

Spring 2023

**We acknowledge
Aboriginal people as
the traditional owners
of the land, and pay
our respects to elders
past and present.**

Bridge Housing says Yes to The Voice to Parliament.

Bridge Housing acknowledges that the land we live and work on always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We support The Uluru Statement from the Heart as an invitation to the Australian people from First Nations people to walk together on a journey of reconciliation and the pathway forward laid out in the Statement.

Every day we bear witness to the ongoing impacts of colonisation experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience much higher rates of homelessness and housing insecurity. This is due to discrimination and intergenerational disadvantage and compounded by a lack of culturally led and designed services.

Inclusion is a core value at Bridge Housing. We believe that people impacted by policy and decision making should have a real say in the way that these policies are developed. We believe the Voice to Parliament provides a genuine opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide meaningful feedback and advice on legislation and policy that impacts them. This will lead to better outcomes.



Voice, Treaty and Truth comprise the pillars of the Uluru Statement of the Heart. The Voice to Parliament, enshrined in our Constitution is the first step on a journey towards healing and reconciliation.

We understand that there are different perspectives on the best pathway to reconciliation and acknowledge divergent opinions. We will walk alongside and support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, tenants and service partners as we build our knowledge and garner support for the Voice.

Bridge Housing commits to Reconciliation and The Voice. We work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to create welcoming and appropriate homes, places, and spaces. The Voice guarantees that first nation perspectives are actively heard in meaningful conversations and critical decisions.

Walking Together Forums



Bridge Housing is delivering two workshops to provide Bridge Housing tenants and staff with the opportunity to be informed leading up to the Voice to Parliament Referendum. The workshops will be held in two locations:

Wednesday 13 September 10am - 1pm at Redfern Community Centre, Hugo Rd, Redfern

Tuesday 19 September 10am -1pm at Community Room above the Library in Warringah Mall, Brookvale

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP using the QR code or contacting the Communities team on 8324 0836 or community@bridgehousing.org.au

CEO Update

Providing safe, secure and affordable homes is central to our mission at Bridge Housing. Caring for our planet is important, too. Our new property in Victoria St, Glebe, is providing us with a wonderful opportunity to do both things at the same time.



With a \$7.8M grant from the City of Sydney Council, Bridge has been able to purchase a block of 20 units in Glebe. The property provides affordable housing for Aboriginal women in a culturally safe environment.

The grant has also allowed us to upgrade the property to improve environmental

sustainability. We have done this by adding solar panels for the common area lighting, heat pumps to reduce energy costs and double glazed windows and insulation to improve energy efficiency. We are testing the environmental performance of the building before and after the upgrades. We will use this information to inform how we can improve the sustainability of other older buildings that we own as well. This will help Bridge Housing and tenants save money and reduce our impact on the planet.

Over the coming months, we will share more about actions we are taking to improve our environmental sustainability. We are also listening to tenants, who we know are resourceful and have plenty of good ideas about

keeping energy costs down.

We are also interested in hearing from tenants about how we can continue to improve our customer service and better respond to tenants' needs. Anytime you phone Bridge, you will be invited to give us feedback through a quick telephone survey. By giving us your thoughts, we

can learn how to do better. In July 9% of tenants stayed on the phone to respond to the survey. 83% of tenants were satisfied with our customer service.

You can also provide us with feedback by calling us, emailing us or using the My Bridge tenant app.

I would also personally like to thank tenants that have come along to our Time To Talk sessions in Redfern, Granville, Brookvale, Glebe and at our head office in Goulburn Street over the last few months. It has been wonderful to share what we are working on at Bridge Housing and to meet with you all.

Rebecca Pinkstone,
Chief Executive Officer



Reviewing our Customer Service Standards

We're reviewing our customer service standards and would love to hear from you!

When: Monday 25 September at 1pm **Where:** Redfern Town Hall **RSVP:** 20 September Lunch provided

Scan the **QR code** to register or call **83240836**

BRIDGE AGM is coming up - Save the Date and renew your membership now!

