

Inner Sydney VOICE

AUTUMN 2013

**DISPENSING A SAFER,
HEALTHIER REDFERN**

**VIOLENCE PUTS WOMEN ON
THE STREET**

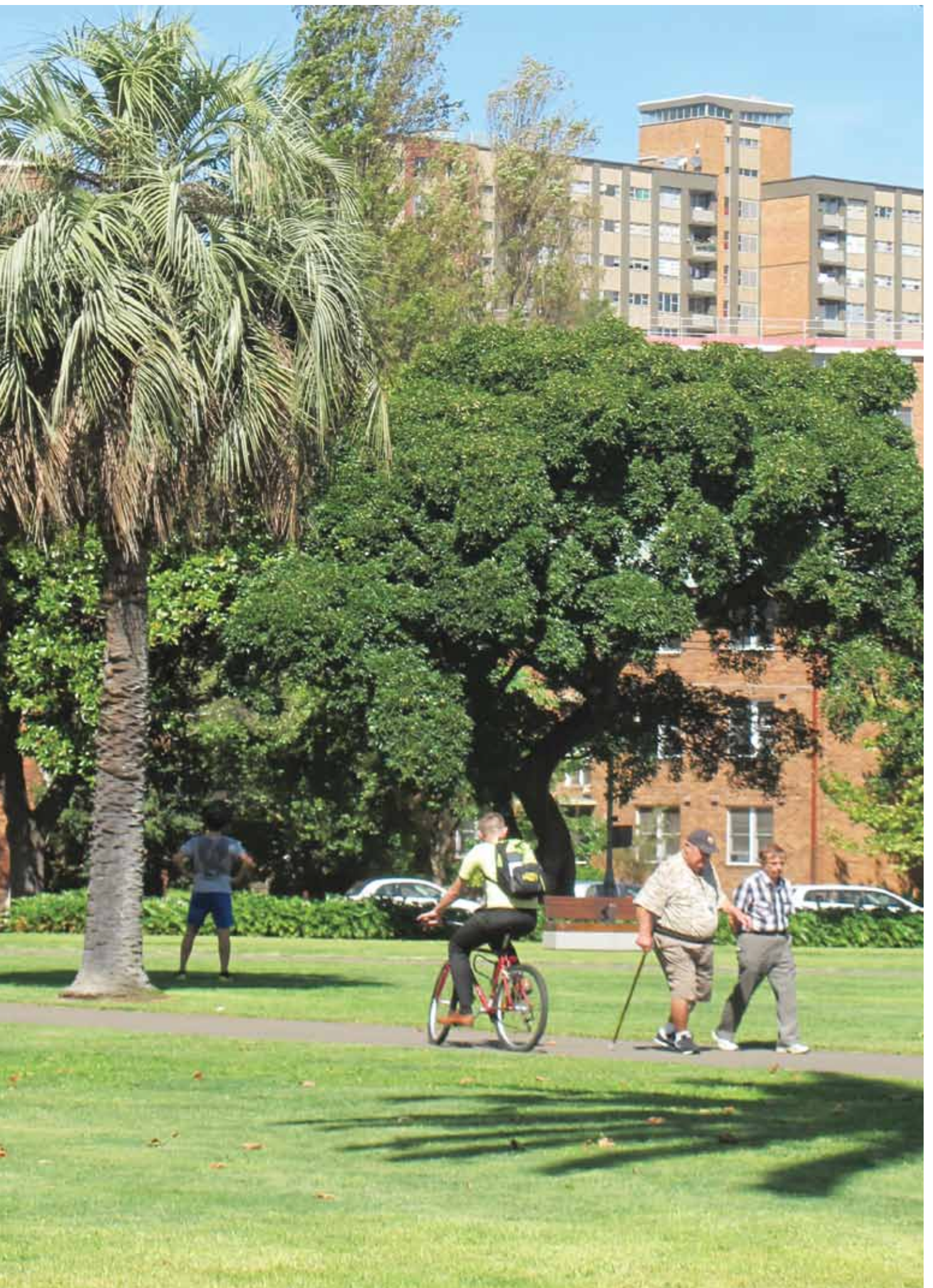
**A NEW HOME FOR OLD
NEIGHBOURS**

A BETTER PLAN?

FAREWELL TO AN ACTION MAN



THE JOURNAL OF THE INNER SYDNEY REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INC





About

Inner Sydney Voice is the journal of the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development Inc; a non-profit organisation committed to the idea of information as a tool for community development. The organisation defines inner Sydney as being the local government areas of Botany Bay, Leichhardt, Randwick, City of Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional owners of the lands across the areas we service, particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, traditional owners of the land on which our office is located. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

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Quote

If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading.

Lao Tzu



Online Community Map

Inner Sydney Regional Council is in the process of creating an extensive online map of community services in the eastern suburbs and inner city. The map will be both easy to read and navigate, describing key services for each organisation. Keep an eye out for the link on our website or in the next edition of Inner Sydney Voice.



Aboriginal HACC Development Officer

Cindy Hamilton is the current HACC Development Officer for South East & Inner Sydney Region. Cindy's position is currently auspiced by Aged & Community Services Association NSW/ACT, based in Rhodes NSW however Cindy works from the Inner Sydney Regional Council in Waterloo three days per week.

The Aboriginal HACC Development Officer supports the coordination and development of HACC funded & CCSP funded services in the local government areas of:

- Randwick Council
- City of Sydney
- Botany Bay City
- Waverley
- Woollahra

Some of the services that Cindy may be able to assist in are:

- Supporting and resourcing of Aboriginal and mainstream HACC/ CCSP networks within the region
- Assisting to implement the Community Care Common Standards
- Build the capacity of the HACC/ CCSP service system to better meet the needs of Aboriginal people and communities
- Advocate on behalf of the needs of the Aboriginal community and organisations
- Provide cross sector information to Aboriginal communities

Cindy can be contacted on 02 8754 0400 or 0427 484 801 or by email cindyh@agedservices.asn.au



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Randwick

ClubGRANTS Clubs:

- Coogee Diggers
- Maroubra Seals Sports & Community Club
- Matraville RSL Club
- Randwick Labor Club
- South Sydney Juniors Rugby League Club
- Juniors @ the Junction

2013 Category 1 application deadline:

Applications open 19 March 2013 and close on 3 May 2013.

For more information contact:

Susanna Susic, Randwick City Council on 02 9399 0677 or by email to susanna.susic@randwick.nsw.gov.au

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: City of Sydney

ClubGRANTS Clubs:

- Bowlers Club of NSW
- City of Sydney RSL Club
- City Tattersalls Club
- New South Wales Leagues Club

2013 Category 1 application deadline:

Applications open 1 January 2013 and close 7 June 2013.

For more information contact:

John Ekert on 0423 698 933 or by email to johne@cityofsydneyrsl.com.au



Share your views on Government plans to improve the economy, services and infrastructure in NSW on the new *Have your say* website.

You can search by area and/or topic to find consultations that you care about the most. Or simply browse a list of the most recent consultations.

www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au

EDITORIAL

Sydney has always been a rapidly growing city, but now we are not only growing out, we are growing up. Things are moving apace in the inner city and eastern suburbs; from The Block to Barangaroo, from Green Square to Ashmore Precinct, development work is underway.

The current building trend is to use what are referred to as brownfield sites. Brownfield sites are abandoned or underused industrial and commercial facilities (and it would appear this government views public housing in much the same way) available for re-use. But in re-using these sites to create high-rise housing, we are faced with the modern-day problems of density, traffic, gentrification and loss of community. How do we ensure our communities have the resilience to undergo massive change and still retain their sense of place?

Seldom have we seen, in this part of Sydney, such intense development. The Green Square urban renewal area is 278 hectares and includes the suburbs of Beaconsfield and Zetland, and parts of Rosebery, Alexandria and Waterloo. This major redevelopment has already attracted over 11,000 new residents since 2000 and is expected to attract 40,000 new residents by 2030.

We also have the Pemulwuy Project in Redfern to begin work in July, the Ashmore Precinct and Central Park well underway and toward the future, the release of the NSW government's urban activation precincts covering Randwick, Mascot and south Anzac Parade, will mean population increases will be significant. In *A Better Plan?* (page 14) we consider concerns raised by both communities and local government in response to proposed new planning laws for NSW.

Planning needs to ensure new developments have adequate open spaces, transport management, community facilities and services. There is already a need for a new inner-city high school and indeed, with the predicted population growth that will come with the current and future developments a number of new education and community facilities will need to be built.

An increase the number of people means an increase in the demand for services. With budget cuts already affecting vital infrastructure like our hospitals (see *Once it's Gone, it's Gone* - page 19) NSW Planning and Infrastructure must work hand in hand with departments like Health, Education and Family and Community Services to build the foundations for human service delivery.

It is our job as a community to demand the NSW government synchronises its human services along with housing development. Too often, basic community infrastructure is forgotten until long after the last builder/developer has left and people are in desperate need of supports. ■

CJ, Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development



DISPENSING A SAFER, HEALTHIER REDFERN

In the context of public health strategy and Redfern Waterloo's high and rising rates of HIV and Hepatitis C, does installation of an automatic dispensing machine outside the Redfern Health Centre make sense?

BY ERIN SNELGROVE

The final public consultation on the installation of an Automatic Dispensing Machine to provide sterile drug injecting equipment and disposal packs outside the Redfern Health Centre saw avid supporters, concerned residents, other local stakeholders and government representatives wrangling with what was the relative minutiae of rational public health strategy for some; and for others, the perceived assault on a neighbourhood continuing to work hard at self-improvement.

By all accounts, the meeting was markedly less volatile than prior meetings in the consultation process, but it hasn't appeared to quell concerns about the Automatic Dispensing Machine (ADM), and has quite possibly exacerbated frustrations over government's approach to community engagement. Less than one week later, with no mention made at the meeting, the ADM was installed.

The premise for the ADM is relatively straightforward: Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) rates among injecting drugs users in the Redfern Waterloo area are three times the national rate, and Hepatitis C rates are 10 per cent higher than anywhere else in Australia. It's a situation described by Dr Teresa Anderson, Chief Executive of Sydney Local Health District as being a major public health crisis that cannot be ignored.



Australia has long been at the forefront of the international public health response to the emergence of HIV/AIDS, and in 1987 passed legislation to enable legal distribution of needles, syringes and other injecting equipment to injecting drug users, developing a National Drug Strategy (NDS) with three interdependent strategies;

1. Harm reduction: aiming to prevent anticipated harm and reduce actual harm to individuals and communities,
2. Supply reduction: to disrupt the production and supply of illicit drugs and to control and regulate licit substances,
3. Demand reduction: to prevent the uptake of harmful drug use through education and other prevention activities and to reduce drug use through treatment and rehabilitation activities.

Harm reduction strategies are underpinned by Needle and Syringe Programs to address the sharing of used injecting equipment, which is the primary manner in which blood borne viruses (BBV), including HIV and Hepatitis B and C, are transmitted. Providing both preventative and primary health services, Needle and Syringe Programs continue to play a vital role in Australia's enviable reputation for comparatively extremely low rates of BBV.

