

INSIDE

Have Your Say and Get Involved	2
Meet the Assets Team	3
HomeGround Real Estate Sydney	4
Bridge Housing Values You Award	4
Northern Beaches Update	4
TAG in 2018	5
What's On	6

Everyone Belongs

Harmony Day is a celebration of our cultural diversity – a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home. There are many great events held around Sydney to celebrate Harmony Day, you can search for events in your local area by visiting www.harmonyday.gov.au. You can also choose to wear something orange on March 21 to show your support for cultural diversity and an inclusive Australia. Everyone belongs!

Ngày Hòa hợp (Harmony Day) là ngày kỷ niệm sự đa dạng văn hoá của chúng ta - ngày tôn trọng văn hóa của tất cả những người gọi Úc là nhà. Có rất nhiều sự kiện tuyệt vời được tổ chức ở Sydney để chào mừng ngày Hòa hợp, quý vị có thể tìm kiếm các sự kiện tại khu vực của mình bằng cách truy cập vào trang web: www.harmonyday.gov.au. Quý vị cũng có thể chọn mặc trang phục màu cam vào ngày 21 tháng 3 để thể hiện sự ủng hộ của quý vị đối với sự đa dạng văn hoá và một nước Úc của mọi người. Tất cả mọi người đều thuộc về!

和諧日讓我們一同歡慶多元文化，尊重澳洲的各式文化。雪梨周圍舉辦許多活動，歡慶和諧日，您可造訪 www.harmonyday.gov.au，以搜索當地的活動。您也可於 3 月 21 日穿著誠色衣物，以支持多元文化與和含融的澳洲。大家都是澳洲的一份子！

“和谐日”是对我们所拥有的文化多样性的庆祝 - 对每一位将澳大利亚当作家园的人来说，这是对他们的文化表示尊重的一天。悉尼周边地区将举办多种庆祝和谐日的重要活动，您可以在 www.harmonyday.gov.au 网站上搜索您本地的活动。您也可以选择在 3 月 21 日穿着橙色的衣服，以显示您对文化多样性以及对一个兼容并蓄的澳大利亚社会的支持。人人都是其中一员！

يوم الوئام هو احتفال بتنوعنا الثقافي - يوم من الاحترام الثقافي لكل من يدعو أستراليا وطنًا. تم تنظيم العديد من الفعاليات الكبيرة في جميع أرجاء سيدني للاحتفال بيوم الوئام، ويمكنك البحث عن الأحداث في منطقتك عبر زيارة الموقع www.harmonyday.gov.au. يمكنك أيضا ارتداء ملابس بلون برتقالي يوم ١٢ مارس لإظهار دعمكم للتنوع الثقافي في أستراليا التي تضم الجميع. الجميع ينتمي!



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

Repairs - 8324 0886
repairs@bridgehousing.org.au

Community - 8324 0844
community@bridgehousing.org.au

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

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

Follow us



Have Your Say and Get Involved

There are many opportunities at Bridge Housing for you to have your say in how we deliver our services. By getting involved, you could make a real difference to people's lives and communities.



We are committed to including you in a way that suits you, so we work hard to make sure that there are many different ways to get involved. This includes ways you can get involved from the comfort of your own home through to attending meetings and workshops.

Here are the ways you can get involved:

Tenant Satisfaction Survey – Our tenant survey aims to get your feedback about your experience and wellbeing as a Bridge Housing tenant. This gives us a good snapshot of how we are going and areas we can improve on. Our next survey will go out at the start of 2019 and we encourage you to take some time to fill it out and send it back to us.

Time to Talk – these groups are an opportunity for different communities of tenants to gather together and meet with Bridge Housing staff, to speak in their own language or talk about issues of importance to them. For example, this might be Arabic speaking tenants, LGBTIQ tenants, or young tenants.

Your Views E-Panel – get involved without leaving your home! The Your Views E-Panel lets tenants provide input and comments on a range of Bridge Housing letters, forms and factsheets. This is all done via email and at a time that suits you.

Tenant Advisory Groups (TAG) – five tenant groups meet regularly. You can choose which meeting is best for you based on the type of group or location.

