

SMARTER *Communities*

EDITION
02/2020

The benefits of
**GOING
GREEN**

Finding your
HAPPY PLACE

Celebrating magnificent
COMMUNITIES





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Let Community Spirit Shine



“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it”
– Robert Swan

The same can be said about our communities. It takes effort to create and maintain a harmonious community environment for all to enjoy. We all have a part to play, it doesn't always have to be an active role on the strata

committee, but as simple as showing acceptance, empathy, respect and tolerance towards one another. All visible traits at the Linc Apartments which we proudly feature.

Apart from our immediate communities, our planet also needs our collective help. COVID has given the environment some temporary relief, but it's important to maintain a focus on conservation. That's why Smarter Communities signed up to the Forktree Project and set an ambitious target to become carbon neutral by 2025.

Individual communities and families can get involved too. The Harmony Apartments in Haymarket, Sydney for example have reduced their energy consumption by 10% and water use by 25%. Not only is that a big win for the environment, it represents incredible and tangible savings for its owners.

Great things are not done by impulse but by a series of small things brought together. At our own homes we can look at what we can recycle, how we reduce waste, how we save energy or water or even growing our own vegetables/herbs.

Together we can drive positive change. Just like asking R U OK? can change, or even save, someone's life. Be sure to read “Finding your happy place” for some stress-busting activities to help you relax, because compassion for others begins with kindness for ourselves.

Enjoy,

Timothy Lee

Editor | *Smarter Communities*

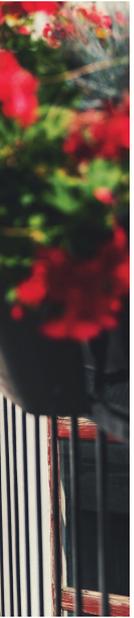
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NATIONAL

Rewilding

Environmental conservation and ecological restoration

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S PICTURESQUE FLEURIEU PENINSULA, JUST 30 MINUTES SOUTH FROM ADELAIDE, IS THE LOCATION WHERE HIGH-PROFILE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST, TIM JARVIS, CHOSE FOR HIS CONSERVATION INITIATIVE, THE FORKTREE PROJECT.



Nicole Roach, Locum
Community Manager

A well-known environmental explorer, Tim is passionate about climate change.

He's been stalked by polar bears in the Arctic, pulled a sled 2,000 kilometres across the world's southern-most continent and is renowned for using his expeditions as a platform to communicate the impact climate change is having on the planet.

"If we planted trees on all the suitable spare land that existed globally, we could store over 200 billion tonnes of carbon and buy about 20 years in the fight against climate change," says Tim.

So that's exactly what he's doing with The Forktree Project. This initiative will see the return

of a degraded former pastoral property, on Fleurieu Peninsula, all 133 acres, back to nature by clearing land and planting tens of thousands of native trees and shrubs.

This will provide habitat for native species as well as a seed nursery to grow native plants and trees.

The result will help combat climate change and biodiversity loss. It will remove thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in a process known as sequestration.

More broadly, The Forktree Project aims to set a positive example of the type of work that can be done for others to follow.

Acting global but thinking locally with a conscience

Tim Jarvis is living proof that one motivated person can effect change. But together we are stronger, and Tim needed all the support he could get from businesses and individuals to help him reach his goal.

So that's what we did. We aligned ourselves with The Forktree Project to assist Tim.

Our involvement began when Tim conducted an audit of the flights and ground travel we undertook, as well as how much electricity we consumed in the past financial year. Based on our emissions, Tim



The Forktree Project aims to set a positive example of the type of work that can be done for others to follow.

calculated we would need to plant 900 trees each year for each for the next five years to cancel out the environmental impacts of our travel and power usage.

Initially the goal was to go carbon neutral in 10 years, but we're ambitious and wanted to achieve this goal in half the time.

"The figure of 900 trees was calculated based on the amount of carbon dioxide Forktree's trees will take out of the atmosphere over the next five years of their lives.

"As the trees have only just been planted, and begin their lift as small saplings, they will only sequester a small amount of carbon dioxide

initially. This will increase rapidly as they grow so that by year five they will have sequestered all of Smarter Communities' emissions for this financial year," Tim says.

Everyone can contribute to reducing carbon dioxide emissions

Keeping within pandemic restriction guidelines, a team from Smarter Communities' SA branch, Adelaide Strata and Community Management (ASCM), braved the brisk windy winter conditions to assist Tim and his crew with land clearing and planting eucalyptus trees.

Tim says becoming carbon neutral is critical as greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, are a major contributor to climate change as they trap heat in the earth's atmosphere rather than allow it to escape into space.

Owing to human complacency, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are currently at the highest levels they've ever been, with the result that we are enduring higher sea levels, extreme weather events, increased variability in the climate and ocean acidification.

While we hope our involvement will assist other businesses to consider going carbon neutral, there are also a number of ways you as individuals can do your bit too. 



Kendra Burgess, Marketing Coordinator. Gary Read, Business Development Manager (left) with Tim Jarvis



NEW SOUTH WALES

Artwork inspired Sutherland office



Artist Bruno Mota in front of his artwork 'The Bright Shire'

IN EARLY 2020 THE TEAM FROM STM SOUTHERN SYDNEY WERE EXCITED AND LOOKING FORWARD TO MOVING INTO THEIR BRAND NEW OFFICE SPACE AT SUTHERLAND.

