

BUILDING BRIDGES

Community Building and Engagement Strategy 2018 – 2021



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land, whose culture is the oldest living culture in human history. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal people and their communities.

Thank you

We would like to thank all Bridge Housing tenants, the Tenant Reference Group, Tenant Advisory Groups, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group, staff, and organisations who took part in workshops and surveys to help us build our new version of Building Bridges.

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CEO's Foreword



It is a great pleasure to introduce *Building Bridges – Bridge Housing's Community Building and Engagement Strategy 2018 to 2021*. *Building Bridges 2018 to 2021* outlines a new and responsive approach to addressing community building priorities based on feedback from tenants and staff, and on research. It embraces the 1200 new households in the Northern Beaches that will be added to Bridge Housing's management in 2019.

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 builds on what tenants have told us and supports our continuous improvement. It also responds to new opportunities that arise from our growth, new funding options, tenant ideas, and partnerships.

At the heart of our approach is the concept of working together and involving tenants and partners in decision making about the way we do things.

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 is shaped by our experience, drawing on good practice in the community housing sector and broader community. We also seek innovation through our Bridge to Work initiative connecting people to employment and training. We seek new ways to connect, engage and work with younger tenants.

At Bridge Housing we are proud of the work we have done over the last 4 years to engage tenants at the core of our work. This has involved engaging with our tenants in our strategic planning process and in our maintenance contract management committee. We have engaged with our culturally and linguistically diverse tenants through the Time to Talk workshops and through the Vietnamese Tenants Group. We have worked with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group to monitor the implementation of our *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2017 to 2019*. We have also engaged with the Tenant Advisory Groups, run by tenants for tenants, and the Tenant Reference Group, and the Your Views Panel who have provided policy review and input into major changes.

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 builds on this groundwork to open up new pathways and directions for future activities based on solid research, collaborative processes, and our award winning approach.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'J. Nicolades'.

John Nicolades
Chief Executive Officer



Justin Adams



Footsteps in New Orleans

Ray Morgan



Idalma Albergoni



Untitled



Honeybee Vase

Artworks and artists from *We Are Here Now Exhibition* for National Reconciliation Week May 2018

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021

Bridge Housing's Community Building and Engagement Strategy

A guide for positive change

Bridge Housing believes that tenants should be at the heart of all that we do. *Building Bridges – Community Building and Engagement Strategy 2018 to 2021* is a guide for the organisation, community partners and tenants.

We want to work together to improve wellbeing and strengthen a sense of community for tenants, their families and household members through:

- ▶ supporting successful tenancies
- ▶ making sure that tenants have a real say in the way we do things
- ▶ building opportunities for younger tenants
- ▶ increasing access to opportunities
- ▶ strengthening neighbourhood and community connections.

What will the strategy do?

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 is a plan that

everyone can use. It provides guidance for Bridge Housing as an organisation and for our tenants, applicants, staff and communities about our key directions for community engagement and tenant participation activities.

This strategy highlights how we will work together with our stakeholders to develop and implement our community and capacity building and tenant participation work over the next three years. It identifies key focus areas to guide our work and develop new initiatives that respond to:

- ▶ tenant ideas for positive change
- ▶ funding opportunities
- ▶ partnership opportunities
- ▶ innovation and research
- ▶ our capacity as we grow.

Actions arising from this strategy will be included in Bridge Housing's strategic and business plans, which guide our organisational directions.





Why is *Building Bridges* important?

We believe that strong and resilient communities are built from the ground up – by working with the strengths of our tenants in their local communities and through strong partnerships with local organisations and businesses. We adopt a long term approach to capacity building activities. By being adaptive and driving innovation we can help tenants create new stories and drive positive health, wellbeing, and social inclusion outcomes.

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 builds on the work we have done over the last four years to embed community engagement and tenant participation at the core of our business. It also integrates our learnings from the implementation of our first strategy - *Building Bridges 2014 to 2017*.

This next strategy adopts a more flexible and responsive approach to community building and engagement – an approach that provides the space to take on positive ideas for change, responds to changes in our tenant community, and harnesses emerging funding and project opportunities as they arise.

The development of this strategy resonates with our mission, vision, and corporate values of working in communities to promote housing services, and to involve tenants in service delivery and in their communities. This strategy also fulfils our responsibilities under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.

A collaborative process

Building Bridges 2018 to 2021 was created by working with tenants, staff, support partners and our tenant advisory groups. In developing *Building Bridges* we:

- ▶ reviewed the literature on innovations in tenant participation and community building
- ▶ looked at what tenants have told us through the TAG's and annual tenants survey
- ▶ met with government and non-government organisations and attended forums and seminars
- ▶ conducted workshops for tenants, staff and support partners
- ▶ included children through a survey and art project at Orbit, our annual kids engagement day
- ▶ interviewed parents
- ▶ used SMS and Survey Monkey to target and survey tenants who weren't represented at the workshops
- ▶ reviewed our drafts with the Tenant Reference Group and senior staff.

What tenants, staff, support partners and our research have told us has been incorporated in this strategy and reflected back through reports and briefings. This strategy talks about what we can and will do as an accountable, responsible and responsive community housing provider to create positive change for tenants and their families.

Who we are

Bridge Housing

Bridge Housing is an award-winning community housing provider innovating to create great outcomes for the communities we serve. Our mission is to improve lives and strengthen communities through the provision of housing and services for low to moderate income households.

