



Reconciliation Week

and Interview with ATTAG Member, David Penrith

We had a chat with one of our Indigenous tenants, David Penrith to find out about his life and experiences as an Indigenous tenant, and his views on National Reconciliation and NAIDOC week.

Tell us a bit about yourself

I am a proud Wiradjuri man from Brungle NSW. I grew up in Tumut NSW and lived there from the ages of 4 to 20 years old. Tumut is situated East of Gundagai and Brungle. The Wiradjuri Nation is geographically the largest Indigenous Nation within NSW and it's probably the largest in terms of population. The boundary of the Wiradjuri Nation extends from Coonabarabran in the north, straddling the Great Dividing Range down to the Murray River and out to western NSW. At the age of 20 I moved to the big smoke, Sydney. I worked in the public service sector for eight years before moving to Tamworth then on to Bega. In my life in Bega, I was looking after children. I worked in the day care centre when living in Bega. I loved working with the children: children bring you so much joy! I have four children of my own who are living in Sydney and Adelaide. When living in Adelaide - that's right, I also lived in Adelaide for 12 years - I had numerous jobs at local council and I also made lenses for glasses.

After Adelaide: I moved to Griffith. While living in Griffith, I worked in a chicken factory - the worst job I have had.

What is important to you as an Aboriginal tenant?

Being able to have a house that accommodates myself and family when so they can and come to visit. My mum visits me here in Sydney, having the room for her is very important. We as Aboriginal people have big families. Having the chance to be able to have my family visit me is important. I love my Bridge house. Being in stable and secure housing is fundamentally important to my health and well-being. Historically, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have experienced much higher rates of homelessness and have been overrepresented.

What does National Reconciliation Week mean for you?

Being recognised as the first people of this land, along with our strong continuing culture. I will be attending the National Reconciliation Week Movie night Bridge Housing is hosting. I'm looking forward to it!

How do you celebrate NAIDOC?

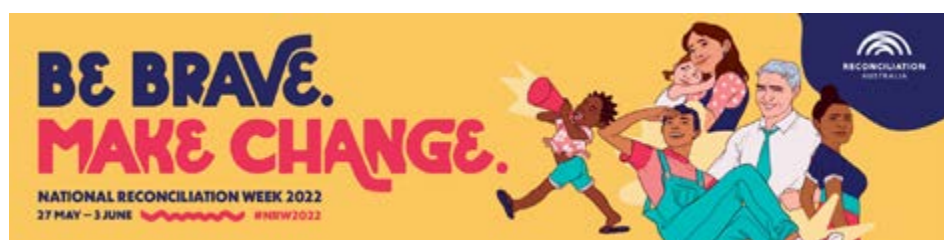
I try to get to as many NAIDOC Community events. There are so many so it's deadly to be able to catch up with your mob and people at the NAIDOC events. The debutante ball is also something I like to attend and wish there were more, I like to dress up deadly and see my mob dressed up, it feels good.

The National Reconciliation Week for 2022 was from 27 May until 3 June. This year the theme was 'Be Brave. Make Change.' This has been a challenge for all Australians to step up, be brave and work towards reconciliation to make a positive change for all Australians.



This year, National NAIDOC Week runs from 3-10 July. It is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about, recognise and appreciate the culture, history and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. All Australians are invited to support and get to know their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities through events and activities in their area. The theme for 2022 is 'Get Up Stand Up Show Up'.

Find a local NAIDOC week event- <https://www.naidoc.org.au/local-events/local-naidoc-week-events>.



CEO Update

This edition we focus on two significant cultural events for Aboriginal people, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week, as we celebrate the strength and resilience of our Aboriginal tenants, staff and community. I was delighted to attend a picnic with some of our tenants who volunteer their time through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group. Thank you for sharing lunch and a chat with me. It is wonderful to hear from our residents about how we can deliver great services.

This year's NAIDOC theme is Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up! It is a call for all of us to take action. To challenge racism, to celebrate First Nations culture and to work to make a real difference for Aboriginal people and communities.

To celebrate NAIDOC week, our Tenant Art exhibition is back this year at 107 Projects in Redfern. We invite all our tenant artists to submit their work for exhibition and sale during the exhibition period from 23 June to 11 July. I hope to see you there for our opening night! It is a wonderful event that brings together tenants from many cultures to celebrate our First Nations culture.