The office had been fitted out with all the technology and fancy features the team could possibly ever want, complete with a unique artwork from artist, Bruno Mota.

Then COVID-19 hit. The office was like a shiny new toy waiting for batteries at Christmas. All the team could do was to drive past and know that one day they would be a complete team once again inside their beautiful new offices.

According to Bruno, the mural was painted during the challenging time of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

'The role art plays in people's lives has never been more important, how it can bring joy and comfort during difficult times.'

Artist Statement; Bruno Mota

The Bright Shire was created by local artist, Bruno Mota, to represent the Sutherland Shire's culture and lifestyle, illustrating the region's abundance of beautiful landscapes, nature, beaches and friendly community.

My aim was to represent some

iconic places such as Wedding Cake Rock, Waterfalls and Cronulla with the regional architecture, surf culture and happy atmosphere.

This artwork shows an intersection of lines, shapes and exploding colours connecting all these icons in one piece, bringing together the spirit of community.

I wanted to bring happiness and all the beautiful outdoor landscapes from The Shire inside the office, to make a positive impact on your mood and energy whilst inside. 

The new STM Southern Sydney office is located at ground floor, 680 Old Princes Hwy, Sutherland NSW 2232.

Experience from within

WHEN WE SAY, 'WE UNDERSTAND', WE LITERALLY MEAN WE UNDERSTAND. ALL OF IT.

The parking issues, noise complaints, blockages in garbage chutes... because no, square pizza boxes do not fit in a round garbage chute no matter how many times you try to fold them.

They will unfold and get stuck! Please do not put them down the chute. When there's blockages it affects everyone. It takes time and it's a waste of good money to fix.

Many members of our national team have chosen the apartment lifestyle for many different reasons and in many different types of buildings. But the one thing they all have in common when you ask them what it is exactly they love most about their home and they'll tell you how easy it is.

Not only do we manage communities, but we live in them too.





Victoria

VBCS Business Development Manager, Adam, and his gorgeous family - wife Kerry, daughter Lily and fur child Nacho, chose a nurturing, family-oriented townhouse development in Bayside as their home.

"I grew up around here and have lived here ever since. We moved last year into our townhouse and it fits my family perfectly.

"There's just over 55 townhouses within this community, it's a decent size spread over two blocks, large enough to not feel too close to each other but small enough to know who our neighbours are.

Within Adam's community there are many different age groups from couples with young children, older families to a few retirees in their 70s.

"The kids love it. Most afternoons the kids are out riding their bikes through the development, the parents chasing behind with the

family dog. It's not unusual to see the mums riding their scooters. The atmosphere is friendly, relaxed and we all watch out for one another.

Apart from their owners corporation meetings, the community stays in touch with a monthly newsletter. The community spirit is alive and flourishing at Adam's place.

They celebrate birthdays, baking treats, new residents and pay their respects to a neighbour who recently passed away. "That's exactly what it is like here. This is home. You can't beat neighbours like these.

"The location is perfect, it's very close to public transport, the shops and the beach. It's a great location for everything," Adam says.

South Australia

South west of the city, located on the beautiful outskirts of Adelaide is where Caron, ASCM's Assistant



Community Manager, calls home.

Caron moved into her apartment over three years ago and hasn't looked back. She chose an apartment building with a strata group of 32. Although that is quite a large block, Caron chose it because 'the residents are a very quiet group'.

The building comprises of residential apartments, all single storey with mainly three bedrooms.

"I love my little unit, it's so light and bright, I really enjoy living here.

"One man has the role of Presiding Officer, Secretary and Treasurer. He does an excellent job of running the corporation. Meetings are productive and never contentious. We support him and our community management company are just as easy to deal with.

"I can't imagine ever going back to a single standing home and all the maintenance that goes with it. We have an issue with anything, we advise then it's fixed. It's so simple.

I'd never change a thing," says Caron.





"I love my little unit, it's so light and bright, I really enjoy living here."

Queensland

Sitting way up high in one of those stunning new skyscrapers on the Gold Coast is where you'll find Ben, our Queensland Business Development Manager. Ben by far has the most envied view during online meetings, with Surfers Paradise Beach located just 200m away.

In an area where high rise apartment buildings are literally next door to one another, with restaurants, cafes and shops downstairs, this was the lifestyle Ben chose to call home.

"My apartment building is a resort with a world renown hotel attached with 5-star facilities. It has 55 floors and 4 lifts in one tower and 3 in the other and a variety of shops and cafes on ground level. My apartment has two bedrooms with a huge north east facing balcony overlooking the ocean by day and city skyline by night. We have 2 swimming pools, 2 gyms, saunas and indoor spas and a cocktail bar on pool deck open daily.

"I just go downstairs to buy a coffee, can choose whatever cuisine I like within a 100m radius and of course the beach is just down the road.

Managing a building like this does have its challenges, traditionally with a higher percentage of owner investors rather than occupiers. Communication is best delivered when it is in conjunction with the onsite building manager, and all residents have access to essential building information.

