

# DOCKLANDS NEWS

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▲ Alma Doepel restoration director Peter Harris and ATET director Jake Hughes at North Wharf last month. Photo: John Tadigiri.

## From Alma to ATET: new barge project to enliven Docklands

*In what will come as a much-needed boost for our struggling precinct, the Alma Doepel's barge will soon be given new life with the creation of a floating events space in Victoria Harbour, launching in spring.*

WORDS BY Sean Car  
BUSINESS

Representing a win-win for the Alma and the barge's buyer – Gippsland man Jake Hughes – the sale will provide both a new destination venue for Docklands, as well as the final funds necessary to complete the 12-year restoration of the historic tall ship.

To be made available for music events, weddings, parties, corporate events, floating cinema and even morning yoga, ATET – a reference to Egyptian mythology – will see the Alma's barge transformed into a flexible two-level event space, envisioned as an "urban island oasis."

Designed as an open-air space with a fully retractable

roof and blinds to cater for any weather conditions that Docklands throws at it, ATET will largely be a fixed events space at the tip of North Wharf Rd underneath the Bolte Bridge.

Mr Hughes told Docklands News that the venue would also have the ability to be relocated to areas such as Harbour Esplanade, while it could also be towed out into the harbour or the bay for larger events with a connecting ferry service.

The family-owned business has been in discussions with Development Victoria, the City of Melbourne and developer Lendlease about other exciting ways of activating the largely disused wharf.

With a mixture of connectivity options via Uber or

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## "Significant changes" in new plans for Waterfront City

WORDS BY David Schout  
PLANNING

Plans for a major development in the northernmost part of Docklands have been submitted to the state government with "significant changes" after pushback from the City of Melbourne last year.

Initial plans for the Waterfront City site, situated next to both Docklands Primary School and The District, featured excessive building size, overshadowing, excessive car parking and a lack of pedestrian connectivity according to the council in September 2020.

But under a new blueprint recently submitted to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) prepared for developer AsheMorgan, owners of The District, the "scale, intensity and layout" have all been altered.

The large site is now set to feature office and apartment blocks, a "substantial" communal space above the existing car park, and improved pedestrian connections with the waterfront and surrounding areas.

Among seven workplace and residential buildings on the site ranging between 12m and 90m in height, plans for the public realm include:

- A "high park" on the roof of the existing car park;
- A public plaza opposite the primary school featuring bluestone paving, seating, trees and bicycle parking;
- A large public "arbour room" similar to the Federation Square Atrium; and
- Activated retail areas called "the lane" and "the boulevard".

The large site is bound by Footscray Rd, Little Docklands Drive and Waterfront Way.

Overall plans aimed to create "a new village for Melbourne with all

the uses, activities, spaces and places that support a healthy inner-city community – a genuine piece of Melbourne."

"[The plan] assists in facilitating AsheMorgan's reinvigoration of the Waterfront City precinct; a process which was commenced by upgrades to The District Docklands, the delivery of a state of the art entertainment and dining precinct anchored by an eight-screen cinema and, on this site, the inclusion of a supermarket and a fresh food market through the entire ground floor of the existing car park," the report said.

In September last year the council made public its concerns about the development plans.

These included building sizes, insufficient setbacks, wind comfort, overshadowing of public open space, excessive car parking and insufficient detail in relation to public benefits and signage.

The council's planning chair Nicholas Reece said while there were "some significant positive aspects to it", there were concerns about the proposed built form.

"There is too much about this proposal which does not allow this site to connect and speak to the outside world. It's too fortress-like with 60-metre street walls. We want a fully open and permeable proposal," he said.

The application is currently before the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for approval and the council is yet to comment on the updated development plans.

### Office opening

Meanwhile, AsheMorgan has announced the opening of its \$13 million office precinct development at The District, called "District Office".

The new commercial space can  
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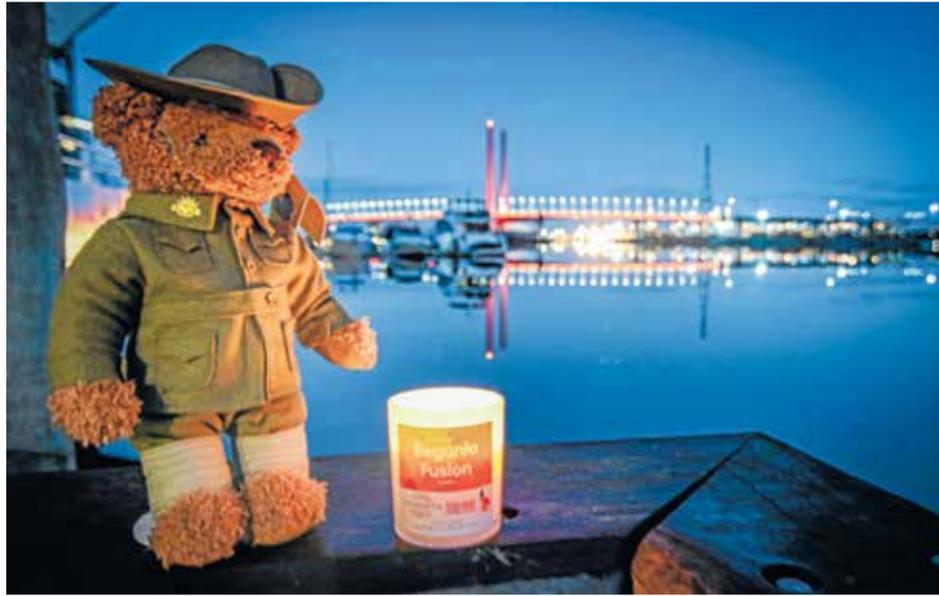
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## Another Dawn Service to remember

### EVENTS

Eight buglers graced Docklands on ANZAC Day as the moving sounds of *The Last Post* reverberated across Victoria Harbour.

With three buglers located along NewQuay, three at Victoria Harbour and two at Yarra's Edge, the Dawn Service saw residents from all around Docklands come out onto their balconies to commemorate ANZAC Day.