Thank you to everyone who completed a Tenant Survey. This year we had a fantastic response rate. Over 35% of our tenants completed the survey up from 25% in 2021. We saw a great improvement in our Customer Satisfaction scores with 82% of tenants satisfied with our services up from 78% last year. We have been working hard to improve our customer service so it is great to hear that we are hitting the mark. We are looking forward to sharing more results and identifying ways we can improve our services to you.

Finally, as we approach the winter months, please remember to get your booster and flu shot, stay safe and get tested and if you feel unwell, contact your Housing Manager for assistance and we will link you to support in your local area. Bridge Housing wants to help you stay safe and well in your home.

Rebecca Pinkstone,
Chief Executive Officer



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ATTAG Family Picnic 2022

The ATTAG Family Picnic Day was held on Gadigal Land of the Eora Nation at the Redfern Community Centre.



Saturday the 14th of May could not have been a more perfect day for a picnic in the park. The amazing weather meant we were able to be together outside on the beautiful green grass of the Redfern Community Centre. This was such a relief after we postponed the event three times due to all the rain we've had recently.

The day consisted of tenants, staff and their children sharing a beautiful day in the autumn sun: eating, chatting, children playing and sharing stories. The picnic included a beautiful spread from the Kallico café, thank you Kallico! Garry shared some of his amazing artwork which you will see at the upcoming Bridge Housing Art Exhibition from 28th June – 11th July.

The ladies enjoyed chatting and sharing stories with Rebecca, our CEO and Koolyn, one of the Housing Managers. Thank you, Rebecca and Koolyn for attending the picnic - it was great having you both there.

The picnic was a great way to spend quality time with each other in a less formal setting. For all of us, the opportunity to be in each other's company in the natural environment is positive after too much time spent indoors.

Thank you to our tenants who made the day - we really do appreciate your time and company and giving up your Saturday to attend the ATTAG Family Picnic Day.

Thank you,
Melissa
Tenant Participation Officer

NAIDOC WEEK Tenant Art Show

From the 28th of June until 11th July, we will be displaying the wonderful art from our talented tenant artists and residents of Bridge Housing.

In addition, we are extremely honoured to have the exhibition curated by the 2022 Archibald Prize Winner, Blak Douglas. Everyone is welcome and invited to the gallery to view our artists' work.

NAIDOC WEEK 2022 Tenant Art Exhibition



Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!
Come and see our Tenant's Artwork

28th June – 11th July 2022
at 107 Projects Redfern

Give Your Good Neighbours a Shout Out!

Bridge Housing wants to recognise Bridge Housing tenants who look after their blocks, go above and beyond for their neighbours, and help to create positive spaces to live in.

Do you have a Bridge Housing neighbour who:

- ▶ Does a great job taking care of the common area?
- ▶ 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! What better way to thank your amazing neighbour than to nominate them to become a Champion! Call our Community Team **8324 0836** or email community@bridgehousing.org.au.

Congratulations to our latest Good Neighbour Champions - Johnathan (Glebe), Luisa (South Coogee) and Darren (Manly)!

Advance Scholarship

The Advance Scholarship is for Bridge social housing residents who want to improve their children's experience of school or their own employment prospects. The program started in 2017 and was designed in response to feedback from families attending Orbit 2016 and 2017. Families told us that they wanted access to opportunities for the children that they are otherwise unable to afford and assistance with education and employment costs.

This year we had a total 62 applications, and 51 of these applications were successful. Over \$30,000 was awarded to the approved applicants. This funding was put towards the cost of 31 WorkVentures laptops, funding for extra-curricular activities such as swimming lessons, art and drama workshops; and, school uniforms, course fees and educational supplies.

Who is WorkVentures?

"As Australia's first IT Social Enterprise, WorkVentures has been committed to empowering communities and protecting the environment through technology for over 40 years. With a focus on helping vulnerable Australians become and remain digitally connected, whilst igniting the potential in young people, WorkVentures bridges the digital divide by providing access to affordable preowned technology to not-for-profits, disadvantaged communities, and other individuals. Using this service as one of our training tools, we also create meaningful training and employment opportunities to young people.

WorkVentures also plays a large part in Australia's transition to a circular economy through the maintenance, repair, reuse, and responsible recycling of technology."

Congratulations to all the successful applicants of the Advance Scholarship Program! We will be hosting a morning tea in the July school holidays to celebrate. The applications for the next round of the program will be open later in the year.