"It's harder to get to know your neighbours because they tend to be tenants as opposed to owners, so they move again at the end of their one-year lease. The facilities can get crowded, not now during covid of course, but there's a good system in place so everyone can get to use their preferred equipment in the gym or swim laps without distraction.

It's definitely a lifestyle choice. On the Gold Coast it is common to call a resort-style apartment home.

"There's nothing better than just parking your car in the garage and walking to everything you need," says Ben. 





The benefits of going green

EVIDENCE IS GROWING THAT GREEN BUILDINGS DELIVER MULTIPLE BENEFITS

One of the most important benefits green buildings offer is to our climate and the natural environment.

Green buildings can reduce or eliminate negative impacts on the environment by using less water, energy or natural resources. They can also have a positive impact on the environment if they can generate their own energy or increase biodiversity.

Another benefit is the cost savings on utility bills for owners or tenants through energy and water efficiency.

But the benefits of green buildings go way beyond just environmental

and financial. They have proven to have brought positive social impacts on the residents too. Mostly around good health and wellbeing of the people who reside in these beautiful green homes.

Harmony Apartments – Quay Street, Sydney

The Harmony is a stunning 17-storey high-rise mixed-use residential and commercial building located in the popular Haymarket, Chinatown area of Sydney.

The development was built in 2003 on the site of the old Her Majesty's Theatre. It now houses luxurious apartments with sought

after features such as an indoor heated swimming pool, spa, sauna, gymnasium, games room and 24-hour concierge.

Committed to the environment

In 2017 the Harmony's Owners Corporation made a conscious commitment to reduce the impact of the property on the environment by reducing water and energy consumption.

Harmony residents were encouraged to actively participate in the building's numerous green projects to help make a positive impact on the environment.

Water usage is now 50% lower and energy savings of \$1,200 per quarter, thanks to the 100% participation rate from residents.



An ambitious target was set to reduce energy by 10% and water use by 25% by 2020.

STM Northern Sydney Senior Community Manager, Patrick Rush, has managed Harmony for over 5 years and is extremely proud to say not only were those impressive targets achieved, but the residents absolutely smashed them.

“The goal now for the Owners Corporation is to maintain savings while continuing to identify new opportunities for further savings.

This will include educating residents of the existence and benefits of energy saving schemes. We'll implement updated signage around the common property promoting recycling and energy

saving strategies to continue enticing resident participation,” said Patrick.

Exceeding water saving targets

The Harmony obtained a 100% participation rate with all apartment owners and tenants keen to introduce Sydney Water's WaterFix® project to reduce water consumption. The initial reduction in water usage was over 30%, yet this has reduced even further over the last 24 months.

Current usage is now around 50% of water level consumption prior to the introduction of the Waterfix® project.

That's an incredible saving in

both water and cost. The biggest ongoing challenge has been sustaining the reduction of water usage each quarter.

The Building Manager monitors usage daily and immediately organises any rectification works if required, which has proved crucial in maintaining water savings.

Reducing energy consumption

The Harmony's Owners Corporation installed variable speed drives (VSDs) and a carbon monoxide monitoring system throughout the car park to reduce energy consumption.

The VSDs control the speed of the exhaust fans and the monitoring system accurately measures the levels of carbon monoxide and other harmful gases present. The fans are only activated when required. These installations have had a healthy impact on energy bills by saving \$1,200 per quarter.

Also contributing to energy efficiency is the new and upgraded spa and pool heaters and the building now has full LED lighting throughout common areas.

Despite the considerable cost savings with the installation of smarter, more environmentally friendly equipment and devices, the dedication this Owners Corporation has towards reducing their footprint and maintaining a sustainable building is admirable.

Residents take these initiatives seriously and the community engagement has escalated thanks to the drive and encouragement from the Strata Committee, Building Manager and Strata Title Management. 🌈



**CELEBRATING 15 YEARS
OF PARTNERSHIP WITH
LINC'S COMMUNITY**

Building magnificent communities

Sitting on your balcony, looking out over the swimming pool, admiring the frangipani-lined manicured gardens, sipping a latte from the café you bought downstairs... one could be mistaken for thinking this is a luxurious resort.

For more than 300 residents – and their pets – this resort style living is actually home, it's just disguised as a designer residential complex built in 2005.

Linc was built with forward thinking in its planning. The residential towers feature one or two bedroom apartments, some with a loft-style option, and together with the commercial property interlinked in a U-shape, the close proximity between the buildings has helped to create a strong bond between the different committees.

BMC

Linc was designed as a BMC - a building management committee - which comprises three residential strata plans plus commercial premises within the BMC community.

Between the three buildings there are

shared facilities including the pool set in an impressive garden courtyard, the gardens themselves, a basement car park and fire services amongst others.

Each of the three parcels of land have their own committees. The BMC is made of representatives from all three buildings to ensure the covenants specified within the BMC's governing document, the Strata Management Statement (SMS), are delivered in a compliant and fair manner.

In short, the BMC representatives from all three buildings collaborate in partnership under the terms of the SMS to manage the shared facilities.

STM Regional Manager, Lynne Kopellos, says traditionally BMCs can be complex and fragmented in opinion.

"This is not the case with Linc. Since our management commenced right from the beginning, Linc's BMC and the respective Strata Committees have been active and engaged.