The Bridge Housing Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on:

Wednesday 15 November 2023

**Redfern Community Centre
29 - 53 Hugo St, Redfern**

9.30am registration.

An AGM is a meeting that Bridge Housing is required to hold every year. It is an opportunity to look back on the past year to celebrate successes and discuss what we have learned with members.

Usually, a company would invite its shareholders. As Bridge Housing is a not-for-profit organisation, our tenants are invited to attend as members.

All Bridge tenants are encouraged to become members officially. We look

forward to many of you joining us as returning or new members.

You do not have to be a member to attend the AGM, but being a member gives you more of a say. Members will be able to:

- ▶ ask the Directors questions about Bridge Housing's operations or finance,
- ▶ vote on any proposed resolutions, and
- ▶ elect or re-elect board members.

Even if you can't make it in person on the day, you can vote by completing a 'proxy nomination' which means someone can vote on your behalf if they attend the meeting.

At our AGM, the Directors will present on the company's performance over the last 12 months and outline our strategy for the future.

Attendees will be able to join the Bridge Housing staff and board of directors for lunch afterwards. We will send out more details and a reminder a few weeks before the event.

If you have any questions about accessibility or need assistance, please contact the Communities Team at community@bridgehousing.org.au or phone 8324 0836.

If you would like to become a member or if you aren't sure if you are a member, you can sign up or find out by using the QR code.



Linda's 'Pizza Jam Session'

Linda received a Big Ideas Grant to organise a community event

What was your goal?

My goal was to have a social gathering with live music and pizza to get everyone together in the community room. I called the event 'Pizza Jam Session'.

Many tenants are new in our block of 16 units. Some tenants have existing relationships, and others are just getting to know each other.



What was your experience with the Big Ideas Grant Initiative?

I heard about the Big Ideas Grant from a neighbour who attended the North Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) meeting. I contacted the Communities team and arranged a time to meet to complete the application together.

Through the "Feed the Knead" program at our local Domino's, we were provided with free pizzas for the event. I was able to easily source the band as the lead singer of 'Hey Sugar Music' is a friend.

Communication between myself and the Communities team was a positive experience especially when we collaborated on the invitation and organisation of the day.

I formed a committee with two other neighbours who helped with preparation for the day. I did some door knocking to discuss the ideas with neighbours and invited the whole block.

The event was a great success with two thirds of the block attending and everyone asking when we could do it again. We all enjoyed singing along to songs we knew, dancing and chatting to each other outside.

The Big Idea Grant gave me the opportunity to use my event management skills and I felt a great sense of accomplishment by making the 'Pizza Jam Session' event happen.

We all appreciated Bridge Housing for funding the event and the donation from Domino's.



What has changed as a result of the Pizza Jam Session?

New connections have been formed and existing ones have been strengthened. Everyone is looking forward to the next event.

What's next?

There was some funding left over, which will go towards afternoon tea with party pies and sausage rolls, and a morning tea with cakes or doughnuts.

I want to schedule a social activity with the neighbours once per quarter to keep everyone connected.

Have you got a Big Idea?

If you would like to organise a community event with your neighbours, please contact the Communities team on 8324 0836 or community@bridgehousing.org.au for more information.

Assets update

Bridge Housing has carried out property upgrades using \$3 million funding from NSW Land and Housing Corporation.

We agreed with our multi-trade contractor, Assett Group Services they would need extra resources to manage all this work, so they hired 13 contractors and 41 employees, including 7 apprentices and 2 indigenous workers.

We completed works on 134 properties including:

- ▶ Installing **59** new kitchens
- ▶ Applying **75** internal paints
- ▶ Upgrading **14** bathrooms
- ▶ Applying **7** external paints
- ▶ Installing **50** new floor surfaces
- ▶ Constructing **2** new fences
- ▶ Upgrading **7** roofs

And our tenants told us what the impact of these works was?

"I feel like I am living in a 'brand new home'." This uplifting feedback came from one of our Northern Beaches tenants, who felt that the tradespeople were very respectful, prompt, and efficient.

"I also want to acknowledge the electrician who installed the new hot water service system.

My heart is so, so happy. I am very, very thankful to Bridge Housing."

