

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Forever Free

Puzzles & Trivia P14



Errol St alive with music
Photo by Hanna Komissarova

North and West Melbourne has turned up the tunes, good vibes and great retail offers as part of the *Live at Errol St* series on Thursday nights, which comes to a close on December 14. *More on page 10.*

Moonee Ponds Creek revitalisation projects left without a paddle

A City of Melbourne councillor has called for action on various improvement projects that have stalled for years along Moonee Ponds Creek, noting opportunities to unlock vital community spaces was "just not happening".

The council's environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Lepert expressed his frustration over the lack of progress and updates for various projects and initiatives for the creek – most of which were being led by multiple authorities.

The Moonee Ponds Creek runs for 25 kilometres through several established suburbs, such as Kensington, North Melbourne and West Melbourne, and alongside urban renewal areas of Arden, Macaulay, Dynon and the proposed E-Gate site on the edge of the CBD.

According to the City of Melbourne, the creek is central to these urban renewal areas with its future being critical to the future liveability of Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ENVIRONMENT

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"Avoid mistakes": Community calls for new schools in Arden amid rapid growth

The state government's lack of preparedness in the redevelopment of North Melbourne's Arden precinct has been criticised as "short-sighted" as plans for a new school have only just begun to be scoped out.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
EDUCATION

The 44-hectare Arden precinct is forecast to experience significant change over the next 15 to 30 years, but as it currently stands, there is only one primary school and no secondary schools in the area.

Melbourne Greens MP Ellen Sandell is calling for swift and effective measures to ensure the educational needs of the community were met before the situation became a crisis, noting the precinct was projected to be home to 20,000 residents by 2050.

Ms Sandell told a public accounts and estimates committee hearing on November 22, a process which aims to improve the accountability of Victorian government departments, that neighbouring schools were at, or nearing, capacity.

She stressed the government mustn't make the same mistakes as Docklands Primary School, which reached capacity after opening in 2021, forcing the government in recent months to rent a space at a nearby shopping centre to hold additional classrooms as a temporary solution.

"How do we avoid that at Arden? What is the provision for schools looking like? Twenty thousand people [in Arden] is like a big regional city," Ms Sandell said at the hearing, warning the government's approach was "short-sighted" if it did not act quickly.



▲ *Greens MP Ellen Sandell and local parents want to see plans for new schools in Arden. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.*

According to the Arden Structure Plan released in July 2022, a government primary school and a community centre has been mooted for "Arden Central" on Laurens St, adjacent to the future Metro Tunnel Arden station, which is currently under construction and expected to open in 2025.

The plans also propose an "additional government secondary school" to service Arden North-Macaulay (nestled between North Melbourne and Kensington), which would be "required to meet the needs of the new community".

However, a timeline for when either school would be built remained unclear with funding dependent on a "future state budget". Land for where the secondary school would be located is also unknown.

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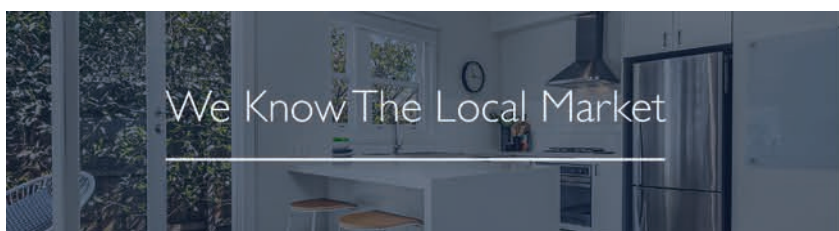
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CONTACT
Suite 208, 198 Harbour Esplanade
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northwestcitynews.com.au
Tel: 8689 7980

EDITOR
Sean Car

PUBLISHER
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd
ABN: 57 623 558 725

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PHOTOGRAPHY
Marcela Lehocka
Hanna Komissarova
Ajay Viswanath
Maria Vasileva

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Moonee Ponds Creek revitalisation projects left without a paddle

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But Cr Leppert said progress had been slow on several projects proposed, with many yet to materialise, including the Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan, which he said had gone five years without an update from the state government.

Six of the 10 projects currently earmarked to improve the creek are being led by Development Victoria, the West Gate Tunnel Project, the Victorian Planning Authority, Melbourne Water, and the Commonwealth Government, which included tree reinstatement, open space and drainage infrastructure, and a trail reinstatement to Docklands.

In successfully moving a motion at the council's December 5 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, Cr Leppert called for a renewed commitment across all levels of government to deliver open space improvements along the creek "that have been identified as essential for the success of urban renewal in Macaulay, Arden and Docklands".

Cr Leppert said there was a "problem of disjointed governance" and a need to "package together" the various projects proposed along the creek corridor, "and pull them together in an update and a new report towards the beginning of next year (2024)", adding the projects were "just not happening so we have to try something new".

Cr Leppert said he welcomed more affordable and social housing to the Arden and Macaulay precincts, which were undergoing significant renewal and would be home to up to 20,000 residents by 2040, but added it was "not the complete picture".



▲ Cr Rohan Leppert at Moonee Ponds Creek in Kensington.

Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

"The entire basis of planning Macaulay is that we have to unlock the open space along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor otherwise there will not be the open space that the community requires to maintain their health and the flood mitigation impacts [and] the flood mitigation measures along the creek will not be delivered," Cr Leppert said at the meeting.

Among the proposals that had been met with silence included a council application requesting to transfer or lease land owned by VicTrack near Macaulay Rd so it could be used as a community open space, but the council had yet to receive a response for four years, Cr Leppert said.

The council's proposed improvement projects include an active transport bridge plan, a Chelmsford St local park, Macaulay

development contributions plan controls (awaiting state government approval), and the VicTrack open space request.

In a statement, the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek welcomed the motion, noting it supported the request to "integrate the multiplicity of issues applicable to plans and projects along the creek", which would "allow council and community to better understand, advocate for and follow the progress of the projects".

"The lower Moonee Ponds Creek, which lies within the Melbourne municipality, is complex with multiple landownerships, management, and other responsibilities; multiple government jurisdictions and policies; overarching strategic plans; corporate interests; and overlying transport issues."

VicTrack was contacted for comment. ●

Council to get to the bottom of sinkhole in Kensington

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ENVIRONMENT

Traffic in Kensington came to a standstill after a sinkhole opened up on Macaulay Rd on December 6 following days of heavy rainfall.

The sinkhole, which occurred between Rankins Rd and Stubbs St about 5pm, was about one metre in diameter and about three-feet-deep, forcing the road to be closed in both directions, causing peak-hour traffic chaos.

While the circumstances of the incident are unknown, the City of Melbourne said it was made aware of the sinkhole with crews having attended the scene immediately to make the road safe by covering the hole with a plate.

"The cause will now be investigated, and permanent repairs carried out over the next week," it said.

It's not the first time a sinkhole has occurred in the city and surrounding area. In June 2020, a gaping hole on Collins St caused by a drainage crack was about two metres deep, while in Lygon St, East Brunswick, a leaking water hydrant caused a sinkhole to appear in November 2021.

In another incident, a 12-metre wide and



five-metre-deep sinkhole at a park in Kew in April 2020 was believed to have been caused by a broken stormwater pipe.

University of Melbourne professor of infrastructure engineering Guillermo Narsilio told *North West City News* that sinkholes occurred for various reasons, but were more likely to appear when water was present.

"That can be made up of flooding or heavy rain or water coming from the rupture of a pipe. I suspect in this particular case [in Kensington] that that may be the case," he said, but noted he did not know the particulars of the Macaulay Rd incident.

"Initially you don't see much but erosion may be occurring under our feet causing a cavern and eventually that cavern collapses and what you see is a sinkhole."

Prof. Narsilio said in naturally occurring sinkholes, water eroded an underlying rock and soil layer, forming caverns underground, which, when big enough, collapsed under the land surface. He added sinkholes were common, but they didn't appear every day, noting "we notice those which produce more disruption".

"Most of them go unnoticed because it doesn't generate the level of pain for citizens that appear on main roads."

Melbourne Water confirmed it was not involved with the incident on Macaulay Rd.

A resident said it was the first sinkhole they had heard of occurring in Kensington, noting crews had been conducting works in the vicinity of the area in the previous days, but there was no suggestion this had contributed to the cause. ●

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TRADER PROFILE

North and West Melbourne Precinct Association

The pawfect place for your pets



Life's true joy is often intertwined with the presence of our beloved pets, and for Bark Road, this heartfelt connection serves as the driving force behind their brand.



WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Hanna Komissarova*
BUSINESS



said. "They're the true spirit of our brand, and we believe in listening to them and learning from our customers, friends, and the wider community. We aim to build relationships that last."