"For over 15 years now Linc has valued our input and guidance. They're well informed and together they've made judicious decisions that benefit each

owners corporation and the BMC community in its entirety."

With more than 10 years' experience under his strata belt, Senior Community Manager Joel Holgersson says managing Linc is an absolute joy.

"I was very honoured when Linc was added to my portfolio. Linc is a longstanding client of ours, there's so much history between us going back 15 years and I'm really keen to continue working with these committees for another 15 years.

"There's nothing more rewarding than admiring a fully functional committee, let alone three of them. Linc are great to work with, it's truly an honour," says Joel.

Together we're better

In a property of Linc's size, onsite building management with 24/7 support plays an integral role in keeping the buildings and grounds well maintained, safe and tidy. But it's more than that.

It's about building relationships with the residents, being a professional ally with strata community management



Benjamin from Mexico Latte

and working together as a team to help Linc maintain its reputation as a much sought-after place of residence.

That's where Nicole from BME Group comes into the extended family. Known affectionately around Linc as 'darl' or 'love', Nicole knows the property inside and out and is a friendly, familiar face for the residents.

"It's a great group of residents here at Linc and quite a mixture. There are young families, singles, married

couples and soon there'll be new families – babies due to arrive very soon, it's exciting," says Nicole.

Having been placed in other communities previously, Nicole admires the mindfulness of the residents at Linc, and can appreciate the etiquette they display towards one another.

"Linc has its own Facebook group for residents and they tend to communicate internally really well

using that channel. They are very considerate and tolerant of each other.

"If someone is having a little gathering, they communicate to let neighbours know so there's no issues with noise. Communication goes a long way."

Nicole recalled an instance where an owner had bought a new treadmill and was trying it out one night. The neighbour below was concerned about this new foreign noise and mentioned it to Nicole.



“There’s nothing more rewarding than a fully functional committee, let alone three of them”

Benjamin loves living at Linc so much he took over the shop lease of the commercial building and named the café in honour of his ex-home, the Mexico Latté.

The timing could not have been worse. Not long after he signed the lease, COVID-19 hit and life as we knew it would never be the same. With industrial sites close by shutting down, the foot traffic for the Mexico Latté slowed considerably.

But I doubt anything could dampen Benjamin’s spirit. He’s full of life and is such a joyful character. His smile is infectious, he makes a mean skim latte and his menu is nothing short of delicious.

You can’t miss it. The Mexico Latté is in the perfect location. It’s where the resident doggies meet before they head out on their walks and residents love the convenience of going downstairs to get a great feed, a cold drink or better still, a fabulous coffee.

Big shout out to Benjamin, thank you for your hospitality. We love the Mexico Latté! 🍷

After a quick phone call Nicole learnt it was noise and vibration from the treadmill which could be heard below.

“The resident upstairs was very apologetic to her neighbour but grateful she was made aware of the noise in a friendly, diplomatic manner. With the installation of foam underneath to drown the noise, the issue was fixed within 24 hours.

“That’s what it’s like here, people love living here and just want to be happy.

Considering how close we are to the city, it really is a happy, peaceful place to live,” says Nicole.

Building a neighbourhood

Since leaving his native Mexico five years ago, Benjamin and his wife chose Linc as their first home away from their Mexican home. “I love living here. It’s a very quiet place to live, which is one of the reasons we want to stay here. It’s quiet all of the time, not just during the week, but weekends too.”

Finding your happy place



NOW MORE THAN EVER IT'S OK TO SAY, 'YOU KNOW WHAT? I'M ACTUALLY NOT OK.'

Currently 1 in 5 Australians are suffering with their mental health. It's so important to feel comfortable about speaking up when it comes to mental wellbeing because help is widely available through many different channels.

Indeed, people who do speak up and seek help for their mental health issues should be applauded for their courage. Because they are courageous. But to seek help shouldn't be seen as an act of bravery, speaking up should be part of our regular everyday lives. Hiding behind the

'happy face mask' is detrimental.

The sad truth is if people fear being judged for having a mental health condition, there's a very good chance they won't talk about it. Instead they will put on their 'happy face', they hide behind a faux happy facade when deep down they are miserable.

People can be great actors, especially when times are tough. But hiding a mental health condition can only make matters worse.

It's exhausting to constantly try to keep up with appearances, and it can

increase the feeling of isolation.

Organisations such as Beyond Blue, RU OK? and Lifeline do amazing work with public awareness of mental illness and wellness.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman says, "You don't leave your depression at the door when you walk into work." That is why Beyond Blue works so hard to address the stigma around anxiety, depression and suicide. Especially in the workplace.

There's no right or wrong answer when it comes to telling people at work

People who seek help for their mental health should be applauded for their courage

about your mental health condition. However, having a conversation with a trusted colleague or workmate can be a good place to start.

There's more to simply asking R U OK?

The organisers of national R U OK? want us to reach out to friends, family, neighbours and colleagues to ask them how they are really doing. Not just annually on R U OK? Day, but frequently throughout the year.

By having regular, meaningful conversations about life's ups and downs we can all make a difference in the lives of those who might be struggling.

And if you feel like something's not quite the same with someone you know, trust that gut instinct. You don't need to be an expert to reach out - just a good friend and a great listener.