According to a report commissioned by the federal government, Needle and Syringe Programs (NSPs) resulted in the prevention of an estimated 25,000 cases of HIV, and 21,000 cases of Hepatitis C among injecting drug users between 1991 and 2000. Savings to the health care system alone, in avoided treatment costs over a lifetime were estimated to be between \$2.4 billion and \$7.7 billion.

“

Access and anonymity are essential.”

*Jason, local resident, irregular Injecting Drug User
HIV and Hepatitis C positive*

The first Automatic Dispensing Machine was installed in NSW in 1992 and there are now 150 in operation. Credited with accessing hidden and high-risk groups of Injecting Drug Users, including young people, women and irregular users, Automatic Dispensing Machines offer anonymous access to sterile injecting equipment for people who may not identify as having a drug addiction, or who may be unwilling to admit to having such. Most injecting drug users are able to go about their day-to-day business without being labeled, however once labeled, are often never quite able to completely shake off the associated stigma. In reality, the people who fit the commonly perceived stereotype of a ‘junkie’ – for example, a homeless, unemployed, hygienically challenged individual with bad teeth – are a minority in the drug using community. These individuals are likely to avoid engagement with services, and ADMs are considered both pragmatic and essential in reaching them.

Similarly, drug use is not confined to a nine-to-five schedule and services are diverse to accommodate the different patterns of user. The Redfern Automatic Dispensing Machine is in operation only when the Redfern Health Centre and pharmacy (offering needle exchange) directly opposite, are closed. For the most part that is after 9pm and on Sundays.



In 2010, the \$9.8 million Redfern Health Centre (RHC) opened in the original Courthouse on Redfern Street. Designed to provide a central location for a range of community health, drug and alcohol, and mental health services as part of the NSW State Government's long term plan for the Redfern Waterloo area, DA approval was granted in 2007 to operate an Automatic Dispensing Machine at the RHC entrance. It wasn't until 2012 that Sydney Local Health District publically announced its plans for the ADM – a long time later in anyone's book, let alone in a neighbourhood evolving as quickly as Redfern.

“

We are of the opinion that an ADM on the main street... presents an image of Redfern that is at odds with the one that so many people have worked to develop.”

South Sydney Business Chamber

Stephanie Wood, in the Sydney Magazine (Issue 113, Sept 2012) described how “in only a few years, one of Australia's most infamous areas has altered at an unprecedented pace. Today, it's a place of fat real-estate prices, hipsters and the affluent, cafes and small bars, artisanal bakeries selling \$7 loaves of bread, farmers' markets, chic apartment blocks, designer dogs and all the joys of gentrification, spreading from Waterloo south of Phillip Street, across to Redfern Station and beyond to Eveleigh and CarriageWorks.” Despite this, the fact remains that the Redfern Waterloo community possesses unacceptably high levels of BBV, a fact that leaves the entire community – affluent, hipsters or not – in a precarious situation.

“

What about our kids? What sort of message is it sending? It's just going to bring crime back to Redfern and we don't have a problem here anymore”

Anonymous

In 2009, an Automatic Dispensing Machine was installed on the corner of Albion and Crown Street in Surry Hills. A similarly regenerated area of inner Sydney, on a popular thoroughfare with a primary school a stone's throw away and some of Sydney's trendiest restaurants and cafes across the road, public objection was initially strong. Once installed, however, anxieties were dramatically reduced; there has not been one incident involving children, no increase in crime, and no public injecting or inappropriate disposal of used equipment.

Kate Reakes, appointed as Redfern's Harm Minimisation Manager in late January, describes community education and support as key to changing people's perceptions of harm minimization practices and in garnering their support. Facilitating the Automatic Dispensing Machine Implementation Working Group, established following consultations, Reakes provides information, education and support to local residents and business owners and reports a shift in attitudes already.

Designed with no advertising material or attractive attributes that might pique a child's interest, there has been only one incident involving a child accessing an Automatic Dispensing Machine in Australia since the program began. The incident involved an injecting drug user holding his child up to the unit to press the button; the incident was captured by CCTV, and the Department of Family and Community Services followed up with the family.

Despite statistics telling us that access to clean needles does not result in an increase in crime nor does it create a 'honey-pot effect' where drug dealers are attracted to the area, some local residents and business owners remain fearful. There is a particular fear of infected syringes being used as weapons; public health rationale describes BBV as the danger, not the syringe.

Not surprisingly, addressing concerns around inappropriate disposal relies on providing opportunities for appropriate disposal. The Automatic Dispensing Machine has a sharps disposal unit attached, and the

Redfern Sharps Waste Management Plan already includes safe disposal campaigns for users, community education, needle clean up hotlines and regular sweeps of the local area.

While there have been no reported instances of a member of the public becoming infected with a BBV after an injury from a discarded used syringe in Australia, the risk is real. As the recent pilot of sharps waste disposal bins at Northcott in Surry Hills has demonstrated (see opposite), this significant issue for government can be addressed through committed partnerships. For the approximately 25% of Redfern's community who live in public housing properties, this move towards more proactive management of community sharps, particularly by Housing NSW, is sure to be welcomed. Community education also seems to be paying off with the Redfern Harm Minimisation Program receiving an enquiry from the strata of a private apartment complex in Waterloo regarding installation of a sharps disposal unit on its property.

”

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being”

World Health Organisation Constitution

In the end, the statutory obligation of the Australian government to address BBV in our communities through implementation of its National Drug Strategy and harm minimization policies won, with the Automatic Dispensing Machine in (partial) operation since February. As frustrating as the consultation process may have been, let's hope the evidence base supporting the ADM installation wins too. For all of us.

The Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development support harm minimization practice.

NSW Health Needle Clean Up Hotline 1800 633 353

Redfern Harm Minimisation Program 9395 0400

For further information, or any concerns regarding sharps waste management or the ADM operation, please contact Kate Reakes, Harm Minimisation Manager, on 0427 550 782 (during business hours).

Quick facts about ADMs in Australia

- Location is carefully selected for proximity to a primary Needle and Syringe Program
- Non-descript design decreases the likelihood of general members of the public, including children, accessing the machine
- Safe disposal boxes issued with the dispensed fipacks
- Co-location of a Sharps Waste Disposal Bin results in fewer incidents of inappropriately disposed equipment
- Passive surveillance from passing traffic, lighting and CCTV coverage are essential elements, increasing public safety and discouraging public drug use
- They are successful at accessing injecting drug users (IDUs) who do not normally attend fixed site NSPs such as young IDUs and women

NORTHCOTT SHARPS BINS

BY CHARMAINE JONES

Old Ces, a long-time tenant of the Northcott Housing estate in Surry Hills, spent his septuagenarian years wandering the stairwells, grassy knolls and surrounding streets of the estate. He came prepared – gloves, tongs and a sharps bin. On an average day, Ces would pick up about 60 syringes, that total heading up to 250 on a good day, well, bad day, depending on how you look at it.

These were the sharps being scattered about the common areas of the estate and nearby park by a small minority of illicit drug users, mostly blow-ins, utilising the rabbit warren like spaces of the buildings to hide in whilst injecting. A larger majority of drug users preferred to dispose of their sharps properly, but many believed by placing them in the general garbage bins, they were doing the correct thing.

Syringes and needles left lying in common areas or thrown in regular rubbish streams pose a risk to the public and garbage and recycling collectors. Potential infections from needle stick injuries include Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), though it should be noted health experts say that the risk of infection from a needle stick injury is statistically very low, but acknowledge the “associated stress can be significant”.

Community sharps management is a significant problem for governments to tackle and at Northcott, tackle it, they did. The Community Sharps Management in Northcott precinct pilot project was developed by SAVE (Sustainable Action Values Everyone) program supported by the NSW Government’s Environmental Trust.



The project, a joint effort between Housing NSW, City of Sydney, South Eastern Local Health District and the residents of the Northcott social housing community, proved so successful the Local Government and Shires Association of New South Wales (LGSA) awarded the City of Sydney a Local Government Excellence Award.

After an intensive consultation and information process with the Northcott Community, the first ever sharps bins on Housing NSW land were installed in July 2011. There are two bins and they are large, 240 kilo capacity, placed next to the recycling bays in easily accessible spots. Practical onsite training on handling sharps was provided for tenants and cleaning contractors.

There were the usual naysayers, who claimed drug users didn’t give a damn and would never be responsible enough to utilise the bins, but as the monthly statistics were collected, any scepticism about the value of the sharps bins was soon overshadowed.

In just under 12 months, 10,710 sharps were diverted from the domestic waste stream and public places around the Northcott estate. Surprisingly over 60% of the sharps collected have been related to medical waste, not illicit drug use. A major factor in sharps entering the rubbish collection stream is the rising number of people managing illnesses like diabetes at home. The bins have been monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that the system continues to function effectively.

Following the success of a trial project which saw the installation of two Sharps bins at the Northcott housing estate in Surry Hills, two new sharps bins will be installed in Redfern and Waterloo. To assist other communities who may be interested in installing sharps bins, the SAVE team who initiated the project have created a Community Sharps Management Toolkit which is available online. ■



VIOLENCE PUTS WOMEN ON THE STREET

Women are more likely than men to become homeless - especially rural and Indigenous women - and domestic violence remains the number one cause.

BY SQUIRREL MAIN

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has reported that almost a quarter of a million people sought assistance for homelessness during the 2012 financial year. That's one in every 98 Australians, enough to fill the ANZ stadium three times.

More than half of these people were women.

"Women quite often find themselves in the margins ... in the popular perception of what homelessness looks like, but they're every bit as represented in the statistics," said Chris Povey, principle lawyer and manager of the Homeless Persons Legal Clinic.

Getting exact statistics is difficult — those sleeping rough go uncounted and the ABS admits that women's refugees are often misclassified as private dwellings during the census.

The AIHW has found a better way of estimating — by asking service providers to submit counts of their clients. Using this method, AIHW found about 19,000 people slept in a government-supported accommodation each night during the 2011-12 financial year.

Mi Fon Lew, from the Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE) told New Matilda that last year, 84,000 women were counted in the AIHW survey. "And that's the women receiving support. You're not including the other women who are couch surfing, living with friends, sleeping in cars and not accessing these services," Lew added.

Homeless people, and particularly women, can easily fall through the cracks. "Women are more likely to 'shack up' (end up in unsuitable housing situations). They're more likely to sleep in their car," Povey explains. "The fact that it's harder to identify the women who are experiencing homelessness means that it's harder to get services to assist them."

Just over half of women with children entering emergency housing cite "domestic violence" as their main reason for becoming homeless. So do more than a third of young women with no children. The AIWH 2012 report states that women and children become temporarily homeless for domestic violence reasons, but wonders if the decline in the housing market explains the increase in long-term homelessness. That's the

AIWH theory on why homelessness increased on census night.

