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Volunteering is an offering, not a sacrifice

Zorica, originally from Croatia, had experience teaching English as a second Language in Japan and Europe. In 1989, she noticed that the women who brought their kids in for preschool experience at the YWCA's nanny training school were sitting around doing nothing while they waited for their children. Zorica designed a program teaching them basic English skills which she ran two days a week as a volunteer. When, six months later, the YWCA wanted to employ a teacher for its English evening classes two nights a week, Zorica got the job – but she continued her volunteer work as well.



Zorica & Cholok

Zorica arrived in Australia in 1973 without a word of English. She stayed at the YWCA and had her first English lessons there.

"I believe that without language there is no communication. I became a volunteer English Teacher with the YWCA because I want to be part of an international community that supports all people."

"I've always wanted to be involved in some kind of community work. I believe everyone should put in something, no matter where you live or who you are, Zorica says. And I'm devoted to language and communication... one time I had a class with 17 different nationalities in it, which I feel is very exciting. They were all concentrating on making that connection with the spoken word."

Interested in volunteering?

- Transport Heritage NSW volunteers contribute to restoration projects like Locomotive 3801, major events, daily operations and more. Check out www.thnsw.com.au for more information and volunteer vacancies.
- Are you a Pianola player? Mosman Seniors Centre is seeking a pianola player to play music for up to an hour on Wednesdays for older people attending the centre. Calvary HealthCare in Kogarah are also seeking a musician to play to create ambiance for both patients and visitors. Explore these opportunities and more at www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au
- FoodBank is always looking for volunteers to help out packing hampers for those in need at the Sydney Distribution Centre in Glendenning. For more information or to register go to www.foodbank.org.au/support-us/volunteer-with-us

- Volunteering builds your skills and is a fantastic way to meet new people
- Volunteering is one of the best expressions of active citizenship
- It creates a sense of belonging, shared activity and general well-being
- It's about enjoyment and skills development and getting a sense of satisfaction
- It's about contributing to our community's development
- It raises our self-esteem and motivation and broadens our life experience
- It fosters social development, self-development and empowerment.

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 Mental Health Month issue of Our Place. October is Mental Health month, and to coincide we have themed this issue of the newsletter around connection. Connection can often help soften the hardest parts of mental ill-health. Connection means a sense of belonging, of company, of feeling valued. In this issue, we've focused on some ways to connect through volunteering and getting involved in the hope that something there speaks to some of you.

There are lots of ways to connect with the Bridge Housing community, and I especially encourage you to think about becoming a member of Bridge Housing. Membership is defined in the Bridge Housing Constitution which can be found on our website. Members meet yearly at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and vote on motions raised during the meeting. Members also have the power to elect Board Members at the AGM. Bridge Housing Board member Graham Monk will lead a session on how to understand financial statements for our Company Members ahead of the AGM in November this year so if you are interested, please come along.

In addition to being a Bridge Housing member, you might choose to connect with your community by joining a Tenant Advisory Group, becoming a Bridge Buddy, helping to run a Community Garden or using a Big Ideas Grant to bring your community together. Speak to one of our staff in the Communities team for information on how to get involved by calling **02 8324 0851**. I hope some of these ideas for connection inspire you!

John Nicolades, CEO



bridgehousing.org.au

Bridge To Work

Mick's transition back to work.

With a hard-working attitude and motivation to-boot, Mick was able to secure a full-time permanent job that he loves, with thanks to the support of the Bridge to Work program.



Mick

Mick (Michael) registered with Bridge to Work at the end of October after a significant period of unemployment. He was looking to transition back to a permanent full-time position and had recently completed a TAFE course in Community Support.

Gavin, the Bridge to Work Employment Support Coordinator and Mick set out to develop a resume and cover letter, setting up an online profile for Mick to make his job search easy. Gavin worked with Mick continuously over the next couple of months, refining and applying for various positions, as well as having regular catch-ups to keep his motivation and confidence up.

Mick continued to apply for suitable roles through SEEK and received an invitation to interview for a job within the recycling industry.

Mick was successful initially in securing a casual ongoing role, which due to his hard work and reliability has now led to a full-time permanent position – a great result!