"We are excited to offer a wide range of products and services to cater to the diverse needs of your furry family members."

Bark Road offers a diverse array of premium pet products, including high-quality pet food,



Bark Road is a community-centred pet store, located as part of West Melbourne's West End at Adderley St.

With a commitment to providing quality products and unparalleled customer service and being a sustainable pet store, owner and founder Brent Martin has Bark Road poised to become the go-to destination for pet owners and enthusiasts.

"Life's no fun without our pets," Mr Martin

treats like crocodile tails and kangaroo boomerangs, toys, grooming supplies, and refill and re-use products. Their carefully curated inventory ensures that you can find everything you need for your pets under one roof.

Mr Martin's clear passion and enthusiasm for animals shines through, not just in his product line but his knowledge and advice for product recommendations, pet healthcare, and general pet care tips.



At Bark Road, you'll find an unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability through implementing a refill and reuse model to reduce plastic waste in landfills, recyclable packaging is recyclable, and sourcing "from sustainable supply chains whenever possible."

"Our journey as a small business may not be easy, but we are committed to making a positive impact. We're constantly looking for ways to minimise our footprint and improve as we go," Mr Martin said.



"We are proud to be a part of this vibrant community and are committed to engaging with our neighbours through pet-related events, workshops, and educational programs."

"Join us on our mission to become a colourful, modern, and sustainable pet brand. Bark Road is not just a store; it's a movement that celebrates the bonds we share with our pets and the planet we call home."

Bark Road also offers an in-house grooming salon, where their trained professionals will provide a range of services, from baths and nail trims to stylish haircuts. All products can be found online with delivery available throughout Melbourne's inner city.

Bark Road is located at 118 Adderley St, West Melbourne. ●

For more information:
barkroad.au

the **NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE** directory

In partnership with the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association, we would like to introduce you to The North & West Melbourne Directory.

The Directory is a guide, to and celebration of business throughout North and West Melbourne.

Whether you are a resident, work in the area or visiting, you will find everything you need to know in this guide.

To find out how you can feature your business in this publication or if you would like a copy dropped to your home, please contact jack@hyperlocalnews.com.au



WHY WE LOVE KENSINGTON

With an abundance of places to visit and community events on offer, there's always so much to see and do in Kensington.

- Head to Kensington Town Hall on 17 December from 10am-3pm for the last Kensington Market of the year. Held on the third Sunday each month, you can browse designer fashion, homemade treats and coffee, homewares, ceramics, kids' wear and art creations.
- The United Through Football and Cultural Festival is a week-long event aimed at bringing our diverse communities together through sport, from 22-31 December at JJ Holland Park.
- Speaking of JJ Holland Park, have you been lately? This large multi-use park offers picnic and barbecue areas, a colourful children's playground, a BMX track and skate park, the Bill Vanina sports facilities and Venny adventure playground.
- A hot summer is predicted – make sure you check out City of Melbourne's website to beat the heat – search 'cool routes' to plan your journey. Local spaces like Kensington Neighbourhood House, Kensington Town Hall, North Melbourne Library and North Melbourne pool are also welcoming spaces offering refuge on hot days.
- Is rising cost of living hitting hard? The Kensington community fresh food market is a great place to enjoy locally grown produce for free or by donation. Held on the first Saturday each month from 10-12pm at Skinny Park, Bellair Street Reserve.

Want to connect with your neighbourhood? Contact your Kensington neighbourhood partner, Melanie Del Monaco, through the Neighbourhood Portal participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/kensington



Nancy D Lane surrounded by her 'junk' at River Studios.

Artist takes recycling to next level at River Studios

In what looks at first like an old warehouse on the banks of the Maribyrnong in West Melbourne, River Studios is in fact a thriving community of artists.

Inside, is an award-winning architectural warehouse conversion with three levels of studio spaces accommodating a range of creative practises including visual arts, sculpture, photography, making and design.

A self-confessed magpie, North Melbourne local Nancy D Lane has had a studio in the space for five years.

"Being at River Studios and interacting with other artists adds an extra dimension to my art. It is a great space and I've connected with a fantastic artists' community," Nancy said.

"Other creatives will bring off-cuts from their work for me to use in my art, I am their 'go to' for nails and screws, and we lend each other tools. There's a great age range, great diversity. Some people have other day jobs while some are full-time artists, and some, like me, have changed profession."

Nancy's art is inspired by her strong interest in sustainability through repurposing and upcycling. It has

been described as quirky, imaginative, environmentally aware, industrial and geometric – and occasionally, even beautiful.

With objects found on the street and in skip bins on the side of the road, Nancy has an amazing ability to see possibility in what others may see as rubbish. Nancy came to 'junk' art in recent years, after having done courses in watercolours, ceramics and weaving previously.

"On the way to the gym one day I saw a long, thin piece of metal on the ground. I didn't know what it was, but I kept seeing them and started picking them up. A few months later someone asked me why I was picking up street cleaner bristles," Nancy said.

"I said, 'Oh, so that's what they are.' I found it surprising that the street cleaners picked up junk, but then spread junk themselves. By that time, I had also started picking up other metal, such as nails, screws and bolts."

"I wasn't sure what to do with all of it, so I went to Bowens building supplies store in North Melbourne and said I wanted something that glues anything to anything."

People Nancy knows at her local gym, in her book club, and even at North Melbourne Library now know what she does and like to bring her objects they've found on the side of the road or from their home. This, and the bags of objects she collected during lockdown walks, has given her studio space a very full feeling.

"All the boards, tiles, drawers, everything I use to make and mount my artworks, are found on the street. I do dive into skips if they're located on public property. Builders drop bolts and screws like nobody's business, so I've collected boxes of those to use," Nancy said.

"Everyone seemed to be cleaning out their houses during Covid, so there were lots of old bureaus and desks being thrown out. If they were in reasonable condition and I thought someone would take them, I'd leave them for a few days, but after that, I'd take the drawers out. I've probably collected 50 or 60 drawers."

It was these drawers that formed her largest solo exhibition held at City Library Gallery on Flinders Lane from 2021-22 with support from a City of Melbourne arts grant. It was called In the Drawer: The Silver Lining, and featured drawers collected in lockdowns to create framed art.

"To me, the drawers symbolised the isolation of Covid, while the images I created within them celebrated some of the positive experiences that came with Covid, such as people spending more time playing with their children, meditating or working in their garden," Nancy said.

"Personally, I try to live as non-commercially as possible – I'm not into retail therapy."

"I've got a solo exhibition on in Canberra at the moment called Zero Waste, which I've also created in drawers. The inspiration for this exhibition was a comment in the Clean Up Australia newsletter that said we don't need a small number of people doing zero waste perfectly, we need everyone doing it imperfectly. That resonates with me. Zero waste can mean different things to different people."

Nancy is grateful for spaces and grants like those offered by Creative Spaces and the City of Melbourne that support artists.

"I'm glad I didn't try to make a living as an artist, because to make ends meet is very difficult in the arts generally. However, I think it is important for everyone to express their creativity in some way," she said.

Studios are offered to artists on a 12-month licence, with the option to extend. Interested artists can apply for a place at the City of Melbourne-run facility at creativespaces.net.au/venue/river-studios

You can find out more about Nancy at nancydeesculptures.com.au

Meet your Neighbourhood Partner

Passionate about our area, Neighbourhood Partners are here to respond to community needs in a localised way.

Whether a resident, business owner or visitor to our neighbourhood, get in touch to see how we can support you.



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Arts House announces first instalment of 2024 season



Arts House has unveiled Season 1 of its 2024 program, marking the final collaboration between its co-artistic directors Nithya Nagarajan and Emily Sexton.



WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*
ARTS & CULTURE

The first half of the year will see nine contemporary art offerings from leading artists and curators take over the venue, alongside the introduction of Arts House's new *Equity-Builder* and *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2028*. Season 1 2024 will highlight these strategies, working with artists and creatives with lived experiences from their communities of focus, to prioritise change and justice within the arts. "Our *Equity-Builder* is dedicated to building a culturally safer ecology for artists and arts workers who endure barriers to access," Arts House acting artistic director Olivia Anderson said. "This commitment responds to calls for structural change, and the City of Melbourne's vision for an Inclusive Melbourne."

The season will open with Harrison Ritchie-Jones' *CUDDLE* from February 20 to 25, a contemporary dance work which Mr Ritchie-Jones will perform alongside dance partner, Michaela Tancheff.

Setting up the space to resemble a wrestling match, *CUDDLE* weaves in elements of martial arts, rodeo barnyard, figure skating, and Latin dance, to "make an amalgamation of movements and invent a new form of forms".