In 2018 we have a portfolio of 2,244 properties providing secure affordable housing to over 3,335 residents. By 2019 our portfolio will increase to over 3,300 properties following the management transfer of over 1,200 properties in the Northern Beaches.

We offer secure, quality homes to people disadvantaged in Sydney's challenging housing market and who cannot afford to lease in the private rental market,

let alone buy their own home. We house tenants and their families for as long as required in social, supported or affordable housing based on their income, needs and circumstances.

We are registered as a Tier 1 provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing, and are a registered charity under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission. We operate to the highest standards of governance and customer service.

Our Community Team

Led by the Sustainable Communities Manager, the Community Team works alongside tenants and communities to develop and implement community building and engagement initiatives. We work in partnership with the whole organisation to make

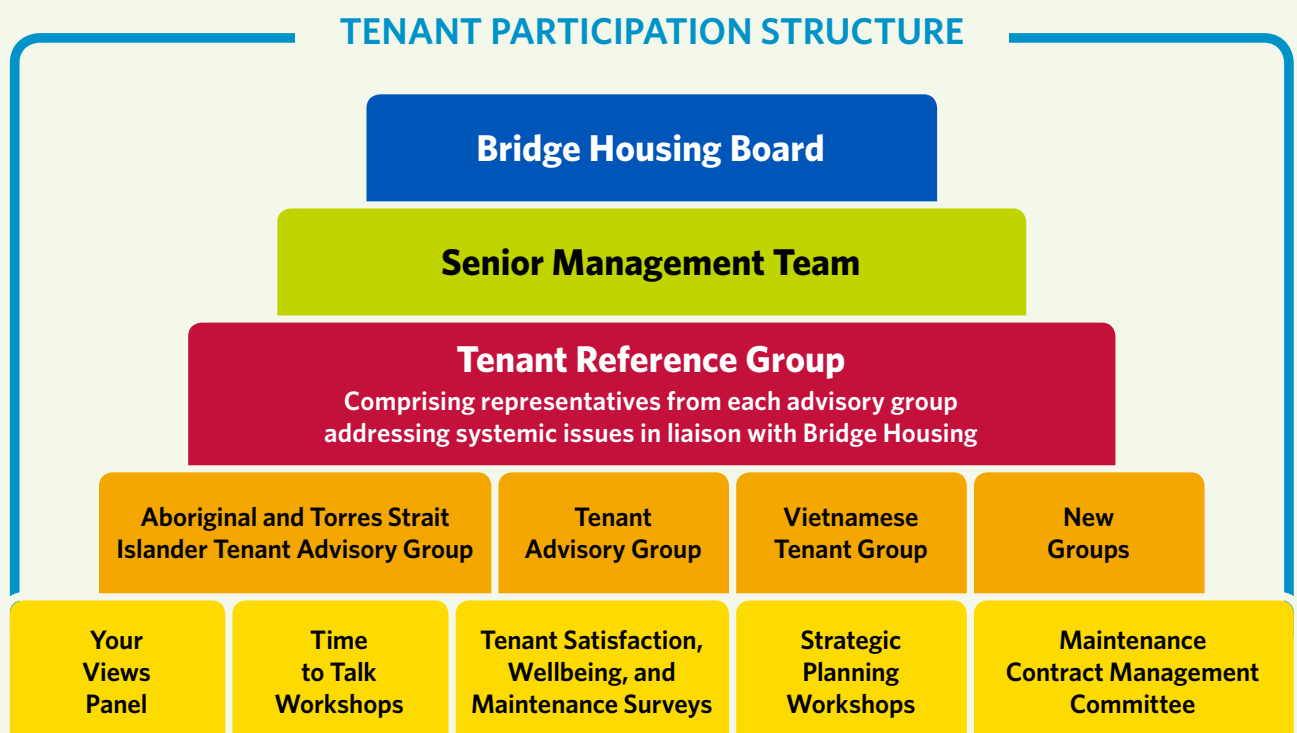
sure that tenant voices are at the heart of all that we do.