Interestingly, the Federal Government's background paper to "Time for Action" states that reports of sexual assault have increased by an average of 4 per cent each year since 1995. Although there is no proof of correlation, that is strikingly close to the 5 per cent per annum increase in homelessness between 2006 and 2011. Regardless of the increase, with the exception of very young children, homeless females are the ones bearing the brunt of domestic violence.

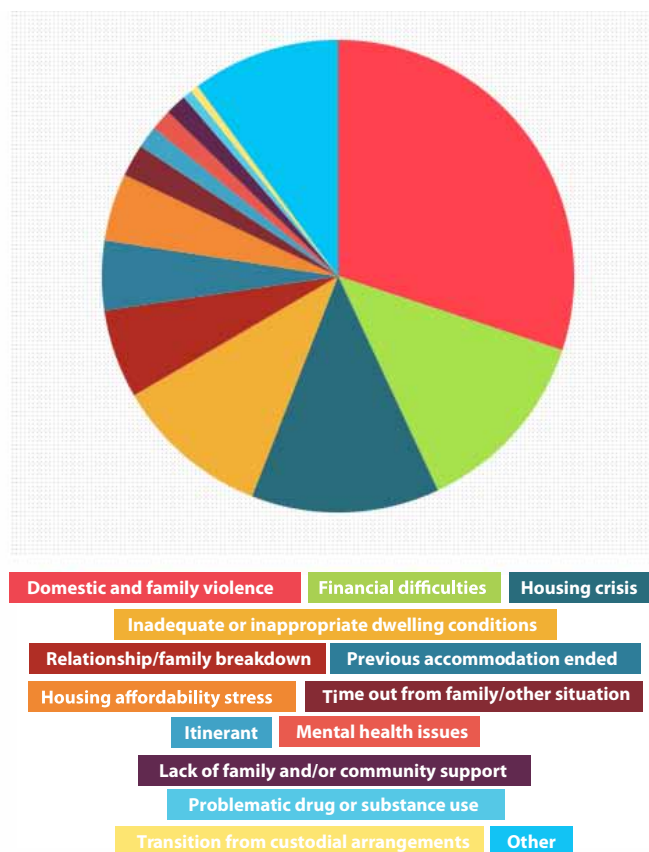
Not only are more homeless women victims of violence, but more victims of violence become homeless. According to the Women's Property Initiative, more than one out of every five incidences of domestic violence leads to homelessness.

Povey believes that improving women's security and having a rigorous approach to following up violence orders will help. "If there's been an alleged breach, that needs to be prosecuted very vigorously."

Aside from domestic violence, there is another issue surrounding women and homelessness. Namely, that a wide variety of marginalised groups are disproportionately women. For example, the Federal Government white paper on homelessness, *The Road Home*, explains that young people aged 12 to 18 are the largest group of people experiencing homelessness. Of young people who turn up alone at services, 63 per cent are female.

Females are also a greater proportion of rural clients. While females represent 57 per cent of clients in cities, they represent 81 per cent of clients in very remote areas. Three out of five Indigenous homeless clients are female.

Domestic violence is the main reason given by females for their homelessness



Source: AIWH 2012 March quarter

WIRE is seeing a growing number of older women who find themselves homeless. These women have brought up families, taken a break in their careers, and then suddenly find themselves alone, without a home and unable to support themselves. "We're finding that all the other structural inequalities that affect women on a day to day basis that contribute to housing crises that women face when they grow older," Lew said.

By this time last year, the AIHW figures were showing a disturbing trend for Victoria. "Even if the woman fulfills all the criteria that makes her eligible for crises or emergency housing, one in two are turned away because there just aren't enough beds," Lew said.

"Housing crises and homelessness is a growing issue with the women who contact us ... We even get calls from housing workers who are at a loss as to where to direct clients," she added. In response to this demand WIRE has recently produced a comprehensive information booklet to provide support for women facing housing crises in Victoria. But the booklet's popularity brings little joy to the staff.

"The reality is there's just not very much housing out there," Lew said. Nationwide, nearly one-fifth of clients (19 per cent) had a need for emergency accommodation that was unmet. In Victoria, where the situation is particularly bad, there are over 37,000 people on the waiting list for public housing — many pushed into precarious circumstances by otherwise minor events.

"For example, a single parent who just needs help because she's been sick and cannot pay the rent ... she can become a 'crisis person'," Lew says. "The priority is given to the people who have immediate need. There is not enough leftover to help people avoid becoming one of those priority people."

The Homeless Persons Legal Clinic is focusing on eviction prevention under Povey's direction: "It's about supporting women to stay in housing ... you don't want women being evicted because a lot of their community and social connections will be undermined."

Internationally, there are examples of successful programs. Povey, who received Churchill Trust support to study homeless interventions abroad, found programs like the UK's Family Intervention Projects to be highly successful. These programs emphasise low case numbers, comprehensive support, strong relationships, and they do not have an "expiry date". They target longer-lasting, preventative interventions.

Back in Australia, there is momentum for improving this situation. The Federal Government has released a draft bill aimed at increasing recognition and awareness of people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In addition to increasing awareness of the problem, the draft bill will set out a range of service delivery principles and strategies the Commonwealth regards as necessary to reduce homelessness. Submissions can be emailed to homelessnesslegislation@fahcsia.gov.au.

Perhaps by the next International Women's Day, the statistics will be less grim.

Originally published on www.newmatilda.com

VOX POP

We asked what you think of the ADM recently installed on Redfern Street.

Excellent! I've lived on Redfern Street for 15 years and think it's a very sensible idea.

Jackie, 50, Redfern

I can't understand what all the fuss is about - they should be everywhere!

Mary, 57, Surry Hills

But isn't it an enabler? If people can access needles already then I guess it's ok.

James, 24, Surry Hills

It's great - but you need it down on Wellington Street near the park where all the kids are playing, there's bloody needles everywhere!

James, 36, Redfern

I didn't even notice it was there.

Sarah, 39, Redfern

I've got no problem with it, but I thought everyone was smoking ice these days?

Mark, 47, Redfern

As long as it's used I think it's a great purpose.

Tanzil, 29, Redfern

A NEW HOME FOR OLD NEIGHBOURS

South East Sydney Community Transport and Neighbour Connections are still a little homesick for Redfern and keen to maintain their special bond with the community in which they were 'born and bred', but excited to report an expansion of client referrals particularly in the Glebe, Ultimo, Pyrmont, Millers Point and Woolloomooloo areas.

BY THERESE POULTON, JANE ROGERS AND ERIN SNELGROVE

Since moving from their home for the last 13 years at the now defunct Redfern Centre in St Saviour's Anglican Church, the services have established their new base in Ultimo and are focused on continued collaboration, strengthening the supports each continues to provide in the City of Sydney local government area.

Therese Poulton, Manager of Neighbour Connections (NC), and Jane Rogers, Manager of South East Sydney Community Transport (SESCT) report that despite some teething problems - not least of all the limited phone access for clients - the services continue to go from strength to strength.

Now located in a commercial environment, both services are disappointed that visits from clients will no longer be possible, however SESCT has organised a monthly outreach service - an opportunity to catch up, make bookings and share a cuppa.

SESCT Outreach Service

Where Our Place (Poets Corner)

Where Third Monday of each month 2 - 4pm

Who New and existing clients are welcome.

The first session will be held on Monday 15th April.



L-R Therese Poulton and Jane Rogers



SOUTH EAST SYDNEY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

With a focus on providing accessible and affordable transport to individuals isolated from their community through transport disadvantage, South East Sydney Community Transport (SESCT) works to ensure all members of the community have equal access to safe and affordable transport options, which promote their health and wellbeing and enable them to exercise choice and participate in community life. Primarily funded through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program, the main focus is on the provision of transport services to the frail, aged, younger people with disabilities and their carers.

SESCT offer transport options for social, shopping and medical trips, as well as social assistance. Subject to availability, bus hire is also possible. Running two shuttle services from Redfern to Broadway and Woolloomooloo, last year minivans were introduced to the fleet - allowing small groups of people to travel together.

SESCT supports individuals to access amenities and participate in community life through:

- Direct delivery of a range of transport services.
- Collaborations with like-minded agencies to deliver improved transport options.
- Lobbying for change on transport related issues.

SESCT operates a continuum of services with a focus on re-enablement. Client needs assessments are undertaken, with reassessments determining the most appropriate level at any given time. There are five levels of service provision:

1. **Village to Village** This free access service is funded by the City of Sydney to enable all community members to reach facilities such as hospitals and shops and links in with other public transport. It runs to a fixed timetable each week on Thursday and Friday. If extra assistance is required, our bus drivers will advise passengers of other SESCT services.
2. **The Blink** is for lower level HACC (aged and disability) eligible clients. These passengers don't need a door to door service but require more help than the Village to Village can offer. The Blink picks up clients from public bus stops and passengers are assisted on and off the bus.
3. **The Shopping Bus** is the traditional HACC shopping service, a door to door service with a bus assistant to help passengers on and off the bus.
4. **Bus Assist** Passengers are met at the shopping centre by a volunteer who helps them negotiate the shopping centre. Volunteers are provided by South East Neighbourhood Centre and Neighbour Connections
5. **The Assisted Shopping Service** This model uses a wheelchair accessible minivan to assist clients who can't use the regular HACC shopping bus service. Each client is allocated a personal shopper to assist them at the shops and at home to put away the shopping.

Funding from the Department of Health allows us to provide limited transport services to hospital appointments for those who don't meet the HACC criteria, however health related transport continues to be a major challenge with community transport struggling to meet demand.

Over the 32 years of operation growth in funding and a focus on service reviews, we adjust our services to meet the changing needs of our clients but while the service has grown and developed significantly over the years, there is still much to do. Managed by a committee of local residents and workers, we encourage people to join the organisation and have input into the delivery of our services.

Web www.sesct.org.au
Phone 9319 4439
Email admin@sesct.org.au



NEIGHBOUR CONNECTIONS

Aiming to reconnect people to the community, Neighbour Connections provides flexible social support services to people living in the City of Sydney local government area who are frail, aged or have disabilities, together with their carers' in order to reduce social isolation and support people to live independently in the community.

The service began over 20 years ago, when concerned residents identified elderly neighbours not coping on their own. What was needed was the kind of things neighbours do – an escort to the doctor, help to get to the bank or do the shopping – someone to share a cuppa with.

Interaction between clients is vital, with large events held at Christmas and throughout the year to complement the more regular activities including trips to the movies, exercise classes and BBQs; clients are contacted regularly as part of our 'friendly chat service'; and our work to assist individuals to reconnect with the community may also involve negotiating with for example, Housing NSW for appropriate housing for someone with limited mobility.

With three full-time staff, 10 part-time and a host of volunteers, clients are assessed and matched with a social support worker or volunteer according to their needs. There are three specialist workers, one Chinese speaking, one Russian speaking and one for clients diagnosed with dementia.

Relying heavily on volunteers to assist clients maintain their independence, much effort is put into providing appropriate training and support. Neighbour Connections are always looking for new volunteers!

