

# Inner Sydney VOICE

SUMMER 2014-15 · ISSUE 123



# MY LIFE MY CHOICE



TIRED OF STICKING TO SOMEONE ELSE'S SCHEDULE, **ELLIE ROBERSTON** DECIDED TO SELF-MANAGE HER HOME CARE AND NEVER LOOKED BACK



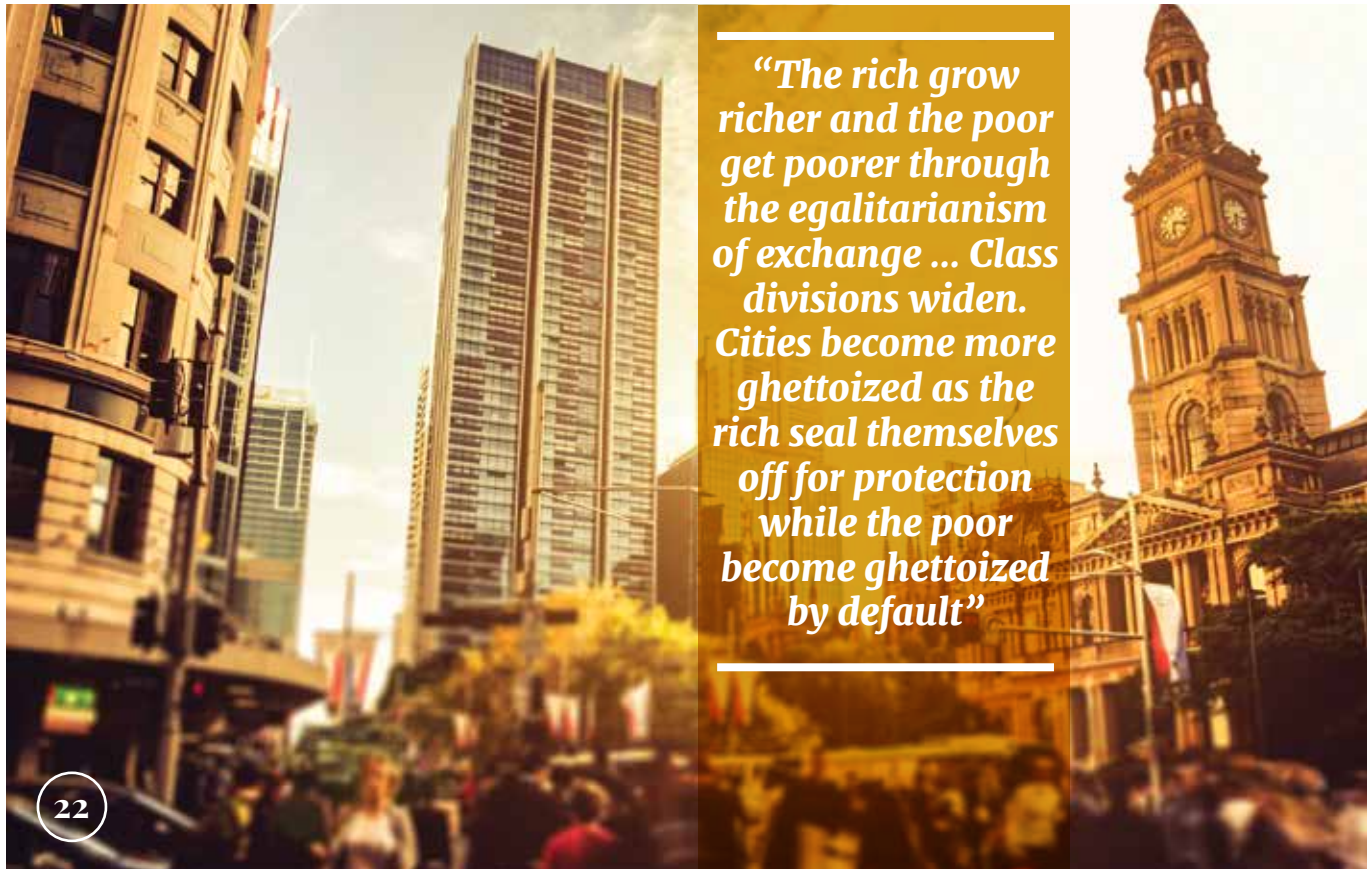
## +PLUS

MILLERS POINT MIXED IS BEST  
BAYS PLANNING PRINCIPLES  
UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPERS

ABORIGINAL HOME CARE SALE  
SMALL ORGANISATION BENEFITS  
RETHINKING MULTICULTURALISM

ALCOHOL HEALTH ADVOCACY  
NSW ELECTORATE CHANGES  
AGED CASE MANAGEMENT

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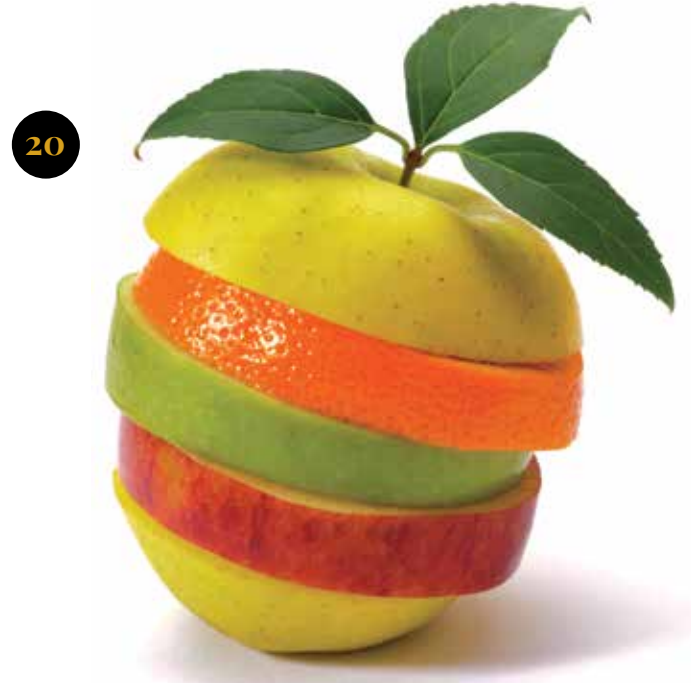
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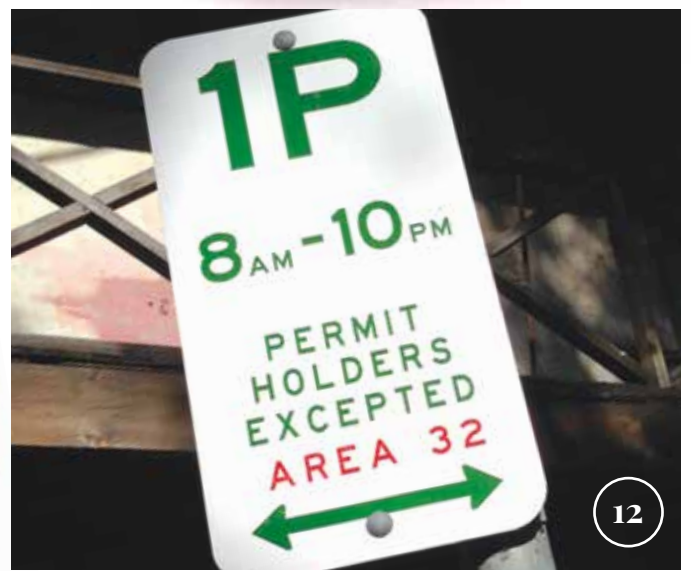
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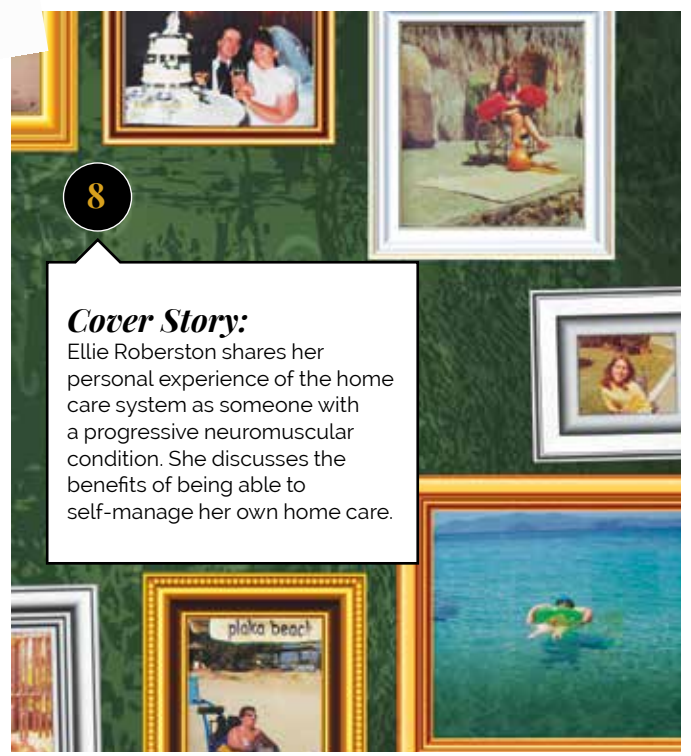


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Discussion paper for input and comment on  
**SOCIAL HOUSING IN NSW**

for Comment by 20 February 2015

**Inner Sydney Regional Council will hold a community forum to discuss the paper, to inform our response, and to assist tenants make a submission.**

**REGISTER YOUR INTEREST WITH SASKIA ON 9698 7690.**

*More information will be available on [www.innersydney.org.au](http://www.innersydney.org.au)*

*The Government Discussion Paper proposes reform around three pillars summarised below:*

**PILLAR 1: A SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY AND PATHWAYS FOR CLIENT INDEPENDENCE.**

Current social housing does not encourage or support greater social and economic independence. There is potential to provide pathways to successfully move people from social housing to the private rental market.

**PILLAR 2: A SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM THAT IS FAIR.**

Social housing should target those who need it most. In a fair system, targeted assistance would be provided only when it is needed. Long-term assistance to people with short-term reduces the capacity to assist more people.

**PILLAR 3: A SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM THAT IS SUSTAINABLE.**

A social housing system that is sustainable provides appropriate housing assistance to vulnerable people now and into the future that meets people's needs. The system also needs to be financially viable within the Government's existing funding envelope.

**Further Details: [www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/social-housing-in-nsw](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/reforms/social-housing-in-nsw)**

**FOR SOME ANALYSIS ON THE DISCUSSION PAPER SEE WHAT IS NOT UP FOR DISCUSSION ON PAGE 30**



**PLEASE  
SPEAK  
OUT**

**YOU CAN SPEAK OUT  
AGAINST RACISM  
AND ABUSE.**

**PHONE:  
1800 131 555**



**NEW "SPEAK OUT"  
HOTLINE TO IMPROVE  
REPORTING OF  
RACISM AND ABUSE**

**There is something you can do about harassment and abuse based on race or religion.**

No-one should suffer insult or abuse because of the way they look or what they believe in.

Call the SPEAK OUT HOTLINE if someone has harassed, intimidated or made hateful insults or threats.

It does not need to have been aimed at you. You can also report an incident you have witnessed.

- **Your phone call WILL be taken seriously.**
- **If a crime has been committed, Police WILL investigate and take action.**
- **Multicultural New South Wales WILL listen and respond.**



**INNER SYDNEY  
REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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#### Join and Subscribe

Please see page 30

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# Editorial

Governments push a “big is best” mantra because it is easier for them to administer and potentially less costly. At the other extreme is the often under-resourced yet “small is beautiful” experience of many NGOs.

The proposed sale of the NSW Home Care Service to a single buyer is an example of “big is best” for government. The Aboriginal community is concerned about the implications for the clients of the Aboriginal Home Care Service which is included as part of the sale – see *Not so Aboriginal home care?* (page 11). There are a number of issues: the profit motive may impact on the quality of service delivery for some of the most marginalised people in the state; there was no opportunity for the service to be split off and become Aboriginal run and controlled; and if the service delivery is sub-standard it may not respond to pressure from local elected representatives like a government service.

