



September 2013



The crowd enjoying a coffee and cake at Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.

## Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.

PPHA and Berengarra School joined forces to host Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and raise funds for Breast Cancer Research. Held in the social enterprise space at 2 Elliott St, the students from the Pathways Hospitality Programme showed off their barista skills to the public while the exercise itself was their final VCAL assessment. A mouth-watering array of goodies had been provided by staff, over sampling of which meant that many skipped lunch! Well done to all involved. We hope that it will go on to bigger and better things as an annual event each June and as that the social enterprise becomes a thriving café supported by the wider community.



**Above:** Emma Williams, Katina Astles & Graeme Barwise.

## Visions in Substance Art Exhibition..Coming Soon

PPHA is very excited by the upcoming resident's art exhibition. Twenty-four responders (so far) to the survey distributed with the last newsletter have expressed interest in being part of the project.

### Who can enter?

Everyone has a story to tell! This project is not just for experienced artists but is open for all tenants. If you don't want to exhibit there is opportunity to participate as a volunteer on the committee or at the venue during the exhibition.

### Workshop Studio

Elwood/St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre has kindly allowed the art exhibition participants to use their space to work on their art.

### Tenant's feedback:

"I want to congratulate PPHA for initiating this project which encourages tenants in their artistic and organizational abilities."  
Richard James

All welcome to attend. Please contact Liban Yusuf on 9534 5837 for details of the next meeting or how to enter the exhibition.

### ART FOR KIDS

Calling all school aged kids who live in PPHA properties. Would you like to participate in our exhibition by creating a piece of art along with other kids? We can help you! We are planning a couple of creative workshops where you can let your creativity run free. Please contact Liban Yusuf for more information and to register your interest on 9534 5837 or email [info@ppha.org.au](mailto:info@ppha.org.au)

**Below:** Volunteers eagerly planning the first PPHA Art Exhibition "Visions on Substance": from left, Richard James, Taurus Ashley, Ricky Howell, Niki Harley, Coral Baker, Lisa Fam, Jan Grey, and PPHA staff member Liban Yusuf.



*It's perfectly set out for me, in a prime location and allows access to all Melbourne has to offer.*

## *Proudly Rich: Changing Nimby's, Notes and Banana's*

Although Victorian State government policies specify two imperatives for local government:

- Promote community cohesion, and
- Plan for a more compact, sustainable and fairer city

implementation, particularly in terms of social housing and urban consolidation, often causes fragmentation and divisiveness as community members resist change<sup>1</sup>. Even as waiting lists for affordable housing continue to rise, the opposition to community housing developments is intense and is usually in two quite distinct forms:

- Opposition to medium density/multi storey developments
- Opposition to the people to be housed

Inner suburbs have long realised the need to build upwards as available land becomes scarce and prohibitively expensive. Middle ring suburbs are now feeling the same pinch. More and more older homes on the traditional ¼ acre block are being torn down and replaced with several townhouses or the backyards are subdivided and sold off. Despite achieving efficiencies, residents and politicians in these areas can be resistant to the provision of increased housing through building multi-storey developments citing

- Increased population placing stress on existing infrastructure
- Building size and profile not being in keeping with the surrounding area

The PPHA Ashwood development, a program of urban renewal, has defied the

trend. It is a multi-storey development that has successfully followed the contours of the land to build up to 7 stories without appearing to be a 'high-rise'.

There is also concern about the risk of property devaluation, often leading to well resourced opposition campaigns. Despite evidence from a number of studies that property values are not detrimentally affected by community housing, the 'normal' response is to assume that they do. A follow up study of neighbours around a hotly contested PPHA rooming house discovered that new neighbours did not even know the building was a rooming house and the majority of the original neighbours were surprised they had not noticed any change in the neighbourhood. A couple of years later, a warehouse apartment



A group of PPHA community housing residents.



development opposite the rooming house sold for almost \$500,000 more than expected: definitely no property devaluation. The PPHA project in Ashwood was an urban renewal project, revitalising an old public housing estate and improving the urban streetscape and property valuations.