Organised by the Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC), the event raised money and awareness of the "The Last Post Project" by Skunkwork Productions, which worked in partnership with the DCC to bring the memorial to the precinct.

Enjoy a few moments of the Dawn Service captured by *Docklands News* photographer John Tadigiri ●



▲ An artist's impression of Waterfront City East.

## "Significant changes" in new plans for Waterfront City

*Continued from page 1.*

house more than 500 office workers at capacity, and spans more than 5000 sqm.

It has been advertised as a flexible environment "designed and built to meet the evolving needs of today's office worker".

This includes flexible and fast leasing, full modular fit-outs with kitchens, desks, meeting rooms, breakout spaces and a collaborative zone called "the clubhouse".

"The office isn't dead, it's just changing," Senior Development Manager Mat Stoddart said.

"Many landlords are focused on trying to reimagine what fit-outs need to be, to create genuine flexibility. Desks are still desks, chairs are still chairs, meeting rooms are still meeting rooms. The change that is needed is genuine flexibility, which we have fulfilled through District Office. All this offers a much more affordable and attractive proposition than co-working or traditional office space."

The first tenants to move into the office space, located on Waterfront Way, are Carl's Jnr and The Digital Picnic ●

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# From *Alma* to ATET: new barge project to enliven Docklands

*Continued from page 1.*

taxi, the Collins St tram and a short walk from Southern Cross Station, Mr Hughes said the location suited the needs of what would be a “destination venue” perfectly.

“We fell in love with the location at the end of North Wharf. It’s so close to the city but feels completely secluded,” he said.

“It’s a part of Melbourne that almost no one has ever really experienced, it feels like a completely forgotten space. The site is almost underneath Bolte Bridge which provides such a dramatic backdrop, the whole setting feels a bit surreal.”

“It’s nice being slightly removed from the built-up part of Docklands. There’s a bit more privacy and we can really create our own vibe down there. It also helps to prevent noise issues, the distance from apartments means we can do our thing without affecting the amenity of local residents.”

“The great thing about what we’re doing is we’re a destination venue and people will come specifically for the events we’re doing – we don’t really rely on foot traffic as we’re not a walk-up bar or restaurant.”

“We’ll be doing music events, corporate events, weddings; events that people are specifically coming for. So, we think we can really help draw people back to the area. When people experience it, they will see the potential and how beautiful it is being on the water and hopefully people will start to see more opportunities to do more things here.”

“We want to bring a bit of creative culture to the Docklands area, which is something that has been a bit lacking.”

Ahead of the *Alma*’s anticipated return to water in June, Mr Hughes and his team were on site last month gathering final specifications of the barge in preparation for the installation of pre-fabricated infrastructure.

As an architect and DJ who grew up on the Gippsland lakes, Mr Hughes’s skills and passion for design, music, and life on the water are all tied up in the ATET project, which he said had been more than four years in the making.

But having originally sought to purpose-build a barge from scratch, something that he said would have been far more challenging and expensive, he described the *Alma*’s barge as a “one-of-a-kind” opportunity.

Understood to be worth around a million dollars, he said the 40-metre-long and 12-metre-wide barge was quite a “unique asset” as it was specifically built for the purpose of restoring the tall ship.

“These types of barges don’t really seem to exist in Melbourne so if we wanted to replace this, anything we could find was up in Darwin or Perth and you’re looking at a sea tow and



▲ Main: a render of ATET positioned at the end of North Wharf in Docklands, (top right) towed out to the bay and (bottom right) Peter Harris and Jake Hughes with the *Alma Doepel*.

hundreds of thousands of dollars just to get it here,” he said.

And in addition to providing the final funds necessary to see *Alma* back in the water, Mr Hughes explained that there was another nice angle to the story, with the barge itself travelling full circle with its original naval architect Paul Bury.

“We originally engaged Paul to design a concept for a new purpose-built vessel which we worked on together for at least 18 months,” he said.

“We were planning to build it from scratch, but then when we found the *Alma Doepel* barge we gave him a call to ask for his opinion to see whether it would be suitable. And it turned out he designed the barge originally so he had all the engineering details, hydrostatics and everything. It’s a nice little synchronicity there.”

“The builder is also based down in Gippsland and was a contact of his [Paul Bury] in the same town and he has just the right level of marine experience building barges and pontoons and things like that.”

On track to launch in late spring, Mr Hughes said the project team would soon begin construction, with all materials prefabricated offsite and trucked in for installation once the *Alma* was back in the water.

He said ATET had been engineered to cater for more than 600 guests and while it would largely focus on music events, he said it was open to anything from weddings and fundraisers to major public and community events such as Fashion Week.

“It’s designed as a really versatile space that is capable of hosting a diverse range of events. It’s essentially a big open deck with loose furniture that can be rearranged to suit any event or activity. The whole space is fully enclosable with a retractable roof and retractable blinds, which is required for the Melbourne climate,” he said.

“The entire space is defined by a six-metre-high steel portal frame. The idea is that we get a lot of days in Melbourne that are beautiful and warm when the sun’s out and you’re sheltered from the wind but as soon as you step out into the wind it’s cold. So, the space can be enclosed on the sides to the full six metre height with motorised PVC blinds and then we can open the roof to get the sun in, creating a sunny, sheltered courtyard.”

*Docklands News* caught up with Mr Hughes and the *Alma Doepel*’s restoration director Peter Harris at North Wharf last month as the ship approaches its long-awaited return to water.

In praising the efforts of Mr Harris and the *Alma*’s many volunteers, Mr Hughes said ATET

looked forward to continuing its support of the project.

“It’s a great project to be able to support. They’ve had something like 78,000 hours of work donated by volunteers, which is an incredible number and shows a huge amount of generosity and dedication to the project. It’s nice knowing that our purchase of the barge is helping to fund the restoration,” he said.