At the other extreme, In *All things great and small* (page 18) we look at the benefits of small organisations. In *My choice matters* (page 8) Ellie Roberston discusses the benefit she has experienced by being able to manage her own care package. Both stories challenge the “big is best” mantra and invite us to look for the best outcomes for service users and communities. In *the case for case management* (page 14) we cover a different aspect – people with complex needs who need individual advocacy and case management in order to manage their disparate supports.

Urban renewal is another area where “big is best” is being rolled out as the global city. *Citizen rights to the global city* (page 22) explores the relationship between a global city and its citizens who want a say in what happens. The *Bays Precinct people’s campaign* (page 24), has gone on the offensive listing out the principles that they want guiding any redevelopment by UrbanGrowth.

In *Millers Point and The Rocks: an alternative way forward* (page 6) consultants SGS found that mixed communities, that include public and affordable housing, deliver better economic outcomes than the proposed sale of public housing. In announcing *The friends of Millers Point formed* (page 7) we cover their initial campaigns to save Darling House and the Sirius building, which are targeted for sale in the governments public housing sell off.

Property development is happening all around us but how much do we actually know about it? *An overview to property development* (page 26) provides an insight into what makes developers tick. In addition we also have an article on the hot button issue of *Car parking and inner city planning* (page 12).

Racial tensions, fueled by the ISIS intervention, see us advertise the new Speak Out line for reporting racism and abuse (page 4), as well as *Rethinking Multiculturalism* (page 20).

In other articles we look at the *NSW election boundary changes* (page 25) and at alcohol advertising in *Alcohol in our community* (page 16). *One from the vault – airport Battle* (page 31) acknowledges 40 years of campaigning around aircraft noise and a second airport for Sydney.

As we went to print the NSW Government released a discussion paper on social housing so we have given notice of a forum on page 4. You can find out more in Chris Martin’s *Social housing in NSW discussion paper... what is not up for discussion?*

Charmaine Jones & Geoff Turnbull

Co-editors Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development

**“The proposed sale of the NSW Home Care Service to a single buyer is an example of “big is best” for government”**



## MILLERS POINT AND THE ROCKS: AN ALTERNATIVE WAY FORWARD

THE NSW GOVERNMENT CONTINUES WITH ITS PLAN TO DRIVE PUBLIC HOUSING OUT OF MILLERS POINT. JOHN MCINERNEY DISCUSSES A NEW STUDY THAT FINDS A MIXED COMMUNITY WILL HAVE BETTER ECONOMIC OUTCOMES FOR NSW THAN SELLING THE HOUSING.

There are still angels in the consulting world as the Millers Point community found, with the receipt of a pro bono consultants' report from SGS Economics and Planning Pty Limited, one of Australia's leading researchers into the economics of community development.

Initially, SGS were approached by the Millers Point Community Working Party, to investigate the government's current plans for a standard consultant's fee. The Working Party, a coalition of three community groups, was spontaneously generated after

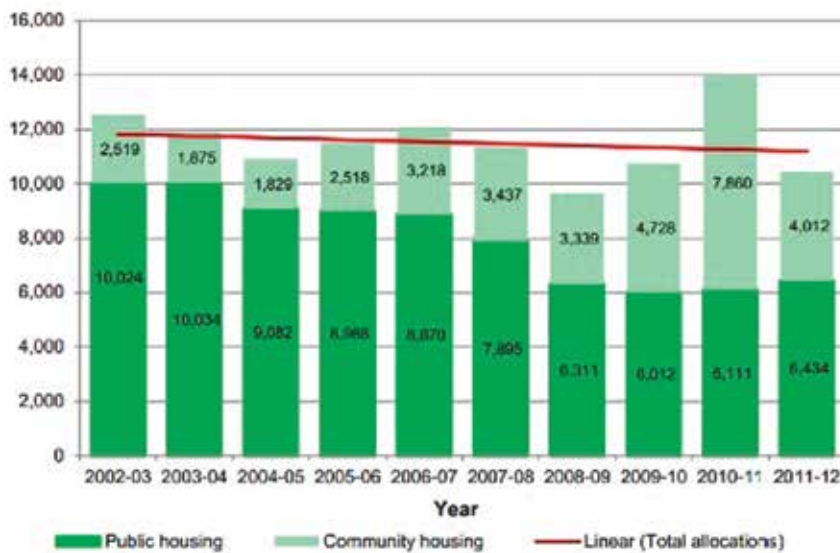
the announcement on the 19th March 2014 from Family and Community Services Minister Prue Goward that all 293 government-owned properties, including the Sirius building, would be sold on the private market over the next two years. The government had previously promised to consult with the local community before making a decision. That promise was broken, leading to a great deal of community fear and anguish, and the charge that a policy of "social cleansing" was under way.

SGS took the brief but surprisingly, changed the rules half-way through the study when their staff became convinced of the social importance of the results. They believe their recommendations needed to be presented as totally independent with no hint of bias towards any source of funds, and therefore the study was offered to the community on a pro bono basis. As can be imagined the Working Party were excited by this turn of events, and were more than happy to step back from any involvement with the Study, confident that their opposition to the government's plan would be vindicated.

On completion of the report in July, SGS offered the Minister, Gabrielle Upton, the opportunity to consider their recommendations without any pressure from media or the community. Accordingly SGS forwarded to her department a copy of the report in late August which, it is understood, was discussed with the Minister in early September. As of early November, there had been no response – so much for a genuinely sensitive attempt to open up dialogue with the Minister.

The report, entitled "Millers Point and The Rocks: an alternative way forward", has now been made available through the SGS website ([www.sgsep.com.au](http://www.sgsep.com.au)), including a summary of the findings. Its recommendations have been fully supported by the Working Party and are summed up in the primary recommendation that the government should aim to achieve a mixed community with a range of private, affordable, social and aged care housing throughout Millers

NEWLY HOUSED PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HOUSING TENANTS, 2002/03 TO 2011/12



Source: Housing NSW, 2012, in Audit Office of NSW, 2013

Note: The numbers of newly housed community housing tenants also include transfers between community housing dwellings, which may slightly inflate these numbers.

Point. Failing to provide opportunities for people on lower incomes to live in well-serviced, accessible and job-rich areas, like inner Sydney, has an impact on the city's overall productivity and global competitiveness.

SGS suggests retaining a mixed community by providing a range of private, affordable, social and aged care housing by retaining some social housing in the area. They conclude that, although a mixed community will provide less cash upfront for the Land and Housing Corporation and it will have improved outcomes for NSW as a whole. Their recommendations include:

- Enabling workers on lower incomes to live closer to employment opportunities. This allows them to access a deeper jobs pool within community distance and more easily improve their skills.
- Making it easier for firms in the inner city to fill lower paid positions, such as cleaners and childcare workers.
- Providing housing for 'key workers' essential to the city's functioning, such as police, nurses and teachers, which could have an effect on the tourism, hospitality and education sectors.
- Addressing the mismatch between the locations of cheaper housing and employment in Sydney, which affects lower income families especially women.

The SGS Report contains a number of recommendations for an alternative approach including:

- Maintaining some, rather than all, social housing in the area. The most appropriate properties to retain will be those with low maintenance costs that are purpose-built as social housing.
- Replace all lost social housing stock within the inner city area, rather than relocating it to areas with poor services and accessibility.
- Invest in a purpose-built facility to house elderly long-term residents of the area to allow these residents to age in place and maintain their links to the community.
- Increase the amount of affordable housing in the area to cater for lower-income workers essential to the city's function.
- Offer long term leases to the market, rather than selling properties outright. This will allow the NSW government to keep their options open about how to use the properties in the future.

The fifty-page report quantifies the costs and benefits of various options and is illustrated with various diagrams illustrating the economic spatial inequality now entrenched across the Sydney metropolitan area. Particularly telling are the graphs showing public housing being available for fewer new people in the face of rising demand. The diagram reproduced here is from the report but was originally sourced from the Audit Office of New South Wales.

**John McInerney is the Chair of the Millers Point Residents Action Group and a member of the Millers Point Community Working Party. He is a planner and also a former Councillor in the City of Sydney.**



### THE FRIENDS OF MILLERS POINT FORMED

A meeting at the beginning of October 2014 formed The Friends of Millers Point to work with the existing local groups and the existing Working Party. The Friends group aims to be a focus for people outside Millers Point who want to support the existing groups and their struggle.

The Friends meeting was convened by the Mayor of Leichardt and includes artists, writers, musicians, performers, arts administrators, architects, community and businesses leaders, unionists, federal, state and local politicians, and residents.

The aims of The Friends of Millers Point are to:

- support the community of Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks.
- oppose the forced relocation of residents and the destruction of their community.
- make others aware of the effects of this relocation process on residents, including their loss of identity, greater isolation and increased vulnerability.

The Friends will be kept in touch with what happens in this community over the next 18 months through a regular email newsletter, occasional special events, and links with the festivals and events that occur in this neighbourhood.

To become a Friend of Millers Point, email [john@piperpress.com.au](mailto:john@piperpress.com.au) with "Friends" as the subject and include your name and suburb. There is no cost, your details will remain confidential, and you can opt out at any time. You can find out more at [www.millerspointcommunity.com.au](http://www.millerspointcommunity.com.au) and [www.facebook.com/savemillerspoint](http://www.facebook.com/savemillerspoint)

Early activities of The Friends of Millers Point involved a SOS Save our Sirius exhibition and open house in early November and Save Darling House which is also threatened with closure as a result of the withdrawal of its peppercorn rent by Land and Housing Corporation.

The Friends are arranging a screening and discussion of Pat Fiske's film *Rocking the Foundations* which includes stories of the 1970s Green Bans. Jack Munday and Nita McCrae together fought to save The Rocks from developers and from plans for high-rise office towers. The Green Bans were lifted for the building by the Housing Commission of the Sirius Apartments for the residents who had been displaced by some of the earlier demolition in the area.

The screening and discussion with Pat Fiske and two other filmmakers Helen Barrow and Blue Lucien, who have each been filming in Millers Point for many months, will be at Abraham Mott Hall at 3.00pm on Saturday 6th December, 2014. Jack Munday, the Patron of The Friends of Millers Point, is also attending.



# *My choice* **MATTERS**







Ellie lives a full life of love and travel, adventure and serving her community



MOST OF US TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT WE HAVE CHOICE AND CONTROL OVER THE SERVICES WE RECEIVE BUT IN THE DISABILITY AND HOME CARE AREA THIS IS NOT OFTEN THE CASE. AT THE RECENT ISRC DISABILITY SUPPORTS IN TO THE FUTURE FORUM **ELLIE ROBERSTON** SHARED HER PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE BENEFITS OF SELF-MANAGING HER OWN HOME CARE.

**M**y parents looked after all of my personal care needs. I lived at home and was encouraged to experience what other able-bodied children and young adults were experiencing. I also enjoyed having both a strong Greek heritage and identified myself as a proud Australian.

In my late teens, as my parents were ageing I thought it would be wise to ease myself off depending on them. I applied to receive independent personal care from the Home Care Service of New South Wales.

After my father passed away, I moved out of home to live on my own. I was totally reliant on Home Care to take care of my personal care and household chores. It was a bit of a struggle though, in a number of ways.

Firstly, I had no choice as to which carer was sent to me so whether I liked her or not, whether she was competent or not, and whether she was trustworthy or not, did not seem to matter to Homecare.

My personal care is very personal so it was very disturbing to me when I would be sent a lady I was not comfortable with.

Secondly, there were many issues on the times that my carers could attend. The worst part was my night service. I enjoyed going to bed after 10 PM however I could only do so when there was a carer available.

Homecare then deciding I was difficult, outsourced my service to a privately run service provider.

In 1996 I married my husband.

Further problems arose with my service provider after I married. Their belief was that my service would focus only on my personal care needs. They did not look at my life and living situation in a holistic way as they should have.

By this stage my disability had already progressed a fair bit and I was reliant on my husband to drive me to and from work, cook and prepare all meals, turn me and toilet me in the middle of the night, take me shopping, readjust my body and fetch me things constantly. All while he had a full-time job as well.

I was told carers were not to do any ironing or tidying up for my husband or clean his bathroom. These rules made me feel worthless and whether real or just perceived, I felt that I was not contributing much to my marriage or to my home in any significant way.

I needed personal care assistance but just as importantly, I needed assistance to help me run my home. This included contributing my share of the work in looking after the house. Having a disability did not, and does not; make me any different to any other woman. I did not want to just exist, I wanted to contribute!