Web www.neighbourconnections.org.au
Phone 02 9319 3587
Email manager@neighbourconnections.org.au

A BETTER PLAN?

Our Summer edition reported the battle being waged by the Rozelle Residents Action Group (RRAG) over the development of the old Balmain Leagues Club. The snapshot of a community enduring a carousel of proposals, rejections, audits and controversy supports a general consensus that changes to the current planning system are needed. But with the launch of the NSW Government's Green Paper, *A New Planning System for NSW*, the Better Planning Network is not alone in asking if it's a case of "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" in a rush to address growth and stimulate the economy.

BY ERIN SNELGROVE

As we go to print, the imminent release of the state government's white paper on planning has the Better Planning Network (BPN) ramping up its call for fairness in the representation of community interests to ensure appropriate and integrated urban development. Formed in response to the release of the Green Paper in July 2012, BPN now has the support of more than 300 community groups. The BPN platform (see opposite) is supported by an independent survey found 78% of industry professionals believe the Green Paper is favourable to developers.

Randwick City Mayor, Tony Bowen, echoes these concerns describing the recent declaration of two of the state's first Urban Activation Precincts (UAPs) in its local government area (LGA) as "going totally against democracy in planning", citing the comprehensive process his council has recently completed with its new Local Environment Plan. With vast tracts of its LGA effectively quarantined from the ordinary democratic process of council performing its rezoning functions, in close consultation with its community, Cr Bowen said he accepts that "there will be development, areas will change, but the community must have the ability for its voice to be heard".

Planning Minister, Brad Hazzard has said that the "urban activation precincts process is completely transparent and reliant on extensive council and community consultation" but is also reported as saying the precincts would go out for public consultation "once finalised". Rejecting this notion, Cr Bowen describes the mechanism of UAPs as sidestepping councils completely and is concerned that a process allowing institutions or other state government departments to trigger development proposals is another O'Farrell attack on local government - despite a promise made at the last state election that planning powers would be returned to councils.

In response to Minister Hazzard's comment that "I know there are some councillors in Randwick, and elsewhere, who would like to maintain the status quo, but if taxpayers are going to pay \$1.6 billion for light rail, and other greatly enhanced public transport infrastructure, consideration has to be given to how local areas can evolve to make maximum use of the new infrastructure", Cr Bowen is quick to point out that while the minister makes a valid point for one of the Randwick UAPs, a health and education precinct identified around the University of NSW and Prince of Wales Hospital, his greater concern is for the process in relation to the precinct proposed on Anzac Parade between Maroubra and La Perouse.

A high proportion of the 14% of Randwick's population living in public housing are located in this second precinct and Cr Bowen describes great anxiety around the security of their housing; worried about what will happen now that the state government has decided to realise the value of the land they call home, these residents who contribute an essential diversity in our immediate communities, and include the elderly, vulnerable and socially isolated, must be afforded a quality of life that at its base level is built on stability. In any case, he asks, "why shouldn't public housing residents live close to the city, beaches and parks?",

calling on the government to guarantee that any changes in planning controls will be put on hold until there has been comprehensive council and community consultation on the plans.

The Urban Taskforce, a non-profit organisation representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers, asserts a presumption for growth in its support for the new legislation, and claims challengers are anti-development and opposed to growth. Cr Bowen and Corinne Fisher say "we don't want anything unreasonable".

What is unreasonable, says People United Surry Hills (PUSH), is for the first a community hears of plans for a light rail system directly through their homes and parklands to be in media reports and in seeing lines on maps. Formed for just that reason - in response to the release of the NSW Government's Sydney's Light Rail Future in December 2012 - PUSH is challenging the government's assertion that the development "has drawn on extensive research and stakeholder consultation, which has been carefully considered."

Highlighting BPN's concern that opportunity for community input into decision-making must be available at both the early strategic planning phase as well as when individual developments are being assessed, PUSH is calling for the state government to ensure appropriate and comprehensive community consultation from here on in (see over).

One thing is for sure, the community has not been afforded the opportunity to be heard, but it's rising to the challenge. ■

The Better Planning Network Platform

1. Community engagement in decision making is essential at every stage of the planning and development process.
 2. Protecting our natural and cultural heritage is... fundamental to the wellbeing of our communities.
 3. Development must put local residents and communities first.
 4. Strategic planning must be evidence-based.
 5. Development must comply with strategic planning instruments.
 6. Infrastructure goes hand in hand with development.
-

An update on the proposed Rozelle Village development from the Rozelle Residents Action Group (RRAG).

BY MARK WALLIS

The Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DOPI) has been waiting since December for the last of the public authority submissions from the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). RMS commissioned Parsons Brinkerhoff to audit the traffic modelling submitted by Rozelle Village. A joint submission between RMS and Transport for NSW which include this audit was made public on the DOPI website in late February 2013.

The results show that the modelling was so riddled with errors that RMS have said it was unfit for purpose and therefore they were unable to make any recommendations until the modelling is redone to the standards set by the independent auditors. They have also asked Rozelle Village to undertake a safety audit in relation to the concerns about pedestrian safety around the proposed intersection changes.

This means that if DOPI insist the traffic modelling is again resubmitted there will be a considerable delay in DOPI making a final assessment on the project.

It is quite clear from the audit, that if the modelling is redone to correct the many errors of the current model, results will only show a worsening of the traffic situation. The existing model had major errors such as the traffic moving in both directions simultaneously at the Victoria Rd/Darling Street intersection in the morning peak hour i.e. both north south and east west were showing a green light phase.

The errors had the effect of reduced traffic volumes and travel times on Victoria Rd. Rozelle Village should not be given another chance to run their modelling. They have already had two chances to submit correct information; the original application in April 2012 and the PPR in October 2012. How much more public service time and money needs to be wasted on this project before the only logical conclusion is reached. That is, that this project is unworkable on so many levels that it must be refused.

The DOPI should, without further delay, recommend refusal in their assessment report and pass it on to the Planning Assessment Commission for a public meeting followed by a swift decision for refusal. ■

Mark Wallis is spokesperson for RRAG



A LETTER TO THE MINISTER

A letter to Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP, from Venietta Slama-Powell, Founder of People Unite Surry Hills (PUSH).

PUSH

PEOPLE UNITE SURRY HILLS



© Zoë Brown

Dear Minister,

RE: SOUTH EAST RAIL ROUTE THROUGH THE HEART OF SURRY HILLS

I am writing to you as a Surry Hills property owner and resident who is deeply concerned about the NSW Government and Transport for NSW's consideration of, and approach to, the South East Rail Route through the heart of Surry Hills.

After researching many suburbs across Sydney, five years ago I decided to purchase a home in Surry Hills due to the wonderful village feel, the parklands and ability to wander around the area safely with my daughter and dog.

I believe the Government's plan for the South East Light Rail Route is from Central station, down Devonshire Street, through Wimbo Park, with the associated demolition of the Olivia Gardens apartment complex, across South Dowling Street then cutting across Moore Park before reaching Anzac Parade.

My concerns include:

LACK OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

In 2011, the Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP promised to return planning powers to the community, yet Surry Hills' residents have been blind-sided by the proposal to construct a light rail service through the middle of their suburb. The lack of engagement has created unnecessary stress, and a distraction from the bigger picture in bringing this form of transport back to Sydney. The first time residents of Surry Hills officially heard about the South East Rail Route was when the Government released the 'Sydney's Light Rail Future' document in mid December 2012. Understandably, seeing maps with a rail line through the middle of the community, residents homes and parklands, sent shock waves through the Surry Hills community. And the timing could not have been worse, leading into the festive season.

Development that impacts a community, and may involve compulsory acquisition is sensitive at the best of time, and this has not been handled well by the Government or Transport for NSW.

BISECTING OF SURRY HILLS, AND ITS IMPACT

To put it simply, this proposed rail line route with split Surry Hills!

Surry Hills ranks as the 23rd most stylish neighbourhood in the world, according to American lifestyle magazine Complex (October 2012). Surry Hills was the only Australian neighbourhood to make the ranking. A rail line through the heart of Surry Hills will ruin it.

The proposed route has never before been used as a transport corridor. There is now no bus service between Chalmers and Crown Street; so if part of the objective is to replace buses with light rail, the existing bus routes should be used.

Why should Surry Hills be bisected for other people to transit between suburbs due to previous government mistakes in planning?

Traffic flows into and out of the city, and around the Surry Hills area will be impacted. A local traffic corridor i.e. Devonshire Street will be either closed, or limited, forcing additional traffic onto surrounding streets. This will result in

the return of traffic congestion experienced before the Eastern Distributor was opened.

I estimate a loss of 100 car parking spaces on Devonshire Street. Already parking is a problem in the area. On Thursday at 2pm, a non SCG or SFS event day, during school hours, a typical week day . . . it took me 45 minutes to find a car spot between Parkham, Nobbs, Bourke and Devonshire Street.

Safety at the intersection of Devonshire and Bourke Street is also a concern, where there are two crossings; for pedestrians, cyclists and cars. Already this intersection is a hazard; it is frightening to imagine the chaos when you add another form of transport across this intersection. And you need to give consideration to how slippery the rail line gets when wet.

Let's not forget the various Housing NSW sites, particularly the large Northcott complex on Devonshire Street that houses about 1,000 people. How would you ensure the safety of these tenants, many of whom have health related issues, with high frequency trams outside their front door?

The proposed route would mean the loss of housing in one of the most densely populated areas in Australia, and would significantly reduce green space available to residents. Wimbo Park will be destroyed and Moore Park will have a light rail line dissecting it. With residents primarily living in units and terraces, the parklands are the resident's backyards, and are a critical part of their daily lives, and very much part of the reason why they live in the area. Surry Hills – known as the City's Backyard.

PURPOSE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The route between Randwick and Central will be a major corridor for the light rail. During peak periods one light rail per minute will be passing their front doors. This is based on capacity of 9,000 people per hour in each direction and each train carrying 300 passengers as per the "Sydney Light Rail Future" document.

It is envisaged that a proposal will be made at some point in the future to extend this light rail service to La Perouse and this will of course further increase the frequency of light rail carriages using the proposed route.

Part of the objective of the proposal is to move as many students as quickly as possible between UNSW and Central station. This contradicts the purpose of light rail which is designed to move people 'around a city/area', enabling commuters to 'hop on and off'.

I have concern that the light rail will result in very few cars being removed from the roads. Cars are the problem for Sydney traffic, not buses. The reason buses don't run on time is that there are too many cars. Please provide to the public data to demonstrate that the proposed route will remove cars. My concern is that it will switch students from buses to rail and provide a more indirect route for those already travelling by bus to the city from Randwick.

Already Surry Hills gets stuck between the Eastern Distributor / South Dowling Street and the main railway line at Central. There are no proper arterial roads that divert traffic across these two corridors so consequently traffic is congested getting through Cleveland Street and all the surrounding roads. Adding light rail to this is likely to add to the congestion and deliver poor performances in commute times for light rail travellers.