“We want to help to support them as much as we can and we’d love to host some fundraising events for them once we’re up and running. I’m sure when the launch [of *Alma*] happens we’ll offer our space as one they can use.” ●

**For more information:**  
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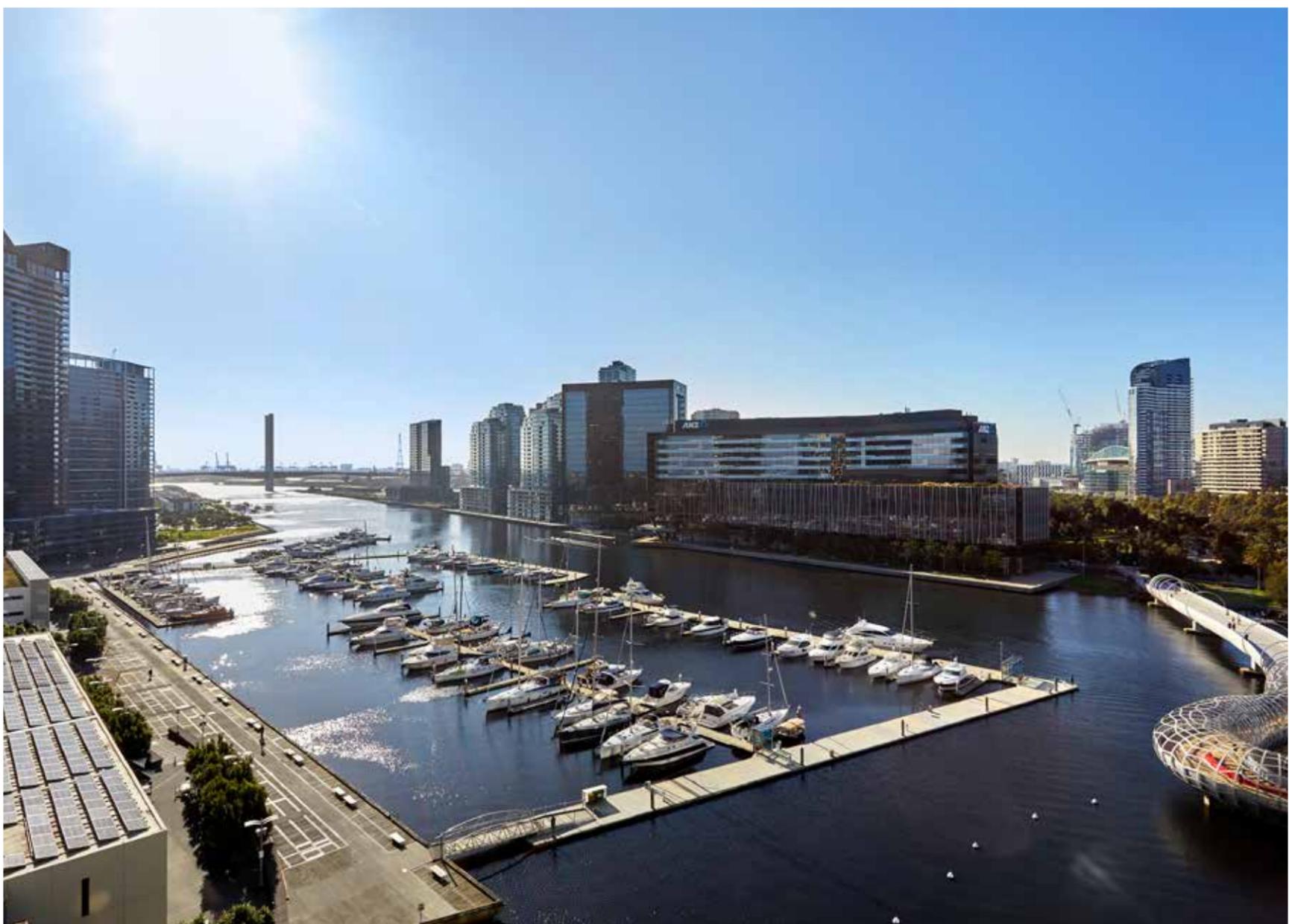



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# Seafarers Rest Park edges closer

WORDS BY *Jack Alfonso*  
CAPITAL WORKS

A new park will be created at Seafarers Rest in Docklands after City of Melbourne councillors endorsed updated designs at a Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on April 20.

The 3500 sqm park will be located on the north bank of the Yarra River between the heritage Mission to Seafarers building, Seafarers Bridge and developer Riverlee's current restoration and redevelopment of the heritage Goods Shed No.5.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the new park would be a "valuable link" to Docklands, while "increasing public open space" and "providing access to our maritime district".

"Delivering the Greenline, a connected series of green spaces and amenity along the north bank of the Yarra is one my key priorities," Cr Capp said.

Community consultation revealed that park users wanted a safe space for both cyclists and pedestrians, and that local history must be represented in the redevelopment of the park – all of which the Lord Mayor said were factored into the updated park design.

"The updated park design has taken feedback from the community on board," she said. "[It] now includes widened paths for pedestrians, a diverse range of seating options to cater to different needs and experiences, and improved access through the space."

"This is a part of our river network on the north bank which is much neglected and we are seeing a renewed interest from the private sector and government to turn that around. The celebration of our maritime history is a strong feature of this positioning."

The project is being delivered in line with the council's Open Space Strategy and Docklands Public Realm Plan. Key stakeholder groups, including the Naval Association of Australia, Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network



(MMHN), Traditional Owners and a Disability Advisory Committee, have all been consulted.

While highly supportive of the new park, MMHN president Ross Brewer expressed concern at the April 20 FMC meeting with a lack of access to, and visibility of the Mission to Seafarers building.

"It [the Mission building] must be able to be seen and accessed properly," he said.

"It seems to be covered behind the trees so you wouldn't be able to see from the river. It really needs to be visible and linked to the park. In the future the building will have an entrance to the river again."

The council's environmental portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said it was "premature" to be considering a future entrance without knowing the extent of the heritage works.

"It's a heritage-listed building and until we know how a new entrance will look it is premature to look at how we open up to it," he said.