The service provider didn't seem to understand or want to accept that there was more to my life than just having a clean body.

Two years ago, I was granted an Attendant Care Program Package from the Department of Ageing and Disability in NSW. This is a self-directed individualised package that gave me the freedom to interview potential carers and ultimately hire the ones I found suitable. In this way, I was able to accept carers that fit my criteria and that they were able to work the specific hours that I wanted. I was also responsible for creating and running the rosters and deciding on the duties required. It was a new lease on life!

However my package was still managed by my service provider who >>

>> still held the reins somewhat. I did not have control of the wording of advertisements, the required qualifications for the carers, the type of training they received, and the amount of times I could advertise. Another big issue for me was that carers that I would meticulously find and employ would be head hunted by the service provider and given to other clients which compromised their availability for me if I needed them at different times or for backup.

With my disability progressing I was finding that my approved hours were getting increasingly difficult to keep within the time limits. Carers were constantly going over time. My personal care was using up all my hours and there was little time if any, for housework or anything else.

So I decided it was time to take my business elsewhere! I applied for the Direct Funding Model (or DFM) option of this package. The funding of my package would be deposited directly into my bank account and I would be completely responsible for the employment of my carers. I was granted my DFM in April of last year and I have never looked back!

I had to research the legalities of employing staff, such as paying wages, super, taxes, workers Comp and public liability. Searching on the Internet I found loads of information easily. It was a lot of work but it paled in comparison to the benefits that I gained from being self-managed. I was also able to use some of my funding to purchase software that would calculate pays, and print and send payslips and timesheets.

I advertise for carers myself and I get great results. I am now able to structure ads for potential carers with my own personal requirements. This greatly minimises unsuitable applicants because they respond to my particular criteria. This aspect of my care is crucial because fulfilling my needs begins with finding the right person for the right job. I am able to employ staff that I like and can click with.

I interview potential carers and I have drawn up a simple contract and statement of duties that I provide new



***My carers know that I am the employer, and this brings with it more respect to me as I am in control of their employment.***

employees with along with a letter of employment offer.

I am able to set my own pay rates, being of course above minimum award, and so pay higher wages, than the service providers. This helps greatly in keeping good workers because I can compensate them for their good work. I look for carers that are compatible with my level of intellect, needs and interests. I look for carers that are well presented, punctual and eager. I look for qualities of reliability and a genuine care and interest in my needs. I look for carers that do not have issues with taking directions from me. I look for carers who have an open mind and will not judge me on my way of life, my little quirks or my idiosyncrasies.

My carers know that I am the employer, and this brings with it more respect to me as I am in control of their employment. I can hire as many carers as I want which I have done, and now there is always someone to assist me if one of the regular carers cannot make it. Previously, I had a lot of shifts missed because my service provider did not have enough staff.

I am in a position to responsibly train my carers for tasks tailored to me. I also have the option of engaging an occupational therapist to train my staff. All of these expenses are covered in my package.

I can save up some of my hours for times when I need extra assistance. I can take my carers on holidays.

Another huge bonus that I get from being self-managed is that my funding does not have to pay for overheads and service provider fees. In this way, I can actually increase the number of hours of care that I receive.

I now have time to do something special with my hair, or put away winter clothes or reorganise my store room or get presents wrapped for Christmas, or get assistance to just cuddle my cats. And a zillion other tasks that everybody does in their daily lives but take for granted.

I am in control now of the times I get up from bed, the times I go to bed, who is cleaning me. I can accept invitations to go out with friends and take a carer with me if I choose, knowing that I can go to the toilet and shower when I come home at whatever time I please.

Being self-managed with my funding has made my life complete in terms of self-care.

When the NDIS reaches you, I encourage you to embrace it and don't be afraid! You don't have to manage the funding yourself if you don't want to, you can choose a service provider to do that for you if you wish. Or you can have something in between and have an accountant or bookkeeper manage the money for you and you would still come out on top. I choose to do it myself because I save a lot of my funding that way so I can use extra hours. Running my own package only takes about an hour or less each week.

All in all, my directed package has allowed me to be a wife, a daughter, a friend, a colleague, an employee, even a pet owner! It has allowed me to participate in my community and to do all the things that I want.

**Ellie Robertson was born with a progressive neuromuscular condition. Ellie grew up on Bondi Beach, has travelled, worked full-time and married: always living life to the full. Ellie is personally available to speak at conferences and forums to share her experience on this important topic.**



## NOT SO ABORIGINAL HOME CARE?

THE PROPOSED SALE OF ABORIGINAL HOME CARE HAS RAISED CONCERNS WITHIN THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY SUCH AS THOSE BELOW FROM AN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKER WHO WISHES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.

**A**bsoriginal Home Care is the largest provider of Home and Community Care services to Aboriginal people in NSW and is part of the government run Home Care Service of NSW. It provides help to Aboriginal people with a disability and older Aboriginal people to help them remain independent in their own home. It also provides respite support to the carers of Aboriginal people.

On 22 September 2014 Minister for Ageing and Minister for Disability Services John Ajaka announced that as part of the NDIS transition, where the federal government takes over responsibility for disability services, “we’re about to start the process of transitioning the Home Care Service of NSW into the non-government sector”. The sale is expected to be completed by mid-2015. Aboriginal Home Care is to be part of the proposed sale.

The announcement has raised concerns within the Aboriginal community about how clients especially in remote communities will be handled in a privatised for profit service. The comments below set out some of the concerns that have been raised from within and outside the community.

*I am writing to express my concerns regarding a recent Media Release made by the Minister for Ageing and Minister for Disability Services John Ajaka, regarding the sale of NSW Home Care, including Aboriginal Home Care.*

*The Aboriginal community, including current Aboriginal Home Care clients and community sector employees are heavily disparaging of the plan to sell the largest home and community care service provider to*

*a multi-national for profit provider, particularly given that not for profit organisations will not have a fair chance in the tendering process.*

*The state government has clearly stated that it want to maximise its profit from the sale. This will mean that smaller Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers will not be given the opportunity to expand their services to their local communities as they will not be in the financial position to compete with the large for profit organisations.*

*Currently Home Care is one of the largest employers of Aboriginal Staff in NSW, with 8 Aboriginal Home Care Offices throughout NSW providing assistance to rural and remote areas as well as suburban areas.*

*Selling Home Care to a multi-national provider may result in loss of employment for Aboriginal staff which jeopardises what the Aboriginal community has fought for over the years.*

*It also works against the Closing the Gap Policy. In 2008, COAG agreed to six ambitious targets to address the disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians in life expectancy, child mortality, education and employment.*

*The Closing the Gap target for employment states it will halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and other Australians by 2018. Selling off Aboriginal Home Care to a multi-national company jeopardises the government’s agreement in attempting to reduce the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people. The sale of Aboriginal Home Care will possibly increase the unemployment rate for Aboriginal people and for the*

*nation as we predict Aboriginal people will no longer access services if they are not provided by Aboriginal workers who can provide culturally safe and appropriate services.*

*“Aboriginal pensioners and low income clients are not required to pay for domestic assistance, respite or personal care services provided by Aboriginal Home Care.” This is a real concern for the organisation that purchases Aboriginal Home Care.*

*If this organisation is a multi-national for profit provider it will want to maximise its profit. There is no known Aboriginal home care service provider that seeks to make a profit. It is about providing a service to their own people so they can continue to live in the community and not have to move into a residential institution like setting.*

*We are particularly concerned that if Aboriginal people cease accessing home care services there will be more admissions to hospital and premature admittance to residential care which will cost the government more money in the long term.*

*Aboriginal service provision is unique, requiring specialist Aboriginal staff to be employed throughout, not only direct care workers but also in management and senior management roles to ensure a quality service for Aboriginal elders and people with a disability.*

*The only way to do this is to keep Aboriginal Home Care as a separate entity providing assurance to the Aboriginal community that service provision will remain culturally appropriate and safe, run by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people.*

# CAR PARKING AND INNER CITY PLANNING

CAR PARKING IS ONE OF THOSE ISSUES IN PLANNING THAT THE COMMUNITY AND POLITICIANS GET MOST EXCITED ABOUT. **PETER PHIBBS** UNPACKS THE PARKING ISSUES IN THE RECENT PROPOSED SEPP 65 CHANGES WHICH ALLOW DEVELOPMENTS CLOSE TO STATIONS TO HAVE NO PARKING FOR THEIR RESIDENTIAL UNITS.

**T**he recent announcement by the Minister of Planning, that there may be no minimum requirements for some LGAs for developments within 400 metres of train stations under SEPP 65 changes really got the commentariat going. Probably the most sensational was an article in the *Daily Telegraph: Liberal MPs smash Pru Goward for joining Clover Moore's car-killing crusade.*

## WHAT WAS THE PROPOSED CHANGE?

SEPP65 is a State Environmental Planning Policy the aim of which is to improve the design of apartment buildings. It provides some design guidelines and also a set of standards which council must use when assessing development applications for apartment buildings.

In the most recent modifications to the SEPP it has also attempted to have an impact on affordability by not allowing councils to use the lack of parking as a reason to either refuse a development application or to modify a development application in the situation when the apartment site has good access to public transport.

Note that this does not mean that the State Government now **requires** developers to have no parking. It simply says if a developer does take that option the council cannot refuse the application based on this issue. SEPP 65 has other guidelines on things

like apartment sizes. And please note – the option about car parking is not operational yet. The idea was put on exhibition until the end of October 2014 and public comment was invited.

## SO IS THE WORLD GOING TO END?

Will it suddenly be much harder to find a park. Will someone steal that spot out the front of your house which is “your spot”? Well let me first explain what is likely to happen.

In many council areas, where there is no maximum parking requirement, things probably won't change much. If developers think that providing an apartment without a car space will not sell in their proposed development, they will proceed as before and build apartments with car parking. So the planning change allows for less car parking but does not require it. The decision is left up “to the market” – what the developer thinks will sell.

In inner city areas where there is good public transport there are already a lot of apartment dwellers without cars. For lots of reasons these owners or renters get around using alternative means such as public transport, bicycles and car share (like Go Get). For these people the costs of owning and running a car don't add up.

In a range of centres, there are very large numbers of apartment dwellers without cars. This means that there





***In some parts of the city where the roads are very congested, providing apartments with less parking can be an important planning strategy for not clogging up an already congested road network.***

is less traffic on the streets, less greenhouse gases, less oil consumed – all good things. The proposed changes in the planning system allow this group to be catered for. In some parts of the city where the roads are very congested, providing apartments with less parking can be an important planning strategy for not clogging up an already congested road network.

#### **WILL THIS MAKE HOUSING REALLY AFFORDABLE?**

The cost of a parking space for a new apartment where the parking has to be provided underground can be up to \$75,000, so it is likely that apartments without car parking will be cheaper. However, it is unlikely that the full savings will be passed onto the purchaser.

One of the great myths about development is that developers price dwellings at their total costs plus a profit margin so anything you do to costs always appears in the sale price. Developers price their apartments depending on what the market will bear – don't forget that the new market represents only a small percentage of the total housing supply (1-2%). The price tends to be set by the established market.

Not surprisingly, the resale value of an apartment with car parking tends to be more than equivalent apartments without car parking. People looking in the market describe the difference is in the order of \$35,000-40,000 – so the saving could be in that order. It will be more in higher value areas, especially in areas – think Bondi – where apartments with car spaces are in short supply. Once there are a larger number of apartment blocks – some with apartments with car parking and some without – it will be easier to get a more precise measure of this price difference.

#### **ISN'T IT EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO OWN A CAR AND A CAR SPACE?**

Well, actually no. What is probably more important is that we develop a housing market that provides choice so we can allow people to seek the

combination of housing/parking/location that maximises their own wellbeing. Whilst lots of people might think that not having your own car/car space would be like cutting off your arm, for many younger people, the whole car/car space thing is so last century/analog/boring.

One way to see this is to examine the statistics on driving licenses. Back in the day, kids used to apply for their license the very first day they were eligible. Now many younger people put that off until they are well into their twenties. On the other side of the age distribution, many older people will lose their licenses because of disability issues – for them the car/car space package will also make no sense.