Mick is happy to be engaged in the workforce and enjoys the physical aspect to the role and enjoys the company culture and his teammates. With his new reliable income, he's been able to get on top of his finances. Gavin will continue to support Mick to help him continue to thrive in his role.

The Bridge to Work team work with Bridge Housing tenants to help develop their work-readiness and support them as they transition into the workforce. If you're a Bridge Housing tenant and would like to find work you can register your interest online at **www.bridgetowork.com.au**, or contact your housing manager for a referral.

Northern Beaches update

Our new Brookvale office opened its doors on 5 August and we have already welcomed a number of Northern Beaches residents to the refurbished FACS office.

The first Bridge Housing block meeting was held at Manly Cove with a resident BBQ on 27 August where we had 22 residents attend and more tenant engagement activities are being planned!

A Living Skills program will be offered in October for residents to learn more about how to manage their tenancies.

Rent Review

The October 2019 Rent Review is underway!

Don't forget to return your forms to **rentreview@bridgehousing.org.au** or contact the rent review team on **02 8324 0804** if you have any questions.

Natural Order

Milk Crate Theatre recently offered some free tickets to Bridge Housing tenants for a play called Natural Order. One of the sessions was an audio described performance, accessible for people with a vision impairment. Lee, who is blind, attended with her carer, Rodney.

Director Jac met Lee and Rodney as they arrived, to guide Lee through a sensory tour of the stage, props and set. Lee appreciated the tour as the staging of the show was very unusual. The theme of the play makes a comment on the systems and structures of society, and how they contribute to and perpetuate homelessness.

Lee had someone sitting with her during the show to describe the play and help her move around when it was time to switch tables. The tour included a visit to the wardrobe department, and a description of each of the costumes and time for Lee to touch all the outfits and feel the textures and styles of the different fabrics.

Milk Crate Theatre uses the performing arts to change the story of homelessness. Programs are run for, with and by members of the community who have a lived experience of homelessness and the complex issues associated including people with

THEATRE REVIEW



Rodney, Lee and support dog Pluto

mental health, financial, emotional and physical support needs, addiction, trauma and domestic violence. There are lots of programs and ways you can get involved, including: attending a workshop, subscribing to the newsletter and going to their shows, or email and see if you've got the skills necessary to be a theatre volunteer. For more information go to www.milkcratetheatre.com/get-involved.

Love the Theatre? Belvoir St Theatre have free performances for low income earners roughly every two months on a Thursday. The remaining shows in 2019 are:

Fangirls - 24 October 11.30am

Packer and Sons - 5 December 1pm

To claim your complimentary ticket, visit the Belvoir Box Office at the theatre in person from 11am on the day of the performance and present an eligible Pensioner, Health Care Card or Veterans' Affairs Card along with photo identification. (MEAA and Equity cards are also accepted.) Seniors and Seniors Health Cards are not valid.

Good Neighbour Champions

We've received some great resident nominations over the last few months



including many examples of awesome things these people are doing to make their community a more positive place - keep them coming!

Do you have an amazing Bridge Housing Neighbour who:

- ▶ Does a great job taking care of the common areas?
- ▶ Helps keep the gardens at your block beautiful?
- ▶ Goes above and beyond to help other people?
- ▶ Is a great neighbour to have around?
- ▶ Contributes to creating a positive community to live in?
- ▶ Is a Bin legend?

You can nominate them to go in the running to become a Good Neighbour Champion and receive a \$50 gift card! Download the nomination form at www.bridgehousing.org.au or contact us via email at community@bridgehousing.org.au or phone 8324 0800