Reminder - Tenants are our eyes and ears. Please sign off that the work has been completed at your home.

Great Properties Prize Draw

Every month we conduct a prize draw for all tenants who have completed their Wellbeing Inspection and are looking after their homes.

Congratulations to Mr Thomas Fairweather, Miss Nicole Taylor and Ms Qimei Yang who were the winners 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.



Technical Officer Jane Smith with tenant Aleks

New Housing Properties in Granville, Western Sydney.

Bridge Housing recently allocated 35 new social and affordable homes in South Granville!

We welcomed the Honourable Member for Parramatta, Dr Andrew Charlton to the property for an afternoon tea with tenants to launch the new properties. The tenants shared their stories with us and were so happy with their new homes.

Our CEO, Rebecca Pinkstone said, "the NSW Land and Housing Corporation and Bridge Housing have worked together to bring this much-needed social and affordable housing development to life. Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure that these apartments meet the highest standards of modern quality design and provide safe, secure and affordable homes for residents."



New Womens' Refuge on the Northern Beaches

We also want to congratulate our partner, Women's Community Shelters on the launch of their new Women's shelter for the Northern Beaches area. This much-needed safe accommodation for at-risk women and children was launched by the Hon. Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Bridge Housing will partner with WCS and Northern Beaches Women's Shelters and deliver four self-contained units that will provide medium-term accommodation that will give the essential breathing space for women to regroup, get the

support they need to move forward in their lives and escape the trauma of domestic and family violence.



Our CEO Rebecca said, "Bridge Housing is honoured to work again with Women's Community Shelters to support women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. Our role in this shelter project includes upgrades to make each home fit for purpose, ongoing property management and then ultimately assisting families transition into permanent long-term housing. Together we are working closely

to end homelessness and ensure women and children fleeing violence have a safe, secure, and affordable home as a foundation for a better life." noted Rebecca Pinkstone.

The Northern Beaches project is in the design and development application stage and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2023.



Since launching in March, the number of tenants logging in to MyBridge has steadily increased from 54 in March to a whopping 165 in July! So far you have used the portal to:

	Request 750 Rent Statements
	Request 339 Water Statements
	Request 106 Maintenance Statements
	Report 62 Repairs

Tenants have also applied for pets, requested an absence from their property

and uploaded documents directly to Bridge Housing using the portal. The portal makes it easy for you to view account balances, request statements and report a repair directly to Bridge Housing.

You can access the MyBridge portal by visiting our website (www.bridgehousing.org.au) and clicking the link on the home page. All you need is a mobile phone and a device you can access the internet from. The portal will open on a home computer, tablet or mobile phone.

Use your mobile phone number to receive a four-digit password to log in securely.

This must be the same number Bridge Housing has on file for you. If you need to update your number, please call us on 8324 0800.



Need help to get started? You can speak to a Customer Service Officer or Housing Manager to help. Call us on **8324 0800**.

Tried logging in and not received a code? Save this number as 'Bridge Housing' in your contacts: **0417 114 455** and mark as unblocked.





Aunty Barbara Rose



Aunty Jude Jarrett



Aunty Sandra Miller



Aunty Millie Ingram



Aunty Jenny Thomsen

NAIDOC exhibition

FINDING HOME was Bridge Housing's 2023 NAIDOC Week theme event, "**For Our Elders**", an exclusive photographic exhibition at 107 Projects. Over 8 days that the show was open, a whopping 205 people attended.

Tenants and staff came together for the opening of "Finding Home" and shared a night of celebration and collaboration showcasing Elders from the Bridge Housing community.

Our Elders shared their valuable insights on home and life, through captivating stories and images. Renowned photographer Belinda Mason of Mutti skilfully captured portraits of each Elder. The Elders contributed enchanting images of their most treasured belongings and life



Aunty Eunice Roberts



Aunty Love Tru



Uncle Jack Dunn



Uncle Byron Grey

experiences. This extraordinary exhibition explored and celebrated "Our Elder's" through stories and heritage.

Across every generation, our Elders have played, and continue to play, an important role and hold a prominent place in our communities and families.

