

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P22



Police toy and food Christmas drive returns

Photo by Ajay Viswanath

North Melbourne Police Station's annual Christmas toy and food drive has returned for its 20th year, supporting local families who are doing it tough over the holiday period. Community members are encouraged to donate until December 13. *Full story on page 10.*

Iconic pub undergoes a new lease of life

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

A complete refurbishment is under way at North Melbourne's historic Court House Hotel with its doors expected to reopen early next year.

The venue's new management confirmed it had entered a 30-year lease in what it said was an exciting opportunity to keep the pub running.

The news comes as the building, which is believed to have stood at the corner of Errol and Queensberry streets since the gold rush era, was listed for sale in January after having become a COVID casualty.

However, the building was taken off the market with the new management, the Naughton's Hotel team, having begun works in October to give the pub a new lease of life.

Ryan Moses, a business partner of the Naughton's Ho-

tel team which also runs Naughton's Hotel in Parkville, gave *North West City News* a recent tour of the building which has been completely gutted and floorboards ripped up.

Ms Moses said they were undertaking a "significant cosmetic refurbishment" which will see the building's charming timber restored and wood panelling kept, as well as the main bar's timber flooring.

The kitchen will be refurbished along with the two downstairs dining areas with management aiming to bring more natural light into the second dining area that faces Queensberry St.

Mr Moses said the main bar would be "very much the causal drinking and dining area" while the second bar would primarily be a family friendly space that could be used for functions.

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Kensington midwifery clinic could be saved with lease extension

A community campaign to save a much-loved Kensington family clinic could see the City of Melbourne enter a two-year lease with the building's management.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Midwives and Mothers Australia (MAMA) has operated out of 30-38 Gatehouse Drive since 2011 when it became the state's first private midwifery clinic, with services including acupuncture, physiotherapy, chiropractic care, aromatherapy, baby massage, and breastfeeding support among others.

But the City of Melbourne, which owns the building, announced its intention to sell the property, along with three others in the municipality, as they did not support "future needs, meet the standards for accessibility or align with the strategic objectives".

The proposal prompted shock and disappointment from MAMA and its clients who said its services provided a "wonderful model of care" with an online petition also launched in a bid to keep MAMA's services running at the building.

The community's strong show of support appears to now have the council's backing with management recommending that the council enter a two-year lease with MAMA.

The recommendation was to be considered by councillors at their Future Melbourne Committee meeting on November 8, but it was deferred to the next FMC meeting on November 22.

The proposal to extend the lease has nonetheless spurred hope that

MAMA could continue running in what would be a huge win for the community.

Public consultation (held between July 4 and August 7 through an online survey on the Participate Melbourne website) revealed "objections to the sale of the four properties were most often on the grounds that they should house community-oriented services".

"There was also aversion to the idea that the properties could be purchased by developers," the council report also stated.

"Respondents implied that there would be greater acceptance for the sale of council properties if assurance could be given the funds would directly benefit the community, especially by way of affordable housing."

In an objection letter from MAMA's management to the council, it outlined the importance of the clinic improving the mental health outcomes for women and families in the perinatal period, while also adding how the sale of the building had triggered uncertainty among its staff and clients.

"Despite our minimal revenue, we have always and to this day continue to offer free services that support our mission statement including counselling and breastfeeding support services," the letter read.

"When the council announced that the building might be sold, our

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Early works to remove asbestos-containing material at KCRC

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has begun early works to excavate and remove soil from the site of the new Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre (KCRC) after asbestos-containing material was found earlier this year.

The old KCRC building was demolished in May to make way for a \$42 million revamped version, which was set for completion in late 2023.

But the redevelopment works were put on hold after environmental assessments identified asbestos in soil samples in July.

While the asbestos posed no health risk, the council said the affected soil had to be taken away by a licenced asbestos removalist before construction work restarted, which was expected to take about six months.

Early works to prepare the site for soil excavation began on Monday, November 14, which included setting up a decontamination area for vehicles and equipment to be cleaned before leaving the site, the council said in its November community update report.

Air monitors and water misters will also be installed to ensure the safety of workers and the community.

However, once site preparation works are complete, noise levels are expected to increase as soil excavation begins.

"After the soil has been excavated and loaded onto trucks, it will be transported to a facility licensed to accept this material," the report said.

"This process will impact traffic conditions over several months from



Monday to Friday. Traffic controllers will be on site to support pedestrians, cyclists, traffic, and construction vehicle movements during this time."

Trucks removing the soil will be lined and covered, the council report said, with mist water also to be used during the works to minimise dust and wash the trucks as they exit the site.

"We will continue to use air monitors and complete daily clearance certificates to confirm the works are being carried out safely," the report said.

The asbestos material found is bound within cement, which reduced the potential for airborne asbestos fibres to be released, the council said.

Once complete, the brand-new recreation centre will feature a 25-metre pool, gym facilities, children's water play, indoor multi-sports courts, and community spaces.

Last month, the council said the challenges facing the construction industry such as building material and labour shortages, would mean "the timeline of the project will be significantly impacted".

Noise and traffic disruptions are expected to be minimal during the holiday period from Friday, December 23 to Wednesday, January 11. ●



▲ Naughton's Hotel team from left, Ryan Moses, Thomas Sturrock, Laura Berry, and Ryan Berry. Photo: Ajay Viswanath.

Iconic pub undergoes a new lease of life

Continued from page 1.

The upstairs area is also being renovated with former backpacker accommodation rooms to be converted into boutique hotel suites – complete with a study and lounges - in the hope of attracting weekenders and interstate visitors.

"I remember coming to this pub in the early to mid 2000s when I just started out in hospitality, and this was one of the pinnacle pubs and dining locations in Melbourne at the time and I absolutely loved it. So, I have these really fond memories of it, a lot of people in the area do too," Mr Moses said.

"As a group we're really excited to bring some of that back while trying to retain as much as we can throughout the building," he said.

Timber flooring has also been pulled out upstairs which will be reused in other sections of the pub.

Mr Moses said his team was excited to keep the corner hotel running with too many historic pubs in Melbourne having fallen into the hands of developers.

"It stopped in March 2020; I think they opened a handful of days in between but I think it never really got going again. I think the good news story is that's its being revived," he said.

The pub's revamp comes as the Naughton's Hotel team recently revealed on social media that it was "busily working away to breathe new life into your old local". ●



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“A really strong community”: Council meets in Kensington

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

At the second last of its inaugural series of Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meetings held away from Melbourne Town Hall in 2023, City of Melbourne councillors met with Kensington locals in their community on October 18.

The strong attendance at Kensington Town Hall wasn't the only indication of the high level of interest among locals in community matters, as the meeting itself finished just shy of the three-hour mark with a wide range of issues discussed.

As is always the case at any FMC meeting, the first 15 minutes prior to the council's set meeting agenda allows locals to ask questions and several did so by writing in as well as addressing councillors in person.

The meeting had initially got under way with Lord Mayor Sally Capp referring to the recent flooding events that had occurred in parts of Kensington and West Melbourne, as well as neighbouring communities hit hardest in Flemington and Maribyrnong.

Cr Capp said councillors had visited Kensington, as well as communities on the other side of the Maribyrnong River in the aftermath, as the council's general manager of strategy, planning and climate change Evan Counsel gave locals an update on its response.

“Our teams have been working around the clock,” Mr Counsel told the meeting, stating the council's response to the flood crisis had been “swift” in ensuring drains remained unblocked, and “extraordinary amounts” of silt and debris had been removed.

“Following the initial response of heavy-duty street cleaning, we've shared resources in Moonee Valley and Maribyrnong,” Mr Counsel said, while acknowledging the important role Kensington Neighbourhood House (KNH) had provided to impacted locals in need of urgent “respite”.



Mr Counsel also highlighted the significance of open spaces in the city “acting like a sponge” such as Riverside Park, which he said had played an important role in absorbing flood water.

The meeting also heard from flood affected West Melbourne business owner Richard Noble, who called on the support of both the council and state government after his property was destroyed during the extreme weather event (read more on page 4).

Away from flooding, KNH manager Rebecca Smith asked the council whether it was planning to reinstate a community bus service for locals in growing need of cost-effective transport, which had been unavailable since the beginning of the pandemic.

A response from council management said it had “managed to secure an excellent discounted rental rate with [car hire company] SIXT”, which would soon be made available to all community groups across the municipality.

Another local raised concerns regarding graffiti along Macauley Rd, which the council confirmed would be immediately removed in the days after the meeting, while councillors also heard from Kensington Reconciliation Group representative Karen Bonson, who asked how the council would support its important work in the community.

“There are lots of ways we would be pleased to interact with you,” said the Lord Mayor, responding in her capacity as the chair of the council's Aboriginal Melbourne portfolio.

“

The people who live here love it, and feel very connected to each other and contribute very actively to this wonderful place ...

”

A number of other planning issues were raised by locals, including a now lapsed application for 496-498 Macauley Rd, and delays caused to the redevelopment of the Kensington Recreation Centre due to the discovery of asbestos, while Kensington Association chair Simon Harvey asked the council if electric vehicle charging facilities were being explored for local residents.

Cr Rohan Leppert, himself a Kensington local of 14 years, assured Mr Harvey that it was an issue the council was looking into as part of its annual planning, despite Kensington being an “anomaly” in a municipality where apartments made up 82 per cent of residences.

As has become tradition at locally held FMC meetings, the council's community development director Rushda Halith provided an update on key issues in Kensington, as well as its major initiatives supporting the community.

Along with the CBD, Kensington was among the first suburbs in the municipality to receive its own dedicated “neighbourhood portal” from the council; an online “one-stop-shop” linking locals with council services, as well as its own dedicated “community partner”.

As a further indication as to the strength of the Kensington community, Ms Halith said that 77 per cent of local respondents to a recent

survey “felt strongly connected with their community”, compared to 54 per cent across the rest of the municipality.

“It's [Kensington's] a really strong community,” Ms Halith said.

In a submission to the neighbourhood planning process, resident of 40 years John Widmer said the council needed “to be careful” to maximise open space and preserve the amenity for current residents affected by rising density of development in the Macauley precinct.

Also speaking on Macauley, Simon Harvey called on the council to undertake a “comprehensive traffic and parking study” for the area to ensure future projections for the area were accurate.

Sheila Byard OAM, a Kensington resident since 1972 and well-known “local historian” to many, addressed the committee on “natural hazards” in the Dynon precinct along the Maribyrnong waterfront and whether such issues were given due planning consideration.

Rebecca Smith also made a submission on behalf of KNH, calling on the council to ensure funding for neighbourhood houses, which she said hadn't increased in “many, many years”, to have CPI increases embedded moving forward.

The council's health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio head Cr Dr Olivia Ball said, “the people who live here love it, and feel very connected to each other and contribute very actively to this wonderful place. You are active here, present in a public meeting tonight, active in community organisations and as volunteers.”

Cr Leppert, who earlier was acknowledged for 10 years of service as a City of Melbourne councillor, added, “I am a local resident, and I love this community.”

The meeting finished with the Kensington Association presenting a petition to the council calling for a cultural sensitivity review of Australian Natives' Association honour boards which are showcased in the Kensington Town Hall's Conference Room.

Cr Leppert thanked the association for its “thoughtfulness” in bringing the issue to the council's attention. ●



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Council on “front foot” in advocating for flood support payments

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ENVIRONMENT

Lord Mayor Sally Capp has met with locals in Kensington after they were impacted by devastating floods in October, which left one business owner with an estimated \$1.5 million damage bill.

Several homes, vehicles, and other property in Kensington was significantly damaged by floodwater, which Cr Capp took time surveying with other councillors and the council’s executive team in the days after the floods hit.

“The first thing we did was write to the state government asking for the City of Melbourne residents and businesses to be eligible for disaster relief payments,” she said at the City of Melbourne’s Future Melbourne Committee meeting on October 18 that was held at Kensington Town Hall, while also ensuring the council was “working around the clock” to support flood affected residents and businesses.

Cr Capp thanked council team members as well as residents and businesses in helping clean up after the natural disaster, which also saw clean-up efforts directed to Maribyrnong and the Moonee Valley.

The council also expressed its gratitude to the Kensington Neighbourhood House which had offered its site as a place of support and respite.

Overall, the floods impacted about 12 businesses across West Melbourne and Kensington which resulted in building and stock damage.

Among those caught up in the mammoth clean-up task was Richard Noble, co-owner of Aftershock PC in West Melbourne.

“There’s still a whole bunch that needs cleaning up, fixing and repairing, and walls that need pulling down and replacing,” he told *North West City News* after floodwaters inundated his business.

“Our showroom is totally destroyed; we won’t get that rebuilt this year so that will be out of action until sometime next year.”

Mr Noble said the council had provided a



▲ Aftershock PC’s damaged computer stock.

skip bin after he asked for support at the council’s meeting, which he was grateful for.

But he was nervously awaiting the outcome of an insurance assessment about whether he would be able to recoup an estimated \$1.5 million worth of damaged stock.

“We’ve still got 111 pallets of computer equipment sitting in our yard at the moment, that’s all-waterlogged waiting for the insurer assessors to let us know.”

He said there was no warning or doorknock from authorities about the flood, which he and his staff managed to keep “at bay for quite a while” until a cement truck drove through Dynon Rd and “exploded out all the windows” allowing water to rush in.

Mr Noble said everything from laptops,

power supplies, computer equipment, graphics cards, motherboards, computer chassis and more was lost in the floods.

Mr Noble addressed the council meeting asking whether the City of Melbourne would ensure his business was included in the flood disaster area, and what the council could do in terms of financial help.

In response, the council’s acting CEO Alison Leighton said it was on the “front foot with advocacy” and the Lord Mayor “is leading the conversation with the state government”.

“I’m sorry that has happened to you, I can only imagine what you and your business partner are going through,” she told Mr Noble, adding “we are having conversations internally about how best we can support you”.

“We know that businesses in the City of Melbourne have been impacted and we believe that they should have access to the support that the state government is providing.”

Mr Noble said his shop was “nearly back full action” with about 80 per cent of the building in operation, but most importantly, his total of 80 staff had kept their jobs.

Asked how he was coping, Mr Noble said, “I go through phases, I didn’t get any sleep for the first week, but after that it’s been plugging away and hoping for the best.”

Businesses directly impacted by the Victorian floods that began in October can access a one-off grant of \$5000 to cover immediate expenses.

Meanwhile, Melbourne MP Ellen Sandell said the Greens were calling for funding for the overstretched Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES), including the VICSES Footscray Unit, which services all Melbourne as well as Maribyrnong, and was desperately in need of new facilities. ●



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▲ Vinh Vo: lost his car in the flood.

Cars written off after basement flooded

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
COMMUNITY

Residents of Riverside Place, a block of flats by the Maribyrnong River in Kensington, are still toting up the damage caused by the floods on October 15.

Vinh Vo had his car in the basement and woke to hear that it had been flooded.

“I really didn’t see the flood coming,” Vinh said. “I just thought it was going to rain a lot. I got up at 8am and saw that the river was breaking its banks already.”

“I couldn’t see the middle of the road. There was high water at about a metre on the wall opposite.”

It took four or five days of pumping by the VICSES before he had access to his Holden Cruze.

“It wouldn’t turn on or anything,” he told *NW City News*. “The insurance company took it away a week after. Vic Roads says it has to be written off.”

An estimated 100 cars were in the basement, and most have been written off, according to a worker at the apartment block. He said some cars were still in the basement after two weeks.

Residents are still reconstructing events and wishing they had heeded flood warnings.