#### **WHAT IS THE LIKELY OUTCOME?**

Overall, I would see this change as positive in the parts of Sydney where there is good public transport. However, like all changes there will be some implementation problems.

Firstly, the policy will work best where occupants of the apartments aren't given an on-street parking sticker in areas with a shortage of parking spaces (though obviously there would be exceptions to this rule such as for people with a disability).

The other issue is that renters may end up signing on a lease on the basis of advice that they can obtain an on-street parking permit (now who might tell them that?). In this case, there should be a longer cooling off period so tenants can be released from a lease in these circumstances. Councils should also provide better on-line information and maps to highlight where resident car parking permits are available and the areas where resident car parking spaces are not available.

And for it to really work we need to improve our public transport alternatives such as greater services across the radials in inner city areas.

**Professor Peter Phibbs is an economist/planner and is the Chair of Urban and Regional Planning and Policy at the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney.**

# THE CASE FOR CASE MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

WITH MAJOR REFORMS TO COMMUNITY AGED CARE DUE TO COMMENCE ON 1 JULY 2015 ENIS JUSUFSPAHIC OUTLINES THE RISKS TO CLIENTS OF THE REMOVAL OF CASE MANAGEMENT FROM THE BASIC CARE LEVEL PROGRAM.



The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program has provided supports for people over 65, younger people with disability and their carers to remain living independently in their own homes since 1985. HACC currently has seventeen service types, including in-home services like Domestic Assistance and Community Nursing, and out of home services such as Community Transport, Social Support, and indirect services such as Case Management. Service contracts are based on a particular service type and service providers are held accountable for outputs for that service type only. This is the reason why the HACC sector is highly specialised, with many funded organisations providing only one type of service.

The program was jointly funded by the state and federal government, but administered by the state government. In 2011, changes under the Health and Hospitals Reform Agreement saw the federal government take over funding and administration of the program for people over 65. The state retained responsibility for younger people with disability. When further reforms to aged care and disability commenced in 2012, HACC service providers were given three year funding contracts, which are due to expire in July 2015.

The federal government department administering the Commonwealth HACC Program for people over the age of 65 [and Indigenous people over 50] released a Design Paper earlier this year which outlined its vision for the future of HACC – which will merge with two or three other community aged care programs into the new Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) in 2015.

The Paper introduces a two tiered Aged Care System administered by:

1. My Aged Care – informational and referral service which performs the initial intake and screening for those want to have access to the CHSP. Provided that the person is found eligible, they will be referred to a Regional Assessment Service who will then assess the person’s needs and draw up a care plan.
2. Aged Care Assessment Team – team of clinicians usually placed in a hospital who assess people for access to Home Care Packages and Residential Aged Care.

The paper states that from 1 July 2015 case management will no longer be funded, and suggests that older people who need ongoing case management will be directed by My Aged Care for a face-to-face assessment to identify those who are vulnerable and require

linking services such as “tailored advice, guided referral, active assistance with linking to services in and outside aged care, care coordination and short term case management.” If the linking service is not enough then a case management client may be referred to an Aged Care Assessment Team to determine their needs and eligibility for Home Care Packages or residential aged care.

## TRANSFER OF HACC CASE MANAGEMENT CLIENTS TO HOME CARE PACKAGES

Home Care Packages were created to meet the person’s ongoing needs and include a minimal case management component which focuses on care coordination and assessment e.g. “identifying goals, building care plan, referrals and ongoing monitoring.” Whereas HACC Case Management services are targeted at “people who need specific types, mixes or levels of support services that are not usually provided by community care services and who need a case manager to help organise them”

HACC Case managers work in this grey area between social housing, chronic disease management, mental health, aged care and disability. These services were funded to find

solutions in the local community for those clients who need somebody to bring together all their supports from other sectors and advocate on their behalf for access to services and their legal rights as well as working on the person's self-care capacity.

Home Care Packages do not offer sufficient hours of service for complex needs case management clients. Many people in the sector are concerned that costing out case management in the same way as other service types fails to acknowledge its real value and would amount to a significant decrease in number of hours offered to the client transitioning from HACC case management.

For example, Social Work is costed out at \$140.83 an hour at the NDIS Hunter Launch Site. This would mean that a Level 3 package at \$30,000 with a 10 per cent administration fee would be able to provide 3.7 hours of case management a week without any other support services. HACC case management clients received up to 6 hours of case management support a week. Arguably, there would not be enough hours of service, even on the highest level packages, and in most regions there are long waiting lists for packages, which would make a transfer very difficult.

#### HIGH NEEDS GROUP AND CASE MANAGEMENT AS ADVOCACY

Having reviewed a number of de-identified files of older people receiving case management support, I have come to the conclusion that there is a group of case management clients – who have significant cognitive impairments due to dementia, mental health or degenerative diseases – such that they are not able to advocate for themselves. They would be deemed eligible for HACC services, as their need for support with daily living activities stems from their illness, yet they do not fit within the service type specific responses (e.g. transport, meals, day care) offered by the HACC service system, as they require more intensive advocacy style support to deal with potential home-

### **“Case managers work in this grey area between social housing, chronic disease management, mental health, aged care and disability”**

lessness, guardianship, Centrelink etc.

The CHSP Design Paper mentions that all advocacy funding in the HACC program is to be transferred to the National Aged Care Advocacy Program. In NSW, there is only one service provider funded under this scheme – The Aged-Care Rights Service. Service providers in Eastern Sydney have identified a need for local services due to increasing numbers of people with complex needs, who require ongoing advocacy, and suggest that due to increasing complexity of the client group, advocacy services need to be expanded through a grants process, in order to fill this gap.

#### LONG TERM CASE MANAGEMENT IN OTHER COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS

Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program (ACHA) is also being considered for inclusion in CHSP. It is similar to HACC Case Management, with a focus on housing and care needs of older people. The National Aged Care Alliance (NACA) recommends that ACHA case managers need to be able to “provide case management and face to face assessment that has an uncapped time period for interventions” This is an excellent recommendation, acknowledging the need for an uncapped time period for interventions in order to achieve sustainable positive outcomes. However, this element of the program would need to be expanded in order to accommodate clients transitioning from HACC Case Management.

Mental Health Case Management is another service similar to HACC Case Management. There is a recognition by the funding body that many people with a history of mental illness have a need for ongoing case management, due to a complex array of needs. Because they are not adequately supported in

the community they also experience a ‘revolving door’ of discharge and re admission to hospital.

Chronic Disease Management and Mental Health Case Management are available in the community but are limited to the person's specific condition. A person with complex needs may end up with a mental health case manager as well as a chronic health case manager and housing case manager. HACC case managers are currently able to work across all sectors to bring supports together. This translates into better outcomes for the person and costs savings across different sectors.

#### IMPACT OF REMOVING CASE MANAGEMENT AS A SERVICE TYPE

The removal of case management as it exists in the HACC Program creates a gap in support for vulnerable older Australians that can't be met elsewhere in the current system. Significant changes are required if clients are to be successfully transitioned to other support services. There is a real risk that if these people's needs are not dealt with in the community setting they will end up in acute services much earlier, which would put more pressure on health, mental health, housing and homelessness services.

Considering the increasing complexity of the client group, we recommend expanding other Case Management services as well as extending the capacity of the My Aged Care Linking Service to provide ongoing case management in situations where the person is not able to be supported elsewhere.

Enis Jusufspahic is the Home and Community Care (HACC) Development Officer (Eastern Sydney) References and further reading can be found in the online version of this article

# ALCOHOL IN OUR COMMUNITY

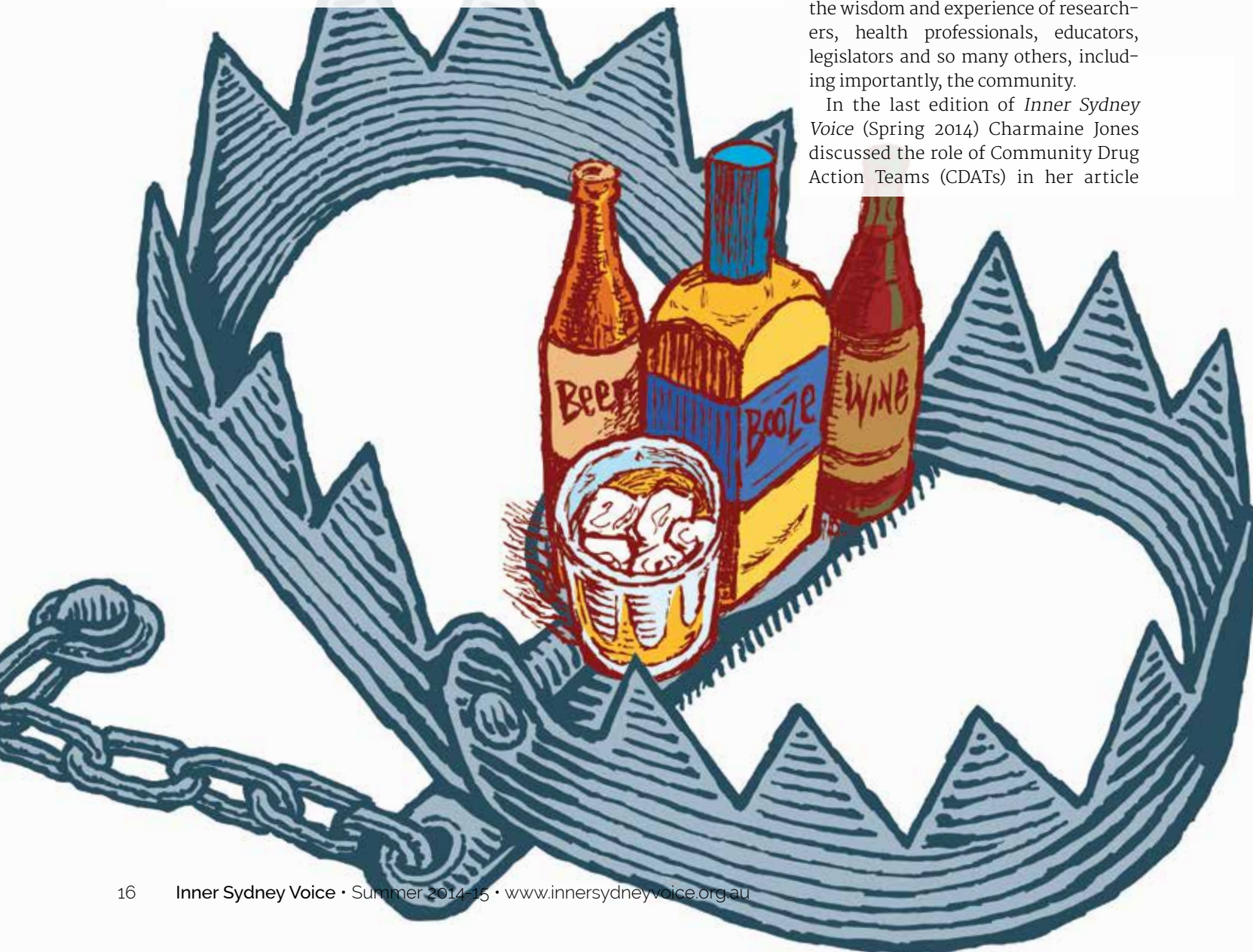
WHEN WE THINK ABOUT ALL THE DRUGS — LEGAL AND ILLEGAL — CONSUMED IN OUR COMMUNITIES, THERE IS ONE THAT STANDS OUT AS HAVING A MASSIVE IMPACT ON THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

**NORMAN BOOKER** EXPLORES WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT ALCOHOL.

Alcohol is second largest contributor to drug-related harm in Australian society, after tobacco, (Loxley et al 2004) and its misuse is one of the major causes of preventable death. In NSW alone between 1992 and 2001 there were 10,369 alcohol-related deaths and 537,742 alcohol-related admissions to hospital (National Drug Research Institute 2003). The figures speak for themselves, and despite growing community concern over alcohol-related violence and unacceptable behaviour, efforts to rein in the harms caused by alcohol misuse continue to be a challenge our community.

There is no simple 'silver bullet' strategy that will solve such a complex issue as this. We need to continue to draw on the wisdom and experience of researchers, health professionals, educators, legislators and so many others, including importantly, the community.