"*CUDDLE* is a strange deep dive into a plethora of my lived experiences, explored very abstractly and performatively," Mr Ritchie-Jones said.

"It feels to me like an expression of how complex and nuanced our feelings can be – I often feel like joy, sadness, and confusion can sometimes all bundle in tiny moments, the work aims to propose but not name, offering images, ideas and scenes that perhaps conjure reflection or stir up feelings."

Mr Ritchie-Jones says preparing for such a complex show has been intense, but also "fun-filled with laughter and play".

"We would wear heavy duty ice hockey gear and balaclavas, usually practicing in car parks and public spaces," he told *North West City News*.

"We would also do early morning runs to *Rocky's Eye of the Tiger* and begin to build ourselves up like warriors, mentally and physically, so we could be ready to fight out the dance of our lives."

With Arts House being one of the first spaces that Mr Ritchie-Jones performed in Melbourne in *Pile of Bones*, he is "very grateful and very excited that they [Arts House] are presenting my work".

"It's a space that I watched a lot of my favourite artists like Jo Lloyd, Lucy Guerin, Mellanie



Lane, and Alistaire Macindoe perform over the years, so it holds a special appeal to me," he said.

"It's very cool to now be sharing my own work in the very same walls as the people that who inspire me."

The lineup for Season 1 2024 also includes a range of other performances, exhibitions, talks, meals, and even role-playing games such as Daley Rangi's *Dissent*, which takes "players" on an interactive game-path through the streets of North Melbourne.

There will also be an opportunity for locals to meet and chat with the team at Arts House and other members of the community at their neighbourhood gathering on February 14. ●

ARTS HOUSE

For more information:
artshouse.com.au



"Avoid mistakes": Community calls for new schools in Arden amid rapid growth

Continued from page 1.

North Melbourne Primary School is the only school in the area with the state government having succumbed to community pressure to build a second campus next to the school, which opened in early 2023 to meet demand.

In response to Ms Sandell's question at the hearing, Natalie Reiter, deputy secretary of strategy and precincts at the Department of Transport and Planning, said there was land planned for a school with "significant conversations" having been held with the Victorian School Building Authority.

Ms Reiter said this included "what that school would look like, the land area required and the need to have a model similar to that at Fishermans Bend, where the school children can access the neighbouring park area for play and recreation".

However, Ms Sandell said "this is another example of the Victorian Labor Government prioritising developer profits over the needs of our communities".

"At the very least, the Labor Government should be planning for multiple primary schools and a high school in Arden, so that we don't have an expensive disaster on our hands later on."

West Melbourne parent Mary Masters, whose two children attend Docklands Primary School, said if a new school was to be built in Arden tomorrow, "we would fill it immediately; we're not waiting for more apartments to come online".

"If there was more local capacity for primary schools and especially if we had a new high school come online in the area that would be just so beneficial," she told *North West City News*.

As a member of the North and West Melbourne Association, Ms Masters said it was hoped that pressure would be put on the government "to come up with a plan for the E-gate site", which they "see that as a new greenfield



for education" that should be "developed appropriately".

The E-gate site is 20-hectare parcel of state-owned land in West Melbourne that has been earmarked as a proposed urban renewal redevelopment.

RMIT University emeritus professor of planning and environment Michael Buxton told *North West City News* it was concerning the government was "not learning from their mistakes" such as planning for public services in Docklands.

"The obvious solution to this is to reserve all the public services that you need for the land at lower prices," he said.

"If you don't do this at the rezoning stage you have to pay enormous extra amounts for public infrastructure later because the value of the land goes up, so the government creates its own problems."

Prof. Buxton said another problem the

government faced was "finding solutions such as so-called vertical schools" which was touted "as a modern solution" but was "totally insufficient".

"They [government] can't afford to buy enough land with proper playing space and so on, so they end up having to build highly urbanised schools in high rises," he said, adding it would create a "whole lot of undesirable effects down the track from the bad decisions being made initially."

City of Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor and planning chair Nicholas Reece said, "We look forward to working with the Victorian government as we build the high-quality amenity that the new residents of Arden will rightly expect and should receive."

"Melbourne is very proud of its standing as one of the world's most liveable cities, and that includes world-class public services like health and education". ●



Roos kicking goals with new facilities

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SPORT

New and improved training facilities at North Melbourne Football Club are not only set to benefit players and staff, but also the local community.

The Arden St "world-class" training facility includes new changerooms, umpires' rooms, an away-team medical room, and a multi-purpose meeting space.

The newly completed facilities now provide the capacity to boost female player development and help support the next generation of North Melbourne stars, as the upgrade bridges the gap between men's and women's programs.

North Melbourne Football Club CEO Jennifer Watt was thrilled with the upgrade, saying it would "embed North Melbourne as the beating heart of the new Arden Precinct".

"The Arden St redevelopment means that we can not only continue improving our footy on the field across our four teams – AFLW, AFL, VFLW and VFL – but it also allows us to deliver world-class education programs for the community via The Huddle," she said.

Local schools, sports clubs, cultural groups, universities, and residents can also use the facilities for a range of events as the main oval being open to the public all year round. ●

Campus style village under way in Kensington

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COMMUNITY

Construction of a “village precinct” comprising a landscaped courtyard, an outdoor pool, and retail shops is well under way as part of a build-to-rent project in Kensington.

The \$315 million complex at the corner of Macaulay Rd and Stubbs St will consist of six buildings across eight storeys with construction expected to be completed in the middle of 2024.

Melbourne developer Local Residential is behind the project, which will provide 477 apartments, which includes an Impact Housing initiative, contributing 33 social and affordable homes through a partnership with the Women’s Property Initiatives, with homes dedicated to women over 55 experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The build-to-rent model gives renters more security and the promise of better service including allowing pets, no third-party real estate agents, and a lease on the renters’ terms.

Construction, which is being undertaken by Hacer Group, is gathering pace with the project achieving a “topping out” phase, celebrating the successful completion of the structural phase of a project.

To mark the occasion on November 27, Local’s founders and co-CEOs Matt Berg and Dan McLennan joined the City of Melbourne’s Lord Mayor Sally Capp, and key Local stakeholders from Macquarie Bank, NAB, Hacer Group and Women’s Property Initiatives for a celebratory get-together.



“At a time when we’re facing housing challenges, Melbourne sorely needs more quality homes in well-connected communities that also provide residential security for tenants,” Mr Berg said. “We are extremely proud of these partnerships and look forward to seeing the transformative impact of these housing initiatives on our communities.”

“Dan McLennan and I set out with a vision to not just build apartments, but to build homes where families thrive and neighbourhoods flourish. We are committed to creating sustainable, inclusive spaces that stand the test of time.”

There will also be nine specialist disability accommodation homes delivered by Home in Place, and affordable accommodation for key workers.

Once complete, the “campus style village precinct” will feature a shared landscaped internal courtyard providing a communal link between the buildings. It will also comprise 461.5 square metres of retail offerings along Macaulay Rd designed to activate the street frontage.

Cr Capp said the project was exciting, noting not only would it cater to Kensington’s booming population but be a “valuable asset” to the community.



“Build-to-rent offers exciting lifestyle options for residents, with this build delivering private dining rooms, a gym, pool and wellness zone, cinema and more. We can’t wait to see residents flock to Local: Kensington,” she said.

The project will incorporate an eco-friendly design, energy-efficient technologies, and green building materials.

After only two years of operation, Local’s asset portfolio has climbed to more than \$1.1 billion and more than 1300 apartments under construction across Melbourne. ●



▲ Emma Cook and her daughter Elloise Scherz with their FOGO bin.

FOGO waste service keeps a lid on landfill

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Hanna Komissarova*
SUSTAINABILITY

West Melbourne resident Emma Cook says doing her bit to help the environment by recycling food and garden organic waste from home has been hugely rewarding.

She is among many residents across 23,000 households embracing the City of Melbourne’s FOGO (food organics garden organics) waste service since it was rolled out in June 2021.

So far, it has seen 3900 tonnes of food and garden organics diverted from landfill.

“Since my partner and I started using our FOGO bin, we’ve made an effort to involve our five-year-old daughter too,” Emma said.

“We’ve been teaching her to put her food scraps into our FOGO bin after she’s finished eating each meal. It’s been a really rewarding process as she has been learning about recycling at kinder, and we can see how easily she has introduced these behaviours at home too.”

The program works by households, including low-rise apartments, using a kitchen caddy to collect food scraps, which, when full, is emptied into the FOGO bin marked with a green lid.

Sustainability Victoria interim CEO Matt Genever said when correctly used, food scraps and garden clippings were turned into mulch and compost that could help grow food again.