When *North West City News* visited a day after the floods, water in the basement was about 150cm in depth.

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Melbourne Water to investigate Flemington Racecourse flood wall

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ENVIRONMENT

Kensington residents impacted by last month's extraordinary floods have welcomed a review that will determine whether a wall built around Flemington Racecourse may have contributed to the inundation of surrounding communities.

As the clean-up gets under way, Melbourne Water confirmed it would review the "possible impacts of constructed assets in the flood plain including the Flemington flood wall" while also investigating the "causes and impacts" associated with the Maribyrnong River flooding which resulted in more than 100 homes being inundated.

Aerial footage of the racecourse, which was gearing up for the Melbourne Cup Carnival, showed the grounds were left unscathed by floodwaters while surrounding streets were swamped, sparking anger among residents.

The Victoria Racing Club (VRC) was given approval to build the wall in 2004 to protect the racecourse from flooding despite opposition from councils and residents at the time that it could have devastating consequences.

While the review process was in the "scoping stage", Kevin Chamberlin, chair of the North and West Melbourne Association, which addresses a range of community issues, said he was "very concerned" that such an investigation would be conducted by Melbourne Water "even though they were one of the approving authorities in the first instance".

"It should be a truly independent inquiry, not an in-house job," he said.

"Fundamental to all of this, is that it shows the power certain groups from the big end of town have over the decision-making processes we have in this state."

"There are a few of these groups around Melbourne and they always get their own way."

Mr Chamberlin also questioned the "great mystery" of what role former Melbourne Labor MP Bronwyn Pike played when the wall was approved and completed in 2007 "given she

was a member of the ruling government, and actually a member of the cabinet".

"It's clearly a massive failure of government."

Kensington Association chair Simon Harvey shared Mr Chamberlin's sentiment, saying the floods had "brought into question the ramifications that resulted in the building of the wall" that the association, along with other groups, had "strongly opposed".

"It is understandable the community is sensitive to power imbalances and that doesn't do the community any good in terms of relationships between various groups and the community," he said.

Victoria Racing Club's chief executive Steve Rosich said his organisation would "fully cooperate" with Melbourne Water with its review of the floods, adding its "thoughts are with those that have been impacted across the state from this extraordinary weather event that has caused flooding across Victoria".

As flood waters recede, major arterials including Kensington Rd, Dynon Rd, Macaulay Rd, Smithfield Rd, and Racecourse Rd have reopened, the Department of Transport said.

The City of Melbourne said all local roads had also reopened while clean-up crews hitting flood impacted streets and footpaths to clear debris and sweep roads. Kensington Rd was identified as a priority.

Residents also swung into action as they used high-pressure hoses to clean the mud and sludge from the front of their homes in the aftermath of the floods.

City of Melbourne councillor and Kensington resident Rohan Leppert said he too welcomed the Melbourne Water review, noting the City of Melbourne had opposed the construction of the racecourse flood-prevention wall.

But he added, "let's establish the facts so that we can learn from this experience".

He said Kensington Banks was built to withstand a one-in-100-year flood, at least as modelled in the 1990s and, except for the entrance to the basement carpark of Riverside Place apartments having "topped over" with flooding, residential buildings in the area had



▲ Cumberland Drive in Maribyrnong was impacted by flooding. Pictures: Murray Enders.

mostly avoided inundation.

"The residents I've spoken to have all been pretty angry about the symbolism and reality of dry grass in the racecourse next to a flooded Smithfield Rd, stock route and Kensington Road, but I would say that Kensington residents' sympathies are overwhelmingly with Maribyrnong residents upstream, who have lost so much," Cr Leppert said.

North West City News spoke to a few Kensington businesses with many lucky to have

escape the brunt of the floods.

But it came at a cost for Tushar Bhatnagar, co-owner of The Premises café on Macaulay Rd, saying he had experienced a drop in takings of up to 40 per cent over the weekend as customers were confined to their homes or faced hours of traffic diversions.

"I honestly didn't think something like this would happen. We were fully staffed with all the prep for the food ready to go," he said.

"It did affect the business, but luckily it didn't flood all the way where we are in Kensington."

State Greens MP for Melbourne Ellen Sandell said the flood wall at Flemington Racecourse appeared to benefit the "profits of the horse racing and gambling industry, despite the impact it would have on nearby homes and public space".

"The racecourse is on a floodplain and should hold floodwater when needed," she posted on Facebook.

"Instead, it's the only dry land for miles around, while people have lost their cars, some in nearby Maribyrnong have flooded homes and businesses and people were evacuating in rubber dinghies."

"I can't think of a better symbol of the state government's priorities."

Former Maribyrnong councillor and current Greens Senator Janet Rice said the "VRC got what they wanted, despite it not making sense from a planning perspective. But somehow, they managed to convince the government at the time".

Maribyrnong council mayor Anthony Tran said while the council's efforts were devoted to supporting the clean-up, it welcomed "any reviews or investigations that might assist in managing these kinds of events in the future".

A Melbourne Water spokesperson said the construction of the flood wall was subject to a range of additional flood mitigation measures by the VRC as well as ongoing maintenance and management.

In a statement Melbourne Water said the flooding of Maribyrnong River had been caused by a significant rainfall event associated with La Nina weather conditions. ●



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LORD MAYOR SALLY CAPP

A vision for a cleaner, greener, busier city

Elected leaders might expect a few surprises once they're voted into office, but who could predict a once-in-a-century pandemic?

Lord Mayor Sally Capp quickly became a key figure in managing the city's response, a period she says was defined by 'ingenuity and collaboration'.

'It really was a time of collaboration and I've got more telephone numbers in my book than I ever had before,' the Lord Mayor said.

'I can call colleagues in state and federal government. We see efforts to bring Melbourne back better right across the private sector, community sector and cultural institutions. They're all pitching in to say "what can we do?"'

Indeed a typical week for the Lord Mayor features numerous meetings with a huge range of Melburnians and delegates from interstate and overseas.

'This morning I was with a small business owner hearing their great ideas to attract new customers. I applaud people for every single day making the effort to find ways to keep their doors open and people employed and customers coming in. That is so Melbourne.'

She'd recently worked the room at an arts festival launch encircled by acrobats and singers; welcomed an American climate policy foundation impressed with City of Melbourne initiatives; and taken a look at Melbourne Fashion Week planning.

'Ambassadors, residents groups, it could not be more varied. I see the catering staff here at Town Hall at six in the morning preparing beautiful

food for lunches at Town Hall. I'm an early starter and see the city awakening. We are a very big part of that.'

She believes the motivation for running for Lord Mayor held her in good stead for helping manage the city's COVID response and ongoing recovery. Melbourne was the hardest hit city in Australia, with long lockdowns emptying our streets and devastating the local economy - creating major challenges for the city and the Victorian Government, who worked closely together on revitalisation initiatives.

Reflecting on the past few years, she said: 'There were certainly lots of surprises about being Lord Mayor. I think it's important for everyone who takes on a leadership role to have a real passion for something, because there are going to be lots of challenges and the passion keeps you focused and feeling driven.'

'For me, that passion was for Melbourne. I'd had many roles in the past where I'd represented Melbourne or been involved in issues about the city, in roles such as CEO of the Committee for Melbourne, and representation and trade investment roles such as Agent-General for Victoria.'

One of the most satisfying aspects of her role, she said, is making a difference at the local level for Melbourne's neighbourhoods.

'Of course the list of things to do never ends and that can be overwhelming at times. I really focus on the things we can do which helps move me away from the things I can't get done,' she said.

Asked what she's most proud of midway through her term as Lord Mayor, she singles out 'the whole response of City of Melbourne to the pandemic. The Queen Victoria Market renewal was at an absolute stalemate and that is now moving ahead. Also, I'm so proud the city understands we can play a major role in helping people experiencing homelessness by dedicating a building to support them through the Make Room program.'

The Greenline Project to transform the river's north bank 'has excited and galvanised people', she said.

'It's moved beyond just my passion project - it has a business case, initial funding and multiple agencies working on it. I'm also really excited about Power Melbourne and the way we can change the paradigm on renewable energy in cities.'

'This is another reflection for me about the City of Melbourne. We are brave, we are happy to step into the unknown and to say this is important and we should give it a try. I think that sense of taking some risks because it's worth it, because it could and should lead us to better outcomes, that is extraordinary. I used to look at government as a very risk-averse, status quo kind of body, and I look at City of Melbourne and I think, wow, this is an organisation with people with the courage to do the right thing. I think that reflects where our citizens expect us to be.'

'Look at what we've done on the change the date discussion around 26 January - we had the debate, we've done the work. These are difficult conversations and they're challenging but they're important and we take a stand on these things which I think is fantastic.'



Meetings, conversations, decision-making continue apace in her life as there's much still to do, together with all councillors and staff, she said.

'We need to keep delivering on our essential services, to be a cleaner city, and to take bigger aspirational roles in important issues like climate change, being a greener city; and I think ultimately, following the pandemic experience, it's about being a busier city. Melbourne can be a magnet for students, residents, investors, business owners, workers, creatives - whatever your personal passions or professional pursuits are, you can do them here in Melbourne.'

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Council approves controversial mixed-use buildings in Kensington

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne has endorsed a controversial plan to build an \$82.5 million mixed-use development in Kensington despite opposition from the community.

Under the proposal by Assemble Communities, five buildings at four and eight storeys high, would be built at the corner of Macaulay Rd and Barnett St, including 362 apartments, shops, a supermarket, a cafe, and office space.

Of the one- and three-bedroom studio apartments delivered, 20 per cent would be provided as social housing.

Councillors voted unanimously to approve the plans at their October 18 Future Melbourne Committee meeting in which Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said was a “very thoughtful development” that was consistent with the Macaulay Structure Plan.

“The council has recently endorsed a new Macaulay Structure Plan and although this new structure plan has not yet gone out for exhibition, I’m very, very pleased to say that this application is compliant with the new ambitious structure plan which will we hope soon take effect in this area,” he said.

“It’s also heartening to see that Assemble and Housing Choices Australia (as a joint venture) have been able to make this development happen.

“Homelessness is one of the most pressing issues facing Melburnians and we strongly encourage all new developments to include affordable housing measures.”

Mr Reece added, “We don’t often see, to be frank, this amount of thought going into an application development proposal, and there are a number of really positive features which reflect that thinking.”

The application was approved after being referred to the council by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning that will ultimately decide whether the development goes ahead.



▲ Artist's impressions of the proposed development at 402-432 and 434-444 Macaulay Rd, Kensington.

However, residents have voiced concern that the proposed development at 402-432 and 434-444 Macaulay Rd would impact the amenity of the area as well as create issues around parking and privacy.

One objection letter stated, “the sheer size of the planned development is far too big impacting on the visual Kensington landscape and Barnett St streetscape which consists of a row of heritage homes”.

“As a young family we are deeply concerned about the new build with residents seeing into our backyards despite the design measures Assemble have in their plans,” it said.

Kensington Association chair Simon Harvey said given the council had approved a similar

development in Kensington in recent years, the association was “not surprised” the current proposal was given the green light.

He said most concerning was that the plan would “adversely affect” residents in Barnett St with street parking.

“We think it’s an overdevelopment,” Mr Harvey said, adding the association would be “pushing hard for a more complete precinct plan for parking and traffic control around the area”.

However, the Deputy Lord Mayor said although there would be some shared parking available on-site, the council would not be providing on-street parking permits for residents of the building.

“This means we don’t anticipate additional pressure on public on-street car parking from the new residents in this building,” he said, noting he was “acutely conscious” about the “large amount of development that is coming along Macaulay Rd and the need for us to get the traffic management plan right”.

Assemble’s managing director Kris Daff addressed the council meeting, saying he looked forward to partnering with different community groups including Kensington Primary School in allowing them to use their communal spaces as part of the proposed development.

“We’ve got a community engagement team that has been meeting with the community and hearing some of their desires and thoughts around our proposal,” he said.

Mr Daff also pointed to Assemble’s presence in Kensington including the recently completed build-to-rent complex at 303 Macaulay Rd (home to about 170 residents) while construction will soon start on a project at 15 Thompson St which will consist of 199 apartments.

Director of Planning and Property Partners Paul Little, who is the advisor and planning consultant for Assemble, said the proposal would deliver a “high level of amenity for future residents, a great sense of community delivered through the relative design of this proposal, and excellent amenity spaces for residents”.

Cr Rohan Leppert said the developer had “heard loud and clear” from the community’s demands but noted that “doesn’t mean that they get a blank check for everything that they would like to do”.

“Our job today isn’t to decide whether or not we like the proposal. It’s to assess the proposal against the planning controls as they stand,” he said.

“I will say without any hesitation that the application that we’ve got before us with two very quality architects KTA (Kerstin Thompson Architects) and Hayball – not just the one – and the additional public benefits that are being offered that we wouldn’t have got the case with another application from another developer, has to be acknowledged and should be rewarded.” ●



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New Lort Smith Animal Hospital to open in autumn 2023

BUILDING

North Melbourne's historic Lort Smith Animal Hospital is set to unveil the first stage of its brand-new building in autumn next year.

As Australia's biggest and busiest not-for-profit animal hospital, Lort Smith's new hospital will house separate cat and dog waiting rooms and facilities, modern surgeries and more emergency and critical care facilities.

The design also uses ground-breaking fear-free principles that help reduce the anxiety and stress vet visits can cause for pets and their families.

As Melbourne's pet numbers have grown over the years, veterinary techniques and practices have been growing with it and Lort Smith has kept pace and expanded the services on offer at North Melbourne.

From acupuncture to CT scans, and dentistry to ultrasounds, these new treatments rely on new technology and a larger and improved facility.

Thanks to their generous donors, this is about to become a reality for the animals and people that Lort Smith serves.

The institution first opened its doors in April 1936 as the Lort Smith-Lyle Hospital for Sick and Injured Animals by founders Louisa Eleanor Lort Smith and her good friend Lady Frances Lyle.

These formidable women and passionate animal welfare advocates were often criticised for their "over-sentimental" devotion to animals.

Eighty-six years on, their vision continues in the work of the dedicated vets and nurse who together treat more than 20,000 animals every year, supporting people from all circumstances and help many who struggle to afford vet services. ●

For more information:
lortsmith.com



One last weekend to *Dance This Way*

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Kit Edwards*
EVENTS

For the first two weekends of November, Errol St has been awash with rhythmic dance, art and colour as part of the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association's (NWMPA) Dance This Way street activation.

The weekend of November 17 to 19 will be the last chance for locals and visitors alike to dust off their dancing shoes and boogie the night away.

The program has been curated by creative agency, The Place Agency, in partnership with the NWMPA and features a range of family friendly performances from hip-hop performers to ballroom and swing dancers, cheerleaders and even some dancing robots.

According to NWMPA president, Sylvia Hungaria, the response from the first two weekends has been great, with "visitors, locals and families all enjoying the fun."

"We have designed Friday and Saturday night to bring people into Errol St to eat, drink and activate the area, whereas our Sunday performances are engineered to welcome kids and families," Ms Hungaria said.

"The performers have been very good at interacting and engaging with the audience around them; it's great for kids and families because they can participate in the performances."

"Through *Dance This Way* we aren't just activating Errol St, but all our members throughout North and West Melbourne with our accompanying Spin to Win competition."

After what have been a challenging few years for the precinct, Ms Hungaria said the public had been happy to see the street activated, particularly with something a little "outside the box".