Redfern - Central TAG, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenants, Vietnamese Tenants
Bondi Junction - East TAG
Parramatta - West TAG

Maintenance Management Committee – this committee is an internal working group who oversee the delivery of our repairs and maintenance contract. The committee consists of Bridge staff, contractors and tenant representatives. The tenants on the committee are selected through an Expression of Interest process based on relevant experience.

Workshops and Focus Groups – Bridge Housing staff will often meet with tenants in workshops and focus groups to hear from you about specific topics and to get your feedback on new policies, procedures, documents and plans. We also hold Good Neighbours workshops throughout the year that focus on being a good neighbour and understanding our Good Neighbour Policy. You don't have to commit to ongoing meetings, you can come to any workshops that you are interested in. Invitations and information are sent by post and email and are posted on Facebook as the workshops are scheduled.

Block Meetings – Block Meetings give tenants the chance to discuss any concerns they have in their block, meet their neighbours, exchange information about local services and programs, and discuss positive ideas for change. Block Meetings are scheduled by a Housing Manager and are a great opportunity to meet Bridge staff and hear about what is happening.

Become a member and attend the AGM

– all Bridge Housing tenants are invited to become members of Bridge Housing for the duration of their tenancy with us. As a member, you are able to vote at the AGM each year. Simply email customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au, phone the office on 02 8324 0832 or complete our Membership Application Form available to download from the Bridge Housing website.

Projects with your neighbours – did you know that many Bridge tenants have beautiful community gardens that are looked after by tenants? Bridge can support you to build a garden at your block with a group of your neighbours through the Royal Botanic Gardens Community Greening program. Other tenants have applied for a Big Ideas Grant and used the funds to host block parties, art clubs and community events. If you have an idea for your block or community, then a Big Ideas Grant may help make that idea become a reality.



We would love to hear from you and talk to you about the ways you can get involved. For an informal chat or for more information on any of the above, please contact Francesca, Anna or Sarah on **02 8324 0800** or by email: community@bridgehousing.org.au.

Text Messages from Bridge

If we have your mobile number, you would have already received a welcome text message from Bridge Housing's new dedicated text message number. In the future, you might receive text messages about inspections, events and arrears alerts. If you have not received a welcome message on your mobile and you would like to receive notifications through text message, phone **02 8324 0885** and ask to update your contact details.

Digital Strategy - we need you!

Bridge Housing is developing an exciting new Digital Strategy and we want you to be involved! Later this year, we will be delivering a new web based service that will allow tenants to access rent statements and update details online. We want to talk to tenants about our online services and how Bridge can best communicate with you using different methods, such as online, phone, email and post. If you want to know more or would like to get involved in a discussion group, call the Systems Team on **02 8324 0860**.

Meet the Assets Team



Theo Posumah, Director, Assets

Theo is responsible for managing Bridge Housing's Assets Team. He is responsible for ensuring the various maintenance programs are carried out in accordance with relevant standards and legislation.



Bronagh Loy, Team Leader, Assets

Bronagh manages the responsive repairs and cyclical maintenance programs for Bridge Housing and assists Theo with reporting and budgeting.



Tayla Heming, Asset Maintenance Officer

Tayla looks after responsive repairs at Bridge Housing and makes sure the correct contractor is sent for the right job.



Andrew Stone, Technical Officer

Andrew is the Technical Officer for our East Portfolio. He is responsible for vacant and planned maintenance and provides technical advice to the Assets team when required.



Jess Pearson, Asset Maintenance Officer

Jess looks after responsive repairs at Bridge Housing and makes sure the correct contractor is sent for the right job.



Maree Clancy, Asset Maintenance Officer

Maree looks after grounds maintenance and the fire safety maintenance program at Bridge Housing.



Simon Port, Technical Officer

Simon is the Technical Officer for our West Portfolio. He is responsible for vacant and planned maintenance and provides technical advice to the Assets team when required.



Rachel Berry, Asset Maintenance Officer

Rachel looks after responsive repairs at Bridge Housing and makes sure the correct contractor is sent for the right job.



Jessica Turner, Asset Admin Officer

Jessica assists our whole Asset Team with tenant communication and administration tasks.



CEO Update

We are already well in to the New Year and it is shaping up to be another busy year. We have some exciting ventures that will be launched this year including HomeGround Real Estate, new tenant communication strategies and our disability housing programs. We are also preparing for the Northern Beaches Social Housing Management Transfer, which will begin in 2019.