In the last edition of *Inner Sydney Voice* (Spring 2014) Charmaine Jones discussed the role of Community Drug Action Teams (CDATs) in her article







## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In response to this work SHCDAT, continuing the partnership with the Centre for Health Initiatives produced a series of resources that built on some the recommendations.

Three full colour brochures were designed, piloted, revised and printed for distribution. The brochures were distributed to all CDATs in NSW and are now available for download online. They can be overprinted with local CDAT contact information as needed.

Additionally, a draft pro-forma Media Release was developed. This provides a framework which local CDATs and other community groups

can use to respond to an issue of concern, to support other initiatives like online petitions and local awareness campaigns.

To help in awareness raising and education two other resources are also available. One is a collection of statistics and research findings on alcohol use, the other includes quotes about alcohol advertising, prevalence and promotion.

Talking about our concerns and taking position action are the first steps in bringing about real change.

[www.adfa.org.au/policy-advocacy/cdat-community-drug-action-teams](http://www.adfa.org.au/policy-advocacy/cdat-community-drug-action-teams)

*Community Drug Action Teams — Condone or Condemn?* She highlighted the fact that individual community members can bring about change. Providing accurate information, raising awareness and fostering strategies that empower people to make the best decisions about their health and welfare are all CDAT work areas. Lessening the harmful effects of drug use, both at the individual and the community level, is a key goal of local CDATs.

In 2011 Surry Hills Community Drug Action Team (SHCDAT) embarked on a collaborative project to look at the evidence on alcohol advocacy and activities in Australia, and to develop some ideas about how CDATs could contribute to work in this area.

SHCDAT worked closely with the Centre for Health Initiatives at Wollongong University which undertook an extensive research project that could be used to inform practice. The focus of the research was to review alcohol advocacy groups and activities (mainly in Australia but with some overseas examples) with a view to recommending practical alcohol advocacy strategies which local groups such as CDATs could undertake. Under the leadership of Professor Sandra Jones and Ms Laura Robinson a report was produced paving the way for more innovative responses to this challenging issue.

As well as providing a review of the literature, the report provided a

valuable listing of agencies and groups working to advocate for reform in alcohol advertising in Australia.

Key Advocacy Groups in Australia

- Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)
- National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA)
- Alcohol Policy Coalition (APC)
- The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF)
- The Public Health Advocacy Institute of Western Australia (PHAIWA)
- Injury Control Council of Western Australia (ICCWA)
- Alcohol Advertising Review Board (AARB)
- McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth (MCAAY)

(Links to these organisations can be found in the online version)

Given that the Australian industry's self-regulatory system for alcohol advertising is generally ineffective, the report identified processes that have been set up to assist with, or to lodge complaints about alcohol advertising. It also showed that there is great value in informing communities about issues of concern regarding alcohol marketing and provided advice about how agencies can support communities to provide evidence for policy change.

Norman Booker is the Chair of the Surry Hills Community Drug Action Team and can be contacted on [shcdat@gmail.com](mailto:shcdat@gmail.com)

**“Despite growing community concern over alcohol-related violence and unacceptable behaviour, efforts to rein in the harms caused by alcohol misuse continue to be a challenge”**

## THE REPORT RECOMMENDED ACTION IN FIVE KEY AREAS:

- **Advertising complaints mechanisms** — to raise awareness about what is possible and to develop resources to assist people formulate and submit complaints
- **Tracking community concerns** — to collect information about community concerns around alcohol at CDAT events
- **Informing the community** — to develop resources to keep communities aware of key issues and the evidence for change
- **Empowering the community** — to respond to instances of inappropriate advertising or marketing and promotion of alcohol
- **Agenda setting** — to develop a media strategy for responding to and initiating local media discussion of the issue.



# ALL THINGS GREAT AND SMALL

**CHARMAINE JONES** EXPLORES THE STRENGTHS OF SMALL ORGANISATIONS AT A TIME WHEN GOVERNMENTS ARE SHOWING A PREFERENCE FOR DEALING THE LARGE ORGANISATIONS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY.

**W**hen completing the end-of-financial year compliances and obligations with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), I was somewhat bemused to see, that despite only being an organisation with the equivalent of 4.5 full time employees, we had been scaled up from a small organisation to a medium one.

There are many who would suggest that in the current environment this may not be a particularly bad thing. There is this prevailing sense that funders are not interested in funding small organisations anymore, that competing against the larger charities is nigh on impossible and, in the face of this, many organisations and agencies are scrambling to merge or set up collectives to avoid falling in to the 'small' status basket.

This nervousness is highlighted in the NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS) paper *Surviving the Squeeze: How small Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) can thrive in the current climate*. The paper discusses

the emergence or consolidation of large State-wide/national providers, the contraction of funding to favour these organisations coupled with high compliance costs, greater accountability and competition, and the effects of such trends on smaller organisations.

Yet, something occurred to me recently, when, totally unrelatedly, I was reading a list of the latest television shows and movies. The upcoming shows developed by the larger film and television studios are all rehashes of old stories; we will be seeing 'Gotham' a remake of the Batman comic, as well as a TV version of the Keanu Reeves movie Constantine. It appeared that only the smaller studios dared to create something new, exciting and which could, in all possibility, fail.

I was struck with how often our large charities emulate the larger movie and television studios in the way they adhere to the tried and true. How, as with most large bureaucracies, they sometimes lack the flexibility to be innovative and to take risk.

Smaller not-for-profits offer distinct

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## AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMISSION THRESHOLDS

- Small charity – Income \$0-\$250,000
- Medium charity – Income \$250,001-\$1,000,000
- Large charity – Income - \$1,000,000 upwards

benefits to all stakeholders; employees, service users, funders and other partners. They have the ability to help people connect more readily to the objectives and purpose of their organisation and to enable staff, volunteers and members to see the work they are doing is contributing to that purpose, in a meaningful way.

Due to this commitment to the work of the organisation from those associated with it, small NGOs, those with good governance and management structures at least, tend to have a constancy in staff and board members not replicated in larger organisations. This low turn-over results in a retention of corporate memory.

The combined knowledge and experience of employees and members, just like our own memories, assist in improved decision making and avoiding problems. It is not the sort of information that can be shared via a spreadsheet. It is an intuitive understanding of the environment within which the organisation sits.

Smaller organisations have the capacity to move very quickly as circumstances change. They do not have large tiered systems of bureaucracies through which the decision making processes must progress. Small NGOs can therefore keep abreast of changing needs and adapt their programs as required. They can be flexible and responsive in their service delivery and meet community need and concerns promptly.

One of the great advantages small organisations have over large ones is their communications links. Skip Reardon points out in his blog 'Advantages of small business' how the complexities of interaction increase exponentially with the number of staff an organisation has:

- in an organization with 3 people, there are only 3 possible different interactions.
- in an organization with 25 people (8x as many people), there are 300 possible different interactions =

**“Small NGOs ... tend to have a constancy in staff and board members not replicated in larger organisations. This low turn-over results in a retention of corporate memory”**

100x increase in the complexity of communications

- in an organization with 100 people (33x as many people), there are 4,950 possible different interactions = 1,650x increase in the complexity of communications

The result of the higher number of possible interactions is slower and often lower-quality decisions. In smaller organisations, there are fewer decision-makers, and they are more than likely to be at the coalface, close to service users, employees, funders and daily operations; they can get a much more accurate sense of whether a decision is right or wrong (...and can get this sense much quicker.)

And it is this quicker communication and decision making process that allows smaller organisations to be less risk averse than larger ones, to veer away from the tried and true. And yes, while occasionally risk taking will lead to failure, often, it is only through failure that we can learn and then build upon those learnings.

Too often in this sector we bemoan how little has changed over the years in terms of disadvantage, but we are ourselves are partially to blame; for how little we have altered the manner in which we deliver and evaluate projects. The lingo may change, but the underlying practices remain the same.

Many times small organisations and projects do work which excites and inspires us, but due to the small scale of delivery or funding, is never picked up and developed in to broader programs.

Of course, there are disadvantages to being smaller. Funders prefer consistent service provision, which is unlikely when 50 organisations are delivering a service that could be delivered by one

large organisation. It is also more work for funders in contractual red tape.

There are obviously higher costs –small organisations cannot exploit economies of scale which consequently means their average costs may be higher than their larger competitors, another aspect funders don't like. Small organisations often do not have the resources to draw on when there is the loss of a funded program. It can mean the difference between survival and not.

But these very disadvantages are that which add to small organisations strengths. The latest buzz word 'Collective' is something smaller NGOs have been doing for aeons. Partnerships and collaborations with like-minded services, education bodies, local governments and other agencies have been driven through the need to share resources and skills sets, to build better practice models and to seek funding.

While overheads may be slightly increased, funders can be sure that with a smaller organisation the funding is being spent directly on its intended purpose. Expenditure within a smaller NGO is much more directed and more easily tracked. It is very unlikely, as is possible with larger organisations, that the funding is absorbed in to a greater pool and is used to subsidise other arms of the business.

For the NGO sector to remain innovative, progressive and user-friendly, we need organisations of all shapes and sizes. And at the very least, who would wish to contradict the Nobel Peace Prize winner and blessed missionary, Mother Theresa who is quoted as saying *'Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.'*

Charmaine Jones is the Executive Officer of ISRC

# RETHINKING MULTICULTURALISM

**BILL YAN** FACES HIS OWN RACISM AND ASKS US TO DO LIKEWISE AS HE ASKS SOME PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTICULTURALISM. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO ENSURE MULTICULTURALISM WORKS FOR EVERYONE ESPECIALLY MINORITY COMMUNITIES?

**M**y name is Bill Yan. I am a racist; a conscious racist. I come with my own cultural and family upbringing and my personal biases – I understand most of these. I am conscious also that I am being manipulated by the daily media into stereotyping people and in using this media lens and my upbringing in my daily dealings with people. I also happen to be a manager of a multicultural neighbourhood centre. I had thought long and hard about writing this.

I want to think a little outside the box, I do not wish to just review policies and regurgitate theories. I want to purposely exaggerate some points raised from the ‘pessimistic’ side of my psyche. In doing so I want to emphasise that this article does not embody my whole belief and philosophy on the issue of multiculturalism. Hopefully it makes you think more about what we mean by multiculturalism.

Most cities in the world today are multicultural, however, the reality in most countries is a regularly “racialised” democracy; that is they have a dominant race overseeing their political, planning and other institutions. In the tradition of the “The White

Man’s Burden” most of these countries (Australia included), are living in an unclear post-colonial context that time and again confuses the seemingly noble intentions of multiculturalism with the reality that the dominant race is doing most of the planning that dictates the terms of engagement for the minority or emerging multicultural citizen.

Here lies the problem. How does the dominant race understand the cultural heritage and nuances of its minority citizens? What sense of belonging or alienation might this majority defined multicultural framework generate in the society?

The simple fact is that in order to act within multicultural cities, we must understand ‘difference’. Intercultural contact and interaction within a multicultural society is an essential condition for being able to address the inevitable conflicts that arise in any multicultural society.

While I do appreciate our current multicultural policy provides guidance for our expectations and behaviour, I want to be purposefully harsh here in my evaluation in order to incite further discussion and reflection.



As an ideology, multiculturalism has a multiplicity of meanings for different people. Yet, the common understanding in the sociological content is that multiculturalism was formulated as a set of policies for the host/dominant race/nation to accommodate/control the minor race or immigrants.

In a lot of our policy, especially those dealing in multiculturalism, we tend not to include the narratives of our history such as our colonial past. We also do not like to be reminded of our post-colonial dominant “White Australia” racist hangover.

Policy instruments seem to dance around phrases such as ‘shared sense of belonging’, ‘core social values’ and the like. Who then decides and takes the lead in articulating such visions I wonder? Governments, organisations and individuals at different levels try to impose their ideas in creating activities and multicultural opportunities such as Harmony Day. Every now and then there is a blunder or a pushback

that redefines the issue of multiculturalism. It almost always feels like the majority group needs to adjust to the minority groups; the idea which requires the majority 'them' to accept the minority 'our' way of life. However, I do not think this should be the case.