Use these steps to start a conversation:

1. Ask R U OK?
2. Listen
3. Encourage action
4. Check in

Remember that conversation could change, or even save, their life.

We enjoy these stress-busting activities to help us to relax. Give them a go.

Do some gentle exercise

Walking, stretching, swimming - these gentle exercises are perfect to help get your endorphins flowing. For those seeking a little more exertion, try hiking or bush walking and enjoy the great outdoors.

Spend time with a furry friend

Pets undoubtedly have healing powers. Playing, petting, walking or just talking to your furry friend literally gives you the warm and fuzzies.

Listen to some tunes

Creating a playlist of relaxing songs and music can help reduce stress levels. No need for the heavy thrash, keep it calm and soothing.

Sing out loud and dance

Sing like no one is listening and dance like no one is watching because chances are... they're not! Laugh as you may but these activities are great for the soul and are a fabulous way to improve your mood.

Spend time in a garden

Pottering with plants and shrubs has been linked to physical and mental health benefits, including slowing heart rates, improving memory and reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Enjoy the sunshine

Find a sunny spot, close your eyes and lift your face to the sun. Take slow deep breaths. For just 10 minutes this can have a calming effect. Always remember to be sun smart. 🌈



The art of collecting artwork

WHILE STARTING UP A PERSONAL ART COLLECTION MAY CONJURE UP THOUGHTS OF SPENDING A YEAR'S SALARY ON JUST ONE PIECE, IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE THE CASE





*Artwork by local artist Nastia Gladushchenko,
available on Art Pharmacy's online gallery*

Even on limited budgets it's possible to colour your home with works from emerging artists whilst supporting Australia's arts scene.

Starting an art collection is an exciting first step. Visit galleries big and small, go online and research artists, see as much as you can and talk to the art community to learn from them.

The art world is a very warm and welcoming environment. The early stages of collecting involves finding artists you like and learning about their process.

A curated online collection from a range of artists makes navigating the art marketplace a smoother experience. It effectively does the leg work for you. It collates the work from entry and mid-career artists and makes them more accessible for first-time collectors.

Art Pharmacy provides this service. It recognises talented emerging artists and collates their work in one place.

Online art galleries tend to sell their artwork at lower rates than gallery spaces who have overhead expenses. Online art galleries are an attractive avenue for artists as they don't need to produce an entire show collection of artworks.



Artworks at an Art Pharmacy exhibition, artist Marnie Ross



Artwork by emerging artist Rachel Hannan

At Art Pharmacy, artists can display a minimum of 5 artworks online from their collection. The bonus is the artists benefit directly from any sales thanks to reduced commission fees compared to galleries. It is a fantastic way to support the local art industry.

Have a budget in mind

Collecting can be addictive so stick to your budget. Decide how often you want to add to your collection and set aside money for this in your monthly budgeting.

Buying early in an artist's career is a smart way to source high quality and affordable art.

Once you have established your budget, you can delve into your own aesthetic idiosyncrasies. Will your collection have a theme and follow a certain medium, subject matter or style? Or rather be an eclectic range of pieces that you simply love?

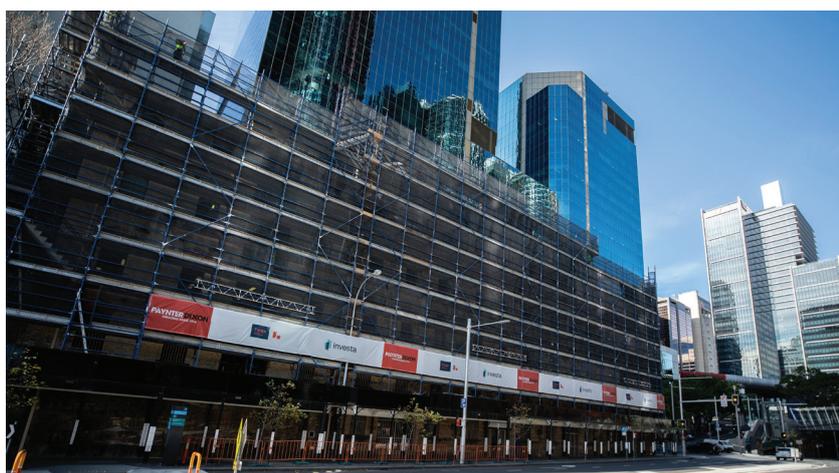
Choose pieces that resonate with you

Whilst a consistent theme, such as an art movement or particular colour palette, will bring a collection together, it's not necessary.

But what is key to a meaningful art collection is the element of storytelling. Every artist invests something of themselves in their work. It's well worth discovering the story behind the piece you're thinking of buying. Just like song lyrics, once you understand what it's about, you love it even more. 🌈

This article was contributed by Art Pharmacy. All artwork pictured available on the Art Pharmacy's online gallery www.artpharmacy.com.au

Specialist team puts the shine back on Grafton Bond



For almost 140 years, the Grafton Bond building has stood proudly in Hickson Road, Sydney overlooking one of Sydney's most historic sites.

The building, designed by revered Australian architect William Wardell, was once part of a much bigger warehouse, capable of holding 44,000 tonnes of cargo and pressing 1,600 bales of wool a day.