There are many different ways you can get involved with Bridge Housing and I encourage you to come along to a workshop or TAG meeting this year. If you have some ideas for your local community, please contact the Community Team and have a chat to them about.

I hope you all find a way to celebrate Harmony Day this year on March 21. Australia is a rich and diverse country and Bridge Housing is committed to supporting diversity and harmony for all who call Australia home.

John Nicolades, CEO

HomeGround Real Estate Sydney



Bridge Housing will shortly launch a new not-for-profit real estate agency.

HomeGround Real Estate Sydney is based on a successful model in Melbourne and will help Bridge find more landlords willing to provide private rental homes at affordable rents to families in need and create a new income stream for Bridge Housing. All landlord fees and rental income earned will be reinvested in the business.

The operations of HomeGround will not affect existing Bridge Housing tenants or their tenancies. For more information contact: **Terry Livingstone** on **02 8324 0870** or **t.livingstone@bridgehousing.org.au**

Bridge Housing Values You Award

In December 2017, Bridge Housing awarded the inaugural Bridge Housing Values You award to the amazing West Team Housing Manager Sage Lukacs! The award recognises noteworthy contributions and celebrates outstanding performance in line with our values. Housing Manager, Aarti Singh-Otuhiva and Assets Team Leader, Lana Pitwell were also acknowledged with runner up awards recognising their hard work and achievements. Congratulations Sage, Aarti and Lana!



March Rent Review

The March Rent Review is underway and if you haven't already received your review notification letter or returned your rent review documents, please contact the rent review team as soon as possible. Without these important documents, we cannot calculate your rental subsidy and may have to charge you full market rent for your property. Some important dates to remember:

Centrelink changes pension and benefit payments from the **20 March 2018**

Your rent will change on **Monday 9 April 2018**

We have streamlined the process for tenants who receive Centrelink payments only and have signed an Income Confirmation Authority (ICA) form. If you have signed the ICA form you will only need to provide income details when we conduct an audit or if there is a problem accessing information from Centrelink. If you haven't signed an ICA form and would like to take advantage of this

new arrangement please contact Bridge Housing and we will send you a form.

If you and your household receive income from sources other than Centrelink, you will need to continue to submit the application for rental subsidy form and provide your household income details to Bridge Housing.

If you have any questions about our new process, please contact Bridge Housing's Rent Review team on **8324 0800** or email **rentreview@bridgehousing.org.au**.

Northern Beaches Update

Bridge Housing has been busy preparing for the arrival of our new Social Housing Management Transfer tenants on the Northern Beaches in July 2019.

We are starting to:

- ▶ Plan the transition process with FACS
- ▶ Meet with the other Northern District providers Link Housing and SGCH, and with local support agencies
- ▶ Talk to the Tenant Participation Resource Service.

In 2019, we will be holding tenant forums and block meetings to better understand tenants' transition needs.

If you have experienced a public housing transfer to Bridge Housing in the past, let us know if you would be willing to chat with our new tenants and make their journey easier.

Contact **northernbeaches@bridgehousing.org.au** for more information.

New and Revised Policies

We want you to be aware of any changes or revisions to our policies, so from now on we will let you know here in the newsletter about the policies that we have recently developed or updated. To read the policies in full, head to www.bridgehousing.org.au and click on 'Policies' under the Tenants tab.

- ▶ Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy (New)
- ▶ Affordable Housing Policy (New)
- ▶ Good Neighbours Policy and Fact Sheet (Revised)

TAG in 2018



Update from Pam Pryor Chair of Central and West

Welcome to a New Year.

The West Tag for March will have a new venue at the Parramatta RSL. It will be the Darcy Room, this is off site of the RSL. We will again be able

to have guest speakers. Looking forward to seeing a lot of familiar faces there.

We had our first meeting at Redfern, we had a workshop on recycling. I think everyone enjoyed it. It included a hands on component, and we learnt a lot about what we were doing right and wrong.

Disappointingly we have had to disband the Rozelle meetings, we didn't have enough tenants attending to continue.

See you soon at a TAG meeting.