One classic instance was when David Blunkett, the 2001 Home Secretary under the Blair government in the UK, was quoted as saying after Britain's experience of 'race riots' in three cities; "We have norms of acceptability and those who come into our home – for that is what it is – should accept those norms". His words exemplify the view that immigrants/minority races are guests in the host/dominant race nation and must conduct themselves by obeying the rules in the way their host/dominant race want them to behave. Still, more importantly, inherent in such remarks is that there is only one right way and that it is the duty and obligation of the migrants/minor race to learn how to fit in. Is this then what multiculturalism should look like? Clearly for me the answer is NO.

Maybe what we are striving for is the opposite – a sense of indifference towards others and otherness; which includes showing respect, or self-preservation, not intruding on other people's space or needing to pick up new rules when you migrate to another city. But still this is not what multiculturalism is about especially in the 21st century.

Some people might even think that the notion of multiculturalism as discussed thus far is passé because it is too limiting in the range of identities it permits. What might once have been a good idea seems to no longer be relevant; in fact as discussed here it can be downright divisive in today's globalised world.



"Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned... Everything is war. Me say war. That until there is no longer 1st class and 2nd class citizens of any nation... Until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes, Me say war. That until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race Me say war!"

HAILE SELASSIE; THE LAST EMPEROR OF THE ETHIOPIAN MONARCHY.

Few countries have embraced and institutionalised a working ideology of multiculturalism, Australia is one that has tried to do so. It started in the late 1960s to a certain degree and in 1973 the Whitlam government officially ended the White Australia policy. It was all good for a while, but new thinking in a later years and new groups of "otherness", immigrants needing to be assimilated, threw up new challenges.

Thus, I think we need a continuous questioning and debate about our own individual identity, what are our shared values and common citizenship as part of the process of building cohesive communities in what we deemed our multicultural society.

To me, and many others I believe, a sense of belonging in a multicultural society cannot be based on any one race or ethnicity. It needs to be based on a shared commitment to community and such a commitment requires the entire citizenry to be empowered – especially minority groups.

If multiculturalism is to remain a relevant social concept for the multi-ethnic cities in Australia of the 21st century, each of us will need to start looking inward and reflecting. We will need to be true to ourselves in professing what we do not like about another culture in our society. Then, we must make an effort to try and learn from and about that culture. We need to try their food, visit their places

of worship (with permission), read their religious texts, read their history and talk to someone from that culture about the myths and preconceptions of their culture and so on. The simple acts listed above can easily debunk our prejudices of a culture or at the very least help us to understand and box-in aspects that we really do not like about the culture rather than condemning the entire race or culture.

Yes, we need to be active participants in order to really comprehend a culture and challenge our own preconceptions. We cannot take the short cut of relying on what others say about another culture as this will likely be influenced by their own preconceptions and prejudices rather than deal with our own.

I believe we all know and understand that racism is not a destination but a perpetual journey that feeds on ignorance and fear. In the spirit of Haile Selassie, I hope we will be saying war on ourselves until we eradicate racism within ourselves and that we believe in basic human rights being equal.

Some of the views in this article were adapted from "Rethinking Multiculturalism for the 21st Century" by Leonie Sandercock (2003). This is a useful book to help explore some of these issues further than is possible in a brief article.

Bill Yan is a Malaysian born Chinese and is the Executive Officer at South Sydney Community Aid Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre

# CITIZENS' RIGHTS TO THE GLOBAL CITY

THE BAYS PRECINCT, CENTRAL TO EVELEIGH AND SIMILAR LARGE SCALE URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS ARE SEEN AS HELPING DEFINE SYDNEY AS A GLOBAL CITY. **MICHAEL DARCY** EXPLORES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A GLOBAL CITY AND ITS CITIZENS.

It must be abundantly clear to anyone living in or even visiting Sydney in 2014 that our city is in the midst of a massive transformation. Even as the skyline rises around us we are presented with new and grander plans for rebuilding housing, infrastructure and public space right across the city. For those of us who call the inner city home this is a disruptive and possibly frightening process which sometimes appears to be out of control, and potentially threatens our sense of place and security, our community and even our dwellings.

At the same time, we all love and benefit from the dynamism and energy of Sydney. Cities are the source and the engine of not just economic growth and wealth creation, but of society and culture, science and knowledge creation. Living cities cannot be frozen in time; Sydney has been remade many times over since European colonists arrived 226 years ago and this is not about to stop. From the days of transportation, through the gold rush, the world wars and waves of refugees, the city's growth path has always largely been determined by international pressures and events rather than the preferences of locals. But it is true, the pace and scale of change is accelerating and the forces driving it are increasingly seen as global ones.

Sydney grew up as a port and later as a manufacturing centre – it was the hub


and the fulcrum of Australia's participation in global production and trade. Today minerals and other commodities are shipped directly to manufacturers in China and other parts of the world through dedicated ports often in remote places. While miners fly in and out of company towns, Sydney provides the site through which production is financed and coordinated rather than where it actually takes place. So the city provides a home for an expanding global middle class of managers and technocrats who choose to live in the city, not so much for its productive capacity as for the opportunities it provides for consumption.

This global middle class want harbour views, high quality public spaces and great coffee – and they are prepared to pay for it! And therein lays the problem. How can the demands of people with money to spend, and a preference for particular locations and lifestyle, be reconciled with the needs of the existing populace, many of whom built and worked in the ports, factories and other businesses that made the city what it is, and many more who continue to provide the

services and infrastructure that keep it going? In a market economy with limited available land and diminishing support for the public sector, will pensioners and lower paid workers be driven out of the city? What kind of city will Sydney be?

The people I speak to at community meetings, in the supermarket or the pub, usually, and very astutely, distil these big questions down to three very practical concerns: the cost of housing, the strain on infrastructure and public services, and access to public space. Behind these concerns lies a lack of faith in the power of democratic processes to properly reflect the interests of residents and control powerful profit driven investors with little or no ongoing accountability for urban outcomes.

Former PM John Howard, when asked about housing affordability issues, replied that no voter had ever complained to him that the value of their house had risen. This quip neatly illustrates the contest of interests at the heart of urban development. Leading economic geographer David Harvey warns that in an unfettered market economy:



**“We must imagine a more inclusive, even if continuously fractious, city based not only upon a different ordering of rights but upon different political-economic practices”**

“The rich grow richer and the poor get poorer through the egalitarianism of exchange. No wonder those of wealth and power support such rights. Class divisions widen. Cities become more ghettoized as the rich seal themselves off for protection while the poor become ghettoized by default”.

Harvey is neither a revolutionary nor a utopian planner. He recognises that there is no perfect or correct way to build a city or to resolve urban conflict. In a capitalist society property rights dominate, but citizens must demand a new kind of right to the city, an active right to make the city different.

“We must imagine a more inclusive, even if continuously fractious, city based not only upon a different ordering of rights but upon different political-economic practices”

So how should we think about government and developer plans for vast redevelopment of our built environment and the changes they will inevitably bring to the makeup of urban communities – more importantly, how should we act in response?

Many argue that publicly owned land such as Central-2-Eveleigh and The Bays should be kept in public ownership. People have a right to be cynical following the abrogation of transparent planning processes seen at Barangaroo. The sale of public housing in Millers Point is another good reason to be sceptical about government’s understanding of the housing needs and community life of older people and poorer households.

But despite the bitter experience, I believe we still can and should see development and urban change as an opportunity to get things right, and to show Australia and the world that dynamic, vital cities can also be just, inclusive and sustainable.

Given the seismic changes in the world economy it is not surprising that obsolescent industrial sites should be identified for redevelopment, or that well serviced inner city locations would be attractive to cashed-up international investors and buyers. The fact that so many of these remain, for the moment, in public ownership opens the door to capturing a proportion of this

new value and redirecting it to create diverse and inclusive communities.

Many international examples, and our own experience, show that highly mobile and educated buyers seek out inner city locations not just for views and restaurants but for the diversity, colour and street culture that can’t be found in the suburbs. Land must be reserved in large development sites for social and affordable housing and mandated developer contributions can be used to fund ongoing management costs.

Density is a divisive issue, but it must be recognised that higher densities across Sydney are not only required to reduce energy use and transport demand, but the evidence shows that well designed density leads to healthier, more walkable, and better serviced neighbourhoods.

Households are far smaller, and more people live alone than ever before. The housing market already shows a growing preference for smaller and better located dwellings. This demand can be the catalyst for better public transport and neighbourhood services which will benefit all. Good design with an emphasis on quality public spaces is the key to realising the benefits of increased density but this will put pressure on developer margins, so an inclusive and transparent planning process is more important than ever.

All government agencies claim to want diverse communities, great accessible public spaces and accountable decision making. Experience tells us that they won’t succeed in delivering these things without an organised and vocal community pushing them along. As David Harvey in 2003 wrote in *The Right to the City*:

“If our urban world has been imagined and made then it can be re-imagined and re-made. The inalienable right to the city is worth fighting for.”

Associate Professor Michael Darcy, is an inner Sydney resident and researcher who lectures in Geography and Urban Studies at the University of Western Sydney

# BAYS PRECINCT PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

THE BAYS PRECINCT LOCALS HAVE PUT TOGETHER THEIR OWN COMMUNITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES THAT THEY WANT ADOPTED FOR ANY REDEVELOPMENT BY URBANGROWTH.

In July 2014 the Premier announced the NSW Government would host an international summit on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of November, to hear from world leading urban renewal experts about the best ways to revitalise the area in Sydney's inner harbour known as The Bays Precinct. Locals, who have been working around the site for years, have put together their own Community Planning Principles that they want adopted for any redevelopment.

UrbanGrowth NSW, the government's urban renewal authority, has the job of leading the revitalisation of The Bays Precinct. UrbanGrowth NSW also has responsibility for other urban renewal projects in the inner

city including, Green Square, Central to Eveleigh and the Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Program.

The announcement said the "public and other stakeholders will also be asked to provide input as we develop plans to revitalise this area". Resident groups were not initially invited to the international summit with a workshop proposed for Sydneysiders not set down until May 2015. Some groups have now been invited.

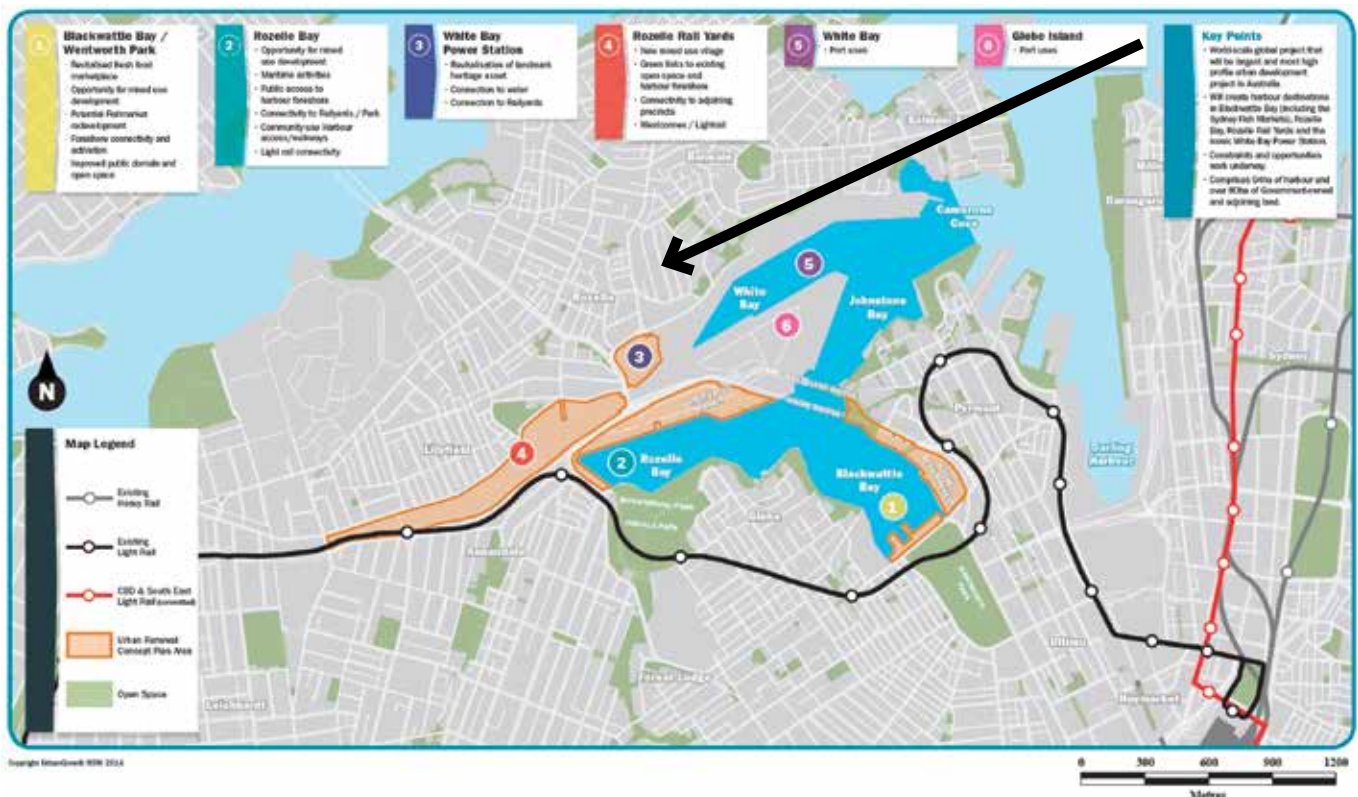
On the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014 more than 200 community members met in Glebe Town Hall to consider proposals for a "People's Campaign" to defend the public interest.

