



**The year in review**

**Keeping Cool in the Heat**

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**What's on over the festive season**

**Tenant Newsletter**  
**Summer 2024**



# CEO Update

Dear Tenants,

As the festive season approaches, I wish you all a joyful and peaceful holiday. This year has been exceptional for milestones.

2024 marked our 40th year of providing affordable and secure homes. We continue to change lives through projects like our partnership with Homes NSW to provide transitional accommodation to people escaping domestic and family violence. We also successfully advocated with our sector partners to the NSW government on No Grounds Evictions.

Thank you for supporting our community events this year. The Tenant Art Show showcased your creativity and personal journeys, the Spring Picnic brought together old and new friends and we enjoyed celebrating our 40th birthday at the recent AGM. We hope to see you under the Harbour Bridge for our end of year Tenant Celebration.

I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know many of you during my first five months as CEO. Your warmth and friendliness have made my transition to Bridge smooth and enjoyable.

With the extreme heat predicted this summer, please take extra care to stay cool and hydrated. We have shared some helpful tips in this edition.



Thank you also to our Tenant Advisory Group and Tenant Reference Group members. Your feedback helps us find local solutions for each community.

The whole Bridge team wish you and your families a happy holiday season and look forward to sharing 2025 with you.

Warm regards,

**Laurie Leigh**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Farewell Carolyn

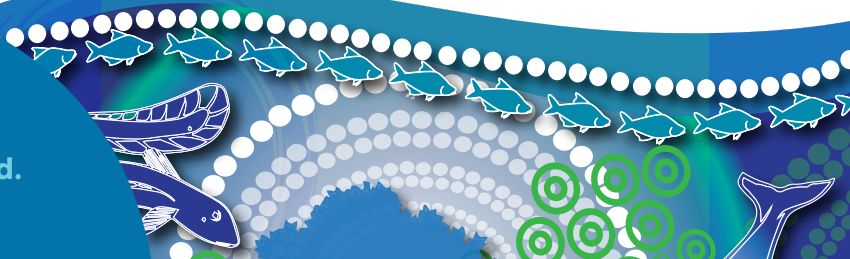
We reluctantly farewell Carolyn Scobie who retired from the Bridge board at the 2024 AGM after nine years of exceptional service and leadership. Thank you, Carolyn for your unwavering support of Bridge and our sector.



## Pawsome Pets

Miss Mini paid a visit to the Central office recently.

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





# Bridge Photo Album

## Sunshine Day

Our first Spring Picnic up at Forestville was a big day full of laughs, food and friends old and new. There was even a singalong on one of the buses on the way home.



## 40 years young

We celebrated our AGM and our 40th birthday at the Redfern Community Centre.



We also unveiled a tenant video to celebrate our birthday.



<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1029512189>





## End of year party!

Thank you to everyone who attended our end of year party under the Harbour Bridge.



## Advance Scholarships are open for 2025

"The scholarship program has helped me focus on my study as I complete my goal of returning to the workforce."

Val, 2022 Scholarship Recipient

## Beating the Heat

Here are some tips for handling the heat this summer.

1. **Hydrate:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
2. **Cool Showers:** Take cool showers or baths to lower your body temperature.
3. **Use Fans:** Place a bowl of ice in front of a fan to create a cooling breeze.
4. **Stay Indoors:** Avoid going out between 10AM and 4PM.
5. **Light Clothing:** Wear loose, light-colored clothing.
6. **Close Curtains:** Keep curtains and blinds closed to block out the sun.
7. **Cool Compresses:** Use damp washcloths or ice packs on your wrists, neck, and forehead.
8. **Visit Public Places:** Spend time in air-conditioned public places like libraries or shopping centres.
9. **Eat Light:** Opt for smaller, lighter meals.
10. **Check on Neighbours:** Ensure elderly neighbours and friends are coping well.