A walk around the Grafton Bond takes you back to the days when Hickson Road was a busy port site – a far cry from the modern Barangaroo project with its modernist glass skyscrapers, retail and restaurant and cafes.

The walls are built in an English bond pattern – the bricks shipped as ballast from Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The building is a remarkable testament to the 1800s building techniques.

Today, the Grafton Bond is undergoing remediation work to ensure it continues as a wonderful landmark for decades to come.

Paynter Dixon's remedial unit have been leading a team on the heritage-listed building.

Project Manager Paul Gangemi says the project is a challenging one.

"The key to this project is to understand the building techniques of the period in which it was built," he said.

The scope of work included:

- Timber frame recoating and repair
- Parapet capping works
- Masonry repointing
- Masonry crack stitching
- Balustrade corrosion works
- Cavity flashing works
- Slate roof tile repair

The slate roof tile restoration is a specialist job.

"Roof tile replacement is not a standard roof job – you need an expert team of craftsmen," Paul said.

"Working with slate on a steep-pitched roof requires experience and with safety in mind at all times. "We were able to source recycled tiles which are a great match to the existing roof area.

"It a sustainable process and the tiles will last for years to come."

Today, Grafton Bond is home to an eclectic group of organisations.

"The building is occupied, so noisy works had to be performed out of hours, with night work and the team on site at weekends," Paul says.

"Communication on any job is important, but it was critical on this job given the complexity and the need to minimise any disruption."

The site also presented its challenges with a lot of material walked in.

Mr Gangemi says good planning up front is important on any job, but it is critical on a sensitive project like Grafton Bond.

"Working on a historic building like the Grafton Bond you feel a real sense of responsibility to do the building justice."

"I am confident that the work we are doing to restore the building will ensure its place in history continues for many more decades." 



Facilities Management services in Queensland

THE LANDSCAPE OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS CONTINUES TO DIVERSIFY IN TERMS OF SIZE, COMPLEXITY AND THE DEMANDS PLACED UPON THOSE WHO MANAGE AND MAINTAIN THESE BUILDINGS OF THE FUTURE.

Facilities management is a direct complementary support function for strata community management. Together they go hand in hand in delivering combined professional care services for the lifespan of the buildings we manage, whilst maintaining a fully functioning harmonious community with owners and residents.

Ernst Community Manager, Lisa Scott, has over 27 years' combined experience with property, bodies corporate and facilities management. She has maintained buildings of all sizes throughout South East Queensland. She has a deep appreciation of what benefits owners as well as best practice for the property.

Lisa explains the difference between

facilities and community management.

'A Community Manager is responsible for the administrative side of running a complex. This includes paying accounts, looking after financials, holding all meetings and collecting levies.

'The Facilities Manager, or the FM, will manage all tender processes and oversee a range of contractors responsible for cleaning, gardening and landscaping as well as fire services.

'The FM will also manage WHS compliance, supervise any scheduled works or emergency repairs then report back to the Body Corporate. We'll also put plans and budgets into place to ensure there are enough funds in the Administrative Fund for future

expenses which may not be considered as a capitol cost from the Sinking Fund.'

If you're thinking only large buildings could benefit from a dedicated Facilities Manager, you could be in for a very pleasant surprise.

According to Lisa, buildings of all sizes could benefit from having a Facilities Manager, especially if they don't have a Building Manager or Caretaker.

'It might be a simple task of ensuring cleaning is being attended to in a satisfactory standard, particularly during these pandemic conditions, to organising contractors for repairs and maintenance, or large schemes which require a team of contractors full time.



Lisa Scott (left), Community Manager, 07 3620 0600. Henry Hajduk Facilities Manager, 07 5519 2900. Emily Harrison Assistant Community Manager

‘For those buildings that don’t have active Committee members, or owners who want to be involved in the day to day running of their scheme, the appointment of a Facilities Manager would be of real benefit to the Body Corporate to manage these tasks on their behalf,’ Lisa said.

That’s exactly what Lisa and Assistant Community Manager, Emily Harrison, have been doing for over six years now. Both Lisa and Emily have been providing clients throughout the Gold Coast and Brisbane with additional, proactive facilities management services to improve efficiencies, reduce operating costs and to add value to the maintenance of Lisa’s properties.

As the benefits of having dedicated facilities management continues to increase, so too has the demand for FM services all over the state.

Welcome Henry Hajduk, Facilities Manager

Henry recently joined forces with Lisa and Emily in response to the high demand for facilities management.

A seasoned veteran, Henry has held managerial positions within the property industry for over 20 years. He started his career in property management, looking after a diverse portfolio of residential buildings and working closely with builders and contractors.

Henry moved to facilities management to manage a prestigious building 21 levels high comprising 322 apartments with 9 retail shops. Within 24 months Henry was promoted to manage 622 apartments including an atrium, full facilities hotel and concierge.

Henry has an incredible eye for detail.

Under his management he ensures facilities are in top condition, are compliant, but more importantly, the owners and residents truly believe their apartment building stands out from other buildings thanks to his high-quality maintenance attention. He literally treats each building as if it were his own.

Working together with Lisa and Emily, the new facilities management team is focused on tailoring service agreements to suit individual buildings and its needs. This will be beneficial to each customer as they will be paying only for what they need.