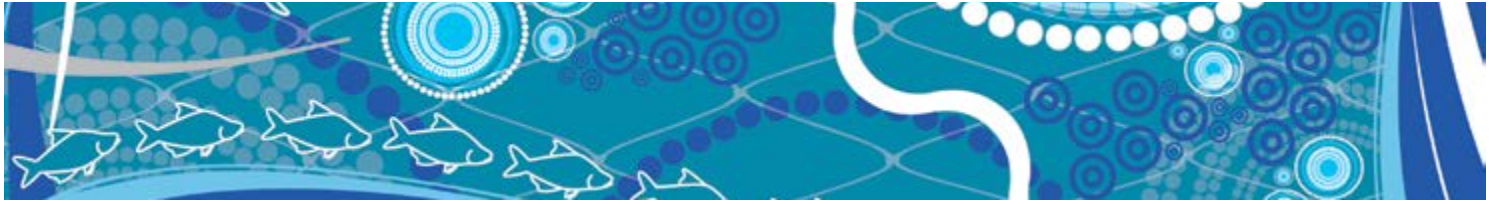


Bridge Buddies

Have you heard about Bridge Buddies yet? Bridge Buddies is a way for tenants to make new friends and reduce isolation in the community. It's also a way for new tenants to learn more about the programs and services Bridge Housing offers, from existing experienced tenants. The Bridge is a knowledgeable and experienced Bridge housing tenant, and the Buddy is a new tenant. The Bridge and Buddy are matched by staff according to their interests, what they want from the Bridge Buddy relationship, their availability and preferred contact method (telephone, email, in person, etc). For more information, or an application form, please contact the Community Team on 02 8324 0851 or community@bridgehousing.org.au



Stronger Smarter Institute



Are you an indigenous woman interested in a STEM teaching career? The Stronger Smarter Institute is running programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. If you are an educator, or studying in high school or uni, the Teachers of STEM initiative could help you with mentoring, support pathways, and professional development.

What is STEM? Stem stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. STEM can be applied to all subject areas and is about using a range of skills to investigate the world.

What interests align with STEM education? Fishing, cooking, tinkering, drones, sports, bush walking, networking, technology, photography, gardening, crafting, plants, animals, family, art.

Who can access this support? Indigenous education workers, primary teachers, university students, community members, high school teachers.

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been applying STEM thinking for millennia, and continue to do so today.

To find out more or register your interest, visit <https://strongersmarter.com.au/teachers-in-stem/>

Don't forget your Active Kids and Creative Kids vouchers

The NSW state government offers two different vouchers, Creative Kids and Active Kids, for parents or caregivers of school-aged children to help with the cost of activities. Both vouchers are available once a year to all children in NSW aged between 4.5 -18 years who are enrolled in school.

The Creative Kids voucher is a \$100 voucher for school aged children to use for music, dance and drama lessons, language classes or visual arts, even coding, public speaking or circus skills. You can apply for a Creative Kids Voucher once per year.

The Active Kids Vouchers are a \$100 voucher, for all children aged 4.5 - 18 years to contribute to sport, fitness and recreation costs like fees and rego.



Active Kids (Orbit! 2019)

To apply for these vouchers online you need:

- a Medicare card with the child's name on, and
- a MyService account with Service NSW

If you don't have a MyService account, or you can't apply online, visit a Service NSW centre or give them a call on **13 77 88**.

Active Kids and Creative Kids Vouchers have to be used at a registered provider. If your child does an activity, you can suggest that the provider becomes registered to accept the vouchers.

Return your Repairs Feedback Survey to WIN!

All completed and returned Repairs and Maintenance Feedback Surveys are entered in to a monthly prize draw. To be in the running to win all you need to do is complete and return the Repairs and Maintenance Survey after our contractor has attended your home. It's as easy as that!

Two lucky winners each month receive \$50 gift vouchers!

Congratulations to the May, June and July Winners:

Garry from Balmain, Tania from Glebe, Vicki from Maroubra, Yan from Belmore, Lee from Erskineville, Phong from Camperdown

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

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 keep to that appointment?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Did the contractor identify the problem?
☐ 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 ☐ Early 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 #

Thank you for your feedback

Bridge Housing Tenant Advisory Groups



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.

Bridge Housing currently has six tenant groups that meet regularly. They are Central TAG, East TAG, West TAG, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG (ATTAG), Bankstown TAG and Vietnamese TAG (VNTAG). All Bridge Housing residents are welcome to join.