Mr Genever said a study conducted by Fiftyfives on behalf of Sustainability Victoria showed more than half of Victorians didn’t know that sending organic waste to landfill resulted in greenhouse gas emissions and contributed to climate change.

“Most Victorians (66 per cent) also don’t know that if people put the wrong things into their FOGO bins, councils pay more to send it to landfill.”

Mr Genever added recycling 3900 tonnes was the equivalent of filling the main pool at the Melbourne City Baths more than 71 times.

“The mulch and compost made from your food scraps and garden clippings are used on farms, and on local parks and gardens. They are processed right here in Victoria and are used across the state to improve soil quality.”

Emma, who owns sustainable business the Australian Natural Soap Company, said it gave her great joy knowing their food and garden organics were going to good use.

“It gives me such a buzz. Most weeks, our FOGO bin is filled up more than our general waste bin, so if everyone in Victoria was doing the same, I can only imagine how much less food and garden organics would go to landfill. It would have a massive impact on the war on waste.”

A food organics high-rise pilot is also under way for selected buildings across the municipality. ●

Council review finds lack of social and affordable housing a “major planning issue”

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

A once-per-term City of Melbourne review has pinpointed key areas of concern, and questioned the time now taken for planning scheme amendments to be approved.

Limited investment in social and affordable housing combined with a growing population and rising house prices was a “major planning issue” across the City of Melbourne, a council review has found.

The review of Melbourne’s Planning Scheme, conducted once every four years by the council and sent to the planning minister, also found that an “appropriate mix” of land had not been reached in Macaulay, instead resulting in a “predominance of residential developments”.

The council said its planning scheme – the policies which control the use and development of land – was currently limited in how it could increase the number of affordable homes locally.

Delivery relied on the council offering additional development rights to landowners in exchange for the provision of affordable housing.

“Limited investment in social and affordable housing combined with a growing population and rising housing and rent prices means there are not enough affordable homes in the municipality,” the review stated.

“The success of securing affordable housing is dependent on council being able to negotiate with developers at the planning permit stage.”

“Along with the voluntary nature of the agreement, council planners are also challenged by the absence of a concise definition of affordable housing in the planning scheme which is clear and unambiguous in interpreting what is meant by the terms social housing and the range of income levels.”

As a result, the review advocated for a state planning policy such as inclusionary zoning, which requires a minimum percentage of units be affordable for people with low to moderate incomes, to provide certainty in the delivery of more affordable housing.

The review acknowledged that, given the Victorian Government had released its Housing Statement in September, the current planning environment was “dynamic”.

A response to the current housing crisis, the

Housing Statement proposes to controversially relocate 10,000 residents across 44 public housing towers commencing in Carlton, followed by Flemington and North Melbourne, then demolish the towers and rebuild the sites with a mix of private and social housing.

A lack of social and affordable housing was one of three “major” planning issues facing the municipality according to the council.

The impacts of climate change and achieving a balanced mix of land use in major precincts, were the other two.

On the latter, it said council’s vision for housing alongside a “vibrant mix of shops, offices [and] spaces for small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups” in Macaulay had not been realised.

“Achieving an appropriate mix of land-use outcomes is a challenge in Macaulay given that the Mixed-Use Zone which currently applies [there] has not achieved a diversity of uses, instead resulting in a predominance of residential developments,” it stated.

The council’s bid to rectify this by rezoning much of the land within the precinct “to support a genuine mix of uses” (via the *Macaulay Urban Renewal Precinct Amendment C417*) is currently before the planning minister awaiting a decision.

Councillors endorsed an amended motion at the December 5 Future Melbourne Committee meeting that also questioned why planning scheme changes were taking so long to be approved by the planning minister.

“The average time it takes to pursue a planning scheme amendment from beginning to end has grown considerably since the 2018 Melbourne Planning Scheme review,” the motion read.

“The integrity of the Victorian planning system demands that the causes of unreasonable delays in amending the planning scheme be identified and addressed.”

The amended motion stated that, in addition to this, the council and state government had not been rowing in the same direction on what needed to be prioritised.

“Delays in the planning scheme amendments process and misalignments between council and state expectations on amendment priorities remain the foremost barriers to efficient planning scheme administration.” ●



▲ Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece at the RMIT Village in North Melbourne.

Photo: Hanna Komissarova.



▲ The RMIT Village building in North Melbourne, and (below) a render of the new development.

Student accommodation to be redeveloped after five years

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne has endorsed a plan to knock down and redevelop a North Melbourne student accommodation complex despite a 12-storey building having been built five years ago.

Under the plans, the site, known as the RMIT Village at 5-17 Flemington Rd, would be demolished with a 19-storey student housing building, as well as two build-to-rent towers of 19 to 22 storeys, built in its place at a cost of \$264,333,000.

Councillors voted unanimously at their November 21 Future Melbourne Committee meeting to endorse the proposal, although Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece did raise questions as to why the whole complex could not be retrofitted.

The site, located next to the Haymarket Roundabout, was previously home to the Old Melbourne Motor Inn before it became the Old Melbourne Hotel in the 1970s. More recently, it was converted into student housing for 456 students before alterations and a 12-storey building was added to increase student capacity.

While the proposal met the city's planning control requirements, it did however prompt



Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece to issue a sharp warning that an "era of disposable buildings in Melbourne is well and truly over".

"When new buildings are built on the cheap to be knocked down every 20 years or so we'll end up with a throwaway city of junk buildings, as well as the unacceptable environmental cost that comes with that," he said in addressing the council meeting.

"For us as a city, the way forward is to ensure disposable buildings don't go up in the first place and that we push other alternatives to demolition, such as retrofitting and adaptive reuse."

Andrea Zohar of planning consultancy UPco spoke on behalf of the building's owners at the council meeting, saying the application had been amended in August 2023, and they believed "the hard work put in by both the council officers and the applicant team is a testament to the ultimate design success of the project".

"The site is currently looking pretty tired, grossly underutilised with a commercial carpark and dated student housing at a time when many international students are returning to Melbourne," she said, adding the housing offered in the development would contribute to the state government's recently released housing

statement, which aims to build 800,000 homes in Victoria over the next decade.

When asked by Cr Reece whether the applicant had considered options around retrofitting the existing building, Ms Zohar said, "all aspects of the redevelopment scheme to the site were considered in depth by the client and the team".

She said the proposal offered a significant contribution to student facilities in addition to "much larger scale" communal areas and outdoor terraces "that can't be achieved by retrofit".

The planning application, submitted on behalf of the site's owners Centurion Australia Investments, was referred to the council as it underwent assessment by the Department of Transport and Planning. The student housing tower (with a total of 644 student rooms) would face Bedford St and be built as part of the first stage of the development.

A ground level retail premises and a medical centre would be provided along Flemington Rd and Blackwood St as part of stage two, which would see a total of 538 apartments built in the other towers. A small retail shop would be provided within the stage one student housing.

In a community benefit, a two-metre-wide pedestrian pathway would be created, providing a through-link between Bedford Place and Blackwood St, which Cr Reece noted would be a "really positive" aspect of the development. ●

Blue Period exhibition celebrates women at One Star

“
A new exhibition is showcasing the work of great and underrated local and international women artists.
”

WORDS BY *Afraa Kori*
ARTS & CULTURE

The *Blue Period* exhibition, now featuring at West Melbourne's One Star Gallery, explores more than 60 works by 33 women artists curated by Mariella Del Conte and Katy Beale.

This is the fourth themed show curated at this small, influential, independent gallery in West Melbourne and the second show celebrating all women artists.

Ms Beale told *North West City News* that the group exhibition had received a positive response since



opening on December 1.

"The exhibition opening was very well attended and supported by the arts community in Melbourne, as well as art appreciators and that included a certain number of North and West Melbourne people, and happily some enthusiastic passers-by... that is always rewarding!" Ms Beale said.

Ms Del Conte added that the opening night of the exhibition was an "overwhelming experience of artists and guests connecting and revelling



in the collective experience".

"The attendance was such that people filled the gallery and spilled out onto the footpath," she said.

"The unique difference in the *Blue Period* is the curatorial brief and the freedom it affords. The artists were free to delve into the theme and respond. The fact that they were participating in a women's exhibition was indeed a welcome feature."

"It has provided a framework for the artists to express themselves with

not just the colour blue, but it has left open the gate to explore the wider implications of the most seen colour on the planet."

"We spent months mulling over the theme, talking about the meaning of it all, writing down ideas and referencing the colour blue in all its incarnations, compiling a list of artists to approach and selecting works from all the submissions."

