese TAG
- ▶ Bankstown TAG
- ▶ East TAG
- ▶ West TAG



## Digital Discoveries

- ▶ Are you over 55?
- ▶ Do you have a computer, smartphone or an iPad?
- ▶ Do you live in the Northern Beaches?

Come discover the digital world for free! Learn how to connect with family and friends on Facebook, create an email address, set up a myGov account and much more. Patient tutors will help you feel confident with your digital device. Bring along your computer, smartphone or iPad and ask all your questions.

There are two locations and tenants can register to attend at either:

- ▶ **Narraweena:** Thursday 15 October, 10:30am-12pm
- ▶ **Manly:** Thursday 15 October, 2pm-2:30pm

Bring your partner, neighbours or friends and enjoy learning, laughs and a free afternoon tea. To find out more information or to RSVP, contact the Community Team on **02 8324 0800**



Digital Discoveries for over 55s

## Good Neighbour Champion

Do you have an awesome neighbour? Nominate them! Tell us about the people who are making your neighbourhood special. call **8324 0844** or email **community@bridgehousing.org.au**.

Congratulations to John from Glebe for being a great neighbour, taking good care of the garden and being a gentleman opening doors for neighbours.





# Getting rid of mould



Cooler temperatures sometimes mean that condensation can build up in our home, which can lead to mould spores growing on walls, ceilings, doors and window frames. The best way to stop mould growing is to stop condensation building up. If you do see mould spores growing inside your home, you can take action to stop the mould spreading and getting worse. Keep in mind that bleach does not kill mould, it just removes the colour.

## Stop mould growing by:

- ▶ Opening doors and windows in your home to encourage air circulation and maintain air flow.
- ▶ Keep your rooms at a consistent room temperature as much as possible. Heating a room at a high temperature can result in

a large amount of condensation forming when the air cools.

- ▶ Open your bathroom window after showers and baths to allow the humid air to escape
- ▶ Use lids on your hot pots and pans when cooking
- ▶ If you have exhausts over your stove or in your bathroom, turn them on while cooking or showering
- ▶ If you see condensation forming on windows or walls, act quickly and dry the area.

## How to kill mould:

1. Mix 4 cups of white vinegar with 1 cup of hot water
2. Use a soft cloth to wash the area with the vinegar solution every day for three days
3. Mix 1/4 teaspoon of clove oil with 1 liter of water in a spray bottle and lightly mist over the area. Wipe the area clean, then repeat and leave to air dry
4. Keep the area dry and increase ventilation to the room
5. Wash any bedding or clothes that have mould growth in a hot laundry cycle with 1 cup of vinegar added with the detergent.

# Repairs Feedback Survey Winners!

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 repair service provided by Bridge Housing and the contractor?  
 Very Satisfied  Satisfied  Neither  Dissatisfied  Dissatisfied

You can report a repair through our website: [www.bridgehousing.org.au](http://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 #

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 May, June and July winners: Mary from South Coogee, Alfred from Bondi, Greg from Glebe, Frida from Redfern, Gultekin from Ashfield and Amanda from Chifley

## 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 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 Details:** Our outreach offices are temporarily closed. Please check our website for updates in line with our COVID-19 service delivery response.

## Outreach Times and Locations

### South Coogee Outreach

3 Yamba Place  
 South Coogee 2034  
 Hours: **Temporarily closed**

### Mill Hill Outreach

Waverley Council  
 1st Floor, 31-33 Spring St. Bondi Junction 2022  
 Hours: **Temporarily closed**