Cr Leppert added that the new park would "revitalise" Docklands' riverfront by "becoming a meeting point", particularly for nearby Siddely St residents.

"There is quite a residential presence in the area – residents of Siddeley St have put up with so many issues in the area, such as helipads and now the delivery of the park will really improve the area in so many wonderful ways," he said.

"The design includes a number of play options including new equipment and recreational spaces, while also providing safe access for pedestrians and cyclists, an events deck and connections to our maritime heritage."

The project is being delivered by the council in partnership with the state government and developer Riverlee. Designed by landscape architects OCULUS, the park is expected to be finished in 2023.

According to a draft memorandum of understanding, funding for the park's design, con-

struction and structural remediation works will be provided by Riverlee, while the Department of Treasury and Finance will contribute the land for the park and some structural remediation costs.

Riverlee's Seafarers project will see a new 17-level mixed-use development built on the neighbouring Good Shed No.5 site, and feature the already restored, heritage-listed crane.

Riverlee development director David Lee said the park was significant in bringing the Seafarers project to life, creating accessible green space and allowing enhanced connections to a revitalised Northbank precinct.

"Seafarers Rest has been part of Riverlee's plan to transform this somewhat forgotten part of the city for many years, so we are excited to officially be progressing with our plans in creating a green, open space by the river for everyone to enjoy," he said.

"Through a highly collaborative process, we are proud to make possible the largest programmed park outside of Birrarung Marr that allows for connection with the river."

"Our vision involves a greener Northbank that does not forget the origins of the site. We are entwining history into the park that will ultimately be the gateway to Northbank for those coming via Seafarers Bridge."

The council is also continuing feasibility studies into a maritime heritage precinct in Docklands, which is largely focused on the possible repurposing of part of the Mission to Seafarers building.

The MMHN, which has been central to consultations on the future precinct, said it continued to advocate strongly for a "world-class" Melbourne Waterways Maritime Trail, as well as the resurrection of Central Pier ●

**For more information:**  
[participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au)



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Flu vaccines are free for children aged between six months and five years,

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During COVID-19, we have introduced additional measures to protect our community and staff during community immunisation sessions, including physical distancing and additional hygiene and screening processes.

Bookings are also essential. For more details, and to find out how to make a booking, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/immunisation](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/immunisation)

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The roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines is being managed by the Federal Department of Health. For the latest information, check [health.gov.au/covid19vaccines](https://health.gov.au/covid19vaccines)

The COVID-19 vaccination does not protect against seasonal flu. You must wait at least 14 days between a dose of the flu vaccine and a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

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# New kindergarten officially unveiled

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*  
EDUCATION

The new kindergarten co-located at Docklands Primary School was officially opened last month with a visit from Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt.

Minister Stitt joined students and educators, Member for Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt and Docklands Primary School principal Adam Bright in celebrating the important milestone for the Docklands community on April 22.

Gowrie Docklands Kindergarten includes two children's rooms and outdoor learning terraces on the first floor of the school. Gowrie Victoria is the approved provider and will offer sessional and integrated kindergarten programs for both three- and four-year-old children.

"We know that education begins far earlier than a child's first step into primary school. This new kindergarten gives Docklands children the early years centre and education they need and deserve," Minister Stitt said.

Gowrie Docklands Kindergarten is the first of nine kindergartens on school sites already announced as part of a \$283 million state government program.

The government has delivered a number of new kindergartens on existing school sites each year to support the roll-out of three-year-old kindergarten, and the co-location of services. It has continued this trend by ensuring that every Victorian primary school to open from 2021 will have a kindergarten on-site or next door.

This includes Docklands Primary School and the other nine new primary schools which opened in 2021, as well as all six new primary schools opening in 2022 •



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# Council approves Marvel upgrade plans

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
PLANNING

The \$225 million Marvel Stadium revamp has been given the City of Melbourne tick of approval, paving the way for works to begin in months.

The upgrade, which included no funds for the Harbour Esplanade side of the concourse, is set to feature a new internal “town square plaza” and “city edge” stadium expansion that would refurbish public and function areas that overlook the Wurundjeri Way side of the ground.

The plaza would open up to pedestrians arriving from Southern Cross Station across the Bourke St footbridge.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the council’s urban planners had approved initial plans for the large-scale project.

“Docklands has gone from industrial land in the 1990s to a harbour precinct with more than 13,000 residents and a mix of residential, entertainment and commercial developments,” Cr Reece said.

“Marvel Stadium and the surrounding precinct is now more than 20 years old, and it needs an upgrade to make it more comfortable and appealing for players, spectators and event promoters.”

Works were set to begin in “the middle of 2021”.

To date there are no plans to upgrade the waterfront side of the stadium concourse, despite previous promises.

“I’m excited about opening up this precinct to the water in Melbourne,” AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan had said in March last year.

Locals had hoped an upgraded harbour side of the stadium concourse would create a livelier Docklands both on match days and during the week, particularly for local businesses looking to attract new clientele.

Cr Reece said, however, that the stadium would become a more welcoming prospect.

“The changes will make these sections of stadium more attractive, with blank walls being removed and new hospitality spaces made available. The pedestrian entries will be more clearly visible from the public domain.”

The AFL purchased Marvel Stadium (then Etihad Stadium) in 2016 and in a 2018 deal, the Andrews Government committed \$225 million to the stadium upgrade.

In what is seen as a win-win deal for both parties, the AFL committed in return to keeping the Grand Final in Victoria (at the MCG) until at least 2058, quelling strong interest from rival states ●



▲ An artist’s impression, from Wurundjeri Way vantage point, of the Marvel Stadium upgrade.

# Docklands Dollars an overwhelming success

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
BUSINESS

The Docklands Chamber of Commerce’s (DCC’s) initiative to draw visitors back to the precinct and put cash back in the registers of local businesses has proven a huge success, with its Docklands Dollars program attracting strong interest last month.

Within less than two hours of launching the program on March 29, the DCC confirmed that registrations for its April allocation had already been exhausted, resulting in an estimated spend of around \$2 million in Docklands during April.