‘It’s about working closely with committee members so they fully understand what is offered within our agreement, then performing these tasks within budget and on time whilst delivering an exceptional level of service. 🌈



Dressing up your balcony

INCREASED DAYLIGHT HOURS AND THE PROMISE OF FLOWERS IN BLOOM MEANS SPRING IS A GREAT TIME TO REBIRTH YOUR BALCONY INTO A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN SPACE.

Balconies are a fantastic way for strata residents to enjoy alfresco dining.

You know the type, that balcony that could have been styled straight out of a magazine. How inviting does it look when there's plants, maybe a little table and chair... a little outdoor oasis and an extension of the home?

Having the space to sit outside like to watch the world go by is a beautiful way to spend your time relaxing and enjoying the outdoors.

But the satisfaction you could gain from spending time in your private outdoor space can be compromised if your balcony or courtyard is merely

a concrete or paved block, devoid of any personality or styling.

With limited space for storage and artwork, your options can be limited. However, the easiest and most convenient way to create an outdoor zone that works as a beautiful extension of your indoor



living quarters is to spruce up your balcony garden space.

According to House Beautiful magazine, whilst weather, climate and a lack of privacy are issues likely to challenge would-be balcony garden designers, following a strict set of rules can lessen their impact.

The first “golden rule” the magazine suggests is to make sure that you think about your watering regime prior to putting in place any plants.

Bear in mind you will need to rely on watering cans to keep your plants refreshed, unless it’s a courtyard, so you’ll need to consider how many

watering can trips you are happy to do to reach your balcony and hydrate your plants. If space permits, it’s best to think of your balcony or just like an outside room, the magazine says.

“Use pots or decorations to create a sitting area. And, just like indoors, decorate the walls, think about lighting and accessorise with a good strong look in mind.”

Select pots and planters that reflect your interior design, considering your internal colour palette, since your outdoor area is important too. Purchase or make some balcony planters or plant stands and think about incorporating different heights to vary the effect of your different plantings.

Safety is also a big issue requiring consideration, it says.

“The main issues are things falling off, making sure drainage is good and not putting too much weight on your balcony.”

If in doubt, it’s always a good idea to ask for professional advice from your strata community manager.

It’s also important to ensure you work with the conditions you are facing. Most Australian balconies are either in full sun or partial shade and wind can be an issue.

If your balcony is in full sun check your by-laws, or your manager, if you can bring in some shading so you can regularly utilise your balcony space rather than hiding inside to escape the intense heat.



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If you live in an area susceptible to winds, you will need to try creating windbreaks.

Likewise, if your balcony has an unappealing view that overlooks a carpark, the development's storage area, another building or other less than desirable obstructions, you may like to screen it off with plants and trellis," the magazine recommends.

But it's not just your balcony floor that you can decorate with flower pots or ornaments.

Your side walls also provide a good canvas to dress up with trellis with climbing plant species or vertical gardens. A variety of lush, cascading plants are the way to go if you are limited for space.

Upright plants such as reeds take up less room and are a great option for screening. But by far the most important ingredient in staging your



balcony garden is to offer it regular attention, the magazine says.

"There is no sight so sad in the gardening world as a neglected balcony. Even if it's just 10 minutes a week, make time to go out there, sweep, water and generally spruce

it up. It will make all the difference."

If your outdoor balcony or courtyard is as appealing and comfortable as your indoor living spaces, you'll be more likely to spend quality time outdoors. 

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How we can help stop our landfill sites overflowing?

Australia's landfill sites are brimming. Each year the capacity for rubbish to be dumped into landfill diminishes.

And when disaster strikes, such as major storm or fire, a huge amount of debris ends up in the already crammed landfill sites.

It's estimated that 40% of the waste Australia generates each year is from the demolition and construction sectors. More than a third of it ends up in landfill.

Insurance clean-up and repair work material are significant contributors, especially following the major catastrophes that have hit Australia in recent year.

So what can the insurance industry and strata communities do?

Strata insurance specialist CHU is serious about helping our planet. CHU's 2025 strategy includes a major environment and sustainability focus and the insurer is working on a number of biodiversity and environmental initiatives to play its part.

For example, in the aftermath of the Darlings Down floods and severe storms in south-east Queensland in February 2020, CHU worked with eco waste managers the handel: Group to recycle waste from the clean-up and repairs to lessen impact on landfill.

CHU is piloting a scheme to use unique handel:'s unique FLEXiSKiPs to collect and remove waste. The skips are made from 100 per cent recyclable material and easily erected on sites. The waste materials are later moved to handel:'s recycle partners to recycle.

Following the pilot CHU is looking to encourage its panel of builders across Australia to use the skips so that the waste can be recycled.

"With the demand on our landfill sites growing, we can all do our bit to help reduce the impact," says CHU CEO Bobby Lehane.

"While it's absolutely vital for us to help customers get back on their feet after a catastrophe strikes, it's important we don't forget that's not the end of the story," he says.

CHU is also committed to being a carbon neutral business.

It also supports environmental scientist/explorer Tim Jarvis's Forktree Project, which aims to help combat climate change and biodiversity loss. The project involves replanting native trees and restoring native habitat on a former pastoral property in South Australia.