Nathan and Brett from Work Ventures preparing the laptops for delivery.

Bridge To Work - News!

Our hugely successful Bridge to Work program has delivered some life-changing outcomes for residents. Over the past four years, we have assisted 109 people, including 73 into work and 36 into study. Often those study placements have resulted in employment as they have allowed people to gain the valuable skills needed to enter, or return to, the labour market. Bridge to Work is a fantastic example of how we can partner with organisations to deliver real and lasting change for tenants through mentoring, advice and support. To everyone who has taken part in a Bridge to Work, we thank you!

The current program will end on June 30 and our Bridge to Work partners Coact have won an opportunity to deliver a similar program from North Sydney from July. We will be in contact with eligible tenants once that program commences and you can visit our website and social media for more updates. If you have any queries, you can contact the Communities team on **86240836** or by email community@bridgehousing.org.au.

Bridge to Work - David's Story

David contacted Bridge to Work in January of 2022 because he felt that he wasn't getting the necessary support from his employment provider. He is 65, and he hadn't worked for a few years, so he was concerned that his age and employment gaps would deter employers. We met in person a few times to redesign his resume, draft cover letters, update his Seek profile, and explore employment options. We also discussed strategic volunteering and courses to upskill. David decided to go for part-time cleaning jobs. After a few applications and interviews, he was hired by Compass Group. David started working part-time on April 5. He is happy to be back at work and enjoying his new position. Congratulations, David!

"The Bridge to Work program was a godsend. It outdid the jobseeker program required by the government."

Environmental, Social and Governance Framework at Bridge Housing

Bridge Housing is developing a framework to help to understand our impact on the environment and to work towards reducing that impact to 'net zero' through a range of activities and initiatives. Some of these relate to our properties, including the office spaces we rent, and some relate to tenant-focussed activities and initiatives.



In 2020 we undertook a program of works to replace all the fluorescent lighting tubes in our offices in Haymarket and Brookvale with LED lighting. LED lighting uses about 75% less energy than fluro or halogen lighting and lasts significantly longer before needing to be replaced.



A newly tenanted block in Glebe has a Hydraloop system installed. This is a waste water recycling system which collects, cleans and reuses waste water onsite to reduce water usage.

We have undertaken a feasibility study at a block of units in Parramatta to explore solar panel installation. Common areas at the site are already powered through solar power. Tenants have provided us with their power bills to help us to model and understand potential savings. If feasible, we will commence installing panels in September 2022.

Bridge Housing has partnered with Sydney Alliance and Randwick Council to complete energy audits for tenants. Energy audits help tenants identify areas within their home that can be targeted to save money and power usage, for example by replacing aging white goods or creating breezeways and insulating where possible.



Passivehaus design reduces a building's requirement for space heating and cooling through the building structure and fabric. We are exploring whether we can apply 'Passivehaus' principles to our portfolio, particularly when we develop new properties.



Bridge Housing is partnering with the University of Western Sydney and other Community Housing Providers as part of an Australian Research Council grant awarded to explore climate readiness in social housing. The three-year project aims to explore tenant wellbeing through a research project about the impact of rising temperatures for community housing tenants.



Each time we upgrade windows at a block or home we consider double glazing and PVC frames to assist with insulation and reduce draughts from older window frames.



Bridge Housing has a very active community greening program, Our Place Green Space and we can help you to establish and maintain a community garden in your block or neighbourhood. To get involved or find out more, contact the community team on **8324 0836** or by email **community@bridgehousing.org.au**.



What can I do to help?

One of the easiest things we can collectively reduce our carbon footprint is to increase biodiversity and plant more trees. Planting can create shade, remove carbon from the atmosphere and create a positive sense of wellbeing and calm. It is actually the only way that Bridge Housing can become carbon negative (remove more carbon from the atmosphere than we emit).

Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) Meetings

TAG meetings for 2022 are back in person! Find a local TAG meeting near you and come along.

What is TAG?

If you enjoy meeting new people, catching up with friends and finding out what's on in your local community then you would enjoy TAG meetings! Tenant Advisory Groups (TAGs) are tenant-organised groups which meet every two months to learn about a wide range of topics such as information on community events or local

services, as well as hear an update from us on changes to policies or fun events we have coming up. Sometimes groups run outings or games too. We support the TAG meetings by making sure they are COVID Safe and providing refreshments. A housing manager attends as well as a guest speaker. Following the meeting, tenants share a catered lunch and often have a laugh or two as they catch up. So if you're interested, take a look at the meetings below or contact us on **02 8324 0836** or email **community@bridgehousing.org.au**.