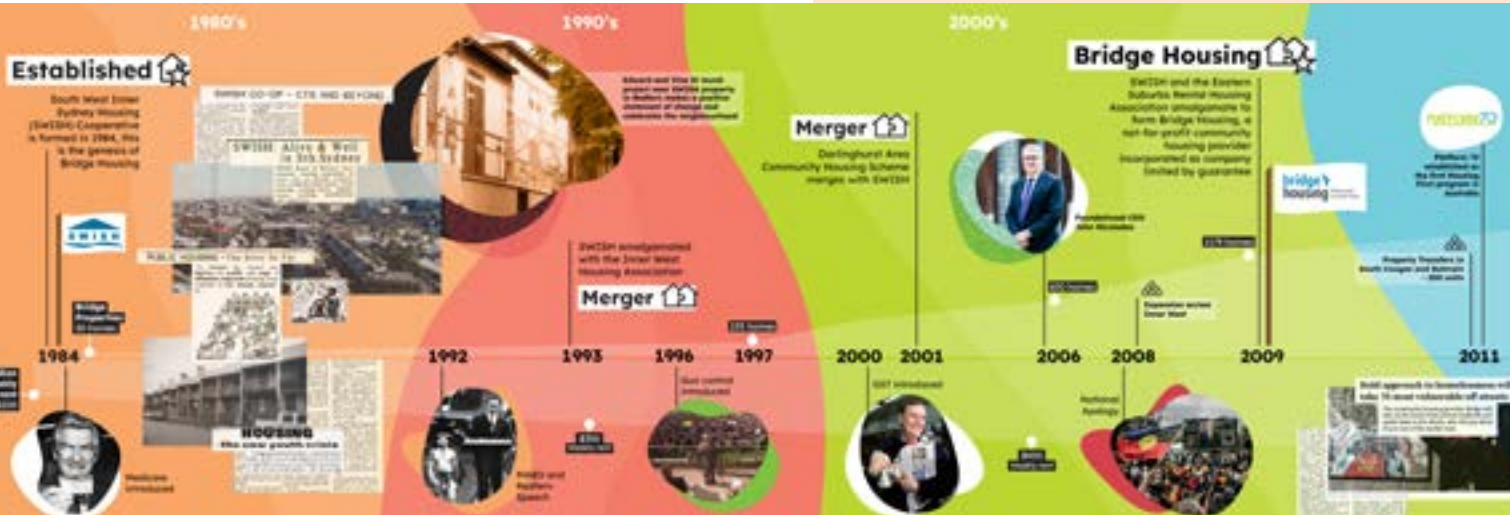
Stay safe and cool!

Don't miss out on your chance to receive a Bridge tenant Advance Scholarship for yourself or for your child to help with your education or work goals. Applications close 31 January 2025 and some eligibility criteria applies. If you need help filling out the application, just call Communities on 8324 0800.

Learn more about the new, more flexible eligibility guidelines and the grants scan below:



<https://bridgehousing.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/AdvanceScholarshipGuidelinesV5.pdf>





# Right Place, Right Time!

Bridge Housing recently teamed up with Northern Sydney Health Promotion to bring their Narraweena residents the “Stepping On” falls prevention program at the Narraweena community centre.

The participants have been really enjoying attending each week where they do strength and balance training, and they also meet health professionals who are full of positive messages about healthy aging.



It was on one of these sessions that Gilda, a Bridge resident brought along her friend Rosmarie, who had recently had a hip replacement.

Since her hip replacement Rosemarie was finding walking very challenging and painful, but Rosemarie turned up with a walking stick and a lot of determination to make a full recovery.

When Gilda brought her into the session the physiotherapist and the occupational therapist who were facilitating the group identified immediately that Rosemarie was using her walking stick incorrectly.