How would the light rail travel across Moore Park as many

sporting groups, individuals, families with children, and dogs play in this park and the light rail would need to be travelling at its maximum speed during this part of its journey, in order to meet the 'speed' objective?

Or one could look at it from a different angle . . . and suggest the need for a slow speed light rail, necessitated by the terrain. If so, the objective for this proposed route is not served.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Cross City Tunnel was supposed to be a solution to transporting people around Sydney, however many people are unable to justify the cost of this service. How much will it cost to use the light rail; will this have the same affordability issue?

With regards to the South East Route, light rail is a very expensive solution. The route will service the Sydney Cricket Ground precinct where (at best) one day per week patrons will use the service. The other major user of the proposed service are students at UNSW (which is limited to semester times, 32 weeks per year) and who will be concession fare payers i.e. limiting the revenue stream for the route.

I question the financial viability of a service where a large section of the regular university students are concession card holders, peak demand for this part of the service is limited (32 weeks for students and 52 days for sporting patrons), and a large section of the route is not populated.

Light rail is designed to service densely populated areas where patrons can "hop-on and hop-off" the service. A considerable proportion of the proposed route through the Moore Park precinct has no residents living on it, and in fact is a recreation area which is heavily used by local residents.

Is the light rail the best solution for the long-term transport requirements for ALL of Sydney?

Many believe that it is inevitable that tunnelling will be necessary to permit a proper rapid transport system: not light rail, not heavy rail but a metro system adapted to the urban terrain of a city. Examples exist in many cities, noticeably Paris, Hong Kong, Montreal, Shanghai, and just recently, Greece - all with different population densities and geological conditions.

I would like to emphasise that I am not opposed to light rail as a transport option as I trust you have undertaken extensive research to ensure this is the best form of transport for the sustainable future of all of Sydney. However I do question the proposed route from Randwick to Central Station.

Have you given great consideration to the adverse impact through a dense village environment? I am prepared to challenge development at the cost of the well-being of my community, our environment and our heritage, which cannot be replaced. Especially development that does not appear to have sustainability. I would appreciate your reply as to how the Government and Transport for NSW will address my concerns. ■

Venietta Slama-Powell is founder of PUSH

Website	http://peopleunitesurryhills.org
Facebook	PUSH (People Unite Surry Hills)
Email	yourfriends@peopleunitesurryhills.org

SHOCK TREATMENT

The following media release from the Justice Action Group describes how a new law, allowing community treatment orders to occur inside prisons instead of in hospitals, may be tantamount to torture.

BY BRETT COLLINS

In a shocking revelation at a Mental Health Review Tribunal hearing in February, a Justice Health psychiatrist has admitted under cross examination that a prisoner is being forcibly medicated because he is “annoying” and may provoke other prisoners to attack him. The doctor argued that by putting himself in danger he could be defined as a mentally ill person. Our lawyer demanded that he be left alone and treated as a non-violent elderly person entitled to dignity and humanity, and that he gets the ‘care’ as the Act directs.

The Tribunal refused to allow Justice Action to give evidence or listen to the proceedings by phone although the law requires the hearings to be public. As his only community support, the prisoner named us as his primary carer, having mentored him for ten years. We are in daily contact with him and have reconnected him with his family. The man has told us ‘I’m not the only one they’re doing this to. Doctors used to help you if you asked them, but now I fear them more than the

guards.’ Under the Act, he cannot use his own name to protest about his treatment.

This elderly man’s treatment by Justice Health and Corrective Services undoubtedly amounts to torture. For 15 of his 20 years in jail, the prisoner has been held in effective solitary confinement in super maximum security despite his non-violent prison history. He is moved from cell to cell every four weeks, which denies him the stability of a home. When out of his unit, he is put in leg irons and handcuffs. He is assaulted and his possessions smashed while guards watch. He is told he is mentally ill and forcibly medicated despite his requests that he be left in peace, have a job and mix with others.

In a Justice Health Report to the Tribunal, factual errors show their lack of care. They have no idea who is or isn’t contacting him. They didn’t disclose to him their concerns of a heart condition as a side effect of their medication, and censured him as demanding when he asked for a toothbrush to clean his teeth. In the past month, even with our intervention, he has only been allowed to brush his teeth 8 times. Unbelievably the report claims that the man ‘has no insight into his mental illness’ but We are hoping to build a therapeutic alliance with him and increase his antipsychotic medication if needed. He is locked for 23 hours a day in a bare cell.

The Minister for Justice Greg Smith and current Commissioner Peter Severin haven’t intervened despite receiving full information, and all other agencies with oversight responsibilities accept this treatment as normal. The prisoner has requested that Justice Action help him appeal to the Supreme Court. We have undertaken to stand beside him, holding a line for our community. We have prepared a case study and our lawyer has tendered it to the Tribunal. ■

Brett Collins is Coordinator of Justice Action



ONCE IT'S GONE, IT'S GONE.

In her own words, Lynne Williams is a woman of principle. As one of almost 2000 patients per month set to be affected by the proposed privatisation of the Prince of Wales Hospital hydrotherapy pool – a result of the O'Farrell government's \$3 billion cut to the state health budget - she has found herself as the face of a campaign to save essential public hospital services.

BY ERIN SNELGROVE

The Prince of Wales Hospital (POWH) has been told to find \$775m in savings over four years, with Terry Clout, Chief Executive Officer of the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD), admitting that hospitals will be required to maximise 'revenue opportunities'. This despite assurances that frontline services would remain in tact regardless of budget cuts and a key priority to 'improve access to healthcare for vulnerable populations' identified in the Eastern Sydney and Inner West Regional Action Plan for the NSW Government's ten year plan NSW 2021.

While SESLHD and POWH have made assurances that there will be consultation with staff, unions and the community regarding any changes to access to the hydrotherapy pool and other services, the Health Services Union (HSU) reports that privatisation of crucial services such as the hydrotherapy pool is just the beginning and has launched its O'Farrell Cuts, We Bleed campaign, which will travel across NSW for the next 6 months to highlight what it calls budget cut atrocities.

Therapeutic hydrotherapy treatment is a highly effective, well established program used to treat a broad range of injuries and disease, but generally those that cause pain or inhibit movement including cerebral palsy, post-polio syndrome, spinal and acquired brain injury. Confined to a wheelchair after a series of accidents and major surgeries, Williams describes how the POWH hydrotherapy pool provides her only opportunity for exercise, helping to manage both severe arthritis and diabetes. And the benefits aren't just physical, with treatment helping to combat the social isolation common to many as a result of their disease or injury.

Williams was at pains to clarify that while her initial concerns were founded in the personal impact of the hydrotherapy pool's privatisation, she is now focused on getting the community informed and engaged to fight the catastrophic impact these massive spending cuts will have on an already overstretched public hospital system.

At a rally held outside the hospital in late January, HSU NSW Secretary Gerard Hayes told patients and hospital



workers that the privatisation of the hydrotherapy pool was just one example of how cuts to the health budget would devastate both health workers and the broader community; with pensioners and low-income workers hardest hit.

A Disability Support Pensioner, Williams describes how a massive increase in fees from \$6 to an estimated \$78 per session, would make continuing her twice weekly hydrotherapy treatments an impossibility. To put it further out of reach, there is also talk that the pool's community transport service, essential in providing access to mobility limited patients, will be scrapped.

While the state government passes responsibility for how savings are made to local health district bureaucrats – distancing itself from unpopular decisions – Lynne Williams is imagining the stark reality of life without the Prince of Wales hydrotherapy pool, and mounting a campaign to save essential public hospital services; as a matter of principle. ■

For more information, including how to register your opposition to these cuts with government, go to:

www.saveprinceofwaleshospital.org

Find the campaign on Facebook: Save POWH

A NEW FACE FOR ADVOCACY?

It would seem everyone's an advocate these days; you might participate in Earth Hour to pledge support for the environment, march in opposition to war, or lobby your child to do their homework - the possibilities are endless! However, a new Melbourne based company, providing independent fee-for-service patient advocacy is raising eyebrows. In an Australian first, the company is emulating common practice in the United States and Europe, offering the services of an independent professional engaged and paid for by a client to help achieve a particular health outcome.

BY ERIN SNELGROVE



Australia has more than 600,000 community organisations ranging from animal welfare societies to large organisations like Mission Australia, all of whom advocate on behalf of some person/s or issue and work to give the community a voice, let people know there are alternatives, generate debate, raise awareness and influence future agendas and policy.

These non-government organisations (NGO's) play a vital role in advocating for the community, playing a central role in the democratic representation of our interests; and at the core of their work is the provision of professional, specialized and experienced advocacy services. Importantly, these organisations are funded through a mix often comprised of government funding and private donations - they do not charge for their services and as such offer an equity in their accessibility.

Steve Hambleton, president of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) has raised concerns that the introduction of private advocates charging individuals for services that should be undertaken by a family member, friend or carer, and that issues around communication between a patient and their caregiver should instead be addressed with more resources. But is that realistic?

Have you ever felt like you needed some support in negotiating the medical system; negotiating with health insurance companies, organising second opinions or resolving conflicting opinions - maybe you just needed someone to come with you to an appointment? Demand sees the new company, Patient Advocate, planning expansion into New South Wales and Queensland in its first year of operation. Lawyer Claire Crocker, owner of Patient Advocate, maintains that "people are not people any more, they are a patient to be moved through, you might have a relationship with a clinic these days, but not one doctor, so the burden is really on the patient to ensure there is continuity in their care."

The dilemma has caused us to consider how advocacy, in its many guises, works to represent the best interests of those advocated for because, at the heart of it all, is an individual.

SELF ADVOCACY

Self advocacy is undertaken by a person or group of people on behalf of themselves. If it is a group of people self advocating they typically share the same characteristics, interests, or needs.

Imagine an Australia where car-related injuries and fatalities are considered an unavoidable part of everyday life... Advocacy for seat belt legislation was initiated in the late 1960s by Australia emergency doctors who noted that seatbelt wearers were less likely to be seriously injured in collisions.

Compulsory seatbelt laws, accompanied by a community education campaign, were introduced in Victoria in 1970, followed by the rest of Australia and then other countries during the 1970s and 1980s - a move that has resulted in dramatic reductions in death and injuries caused by car accidents.

Speed, drink-driving and other car-safety messages have had similar results in recent years.

www.community.org.au

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

Individual Advocacy is when an advocate concentrates their efforts solely on advocating for one or two people. The advocate could be a staff member of an organisation, a carer, family member, friend or volunteer. This type of advocacy is focused on the specific needs or situation surrounding the individual or person with a disability.

Nola is a young, Indigenous single mother of a two year old daughter. She became homeless when she left a violent relationship, and has been homeless for three years. Nola's family has a history of homelessness: her mother lost her public housing property as a result of anti-social behaviour and debt. Nola left school at 14. She speaks English as a third language, and her literacy is poor.