Such was the success, the DCC released a new second round of allocations on April 15, which was registrations exhausted after just 13 minutes. The DCC will soon release a third allocation due to continued demand.

The DCC has partnered with the City of Melbourne and Development Victoria to launch the program which is designed to encourage visitors to stay, eat, buy, play and then redeem a generous portion of the money they spend in Docklands.

The program provides registrants with a \$100 rebate for a two-night stay in Docklands. A further \$110 rebate is also available across five categories of spending: retail, services, restaurants, attractions and fast food.

With the idea first conceived just over 12



months ago, DCC president Johanna Maxwell told *Docklands News* that nine months of pressing the council and Development Victoria had truly paid off.

“The DCC fought long and hard to get this program off the ground. At times I’m certain the City of Melbourne and Development Victoria were tired of hearing about our idea to come out of COVID. But we sincerely thank both entities for seeing the potential,” she said ●

**For more information:**  
[docklandsdollars.com.au](http://docklandsdollars.com.au)

# Action on “world-class” Docklands Media Precinct

ARTS & CULTURE

The state government has opened expressions of interest (EOI) for a state-of-the-art media precinct in Docklands, the newest of its kind in Australia.

On April 15, Minister for Business Precincts Martin Pakula and Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson announced interested parties from local and international film, screen and media organisations and partners were being sought to demonstrate how they could achieve the government’s vision of growing the “thriving” and “world-class” Docklands Media Precinct.

“We know Victoria is a global destination for screen, technology, innovation and creative industries. This project will further build Melbourne’s profile in these industries and attract more world class organisations and guests to our city,” Minister Pakula said.

The EOI seeks to attract the best and most capable from across the globe to put forward innovative proposals that cement Melbourne as an international destination for film and screen production.

Building on the government’s current \$46 million project to create a sixth sound stage, the Docklands Studios Melbourne site has the potential to support further development and create a home for a community of screen businesses that can support the studio operations.

EOIs are now open for local and international film, digital, technology, screen and media organisations to collaborate to bring the media precinct vision to life.

With EOIs closing in June, Minister Pearson said the Docklands Media Precinct project could be breaking ground in 2022, providing a boost to the state’s economy and create new jobs through construction and its ongoing operations in Docklands.

“This is an excellent opportunity to build on the strengths of Docklands Studios and we look forward to submissions that will help to bring the precinct vision to life and strengthen our screen industry, creating more jobs for the sector,” he said.

Prior to the pandemic, Victoria’s screen industry contributed \$2.2 billion to the state economy and 17,000 jobs.

Following the global COVID-19 hiatus, the local industry is buzzing again, with work on COVID-safe films, television series and commercials now underway in Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Interested organisations can go to the project website ●

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## Cr Hakim leads way for free sanitary trial

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

New councillor and Docklands resident Jamal Hakim has led an initiative which will see the City of Melbourne become the first council in Australia to trial free sanitary products for women and girls in six council facilities.

In a bid to end what Cr Hakim called “period poverty”, a term used to describe the inability to purchase sanitary products for managing menstruation, councillors unanimously supported a trial at its April 20 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting.

As deputy chair of the council’s health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio, Cr Hakim’s motion will now see free products rolled out to six facilities (locations to be confirmed) in what is hoped will become a permanent service offered by the council.

Speaking at the FMC meeting on April 20, Melbourne Period Project founder and Victorian recipient of the 2021 Australian of the Year award Donna Stalzenburg said she began the campaign to end “period poverty” after supporting many who were living with it.

“I started this project after seeing someone experiencing ‘period poverty’ outside Flinders St. It’s a humiliating and degrading situation,” she said.

“Not everybody is comfortable going to council buildings so if toilets and other facilities could be equipped it would be great.”

Cr Hakim described the initiative as a simple and inexpensive service that would have a “profound impact” for women and girls.

“The fact is we know that there are persons in Australia today who use socks, or a newspaper, or rolled up toilet paper as a result. That is not acceptable,” he said.

“Now imagine the stigma of all of this, and being unable to participate in your community because you could not afford to buy the products you need for menstrual hygiene.”

“As a local council, we are at the heart of it. The closest level of government to the day-to-day lives of the people who interact with our municipality. We operate and deliver services directly to diverse people and we are therefore well positioned to enable this.”

Cr Olivia Ball, who seconded the motion, said the initiative was about dignity. “It is the basis of human rights,” she said.

In supporting the motion, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said it was something that should have been implemented a long time ago.

“Let’s face it ... if blokes had periods, we would have done this decades ago,” he said ●

## Heritage protections for Fishermans Bend

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
HERITAGE

Shed 21 on Lorimer St in Docklands was among five industrial sites nominated for heritage protection as part of the City of Melbourne’s independent heritage review of Fishermans Bend.

Councillors unanimously endorsed the findings of the review at the April 20 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, which will also see the Vegemite factory and a Salmon St substation nominated as sites of local significance to the Minister for Planning Richard Wynne.

The review has also resulted in the nomination of the West Gate Bridge and the former Government Aircraft Factory (now Boeing) at 226 Lorimer St Port Melbourne as sites of state significance to the Victorian Heritage Register.

Deputy Lord Mayor and the council’s chair of planning Nicholas Reece said when it came to Australia’s industrial history, there was “probably no area more important” than Fishermans Bend.

“This very special precinct needs to be properly protected,” he said. “Fishermans Bend has been home to some of our most iconic industries and brands including Vegemite and General Motors Holden.”

The facility at 21 South Wharf was established as a berth from 1908 and according to the heritage review, Shed 21, which still stands today, was constructed in 1956 for mechanised handling of steel.

“Steel was seen as vital to the economic growth of Victoria and, for 27 years, Shed 21 played a major role in its importation,” the review stated.

“Shed 21 was large and included distinctive transverse cranes that travelled on tracks beyond the extent of the shed on both the Yarra River and road sides for loading.”