Don't forget to tell your neighbours about TAG too!

Upcoming TAG meetings:

Group	Next meeting	Location	Your Tenant Representatives
West TAG	Friday 8th July 10.30 - 12.30	Granville Centre, 2a Memorial Drive	Chair - Danielle Condry Vice Chair - Hugh Miller
Bankstown TAG	Tuesday 12th July 11.00 - 1.00	Yagoona Community Centre	Chair - Abdel Rahim Alsayed Vice Chair - Carol Kassabian
Vietnamese TAG	Wednesday 10th August 10.30 - 12.00	Bridge Housing Head Office Level 9, 59 Goulburn St, Haymarket	Rotating Chair
East TAG	Friday 22nd July 11.00 - 12.30	School of Arts Bondi, 138 Bondi Road nr Waverley Park	Chair - Julie Bryant.
Northern Beaches TAG	Wednesday 27th July 11.00 - 12.30	Warringah Mall Community Room (above Library)	Chair - Robby MacLaurin Vice Chair - Kathryn Pritchard
Central TAG	Friday 5th August 10.30 - 12.00	Tote Building, 100 Joynton Ave, Zetland	Chair - Rodney Hollis
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG	Thursday 21st July 10.00 - 12.00	Redfern Community Centre 29 Hugo Street	Rotating Chair

West TAG visit to Granville TAFE

On 11th March the West TAG did a tour of Granville TAFE. We found where the library and the canteen is. We visited the hair and beauty salon and the butcher. Both are open to the public. We also visited the air conditioner department, bricklaying and painting. It was quite informative. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. At the end we stopped in at the canteen for a drink then walked down to get some lunch at one of the local restaurants. It's worth a visit if you are thinking of doing a course. There are counsellors that you can talk to about courses. They are located in the admin block. By Dani Condry, West TAG Chairperson.



Home upgrade program continues and is set to make target...

Bridge Housing, together with our head contractors Asset Group Services (AGS) continue to make great progress with our home upgrade program. We are confident we will have completed upgrades to over 700 properties by the end of June 2022 and look forward to hearing from anyone who has had works undertaken at their home. If you would like to share your story please contact your local Technical Officer.

Here's what some of our tenants say about their recent home upgrade experience...

John in Manly

John received a full bathroom upgrade, some internal painting and new floor coverings - his home will soon be finished with the installation of a new kitchen. John advised that our Technical Officer Jane and AGS representative were amazing from the start and continue to be available for help while his kitchen is being finalised. John felt included from the beginning when he received a letter from Jane, advising him that his home was due for some upgrade works. John was able to discuss colour options with the tradespeople and Jane helped him



choose based on her knowledge. John applauded AGS on their time keeping skills, communication and how they treated his home with respect while they were working.

Johns says:

"I am very grateful for all that Bridge Housing has done for me."

David in Granville

David and his family are over the moon with the home upgrade works completed by AGS. David asked that some of the works were delayed to suit his family's needs and was delighted when Bridge Housing and AGS were more than happy

to accommodate and made sure they were available to commence works when he was ready. David and his family are now enjoying having family and friends visit to see their newly upgraded home.

David says:

"If you are contacted by your Technical Officer and offered some home upgrades, you will be so happy with the outcome."

Here are our technical officers, Jane, Simon and Steve displaying our new colour boards. Tenants who are getting home upgrades will be able to choose their options a little more easily now they can see them clearly on the sample board.



Wellbeing Inspection Prize Draw

Congratulations to Mr Daniel Dawson who was the winner of our most recent monthly prize draw for completing a satisfactory Wellbeing check. Want to be in the prize draw? If you receive a satisfactory Wellbeing check we will automatically enter you into the draw to win a \$100 voucher.

Bridge Housing 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

Elger St Outreach Centre is open 1:30 - 4pm every Wednesday

All other outreach sites are temporarily closed, please visit our website and Facebook page for updates on re-opening.

Contact Us

If you wanted more information about anything you've read in the newsletter, contact us!
Email: community@bridgehousing.org.au Ph: 8324 0836