They are cultural knowledge holders, trailblazers, nurturers, advocates, teachers, survivors, leaders, hard workers and our loved ones.

The struggles of our Elders help to move us forward today. The equality we continue to fight for and the gains we have made was found in their fight. Their tenacity and strength have carried the survival for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We pay our respect to the Elders we've lost and to those who continue fighting for us across all our Nations, we pay homage to them.

Happy NAIDOC 2023

Give Your Good Neighbours a Shout - Out!

Bridge Housing wants to recognise our tenants who look after their blocks, go above and beyond for their neighbours, and help to create positive community energy.

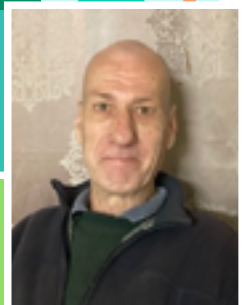
Do you have a Bridge Housing neighbour who:

- ▶ Does a great job of taking care of the common area?
- ▶ Helps keep the gardens at your block looking 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 Alan Vincent, Joe Kimpton and Michelle Glover.



Alan Vincent

Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) Meetings

Our TAG or Tenant Advisory Groups are organised by tenants for tenants. It's a great opportunity to meet your neighbours, socialise and stay informed. TAG meetings cover a variety of topics, including updates on community events, local services, and changes to policies and to plan social activities. At the meetings, a local Housing Manager and sometimes a guest speaker will attend. Afterwards, tenants enjoy a catered lunch, have a good time, and catch up with each other.

If you're interested in joining, check out the meetings listed below or get in touch with us at 02 8324 0836 or email community@bridgehousing.org.au.



Remember to tell your neighbours about TAG too!

Upcoming TAG meetings:

Group	Next meeting	Location	Your Tenant Representatives
West & Bankstown TAG	30th November 10:30am - 12:00pm	Yagoona Community Centre 176D Cooper Rd, Yagoona	Chair - Hugh Miller Vice Chair - Carol Kassabian
Vietnamese TAG/ Time to Talk	8th November 10:30am - 12:00pm	Bridge Housing -Level 9, 59 Goulburn St, Haymarket	Rotating Chair
Central & East TAG	12th October 11am - 1pm	Redfern Town Hall	Chair - Norbert Kisorbo Vice Chair - Noel Jeffs
Northern Beaches TAG	Thursday 16th November 11:30am - 1pm	Warringah Mall Library	Chair - Robby MacLaurin. Vice Chair - Grant Bannakin
Elger Street Community (ESC)	30th October 11am - 1pm	Elger Street Community Room	Representatives - Ericka-Jayne Boidin, Tania Thompson, Jonathan Foulds, Sheree Neumann, Felix Morgan, Emmanouil Harilaou
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG	Wednesday, 27th September	Redfern Youth Connect	Rotating Chair
	Wednesday, 13th December	Tribal Warrior Cruise	

Bridge Housing Opening Hours & Location

Goulburn Street Office

Level 9, 59 Goulburn Street Haymarket.

We are open 9am - 4.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday..

Brookvale Office

Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Road, and Brookvale.

We are open 9am - 4:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday.

Outreach Details

Elger St - Mondays 12:30 - 3pm & Wednesdays 1:30pm - 4pm in the Community room in 3 Elger St.

Granville - 2nd Thursday of the month 2:30pm - 4:30pm Granville Centre, 2a Memorial Drive, Granville.

South Coogee - Wednesdays 3pm - 4pm alongside Junction Neighbourhood Centre at 3 Yamba Place, South Coogee, in the Orange Room.

Waverley - 1st Wednesday of the month, 2pm - 4pm at 59 Newland St Bondi Junction, Waverley.

General enquiries - 8324 0800

Repairs - 8324 0800 the press 1 for Repairs

Housing Management team - 8324 0885

Communities team - 8324 0836

Leasehold Manager - 8324 0858

Contact the Communities Team

For more information about anything you've read in the newsletter, please contact the Communities team!

Email: community@bridgehousing.org.au **Phone:** 8324 0836