Spin to Win gives anyone who spends \$25 or more at any participating local businesses the



chance win daily prizes worth up to \$100 and a major prize of a \$500 Precinct Gift Card.

CEO and founder of The Place Agency, Jack Amies, told *North West City News* the inspiration behind *Dance This Way* came from the "dozens of dance and performing arts studios, all located within a stone's throw of the Errol St business precinct," and was a trait that was "so unique to the local area but, in many ways, is very much unknown".

"Errol St has a lot to offer, and we wanted to use activation as a way for people from all over Melbourne to get the opportunity to come down and experience the street and local businesses for themselves," Mr Amies said.

"We wanted to celebrate this and provide something that really surprises residents and visitors and delivers something for North Melbourne that's never been seen before."

Dance This Way runs for one more weekend, November 17 to 19 along Errol St, North Melbourne. ●

For more information:
northwestmelbourne.com.au/dance-this-way



Art meets Activism

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
ARTS & CULTURE

In an effort to support and fundraise for refugees, grassroots activist group Refugee Action Collective Victoria (RAC-Vic) successfully held an art auction on Saturday, November 12 at The Stables in North Melbourne.

The *Art meets Activism* fundraiser auction was an opportunity for attendees to bid on a number of donated works from more than 30 leading and prominent artists.

More than 100 people were also in attendance on the day, with an additional number of people submitting bids online via Zoom.

Close to \$40,000 was raised on the day and has now gone towards supporting refugees and advocating for policy level change, through the work done by both RAC-Vic and Bridgeline Asylum Seekers Project (BASP).

Of the donated works, RAC-Vic spokesperson Camille McDonald expressed her gratitude for the "generous contributions from the arts community".

"[We are] very excited by the prospect of making a difference to the lives of asylum seekers and refugees," Ms McDonald said.

"It is clear from the interest and attendance on Saturday that there is a great deal of support in the community for refugees."

Both RAC-Vic and BASP invest a lot of time reaching out to refugees and asylum seekers in the community and in detention centers, and they are extremely vocal about the lack of policy changes from the state government.

Being able to share their concerns with the public, through the auction, was considered by project coordinator and co-founder of BASP, Sister Brigid Arthur AO as an "amazing offer" to be a part of.

"There are huge needs currently among asylum seekers with many people having no money to pay rent and utilities, so all help is gratefully received," she said.

Niagara, She Sells Real Estate, Kensington Neighbourhood House, Young Henrys, Art for Good Foundation, Image Group International, and Tony Winspear from Killiecrankie Wines, were also supporters of the auction. ●



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Kensington midwifery clinic could be saved with lease extension

Continued from page 1.

bookings (for birth which of course we take up to nine months in advance) went down by 50 per cent."

"Uncertainty around the time of having a baby is NOT what makes people safe and does not improve mental health."

The objection also explained that it had only just recouped the money it had spent to retrofit 38 Gatehouse Drive when COVID hit "because we have always placed accessibility of our services over profitability".

MAMA services director Jan Ireland also spoke of their position to expand and build on the community work it has been offering at Gatehouse Drive over the past decade, "but will not be able to start again from a new premises".

Her comments come after MAMA's co-founder Kelly Langford said while the

council's intention to sell the building was "nothing personal against us or our services in closing the building, but I do wish that was more forethought in the proposal around the services it provides the community".

MAMA's management will attend the council meeting where they will make a verbal submission.

A council report said the building at Gatehouse Drive was currently zoned as a local government zone and rezoning is required prior to any divestment. If this was to occur, it is estimated that a rezoning planning scheme amendment would take 12 to 24 months.

Meanwhile, the council has recommended moving ahead with selling properties at 505-513 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne and 47-49 Canning St, Carlton, while affordable housing will be explored as part of the sale terms for 100-104 A'Beckett St in the CBD. ●

Candidates meet with north-west city locals

ELECTIONS

The Kensington Association and the North West Melbourne Association (NWMA) saw a strong turnout to their joint meet the candidates event for the Victorian seat of Melbourne at Kensington Town Hall on October 27.

The two major residents' groups of the city's inner north-west suburbs of North and West Melbourne and Kensington combined for the one event, giving locals the opportunity to meet their candidates ahead of the November 26 Victorian Election.

The meeting saw lower house candidates Ellen Sandell (Greens), Rebecca Thistleton (Labor), Rabin Bangaar (Animal Justice) and Colleen Bolger (Victorian Socialists) attend, while upper house candidates Reason Party leader Fiona Patten, Socialists Jerome Small and Liberal Democrat Paul Silverberg also appeared.

The Liberal Party's lower house candidate, George Palackalody, was not in attendance. Neither was the Reason Party candidate Nicola Foxworthy, however, she was represented by Ms Patten on the night.

Moderated by Kensington Association chair Simon Harvey, the meeting heard a range of



▲ Rebecca Thistleton (Labor) and Fiona Patten (Reason).

issues raised by locals and addressed by candidates, including local planning matters, climate change and renewable energy and housing affordability among many others.

Locals can vote from at a range of locations in the area on election day, including North Melbourne Primary School, St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre, North Melbourne Community Centre, Kensington Primary School or Holy Rosary School. ●

For more information:
vec.vic.gov.au

Kensington Neighbourhood House a Melbourne Award winner

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
COMMUNITY

After supporting the community for 47 years, Kensington Neighbourhood House (KNH) has taken home a 2022 Melbourne Award.

As a space supporting people of all abilities, backgrounds, and ages to connect, learn, and create, it seems only fitting that KNH was nominated in the Award's Community category.

After being announced as the winner at a special ceremony held on Saturday, November 12 at Melbourne Town Hall, KNH manager Rebecca Smith said her team was "thrilled to win".

"It is such great recognition for all the staff, volunteers and participants who make Kensington Neighbourhood House such a special part of Melbourne," she told *North West City News*.

KNH was established in 1975 by seven local women from the Kensington Housing Estate, as a space to help reduce social inequality, increase diversity and inclusion, reduce social isolation, and improve food security.

These are priorities which remain pertinent today according to a statement made by Ms Smith during a City of Melbourne Future Melbourne Committee meeting held in Kensington on October 18 where she spoke about the importance of KNH in the community.

"Kensington Neighbourhood House co-convenes and steers the Kensington Community Network that auspices the community gardens, the compost hub, the repair hub, and the bike repair workshops," she said.

"It's the neighbourhood house that [also] hosts and coordinates the reconciliation group for Kensington. We're the lead agent for the City of Melbourne climate justice pilot project tackling food insecurity, and we also deliver the Green Time Not Screen Time project."

In addition to their wider work in the community, the KNH also continues to offer their weekly educational courses, activities, social gatherings and community building events, all with a drive to break down isolation and community barriers.

Among the services and programs held throughout the week are English classes, sessions on digital essentials, sewing classes, creative writing groups, exercise classes, painting and drawing classes for adults and children, and study support.

While the various classes allow for community members to learn life skills together, they also provide an opportunity for people to come together with people of similar and different backgrounds.

KNH is funded by the Department of Education and Training, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and the City of Melbourne, with some funding and grants provided by participants, and corporations and philanthropy.

Running alongside the KNH for the Community award was Channel 31 for telling Melbourne's stories, Meals With Impact, and



▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Kensington Neighbourhood House Team, and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece. Photo: City of Melbourne.

Travellers Aid Australia.

The night also saw winners announced for the categories of Aboriginal Melbourne – ganbu guljin, Arts and Events, Hospitality, Knowledge and Innovation, LGBTIQ+, Sustainability and Urban Design, and a Melburnian of the Year.

"There is no greater honour than acknowledging and celebrating the efforts of ordinary Melburnians doing extraordinary things," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"We're thrilled to recognise this year's winners, who have worked hard to create positive change, inclusive communities and make Melbourne a better place to call home."

Recognised as this year's Melburnian of the Year was Kuku Yalanji woman Antoinette Braybrook for the "insurmountable difference" she has made to the city through her extensive advocacy and service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Ms Braybrook is CEO of Djirra, an organisation specialising in family violence and providing culturally safe and holistic assistance to women in need of their legal services.

She is also the first Aboriginal woman to win the award in its 20-year history.

Speaking on her award, Ms Braybrook said she was "incredibly honoured" and that she wanted to use the next 12 months to "bring more attention to the systemic issues impacting Aboriginal women".

"I am hopeful the award will open doors and bring new opportunities for Djirra to finally implement our long-standing vision of an Aboriginal Women's Centre in Melbourne for all Aboriginal women in Victoria to access critical services for their safety," Ms Braybrook said.

"I dedicate this honour to Aboriginal women, recognising the strength and courage of every Aboriginal woman who has put her trust in me and our organisation Djirra for over two decades." ●

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I'm a mum of two young children, and I know the value of great public childcare and healthcare, and the importance of inclusive communities.

And I want to do everything possible to protect my kids' future from the effects of climate change.

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Authorised by Chris Ford, Australian Labor Party, Victorian Branch. 438 Docklands Drive, Docklands 3008.

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Birth for Humankind delivers free support, so no-one should give birth alone

WORDS BY *Carol Saffer*
HEALTH

Twenty-year-old Zahra* was 30 weeks pregnant when her culturally conservative parents told her to leave the family home; they did not speak to her again.

Her boyfriend was emotionally supportive but lived with his parents, who didn't know about the pregnancy, so he could not contribute financially. She stayed on a friend's couch for a while, but they asked Zahra to leave before her baby was born.

Zahra was referred to Birth for Humankind, which is based in North Melbourne, while on a waiting list for housing and youth counselling.

She often cried because she felt so alone, missed her family's support and worried about what would happen to herself and her baby.

She had no idea if or when housing and counselling services would be available to her.

Birth for Humankind believes that no-one should give birth alone.

CEO Ruth Dearnley said, "We provide free birth support to people experiencing social or financial disadvantage."

"While we have a good public health system, people undergoing social isolation face complex barriers to seeking the support they need throughout pregnancy and early parenthood."

Recent data collected by Birth for Humankind shows 63 per cent of their clients are at risk of perinatal mental health issues, and 81 per cent lack a trusted person to support them throughout pregnancy and birth.

People from a refugee background or seeking asylum made up 26 per cent of their client base last financial year, and 56 per cent had a primary language other than English. Many of their clients face complex barriers throughout pregnancy and early parenthood. These hurdles lead to lower medical appointment attendance, limited access to information in their first language, trouble accessing interpreters, and client

embarrassment and misunderstanding when dealing with medical professionals and medical terminology.

"We provide tailored support to people who may be facing some or many of these barriers," Ms Dearnley said.

A fully trained volunteer doula, a qualified, non-medical companion who assists a woman before, during and after childbirth, is the primary support provider.

The word "doula" comes from the Greek language meaning "woman's servant". They support, advocate, and mediate on behalf of their pregnant client with her maternity-care providers. They are a "voice" for the mother if she feels she needs it, advising medical practitioners of the mother's preferences or asking questions on her behalf.

Doulas don't replace a woman's partner, if she has one, during labour and birth, nor do they deliver the baby.

Birth for Humankind matched Zahra with a doula, Jamie*. Zahra was initially very shy, but after their first meeting, she began to understand the support Jamie could provide and felt more comfortable getting in touch.

Jamie then provided antenatal education sessions in preparation for Zahra's labour and birth.

Zahra went on to birth a healthy baby with Jamie by her side, relieved and happy she didn't have to give birth alone; she moved into secure housing shortly after the baby was born. Jamie visited for six weeks after birth, helping with feeding and settling into being a mum, as well as helping her become familiar with public transport in her new area and how to travel with her baby. Finally, she referred Zahra to local community health services for ongoing support.

Most Birth for Humankind clients give birth at the Royal Women's Hospital in Parkville or Western Health in the inner west.

Ms Dearnley said the organisation is run totally on unpaid work from their doulas, and



▲ Volunteer doulas in training.

they are seeking government funding for the launch of a pilot program

"We know consistent support throughout pregnancy reduces the risk of neo-natal depression and anxiety," she said.

"The child is less likely to spend time in neo-natal intensive care; there is a reduced risk for medical intervention at birth, and better infant bonding with the mother."

"This kind of service should become a critical complimentary service alongside current maternity services."

"We have 50 per cent of our funding needs to implement a pilot program with the Royal Women's Hospital and are seeking government funding to employ full-time doulas who can continue to improve health equity for vulnerable Victorians."

Their volunteer doula workforce provided more than 150 services to their clients, including birth and labour support and extended post-natal support (up to eight weeks after delivery).

Samira*, a past Birth for Humankind doula trainee, said, "I've had the opportunity to meet some wonderful people through the program and in my time as a volunteer doula, and it's an experience I'll cherish forever."

"I loved having the company and support of many other passionate women and enjoyed the



▲ Farzana: past client and now volunteer doula. Photographer Nymno Bel Air

thought-provoking discussions during our time together."

People who give their time as doulas range from private practice doulas, midwifery students and registered midwives, plus doulas trained through Birth for Humankind's foundational training program. They speak 19 different languages and provided 1973 hours of support to clients during the last financial year.

"Last year, we had a large increase in client referrals for extended postnatal support, but given the capacity of our volunteer workforce, [sadly] we have not been able to match all these referrals," Ms Dearnley said.

*Names have been changed by request. ●

Annual North Melbourne Victoria Police Christmas toy and food drive returns

WORDS BY *Jemma van Zaanen*
COMMUNITY

The annual North Melbourne Christmas toy and food drive has returned for its 20th year supporting local families who are doing it tough over the holiday period.

North Melbourne Police Station and the Melbourne North Police Community Consultative Committee have joined forces to collect the goods for children and families who need them most.

The community can donate non-perishable food and new toys only (due to hygiene reasons) to North Melbourne Police Station which will then be donated to two charities leading up to Christmas.

Toys and food will be donated to The Venny Communal Backyard and Support Service in Kensington, a "free communal and safe space for children aged five to 16", which focuses on allowing children to engage in play and creativity.

Goods will also be donated to the Ronald McDonald House in Parkville – a "home-away-from home" for children and their family receiving treatment at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne.

Local police will be spreading the holiday joy by decking out their police cars and motorcycles in festive colours and lights, bringing an interactive display for the children at the Ronald McDonald House on December 17. Leading Senior Constable Nick Parissis told *North West City News* the drive was a great way to contribute positively to two great causes supporting the local community.

"It's great being able to talk to the kids and their parents and hear their stories. It's also a good way for the police to give back to the community," Mr Parissis said.

He said the Ronald McDonald House had also organised a classic car club for the children, so they would be treated to a variety of old-style cars; a new and "different" feature of this year's food and toy drive.



"We will attend the House in December and take the police cars for the kids to have a look at. It's also good for the police members' mental health to interact with the families in a positive way," he said.

Community members are encouraged to

“It's great being able to talk to the kids and their parents and hear their stories. It's also a good way for the police to give back to the community.”

donate to help local children and families over the festive period until December 13.

North Melbourne Police Station is located at 36 Wreckyn St, North Melbourne. For enquiries about the Christmas food and toy drive, contact Leading Snr Cnst Nick Parissis on 03 8379 0800. ●



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Queensberry Cup attracts bumper crowds

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Rachel Litwin*
EVENTS

More than 5000 locals and residents braved the elements for the inaugural running of the Queensberry Cup on October 22.

In what marked the first major community event in North or West Melbourne since COVID-19, the bumper crowd relished a day full of live music, performances, food demonstrations, and even a Village Dog Show.

While there was much to entertain punters throughout the day, all eyes were turned to the course as the Queensberry Cup neared go time, and as if some divine spirit intervened, clouds parted over North Melbourne and sun began to shine down on the masses.