Property owners help save the planet – and save money

Property owners with environment programs in place are not only helping save our planet, but can actually realise cost savings from environmental initiatives.

A way to gauge what impact their initiatives are having is through a number of government rating schemes. NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System), for example, measures a building's energy efficiency, carbon emissions, as well as the water consumed, the waste produced and compare it to similar buildings. NABERS says it improves buildings and workplaces because high performing buildings support more profitable and more productive businesses.

Besides reducing waste, strata owners can look at other ways to help sustainability and the environment. Using renewable energy sources, such as solar panels; ensuring your lighting is efficient; and reducing water usage are just some initiatives that reduce environmental impact – and costs.

This article was supplied by CHU Underwriting Agencies. For more information go to www.chu.com.au or phone 1300 361 263 (9am - 5pm AEST). CHU Underwriting Agencies Pty Ltd (ABN 18 001 580 070, AFS Licence No: 243261) acts under a binding authority as agent of the insurer QBE Insurance (Australia) Limited (ABN 78 003 191 035, AFS Licence No: 239545)



Managing risk to help create change

THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE MADE US STOP AND THINK ABOUT THE FRAGILITY OF OUR WORLD. WE'VE REALISED THE DIRECT EFFECT OUR ACTIONS HAVE ON OUR ENVIRONMENT AND HOW HUMANITY IS THE CATALYST OF CHANGE.

Helping the planet heal

Among the stories of people and businesses doing it tough, there are many examples of how the environment has benefited from COVID-19.

Skies are less polluted and waterways are clearer with less

travel and fossil fuel emissions.

Buying goods and services locally has encouraged support for local businesses.

But what happens when COVID-19 no longer dominates our conversations? Will we revert to old habits?

Behaviour change experts claim habits can take as little as 21 days to form and become firmly established in two months. Our lockdown restrictions lasted beyond those timeframes, so maybe our new behaviours will remain and the environment continue to benefit.



Helping to leverage the power of Strata Communities

According to the Property Council of Australia, there are more than 2 million registered strata schemes with over 2.2 million people living in apartments.

A staggering one-third of Australia's carbon footprint is generated by energy consumption and it's estimated strata schemes could account for as much as 10% of Australia's total carbon emissions.

What's more, our carbon footprint has likely increased with more people working at home and could continue if businesses extend flexibility in working locations.

So, how do we respond?

Steadfast Group's Sustainability Advisor, Tim Jarvis, explains "we have an unexpected but unparalleled opportunity to change and do things better".

"We can invest to maintain the status quo and continue our path towards a warmer, less stable climate. Or we can invest wisely and rebuild what we had, but better, stimulating the economy and accelerating our transition to a low carbon world."

A positive evolution

With so many people living in strata communities, even small steps can make a significant difference.

Of the many opportunities out there, Tim Jarvis highlights three

that strata schemes should take a closer look at.

1. Waste and energy audits

Low cost to implement but with the potential to yield significant cost savings by adding motion sensors to lighting in common areas, changing extractor fans in car parks to only operate during peak times and upgrading to energy efficient pool pumps and led lighting for example.

2. Solar switch

Solar is a complex area given the need to house panels and the number of decision-makers in an Owner's Committee.

A good introduction is to use solar energy for common areas with a dedicated meter covering lights, lifts, gyms/ pools etc. The energy bill is paid using strata levies so it's likely all residents will benefit over time through reduced strata levies.

3. Purchasing power

Large strata buildings or Strata Managers with multiple properties could consider bulk purchasing green energy and potentially even a Power Purchase Agreement if they have sufficient scale.

While common areas only make up around 20% of the overall energy consumption, we shouldn't underestimate the value of change. The environmental benefits, while

the Owner's Committee realise the cost savings.

Greener communities appeal to younger generations, keen to understand the environmental and social impact of their money.

So, imagine if we could also encourage owners to reduce their carbon footprint within their units – tackling the other 80% of energy consumption habits.

Helping the ecosystem

We should all work together to realise greater benefits for the environment and the communities we live in, building a united community that we actively protect.

Consider the insurer – do they simply pay out claims to replace what was there before, or could owners be encouraged to repair/ build back better?

Consider the builder – why just replace old lighting when more efficient LEDs could be installed instead?

We've been given a harsh wakeup call from COVID-19 and been gifted a huge opportunity to accelerate Australia's move towards a more sustainable future.

Tim Jarvis is leading the way for us to build a better future together. We're supporting the conversation we started on managing risk to maintain calm.

Smarter Communities established a business partnership with BCB, Australia's most experienced specialist strata insurance broker, in 2017 to overcome any insurance confusion and make strata simpler for our strata committees, bodies corporate and owners corporations.



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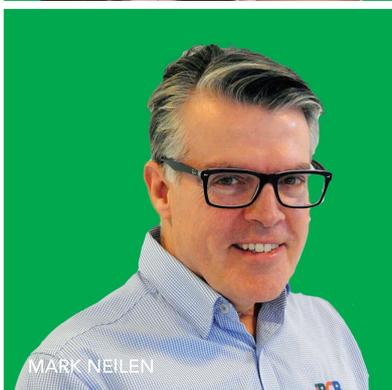


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