Nola was referred to a tenancy support and social housing program for women escaping domestic violence. She was referred to a program to help her address past family violence and sexual assault issues. She attended literacy classes and is now able to read to her daughter. She also learnt how to cook healthy, tasty meals for herself and her child.

Nola appreciated the flexibility of the service: she was able to ring the program and change appointments if she had cultural obligations including sorry camps or funerals.

Homelessness Australia

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

Systemic Advocacy is primarily concerned with influencing and changing the system (such as legislation, policy and practices) in ways that will benefit people as a group. Systemic advocates will encourage overall changes to the law, service policies, government, and community attitudes.

This form of advocacy does not usually involve individual advocacy as it can cause a conflict of interest around the resources that are being generated and the purpose of the advocacy in general.

For almost two years, Graeme Innes AM urged RailCorp NSW to get serious about its obligations towards Sydney's rail passengers with disability by ensuring that its trains provide audible 'next stop' announcements.

The Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) represented Mr Innes. After mediation with RailCorp failed, Mr Innes sued the state-owned rail corporation in the Federal Magistrates Court, alleging its failure to provide audible announcements breached Federal Disability Discrimination law.

In a landmark decision delivered this morning (1 February 2013), the Federal Magistrates Court sided with Mr Innes. Federal Magistrate Kenneth Raphael ordered RailCorp to pay \$10,000 in compensation to Mr Innes. Magistrate Raphael said Mr Innes had suffered indirect discrimination, and RailCorp had been 'reactive and haphazard' in its response to Mr Innes' complaints.

PIAC Chief Executive, Edward Santow, said court action was taken to ensure RailCorp complied with its obligations

under the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002. He said Mr Innes, who is blind, is entitled to use public transport services without discrimination. 'Audible train announcements are crucial because they allow passengers with vision impairment to know they are getting off at the right station,' Mr Santow said.

Mr Innes, who is the Disability Discrimination Commissioner, took the case in his private capacity. 'All I wanted was for RailCorp to do what they do for everyone who is able to read print. That is, tell me where I am,' he said.

www.piac.asn.au

STATUTORY ADVOCACY

Each state and territory in Australia has an independent statutory body charged with promoting the rights and protects the interests of people with impaired decision making ability through guardianship, advocacy and education as the legally appointed substitute. In NSW, under the Guardianship Act 1987, the Guardianship Tribunal or the Supreme Court can appoint the NSW Public Guardian or the NSW Trustee and Guardian to take action and make decisions as guardians, legally the same as if the person under guardianship had made them themselves.

Working with people with disability such as dementia, intellectual disability, brain injury or mental illness, the NSW Public Guardian is only appointed when there is no other person able to take on the role, and advocate at individual and systemic levels on behalf of people with impaired decision-making capacity.

Liam was in his early 30's and an inpatient in a psychiatric hospital when he first came under guardianship in 2005. He has a range of cognitive difficulties including alcohol related brain injury, chronic disorganised schizophrenia and polysubstance abuse. He had several admissions to psychiatric units and had been homeless over the years.

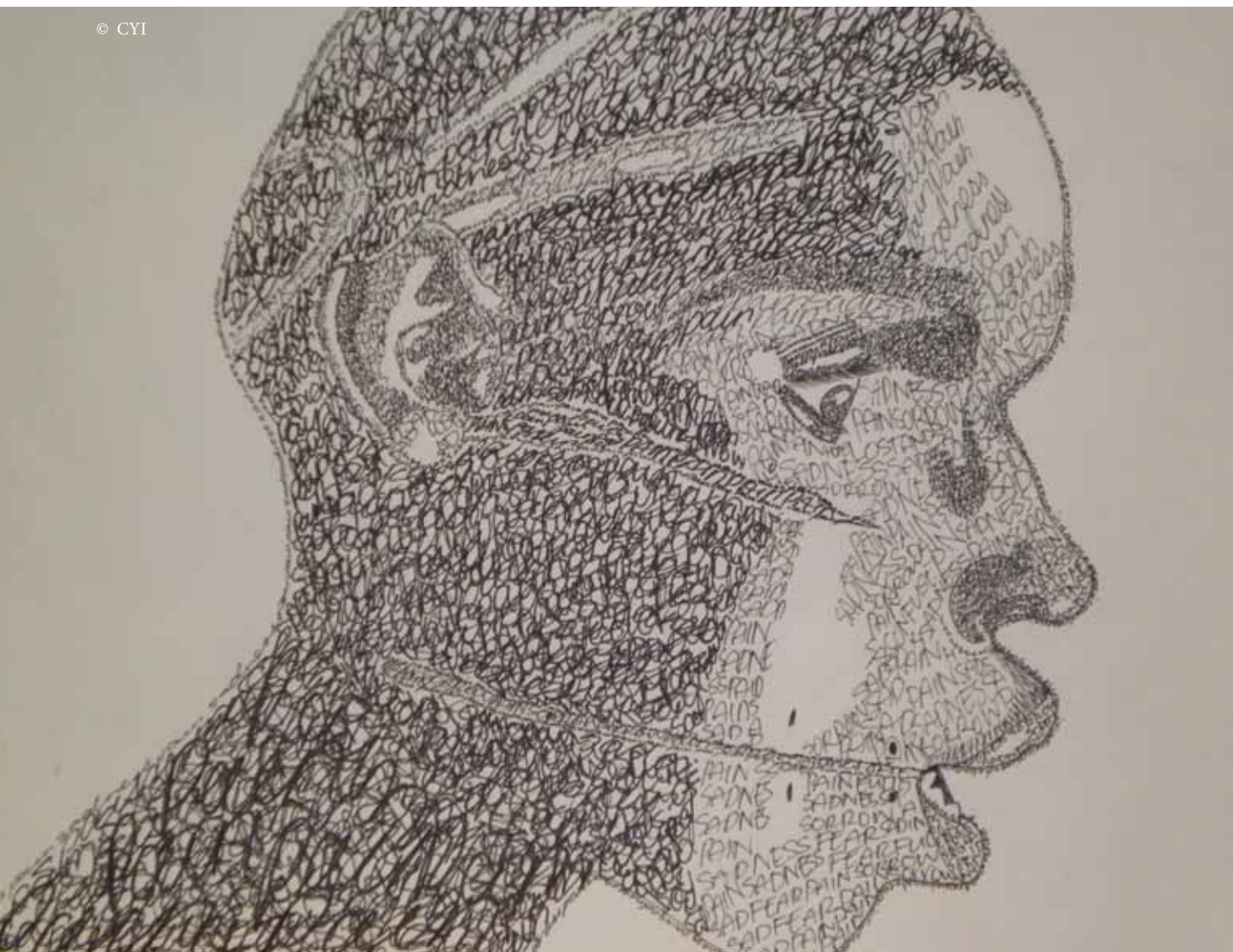
Liam was transferred to another mental health unit in the Illawarra region in 2007. In 2010 staff began to develop a graduated discharge plan for Liam involving increasing periods of trial leave at a group home managed by the hospital. However, Liam became very unwell and was physically intimidating to others. The trials have shown that Liam cannot manage in the community without an individualised model of support.

Liam's status has changed from involuntary to voluntary, but there are no plans for his discharge in the foreseeable future, due to a lack of suitable accommodation options.

We're hopeful the Ombudsman's inquiry will shine a light on the lack of community accommodation for people like Liam. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that people with disability have the "right to live in the community, with choices, full inclusion, participation and enjoyment equal to others".

There are many more people just like Liam who remain in hospital.

www.publicguardian.lawlink.nsw.gov.au ■



In April, the Creative Youth Initiative will celebrate 20 years of using creative expression as a tool for positive change in the lives of young people. *Museum of Creative Hearts* will showcase selected works from past and present students, and celebrate the collective stories of students, staff and supporters from 1993-2013.

The Mission Australia youth initiative has two core programs, ARTWORKS! visual arts program and Sound of the Street (SOTS) music program. A third and critical element of the initiative is the Student Support Coordinator, a social worker who provides individualised social support to students including ongoing assessment and case management throughout the course.

Offering a free 20 week course, programs run three days per week and are TAFE Outreach accredited; students who complete the course receive a Certificate 1 in Access to Work and Training. Funded through corporate sponsorship and private donors, CYI cites The Sir David Martin Foundation, The Raymond E Purves Foundation and Alberts Music as major supporters, also Alcatel Lucent, Gynvill Group, Matana Foundation and Perpetual Foundation.

“From here on in you’re an ‘artist’ or a ‘musician’. Leave your labels at the front door - anything others have called you, or that you tell yourselves”. That’s the first thing participants of the Creative Youth Initiative are told, an important first step in creating powerful change for young people who have been referred to the strengths based program for a range of reasons, but commonly having been coined ‘at risk’.

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social isolation, gender identity, bullying and poor educational experiences, the program has no catchment area and students travel across Sydney to the unique program at the Mission Australia Centre in Surry Hills.

Student Support Coordinator, Melissa Miller, describes vulnerable and impressionable young people who, when given the respect and opportunity to reframe the entire way they view themselves, become equipped to make positive change in their lives. Offering students a safe place to explore their creativity and engage with other young people they can relate to, the program is unlike any educational experience the students have had before. As one graduate explains:

“

I loved music and drama, but the public school system just wasn't for me. I'm pretty sure the motto for most students at CYI is 'I would've done great in school had there been no teachers or students'. So my career advisor suggested the SOTS program. She knew I loved music and thought that it would be the best place for me. I jumped at the idea - of course I would've done anything to get out of school at that time. Little did I realise the profound impact this course would have on my life”.

Young people are referred from a range of services including youth and community services, counselors, juvenile justice, supported accommodation services, schools and TAFE - they may also refer themselves or can be referred by their families.

Demand is high, with referrals almost three times the number of places available (14 art, 10 music per 20 week course, run twice a year). Potential students are not required to have an existing background in either music or art, although the degree of that experience varies widely; more important is their commitment to the course, with the responsibility and discipline required impressed upon students from the outset. Sometimes a young person may be prevented from undertaking the course as their current situation is too chaotic, although this is entirely dependant on the individual; one young woman moved between eight crisis accommodation centres during her course duration – the program providing her only sense of stability.

“

I wasn't too sure what it was going to be like when I first started. It turned out to be the best thing I've done”.

Starting with an initial assessment, CYI's Strengths Based Approach encourages the young person to start thinking about positive change and how they can work collaboratively to achieve it. Miller smiles as she explains that initial assessments commonly see new students describing themselves as 'lost', 'different' and feeling they 'don't fit in anywhere'; she knows they're in the right place, and that they're not alone.



© CYI

A tool called the Rickter Scale, helps Miller and the student identify where the young person perceives themselves to be - and where they want to be - in relation to a range of life domains. The tool which looks much like an abacus, is designed to remove the focus from the 'interviewer', engaging the user to help build rapport - particularly useful in working with a client group who are often not comfortable with, or used to verbalizing what's happening for them. The tactile nature of the scale is also particularly useful in creating a non-confrontational environment and a non-verbal dialogue in a situation where the student may have high levels of anxiety or an autism spectrum disorder such as Asperger Syndrome.