“We are really pleased with how the day went. We had more than 5000 attendees throughout the day and peaked at 1500 during the running of the Queensberry Cup,” Ariel Valent, director of local not-for-profit organisation and event organisers, The Centre, said.

“We had over 30 entrants across three categories, with the standout performer being 10-year-old Oliver Furlong, who took out the open age category.”

“The day was well supported by our volunteers and a great community spirit. With the idea of putting on a significant community event, we thought people would be keen, but to see the response on the day was great. Everyone loved being involved.”

Off the track, the event boasted a diverse range of musical performers including South African acapella group Makepisi, and hip hop crew L To R Dance.

According to Mr Valent, almost all food and beverage retailers sold out on the day, which was great, “not only for them, but saw a flow on to the broader retail and hospitality community”.

“Through our Cirque Culinaire Kitchen Stage, it was great to see a great variety of local



people and showcasing their cuisines; food you might not see every day but is often being cooked in the houses throughout North and West Melbourne,” Mr Valent said.

“Overall, it was a great day which was reflected in a fantastic turn out.” ●

A fun-gi event for all to indulge in

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
SUSTAINABILITY

This month is Urban Agriculture Month, and to highlight the annual national movement, Kensington Stockyard Food Garden is holding a Gourmet Mushroom Growing workshop on November 20 from 10am.

The workshop, which has been held in the past, is being hosted again as a direct response to the positive community feedback and interest in it, and fits in with this year’s theme of “Growing Edible Towns and Cities”.

The one-hour workshop will be a hands-on process, hosted and led by garden volunteer and mushroom growing enthusiast Emma Wasson, where attendees will be taken through how to grow their own mushrooms using provided mushroom growing kit materials.

“We want to show that it is easy and accessible, and it doesn’t take a lot of time – especially in this case because we are pre-organising a lot of it – and we will talk about the life cycle of cultivating gourmet oyster mushrooms, how to avoid and minimise contamination, and make sure people are growing a healthy crop,” Ms Wasson said.

“Essentially it is to help give people access to growing their own food in a fun and fascinating way, because fungi grows very quickly, it can be very cheap, and it is very rewarding because you can grow plenty of them and don’t need a lot of space to do it.”

Following the workshop, attendees are also

welcome to stay on and socialise further, while indulging in oyster mushrooms on toast and sharing in some of the produce grown at the Kensington Stockyard Food Garden.

As a volunteer of the garden for the past two years, Ms Wasson cannot recommend being a part of the community garden enough, stating it was something she “will continue indefinitely” to be a part of.

Growing up in the country, Ms Wasson has always had a fascination with nature, and her interest in mushrooms stems back to when her family would go foraging for them on their property.

Then it was the pandemic, and disinterest in constantly watching Netflix, that ultimately brought Ms Wasson back to “discovering the world of fungi”.

“Through having that extra time at home, I really started to hone in on the process through watching lots of YouTube and doing lots of home growing experiments,” she said.

“The hobby just turned into a passion, and it is something I want to offer other people, and show them what I have learnt so they can enjoy it as much as I do.”

Educating new, and ongoing, gardeners about the benefits of growing your own produce and being a part of a like-minded community is something Ms Wasson takes a lot of pride in, and she is in full support of what Sustain: The Australian Food Network is doing through the Urban Agriculture Month movement.

“It really shows that food resilience is important, and that access to community gardens



▲ Mushroom workshop held at Kensington Stockyard Food Garden. Photo Julian Meehan Photography.



▲ Workshop presenter and garden volunteer Emma Wasson.

and fresh produce is a really beautiful way to learn, connect with other people, and address issues like social isolation, rising costs of food, and food insecurity,” she said.

“These issues can be remedied through connecting to your local community and getting involved in a local community garden.”

The Gourmet Mushroom Growing workshop is among more than 100 events being conducted nationwide as part of Urban Agriculture Month, and according to executive director of Sustain: The Australian Food Network Nick Rose, the month is all about responding to the arising problems we are facing at this time and creating awareness.

“We’re entering a decade the likes of which none of us have ever experienced,” he said.

“Crises are cascading and converging: climate, COVID, cost of living, war and health – mental, physical and dietary. More Australians than ever are facing food insecurity, with the food banks swamped by demand. We need positive, empowering responses, which is exactly what Urban Agriculture Month is all about.”

For more information on the Kensington Stockyard Food Garden event, and to learn more about growing mushrooms or share in your progress, visit Mycelium Futures on Facebook. ●



For more information:
trybooking.com/CDRAX

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Your City of Melbourne community update

GRANTS HELP NEIGHBOURS PRESERVE HISTORIC STREETSAPES

Passionate Melburnians are making-over their heritage places to help preserve beautiful streetscapes for generations to come.

Heritage plays a key role in making Melbourne a place where people love to live, work and visit.

To preserve the city's unique character, we offer heritage grants to help people complete restoration projects at residential, community and commercial properties across the municipality.

We recently awarded two heritage grants to neighbours on McCracken Street in Kensington.

Ian Porter restored floor tiles on his verandah, and Kensington Neighbourhood House replaced the stained glass on its front-door sidelights.

A common feature on McCracken Street, the sidelights cast a beautiful crimson glow into homes during summer sunsets.

'I was pleased to be able to access a grant to restore our verandah and make it safe, as some of the tiles were broken. The project has been well worth it,' Ian said.

'When you live in a heritage home, you can modernise the inside to make it liveable, but exterior restoration helps preserve the character of the streetscape.'

Kensington Neighbourhood House runs educational, wellbeing and social events to bring diverse local people together. Manager Rebecca Smith said restoration helps make the community hub a welcoming place.



Ian and Rebecca chat over the fence at Kensington Neighbourhood House on McCracken Street

'The heritage grants program gave us the opportunity to repair our sidelights, which were cracked and broken, to help restore this beautiful building to its former glory,' Rebecca said.

'Projects like this help make the Kensington Neighbourhood House a welcoming and friendly place that the community can be proud of.'

Ian and Rebecca have both lived in Kensington for decades and love the character and community of the suburb.

'Kensington is a very historic area. We love walking our dog, Lucy, down along the old stock route,' Ian said.

Looking to the future, the neighbours will continue to take care of their piece of local heritage.

Kensington Neighbourhood House recently replaced its slate roof, which has made it watertight and ready to face another hundred years.

Roof works are on Ian's wish-list too, and he's also planning to paint his front door to continue to maintain his home's facade.

About the heritage grants program

First established in 1988, the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund is our local fund for heritage grants, held within the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund. Grants are administered by the National Trust of Victoria.

How to apply for a heritage grant

Have you been thinking about a project that would transform your heritage place? A little restoration work can go a long way to transforming your building and keeping it in great condition for years to come.

To be eligible, your property must be within a heritage overlay and located in the City of Melbourne. The works must also be visible from the public realm.

To find out more, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/heritagegrants

More off-leash areas for our four-legged friends

If there's one thing we know, it's that Melburnians just love dogs.

For it is our fabulous loyal four-legged friends who encourage us to lead active and healthy lifestyles, and importantly offer companionship like no other.

Since 2018, the number of dogs registered within the City of Melbourne has increased by a huge 44 per cent from 3292 to 4750.

That includes a 20 per cent increase in the past two years alone.

As the number of dogs and dog owners in our city increases, so does the need for everyone to have access to safe and secure spaces in which to frolic.

Council is doubling the number of off-leash dog areas within the municipality.

Over the coming months, there will be more than three hectares of new off-leash parkland added to the existing 16 hectares - that's five times the size of Federation Square.

New designated off-leash areas for dogs

- Eades Park, West Melbourne
- Kings Way and Moray Street Reserve, Southbank
- Ron Barassi Senior Park, Docklands
- Royal Park (Manningham Reserve), Parkville

Timed off-leash areas

- Wellington Park, East Melbourne
- Point Park, Docklands
- Riverside Park, Kensington

To ensure everyone can enjoy our parklands safely, timed off-leash access is available between 6pm and 8am from November to March, and 5pm to 9am from April and October.

Top five dog breeds within the City of Melbourne

1. Cavoodle
2. Greyhound
3. Labrador
4. French Bulldog
5. Mini Dachshund

Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/dogwalking for details.



We're creating more off-leash parkland for our furry friends

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Your City of Melbourne community update

How we support food security in Melbourne

Melbourne is a famously liveable city. We're renowned for the quality of our food and world-class dining and hospitality scene.

Despite this, in 2021, about one in three residents experienced food insecurity and only 4 per cent of adults consumed the minimum recommended daily serves of fruit and vegetables, our City of Melbourne Community Indicators Survey 2021 shows.

That's why we're taking steps to make sure everyone in the community has access to affordable, fresh and healthy food.

Community Food Guide and community food map

Increasing levels of food insecurity is a health, social and economic issue.

As a council, we're focused on strengthening food relief initiatives and supporting communities to grow their own food through our Community Food Relief Plan 2021-25.

We have a history of working with the community on food security, and we'll continue to ensure those in need can access food relief.

Our Community Food Guide is a helpful resource for community agencies or anyone in the community who needs information about how to access affordable, fresh and healthy food.

We've also committed to partnering with food relief and other charities – like SecondBite – to provide groceries and meals to vulnerable residents.

We're looking into community food enterprise models, including opportunities to work with Queen Victoria Market traders to redirect edible surplus food that would otherwise go to waste.

This work will help reduce overall food insecurity to 25 per cent by 2025, back to pre-pandemic levels.

Explore our Community Food Guide and food map at melbourne.vic.gov.au/communityfoodguide to find free or low-cost meals, food banks, community gardens and cooking and growing classes near you.

Grow your own

Filled with spinach, cauliflower and kale, the crops in Melbourne's communal food gardens in Boyd, Docklands, Drill Hall, East Melbourne, Melbourne University, North Melbourne, Southbank and Kensington are thriving.

We support the Kensington Stockyard Food Garden, established in 2018, which features more than 100 square metres of growing space, an Indigenous garden and fruit forest with more than 30 trees, including figs, apples, citrus, elderberry, and other berries.

Nan Austin, chair of the Kensington Stockyard Food Garden said the growing is primarily in self-wicking beds as the stockyard is paved with bluestone.

'While we make some compost onsite we cannot meet our ongoing needs so we recently purchased two tonnes of compost from the City of Melbourne green waste program,' she said.

'We've done the sums and we're using a whopping 5000 litres of compost each year, which is equivalent to at least five tonnes of food and green waste redirected from landfill.'

As well as feeding members with fresh produce, the Kensington Stockyard Food Garden delivers kilograms of vegetables to a local food pantry to be shared with the community, and collects seeds for reuse in the future. Excess seed is shared at regular plant swap meets.

Getting creative with our food and garden organics waste

Food and the ways we produce and dispose of it has a huge impact on our environment. In fact, if food waste were a country, it would be the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gasses.

About 45 per cent of our residential landfill bins are made up of organic waste, which ends up in landfill producing methane gas, odour and contributing to climate change.

We're taking steps to cut this in half, and achieve zero net emissions by 2040, with our new food and garden organics waste service.

Since launching, we've provided 23,000 households in the City of Melbourne with the food and garden organics service, diverting more than 1400 tonnes of organic waste from landfill.

That's the equivalent weight of 46 Melbourne trams.

We've just begun trialling the organic waste we collect as compost for our local parks and gardens in Kensington. We're also about to commence a pilot program, testing on-site food waste processing in up to six high-rise apartment buildings.

Visit melbourne.compostapak.com.au for more information.



Fresh produce at Queen Victoria Market

IN BRIEF

REPORT IT ONLINE

From graffiti to abandoned vehicles, you can report issues online around the clock. Get in touch from your smartphone when it suits you and we'll get on the case. Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/contactus

ORDER YOUR FREE KITCHEN CADDY NOW

Kerbside collection for food and garden organics is now available to residents living in apartment buildings up to five storeys.

Order your kitchen caddy and liners today and help us put your organics to good use.

Visit melbourne.compostapak.com.au for more information.

A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

At the City of Melbourne, we are committed to bringing people together, fostering communities that connect, care and collaborate.

From supporting new parents, to acting on food security and making sure our city is a great place to age, we're here for everyone.

Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/community to learn more.

SENSORY GARDEN A DELIGHT FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

Enjoy nature, get your hands dirty and enjoy garden-to-plate morning teas at Kensington's sensory garden.

We've created a beautiful garden at Kensington Neighbourhood Centre where local people, including people living with dementia and their carers, can come together for a weekly gardening and social group.

A professional gardener from Cultivating Community is on hand to guide participants through optional light gardening activities designed to ignite the senses and facilitate a connection with nature.

The fun continues with morning tea, often featuring produce grown in the garden, like herbs and edible flowers.

Visits to Kensington Neighbourhood Centre's sensory garden are free, but bookings are essential.

To register, contact Healthy Ageing on 9658 9190 or email healthyageing@melbourne.vic.gov.au



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CITY OF MELBOURNE

New artist to reimagine Arden Station's history through public art commission

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
ARTS & CULTURE

Following a call out to local artists to paint a mural on two Laurens St electrical boxes opposite the future Arden Station, Michael Zampogna was selected as the chosen artist on October 26.

The project is one that Mr Zampogna said he was "very happy and proud" to be chosen for, which was offered by the City of Melbourne in partnership with CitiPower. He was among six shortlisted artists and was asked to produce a detailed artwork concept for the electrical boxes which explored the rich and diverse history of the area.

"Being two electrical boxes, I wanted to focus on two phases and stages of history," he said.

"One box will display the natural beauty of the area 200 years ago when the very vast Blue Lake with lots of surrounding wildlife used to exist [on the site of Arden Station prior to European settlement], and it will be very



organic with lots of flowing and cool lines."

"I will then contrast it with the second box which will reflect almost like the history of the manufacturing industry in the area, and there will be more rigid lines and warmer tones."

The two electrical boxes are situated side by side and Mr Zampogna is already in the process of starting the work, although the unpredictable weather has been slowing down the process.

Despite this, he can't be happier with the opportunity to finally have his first official mural gig, after wanting to pursue his passion of painting for quite some time.

"My background is in graphic design, and I have always been looking to move into large scale mural work or commercial art, and so this seems like a natural progression," he said.

"I have always been a fan of traditional art and painting on the side as a hobby, then overtime I found that commercial art has a lot of similarities with graphic design, in terms of how you interpret a brief and execute the entire framework."

After practising at home on larger canvases

and seeing the benefits of art being used to enhance public spaces, Mr Zampogna is looking forward to being able to use his vision and work to display something special for locals.

"It's a good opportunity for me, and for artists to be able to decorate and enhance space that would otherwise be left to be tagged or [in this case] left to be just ordinary electric boxes," he said.

Establishing Melbourne as an arts and cultural hub through the use of public art is of high interest to the City of Melbourne and Lord Mayor Sally Capp said it was "very proud to work with Melbourne's thriving creative sector".

"Our Public Art Framework aims to set Melbourne apart as one of the world's leading cultural cities, with public art commissions that express the city's unique identity," Cr Capp said.

"Through extraordinary public artworks, we can highlight the city's spirit, culture and livability, and draw visitors from near and far to enjoy our creative offerings."

Weather permitting, Mr Zampogna is aiming to have the work completed during November. ●



Street soccer supports community

WORDS BY *Jemma van Zaanen*
COMMUNITY

A community street soccer tournament supporting disadvantaged Victorians run by social enterprise *The Big Issue* will take place on November 18 in North Melbourne.