The community has been engaged with government and business in

planning for the Bays Precinct over the past 10 years and has developed a set of core public interest principles.

The August meeting called on the government to ensure that the Bays Precinct Urban Renewal Project follows a democratic and open process. The process should enable public and private interests to come together creatively and imaginatively; to ensure that the outcome will be worthy of the site and of Sydney's status as a global city; and to be properly protective of the public interest.

John Brooks, Pyrmont Action Inc; Dr Lesley Lynch, Glebe Society; Prof Jane Marceau, White Bay Joint Steering Committee; Carolyn Allen, The Balmain Association.





## COMMUNITY PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Bays Precinct planning processes MUST ensure that:

- Precedence is given to the public good as a driving overarching principle for the renewal of these publicly owned foreshores and bays;
- The community of Sydney is able to fully engage in all stages of the planning process
- Excellence in planning and design for all development proposals by designating clear, publicly endorsed planning principles developed by the Bays Precinct Community Reference Group and actively seeking local and international ideas for renewal;
- All unsolicited development proposals relating to any Bays Precinct public land or waters is subject to open competitive tenders and proper public scrutiny;
- There is no alienation of the Bays Precinct foreshores from public ownership by sale or long term lease;
- High priority is given to the inclusion of social and affordable housing as a significant element of any residential uses;
- Continuous public access to the harbour foreshore is a core principle for all development in the Bays Precinct;
- A significant proportion of the 80 plus hectares of publicly owned lands is retained for public uses including open space;
- Heritage items, such as the White Bay Power Station and the Glebe Island Bridge are creatively adapted and reused.

To find out more and join the campaign visit [www.baysprecinctpeoplescampaign.com](http://www.baysprecinctpeoplescampaign.com)

Information about the project can also be found on [www.urbangrowthnsw.com.au](http://www.urbangrowthnsw.com.au)



# NSW ELECTION BOUNDARY CHANGES

The next NSW state election will be held on 28 March 2015. After every two elections the NSW Constitution Act requires boundaries to be reassessed to ensure that the population of all electorates are within 10% of an average electorate size.

In 2014 the Commissioners found that the trend of continued declining enrolment in the western regions of the State, combined with growth in metropolitan inner Sydney warranted abolition of one rural electorate, Murrumbidgee, and the creation of a

new electorate, Newtown.

Growth in Inner Sydney has seen major boundary changes in all electorates other than Vaucluse in this area. To help give a picture of the changing electorates in the inner city we have provided the map above showing previous (2004) boundaries in blue and the new (2015) boundaries in purple.

You can find detailed maps for your electorate or maps showing overlay of the new electorates and Local Government Areas at [www.redistribution.nsw.gov.au/determined\\_boundaries](http://www.redistribution.nsw.gov.au/determined_boundaries)



# AN OVERVIEW OF PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

THE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY IS OFTEN NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD BY THOSE SELLING AND BUYING PROPERTY OR THOSE OBJECTING TO A DEVELOPMENT. **STEWART LAWLER** PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE INDUSTRY TO ASSIST COMMUNITY GROUPS BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS AND HOPEFULLY IMPROVE THOSE INTERACTIONS.

**T**he property development industry is populated by a wide range of persons and groups which operate as developers. At the two extremes are large public companies and very small developers – often one to three person groups which sometimes comprise a local real estate agent and a local builder.

The large development corporations have specialist development managers and usually source developments at board level and from larger commercial real estate agents which provide information to such groups, normally prior to going to the open market with site details. These corporations may fund developments internally. Australian examples include Stockland and Lend Lease.

The majority of developers are small

and spend most of their days searching for suitable sites within a certain geographic area. Most utilise real estate contacts to find sites prior to listing and so have a solid grasp on any sites within their geographic area of influence. They often build small projects ranging from 1 –12 dwellings. They usually do not belong to peak industry property groups such as the Property Council.

It is important for prospective developers to note, the large majority of development sites have been reviewed and assessed by other developers before being listed and advertised. Preferred developers will have had sufficient time to assess a site and suitable development options. Most start-up developers who do not have specialist local real estate information

and input cannot prepare a detailed feasibility with sufficient information and detail to submit an offer without extra risk. Nevertheless, this is what occurs therefore the unconnected developers are often at a disadvantage when bidding for sites compared to experienced developers who may have been notified of a site at an earlier time.

There are many factors affecting property development, however the largest risk is in trying to undertake a development project without sufficient knowledge of the property development process. For those not involved in property development it is easier to think of the process as similar to any chain-link process. If any link or part of the project is inefficient, or fails, the whole process will fall apart. For example paying above a reasonable value for the land will always jeopardise the end profit. It does not matter if a project is designed and built efficiently, an over value payment for a site will always affect the end viability.

Where possible, developers will purchase land subject to an acceptable development approval. This reduces

risk by reducing holding costs such as interest payments on loan funds, possible maintenance, council rates and other sale or property related charges until a development generates income.

The whole property development process is based on efficiency in every stage. Should one phase run over budget it is highly likely to affect all the following stages. Many developers have been bankrupted when they believe you can build cheaper and quicker to offset an overpriced site bought in the hope that a development would become viable because of increases in selling prices during construction.

Assumptions of escalating prices and better than average sales return at completion nearly always turn out to be incorrect. However in heated markets this is often seen and is exacerbated by inexperienced groups seeking to pay more for the land and then recouping the costs through higher sales. This is very apparent when prices start to fall.

A significant number of developers specialise in just the first part of the process – the procurement of land and the gaining of approvals. They have no intention of commencing construction on a site – they simply on-sell a development site. The jargon term for these developers is “flippers” as they buy or ideally simultaneously exchange on a property by ‘flipping’ it on to a developer who is willing to construct and sell. The buyer is often a joint venture between small builders, who have sufficient funds to buy a site and a local real estate agent, who may also be able to fund part of a development and sell the end product.

Local real estate agents may have knowledge of rezonings that the land owners do not. At such times land can be purchased cheaply providing developers with significant uplift gains prior to any further development. Such sales are the preference of “flippers” as the site value is enhanced both by sale value and possible higher density development opportunities.

The larger costs of developing a high rise building can discourage the development of high rise buildings as it may be difficult for developers to access finance at an affordable rate. This is a particular issue if this is the first large high rise development in an area. Moreover, many small suburban developers do not have the expertise or experience to tackle these larger developments.

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**“... Think of the process as similar to a chain-link ... If any link or part of the project is inefficient, or fails, the whole process will fall apart”**

## THE SECRET DEVELOPER EQUATION

All the values and risks in property development can be reduced down to a straightforward equation:

**Land cost + Build cost + Development costs + margin < sales income**

In simple terms the cost of the land, building and other associated costs and margin must be less than the sales income otherwise the only definitive measure of property development – monetary profit, is missing. The developer tries to quantify the three major parts of the process.

The first part of the process is acquiring the land. Initial land acquisition contains many unknowns particularly regarding the physical characteristics of the site including constraints, any covenants on property titles that need to be resolved and possible latent conditions. Latent conditions are when the physical conditions of the site are materially different to the conditions which could reasonably have been expected by the contractor when the contract was executed. The risk associated with a latent condition usually rests with the developer and not the builder.

As site purchase is the first major commitment to the development, a fully informed decision needs to be made which should include all stakeholders, project sponsors and all other persons who will hold long term responsibility for the outcome of the project. This is prior to any tested designing and costing. This is one of the main reasons developers want clarity with regard to what may be developed on the site.

The second part of the process is the period of production where the main unknown is the final cost of construction. Construction cost represents the second major capital commitment and is largely determined during the design and planning phases. The timing of construction can vary significantly due to latent site conditions, approval timing or other unknown factors such as strikes, uncooperative or inexperienced builders or the weather.

The third part of the process is disposal which may comprise outright sale, leasing or occupation by an end user. Again there are many factors which were estimated at the beginning of the process which may now vary considerably. These include the overall sale returns, the current market rental value, the yield or the value determined by the client/owner in originally assessing the development. Other factors which will often change include interest rates, loan rates and the overall economic environment which can affect the end result of the development in either an adverse or advantageous manner.

Three main factors contribute to the increase in cost for high rise. Firstly the Building Code of Australia (BCA) has stricter requirements as the height increases, mainly due to fire services and controls. Secondly, building compliance and construction methodology requirements on high rise structures are more sophisticated and complicated. Builders capable of such work require more expensive equipment and higher skilled workers to undertake specialist trade work. Finally larger developments will need greater cash flow and financial capability to fund large works between payments. Work is only paid for by approved progress payments or once it is completed.

Often developers will have their 'foot' on a site by the use of an option. This is where the vendor is paid a non-refundable sum to agree to the sale of the land at a fixed sale price at some time in the future, usually 6 to 12 months. This allows the vendor to feel as though someone is improving the value of their land, at no cost to them, from which they will receive a sale price higher than the current value. Plus the developer will know the actual price to be paid and will calculate a percentage of any uplift to the vendor in return for not



***“There is no incentive to undertake a property development project if the product cannot be sold or does not return sufficient financial gains to reimburse costs and if possible, a profit margin”***

having to pay holding costs. This may only be a small amount when a developer can convince a vendor the uplift is only minor, but higher if their expected sales price is much greater than current value. With educated vendors such an arrangement is most often reflected in the purchase price based on a price per approved building lot/unit.

It is important to understand in Property Development every site and every building is different due to differing location, soil conditions, local planning constraints and design issues such as orientation, relationship to adjoining sites, building requirements and project constraints, options and aims. The sale realisation (i.e. the value of sales) is also different for each development and each part of a development due to differing location, views, design, desirability, access, parking, demand in a locale and the current condition of the local property market.

Property development ranges from the refurbishment or extension of existing buildings or partial rebuilding, through to the construction of new buildings. There is no incentive to undertake a property development project if the product cannot be sold or does not return sufficient financial gains to reimburse

## ANSWERS TO SOME BASIC QUESTIONS

### What determines the value of land?

The value of a block of land is determined by the income stream the land can generate. For example one hectare of prime agricultural land is worth more than one hectare of land in an arid zone where only a few sheep can be grazed. Urban Planning therefore affects the value of land by determining the income stream that it can generate.

### How much will a developer pay for a block of urban land?

Many of these development lots are sold at auction. The developer will often utilise the residual method to estimate the land value. Firstly the likely sales income is calculated and then an allowance is taken out for their margin (usually 20-25%) and an estimate for all the development costs including construction are deducted. The residual sum left over is what they can afford to pay for the land. There are also costs for sales commission and Stamp Duty which need to be accounted for in a residual calculation. Here the Secret Equation is utilised but in reverse. In this setting it is difficult for a developer to make super-profits by being

able to purchase the land at a reduced rate, since other developers present at the auction will have done the same calculation and will outbid the super-profit seeker.

### When may a developer be able to make super-profits?

A developer may be able to make an exceptional or super-profit if they are able to purchase land at one zoning and then have it rezoned. For example, if a developer is able to purchase farm land and have it rezoned urban, they will receive a very large uplift in their profits. This is one of the reasons there is such intense lobbying around some rezoning issues – there can be some very large windfall gains available to the land owner (vendor) or the developer.