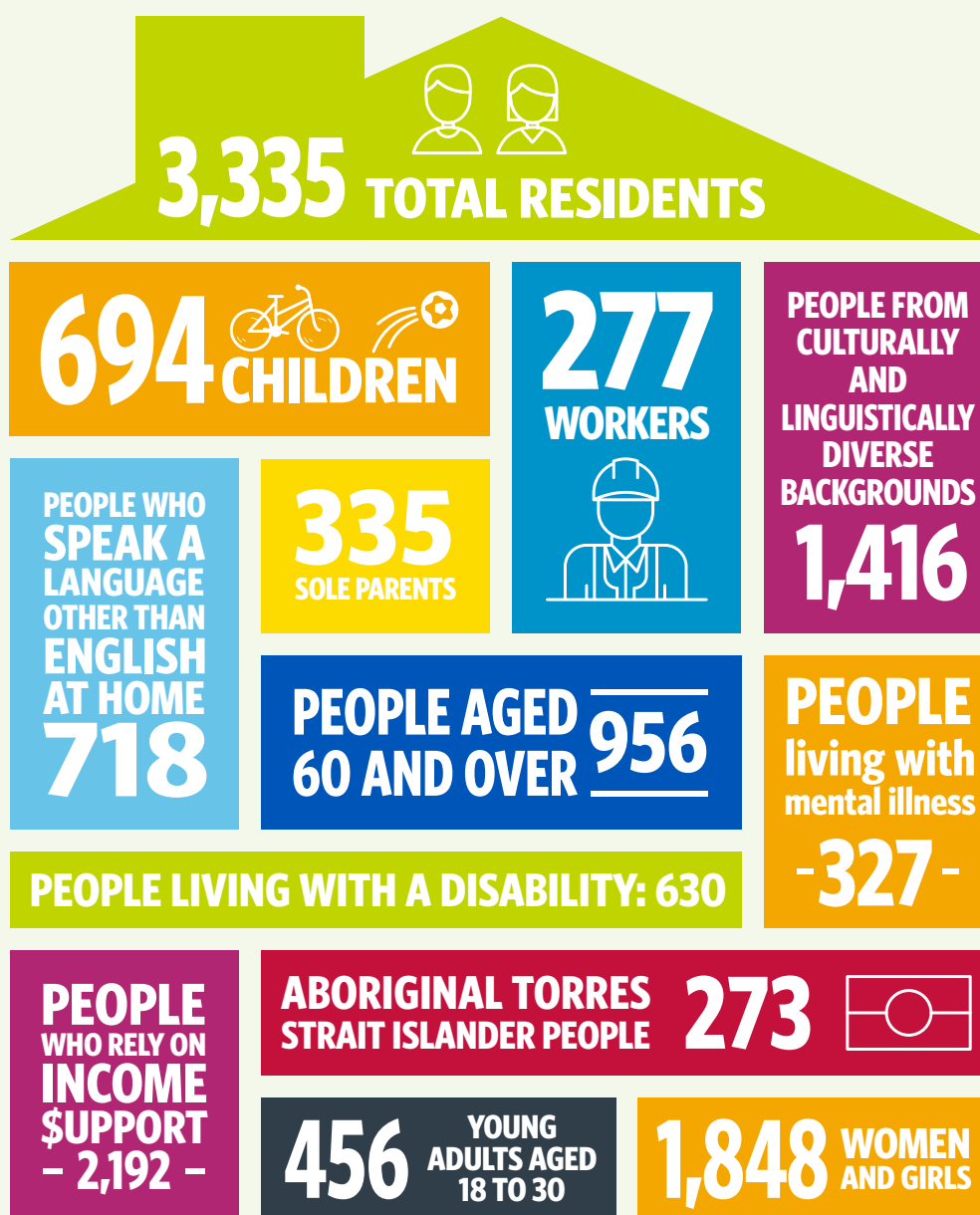
Tenant participation at the heart of our approach

At Bridge Housing, much of our work is developed in collaboration or with input from tenants, household members, and communities. Our tenant participation structure means that tenants can get involved in a way that suits them.

Tenant Advisory Groups (TAG)

are run by tenants for tenants. They operate in different geographical locations and for different community groups. Representatives from each TAG meet with Bridge Housing through the Tenant Reference Group to inform decisions, exchange information, develop new initiatives, and review policies and communications.





All figures as at 30 June 2017

A diverse tenant community

Tenants come to Bridge Housing from all walks of life and all backgrounds. They are activists, artists, parents, volunteers and workers. They are community members, elders, leaders, survivors and everyday people with rights and responsibilities.

Bridge Housing tenants are also some of the most

disadvantaged and vulnerable people in Sydney, with high levels of complex needs.



At Bridge Housing we have made a commitment to make sure we know who our tenants are and what they think is important. Working closely with the Tenant Reference Group and the TAGs,

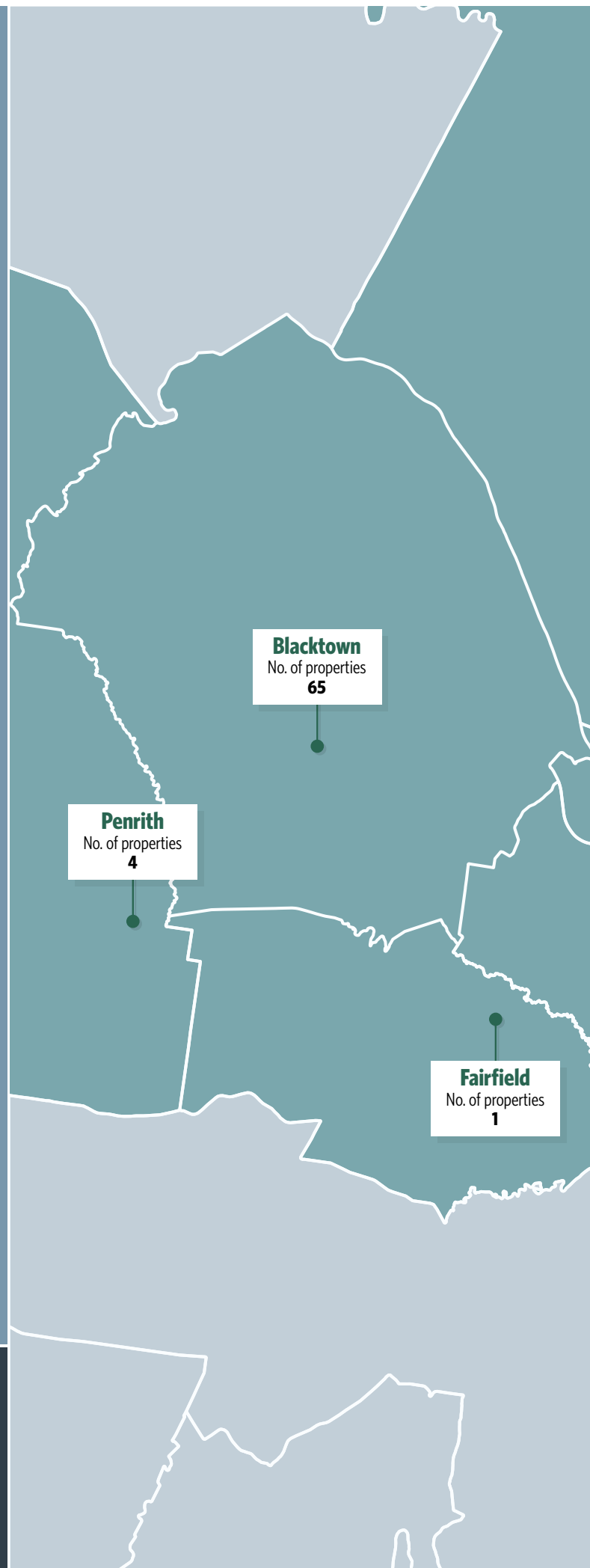
conducting our tenant surveys, and offering regular Time to Talk Workshops and other events helps us accomplish this. We are also documenting tenant stories through our Tenant Video project that you can view online at www.bridgehousing.org.au.