As part of its Victorian program, *The Big Issue* will host the event at the North Melbourne Community Centre on Boundary Rd, with disadvantaged players aged 16 and over from across Victoria to meet for a day of soccer and social interaction.

Founding the Community Street Soccer Program in 2007, the organisation provides free weekly sessions, giving participants across the country a chance to "get active, make new friends and seek support" in a welcoming environment.

The Big Issue is an inclusive organisation with a focus on disadvantaged players, catering to "all fitness levels and abilities" and supporting individuals' needs.

More than 50 players who usually compete in the weekly initiative will come together for the tournament this month in an event national coach and co-founder George Halkias said would be the first large-scale tournament held since the end of the pandemic.

"The tournament will be a celebration of the Street Soccer program, which is designed to support disadvantaged people to improve their health through participation in sport," Mr Halkias said.

With eight weekly programs across Melbourne, Mr Halkias said players had been chosen to compete based on their "attitude and efforts" in their weekly sessions.

"These are people who are experiencing mental health issues, homelessness, disability, long-term unemployment. They're using the program as a platform to improve their mental health," he said.

"We are putting on an event where players get to represent their programs, come together, and share some good times. It can also help boost self-esteem."

The tournament, which will coincide with the Homeless World Cup, will take from 10.45am to 3pm on November 18

The Big Issue is also calling on volunteers to support its Street Soccer program. ●



Cockie Duggan Day

COMMUNITY

A history-loving resident of North Melbourne, Brendan Gleeson, has written a poem about a sulphur-crested cockatoo called "Cockie" Duggan.

Brendan has done some research into the life of Cockie, who lived with the Duggan family at the Court House Hotel.

There is some conjecture as to his age, but Brendan thinks the bird lived until 100 and that a commemorative day should be established in his memory.

"We don't know Cockie's birthday, but we know his date of death and hence his anniversary, June 13, 2001," Mr Gleeson said.

"Each June 13 henceforth could be celebrated as 'Cockie Duggan Day', something to break open the depths of winter to the warm memory of an Errol St legend."

Cockie was a long-term resident at the hotel, spending most of his time on a perch in the back yard next to the men's toilets.

His repertoire included a more than passable imitation of men being sick.

On more than one occasion, Cockie Duggan flew to the top of the flagpole on the Town Hall, refused to leave and so had to be collected by the caretaker.

The bird was donated to the Melbourne Zoo and Brendan has tracked down his records.

When he arrived, he was already very old. There is a note on his file that an elderly lady used to come and see him in the late 1970s. ●

Ode to the King

*Cockie Duggan
Ruled the Gents
At the Courthouse Hotel
He was full of
Common scents
That he'd regularly expel
In a retching refrain
To explain...
In opening hours
His lordship
Wielding special powers
From his throne
Listened in on subjects
Pleading with God
On the
White telephone*



*After bugging each
Combustive collogue
The old royal rogue
Would loudly play back
The highlights
The best were
Supplied by
Footy pie nights
The earth suffering
Monarch
Craved attention
For a royal role
Causing him to skylark
Fiendishly atop
The Town Hall
Flagpole
Equally long suffering
Caretaker Jock
Would gallantly ascend
To retrieve
'The bloody thing'
Crowd cheering
A rescue
Fit for a king
One day his retainers
Suddenly shot through
And Cockie was banished
To the Royal Melbourne Zoo
Where for years
He scared kids
With a thunderous
Chunder or two*



Calling home bakers young and old

EVENTS

Pop-up kitchen Cirque Culinaire is calling on locals to enter its "Festive Treats Competition and Display" on Errol St on December 4 for their chance at "baking fame!"

Following its celebration of talented local cooks at the Queensberry Cup in October, the foodie team behind Cirque Culinaire will be homing in on the sweeter side of shared plates in North Melbourne next month.

If you love to create Christmas cookies or other festive treats, or like sharing your culture through food, then grab your cinnamon and enter this free competition.

Participants will create their works at home before delivering the finished products on December 4 to be judged by experienced home cooks from the Country Women's Association.

The competition is open to children, teens and adults, with four categories – decorated cakes, pretty Christmas treats, tasty festive sweets (e.g., Holi, Eid, etc.) and poems about food (for children) – and prizes to be awarded in several categories.

Entries will be publicly displayed at the Lithuanian Club in the afternoon. The event, presented by B-Friend and The Village World Festival and supported by the City of Melbourne, Victorian Government and The Centre, will also include food demonstrations by locals, prize giveaways, and certificates for all entries.

Exhibition space is limited and registrations are encouraged as soon as possible. ●

For more information:
thebigissue.org.au

For more information:
b-friend.org

Local galleries make their mark

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

They might be down a back alley or beckon from a shop window. They might be outward looking or introspective.

Local galleries have an advantage over commercial ones in that they create their own individual cultures.

Some are on Instagram but never seem to be open; others are on Yelp but have long since disappeared.

North West City News went looking for those mounting regular exhibitions and found one thing local galleries have in common.

Most of their shows are by local artists rather than from interstate, and their openings are events at which friends, fellow artists and family meet.

"We do have occasional interstate artists," said Neil Shurgold, a local resident who has been connected to Rubicon Ari, an artist-run space on Queensberry St, since its inception.

"We had a group from Adelaide," he said. "They had a small turn-out at the opening. We prefer local artists because of that."

The gallery turned 10 on November 10 and will be mounting a celebratory exhibition next year of work from their stable of artists.

There is often a painful division in the art world between commercial galleries which represent artists and the plethora of artist-run spaces that have proliferated to fill the gap between what is often called an "emerging" artist and an "established" one.

Neil said that commercial galleries tended to be more conservative.

"Traditionally, artist-run spaces are catering to more experimental art. At a commercial gallery you do what you're known for. Artists might want to explore other stuff," he said.

Artist-run spaces are the places where this can happen. Most charge an exhibition fee but no commission on sales and it's up to artists to generate interest themselves.

A more recent addition to the inner north-west gallery scene is One Star in Victoria St which combines curated group shows with self-curated solo exhibitions and has an excellent street profile with a bar, verandah and occasional musical performances.

But what cannot be manufactured is the cred connected to past shows. Artists will look for a gallery that shows work they like and will assess the orientation of the curators.

Richard Knafelc is a local artist who currently has a show on at Rubicon Ari, his second in three years, and he's pleased with the space.

He is a conceptual painter and is hanging work himself for *Exuberances*, a show that pushes the boundary of landscape into the surreal. He digitally manipulates his botanical photographs then paints them up. His show is on until November 26.

One Star, by contrast, focuses on the conventions of painting itself and is gathering a community around the interests of curator and director Katrina Beale.

Matthew Simpson exhibited his lovely freeform linear works in October, abstractions that followed a show of a painter mate the month before. Matthew has already booked another exhibition for next year.

Local galleries don't have to do expensive



▲ Matthew Simpson with a stochastic abstraction at One Star.



▲ Richard Knafelc lost in his surreal landscapes at Rubicon Ari.

promotions because they attract like-minded practitioners.

One Star is still developing a reputation for showing a cross between ironic and expressive works. ●



At the Zoo

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
EVENTS

There's a big difference between having an opinion about racing and actually going to the Melbourne Cup and experiencing the vibe.

Last year *North West City News* interviewed locals who had been exercising on the tranquil Flemington Racecourse grounds.

Even those who'd usually ducked for cover when the Cup came around were having second thoughts.

"The Victorian Racing Club can do whatever it likes as far as I'm concerned," said one grateful resident, who'd been distancing on the grounds during lockdown.

But for the 2022 Cup Day, almost 250,000 punters made up for lost time even though heavy rain was on the radar, and they attended the course in person.

When the deluge arrived all of those in general admission, on both the lawn and race side, converged under the only cover available.

Members looked out to see a surging mass of humanity struggling for a drink or chips, let alone getting to see the horses. They call it the Zoo.

There was yelling and screaming, standing in beer queues and mobs of Melburnians looking for a bit of a celebration. The girls were in bare feet, their strappy shoes hopeless on the slippery tiles. Some were wearing plastic bags as they emerged out of the huddle.

The queue for the burgers and chips was out in the open and it was a case of taking whatever was on hand.

The Cup is meant to be an event for everyone. It's a pity it was impossible to actually move between the mounting yard and the bookies and TAB.

Some people left the track, betting online instead and owners were also affected by the crowded conditions.

With quite large syndicates involved, the VRC has restricted numbers to 15 per horse with members entering a ballot for the privilege and some couldn't get close to their horse in its golden moment.

There was a rumour that the VRC was planning to increase the size of the mounting yard, but this was just that ... a rumour.

"The Victoria Racing Club can confirm patrons remained safe at all times and the weather conditions did not impact the Melbourne Cup Carnival or crowd safety," a spokesperson said.

"There is sufficient space in the Mounting Yard and the VRC does not have plans in the near future to renovate."

The Carnival this year supported more than 5000 jobs on course alone. ●

Forget about the bad old days

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
DESIGN

The desk is being confined to history and replaced by new designer items such as the "Waffle" and the "Axel".

Gone are the days when workers sat at these rigid structures while the boss looked on from his secluded office.

Now people are having "focus time" on their laptops in padded booths.

"You don't need a desk for focus time," said Leia Bright of Design Nation, a shop on the edge of the CBD on Queensberry St.

Leia and her dad moved into their North Melbourne showroom in February and are targeting the corporate sector with their transitional designs.

You just have to sit in a Waffle with your laptop to look professional. The padded walls block out phone calls. The special Axel table pivots over the seat.

This, according to Leia, is the new post-COVID workstation and it's being put together locally.

"There's a push to get people back into the office," Leia said, posing in the booth, but she warned that "we need a transition".

This is where her dad Chris comes in. He



▲ Leia Bright working in her Waffle on an Axel.

designed the laptop table to fit a booth or a couch because there was nothing similar on the market.

It was called the "Axel" after the axle appearance of its construction out of two powder-coated metal circles and a pole.

"I'm not 100 per cent happy," Chris said. "It's fit for purpose and budget. It's available in a range of colours."

But he wants to make the pole slightly thinner, for aesthetics, so it will fit into the new look office and be unobtrusive.

The Waffle, which has just come in from

Canberra, was designed by two PhD students and holds two for a chat or one for a more lounging way of working.

Leia said that designers and architects loved working from home, and they were the people they wished to win over initially with their non-desk style.

The duo saw the opportunity to design for locals at more competitive prices to items from Europe.

The laptop table fills a niche. It's taller than a side table and more solid and the pole design beats more conventional stool-like legs. ●

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WE LIVE HERE

State election – the short answers

Last month in this column we asked the question of the major parties competing at the forthcoming state election – what are your party’s policies on short-stays?

We have talked *ad infinitum* with all the parties about regulating short stays. We have engaged with the first, second and third Minister for Consumer Affairs, currently Melissa Horne. We met with former Planning Minister Richard Wynne. We had talks with the Leader of the Liberal Party in the Legislative Council David Davis. And we have had ongoing communications with leader of the Victorian Greens Samantha Ratnam.

Despite the pandemic, political turmoil, scandals and factional machinations, we tried to keep engaged with politicians across the political spectrum. We have been providing concerned Victorian politicians with case studies, precedent legislation and regulations from other jurisdictions, expert reports, impact statements and statistics.

In this pre-election column, we will summarise what we know about party policies on short stays.

Party Policy Scorecard

SHORT-STAY POLICIES	LABOR	LIBERALS	GREENS
STRATA RULES	✗	✗	✓
DAY CAP	✗	✗	✓
REGISTRATION	✗	✗	✓
PENALTIES	✓	✗	✓

▲ The Party Policy Scorecard shows the short-stay policies of the major parties, ranked against We Live Here key policies.

There are four key policies that We Live Here has been articulating in this column since the previous election:

- **Strata rules:** Let owners’ corporation lot owners decide if their building will have short stays. Owners should have the right to regulate short stays by enacting special rules, within a common framework. This should include the right to on-charge

additional costs on a *cui bono* basis.

- **Day cap:** Limit the number of days that an apartment can be short-term let.
- **Registration:** So many jurisdictions around the world already require short-stay operators to register their property, usually at the municipal level and for a cost-recovery fee. This most fundamental regulation will also help governments understand the extent of the industry.
- **Penalties:** Regulations only work if there are consequences for breaching those rules. The penalties must be enforceable and proportionate to the social and economic impact.

Labor

From previous meetings and correspondence with the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Melissa Horne and her office, we know that the Labor policy is to maintain the status quo until after “a” review. This repeatedly deferred review had been promised in 2020, then 2021 and now it has been pushed out to “between 2023 and 2026”.

The status quo continues to be resistance to any regulation by strata rules, day caps, and even registration, one of the most basic governance tools. Our Party Policy Scorecard shows a tick for the Labor policy on “penalties”. This attribution is exceedingly charitable, because while there are penalties in the current patchwork legislation, they are virtually unenforceable in practice and risibly meagre in quantum. In our extensive review of VCAT cases there has been not one instance where VCAT has enforced a penalty. Zero.

Our dialogue with the minister’s office will be maintained because we trust that empirical economic evidence will eventually have an influence on policy – and we will continue providing that evidence.

We had been hopeful that the departure of Richard Wynne might have afforded an opportunity for a broad review of policy from the planning portfolio viewpoint. We hope this may still be forthcoming from the new Minister for Planning the Member for Pascoe Vale and Legislative Assembly Leader of the House Lizzie Blandthorn.

In Victoria it seems evident that the disconnect between the planning and consumer affairs “silos” of government is at least partly responsible for the short-stay policy disarray in this state. It is therefore perhaps not all that perplexing that the Labor party can only tell us to wait a few more years for yet another review.

Meanwhile there are lessons that can be learned from other states e.g. NSW where the intersection of the NSW equivalents of



planning and consumer affairs portfolios has been recognised and managed, producing some nascent yet remarkable reforms.

Liberals

Liberal policy is quite hard to discern, given that the last known stance was evinced by the party’s 2018 mass absence from parliament when the short-stay issue came to a vote.

Prior to the last election, We Live Here was equally engaged in dialogue with all the major parties, including the Victorian Liberals.

At the time, David Davis, Leader of the Liberal Party in the Legislative Council, declared his party’s support for a legislative review on short stays, making the party’s parliamentary walkout even more shocking.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Liberal Party arguably has had few other distractions that may have relegated our humble edification.

While we remain hopeful of a policy announcement from the Victorian Liberals, it will be a little too late for this pre-election wrap. For now, our Party Policy Scorecard for the Liberals shows no known policies.

The Greens

Moving along the spectrum, the Victorian Greens have made a welcome announcement that has made headlines, including in the news pages of this issue.

We had been anticipating this policy release for some time. Last year Greens State MP for Melbourne Ellen Sandell called for regulation

of the short-stay industry, something we have been arguing strenuously for. Our ongoing dialogue this year with Samantha Ratnam further stimulated our expectations.

Now they have proposed a regulatory framework for short stays:

A cap of 180 nights a year for a property to be rented as a short stay.

Allowing owners corporations to regulate short stays where the property is not the host’s principal residence.

Setting up a mandatory register of short-stay operators.

We Live Here is pleased with the Green’s announcement and the concordance with our key policies. We look forward to seeing the details.

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit welfarehere.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests. ●



Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton
CAMPAIGN@WELIVEHERE.NET
LEARN MORE AT
WELIVEHERE.NET



OWNERS' CORPORATION MANAGEMENT

Creating more sustainable strata lots – what can be done?