If you are a Northern Beaches resident interested in joining a TAG or leading a Tenant Group in your area, please let the Community Team know by emailing community@bridgehousing.org.au or calling the office on **8324 0800**.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG (ATTAG) Meeting Dates:

Redfern Community Centre Activity Room from 10AM - 12PM

RSVP to the Community Team on 8324 0800

24 October 2019

I encourage tenants to attend a TAG meeting to observe firstly and if comfortable share an issue or ideas - have a voice and an opportunity to be heard!



Bankstown TAG Meeting Dates:

Yagoona Community Centre, 176 Cooper Road, Yagoona from 11AM - 1PM

12 November 2019

RSVP to The Community Team on 8324 0800

Plenty of parking now in our new venue - come along and meet tenants in your area!



Central TAG Meeting Dates:

Redfern Oval Community Hall, Chalmers St Redfern, opposite Woollies & upstairs from the Café in the park from 10:00AM - 12:00PM

4 October 2019

RSVP to Rodney Hollis 0419 260 336



East TAG Meeting Dates:

****Venue Change** Margaret Whitlam Centre, Waverley Park on Bondi Rd, Bondi Junction from 10:00AM - 12:00PM for September meeting only**

27 September and 22 November 2019

RSVP to Julia Nunes 0423 451 188

Hello everyone, this year we were so lucky to have a range of guests speakers. Next meeting will be about Bridge Housing's new MyBridge Portal and organisation growth, so don't miss out!



Vietnamese (VNTAG) Meeting Dates:

Bridge Housing Office, L9, 59 Goulburn St, Haymarket from 11AM - 1PM

9 October 2019

RSVP to: Anna Barker 02 8324 0851



West TAG Meeting Dates:

Lidcombe Community Centre, 3 Bridge Street, Lidcombe from 10:30AM - 12:30PM

RSVP to the Community Team on 8324 0800

8 November 2019

Come along and meet your new TAG Leaders, to get involved or hear more about what's going on in your community. The November meeting will be an outing including lunch.



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

What's On

International Day Of Disability "Australia's Hidden Shame"



International Day of
People with Disability

Meet at Redfern Park and march to Prince Alfred Park to support children and adults with profound disabilities who cannot vote – their human rights need to be addressed.

The march is endorsed by Eora Resource Centre and proudly supported by grass roots Aboriginal women. For Enquiries please contact Aunty Shirley on **0449 819 843**

When: 2nd December 2019

Where: Redfern Park

ParkRun Near you!

ParkRun is sweeping Australia! ParkRun is a community of people meeting on Saturday mornings to walk or run 5km together. Register online, and bring a printed copy of your barcode and to receive a time at the end of your 5km's. There are events across Sydney, have a look at Parkrun.com.au to find a park run near you!



When: Saturday mornings. **Cost:** Free

Where: George Kendall Riverside Park in Parramatta, John Fisher Park in Curl Curl, Deep Water Reserve in Panania and many more!



Sculpture by the Sea

View the world's largest free sculpture exhibition and up your step count at the same time! Take in spectacular views on the Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk and absorb some art and culture too. For more information on free artist talks and suggested routes for people with low mobility, head to the Sculpture by the Sea website <https://sculpturebythesea.com/bondi/>

When: 24th October – 10th November 2019. **Cost:** Free

Where: Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk.

Become a Bridge Housing Company Member

Members of Bridge Housing Limited can vote at our AGM to elect directors and on any proposed changes to the constitution. If you are interested in becoming a member you can download a membership form from our website: <https://www.bridgehousing.org.au/documents/807-membership-application-form/file> or call the office to request a form.

Save
the
Date!

Bridge Housing's Annual General Meeting is being held on Wednesday 20 November 10am – 12.30pm at Redfern Community Centre, 29 Hugo St, Redfern NSW.

Our Tenant End of Year Party is on Saturday 23 November 10.30am-1pm... invites to follow.

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, 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

Waverley Council
1st Floor, 31-33 Spring St.
Bondi Junction 2022
Hours: Monday 1:30pm – 4pm

South Coogee Outreach

3 Yamba Place
South Coogee 2034
Hours: Tuesday 9:30am – 12:30pm



linking people
to a better future

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