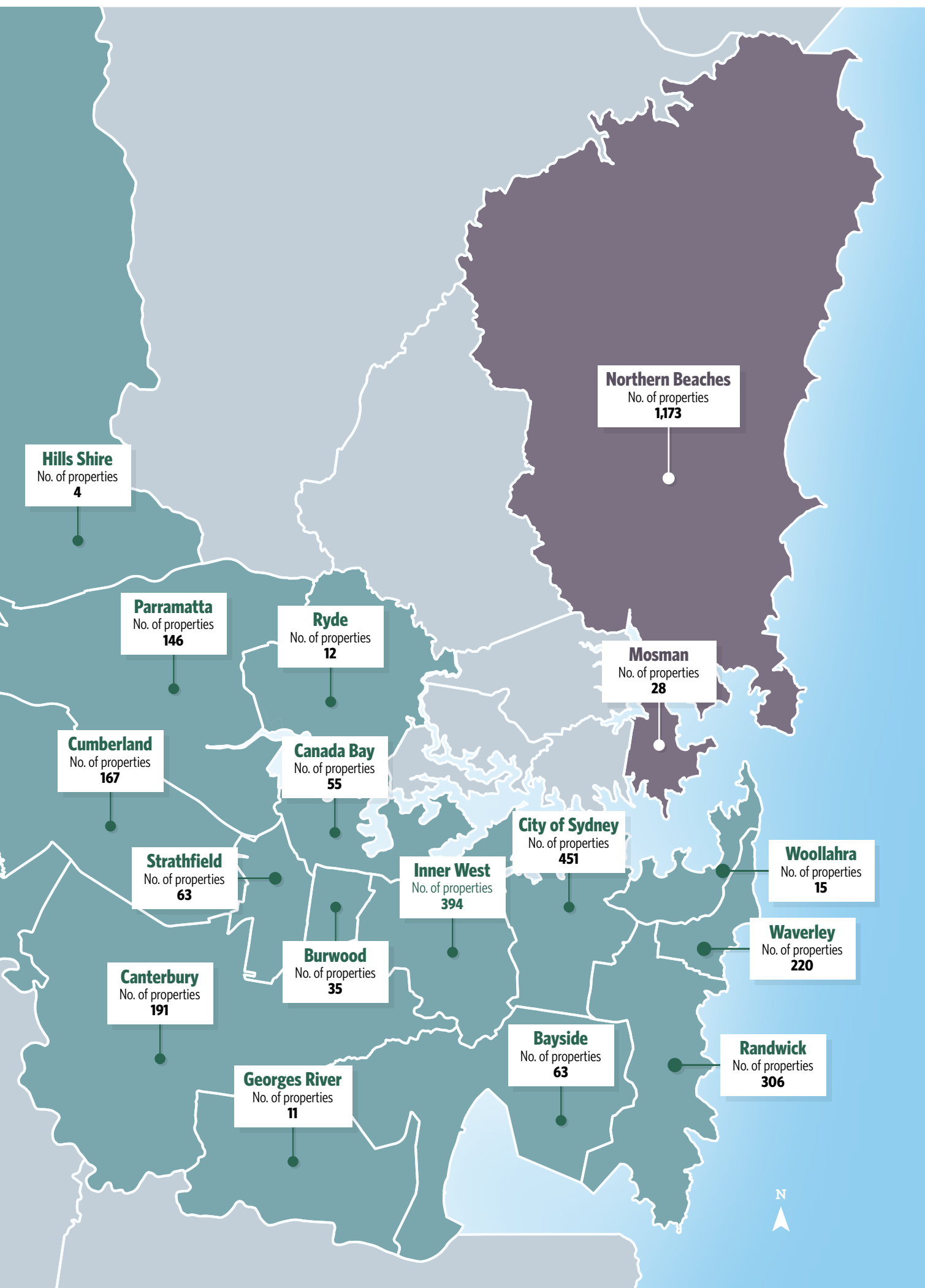
Where Tenants Live

Bridge Housing currently operates across 18 local government areas in metropolitan Sydney. From August 2019, Bridge Housing will take over the management of over 1,200 properties in the Northern Beaches.