“

Through doing the SOTS course I've improved tremendously as a musician and as a person. I would've never clarified my wants in life (nor had the self belief and determination) had it not been for the support and guidance at CYI.”

Students are closely supported with meeting their current needs and future goal planning, referrals to further education or services and community integration. A plan is developed for how comprehensive support can be provided throughout the course including assistance with

e.g. Centrelink, housing and working with a young person's case manager. A mid-term review sees students revisiting the Rickter Scale to look at how and why goals have been exceeded or missed, also to start the process of exit planning - a major aspect of the Student Support Coordinator role. Using the momentum developed throughout the course, Miller works intensively with each young person to develop referral pathways including to school, short courses, TAFE, university or employment.

“

I am getting better with my anxiety. I feel confident in myself!!! I'm happy with my new friends and my life at CYI!!”

ARTWORKS! and SOTS are not therapy as such, instead described as ‘music and art in a therapeutic environment’. Once the young person feels safe, personal issues invariably arise as part of the creative process, appearing in lyrics or drawings. The Student Support Coordinator works outside of the studio setting with the young person at this point; having developed a relationship, students actively engage with her for support. Art and music become conscious coping strategies and learning how to use their creativity is transformational; program evaluations demonstrate that practical art and music skills become a by-product of the students’ personal growth and development of internal resources.

The visual arts program explores a range of mediums including painting, sketching, printing, aerosol art, life drawing and sculpture. Materials, one-on-one and group tuition are provided and an annual exhibition is the goal students work towards; with their work for sale, students are often then commissioned to create artworks for a variety of end uses.

The music program boasts four recording studios and state of the art equipment; students are taught relevant software, the basics of songwriting and how to create original songs. With a focus on developing a practical understanding of the

music industry, students’ work is included on a professionally mastered end of year compilation and performed at an annual album launch. The two tutors in each program are either performing musicians or exhibiting artists - inspiring and relevant role models.

“

CYI has given me the motivation to get up in the mornings and get out in the world again after so long.”

Inter-group meetings, trivia and icebreakers are run to encourage interaction between students; every second week there is a trip to the park - providing an opportunity for sport and play, and to be out in nature; meditation has recently added another dimension to student’s concept of a healthy lifestyle. Students report being less socially isolated, less anxious, more confident and having a sense of purpose. Miller describes the shift as most evident during the end of year exhibition and album launch, with students proudly showing family, friends and support workers how hard they’ve worked and what they’ve achieved.

“

It took me some time, like years, to realise these things are actually the least important things CYI has given you. The skills, the practice, the encouragement, even the hope aren’t as important as another thing I think they give you. It’s definitely the most important thing they gave me - the ability to make things happen and to persevere.”

We know that approximately 83% of the young people who graduated in 2011 successfully entered a training or education program or employment; an impressive statistic - and important outcomes - but in a day dedicated to showcasing the transformations of so many young lives, The Museum of Contemporary Hearts will offer a comprehensive reflection on the history of CYI in terms of its full impact on direction of so many young lives. ■



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THE MUSEUM OF CREATIVE HEARTS

Please join us in a celebration of

20 YEARS
OF MISSION AUSTRALIA'S
CREATIVE YOUTH
INITIATIVE



The day will be a celebration of the collective stories of students, staff and supporters 1993 to 2013, and showcase selected works from students past and present.

11TH APRIL - 11AM TO 4PM

with formal opening at 1pm
and launch of CYI's research snapshot

TAFE Ultimo Campus, "The Muse"
695-731 Harris Street Ultimo

RSVP

Terry Maslak on 9356 8897 or
cyi@missionaustralia.com.au
by the 29th March 2013.

**YOUTH WEEK
IN THE CITY**
5 - 14 APRIL 2013
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BE HAPPY
BE YOU.
CITY OF SYDNEY



Sir David Martin Foundation
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Foundation

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And our partner:



REGIONAL AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

We congratulate the following individuals from the ISRC region who were honoured with Australia Day awards in 2013.

Our sincere apologies for anyone we may have missed.

NAME	AWARD
BOTT, Ralph Edward	Public Service Medal
BUCKLEY, Gregory Mark	Australian Fire Service Medal
BUTLER, Gavan John	Member of the Order of Australia
DACY, Marianne Josephine	Member of the Order of Australia
DALEY, Simon Matthew	Public Service Medal
DYSART, Michael John	Member of the Order of Australia
EYERS, Kerrie Margaret	Member of the Order of Australia
FISHER, Jack Leonard	Medal of the Order of Australia
FLEMING-BAUER, Deborah	Medal of the Order of Australia
FOREMAN, Philip Jack	Member of the Order of Australia
GATINEAU, Yvon Albert	Medal of the Order of Australia
HICKSON, Jill Lesley	Member of the Order of Australia
JAKU, Edward	Medal of the Order of Australia
LONG, Malcolm William	Member of the Order of Australia
MAXWELL, James Edward	Member of the Order of Australia
McGEOCH, Roderick Hamilton	Officer of the Order of Australia
MCPHEE, Sandra Veronica	Member of the Order of Australia
MILLER, Robert Gordon	Member of the Order of Australia
NOVAK, Ivan	Public Service Medal
O'BRIEN, Linda Jane	Member of the Order of Australia
O'LOUGHLIN, Mary Ann	Member of the Order of Australia
OXLEY, Anthony Philip	Medal of the Order of Australia
OXLEY, Roslyn Mary	Medal of the Order of Australia
REDMAN, Sally	Officer of the Order of Australia
REDMOND, Paul Murray	Member of the Order of Australia
SCHWARTZ, Steven	Member of the Order of Australia
SIMPSON, Wendy Susan	Medal of the Order of Australia
THOMAS, Robert Bain	Member of the Order of Australia
WILLIAMS, Mary-Louise	Member of the Order of Australia
WOOD, Glenda Kaye	Member of the Order of Australia
ZORBAS, Helen Maria	Officer of the Order of Australia



L-R Shane Phillips and Luke Freudenstein

A LOCAL HERO AND HIS PARTNER IN PREVENTING CRIME

Shane Phillips and Luke Freudenstein both received prestigious awards as part of the 2013 Australia Day Honours. Passionate mentors to disadvantaged youth, particularly Indigenous young people in the Redfern area, the pair collaborate on the delivery of the Clean Slate Without Prejudice boxing initiative.

BY ERIN SNELGROVE

Phillips, who is CEO of the Tribal Warrior Association, and Superintendant Freudenstein, Redfern Local Area Police Commander, have been credited with transforming the relationships between the police and young people and were both recognised for their work in the Redfern community.

Phillips has been honoured as Australia's Local Hero of the Year. Having grown up on the Block, he is a respected leader of the Redfern Aboriginal community and a passionate advocate for Aboriginal rights; in particular for his work on youth issues, juvenile justice and Aboriginal deaths in custody. Determined to proactively empower Indigenous people, Phillips' work with the Tribal Warrior Association is grassroots, providing a range of mentoring and training opportunities to provide pathways to employment to overcome disadvantage.

Freudenstein was also honoured for his work in the Redfern community, receiving the Australian Police Medal. Appointed as Commander in 2008, Freudenstein has been instrumental in forging strong and lasting relationships between not only the Indigenous community of Redfern but more broadly across NSW. In addition to the Clean Slate Without Prejudice program, Freudenstein is involved in a number of other Indigenous community programs including with Babana Men's Group, the Redfern All Blacks Football Club, the Junior Rugby League Football Association and other programs with the Tribal Warrior Association.

An innovative program bringing Indigenous youth and police together in a context removed from crime, Clean Slate Without Prejudice aims to break down barriers and develop relationships and respect. Phillips says:

“

It's simple - routine and discipline give a sense of self worth and belonging; they do the rest themselves, and the mentors are there to give them some guidance”.

Freudenstein describes the sense of empowerment and confidence the young people are given with incredible transformations evident in so many of the mostly young men; once barely able to mutter a 'yes' or 'no', they now actively engage with and help to train others; others have moved into independent accommodation and found employment.

The pair agree it's no coincidence that since the program started in 2009, local youth crime statistics have dropped 82 per cent, dropping from 114 incidents per month, to just 14. “These kids are the new cool kids, others in the community look up to them” says Phillips “it's changing the community, giving them healthy options. We go to the movies together and have meals - something a lot of these kids haven't had access to before”.

The program now sees up to 100 participants filing into the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence at 6am, three mornings per week; Phillips and Freudenstein are concerned that it's become a struggle to find enough equipment and - crucially - engage the essential local Indigenous mentoring component that provide additional supports.

Currently, Tribal Warrior funds the program as it can, but with no specific funding stream, which has been costed at \$900,000 per year to facilitate six employed mentors, equipment and several intensive camps, Phillips and Freudenstein are concerned the program will lose momentum without immediate assistance; a terrible shame considering not only the enviably low rates of crime and recidivism, but for the very real impact this program is having on the lives of young people and their communities.

As I leave, the participants are animated and taking turns preparing themselves a bowl of cereal, provided after training. Phillips and Freudenstein say “we're so proud of them”. ■

**For more information please phone 9699 3491
Or visit www.tribalwarrior.org.au**



FAREWELL TO AN ACTION MAN

Colin Leslie James (1936-2013)

BY ERIN SNELGROVE

“Make housing a verb” was his motto. Like this pledge, Col James was a true man of action. From the early days of housing activism in the 1970s James pushed for change, believing that investment should be made in community development and social capital rather than simply bricks and mortar.

“My notion of community is that it is something that has to be really nurtured. I like this notion of social capital, that you help to empower people with social capital which is power and access to resources and the strength of collective action... My vision of the future is more that social capital is what drives the world”.

Having studied architecture at the Sydney Technical College and the University of NSW, James won a scholarship to study at Harvard. Inspired by European architects who were calling for the discipline to serve the bulk of society - neglected and living in poor housing, James returned to live in Redfern in the mid-1960s and established Archanon or “Architecture for Anonymous Clients”.

Living not far from the Block, he joined the A Aboriginal civil rights movement and the campaign to establish the Block as a grass-roots community. He worked closely with many Aboriginal organisations and described that this was “with the blessings of Mum Shirl. She actually was the one who decided what white fellas could do for black fellas”. He established Archanon, a collaborative dedicated to the anonymous client. Col’s work with friend and colleague Mick Mundine on the Aboriginal Housing Company, Australia’s first housing collective, spanned more than three decades.

James wanted to see a sense of ownership, or a sense of home for the people in Redfern. He was concerned to develop housing that is more respectful of Aboriginal culture and needs; housing that is affordable, sustainable and adaptable. To that end he remained engaged and active with the development of the Pemulwy Project, determined to see the Block transformed with affordable, appropriate, living housing.

A Professor of Architecture at the University of Sydney for more than 40 years, he inspired respect from his students and co-workers alike. Exploring alternative affordable housing with the cardboard house project as part of the NSW Government’s 2004 Year of the Built Environment: houses of the future led to the launch of CRASH (Construction Industry Relief and Assistance for the Single Homeless), a project partnering vacant or underutilized properties with students and homeless individuals.