They set to work to ensure the stick was set to the correct height, and Rosemarie was given lessons on good walking stick technique, which she embraced

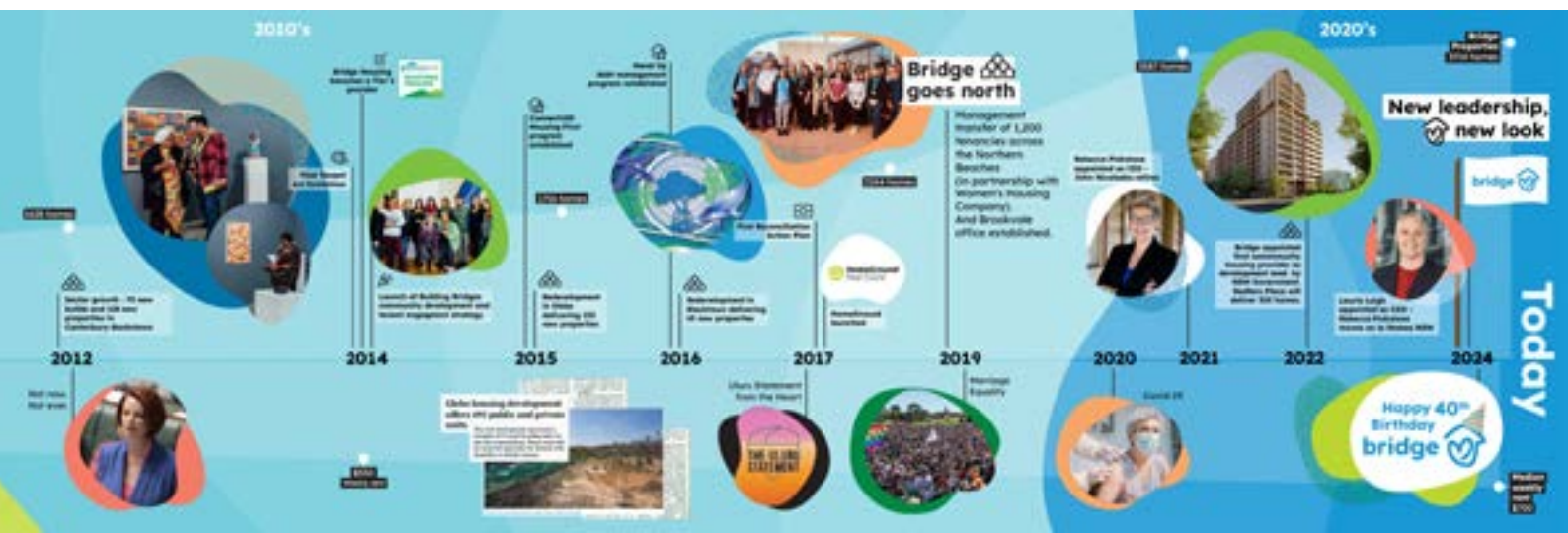
wholeheartedly. She left that session smiling because she was walking beautifully and was no longer feeling pain.

In a later session with the Pharmacist, Rosemarie also discovered that some of the medications given to her at the time of the surgery were also affecting her adversely and her discussions with the pharmacist also proved beneficial as she was advised on how to discuss her issues with her treating team.

Rosemarie is just one of the program participants who are reaping the benefits.

Other participants are commenting on how well they are feeling, about how much their balance has improved and always on how much fun they are having.

We will be running Stepping On in Narraweena again next year so make sure you get your name down.



## Earn and Learn with a Cadetship – Sign Up Now!



Bridge tenants can apply to join the **Cadetship Program** by CHIA NSW and the NSW Government. This program helps people get jobs and training, especially if they have trouble finding steady work.

- **Job:** A 12-month paid job in community housing.
- **Work:** Help with applications, tenancy, and property management.
- **Training:** Earn a Certificate IV in Housing.
- **Skills:** Learn about housing and tenant relations.
- **Support:** Get mentorship and support.

Interested? Visit Cadetship - Community Housing Industry Association NSW for more details and to apply. Applications are **open until January 10, 2025.**

<https://communityhousing.org.au/cadetship/>

## Help Us Improve Our Communication

We want to make sure we're communicating with you in the best way possible. To do that, we need your feedback. Please take a moment to complete our short communications survey. Your input is anonymous and will help us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve.