Our operating area will extend from Botany Bay in the south to Warriewood in the north and Blacktown in the West. Over the coming months we will be working with tenants from Manly, Brookvale, Forestville, Narrabeena, Mosman, Dee Why and surrounds - to learn about who they are and how they want to engage with us.

-  Existing operating areas as at 30 June 2018
-  New operating areas from August 2019





How we work with tenants

We believe that an important part of any organisation is how it works with the people and communities affected by the decisions it makes. In an inclusive society people empower themselves. For this reason we believe that tenants are in the best position to decide how their tenancies, their lives, and their communities develop. We can support this by working together to provide meaningful opportunities for all tenants to speak out, get involved, and have a real say in and real influence over the decisions we make.

The way we engage with people and their communities is changing. There is much more of a focus on direct involvement and the use of technology to allow broader engagement across communities. We are excited by this new focus on participation in the community housing sector and in the broader community. We are committed to working with tenants and communities to make sure we collaborate and engage in a way that suits them.

We are not interested in engagement for engagement's sake. We engage to inform our work and service delivery, to build knowledge, trust and understanding, and to enable equality, inclusion and social justice. Our engagement principles are outlined on our website at www.bridgehousing.org.au.

Outlined below are some of the methods and techniques we can use to engage with tenants and communities - some of these we are already using, others are yet to be tested:

- ▶ improved use of **technology and social media** to encourage participation in decision making, information exchange, and input into programs, initiatives, and planning
- ▶ using elements of gaming to make participation and engagement more fun, particularly to engage our younger tenants - this new trend is called **gamification**. We will be looking at how we can implement this approach through social media, surveys and face to face at workshops
- ▶ **engagement pop ups** - coming to you, instead of expecting you to come to us - but also doing this in interesting ways through the use of digital technologies and social media - for example creating selfie stories and digital loungerooms
- ▶ a focus on **placemaking** as outlined in Places People Want to Live - focusing our community building efforts by immersing ourselves in specific geographical communities
- ▶ using **journey mapping** - a step by step examination of how people experience our processes to investigate and improve the customer service experience of tenants accessing our services. For example, this could be done for the sign up or rent review process
- ▶ where possible partnering with other organisations and tenants to create **collective impact** programs to find creative solutions for complex problems, bringing together all the stakeholders that influence a person's journey to and through support
- ▶ implementing a **co-design** approach for all new initiatives and programs so that tenants and other stakeholders are included in program planning, design, and evaluation
- ▶ using community building processes that are **solutions focused** and strengths based such as co-design, deliberative democracy, and appreciative inquiry
- ▶ ensuring that our **Outcomes Framework - The Difference We Make** is implemented effectively through all that we do - to measure the impact of our work and adapt, change and innovate.



Engagement showcase – the voices of families and children

At our Orbit kids and family engagement day in 2018 a short survey was completed by 31 kids. Their responses to the survey provide a snapshot of the way kids view their world. Although different to adults, their perspectives help build the bigger picture of the key themes that are important to Bridge Housing tenants and their families.

The survey was only short and although not comprehensive, we recognise the important perspective that kids have. Their responses revealed some key themes:

- ▶ kids need green spaces to play and be outdoors, whether that be parks or backyards

- ▶ kids value their own domains and families require housing that suits their family size
- ▶ kids generally live in a small world and the adults they have contact with contribute significantly to the dreams they have for their futures. This is especially true for positive role models such as teachers and community leaders who have a direct influence on kid's perceptions of the world of work
- ▶ kids are growing up in a world that is saturated with technology. Being able to access technology, internet, and gaming consoles in their homes is really important.

We will use this information to keep kids in mind when we are creating new initiatives and programs.

"The best thing about my home is that it's the right size for us. My dream is to be a good leader for little kids"
– Blaize, aged 10

"The best thing about my home is my PS4 and my dream is to be a soccer player"
– Ameer, aged 9

"I have a Chihuahua called Lexy and we keep each other company. My dream is to be a teacher and a vet because I love animals!"
– Kate, aged 9



"I live with my mum and dad. The best thing about my home is playing with my family. My dream is to be a zoo keeper and work at McDonalds"
– Nyarla, aged 5

"The best thing about my home is that I have the best family and the bestest friend and my own bedroom. My dream is to be a teacher at my school"
– Paetyn, aged 8

Developing our key focus areas

We have developed some key focus areas to guide our work and the way we respond to opportunities. They are based on our previous work, what tenants and staff told us, and research in housing and community development.

We will use these priorities and what kids told us as a guide for responding to opportunities over the next three years. What we implement will depend on effective and thoughtful responses in the context of resources and capacity.



We started by asking tenants what their top priorities in life for themselves and their communities are. We asked them to think about both positive priorities and things in life that might be a challenge for their communities, or that they themselves might struggle with. We also talked to staff about their experience and knowledge, especially of tenants with complex needs – tenants who might not be in a position to come to a workshop or answer a survey.

We looked at statistics, complaints, and feedback from other workshops and surveys to investigate priorities for tenants. When we move into the Northern Beaches we will also survey new tenants coming across from FACS Housing.