James was an early member of the Tenants’ Union of NSW and sat on the board of many community organisations including Shelter NSW, the Homeless Children’s Association, the South West Inner Sydney (SWISH) Housing Co-operative and South Sydney Community Aid.

Appointed by the federal Department of Urban and Regional Development as the Woolloomooloo residents’ advocate from 1973-1984, and one of three professional advisors to the NSW Builders Labourers’ Federation on green-bans, James served on more than ten NSW government advisory committees. In 1994 he was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to architecture and the community.

In the words of one of his students “RIP Prof Col James AM. You made uni fun, hands on and bigger than one’s own personal ambitions”; the seed of community spirit successfully planted.

Col is survived by his partner, Karine Shellshear, and their daughter Zoe. ■

THE ANNUAL MARG BARRY MEMORIAL LECTURE

Since 2005, the Marg Barry Memorial Lecture has been held annually, to celebrate and continue the work of an outstanding South Sydney community activist, politician, networker, provocateur and former Coordinator of the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development, Marg Barry (1934-2001).

Over the years, the lecture has educated and engaged local residents, community activists and community organisations on topics such as the changing nature of neighbourhoods and the importance of building electronic communities, the global financial crisis and its negative impacts on social inclusion, and the importance and power of preserving social history.

ABOUT MARG BARRY

She was gut-strong, mind-quick and moral-certain. Therefore formidable. But also light of heart, vivacious, funny and a self-put-down merchant. She was single, single-minded, singular. She was a young woman who had grown old trying to make things fairer and had, therefore, grown fair. She was irreplaceable. She was what every community needs. If this society, Australia, hasn't got a front line of young Marg Barrys coming on, we're in trouble.

Barry, who has died suddenly at the age of 66, was officially the Coordinator of the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development until 1999 (when she retired to the Central Coast). Unofficially she was a networker, a provocateur, a community activist, an organiser, more a barbed-wire fence in the path of bureaucrats than a thorn in their sides.

She was sometimes regarded as a character, as happens to those who do not conform. She was the survivor of an era in which the working class of Sydney and especially South Sydney, where she had lived and worked, was a community.

Find transcripts of previous Marg Barry Memorial lectures on our website www.innersydney.org.au



ISRCSD MEMBERSHIP



The ISRCSD is a non-for-profit organisation providing information, advocacy and community development to local communities and community agencies in the local government areas of Botany Bay, City of Sydney, Leichhardt, Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Local Government Areas.

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Summer
1994-95

Makeover for Redfern Station?

Residents of Little Eveleigh Street claim the State Rail Authority (SRA) is keeping them, and Redfern Police, in the dark about the redevelopment plans for Redfern Railway Station.

Stumbling across a copy of the Station Concept Plan at Christmas, residents from Little Eveleigh St discovered a new station concourse is planned south of the existing concourse at Lawson Street, connected by four new access walkways one of which runs right along their backyard alignments, and a new station entrance in Little Eveleigh Street.

Early phone calls to the SRA brought a peeved response that the Plan was very much a "preliminary development", "squiggles on a map", and there would be lots of time for resident input prior to the lodging of a development application in December 1995.

In next to no time LERAG (Little Eveleigh Street Resident Action Group) was formed. Questions were fired off to the SRA calling for more specific information as to:

- safety to properties
- safety to commuters
- proximity of the new walkway to

their properties

- interference with their trees which are not only decorative but provide windbreaks and security
- why the old bridge which provided an exit for passengers to Wilson Street was not being upgraded



New kiss and ride facilities

- whether their narrow footpath which accommodates only one person at a time would be widened
- whether their narrow street would need to be widened to accommodate traffic at the new station entrance.

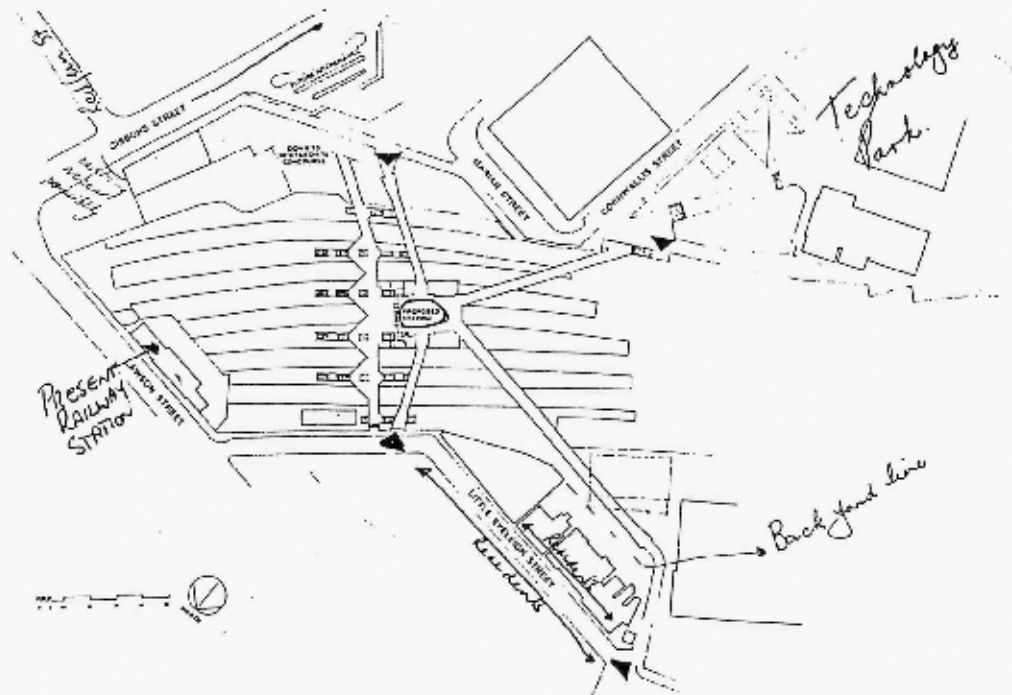
Questions were also asked as to

whether Redfern Police had been consulted over the plans, especially in relation to the altered station entrance, and safety and security, and whether the SRA would release its consultants' report on the "Redfern Station Development Strategy".

Weeks later and silence has been the SRA's deafening reply to LERAG.

But it seems South Sydney City Council is aware of the plans. It is a member of a team led by the Department of Transport (DOT) preparing a consultancy brief for a \$30,000 study for the redevelopment of Redfern Station to provide a new properly integrated bus/rail interchange together with taxi and "kiss and ride" facilities. The funds for the study are being provided equally by DOT, CityRail and SSROC (Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils) who, with the State Transit Authority and South Sydney Council, comprise the team for this part of a tripartite Integrated Local Area Planning Transport Project under the banner of SSROC.

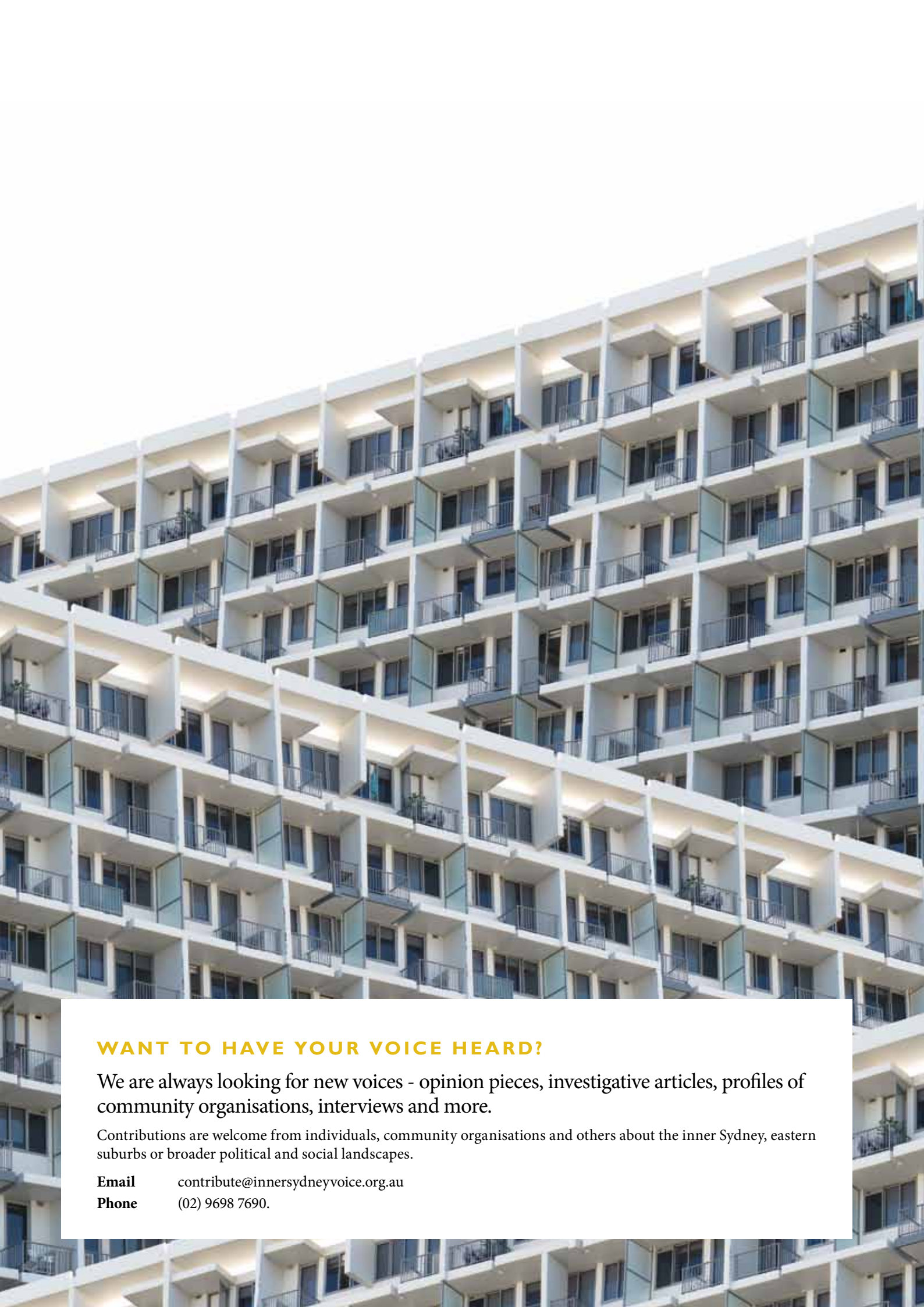
Judith Miller
Little Eveleigh Street RAG



REDFERN STATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

STATION CONCEPT PLAN





WANT TO HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD?

We are always looking for new voices - opinion pieces, investigative articles, profiles of community organisations, interviews and more.

Contributions are welcome from individuals, community organisations and others about the inner Sydney, eastern suburbs or broader political and social landscapes.

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