Each presenting their own versions of the concept, the exhibiting artists came from various disciplines, including art educators from the community sector and universities, while all but three were Victoria, with two works sent from Sydney, and another from Paris.

Ms Del Conte said the show mixed affordable and high-end works, known and lesser-known women artists of all ages, as well as immediate and more complex ideas.

"The curatorial brief for the *Blue Period* exhibition was sent out to a selection of women artists all of whom embraced the theme with great interest and enthusiasm. The subject matter ranges from abstract to figurative and the mediums employed include painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media and spoken word," Ms Del Conte said.



"The individual responses are moody, whimsical, emotional and so forth. There is no right or wrong response but hopefully just enough intrigue to hold the viewer captive long enough for an exchange."

Ms Beale said visitors could experience a thematic grouping of photography, painting, sculpture, prints, assemblages, and installation by artists in all stages of their careers, some of whom would not normally show at a smaller independent gallery.

"I also hope this relatable, if vast, theme will give more viewers a 'way in' of approaching an exhibition. Colour is something that nearly everyone can respond to, and before you know it you are looking at and wondering about a deeper layer of the art," she said.

Blue Period, One Star Gallery 301-303 Victoria St, West Melbourne, until December 17. ●

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CITY SET TO 'SLEIGH' THIS CHRISTMAS

Enjoy free festivities as part of the City of Melbourne's Christmas Festival



Christmas is the most magical time of the year and the city is the place to discover all the fun and festivities.

And the best part – most of the fun is free.

It's because we want everyone to be able to have an affordable day out in the city and enjoy the Christmas activities on offer.

This year's Christmas Festival is set to be our best yet with a spectacular new laser show on the Yarra River – Birrarung and a brand-new home for Santa's Workshop in Howey Place, transforming the laneway into

a Christmas wonderland perfect for a jolly good photo moment.

The inaugural Christmas River Show will illuminate Southbank each night of the Christmas Festival - dazzling Melburnians with water fountains, lasers, lights and projections to a soundtrack of festive favourites.

An array of Christmas decorations will also adorn the city, including showstopping projections, laneway theming, giant presents, and nutcrackers.

And if that's not enough, wrap up your Christmas list at the city's iconic strips, malls and arcades. Shop little laneways and markets to find the perfect present for everyone in your life.

Catch up with loved ones in the city this Christmas to feast under festive lights or celebrate the sparkle season from rooftops.

Highlights of the festival include:

- Mesmerising Christmas projections – illuminating Melbourne Town Hall and State Library Victoria.

- A pop-up Christmas-themed roller rink – keeping the free festive fun rolling into Carlton's Argyle Square. Entry is free, with optional \$10 skate hire.
- The new-look Christmas Cinema – screening iconic festive films at the stunning Capitol Theatre.
- A festival maze in Docklands – inviting Melburnians to win their way through a full-sized labyrinth of giant presents and interactive games.
- Festive thrills and classic carnival treats - as the Christmas Carnival returns to the banks of the Yarra.
- The Listies Ruin Xmas – the acclaimed comedic duo returns to put the slay into sleighbells with an uproarious take on the holiday pantomime.
- The return of the Christmas Quest and Treasure Hunt – the ultimate Christmas-themed scavenger hunts with plenty of prizes to be won.

All attractions are free, except the Listies Ruin Christmas and the

Christmas Cinema. Proceeds from these events will go to the Good Giving appeal for Make Room – a City of Melbourne project creating new pathways out of homelessness.

The Christmas Festival is supported by major partners including the Victorian Government, Fed Square and World Vision.

For more information, visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au and search for Christmas.



Our Make Room project will provide supported accommodation and pathways to long-term housing for rough sleepers. We thank people like Helen Matthews, pictured with Lord Mayor Sally Capp, who has experienced the hardships of homelessness, for helping us deliver this important service.

PAY IT FORWARD THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Make a difference to Melburnians in need this Christmas by donating to our Good Giving program.

Homelessness is a complex and confronting issue that can affect anyone at any point in their lives.

We believe all Melburnians deserve access to safe and affordable housing.

That's why the City of Melbourne is working to reduce homelessness in the city through our housing project, Make Room.

By donating to our Good Giving campaign this festive season, you will support Make Room and help those who need it most.

The Make Room development will deliver 50 studio apartments, housing and homelessness services and other wraparound support. Residents will stay for up to 12 months, or until they can find long-term secure housing.

The design and service model have been informed through people with lived experience and support the needs of residents from different backgrounds. It will offer care and support services, with specialist health, housing and support staff located on-site.

HOW YOUR DONATION WILL HELP

This is a project that will change people's lives. By giving to Make Room, you are helping to give our most vulnerable community members a safe and secure roof over their head.

Donate at lmcf.org.au/makeroom

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Your City of Melbourne community update

SIX WAYS TO CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE

Melbourne is rolling out the sparkling red carpet for a New Year's Eve celebration like no other.



Get ready to don your sequins and glitter as the city sparkles for the annual New Year's Eve spectacular.

The City of Melbourne will host a massive city-wide midnight celebration with a special 'all that sparkles' theme.

If you're planning to head into the city, the best place to see the fireworks is from one of our four Celebration Zones. But you can see them from anywhere you can see the city skyline, or even watch on TV.

For the first time, Melbourne's iconic buildings and streets will be drenched in sparkles for the occasion - with trees across the city lit up, glittery projections across Town Hall and the State Library, late-night busking performances

and free sparkly New Year's Eve hats available at Celebration Zones.

Here six ways to celebrate New Year's Eve in Melbourne:

1. Be dazzled by a fireworks and laser extravaganza that will light up the city across 27 CBD rooftops. You can watch the fireworks from anywhere you can see the city skyline.
2. Head to our family-friendly Celebration Zones at Docklands, Flagstaff Gardens, Treasury Gardens and Kings Domain for live music, dance workshops, light installations, food trucks and a 9.30pm localised fireworks display.
3. Revellers can also savor the celebrations at renowned city

hospitality venues, with special events taking place at Arbory Bar & Eatery, Afloat, HER, Marvel Stadium, Blossom Rooftop and many more.

4. See superstars Marina Prior and John Foreman host the Aussie Pops Orchestra's New Year's Eve Gala extravaganza at Arts Centre Melbourne.
5. Settle in at Sidney Myer Music Bowl to watch some of the world's best live acts, brought to you by the Heaps Good live music festival.

Stay home and tune in to the official New Year's Eve live broadcast on Channel 9 from 11pm.

With half a million people expected to attend, safety remains our number

one priority. A detailed safety plan will be in place to ensure the wellbeing of everyone celebrating in the city, in partnership with Victoria Police and emergency service providers.

Plan early, book into one of the city's world-class hospitality venues or attend a Celebration Zone, as large crowds are expected to close a number of roads.

New Year's Eve celebrations in the city are supported by the \$200 million Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund - a partnership between the City of Melbourne and the State Government.

For more information, visit nye.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Keep your cool this summer

Melburnians are urged to prepare for a hot and dry El Nino summer and reminded of the dangers posed by heatwaves in our city.

By 2050, Melbourne will experience an average of 16 days a year over 35 degrees.

The City of Melbourne is working to reduce the threat of extreme urban heat for vulnerable people.

Our goal is that Melbourne provides places of respite for residents,

workers and visitors during extreme heat events.

We have already started acting to:

- Cool the city through urban greening
- Invest in projects like Greenline to provide a cool green corridor through the city
- Help keep cool, through our Cool Routes online map and providing practical support during heatwaves.

All our efforts combined aim to cool Melbourne by four degrees, to improve liveability, resilience, and community health.

Keep an eye out for heat health alerts on City of Melbourne's social media channels and from the Department of Health, or be aware of upcoming weather.

For tips on how to stay safe during the heat visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/heatwave



ANNUAL REPORT OUT NOW

Find out how the City of Melbourne supported the city and the community in the 2022-23 Annual Report, available to read online now at melbourne.vic.gov.au/annualreport

KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne News* at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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ENVIRONMENT

A poetic end to 2023



The holiday season is a good time to take a break, connect with the things and people that you love, reflect on the last and the New Year and connect with nature.