We will report back through our website, *Our Place* the tenant newsletter, and our Facebook page about what we are doing and how it relates to your priorities.

Key focus area 1:

Supporting successful tenancies

We want to make sure that people can access good quality and appropriate housing that meets their changing needs, where they feel safe and secure, and where they can make a home for themselves. We recognise that tenants who are unable to sustain their social housing tenancies face unaffordable housing options and are at risk of homelessness. We work closely with tenants and organisations to make sure that tenants have the opportunity to access the services and support they need to stay in their homes.

Outlined below are what tenants, staff and research told us about priorities for this area.

Health and wellbeing

Overwhelmingly tenants chose health and wellbeing as a top priority with a focus on self-care, mental health, and connections to health services that are appropriate and affordable. Mental health training and awareness is an important priority for staff to improve the way we deliver services to tenants living with mental health issues.

Nearly 60% of tenants live on their own and over half of these are over 55 years of age. At our workshops, tenants talked about keeping busy and fighting loneliness. For staff working with complex needs and older tenants, addressing social isolation was an important priority. An active response to supporting tenants who might fall through the gaps was also a priority – investigating how we can support those tenants who don't need to be linked in with our support partners, but might need support with specific life skills such as cooking or friendships.

Safety and security

Tenants want to feel safe and secure in their homes with appropriate infrastructure to support that, such as good locks and lighting, and opportunities to get to know their neighbours.

Being able to stay in my home

Tenants want secure leases and to be able to stay in their homes as they age, with access to clear information about their housing options. Leasehold tenants were concerned about relocations, and



tenants thought that being able to modify their home as their needs changed was important. Connecting tenants with aged care services was an important priority for staff.

Beautiful and peaceful surroundings

The quality of our housing is also important. Liveable homes that are designed for comfort, privacy, and are pest free was a priority for many. Shared respect for common areas was important as well as a responsive and good quality repairs and maintenance service.

What we will do:

- ▶ respond effectively to opportunities that address the priorities outlined above
- ▶ examine the establishment of a Block Champions project to recognise and support tenants that look after their blocks
- ▶ work with our tenant advisory groups on initiatives to reduce social isolation, particularly for older tenants
- ▶ continue to deliver our evidence based initiatives:
 - ▶ annual home visits and tenant wellbeing approach
 - ▶ Hand Up Arrears program
 - ▶ Money Matters financial counselling
 - ▶ block meetings and Good Neighbours Workshops, with a focus on new blocks and building place based relationships with tenants.

Key focus area 2:

Making sure that tenants have a real say in how we do things

Tenant participation has been a focus of Bridge Housing over the last decade. We want to make sure that all tenants irrespective of race, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, gender, age and education feel like they are able to contribute. As an organisation committed to working with tenants, their families and household members, we want to keep the conversation open about how to give people real choices and a real say within the context of being an accountable, responsible and responsive community housing provider.



Outlined below are what tenants, staff and research told us about priorities for this area.

Communication and engagement with Bridge Housing

In our discussions and surveys communication and engagement was a priority for many. Tenants were eager to be able to access good information about our services, programs, and supports offered by Bridge Housing. They also thought that getting regular updates on staff and policy changes was important. Feeling listened to was a key priority for tenants and is currently the focus of much of our customer service training and improvements.

Reviewing our information for customers and staff

With staff and tenants both talking about communication we know that the information we provide, and consistent messaging from staff, are important factors in supporting successful tenancies and providing application processes that are accessible and easy to navigate.

What we will do:

- ▶ respond effectively to opportunities that address the priorities outlined above
- ▶ broaden our engagement with young people (see Key focus area 3)
- ▶ implement a Tenant Buddy Initiative for new tenants – so they can get information and support from experienced tenants who know how to navigate our systems
- ▶ work in partnership to develop a tenant engagement structure for Northern Beaches tenants
- ▶ continue to deliver our evidence based initiatives:
 - ▶ Customer Service Benchmarking Project employing tenant mystery shoppers
 - ▶ working with the Tenant Reference Group
 - ▶ supporting the Tenant Advisory Groups (East, West and Central) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group
 - ▶ enabling online engagement through the Your Views E-Panel
 - ▶ Time to Talk workshops to engage our diverse communities
 - ▶ quarterly issues of *Our Place* Tenant Newsletter
 - ▶ providing a subsidy for tenants to attend conferences and seminars
 - ▶ tenant focused Facebook page.

Key focus area 3:

Building opportunities for younger tenants

We want to engage with young people to ensure that we are hearing from a broad tenant voice. Young people aged between 18 - 25 years make up just under 10% of tenants. A focus of the next 3 years will be working with them to make sure they have a say in our work and can access local opportunities in their community.

In consultation with younger tenants, we have developed a number of strategies to improve the way we work now and into the future.

Bridge Housing will:

Provide opportunities for digital engagement

From now on all tenant participation activities will have a digital component built in to the activity. Some examples include:

- ▶ digital surveys using DeepLake (our digital interface) and Survey Monkey
- ▶ using SMS for short surveys and information sharing
- ▶ more communication via email and SMS
- ▶ promoting the Your Views E-panel to young people
- ▶ selfie booths and digital loungerooms at events.