**Complete the survey and enter to win one of five \$100 vouchers!**

Simply scan the QR code or click the link below to get started. Thank you for your time and valuable feedback!

<https://forms.office.com/r/rfyGDp4YxU>



## Bumper Crop

Lulu harvested a gigantic beetroot from her community garden. If you and two friends are interested in testing out your green thumbs at your home, give Communities a call on 8324 0800 to find out if you can get help from the Botanic Gardens of Sydney team.

## Start Work Incentive

Have you heard of the Start Work Incentive? Available to all Bridge tenants who are starting work for the first time or returning to work after a long break (a minimum of 12 months). You may be eligible for your rent to remain unchanged for 6-months. To be eligible, it is important to tell us within 21 days of your new job start. Reach out to your Housing Manager or the Rent Review Team. Go to page 7 of our rent policy for more info, located on our website.





# Making Christmas Merry: Tips for Reducing Isolation This Season

Not everyone looks forward to the Christmas holidays, especially if you are spending it alone. Here are some ideas that might help you get more joy out of the holidays.

**Say 'Yes'** If you turned down invitations, it's okay to call back and accept. Overcoming social anxiety can help you feel connected. Even if it's just a short conversation or a shared smile at a function.

**Take Time** to Volunteer Volunteering connects you with others and boosts self-esteem. Try helping at a soup kitchen, bring gifts to a children's hospital, or visit nursing home residents. Even small acts like grocery runs for neighbours can make a difference.

**Host an "Orphan Christmas"** Invite others who are alone or join a group to share a meal.

**Stay busy.** If possible, work on Christmas. Many volunteer services welcome an extra set of hands at this time. Alternatively, tackle home projects or hobbies this holiday.

**Celebrate Online** Host an online Christmas with friends or distant relatives via Zoom or other platforms. You could exchange gifts by mail and enjoy a virtual catchup.

**Enjoy Solitude** Plan a special day for yourself. Treat yourself to something nice, cook your favourite meals, enjoy a favourite book or TV show. Embrace the time to relax and indulge in activities you love.

Christmas is about finding joy in whatever makes you happy, whether it's connecting with others or enjoying your own company.

## Christmas Lunch Ideas

### Lunches in the Sydney area

If you are facing financial difficulties, hardship or have no one to celebrate with, The Salvation Army can help make this Christmas a joyful one.

[www.salvationarmy.org.au/christmas/events/results/](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/christmas/events/results/)

This includes Christmas Day Dinner at 42 Raymond Street, Bankstown NSW 2200 – 6:00pm 25 December 2024. There are also several lunches in the days before Christmas.

### Wayside Chapel Christmas Day Street Party 2024

**When:** Wednesday December 25, 9:00am – 2:30pm

**Where:** Wayside Chapel Kings Cross. 29 Hughes St, Potts Point

There will be live music with a DJ, dancing, fantastic activities including a (fake) tattoo parlour and photo-booth, and a delicious 3-course Christmas lunch. Everyone is welcome at our table! We hope to see you there.

[www.waysidechapel.org.au/whats-on/christmasdayparty/](http://www.waysidechapel.org.au/whats-on/christmasdayparty/)

**Love a good Christmas feed** – here is the inside track on some of the friendliest, delicious Christmas lunch options in Sydney and details of when key services will be closed for the holiday break.