The Rider

*She rode in on a horse, flaming red hair and haunting green eyes,
Where did she come from?
Why was she here?
She dropped a seed
And did not stop
People looked and wondered
The rider knew the way
To follow the remnants of the one before
Carrying her forwards moment by moment
Place to place
Tireless in her work
Slowly she lifted the cold blanket from the fields, the meadows, the forests
The sparkle off the dew of the leaves returned
Greens of the leaves unfolded
She called the soft rains to fall
Rivers. Streams to remember their paths
Amongst the insects, the birds, the animals and us
There was a quickening, there were things to be done
Old cloaks of winter shook out
Hearths cleared of winter ash
Growth was everywhere
Flowers were picked
Babies were born
Gardens were tended and fields worked
Dawn to dusk grew longer
It was a time of conversations, of dreams*

*This was the way of knowing and a comfort of the timing of things
Where nature led the way*

*Until today
Where the suns rays are lost in a cloud of remnants of our wantings
The greyness of degraded land,
Filled with the echoes of lost trees
Silence fills the space left by the orchestra of nature*

*Water flowing now steeped in the stench of greed vomiting into the sea
Deep caverns blasted into the earth leaving gaping wounds
Mistakenly thinking the earth did not feel
Creatures unable to find rest, plants confused by the changing of seasonal signposts*

*The truth tellers had given up drowned by the tiredness of the people.
Lost is the rider with her steady pace
Moment to Moment
Place to place
Tireless in her work*

*All over the world in little pockets of gardens, gentle hands still touch the earth tending to her remembering the order of things
Sparks of care and love give hope to the sun to continue to shine and the seed to break through the concrete
As beacons to light the path for the rider to return. ●*



Jacqui van Heerden
CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON
JACQUIVANHEERDEN@GMAIL.COM



▲ L-R: Musicians at Here's Looking at You Kid distillery and Aesop.



▲ Manfred's Shoe Lounge.

Explore North Melbourne's vibrant twilight events program

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Hanna Komissarova*
EVENTS

Live at Errol St has taken over the bustling North Melbourne strip every Thursday night since November 23 with live music, late-night shopping and happy hour deals available from various businesses and ends on December 14.

Run by the Australian Retailers' Association (ARA) in partnership with the City of Melbourne, *Live at Errol St* aims to improve the twilight economy by encouraging locals to explore the benefits of staying in the city after work for holiday shopping or after-work drinks.

"Melbourne's twilight economy is booming, with foot traffic increasing in the city by up to 35 per cent after 6pm as Melburnians clock off and make the most of our world-class food and entertainment," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"Through the *Live at Errol St* trial, traders will be staying open later to embrace this encouraging trend, with an exciting range of live music in unique venues."

The program supports local artists and buskers by providing an opportunity to perform in some of North Melbourne's favourite retail spaces including Aesop North Melbourne, Manfred's Shoe Lounge, Here's Looking at You, Kid Distillery, and The Courthouse Hotel.

"There's something for everyone this summer – with jazz, pop, folk, country, blues and electric music performances every Thursday night," Cr Capp said.

Samantha Sharpe is one of the artists involved in the initiative, which she said had been a "great opportunity" for local musicians to get exposure in the community.

"It's important as a musician to have your voice – or instrument – heard, but I think it's even more valuable to be able to bring joy to the community with it," Ms Sharpe said.

"I love seeing peoples' faces light up when they recognise a song, or when parents bring their kids up to say hello – there's a real sense of community around music and having it in the streets in such an accessible way for so many people is a wonderful thing to be a part of."

As well as shoppers getting to enjoy live

music while they browse, various businesses are also offering deals for patrons as part of the program.

For self-care enthusiasts, Aesop North Melbourne is providing free skincare consultations with samples, which can be followed by a \$15 frozen margarita at The Courthouse Hotel – you can even get your shoes shined for free at Manfred's Shoe Lounge while you sit back and enjoy the music.

The intimate Sofar Sounds will also be providing surprise live performances at Udom House, Auction Rooms, and Madison's World hair salon throughout the program.

The project has been supported by the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund, a \$200 million partnership between the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne to boost Melbourne's events calendar. ●

For more information:
whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Perform for life at Life Performance

West Melbourne is now home to a new state-of-the-art sports medicine and rehabilitation facility with the opening of Life Performance Sports Medicine.

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
BUSINESS

Offering physiotherapy, exercise physiology, podiatry, massage, and with an exercise and sports physician on-site, Life Performance provides performance pathways for all ages, whether you are a current or aspiring athlete or someone just wanting to improve your day-to-day movement and live pain-free.

Based at 51 Stanley St, West Melbourne, Life Performance is the high-performance extension from the team behind long-standing sports medicine clinic, Errol St Physio, headed by senior physiotherapists, Shane O'Sullivan, and Ben Smith.

Mr O'Sullivan told *North West City News* the new facilities were critical for his team's "vision and ability to treat and train, whatever level you are at or vocation you are in, whether it's elite sports or daily living."

"Ever since Errol St Physio opened 2004, the business and team have gradually progressed and grown," Mr O'Sullivan said. "In my time I have seen a revolution in sports medicine ... instead of instilling a passive reliance model in people, we need them to be active and educated, and trained to live in their own skin."

"With our new state-of-the-art facilities in West Melbourne, it allows us the space and technology to run highly prescriptive programs founded on evidence-based, industry leading research and training."



▲ L-R: Shane O'Sullivan, Ruby Elder (physio), practice manager Miko Morell and Braden Pullen (physio).

"We can create a performance pathway for people of all ages or body types. Whether it's athletic, youth or lifestyle performance, or people wanting to improve their bone density or muscle mass as they age. Those two things decline naturally, but you can hold it in its tracks with the right training."

During his decade in the industry working in high-performance sports medicine at teams like Melbourne Victory, Melbourne FC, North Melbourne FC and most recently, Western Bulldogs FC, Mr O'Sullivan has seen a seismic shift in how injuries are treated, and how athletes are trained.

"A lot of people are still in the mindset that if you have pain, you need hands on treatment, and you do for a time, particularly for acute injuries, but the strongest evidence-based practice we can give for typical injuries like lower back

or neck pain is exercise, and making sure we stay mobile and stay strong," he said.

"We have that high-performance blueprint to set athletes on a pathway for success, along with the facilities and expertise to get people of all ages performing and moving to their optimum."

With eyes on 2024, Mr O'Sullivan said he was looking to expanding their massage services and introducing a qualified dietician.

Whether training for professional sport or helping pick up your grandchildren pain free, the team at Life Performance will set you on the pathway to achieve your functional goals. ●

For more information:
lifeperformancehealth.com.au

North West City Local

West Melbourne's unique slip casting ceramics studio

While most people would be familiar with the process of wheel throwing ceramics, Isabelle Moustra from Too Friendly ceramics uses the intricate technique of slip casting to create functional homewares out of her space at River Studios in West Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*

Graduating from an industrial design degree at RMIT in 2019, Isabelle “went straight into ceramics”, adopting the slip casting process in her work after studying the technique at university in a three-month intensive course.

“I really sucked at every other physical prototype technique, but I picked up slip casting really easily,” she said.

“It was the first time I’ve ever touched clay other than when you’re a kid, and it was just my thing – I knew that I wanted to do this either as a hobby or a business, and it’s just rapidly grown from there.”

Too Friendly ceramics was established in 2020 by Isabelle and another graduate of her course, before the pair split ways in mid-2022.

Since running Too Friendly on her own, Isabelle now focuses on “heavily designed and accessible” pieces, while also creating “cute and fun” products such as her signature wavy-form mugs.

“I’m also coming out with a cup next year which is formed to the hand for left and right-handed people living with accessibility barriers like arthritis – it’s a mix between art and design,” she told *North West City News*.

The process of slip casting itself is a “niche craft”. It involves creating layers of plaster moulds before a liquid clay called slip is then poured into the mould, creating the hollow form for the object to be glazed and fired.

Isabelle’s process also involves digital modelling and 3D-printing of the moulds, which she says can range anywhere between one- and four-part moulds in her work, while other



artists create up to 250-part moulds for one piece.

Although slip casting is “not really accessible in terms of the material and the knowledge to do it”, Isabelle has introduced her own workshops which she runs out of Handmaker’s Factory in West Footscray, for people to “learn the three-month process in a day”.

“The process is very therapeutic to me,” she said.

“There is a lot of stress that comes with the ceramics process, but being able to master such a complicated technique is something that I want to keep building on.”

When searching for studios to base her business out of, Isabelle found the perfect space to dive into her “messy” practice at River Studios.

“It’s been so peaceful to work here because I’ve got my own enclosed space, and it separates

work from home for me as well,” she said.

“I also have a community of creatives where I can go out into the communal space and talk about the different projects we’re all working on.”

“A lot of the community has been in the industry way longer than I have, and to be able to have conversations where I share my perspective and hear their perspectives is really interesting and beneficial for both parties.”

Following the Christmas season chaos, Isabelle is looking forward to introducing some new projects to customers in 2024. ●

For more information:
toofriendly.com.au

METRO TUNNEL

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas around Metro Tunnel

You better watch out, you better not cry! The Metro Tunnel Project is coming to town for Christmas with a host of festive activities across Melbourne’s CBD.