Over the years as a strata manager, countless owners have come to me with bold plans to make their lot more sustainable by installing solar panels. They go out, get a quote, present it to their committee of management and it gets voted down. Why?

WORDS BY Alex Smale
THE KNIGHT

Too often, simply because other owners don’t like the look of solar panels. This is especially true at townhouse estates where owners want to

maintain a consistent appearance.

It was always disheartening when aesthetics came before combatting climate change. However, things have changed.

With the changes to the *Owners Corporation Act* introduced in December 2021, owners’ corporations (OCs) may no longer make rules that unreasonably prohibit the installation of a sustainability item on a lot. For example, if a lot owner wants to install solar panels, the OC cannot deny this request simply on aesthetic grounds. However, they may be able to deny the request if they have a legitimate reason. For example, if the solar panel impedes access for window cleaning.

This does not just apply to solar panels. The *Owners Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Act 2021* defines a sustainability item as anything that eliminates or reduces a reliance on non-sustainable energy sources and includes: a solar hot

water system, solar panels, and a roof with colours having a particular solar absorption value. It is yet to be seen what impact this new legislation will have on the sustainability of OCs, but it is a positive step in the recognition that these upgrades should not be impeded. In fact, they will be crucial for us to achieve net zero.

What can we do without needing approval?

Owners can make minor alterations that don’t change the external appearance without requiring permission from the OC. Even better, the Victorian Government has a number of rebates to reduce the cost for sustainable upgrades. This includes replacement of inefficient TVs, lights, showerheads, pool pumps and lights.

I live in an old apartment building which still has its original fittings. I recently replaced my inefficient showerhead at no cost through the government scheme and saw a 30



per cent reduction in my hot water bills as a result. All I had to do to arrange this was go to Energy Vic’s website, find an accredited provider, and arrange a time for the swap. I encourage everyone to take a look at the Victorian Government’s Energy Upgrades website and see if they qualify for any rebates:



What more could be done?

A major hurdle in getting strata sustainable is that a significant

alteration to the common property requires a special resolution.

This means that 75 per cent of all owners would need to vote in favour for a final resolution to pass on the installation of solar panels on a common roof. Lowering the threshold for approval would go a long way in getting more sustainable upgrades through.

For now, though, if these sorts of improvements are something you’re passionate about, we recommend getting involved in your OC.

Holding an information evening or contacting your fellow owners about the benefits can go a long way in getting special resolutions across the line. ●

For more information:
theknight.com.au/sustainable-strata

ENVIRONMENT

Managing pests using nature – part one

Traditionally gardeners have been very active when it comes to pests, with all sorts of creative interventions being undertaken. Recently these methods have seen gardeners turning to applying chemicals in the form of pesticides and herbicides.

The feedback we have received shows us how these chemicals used are finding their way into our water systems and air, increasing pollution and overall making the planet less healthy for us all.

There are other approaches to managing pests, which are more humane, and gentler on the earth without the toxic pollution that follows.

By understanding how nature works we do not create work for ourselves by working against nature, for example, we put a plant in conditions that suit it, we are aware of how the natural elements move across the site and place plants accordingly so that they thrive. We watch and receive feedback from nature rather than making hasty insensitive "marks" on the landscape...

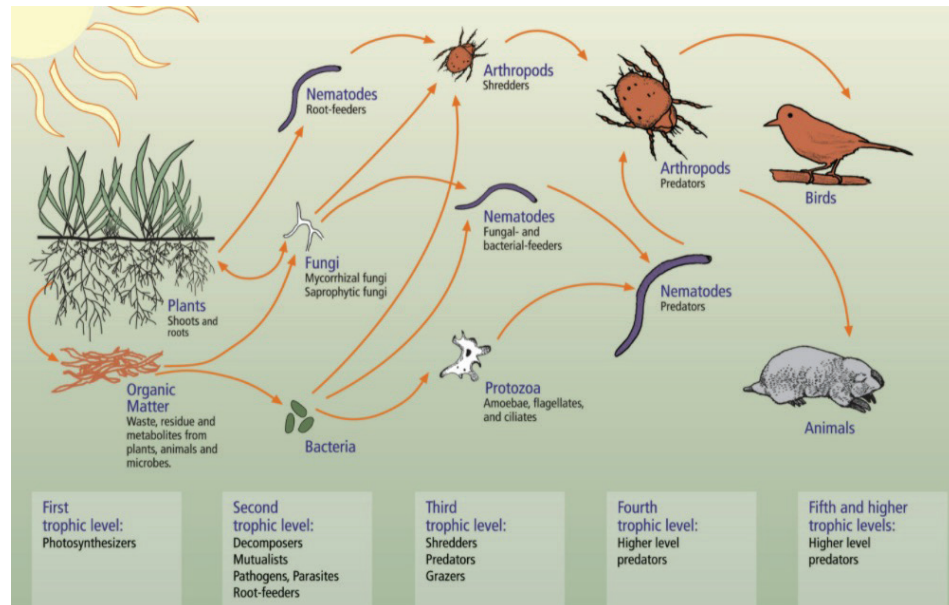
An invitation to sit in the garden and observe.

When establishing a garden, my own or a community one, I plan for the care and preventative pest management in the design.

It is easier to prevent the pests in the first place by ensuring some key components are met.

Understand your site and plant requirements

An approach I use is to first understand my **climate, site and my soil**. My climate's heat and cold zones allow me to determine which plants are suitable for my garden and will prevent me making bad choices creating loss of time,



▲ *The Soil Food Web.*

energy and money by planting a plant in the wrong place.

As I live in the inner city my garden has a variety of **microclimates**, which offer different growing conditions e.g., cool and shady, hot and dry – once I map these I can grow a variety of plants that suit those microclimates.

Sometimes we can create microclimates on our sites, which mimic the growing conditions of a subtropical area, which then means we can grow subtropical plants.

I have planted a banana tree, however, I find more effort is required and the plant is under stress and not as abundant as it requires more heat and moisture.

Apparently plants when not well and under stress give off a scent which insects find their way too – this has been used to advantage with some growers deliberately planting decoy plants to attract pests away from others.

Diversity

Select plants for the conditions of your garden and **create diversity with different species** and guilds to support each other. I use proven earth care techniques of guilds and companion planting and perennials to maintain vitality and yield. I understand that each plant occupies a niche with its own unique form and contribution to the whole.

Caring for soil

Keeping our soil healthy allows the soil to perform its important function in the various bigger cycles of the earth – the carbon cycle, the nutrient cycle and the precipitation cycle.

Minimise tilling the earth, keep it covered to protect the soil life, which does the most important work of keeping fertility up, sinking carbon, breaking down nutrients in the form the plants need it, maintaining soil structure

and managing pH levels.

Ploughing and digging disturb the balance among soil insects, fungi, viruses, bacteria and other soil life. They break up the root channels and soil structural units (aggregates) so that the soil is not able to perform its intended function. These disturbances cause rapid loss of organic matter upon which the crop and soil organisms feed.

The condition of my soil plays a major role in preventing pests. By keeping my **soil life well fed with chop and drop, green manure and compost** my plants are able to be well nourished and withstand pests. All organic material is chopped and dropped and used back on the garden either as mulch or material for the creation of new soil structure and nutrients. This keeps all the nutrients invested into the plant (sun, water, etc.) recycled back into the garden and not transported out.

As I have a small garden it's difficult to rest my productive beds so sometimes after heavy feeding of crops, I plant peas and beans or scatter a green manure if I feel it's needed. **I check my soil pH and moisture regularly** with a small instrument that I place in the soil, so I am on top of any issues. As a guide, I also take a handful of soil and see what soil life is visible, the more soil life the healthier, I don't turn my soil, I generally just use a fork if it feels compacted and leave the roots of some spent plants in to maintain the pathways for water and nutrients.

Working on soil is a year-long effort and not just before the productive time of spring. Soil is the foundation of all growing things. A healthy soil produces healthy plants and healthy plants resist attack from pests and diseases.

To be continued... ●



Jacqui van Heerden

CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON

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NATURE

Coming soon to North Melbourne

You probably haven't been able to tell with all this rain lately, but spring has well and truly sprung, and I for one am thrilled.

WORDS BY *Howard Birnstihl*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Howard Birnstihl*

Oh, if you're one of those moody types, you'll be saying, but I just *love* winter, and I'll confess that, as a photographer, it does have a certain charm. I mean, it gives me a chance to come over all poetic, you know, shooting those mysteriously menacing gnarled leafless branches writhing in silhouette against a dark stormy sky, or capturing those moments where a single tiny droplet of rain hangs trembling on a twig before plummeting earthwards to disappear into the ground mulch with a myriad of others to help continue nature's cycle. Yes, this gives me a certain enjoyment, but where are all those fabulous insects I love to photograph?

The answer, of course, is some are hibernating while some are hiding away in cocoons of the most ingenious range of designs, slowly metamorphosing from one form to an entirely different one, often with wings and the ability to fly. Yet others are still only a twinkle in



their parents' eye, soon to be laid as eggs when the ambient temperature signals it is safe to do so.

Imagine how happy the birds are now, having spent those dreary months struggling to construct a new nest, knowing their environmental larder is again to be fully stocked, those eggs having burst open with gaping beaks now squawking and demanding to be stuffed. And at last, we're again surrounded by a full range of colours, the winter wattles having done their best to cheer us but only partially successful in their endeavours.

Waiting in the wings (one might say) are the bees and their cohorts ready to savour that vast field of nectar before them and in doing so play their part in the vital pollination process. Butterflies are among the most



noticeable insects now surrounding us as their fluttering style, along with their colourful coats, attracts our eye, even if only for a moment before disappearing again over into the neighbour's yard.

Dragonflies too, although they also occasionally appear during winter, are now in abundance, as are moths, hover flies, not to mention beetles and spiders of every colour and shape one can imagine. But along with these latest visitors to our parks and gardens are two of my favourites, champing at the bit as they await the starter's gun.

November is a month which can never make up its mind, is it still spring, or is it summer? Towards the end we have the first really warm days of this back end of the year and those two favourites of mine emerge;



one, the praying mantis, in the bright morning sunshine, and the other, the cicada, making its entrance in the lingering warmth of the night hours.

On your back fence or on the sturdier stems of your garden plants, you may have noticed a whitish blob. This is called an ootheca or egg sac and has been carefully sculpted there by a female mantis back at the end of the previous summer. The hot morning sun will signal its time for the new mantids to appear and the sight of the iridescent green nymphs sprinkling out is a pure delight.

Each will find its own territory in which to sit and await any other unsuspecting insects innocently wandering by. Only tiny as yet (about one centimetre) its prey will be correspondingly miniscule. By the end of summer though it will have grown to about six to seven centimetres and will have gobbled up more flies than you can poke a stick at.

My other favourite, the cicada, has spent many years underground as a grub living off the sap within the roots of its host tree. Seven years later (and in some species much longer) its alarm clock will signal its time to burrow to the surface, struggle up the tree trunk, strain like billy-o, split down its back and slowly emerge as an adult. Yellow/brown, black or sometimes green, the male will spend its life driving us bananas with its song on those stiflingly hot summer days, meanwhile the female will lay her eggs in a slit in a leaf where the young will hatch and fall to the ground and burrow their way to safety to await that next far distant ring of its alarm bell.

My two favourites, one an infamous assassin, the other a strange enigmatic bumbling creature, its role in nature a complete mystery, unless like the ladybirds and tadpoles you consider them an important part of any child's development. But whether you want to study these creatures in depth or just enjoy their company, either way, they are great to have around. ●

BUSINESS

A place for every student

A unique outlook, broad curriculum and a focus on brilliant teaching are part of Haileybury City's success story.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Haileybury's City campus is a vertical school and each day students immerse themselves in their busy and unique surroundings surrounded by floor to ceiling views of the Melbourne cityscape.

The very location of the Haileybury City campus guarantees it is a school with a difference. Located on King St in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, and opposite the city's oldest park, learning at the state-of-the-art campus in the city brings a busy, real-world edge to the school day.

The location also brings opportunities to make the most of the cultural, educational, historical and sporting sights and facilities that are, literally, on the doorstep. From MSAC, Whitten Oval and the State Netball and Hockey Centre to the theatres and art galleries, these places all become classrooms to its city students.

Haileybury City also offers a different education experience not only because of its CBD location, but because it is a vertical campus and community enjoyed by students, teachers and parents, who are regular visitors to the campus to attend events.

"Parents love watching their child flourishing in the classroom. They also enjoy seeing how things have changed since they were at school. Understanding the important role that parents play in fostering and nurturing a love of learning is vital – parents are important partners at Haileybury City," said Caroline Merrick, Head of Campus Haileybury City.

Its youngest students join the Early Learning Centre (ELC) on the lower levels and, as students progress through the school years, they move up the building with senior students occupying the highest levels. The building also accommodates all the learning spaces expected of a quality school, such as library, art and drama studios, science laboratories and music rooms.

Haileybury City prides itself on offering a diverse curriculum with subjects to match the interests of every student. As well as core numeracy and literacy subjects, other subjects that are part of the Junior and Middle School curriculum include Health, History and Geography, Visual Arts, Music and Drama, Science, Communications and Digital Technologies (CDT), Library and Mandarin.

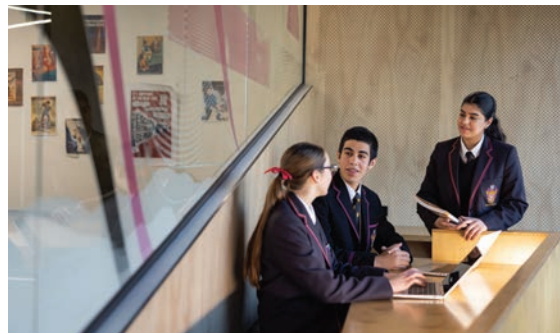
Junior School students from Prep to Year 4 build core literacy and numeracy skills with Haileybury's successful Explicit Teaching Model. Based on an "I Do, We Do and You Do" approach, enabling young minds to build knowledge, skills and confidence in the classroom.

By the time students move to Middle School, they are strong and independent learners who know how to question, explore and problem-solve. Students who discover a passion subject can follow their interests in Senior School and the VCE years.

So, every student can find their special place.

At the heart of the city campus is Haileybury's focus on "brilliant teaching".

"A brilliant teacher is constantly curious about their practice, pedagogy, curriculum and the world," Haileybury CEO/Principal, Derek Scott said.



Head of Haileybury City Caroline Merrick agrees that "brilliant" teachers bring something different to their teaching.

"They bring something different to their maths teaching. They want to lift a student's engagement in the arts. They think beyond teaching a business management course so it becomes something entrepreneurial," she said.

"At Haileybury, brilliant teaching is a culture of high expectations, hard work and collaboration, underpinned by our philosophy that every student matters every day." ●

For more information:
haileybury.com.au



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PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Spring Fling in Parkville Gardens

The skies were grey and threatening but spirits were as sunny as could be. That's how it was at the Children's Amazing (not really a) Race on October 23.

In spite of the dire weather forecast, about 25 children, along with lots of parents and volunteers, turned out in Royal Park for a wonderfully varied, enjoyable and rain-free event. A wide range of activities, such as bird-spotting, drawing, riddle-solving, balancing and counting, gave them a chance to try out all sorts of skills. Full marks to Parkville Gardens Residents' Association (PGRA) secretary Faye Ryan for the imagination and industry that went into staging the event. And a huge thank you to all the volunteers who rallied from near and far when asked to help.