<b>Congress Hall</b> 140 Elizabeth Street, CBD	Hope Christmas Dinner	Wednesday 18 December 5pm – 8pm	Closed 19/12
<b>Sydney City Salvos – Surry Hills</b> Derby Lane, Rear of 339 Crown St	Christmas Party	Thursday 19 December During opening hours	Closed 24/12 Reopening 6/1
<b>St Canice</b> 28 Roslyn Street, Rushcutters Bay	Christmas Lunch & Hampers	Thursday 19 December 11am	Closed 20/12 Reopening 13/1
<b>St Peter's Parish</b> (Parish Hall) 235-241 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills	Festive Dinner	Sunday 22 December 6.30pm	No closure
<b>Manly Salvation Army</b> 59 Pittwater Road, Manly	Christmas Eve Service and Meal	Tuesday 24 December 10am service, Noon lunch	
<b>Newtown Mission</b> 280A King St, Newtown	Christmas Lunch	Wednesday 25 December 11.30am – 1pm	Last meal 12/12 at 7pm First lunch 5/2 at 1pm
<b>Wayside Chapel Street Party</b> 29 Hughes Street, Potts Point	Christmas Lunch	Wednesday 25 December 9.30am – 2.30pm	
<b>Matthew Talbot Hostel</b> 22 Talbot Place, Woolloomooloo	Christmas Lunch *Men only	Wednesday 25 December 12pm	No closure
<b>Refettorio OzHarvest</b> 481 Crown Street, Surry Hills	Christmas Lunch *Advanced booking required	Wednesday 25 December 11.30am – 1.30pm	
<b>Early Bird Café, St Stephens Uniting Church</b> 197 Macquarie Street, CBD	Regular service with extra Christmas goodies	6.30am – 8.30am M-F 7.30am – 8.30am Sat	No closure

# What's On

Meet and connect with new people at our community events

- 26 Jan** Yabun Festival
- 6 Feb** Narraweena Social Group, Wellness Day
- 13 Feb** Narraweena Social Group
- 18 Feb** Disability Meet Up  
Central & Brookvale office and online
- 20 Feb** Narraweena Social Group

- 24 Feb** Yagoona Community Centre Pop Up  
176 Cooper Rd, Yagoona
- 27 Feb** Narraweena Social Group  
Narraweena Community Centre,  
74 Oceana St, Narraweena



Find out more  
on Facebook

## Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)

Tenant Advisory Groups are at the **heart** of our community. TAGs help you to give us feedback, improve our services, share ideas and information, host events and help solve local issues.

Today, we have 7 tenant advisory groups (TAGs) that help shape the Bridge community: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG, Vietnamese TAG, West TAG, Elger Street Community, Northern Beaches TAG, Central/East TAG and the Tenant Reference Group.

**Tenant  
Advisory  
Group**



Be involved, have your say

## Upcoming TAG and Outreach events

Group	Next Meeting	Location / Details
Elger St Outreach	18 December	1:30pm - 4:00pm, includes a BBQ
West Outreach	19 December	Final for the year, Granville Centre, 2:30pm to 4:30pm
Manly Cove Outreach	19 December	One Meal Service
Narraweena Social Group	6 February	Wellness Day
North TAG	11 February	Warringah Mall Community Room, above the Library
West TAG	13 February	Granville Centre, 10:30am to 12:30pm
Disability Meet Up	18 February	Central & Brookvale office and online
Vietnamese TAG	20 February	Head Office Boardroom, 10:30am to 12:30pm
Narraweena Social Group	20 February	Narraweena Community Centre, 74 Oceana St, Narraweena

## Bridge Housing Offices



### Head Office

Level 9 59 Goulburn St  
Haymarket

### Northern Beaches Office

Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Rd  
Brookvale



### Opening hours:

9am-4.30pm Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday and Friday  
1pm-4.30pm Wednesday

## Call Us



For all enquiries and to  
report a repair call – 8324 0800

## Outreach



### 3 Elger St Glebe

Wednesdays 1.30pm-4pm  
in Community room

### South Coogee

Wednesday 3-4pm, Orange Room,  
Junction Neighbourhood Centre,  
3 Yamba Place South Coogee

### Manly Cove

Thursday 11am-12pm, Cove Avenue and  
Stuart Street Manly

### West Outreach

Thursday, date TBC 2:30pm-4:30pm  
The Granville Centre, 1 Memorial Drive, Granville

**Have something to share?** Drop us a line at [community@bridgehousing.org.au](mailto:community@bridgehousing.org.au)