“The Bolte Bridge, constructed in 1999, and the development of Docklands, meant that freight ships no longer used the wharves to the east of the bridge. In 2016, two-and-a-half bays from the eastern end of the shed were demolished. The section of the wharf apron where the cranes ran, which was on timber piles, was also removed and a narrow dropped-level apron introduced at the waterside.”

The site is currently owned by Development Victoria and has been discussed since 2006 when the initial Yarra’s Edge Bolte Precinct Development Plan was approved.

An amended plan was approved by then Minister for Planning Matthew Guy in 2013 under the premise that the Metropolitan Fire Bridge (MFB) would build an emergency services centre at the western end of the site.

However, in 2015 the MFB withdrew its interest and as a result, the 50-metre building earmarked for the site was no longer relevant.



▲ An historical image of Shed 21 in Docklands taken in 1962.

Development Victoria later applied for built form of up to 90 metres along the Lorimer St frontage.

It proposed a mixed-use precinct incorporating a “blend of commercial and residential uses, as well as community recreation and open space areas” including a health and wellbeing hub, maritime facilities and arts and recreation facilities.

But plans for the site remain uncertain, with a spokesperson for Development Victoria telling *Docklands News* last year that it was continuing to refurbish the former shipping sheds for “future activation”.

“Development Victoria continues to explore activation opportunities for Shed 21,” the spokesperson said.

The council’s heritage review of the site supported an alternative recommendation which proposed to “align the heritage overlay with the approved Development Plan covering the subject land (Bolte Precinct West – Yarra’s Edge Addendum, 2019)”.

“Development Victoria is committed to retention of Shed 21 and ensuring a sensitive high-quality interface on any future development to the south,” the report stated.

With Fishermans Bend forecast to accommodate 80,000 new residents and 80,000 new workers by 2050 as part of the state government’s ambitious urban renewal vision, the council’s chair of heritage said the review was particularly exciting.

“This is unprecedented work,” he said.

“When we look at the credible histories that have been put together for us, Fishermans Bend has some of our finest heritage fabric – conserving the best is only going to make urban renewal even stronger.”

“We’re stepping up protection for significant sites to provide certainty and clarity to

landowners, established businesses and the community.”

Cr Leppert said the nomination of the former Kraft Vegemite factory was an example of how to protect the history of Fishermans Bend while the area redeveloped.

“In 1943, hundreds of women were recruited to work at a new vegetable dehydration factory in Port Melbourne as part of the war effort. In 1952, the site was expanded to include a ‘yeast factory’ that went on to become a household name and Vegemite is still being made at the factory today,” Cr Leppert said.

“This site is emblematic of post-war food manufacturing plants that were constructed across Melbourne. It’s important to retain the area’s history and we will continue to do whatever we can to ensure Fishermans Bend retains its industrial spirit.”

The Deputy Lord Mayor said the Westgate Bridge had been nominated as a site of state significance for its historic and social significance as well as the aesthetic and technical significance of the bridge’s design and construction.

“The Westgate Bridge was the site of an industrial accident that killed 35 workers more than 50 years ago and led to lasting workplace reforms. The bridge also opened up our city to the west,” he said.

The former Government Aircraft Factory (now owned by Boeing Aerostructures Australia) at 226 Lorimer St in Port Melbourne was also nominated as being of state significance for the role it played as one of only two aircraft assembly plants in Australia during World War II.

With 40 per cent of the Boeing site proposed for heritage listing, the council said it will not impact on any of the current operations of Boeing nor its ability to consider expansion of their operations on this site in the future ●

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# Urban forests bringing pleasure to residents

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*  
SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Melbourne has unveiled six green spaces which are thriving after receiving matched funding via the Habitat Grants under the Urban Forest Fund 2020 program.

The grants scheme saw up to \$5000 of matched funding for residential owners' corporations (OCs) to create green spaces on privately-owned, residential properties.

The six gardens are located across the municipality, including at a unit complex at Yarra Point on Point Park Crescent where a new sustainable garden was created just before lockdown last year.

With around 600 residents, the OC at Yarra Point had a vision to create a biodiverse indigenous environment that was full of colour, movement and interest – establishing a green oasis for people and indigenous fauna to enjoy.

The area included around 355 sqm of new greening over two levels. Existing communal gardens on level five have been rejuvenated with a variety of native climbers, trees, shrubs, grasses and ground covers, including an indigenous bushfood section.

At ground level, empty garden beds were planted, alternating with Silver Banksia (*Banksia marginata*) and Hop Goodenia (*Goodenia ovata*), with indigenous grasses and ground covers interspersed throughout. Small-leaved Clematis (*Clematis microphylla*) will be grown as climbers on the back wall and will provide habitat structure for birds, and nectar and pollen resources for native bees.

The planting of these trees provides more than 115 sqm of canopy cover and shade.

The Habitat Grants were a part of the council's Urban Forest Fund 2020, which saw the council supporting greening projects in a bid to accelerate the creation or enhancement of green space in the municipality.

The Habitat Grant saw the council partner with residential OCs for greening projects in



▲ Some of the new garden spaces at Yarra Point on Point Park Crescent.



common property areas.

The grant could be used for soil improvement works, plants and trees and irrigation, as well as project planning and labour as long as the cost of this was not more than 25 per cent of the project's total cost.

Eligibility criteria for the grant included the requirement for applicants to show that their project would deliver more overall green cover than had existed previously, as well as using only "in-ground planting", have a maintenance plan and include some plant species which were indigenous to the local area.

The council's environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said, "These projects maximise green space for people and wildlife on residential properties, and I look forward to seeing these green spaces thrive."

Cr Leppert said that although the council was committed to 3000 plantings a year on public land, a significant portion of land in the municipality was privately owned.

"It's crucial that we work with OCs to increase greenery on their sites," Cr Leppert said.

The garden that occupies the green space at

the complex now is cohesive, coherent and sustainable, with a semi-desert feel thanks to the addition of rock and gravel.

For the greening projects which received the funding, there were several different points of focus.