There was scary fun in Cade Square for Halloween. Faye teamed up with neighbour Kelly Armstrong and friend Tara Scorgie to engage a great turnout of kids, with local resident Francesca Waters putting in a stellar performance as a wicked witch. Congratulations and thanks to all concerned.

There's more! Plans for our Spring Fling on Sunday, November 27 are taking shape. There'll be games and pony rides for the kids, food for all, and a surprise attraction. Local residents... don't wait! Book yourself up from 12pm to 2pm for this friendly neighbourhood event.

A hearty thanks to the City of Melbourne for the grant that's funding the celebration. Fingers crossed for the success of our grant application to a new funder for a community festival in March next year!

Coffee competition has come to Parkville Gardens! The café at Mercy Place has re-opened at last. Under the charming name of "Cup of Joy," it's open on weekdays from 8am to 2.30pm, serving coffee and snacks. If longer range plans come to fruition, the adjoining space will eventually become a convenience store. The other shop, on the corner of Oak and Garrard streets, is open from 8am to 5pm on weekdays, and from about 10am to 1pm on Saturdays. It includes a small convenience store. Both shops are managed by friendly baristas – Italian-born Morena at Mercy Place,

and Assyrian-born Nawal at Oak and Garrard.

The City of Melbourne has launched its online neighbourhood portals. Here's what it says about them:

"These portals are one-stop shops for all things in your neighbourhood. You can find important information to help you live, work, study and play, see what your neighbourhood priorities are, and keep up to date on work already under way."

To take a look, go to melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods. For the Parkville portal, go to participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parkville-neighbourhood-portal. There's lots to see and learn.

For crime and safety matters, Parkville Gardens falls under the umbrella of the Melbourne North Police Station. That's where the Police Community Consultative Committee (PCCC), of which PGRA is a member, meets every two months.

Here's the message that's been sent out by neighbourhood policing co-ordinator and secretary of the Melbourne North PCCC, Leading Senior Constable Nick Parissis...

"Each year the Melbourne North Police Station in conjunction with the local Police Community Consultative Committee runs an annual Christmas toy/food drive. This is the 20th year we are running this event. Melbourne North Police ask the local community to donate non-perishable food items and new toys to us which we then pass on to the Venny communal back yard and support service in Kensington and Ronald McDonald House, Parkville."

Donations can be dropped off at the Melbourne North Police Station up until December 13. The drive concludes with an event at Ronald McDonald House on December 17.

In the meantime, Parkville Gardens residents, do come to our Spring Fling, from 12pm to 2pm on Sunday, November 27, on the Galada Ave Reserve. See you there! ●



Tom Knowles
TOM KNOWLES IS THE PRESIDENT OF PARKVILLE GARDENS ASSOCIATION.
PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU

MELBOURNE ZOO

Zoo brews up wildlife-friendly coffee opening

A brand-new way for coffee-loving Melburnians to help save wildlife has been launched at Melbourne Zoo.

Orangutans, monkeys, and tree kangaroos will directly benefit from the four varieties of shade-grown coffee that Zoos Victoria has created in partnership with Melbourne-based family-owned business Genovese Coffee. Melburnians consume more than 22 million cups of coffee at home each week, however this can impact biodiversity through the clearing of forests. Zoos Victoria CEO Dr Jenny Gray said shade-grown Coffee for Wildlife products supported farmers, protected forests and saved wildlife. The beans are sourced from partners in Ethiopia, Sumatra and Papua New Guinea who

know the importance of wildlife conservation.

"Rainforests are rich in biodiversity – this is where you get all kinds of amazing animals living," Dr Gray said. "That is why we have looked for farmers with the same ethic we have, the same ethic of protecting biodiversity into the future."

Rather than rapidly growing coffee in the sun, which removes habitat where wildlife lives, shade-grown Coffee for Wildlife is grown beneath rainforest tree canopies. While it takes longer for the coffee to ripen in the shade, this also produces more complex and delicious flavours and, importantly, preserves precious wildlife habitat.

Genovese Coffee managing director Adam Genovese said this shade-grown form of coffee production provided a livelihood to communities around the world.

"When grown in a genuinely sustainable way,

coffee plantations can benefit the environment, support local communities and produce a great brew," Mr Genovese said.

Dr Gray said everyone had a role to play in protecting the planet's biodiversity – whether that's through the coffee we consumed or any other product we purchased.

"What we can do with every purchase is think carefully about its impact. We have done some of the thinking for you through Coffee for Wildlife products. So, we have sourced coffee that is good for wildlife and good for you," Dr Gray said.

The Zoo's Ethiopian coffee is a chocolatey single origin from the forests of Ethiopia, while protecting the home of vulnerable Vervet Monkeys. The Sumatran beans have a spice and herbal freshness and are sourced to protect Orangutan habitat.

The Papua New Guinean coffee has a honey

sweetness with a hint of almond and helps protect species including the Matschie's tree Kangaroo.

The Survival blend is a unique blend of all three single origin coffees that tastes like bergamot and blueberry with a light body and mild acidity.

Coffee for Wildlife products are packaged in certified at-home compostable bags, which are biodegradable along with the coffee grounds.

All coffee consumed at Melbourne Zoo and other Zoos Victoria properties is served in biodegradable cups, with the cups, coffee grounds and Coffee for Wildlife packaging processed in the Zoo's industrial composter.

Coffee for Wildlife products can be purchased at Zoos Victoria shops, the online Zoos Victoria store and the Genovese website.

A new coffee brew is helping to protect the environment and wildlife worldwide. ●

FEDERAL MP



Climate crisis continues

Last month, as I stood watching the flood waters rise in Kensington and locals worry about their homes and safety, it was crystal clear that the climate crisis is happening right here, right now in Melbourne.

Coal and gas are fuelling the climate crisis, but the Victorian Labor Government wants to open up new gas drilling, near the 12 Apostles.

We're in a climate crisis, but Labor and Liberal want new coal and gas.

Only the Greens have a plan to get out of coal and gas and replace it with 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030.

This month, Victorians will head to the polls once more for the state election. In Canberra, we've seen the power of Greens to push Labor further and faster to act on the climate crisis. Now is our chance to do the same thing in the Victorian Parliament.

During the past eight years, I have worked closely with my colleague in the Victorian Parliament Ellen Sandell to deliver for our neighbourhoods. Alongside the community, Ellen has secured new school campuses in North Melbourne and \$13 million extra for nurses and midwives at our local public hospitals. I am confident that Ellen can continue to be your strong, independent voice in Parliament, restoring integrity and working for you.

Melbourne is a fantastic place to live, but many in our community are doing it tough, with the cost-of-living crisis spiralling out of control. As Labor delivered its first Budget last week, they had a choice, tax cuts for billionaires and politicians, or immediate cost of living relief.

It was disappointing to see Labor choose tax cuts for the wealthy, while everyone else was left waiting. People can't afford childcare, can't afford the rent and can't afford to go to the dentist. They can't afford insurance, and they can't afford the power bills.

We must do more to address the cost of living right now. That's why the Greens will keep fighting to get dental into Medicare for everyone, deliver free childcare and wipe student debt.

In a wealthy country like Australia, everyone should have a roof over their head. But the homelessness crisis remains, and renters are doing it tough. In the first six months of 2022, the big four banks made \$14 billion in profit, while interest rates grew.

The Greens will make housing affordable and end the special treatment for property developers. We'll cap rents, giving renters' real rights and require 30 per cent of large new developments to be set aside for first home buyers.

This November, vote Greens for climate action, rent caps and integrity in government. ●



Adam Bandt
FEDERAL MP FOR MELBOURNE
ADAM.BANDT.MP@APH.GOV.AU

QVM TRADER PROFILE

QVM's very own certified cicerone

After experiencing the hospitality industry in the United Kingdom and finding a passion for introducing people to new experiences and styles of beers, Darren Ivey has found his place at Brick Lane Shed.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

A highly qualified and experienced expert in his field, Mr Ivey has a rare certification as a cicerone, a qualification that is hard to come by and the equivalent to a sommelier (specialist wine steward), but with beer instead.

"There are only a handful of certified cicerones in Australia and the world, and it is a qualification that helps me store and sell beer, make sure the quality is right, and make sure people have an understanding of beer styles and pairings," he said.

This knowledge means that as the venue manager of String Bean Alley's Brick Lane Shed, Mr Ivey is able to equip his staff with the knowledge they need to then further impart the knowledge onto customers.

"It is good to have this kind of knowledge because we have anywhere from 10 to 20 different styles of beer in the Brick Lane Brewing banner alone," he said.

"When a customer says they like one particular beer, we are able to communicate with them and send them down the right path of others they may like and want to try."

The bar was established in December 2019, shortly prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 making it impossible to remain open.

From the unravelling of 2020 to now, Mr Ivey said Brick Lane Shed had battled closures due to COVID and renovations being done to String Bean Alley and seen the venue swap between being a bar and a bottle shop.

"It has been quite up and down, but this year we have been able to consistently run the bar properly and cohesively and it has been awesome," he said.

"Due to restrictions on travel in the past we hadn't been able to hit that international tourist base as much as we would like, but now we have noticed it is starting to ramp up and we have had really good feedback."

Equipped with eight beers on tap and a massive fridge with six doors that is filled to the brim with a selection of single cans, cases, and mixed six packs to take away, the Brick Lane Shed has become a mix between the



▲ QVM trader Darren Ivey.

Photo: Simon Shiff.

two differing forms it identified as during the pandemic.

Keen on it becoming a space that people can unwind after shopping or working at the market, the bar is also equipped with a flat screen TV for all sports viewing needs, snacks and a rule that BYO food is more than okay.

While beer is Mr Ivey's passion first and foremost, after the opening he soon became aware that an option for non-beer drinkers was also needed. He now also co-owns Antagonist Spirits with his two business partners, and it is coming up to its first birthday come the new year.

Operating with a liquor licence as well, Antagonist Spirit is popular for its award-winning gin that people can enjoy on the balcony outside – a perfect place to be when the sun is out.

For a drink-to-go, the Sun Baked Sundae Australian Spiced Rum has also been seen flying off the shelves.

As the customer base ramps up in the alley, success only seems to be growing for Brick Lane Brewing as it expands and becomes part of a new project within the new Munro build.

The Mercat Cross Hotel within the precinct and Munro build, has announced the brewing company will have the rights to also open a bar within its renovated space.

"We are going to have a big bar called the

Brick Lane Market and it will be opening at the start of next year, and it's going to be a great new venue," Mr Ivey said.

"It will have an upstairs area with 20 taps and a kitchen, and there will also be an amazing space downstairs as well."

Another overriding positive is that while the Brick Lane Shed may run under the same daytime hours as the QVM market, this new venue will be allowed to open at night.

"Having a venue that can open at night will be not only great for the community but also the market community who will be able to come after work for a drink," Mr Ivey said.

"This amazing space will have outdoor seating and a balcony overlooking the market, and it will be a really cool environment based around not only quality service but also quality education, and people who want to learn more can."

In the meantime, until the new bar opens, visitors to the market can visit both Brick Lane Shed and Antagonist Spirits on Thursday and Friday between 10am and 3pm, and Saturday and Sunday between 10am and 4pm. ●

For more information:
bricklanebrewing.com

KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Tins for Treasure!

Do you have any idea how many random items accumulate at a neighbourhood house over the years? In our case, the answer is "a LOT."

WORDS BY *Rebecca Smith*
KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

People donate all sorts of things "that might be useful one day" but are often not. Instead they end up at the back of cupboards or hiding under desks. Teachers save magazines and books because "we might need them in the future". Guess what? They never do. Those magazines and books find themselves abandoned on high shelves, gathering dust. And don't even get me started on buttons and beads. They seem to multiply in dark corners.

So, in an effort to reclaim storage space we are seeking loving homes for hundreds of surplus items. We're busy clearing out cupboards, sorting and stacking and getting ready for a giant garage sale.

Favourite finds so far?

A desktop ironing board; an entire box of

Easter themed paper bags; about a million different types of nylon lace circa 1978; and my personal favourite – a children's jigsaw puzzle of a seafood platter (what were they thinking?).

In addition to these quirky items, we also have some wonderful children's books, art magazines, games, puzzles, various toys, equipment, furniture, fabric and craft supplies to rehome. There truly is something for everyone.

Our garage sale is called "Tins For Treasure" and it's part of The Garage Sale Trail to be held on Sunday, November 20 from 10am to 2pm.

Rather than collecting cash, we are asking people to "pay" with non-perishable items for the McCracken Street Food Share Pantry. That's right, no money required! We'd much rather have a few tins of baked beans, some long-life milk or jars of instant coffee.

So raid your pantry and come and find a few bargains at our house!

Since November 20 is the start of Social

Inclusion Week, we will also be encouraging people to stay and chat for a while. There'll be a coffee machine (free coffee), and various activities to get involved in. Or you can just hang out in our backyard for a play.

We hope to see you there. ●

Tins For Treasure
Sunday, November 20 10am to 2pm
89 McCracken Street, Kensington



Rebecca Smith
MANAGER KENSINGTON
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE
INFO@KENHOUSE.ORG.AU

HISTORY

Education in North and West Melbourne

“

This year celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Victorian Education Act 1872 that established free, compulsory and secular education for children aged between six and 14.

”

Many children had been precluded from school because of cost or disinterest, so places had to be found for a huge cohort of new students.

Previously several small schools had been established in North Melbourne through individual initiative or religious enterprises. These were controlled through the Denominational Board (religious schools) or the National Board of Education. The best known of these, in order of their establishment are ...

St Mary's Anglican School, Howard St, opened in November 1853. It was housed in two rented buildings and in 1855 had an average attendance of 31 pupils. The school closed in 1875.

North Melbourne (Queensberry St – later known as Hotham or Hotham Hill) opened in 1856. This was run by the Presbyterian Church. Built on a stone foundation, the walls were corrugated iron and lined with wood.

Mattingley's School opened in 1857/58. Elizabeth Mattingley, recently arrived from England, opened an infant school in two rooms



in her home in Errol St, in the approximate location of Errol's Bakery, in 1857. The following year her son Albert, a trained teacher, opened a school on the corner of Queensberry and Errol streets for more advanced students. These are perhaps the best known early educational establishments in the area and Mattingley Lane (off Queensberry St) commemorates their achievements.

This school was recognised by the National Board of Education in 1858 as Hotham (Errol St) and Albert was confirmed as head teacher and Elizabeth as infant mistress.

Following the passing of the *Education Act 1872* these were replaced by three new state primary schools. Only the Queensberry St school remained on the same site.

Errol Street Primary School opened on May 1, 1874, with Albert Mattingley as the head

teacher. The Hotham School, of which he had been head teacher since 1858, was closed and pupils transferred to the new school. Mattingley retired in 1910 after 52 years as a head teacher.

King Street School in West Melbourne was built in 1875 and opened the following year with an enrolment of 2313 students and an average attendance of 955. Children who had been attending St Mary's transferred to King Street.

Whereas the cost of building King Street was £6,789, the cost of Errol Street was £10,005.

The reason for the huge cost of building Errol Street School was the necessity of building it over the drain that ran, and continues to run, under the school from what is now the Royal Park Native Gardens.

An article in the *North Melbourne Advertiser* of August 11, 1882 comments on the fact that thousands of pounds were “buried” in making

the foundations of the present building of the school on an old gully:

“Although the bungling of the Department is proverbial, still he must have been a particularly bright genius who conceived the insane idea of placing so costly a construction in a ‘gorge.’”