Use social media as an effective engagement tool

The majority of young people have social media and use it every day. By using our social media platforms to engage with text, pictures, video and links, we have a better chance of reaching younger tenants. Over 2018 to 2019 we will continue to:

- ▶ cross promote our website and important information through our social media posts
- ▶ make sure that our Facebook page links to information relevant to young people on our website and the wider internet
- ▶ build our presence on Instagram and other social media platforms.

Promote self-care and mental health first aid

Mental Health issues are a challenge for many young adults and contributing factors may include pre-existing emotional conditions, unstable housing, physical health issues and history of trauma.



Through our housing and support specialist team, we will:

- ▶ support young people to connect to
 - ▶ recovery Colleges at Parramatta, Bondi, Kogarah, and Jannali. Young people can attend free courses for a few hours or a few days every week – the courses cover everything from Exploring Anxiety/Psychosis to LGBTIQ Mental Health to Creativity for Recovery, Mindfulness, and Resilience
 - ▶ other mental health services such as Headspace and On Fire
- ▶ continue to raise awareness about mental health and self-care through our Good Neighbours initiative.

Ensure our employment program 'A Bridge to Work' actively engages young people

A Bridge to Work is a partnership with employment services provider CoAct. The CoAct Employment Support Co-ordinator will provide one to one employment support for tenants of Bridge Housing. We will make sure young people looking for work are kept up to date about the program and encouraged to participate through information made available by their support providers and on YouTube, Facebook, and other social media platforms.

Key focus area 4: Increasing access to opportunities for tenants, their families, and household members

Bridge Housing very clearly has a responsibility to work with tenants and our community partners to ensure that we support tenants and household members in whatever they choose to get out of life for themselves and their families.

Outlined below are what tenants, staff and research told us about priorities for this area.

Education and employment/new technologies

Education and employment were at the top of the list with the search for flexible and part-time work a priority for many. A small but passionate minority talked about support for small business: especially for older people who struggle to find jobs but are full of energy and ideas. Technology was a barrier for some in job seeking and others wanted to improve their computer skills. Bridge Housing staff recognise that with an increasingly digital world the idea of “digital inclusion” is an important issue to address¹.

Family, children, and parenting

Another top priority was family. For just about every tenant who had children, their first priority was their kids – their health and wellbeing, educational opportunities, and for some, parenting. Tenants reminded us that for some people families include our “adopted” families and of course, furry ones – our pets.

Financial inclusion

Staff and tenants recognised that financial inclusion was important – being able to access information, financial services, and support to keep their head above water.

For some, this priority was about learning how to manage their money or getting better financial support. This is an issue currently covered in the media with economists, businesses, community services, and some politicians recognising that benefits, in particular Newstart, need to be increased by a significant amount.



For others, financial inclusion was ultimately linked back to the question of employment and getting a job or building a career. We are currently developing A Bridge to Work program in partnership with CoAct, an experienced employment services provider, to offer one on one employment support for tenants.

Affordable green energy

An important part of making ends meet is access to cheap energy. With an increasing focus on renewable energy and a carbon free future, a priority for staff was making sure that we are positioned for a low carbon future in a way that benefits and includes tenants. Supporting energy “literacy” so that tenants know how to access affordable energy and avoid extra fees and disconnections is a current priority. We will be looking at more ways to support this into the future.

What we will do:

- ▶ respond effectively to opportunities that address the priorities outlined above
- ▶ work with tenants to promote energy literacy, including new programs to support tenants to upgrade appliances and change service providers to reduce energy costs in their homes
- ▶ implement and evaluate Bridge to Work our employment program in partnership with CoAct employment services
- ▶ continue to deliver our evidence-based initiatives:
 - ▶ annual Orbit Kids and Families Engagement Day
 - ▶ Advance Scholarships
 - ▶ volunteer placements in Bridge Housing
 - ▶ Our Place Green Space placemaking projects
 - ▶ community gardens program
 - ▶ Tenants Talk Design to gain feedback from tenants on our new developments
 - ▶ implement our Design Guidelines for new builds.

¹ Bridge Housing is currently developing an IT strategy with input from tenants and staff to address technology needs and training for the organisation and for our customers.

Key focus area 5:

Strengthening neighbourhood and community connections

Bridge Housing is committed to working alongside people and organisations in communities and building on community strengths. We work together to make sure that we are accessible to vulnerable and marginalised people. We work in partnership with tenant groups, community organisations, the not-for-profit sector, businesses and all levels of government to support the growth and development of sustainable and inclusive communities, where people have the opportunity to take control of their own lives and participate actively in society.

Outlined below are what tenants, staff and research told us about priorities for this area.

Strong and connected communities

Strong and connected communities was a consistent theme in discussions with tenants. Priorities here included learning from and sharing Aboriginal cultural strengths; celebrating and embracing diversity and multi-culturalism; and empowering women. Many tenants were passionate about these issues. Some also thought it was important to keep learning about the world and to stay connected to the news and current affairs. Tenants were interested in giving back to their communities and helping each other out. People also thought it was important to connect with one another through social activities and events.

Placemaking approach

As we grow and move into new communities our placemaking approach - developed in *Places People Want to Live* - is an important priority for community development and service delivery. We want to make sure that we get to know communities from the ground up by working closely with the people and the organisations in them and responding to their priorities.