One project at Altona St in Kensington focused on helping create a wildlife corridor between JJ Holland Park and Warun Biik Linear Reserve. The historic fire station complex at 100-110 Curzon St in North Melbourne had funding awarded for phase one of their greening project to help see the replacement of contaminated soil and the existing lawn and shrubbery.

One of the aims for this project was to have 60 per cent local indigenous plants in the garden beds.

For 78 The Avenue, Parkville, its west-facing orientation meant that heat had to be considered, as well as sustainability and ease of maintenance. Its design focused on sustainability in a warming climate, with more tree cover, native plants, and sections of lawn now a habitat for lizards and insects with rocks, logs and grasses ●



## Appeal to identify man following Docklands burglary

CRIME

Detectives from the Melbourne Crime Investigation Unit are hoping to identify a man following a burglary in Docklands in March.

Investigators have been told an unknown man gained access to a secure carpark on Waterside Place about 11pm on Saturday, March 27.

The man forced entry into a number of storage cases before stealing a suitcase and leaving on foot.

Investigators have released images of a man who they believe can assist with their investigation.

The man is perceived to be Caucasian in appearance, aged in his late 30s and was wearing a blue and grey "LA" jacket, blue jeans and a grey baseball cap.

Anyone who recognises the man is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit a confidential crime report online ●

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# How to be a Badass: First book for local author

WORDS BY Rachael Fleury  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY John Tadigiri  
LITERATURE

While many people might have had writing a book on their “to-do” list over Melbourne’s months of lockdowns last year, Docklands resident Nikki Langman set her mind to the task and has just published her first book.

Released in April, *How to be a Badass – navigating your road to self-mastery* details the 43-year-old’s 30-year struggle with sobriety and the framework she has developed to overcome her addiction.

“My relationship with alcohol started exceptionally young. I was seven years old the first time I remember an upsetting event happening and turning to alcohol for comfort,” Mrs Langman said.

She has been completely sober since her late 30s and said the book was a culmination of all her life experiences.

“I watched through the pandemic so many people struggling, and I was wondering what’s the best way for me to help people. How can I best be that message of hope?”

Mrs Langman worked with local Melbourne publishers Ultimate World Publishing and wrote the book over the course of four months during Melbourne’s second lockdown last year.

“I got up at 4am every day, seven days per week, and I just wrote and wrote. I say this book was written in four months, but really this is a story that has been being written for 43 years,” Mrs Langman said.

The book details Mrs Langman’s life and the development of what she calls the “BADASS framework”; her blueprint for managing life struggles, setbacks and how to manage self-limiting beliefs.

“BADASS is an acronym that stands for Brave, Authentic, Direction, Action, Self-love and Self-talk. By holding myself accountable to this model, I have been able to access my most powerful self,” Mrs Langman said.



“At this time, particularly with everything that has gone on with COVID-19, I’m so grateful I have a message of hope. Whatever you’ve been through, whatever you’re going through or whatever what you might go through, here’s a framework to manage it,” she said.

Mrs Langman holds an impressive CV. She is a business consultant, professional speaker and emotional intelligence specialist and, since giving up alcohol, has become an ultra-marathon runner, competing in races up to 60kms long.

Originally from Orange County, California, Mrs Langman has been a Docklands’ resident for nine years. She said she felt lucky to live in a small community on the edge of a big city.

“I just love Docklands. Even though you’re in the city, Docklands has that small-town feel. It’s a real community. The dry cleaner knows my name; my concierge knows my name. You get the ‘cheers’ vibe around here,” she said.

“As a runner, living in Docklands, there are so

“

*I watched through the pandemic so many people struggling, and I was wondering what’s the best way for me to help people. How can I best be that message of hope?*

”

many trails, there are so many beautiful places to run. I also realised when you’re only allowed to go five kilometres from home when you live in Docklands; you’re surrounded by everything, and you don’t need to go any farther than that ever.”

Mrs Langman said she hoped that her book would inspire people to own their story and also to empower them to believe that their story helped and inspired others.

“Every day that you show up in the world as a badass, you influence others. Even when you don’t feel like it, keep going. You never know who you are affecting along the way,” she said ●

For more information:  
[nikkilangman.com/shop](http://nikkilangman.com/shop)

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# Fishermans Bend key in affordable housing blitz

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
HOUSING

Urban renewal in Fishermans Bend represents a “significant opportunity” to build large scale social and affordable housing in the next 10 years, according to the City of Melbourne.

Along with Arden, the council argued these areas had “the capacity to achieve more” than the state-endorsed target of at least six per cent of affordable housing.

The recommendation was part of the council’s submission to the Victorian Government’s 10-year strategy for social and affordable housing in Victoria, expected to be released later this year.

This strategy is set underpin a record multi-billion-dollar investment in the space across the state.

The council’s recommendation stated that Fishermans Bend, Australia’s largest urban renewal project neighbouring Docklands, was one of the “ideal locations for significant affordable housing construction”.

“The timing is right for social and affordable housing development in our urban renewal precincts,” it said.

“The urban renewal process, which is underway in Arden, Macaulay and Fishermans Bend precincts, is a timely opportunity for at scale development of new housing. Rezoning and government investment in these areas is creating major opportunities for value capture that can be directed toward affordable housing and delivered by private industry.”

The state government’s Fishermans Bend Framework aimed to ensure at least six per cent of housing in the urban renewal area would be affordable.

However, the council believed that target should be more ambitious. “These areas have the capacity to achieve more,” it said.

In other key points the City of Melbourne suggested that, as a result of higher residential vacancy rates within Docklands and the CBD in the wake of COVID-19, the state government purchase vacant properties in major residential developments.

“The vacancies offer a rare opportunity ... to purchase properties outright to rapidly house people who need social and affordable housing ... purchasing properties outright has a range of benefits: rapid increase of housing supply in well-located areas, transferring dwellings from investors that may be loss-making, and improving the city’s community and economy.”

## Push for council recognition

In November 2020, the state government announced a historic \$5.3 billion “Big Housing Build” to construct more than 12,000 new social and affordable homes throughout metro and regional Victoria.