Roving performers will entertain passers-by next to City Square every Friday in December before Christmas, between 5.30pm and 6.30pm, including the energetic Trash Puppets and fun-loving Punk Emus.

A new artwork by Gunnai/Waradjurie artist Robert Michael Young, on display along the Metro Tunnel’s site fence at City Square, offers a unique Australian twist on the Christmas classic, *12 Days of Christmas*.

You’ll see galahs giggling, dingos dancing and koalas cuddling in the exciting mural as you stroll down Swanston St.

According to Young, the age-old Christmas



carol offered the perfect structure for a visual artwork that reflects Christmas in Australia.

“I like the simplicity of this song and its meaning,” he said.

“It’s important for me to create artworks that represent life and play and culture.”

If you want to immerse yourself in another Aussie-themed Christmas artwork, this time with a touch of quirky humour, head to Scott

Alley to see *The Little Things*.

The large-scale artwork created by Tonia Composto – also known as Lemon Chicken Por Favor – offers a snapshot of the joys and differences of Christmas in Australia. Prawn on the barbie, anyone?

“It’s the little things in Australia that make Christmas unique,” Composto said.

If you feel inspired to get creative, Composto

is hosting a series of one-hour doodling workshops at Metro Tunnel HQ (125-133 Swanston St) on December 9 and 16 from 10.30am. You’ll learn how to turn a humble doodle into a work of art, which you can take home to gift to your loved ones.

The events are part of the Metro Tunnel’s Creative Program, which aims to bring colour and life to Melbourne’s CBD while construction on this major project is under way. For more information head to bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/metro-tunnel/community/events.

While the streets of Melbourne are filled with all things Christmas, deep underground work on the Metro Tunnel’s five new underground stations is progressing at pace.

Arden Station’s major structural elements are finished, and work is under way on landscaping and installation of passenger signage, vending machines and bicycle racks. Escalators and lifts to the station concourse are being tested.

Test trains are now running at a maximum speed of 80km/h through the tunnel – the same speed they will travel at when the project opens in 2025. ●

Wish your inbox was more local?



Scan the QR to sign up to our Newsletter



NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

GROW Mental Wellbeing Program

If you need support for your mental wellbeing, GROW can help. This is a weekly peer support group. New members are encouraged to come along and see if it’s for them.

Call 1800 558 268 for more info.

Tuesdays

7pm - 9pm

Kensington Neighbourhood House

www.kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com

Al-Anon Family Group

Do you need help to cope with the effects of someone else’s drinking or addiction? You are not alone and there is always help. The Kensington Al-Anon Family Group meets weekly.

Saturdays

9am - 10.30am



ph. 9376 6366

KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

Bearing the brunt

Assemble (or Assemble Communities) is a property development and community management company.

It must have been during 2017 when I first knew of Assemble that I visited a promotional session on behalf of a friend, about an Assemble residential project in Albermarle St. I later visited another of their developments in Roseneath, Clifton Hill.

Many locals will know of the (now completed) Albermale St development because it incorporates Cassette, a very pleasant café on Macaulay Rd.

While I had some reservations about their “lease-to-buy” model I was generally impressed by what I read in their *Assemble Papers*, and by what seemed to be the Assemble approach to development and management.

Sometime in 2019 I heard that Assemble had acquired 402 Macaulay Rd, which was formerly home to the large Webb warehouse property near the corner of Barnett St.

Understandably there had already been a lot of speculation by the residents on the east side of Barnett St as to what might be built on the site, since the Webb warehouse site extended behind their properties, with only a narrow laneway as a buffer.

Later that year, as chairperson of the



Kensington Association, City of Melbourne Cr Rohan Leppert told me that Assemble’s head of urban design Andy Fergus would like to contact me.

Before meeting with Andy I notified residents on Barnett St that I was meeting him, and asked them to let me know their principal concerns. It quickly became clear to me that Assemble, in reaching out to me, were well aware of the sensitivity of the western boundary bordering onto the lane behind the residents of Barnett St.

In my conversation with Andy he did his best to reassure me that Assemble would be taking every step to minimise the impact of the development on Barnett St residents.

The stark reality is that in this type of scenario the die has already been cast. The purchase price paid by Assemble would have factored in a

return on their investment and the possible size (in particular height) of the development.

In the months that followed my meeting with Andy, Assemble had discussions with the community about design issues, like deep planting as a buffer along the laneway, and line of site mitigation from balconies into the backyards of Barnett St residents.

Fast forward to 2023, what Assemble knew would happen and initially tried to mitigate is now playing out. They have effectively vacated the “driver’s seat” to the building contractor Hacer, and the residents of Barnett St are “bearing the brunt” of what happens when a large building is constructed behind their back fence.

In my view Assemble must make a much more comprehensive effort to insist that their builder, Hacer, drastically lift the focus of their

“game” ... particularly with respect to all aspects of the way they show consideration for and communicate with Barnett St residents.

A Barnett St resident described it this way: “we are living through hell and they don’t give a hoot”. The fact is that only the building preparation has started; what will the build itself be like!? So far, this is the picture ...

- There is a lack of proper protective fencing on the boundary.
- Vibrations into residents’ buildings begin from 7am.
- Residents are deeply concerned about the integrity of the foundations of their period cottages.
- The laneway (back access) has effectively been taken away from them.
- Dust from the earthwork falling onto backyards, paths and windows has been ghastly.

This boils down to a severe lack of consideration by Assemble/Hacer to the real-life impact on the residents of Barnett St, who are “bearing the brunt” from the build and their concerns should not be dismissed with the shrug of a shoulder as “collateral damage”. ●



Simon Harvey
SPOKESPERSON

INFO@
KENSINGTONASSOCIATION.
ORG.AU

PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Looking back, looking ahead, looking around

It's hard to believe that Christmas, and for the fortunate, the happy prospect of summer holidays, is just around the corner. It's time to look back, look ahead and look around.

Looking back can be done swiftly. The first half of the year was rather quiet for the Parkville Gardens Residents' Association (PGRA) because of a funding pause, but Frasers Property and social housing provider Housing First filled the gap with a very successful Easter Fair on the Galada Avenue Reserve in April.

PGRA was back in business in October with another of its popular Quiz Nights at the Reggio Calabria Club and a second “Amazing (not really a) Race” event for Children’s Week. Sadly, our Halloween event had to be cancelled at the last minute because of a bereavement, but lots of families and children were able to enjoy Housing First’s Halloween festival the weekend before.

Looking ahead, PGRA is planning to hold a number of community events in the first half of 2024. We had intended to have a neighbourhood multi-cultural celebration this month, but circumstances made that impractical, so it will now happen in the early months of 2024. And, of course, there’ll be the usual Easter egg hunt for the kids. Dates and details to follow.

Also in the New Year, PGRA will be following up on discussions with City of Melbourne traffic engineers about how to make the area safer for pedestrians, especially our frail aged, and less attractive to non-resident drivers taking a short cut through our narrow streets.

We’ll also continue conversations with the City of Melbourne about community facilities as our population increases, while noting the welcome upgrading of the Brens Pavilion in

Royal Park and its availability for community functions.

This prompts me to gratefully acknowledge the City of Melbourne grants that fund the majority of our activities, as well as the Department of Education grant for Children’s Week.

Looking around, Parkville Gardens residents are fortunate to have Royal Park close by. The City of Melbourne has been engaging the community in the revision of the Royal Park Master Plan.

The latest round of on-site consultations has finished but everyone is urged to continue engaging with the process.

Go to participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/royal-park-master-plan-review.

Royal Park is a treasure for us all, so please have your say!

Also nearby is the decommissioned CSL site. It would appear that major stakeholders such as the City of Melbourne and both state and federal governments are in conversation about its future.

The site is complex in terms of ownership and heritage status so there’s every likelihood that negotiations will be protracted. Its size and proximity to Parkville Gardens make its future a prime concern of ours.

Let’s make our voice heard. Send me your ideas on what you think should be done with it. Email me at president@pgra.org.au. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks to *North West City News* for publishing this monthly column. Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all readers and especially to all who call Parkville Gardens home. ●



Tom Knowles

PRESIDENT

[PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU](mailto:president@pgra.org.au)

HISTORY

Corners of Melbourne

Robyn Annear is the author of several amusing and easy to read books about the history of early Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Felicity Jack*
HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT



She has recently appeared in a documentary, currently showing on SBS, *The Lost City of Melbourne* that traces the ups and downs of the city over many years.