### Isn't a 20-25% return for a developer a "super profit"?

If this return was always received by the developer this might be the case but development is one of the riskiest forms of economic enterprises. Not only do developers experience unexpected events on projects that significantly reduce their return, many developers are forced out of business by negative

costs and if possible, a profit margin.

It is essential all developments achieve a minimum level of viability to ensure financial survival of the organisation undertaking a project. All development projects need to respond to a proven demand which illustrates the strong possibility of a sale or rental at predetermined rates on completion, to achieve profitability and in turn financial viability. Consequently a development must be capable of being sold at a profit, used by an owner or utilised to produce a rental income.

Essentially a property development is a series of actions required to produce an end product which is not always static or determinable at the onset of the project. In other words all parts of the process are important. Each and every project is different even if certain parts such as design may be repeated. It is also important to realise every site must be responded to differently as no two sites are exactly alike.

These are just a small portion of the issues affecting Property Development and all are made more complex by the intervention of the buyer's choice and the financier's opinion usually created by a Valuer based on comparable sales in the area. There is also the multitude of likes and dislikes and

other personal issues buyers will utilise in selection of a property.

The process of development means different things to many different people. Some consider development merely the construction of buildings others such as Guy & Henneberry who in 2002 described property development as: 'A complex process which enables the orchestration of finance, labour and expertise by many actions within a wider social, economic and political environment. The physical building is the tip of an iceberg'.

Cadman and Byrne in 1984 viewed property development comprising three parts and envisioned each of these tasks as presenting a new set of risks. 'The first part of the process comprises the acquisition of the land upon which the development is to take place and acquisition of the appropriate planning permission. The second part comprises the construction of the building or buildings and; the third part comprises their disposal both the occupation and investment'.

They were also of the opinion that 'only a very small proportion of individuals positively like the challenge of having to deal with risk and uncertainty on a day-to-day basis'.

Paradoxically as the process

progresses the developer's knowledge of the likely outcome increases but, at the same time, the room to manoeuvre decreases. Thus, while at the start of the process developers have maximum uncertainty they also have maximum manoeuvrability. However by the end of a project the developer knows all the problems and issues which have emerged during the process but can do nothing to substantially change the end product, which is being manufactured on an essentially once and for all basis.

The development process is especially susceptible to risk and uncertainty because, once started, it is relatively fixed in time and place and because it aims normally at a very narrow consumer market within an uncertain economic climate (this is largely because of the time gap between when the developer commits to a project and the receipt of all sales revenue).

*In a future article Stewart will explore the risks faced in the development process.*

**Dr Stewart Lawler is a property development consultant who commenced his career in construction then moved into property development. He also provides training in Feasibility Assessment for Planners and Related Professionals with Professor Peter Phibbs for the NSW Planning and Environment's PlanEd. References for further reading are available with the online article.**

returns. Additionally the development is usually over a minimum of 2 or 3 years which halves or thirds the return.

#### **What happens if a developer is able to increase density on a residential site after purchase?**

What happens in this process is that the developer has not paid for the land component of the additional dwellings on the site. For example, in a high value inner city area because of planning changes after the developer had purchased the land, the developer was able to build fifteen dwellings instead of ten. If the land value of the first ten dwelling was \$100,000 per dwelling (i.e. the land cost was \$1million) the benefit to the developer of the additional dwellings is \$500,000 (5 by \$100,000). Or put another way the land is then worth \$66,660 per site which equates

to a benefit of  $15 \times \$33,333 = \$500,000$  in the marketplace.

#### **Will increasing residential density always increase value?**

Increasing density will decrease the land cost per dwelling but it also increases the construction costs. For example a 3 storey flat building usually has a construction cost of \$1500 per sq. metre, where as a 4 -7 storey residential building rises to \$2,400 per sq. metre and a multi storey residential tower is around \$3,000 per sq. metre.

In lower value land areas of Australian cities high rise development is not viable because the lower land costs do not offset the additional constructions costs. Additionally in many areas the finished cost of a new residential apartment is often higher than an existing separate dwelling in the

same area. The cultural preference for separate dwellings makes it very difficult to sell the new apartments unless the apartments have some other benefits such as being located in a very high amenity precinct, excellent views, excellent access to transport etc.

#### **Will infrastructure charges such as section 94 charges always be passed onto the home buyer?**

This really depends on the state of the market. In a very hot market where prices are rising rapidly they are often passed on, In a more stable market, where they are known to the developer and land owner they are often passed back to the landowner. That is the land value is reduced as the S94 charges are calculated in the development equation or residual value.

# SOCIAL HOUSING IN NSW DISCUSSION PAPER ... WHAT IS NOT UP FOR DISCUSSION?

THE NSW GOVERNMENT HAS PRODUCED A DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL HOUSING AND IS LOOKING FOR FEEDBACK UNTIL 20 FEBRUARY 2015.

**CHRIS MARTIN** EXPLORES SOME OF THE REPORT'S ASSUMPTIONS.

The major theme of the discussion paper is 'providing opportunity and pathways for client independence', particularly by 'more actively supporting clients' – particularly working age tenants, and young people – to 'transition out of social housing'.

Transitioning out of social housing means transitioning into private rental housing. The discussion paper, however, has hardly a word to say about private rental.

This is the biggest gap in the discussion paper, and in current discussions about social housing generally. Much gets said about the failings of the social housing system; not nearly enough about the failings of the private housing system, and private rental in particular.

But you cannot have a proper conversation about social housing – much less actually do any of the things the State Government says it wants to do to social housing – without also saying and doing something about private rental.

Private rental fails low-income households (ie those in the bottom 40 per cent of the population by income). The 2011 Census counted 219,202 low-income households privately renting in New South Wales. Of these households:

- 78 per cent – 171,563 households – were paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent; that is, they were in 'housing stress';
- 43 per cent – 94,959 households – were paying more than 50 per cent of their income in rent; that is, they were in 'housing crisis'.

Research by Terry Burke and Simon Pinnegar tells us a bit more about the experience of low-income households in private rental. Their survey found:

- 86 per cent 'worry constantly about [their] financial situation'
  - 84 per cent 'don't have enough money set aside to meet unexpected expenses'
  - 75 per cent experience a 'constant struggle to pay regular bills'
  - 61 per cent say 'costs put stress on household relationships'
  - 42 per cent say that their 'children have missed out on school activities such as excursions'
  - 26 per cent say that their 'family has sometimes gone without meals'.
- Focusing on those in housing stress, they report these additional effects:
- 35 per cent say that their 'children have had to go without adequate health and/or dental care'
  - 32 per cent 'sold or pawned personal possessions'
  - 28 per cent 'approached a welfare/community/counselling agency for assistance'

These rates are between 50 per cent and 100 per cent higher than the rates for households not in housing stress.

That's just how private rental fails on cost; it also fails on security (about one in six tenancies end at the instigation of the landlord, and everyone is subject to termination without grounds at the end of their fixed term, or on three months' notice otherwise); and it fails on consumer protection (according to the Tenants' Union's own survey, 79 per cent of private renters

have put up with a problem, rather than assert their rights, because they feared adverse consequences).

It is simply unreal to expect appreciable numbers of households in social housing to happily 'transition' into this. And we know this because Housing NSW already operates such a policy (it reviews tenancies for continuing eligibility at two, five or ten year periods), and has done for seven years. Over this time the rate of exits from public housing has declined. This policy has made matters worse for public housing tenants (who stay poor to stay housed) and for those on the waiting list (who are stuck longer in private rental, or homelessness).

If the NSW State Government really wants to help those on the waiting list, and make 'transitioning' out of social housing a realistic prospect, it must discuss reforming the private rental market too. It should also be open to discussing increased funding for social housing, so that there's more of it. Unfortunately, neither is this up for discussion in the paper, which is predicated on funding 'within the existing envelope'.

At a briefing on the discussion paper, FaCS Minister Gabrielle Upton was asked about the lack of reference to the private rental market and its problems. She replied that the policy levers for private rental reform were not within her grasp, but were instead with others in the State Government and, even more so, the Federal Government, and that rather than wait for any action from them, she just had to get on with it.

That's a fair point. But if the social housing policy that follows from the present discussion does not consider the reality of the private rental market, and how it fails low-income households, and how other government policies have shaped it that way, any initiatives for 'opportunities and pathways' out of social housing will only raise false hopes, or real fears.

**Dr Chris Martin is the Senior Policy Officer at Tenants' Union of NSW. The above article is adapted from the TU's blog – The Brown Couch – <http://tunswblog.blogspot.com.au/>. References to the documents referred to can be found in the online versions of this article.**

October  
1979

## A new airport for Sydney!

Across the inner city there was a sigh of relief when a new location for Sydney's second airport was finally announced earlier this year.

Throughout our Regional Council's almost 40 years of work in the Inner City, issues connected to Sydney's airport and a proposed second airport, have been a constant. An example is the article below from *Inner Voice* in October 1979

which describes the then federal - state standoff over a new airport and the third runway. In 1979 we predicted Badgery's Creek was the best location. We await the revamp of the *Sydney Metropolitan Strategy* which should now include the new airport and deliver on the economic stimulus potential it can bring to the western suburbs.

Sometimes change takes a long time!

### AIRPORT BATTLE

The proposals for developing Sydney's airport still seem to be deadlocked between Federal and State officials.

The deadline is December, but it seems unlikely that the MANS Committee will be able to put together a recommendation by then.

Basically the Federal authorities favour a full length second runway for Mascot, but the State Government wants only a shorter parallel runway. This is because the Feds want a full scale upgrading of Kingsford-Smith, while the State Government wants it only as a stop-gap until a second airport is built.

Of course even the State Government's proposal would mean an upgrading and heavier traffic for the Kingsford-Smith airport, and there is nothing to stop their shorter addition from being lengthened into a full scale runway later.

Both options being considered are for parallel runways 1,500 metres east of the existing long runway. Both groups have abandoned a scheme for a parallel runway 1,500 metres to the west because of fear that it would wreck the hydrology of Botany Bay as well as subjecting thousands of extra people to aircraft noise.

In fact, thousands of extra people are already being subjected to aircraft noise because of the new interscan landing/take-off system which is scattering flight paths all over inner Sydney. Maybe this is just part of a softening-up process for the worse to come when the new runway is put in.

The Feds want a full length 4,000 metre strip involving the demolition of the recently completed TAA terminal building, and some Qantas facilities. It would represent a major commitment to expansion of Kingsford-Smith Airport and would allow 280,000 aircraft movements a year, compared with the present limit of 200,000.

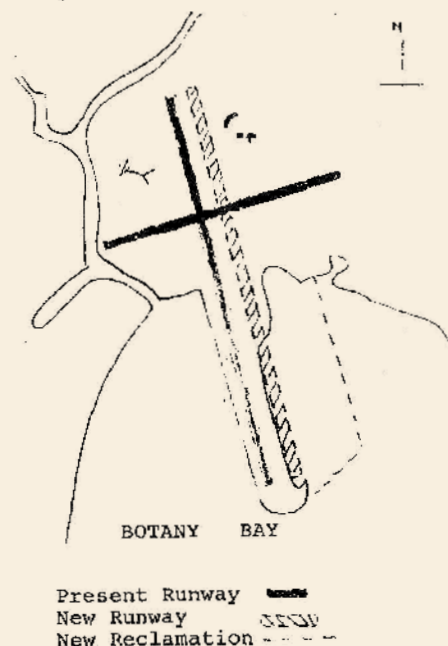
The State favoured short second strip would allow about 240,000 aircraft movements a year.

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The most likely option for a second airport being considered is in the Badgery's Creek-Bringelly area, 20 kilometres west of Liverpool, because it "causes the least environmental damage of all second airport options". 260 houses would have to be acquired and 890 people directly affected. The cost of this would be \$465 million.

The State fears that unless there is some firm commitment to a second airport there will be a backslide in the 1980's and a third runway into Botany Bay will be developed. They also feel that the development of a second airport in the west would be a large economic stimulus for the depressed western suburbs.

The Feds who have to foot the bill seem determined to stall this as long as possible in the hope that de facto full scale expansion of Kingsford-Smith will be necessary.



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