The running of the Queensberry Street School was taken over by the Department of Education which was keen to buy the land. As the church was reluctant to sell, it was leased until 1877 when it was purchased for £2700. A new building, that now houses the Bastow Institute, was built at a cost of £5400 and opened at the end of 1882. It was planned to accommodate 640 students. The old iron building was used as a drill room and shelter shed until 1897. From 1894 until 1907 the school was an adjunct to Errol Street school and used for the training of teachers to be transferred to rural schools.

As the population and demographic of North and West Melbourne has ebbed and flowed over the years, a number of schools have expanded, closed or amalgamated. More denominational schools have opened.

Today the only state primary school in the vicinity is Errol Street, that has changed its name to North Melbourne Primary School. As many light industries have left the area, replaced by residents with families, the school is being expanded to encompass two campuses. ●



For more information:
hothamhistory.org.au

KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

Connected communities – from local to global

What does a connected community look like, feel like, function like? We don't need to look far afield for a model!

Our Neighbourhood House in Kensington (KNH) has recently been recognised in the community section of The Melbourne Awards – such a well-deserved award for the work that KNH does helping diverse people to connect and have a sense of belonging in the community.

Communities that have experienced floods and fires have found out some “home truths” in relation to neighbourhood connection and community consciousness. You'd have to say that they have found out the hard way. Anecdotally, however, it would seem that the bitter experiences in the fires and floods have been mixed with stories of heroic support and solidarity.

To a great extent that is what “connected communities” are about – coming together and supporting one another in a challenge. In Kensington and North Melbourne our community spirit has not been so severely tested. So far, we have escaped the kind of community catastrophes experienced in Lismore or Mallacoota.

At the Kensington Association over the years we have learnt a little about community solidarity. We know, for example, when there is a cause around which to coalesce, the community responds, and our active membership jumps in the face of significant threats to community wellbeing. There is a feeling that something worthwhile is achievable.

But ... hang on! I seem to be looking at reactive, defensive, or deficit solidarity! What about proactive or positive solidarity? Are there

such issues that would be strong or important enough to evoke a kind of “crusade” in our communities? I'm talking about *collective* action. We know there is strength in numbers – the brave Iranian women know all about that!

So, I'm asking myself, in contemporary Kensington (and North Melbourne or Flemington), what cause, issue, or initiative would garner crusade-like support? Or perhaps a sense of solidarity is only possible when confronted with an emergency? Expressed in another way, can we experience connectedness only with “our backs to the wall”?

Try out these in your own thinking; in a sense both would be “deficit” and “proactive”, but not “emergency” scenarios. If we decided that community-wide access to affordable childcare was something we really valued, would you join a crusade for that? If we decided that our local precinct should have a community battery, would you campaign for that?

I know there are general community issues that a clear majority of the community would support – I'm thinking of things like community open space or real access to affordable housing. However, people make judgements; before they join a campaign, they ask themselves whether the cause is realistic or achievable. Very often time is the operative factor. An objective that has wide community support might only be achievable incrementally and require a long-term strategy to realise. When we face elections, and have to decide who we will vote for, in a way, on an individual basis, we “join a campaign” (i.e., we vote for a particular party) in order to realise something that we value.

Moving from local to global, I hope are we on the cusp of experiencing something unique, namely, a scenario or cause (which transitions from a deficit, to an emergency, to something proactive and positive) around which there is international community solidarity and support.

“

To a great extent that is what “connected communities” are about – coming together and supporting one another in a challenge. In Kensington and North Melbourne our community spirit has not been so severely tested.

”

In his opening address to COP27 the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres didn't mince words as he made his call. “We are in the fight of our lives and losing. Greenhouse gas emissions keep growing, global temperatures keep rising, and our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator”.

The “crusade” or “campaign” is clear – it is a fight to save something we value, our lives and our planet. The questions are: how connected is our international community and how many or us believe the objective is realistic or achievable? ●



Simon Harvey

PRESIDENT

INFO@
KENSINGTONASSOCIATION.
ORG.AU

SATELLITE FOUNDATION

Apply to join Satellite Foundation's Youth Advisory Council

Satellite is looking for new members to join its Youth Advisory Council (YAC).

What is the Youth Advisory Council (YAC)?

The YAC is a group of young people who can influence, shape and guide Satellite's future. It's designed to value lived experience as expertise, and we want to harness members' contributions in a way that allows them to have as great an influence as possible on the future of Satellite.

Am I eligible to be a YAC member?

You are eligible to join the Youth Advisory Council if you are aged between 18 and 25 years old and have a lived/living experience of a family member with mental health challenges.

In our space, “mental health challenges” is defined as both diagnosed and undiagnosed mental illness, trauma or stress impacting the family, and other pressure factors such as addiction.

What does YAC membership look like?

The YAC holds monthly two-hour meetings that cover a range of topics. We also have five working groups that have specific areas of focus, such as advocacy, creativity or partnerships.

Membership in any of these working groups is optional. Membership is for six months with the option to renew or leave.

YAC members will be paid \$30 per hour via honorarium for their time and expertise.

To apply, visit satellitelfoundation.org.au or email hello@satellitelfoundation.org.au ●

The North Melbourne bottle shop quickly becoming a destination for craft beers and a good chat

Sessions at Arden may have only been opened in North Melbourne since May, but it has already quickly established itself as a unique space set on making its mark.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

Co-owned and -managed by Paul Liang, Truman Ng, Waylon Chen, and Alvar Leung, the newly established independent bottle shop started from a drive to want a “more experience-driven” shop that helped to create conversations with customers.

From this idea came the development of a little bar area and a space for tastings to take place, all within the bottle shop.

“Our business model and vision is to try and help our customers to explore the differences we offer, and to expand their boundary through always providing a free tasting of different categories of wines and spirits,” Paul said.

“Letting our customers know a bit more about what they are drinking and helping them to find something they didn’t know they liked before, gives us a chance to know the neighbourhood better.”

To truly demonstrate how much they want to educate and explore various selections with their customers, Sessions at Arden currently has “over 90 bottles of different spirits open” at the moment.

The tastings are offered every Saturday in the afternoon, from 3pm to 6pm, and winemakers, sales representatives, and people with a wide range of knowledge on particular drinks, are all



▲ (Left to right): Paul Liang, Truman Ng, and Waylon Chen.

Photo: Ajay Viswanath

in attendance for the occasion. A free cocktail class is also held on Sundays from 1pm to 3pm.

While the weekend is when the various tastings are formally offered, Paul told *North West City News* that they were “always happy” to do tastings throughout the week when they were not too restricted for time.

“We want to create a sense of community around this neighbourhood by having the little bar and providing this service [of tastings], and that’s what makes us special,” Paul said.

“We also find that people sitting at the bar are always starting conversations with one another as well.”

As well as creating a cosy and relaxing environment for locals to come to, the team at Sessions at Arden has worked hard to

accumulate a range of unique offerings, including its speciality of Japanese sake, whiskey, and craft beers.

“The whiskey selection we have is rather rare and unique, and something we have been doing really well. We have a selection from all over the world, including some from India, Canada, and Taiwan,” Paul said.

“At the moment we are also doing a lot of craft beers because the weather is getting a bit warm, and we always rotate the limited release craft beers from different breweries as well. People are starting to see us as a destination for craft beers.”

While much attention has been on the beers, wines, and whiskeys from all around the globe, Paul also pointed out the work they had been

“

Our business model and vision is to try and help our customers to explore the differences we offer, and to expand their boundary through always providing a free tasting of different categories of wines and spirits.

”

doing with a local Melbourne sake maker who was “really talented”, and who they hoped to continue working with in the future.

A range of non-alcoholic beverages is also available within the shop, as it remains the team’s priority to be a space that brings the locals together, in a friendly and welcoming environment.

Sessions at Arden is located at Shop 10 and 11 of 129 Canning St in North Melbourne, and is open from Monday to Sunday, 11am to 9pm. ●

For more information:
sessionsarden.com.au

NORTH WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

Festive season hits North and West Melbourne

“

Come and celebrate the festive season in North and West Melbourne with our 10 days of celebrations.

”

WORDS BY *North & West Melbourne Precinct Association*

You can expect visits from Santa, live music on the streets as you shop, Christmas characters spreading the festive cheer, special offers from North and West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA) members, locally designed gift wrapping and more!

Santa will be flying into North and West Melbourne Tuesday, December 20 from 4.30pm to 6.30pm with his trusted face painting elf.

While we are still in the planning stages for this event, there will be something for everyone for 10 days leading up to Christmas, from December 14 to 23.

You may already see some festive changes coming to the corner of Queensberry and Errol streets with the wonderful Christmas beetle mural by West Melbourne-based urban art



aficionados, Blender Studios.

The artwork symbolises an inclusive celebration of the festive season, represented by the Christmas beetles.

Some of our members already joining the festivities include:

- Gallerysmith is kindly hosting an open night at the gallery to launch our Christmas campaign and get everyone excited. On the night of December 14, you are invited to come and check out some amazing art and enjoy a glass of wine with us! There will be some amazing book giveaways for some lucky winners too!
- Here’s Looking At You Kid is offering Happy Hours for the 10 days from 4pm to 6pm with 10 per cent off selected distilled gin bottles – gift wrapped in our designer paper and ready to put under the tree!
- Wonky Trolley is offering Happy Hours between Monday to Friday from 6pm to 8pm for Christmas customers to buy a \$5 craft beer when they purchase any burger – the perfect summer combo!
- Drunken Poet is offering on Wednesday 21st - happy hour 5pm-7pm \$10 Guinness, Kilkenny and Furphy Pints. Stick around for ‘Wine, Whiskey and Women’ musicians performing at 8.

These are just a few early editions to the schedule, so please keep an eye on our calendar for details over the coming weeks. ●

For more information:
northwestmelbourne.com.au

What's On: November 2022

Community Calendar



UNTIL DECEMBER 18 - FREE
Kensington Market

Kensington Market is returning to Kensington Town Hall, highlighting the produce and artwork of this wonderful inner-city makers community. Be sure to come down as you'd be sure to find something you love, from designer fashion, homemade treats, coffee, homewares, jewellery, kids wear and art.

Kensington Town Hall
30-34 Bellair St, Kensington 3031



DECEMBER 10 - FREE
3-6pm Sessions Arden Craft Liquor Store North Melbourne

Join Bakery Hill for a free whisky tasting and meet and greet at Sessions at Arden in North Melbourne.

Arden Craft Liquor Store North Melbourne
Shop 10-11, Arden Gardens Shopping Centre, 168 Macaulay Road

NOVEMBER 24, 7-10PM
Meet the Neighbours

Join us and our good friends from Hardimans Hotel as we explore the barrel aged flavours of our whiskies.

5 whiskies with canapés \$85pp.

Hardimans Hotel Kensington
521 Macaulay Rd, Kensington



UNTIL DECEMBER 1 - FREE
Stompers at North Melbourne Library

Come along for an energetic 30 minutes of stories, songs, rhymes, music and most of all, fun. Ages 18 months to 3 years; no bookings necessary.

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol St, North Melbourne



UNTIL DECEMBER 9 - FREE
French Club

Run fortnightly at North Melbourne Library, the French Club is an opportunity to explore French culture, improve your French language skills and make new friends.

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol St, North Melbourne



THREADING STORIES

Aimed at residents over 55, this program is an opportunity to learn or practice creative skills (such as knitting, sewing, craft, painting), while forming connections and exchanging ideas and stories.

Kensington Neighbourhood House
89 McCracken St, Kensington
Call 9376 6366 to find out more

DECEMBER 3, 10AM-4PM
Kensington Christmas Fair

Bellair Street comes alive to celebrate the festive season with bespoke free Christmas activities, musical performances on the main stage, roving performers, magicians, face painting, giveaways and of course Santa.

Stop by the local shops for all your Christmas gifts and enjoy dining at nearby cafes and restaurants while you visit the fair. This is a great family day out in Kensington.

discoverkensington.com.au

Kensington Community Bike Shop

The Kensington Community Bike Workshop is a community-run not-for-profit bicycle workshop that runs a supervised space with tools, parts and expertise for bike repairs.

Bill Vanina Pavilion, JJ Holland Park
November 19, 10am - 1pm



Business Directory

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*Terms & Conditions Apply.

ANYTIME FITNESS

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NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

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St Brigid's 10-12 | 20 York St, Fitzroy North VIC 3068

Politician

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STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

(03) 9328 4637 office@ellensandell.com
146 Peel Street North Melbourne VIC 3051

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www.haileybury.vic.edu.au

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SELLING HOMES IN ASCOT VALE | ESSENDON | FLEMINGTON | KENSINGTON | MARIBYRNONG | MOONEE PONDS | NORTH MELBOURNE | STRATHMORE | WEST MELBOURNE



**9/42 MIDDLE STREET,
ASCOT VALE**



- Oak floors & ROW at rear
- Contemporary kitchen with S/Steel appliances
- A quaint & private courtyard.

AUCTION Saturday 19th November at 12pm
Simon Gray 0415 034 855
Lou Rendina 0418 525 415



**15 LORRAINE STREET,
ESSENDON**



- Prime Essendon catchment area.
- Land approximate 619sqm.
- Ducted heating & evaporative heating

AUCTION Saturday 15th October at 11am
Lou Rendina 0418 525 415
Frank Mammone 0447 441 950



**34 CALWELL STREET,
KENSINGTON**



- Dual living zones, open style kitchen/dining spaces
- Master with study nook, balcony, modern bathroom
- Heating/cooling, BIRS, dishwasher, second w/c, OSP

AUCTION Saturday 19th November 11am
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271



**129 WESTBOURNE RD,
KENSINGTON**



- Expansive open plan design
- Bosch stainless steel appliances
- Home office & balcony

AUCTION Saturday 22nd October at 11am
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271



**26 GREENHAM PLACE,
KENSINGTON**



- Modern, open plan design, basking in natural light
- Private courtyard and low-maintenance garden
- Brand new kitchen with luxury inclusions

AUCTION Saturday 19th November 1pm
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271



**27 ORMOND STREET,
KENSINGTON**



- Soaring decorative ceilings.
- Hardwood floors.
- Mantled ornate open fireplaces.

AUCTION Saturday 22nd October at 12:30pm
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271
lou Rendina 0418 525 415

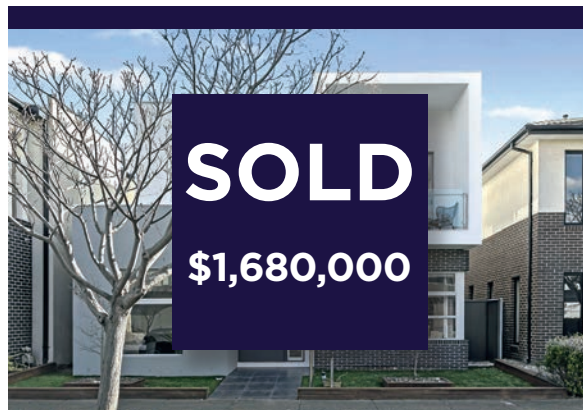


**30 ORMOND STREET,
KENSINGTON**



- Beautifully updated, retaining it's charm
- Includes study nook
- Courtyard & lawn area

AUCTION Saturday 22nd October at 12pm
Lou Rendina 0418 525 415
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271



**21 LAKESIDE CRESCENT,
MARIBYRNONG**



- Vast living areas both downstairs & upstairs
- Kitchen with island bench - a chef's delight
- Home office

AUCTION Saturday 15th October at 1pm
Lou Rendina 0418 525 415
Nathan Collyer 0418 312 271

**WHAT IS MY
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