She describes her latest book, *Corners of Melbourne* as “a splintery cross section of life in the city up to 1899”. It provides a sample of what Robyn encountered when searching on the website *Trove Newspapers* for the words “at the corner of”.

She describes the corner as “both a starting point and a destination” and the destinations she takes us to are many and varied, but often sordid, sad and sometimes downright disgusting. She also uses the corners as a jumping off point to briefly recount some of the history of the city’s early infrastructure – its water, sanitation, and transport. The book includes some amusing illustrations by Simon Barnard.

It was around the time of the gold rush, only 20 years after the founding of the city, that the government decided to build a pipeline bringing water from the Yan Yean reservoir to the city, a distance of about 50 kms.

This mammoth task, using horse and manpower, was completed in four years, with the pipes having to be imported from England. Annear describes the celebrations that took place when the water was switched on during New Year’s Eve of 1857.

A holiday was declared, with crowds assembled to witness the stopcock being unloosed at the valve-house situated on the corner of Nicholson and Gertrude streets. Another tap was turned on at the corner of Elizabeth and Flinders streets that brought water to two

dozen small water fountains situated on street corners throughout the city.

One of the first water jets rose 20 metres into the air before making landfill and drenching many of the assembled crowd.

Water fountains and public toilets were a cause of much political wrangling between shop proprietors, public house owners and government officials, all with their particular vested interests. And one of the impediments to the building of public toilets was the reluctance to even mention the words during the Victorian years.

The problems arising from the lack of public toilets was particularly acute in the Melbourne theatre district that saw some of the laneways around Bourke St streaming with urine during the intervals. The first public urinal was built on Elizabeth St and opened in August 1859, but as the urine drained straight into the gutter, public outcry led to the toilet being removed after only one year. It wasn’t until the 1890s that public toilets were sewered.

Robyn writes at the end of her introduction: ‘keep in mind that this used to be a country without corners’ before acknowledging, with respect, the First Nations people “past, present and forever”. It was a land that was cared for and cherished, with distant vistas and far horizons. ●



North West City News in 2023: a year in review

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Take a step back in time as we feature some of the image highlights from every edition of North West City News over the course of 2023...

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▲ February: Cyclist death prompts calls for dangerous West Melbourne intersection to be fixed.



▲ June: North Melbourne Primary School's Molesworth St campus unveiled.



▲ March: NABE Studios opens in Kensington.



▲ April: Construction gets under way on the redevelopment of the historic Younghusband site in Kensington.



▲ May: North Melbourne mosque fights for play space.



▲ July: Somali Day festival celebrations in North Melbourne.



▲ September: Snake warning for the Maribyrnong River.



▲ August: New community centre announced for Melrose St.



▲ October: Kensington Stockyard Food Garden celebrates its fifth birthday with the inaugural Mush Fest.



▲ November: Another successful Queensberry Cup in North Melbourne.

What's On: December 2023 - January 2024



THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

KENSINGTON MARKET

Kensington Market, held monthly at the Kensington Town Hall, highlights the talent and craftsmanship of a wonderful group of inner-city makers. Now entering its eighth year, the market is well supported and is a popular monthly meeting spot.

Kensington Town Hall, 30-34 Bellair St



DECEMBER 19-20, 10AM - 1PM

Santa Stop in Kensington

Santa is stopping by Kensington this Christmas, at Hardiman's Hotel. Visit Santa and make sure to let him know what's top of your list this year. Have your photo taken and take home a free 6 x4 photo with Santa!

Hardimans Hotel, 521 Macaulay Rd, Kensington. Contact: 0438 505 189

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 12PM - 4PM
Festive Family Market
Join the Ezistreat crew for a Festive Family Market! They've teamed up with the North West Melbourne Precinct Association and pulled together a range of fantastic stalls for you to find those last minute gifts.
ezistreat.co or 0477 004 600
275 Macaulay Rd, North Melbourne



WEDNESDAY, FEB 14. 10.30AM - 12PM
Neighbourhood Gathering
North and West Melbourne residents and community are invited to join the Arts House team for a cuppa and free morning tea. Come along to meet the team, chat with your neighbours and enjoy a live performance. Call 9322 3720.
artshouse@melbourne.vic.gov.au



EVERY THURSDAY, 10.30AM - 11AM

CHRISTMAS STOMPERS

Visit North Melbourne Library and enjoy some special books songs and rhymes to celebrate Christmas. For 18 months to 3 years.

North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol St



SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH (UNLESS PH), 1:45PM - 3:45PM

ORGAN CLUB

Fun and entertaining musical afternoon, with music to suit all tastes. Afternoon tea to follow. \$8 incl afternoon tea.

Contact: 9307 8207.

Kensington Neighbourhood House

DECEMBER 13 - 19, 10AM - 4PM
Seven Days of Christmas
Kick off the festive season in the North West Melbourne precinct with seven days of fun activities leading into Christmas. Santa will come to check out who has been naughty and nice - if you've been good, you may see him twice!
northwestmelbourne.com.au



DECEMBER 15, 6PM - 9PM
The Australian Girls Choir x Picnic
ather your family + friends and get into the Festive Spirit! Join the North & West Melbourne community for a lovely picnic at Gardiner Reserve while listening to the Australian Girls Choir
Gardiner Reserve, North Melbourne

DECEMBER 20, 4.30PM - 6.30PM
Santa on Errol!
Santa has been waiting all year for a chance to come back and visit the wonderful children in North & West Melbourne! Look out for Santa arriving in a very special FIRE TRUCK that will stay on the street for the little ones to explore and take photos in.
northwestmelbourne.com.au

Business Directory

Health & Fitness

THE GYM MELBOURNE
KICK - START YOUR FITNESS GOALS AND GET THE RESULTS YOU DESERVE!
Royal Children's Hospital
48 Flemington Road, Parkville, Vic 3052
P: 03 9347 7229
E: info@thegymmelbourne.com.au

ELLEN SANDELL
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
(03) 9328 4637 office@ellensandell.com 146 Peel Street North Melbourne VIC 3051

Precinct

NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION
NWA
QR CODE

School

www.haileybury.vic.edu.au
HAILEYBURY
KESBOROUGH BRIGHTON REDWICK CITY BEIJING

Politician

ADAM BANDT
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MELBOURNE
142 Johnston Street, Fitzroy
(03) 9417 0772
adam.bandt.mp@aph.gov.au

Senator Linda White
YOUR VOICE IN THE AUSTRALIAN SENATE
Level 1, 62 Lygon Street, Carlton South VIC 3053 (03) 9639 2798
Senator Linda White @lindawhiteaus senatorwhite@aph.gov.au

Real Estate

Biggin & Scott KENSINGTON
For a clear path to success
Kylie 0417 960 492
Trevor 0456 377 780

www.sccmelb.catholic.edu.au
273 Victoria St, West Melbourne
9321 9200
SIMONDS CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Nine Days of Fun!

Explore the magic of North & West Melbourne during this festive season.

From the 12th to the 20th of December

Enjoy a visit from Santa, laugh along with Elf Twinkle Toes, bring your family and friends for a picnic whilst listening to The Australian Girls Choir, bring your furry friends for a "Yappy Hour", grab your last minute gifts from the EziStreat Festive Family Market and more!

Free, family-friendly events!



Gold Chip 12 Dec | 6pm Sharp
Celebrate the festive season with a one-night-only exclusive exhibition at galleriesmith; Gold Chip.



Belle's Roller Disco 13 Dec | 4.30pm - 6.30pm
See the "Princess On Skates" on Errol St with her roller Christmas spectacular! Win giveaways!



EOY Celebration! 14 Dec | 4pm - 7pm
The North & West Melbourne Community Centre invites you to the End of Year Celebration Party.



Australian Girls Choir Picnic 15 Dec | 6pm - 9pm
Join our community for a lovely picnic at Gardiner Reserve whilst listening to the Australian Girls Choir.



'Who's Been a Good Dog?' 16 Dec | 11pm - 2pm
Bring down your furry friends to Bark Road for "Yappy Hour" dog beer specials and giveaways!



Festive Market at EziStreat 17 Dec | 12pm - 4pm
Come and buy your last minute gifts from a range of super cool stall holders!



Queensberry Tunes 18 Dec | 5pm - 8pm
Enjoy live music by Simon Paparo, while you shop and dine outside The Courthouse Hotel.



Elf Twinkle Toes' Show 19 Dec | 4:30pm - 6:30pm
Watch his magic show from 4.30pm and then follow The Elf spreading mischief and mayhem along Errol St.



Santa on Errol! 20 Dec | 4:30pm - 6:30pm
Santa is arriving in a very special FIRE TRUCK that will stay on the street. Explore and take photos.