It is not unusual for the broader community, on viewing our properties, to be impressed by the generous amenity. PPHA's internal design guidelines and policies are regularly updated and improved and insist on our developments being of a liveable size, with adequate room proportions and outdoor living space. Newer developments also include common areas for residents to be able to sit and chat and get to know each other.

Although we live in a time when our city can no longer keep spreading outwards, past reactions lead us to believe future developments will face the same opposition and battles regardless of how successful preceding projects have been.

More worrying is the fear of the 'other' and the perception that community housing residents are 'not like us' and are somehow undeserving of quality community housing. Objectors have become so predictable in the issues they raise that they have their own acronyms:

- NIMBY's (not in my back yard) typically don't object to community housing they just don't want it in their street as they fear it may jeopardise their quality of life.
- NOTE's (not over there either) are the objectors who sign petitions and object even though they don't live in the area and won't be affected by it.

## Battle in 'burbs to keep out battlers

A local paper headline announcing the battle against PPHA housing.

- Lastly BANANA's (build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone).

Fear of the 'other' leads to exclusionary practices. Neighbours are unaware that those to be housed are already living in the area, are active in the community or have close ties to it. A PPHA development had a local shopkeeper vilifying prospective tenants. Local politicians from all levels of government responded in defence of community housing. Building was delayed whilst the legal battles were fought. Of course, when the building was completed, tenants had many years of links to the area, including one tenant who had grown up in the same street. That particular development is now an accepted part of the local streetscape earning the affectionate nickname of 'the treehouse'. The project is now a showcase, regularly featuring in newspapers and was nominated for a Victorian Architects Institute Award.

To break down the barriers caused by ignorance, and to remove the fear of 'the other', tenants and residents of community housing have an important role to play. We need you to talk to friends, relatives and others about community housing:

- the mix of tenants – workers, aged, families, unemployed, singles, couples, etc - just like in the general population. Ordinary people going about their lives to the best of their ability

- the security of affordable community housing for the long-term, it is not short term leases
- let's you remain living in an area where you have history, are close to family and have strong established links
- the quality of the housing – a home you are proud to live in.

We also need you to care for your property, not just your apartment but the whole building. If you notice graffiti, something broken or missing, please report it straight away. Part of PPHA's commitment to you and to the community is to maintain our properties, to keep them and their surrounds in good condition and attractive. It is the appearance of our properties that is most obvious to neighbours, if a property looks run-down or not cared for, it reinforces the negative perceptions held by NIMBY's, NOTES and BANANA's.

Together, as residents and as property landlords and developers, we can change the public perception of community housing. Let's stand up and be counted as community housing residents when people ask where we live. Let's show our pride in our homes and our neighbourhood. Let's create our own acronym to describe where we live and how we feel about it: proudly RICH – Residing in Community Housing. Let's tell everyone.

### References:

1. Press, Mandy (July 2009) Community Engagement and Community Housing, A Report for the City of Port Phillip

"Safe neighbourhood, cheap rent and housing is in great condition."



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## Putting Your Best Foot Forward

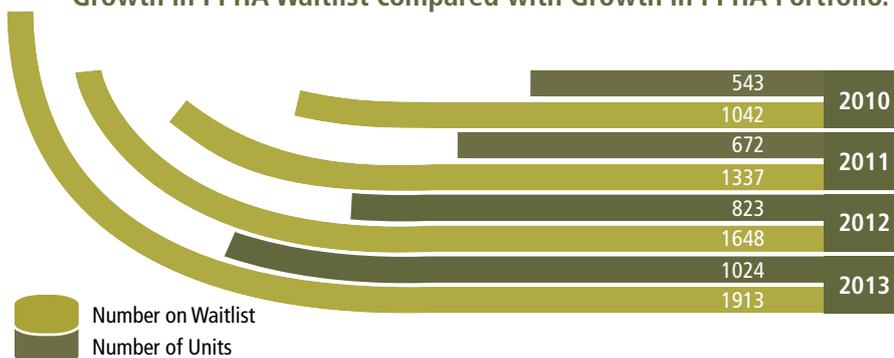
Be assured there is not a serious OH&S issue in the St Kilda office. Our CEO, Karen Barnett (L) and Administration/Reception Officer Lyn Allen (R), compare moon boots and rejoice in getting rid of the plaster. Both look forward to increased mobility and complete independence in coming weeks.