CENTRAL:

Small Room, Redfern Town Hall

73 Pitt St, Redfern | 10am - 11.30am
RSVP to Pamela Pryor

Friday: 6 April, 1 June,
3 August, 5 October

WEST:

Darcy Room, Parramatta RSL

2 Macquarie St, Parramatta
10am - 11.30am
RSVP to Pamela Pryor

Friday: 9 March, 11 May, 13 July,
14 September, 9 November



Update from Julia Nunes Chair of East

Hello Everyone, welcome to 2018! I hope it will be a happy and exciting year. I can't wait to hear all about your holiday breaks and the lovely things that you did over summer. Don't forget to add the East TAG meetings

to your agenda or calendar. Try not to miss any meetings, as they will all be different and hopefully helpful to us in various ways. We will have guest speakers covering several subjects and providing information for us to learn better and easier ways of living. We will also have Bridge staff at the meetings to answer questions and fill us in on the latest information.

I hope you continue enjoying the last remaining summer days and see you soon.

EAST:

Theatrette, Waverley Library

32-48 Denison St, Bondi Junction
10am - 11.30am RSVP to Julia Nunes

Friday: 23 March, 4 May, 6 July,
7 September, 2 November

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Group

Bridge Housing Office
Lawson Square, Redfern, 10am - 12 noon
RSVP to Francesca Cathie 02 8324 0844

Thursday: 26 April, 28 June,
23 August, 25 October



Vietnamese Tenant Group

Contact Anna Barker to register your interest. Call **02 8324 0851**, text **0427 872 789** or email a.barker@bridgehousing.org.au



Bond Refunds

Bridge Housing has recently changed its bond policy and is no longer charging bonds to social housing tenants. We have been refunding rental bonds to all existing social housing tenants. If you have not yet completed the bond refund form sent to you in the mail, please ensure you do so by 23 March 2018. If you do not complete this form, you will need to provide further information to the rental bond board in order to receive your bond.

What's On

Free Boot Camp



**Every Monday
7:30pm – 9:30pm**

Meet at
Sydney Park
car park

Did you make
a new year's
resolution to

get fit and stay healthy? Head down to
Sydney Park every Monday night for
FREE boot camp for all ages and fitness
types! All you need is a water bottle and
towel. St Peters Station is closest to the
meeting point.

Activities for over 55's

The Parramatta Council's Over 55's
Leisure and Learning Service provides a
diverse range of education, recreation and
social activities to enhance your health
and wellbeing. There is something for
everyone from bus outings, choir groups,
tai chi and yoga, right through to crafts
and massage.



There is a small
cost for term
membership.
For more
information and
to book, phone
9806 5121.

English Conversation Classes

Randwick
City Library
provides English
Conversation
classes for people
wishing to improve their English language
skills. Migrants from all non-English
speaking backgrounds are welcome to
attend classes. This is a great way to meet
new people and help you feel part of the
community. To register for the classes,
visit the library website at
www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/library or call
9093 6400.



Save the Date!



Time to Talk for LGBTIQ tenants

Do you identify as
lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,
intersex and/or queer? We'd like to hear
about your experiences with Bridge
Housing – what do we do well, and
what can we do better. Is there anything
you would like to ask Bridge Housing?
Register your interest by contacting
Anna Barker on **8324 0851** or **a.barker@
bridgehousing.org.au**. Time to Talk will be

a safe and inclusive space to meet and talk
about your housing and support needs
(and we will have snacks and lucky door
prize vouchers!)



Orbit!

A great day of fun
and activities in the
school holidays for kids
aged 5 – 12 living in
Bridge Housing. Keep an eye out for your
invitation and contact Sarah Kingsbeer
to register: phone **02 8324 0827** email:
s.kingsbeer@bridgehousing.org.au.

Reconciliation Week Exhibition



We are looking for
artists to be part
of an exhibition for
Reconciliation Week.
If you are a 'maker' or
an artist and would like
to be involved, contact Anna Barker on
8324 0851 or **abarker@bridgehousing.
org.au** before March 31st.

Outreach Times and Locations

Parramatta Outreach
106-108 Church
Parramatta 2150 NSW
Hours: All day Tuesday

Mill Hill Outreach
Waverley Council
1st Floor, 31-33 Spring Street
Bondi Junction 2022 NSW
Hours: Monday 1.30pm to 4pm

South Coogee Outreach
3 Yamba Place
South Coogee 2034 NSW
Hours: Tuesday 9.30am to 12.30pm