What we will do:

- ▶ respond effectively to opportunities that address the priorities outlined above
- ▶ develop and implement a new *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan* for 2019 to 2021
- ▶ develop place plans in areas of high social housing concentrations
- ▶ continue to deliver our evidence-based initiatives:
 - ▶ Big Ideas Grants and Capacity Building Initiative
 - ▶ Bridge Housing in Communities – attending and delivering events in partnership with communities such as Yabun, International Women’s Day, Harmony Day, Mental Health Month and Anti-Poverty Week
 - ▶ tenant art projects
 - ▶ End of Year Party for tenants, families and friends.

Measuring our success

As a social housing provider, Bridge Housing has significant influence on the wellbeing of our tenants and their households. The foundation of our impact is the provision of good quality, secure, affordable housing to people on low and moderate incomes. We know that a secure home provides a solid platform for enhancing participation, independence and improved quality of life. We have developed an outcomes framework *The Difference We Make* to help us measure the impact of our work across the organisation.



The Difference We Make builds on our current program design and evaluation approach, developed through *Building Bridges 2014 to 2017*. Key features include:

- a co-design principle of including the people affected by initiatives from the outset of the design process
- using logic models to demonstrate how our activities lead to positive outcomes
- using a mix of monitoring and evaluation methods, undertaken in-house or by independent consultants, including tenant surveys to measure service satisfaction and impact
- a responsive approach that makes changes as we learn from our evaluations
- a 'we asked, you said, we did' feedback framework so tenants and other stakeholders can evaluate our responsiveness.

Tenant inclusion and empowerment are central to *The Difference We Make*, recognising that making a difference is a joint venture – a partnership between Bridge Housing, tenants and household members. You can read more about *The Difference We Make* on our website at www.bridgehousing.org.au.

Appendix 1

Key terms and concepts

The following key terms and concepts underpin this document and were developed from a range of on-line sources and our discussions with agencies, support partners, and tenants.

Co-design

Co-design engages consumers, in this case tenants, in the design process, with the idea that this will ultimately lead to improvement and innovation. Co-design builds from the existing frameworks of consumer and citizen participation in developing social services, underpinned by the idea that collaborative, cooperative and community-centred approaches lead to more effective social services and greater social impact.

Capacity building

Working with people, organisations or communities to make sure they have the skills and knowledge to achieve their goals or participate in activities in an effective and meaningful way.

Collective impact

Based in the premise that no single organisation can create significant social change alone, collective impact is a framework for a coordinated approach that brings organisations together to challenge social issues and achieve social change. Collaboration is essential to collective impact, and developing capacity in the community to understand how to work collaboratively is essential to adopting a collective impact framework.

Community

Community is a broad term and has a number of meanings. It can be used to describe the people living alongside each other in a block of flats or within a local neighbourhood (place based), or to refer to particular groups of people

who come together because of shared cultures, ages or life-stages, interests and experiences (communities of interest such as sports groups, cultural groups, or work groups).

Community building

Also referred to as community development, community building is about working alongside people and organisations to develop strong and resilient communities through collective action and positive change. It is a way of working with community strengths; recognising that the best people to decide what communities need is the people in those communities.

Deliberative democracy

Deliberative democracy techniques bring people together to understand issue/s and provide informed solutions to the problem or issue at hand. Typically it involves:

- ▶ random selection process to involve a representative group of consumers/clients in addressing a problem
- ▶ information process over time to ensure that all participants understand the issue/s and possible solutions
- ▶ input from a broad range of participants including experts in the field, people with lived experience, services, law makers, and government agencies
- ▶ time given to deliberating, and discussing the issue/s
- ▶ respect given to the outcomes of the process and decisions or recommendations made by participants.

Empowerment

Technically this means handing decision making power over to someone, but in a less formal sense it can mean giving people access to the skills, knowledge and opportunities they need to have more control over their own lives.

Engagement

A process involving a range of activities to encourage participation, such as informing people, actively listening to people, bringing people together, seeking input from them, working with them and supporting empowerment. Community engagement is about making sure that we work closely with the neighbourhoods and communities that tenants are a part of. Tenant engagement is about giving tenants the opportunity to participate in a number of ways that suit them.

Participation

Public participation means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision.

Place-making

Place-making is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of places and spaces in communities. Place-making capitalises on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating places and spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being. Community engagement and participation are at the core of place-making.

Social inclusion

Many people are excluded from the opportunities they need to create the life they want. In a socially inclusive society all people feel valued and have the support and opportunity to participate fully in society.

Social justice

This term is used to describe the need for equality and fairness between people and groups of people in our community. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that

people face because of gender, class, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexuality or disability.

Tenant

We often use the word tenant when we are referring to tenants and their household members. When we need to be clear that we are referring just to the person who holds the lease with Bridge Housing we refer to “head” tenants. In the context of Building Bridges we mean all residents when we talk about tenants.

Tenant participation

Tenant participation is a part of Bridge Housing’s core business. It enables Bridge Housing tenants to get involved in decision making across the organisation. Tenants give input across a wide range of activities, including the TAG, tenant surveys, workshops, and celebrations. What tenants tell us is used to review and revise policies, build new initiatives, change business processes, and improve our service delivery.

Document Review

This document has been compiled by the Bridge Housing Community Team and is a living document that can be updated to respond to changes in funding, resources, best practice, evaluations and new ways of thinking. It replaces Building Bridges 2014 to 2017.

VERSION	CHANGES	NOTES
Final 3 July 2018		



Maddad performing
at the Communities
Belong Multicultural
Festival - supported by
a Big Ideas Grant from
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