## Waiting, Waiting .....

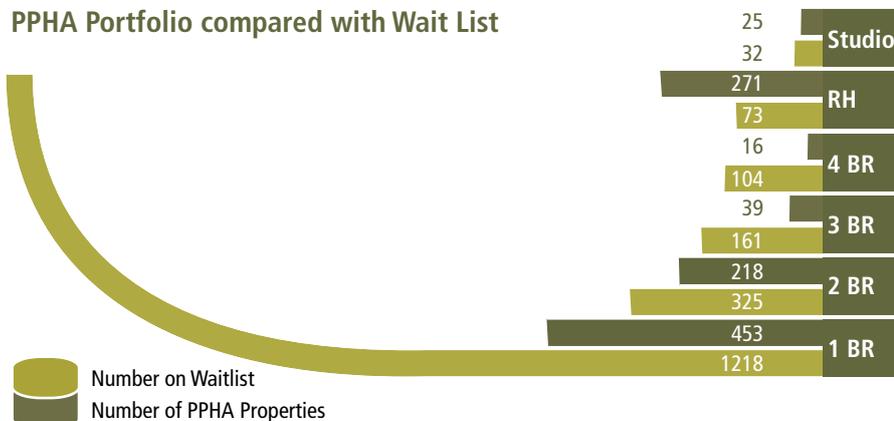
You would think that with our portfolio virtually doubling in size over the last 4 years that our wait list for housing might remain static or even decrease. Unfortunately this is not so. In the same time period, our waitlist has also virtually doubled in size.

### Growth in PPHA Waitlist compared with Growth in PPHA Portfolio.



We are sometimes asked why we don't build more large family homes. With 81% of people on our waitlist needing 1 & 2BR properties, our resources focus on trying to meet that need with only a handful of larger homes in any new developments. With only a 6% turnover in general tenancies and 22% turnover in rooming houses, people can face a very long time on our waitlist.

### PPHA Portfolio compared with Wait List



Part of the juggling act PPHA faces is to provide appropriate sized housing for our tenants. As young people partner up and start families, we need to be able to move them in to larger size properties. As families grow-up and leave home, we need them to downsize and free up the larger property for another young family. If a move is required, keeping you close to family and networks can be achieved within the PPHA portfolio.

## Staff Movements

Coming:

**Sabina Rosser** has accepted the role of Maintenance Administration Assistant, working in the St Kilda Office. Sabina brings a wealth of experience to the Maintenance Team.



Sabina Rosser

**Leanne Vasilevska** has commenced as a Tenancy Management Officer based at the St Kilda Office. Leanne brings with her skills and experience picked up in transitional housing.



Leanne Vasilevska

## Obituaries

Some tenants have asked that we re-instate our obituaries section. In doing so, we sadly report that four PPHA tenants have passed away since the last newsletter.



**Dennis Chapman** from Balluk Willum in St Kilda had been a tenant with PPHA since 1996.

**Deborah Coleman**, also of Balluk Willum in St Kilda had been a PPHA tenant since 1999.

**Anthony Bouchard** who had been living at Broxted rooming house for 3 years.

**Mary Tovey**, a resident of Enfield St in St Kilda for 18 months.

Our thoughts are with family, friends and neighbours of these tenants.