The commitment was the state (and nation’s) biggest ever investment in the space and, according to homelessness groups, was well overdue.

At the time, the government announced that

a new agency, Homes Victoria, would deliver the record housing growth and manage existing public housing.

The CEO of the new agency is former City of Melbourne CEO Ben Rimmer.

In its submission to Homes Victoria’s 10-year strategy, the council made no secret of its desire to be made a key part of the government’s housing blitz.

Citing its central location, access to jobs and existing support services and community infrastructure, the council’s first recommendation was to be brought closely into the fold.

“We seek recognition as a priority delivery partner,” it said.

It proposed a new entity, “Homes Melbourne”, was set up to work in partnership with Homes Victoria.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp underlined the importance of collaboration in the coming years.

“This submission reflects our ability to create a game-changing, city-shaping, but most importantly life-transforming set of policies and actions in the city of Melbourne for Melburnians,” she said. “What we see now is a coalition of the willing, the able and now well-resourced group of organisations, led by the state government and its decision to properly fund a significant delivery of much-needed affordable and social housing.”

Cr Rohan Leppert said the council’s intervention into the policy space was “incredibly important” and would be “one of the most things we’re going to do” in this term.

## City to push affordable housing at State Council

Affordable housing will be one of three key priorities submitted by the City of Melbourne when the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) meets for its state council meeting on May 21 at Melbourne Town Hall.

The City of Melbourne’s representative and MAV deputy metro president Cr Rohan Leppert told the April 20 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting that affordable housing would be one of “three concise and very important motions” put forward.

The other two motions were also planning related, focusing on planning scheme amendments and environmentally sustainable building design.

“One is on the provision of affordable housing – this is a hot issue at the moment,” Cr Leppert said.

“Another is a motion calling on the recognition of the council-initiated planning scheme amendments that are economic enablers and this is very important as councils have planning scheme amendments across the state that are there to provide certainty and to lift economic opportunities. But if the state only views council schemes as inhibitors rather than enablers we have a little bit of an impasse. We need to unlock this impasse.”

“And thirdly the roadmap to environmentally sustainable design. We can’t only leave these matters to national building codes.” ●



▲ THECHO!R, led by Artistic Director Jonathon Welch, has moved into Docklands.

# Community choir moves into Docklands

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*  
COMMUNITY

Community singing group THECHO!R, led by award-winning choral conductor Jonathon Welch, is welcoming new members as it starts back at rehearsal in its new home at Community Hub at The Dock.

Each Wednesday night, sounds of pop music, theatre tunes, folk songs and new works sung with gusto float across the harbour from the first floor of the hub, with the balcony door left open to keep rehearsals COVID-safe.

Mr Welch, who is also THECHO!R’s Artistic Director, said though their old home at Brenan Hall at St. Vincent’s Hospital held many memories for the group, they were excited to move into the area.

“This is such a beautiful, fresh, inspiring space for us to start this new journey coming out of COVID,” he said.

Members of the non-auditioned choir travel far and wide to be involved in the group which caters to all levels of musical skills, from beginner singers to those who are adept at reading and interpreting music.

The closest attending members live in the nearby towers in Docklands. Others, like Tineke Westwood, travel for hours to be involved.

Every week, Ms Westwood makes the journey to and from Traralgon. It’s time she feels is well spent have the chance to sing in what she describes as a “judgement-free zone”.

“That’s what’s so beautiful. When we are here and we rehearse, we’re all the same. So, we’re all concentrating on the music, the words and everything. So, there is no difference,” she said.

Docklands local Viv Walker became a member of THECHO!R after being encouraged to join when she met Mr Welch in Wagga Wagga, where she lived until 2018.

Mr Welch had visited the New South Wales town to lead a massed choir event, and Ms Walker, who at that time would soon be moving to Melbourne, plucked up the courage to ask him if he could recommend a choir.

“He said, ‘I can! THECHO!R ... look us up, let me know when you get here.’ And I’ve been here ever since,” she said

For Ms Walker, as well as the sense that she’s spending her time with like-minded people, one of the key highlights of attending choir is the boost in her singing skills.

“Each week it’s not just a rehearsal. It’s a full-on singing lesson. So, Jonathon works a lot on technique, which is fabulous,” she said.

In leading the choir, Mr Welch said his philosophy is that competence builds confidence.

“Whatever it is that you focus on, that’s where your attention goes, and the energy that comes back to you from that focus can help in so many other parts of your life,” he said.

As a trained opera singer, Mr Welch feels that his vocal skills are what he brings to the table, and though rehearsals are a fun, light-hearted and enjoyable experience for the group, he is also meticulous in imparting his technical knowledge.

He sees his position as both a professional musician and a community choir director as an opportunity to help bridge the gap between the two musical spheres.

As such, he has also organised workshops and performances for the choir with other acclaimed singers and performers including Yorta Yorta soprano Deborah Cheetham and singer-songwriter and comedian Eddie Perfect, and contralto Liane Keegan.

Mr Welch established THECHO!R in 2009, not long after another group he leads for those experiencing disadvantage and homelessness, the Choir of Hard Knocks, shot to fame when they featured on a documentary series on the ABC.

Mr Welch continues to work with the Choir of Hard Knocks today, but a couple of years after they were established he said felt inspired to start a separate group which encompassed the broader community. He encouraged members of the community to come and have a sing, with no auditions and free tryout sessions to “try before you buy” ●

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# “Don’t let the perfect get in the way of the good”

*Reason Party leader Fiona Patten is your local member for the seat of Northern Metropolitan in the Victorian upper house (Legislative Council) of parliament. But what does that mean for locals in practice?*

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
FEATURE

As an independent, Fiona’s vote is incredibly valuable to the government which only holds 17 of the 40 upper house seats, meaning her ability to advocate for change on many critical laws and issues is stronger than what many may assume.

But with a “whopping great electorate” spanning from Craigieburn to the CBD and incorporating 11 lower house seats, including that of Melbourne held by Greens MP Ellen Sandell, her role is more focused on policy than “fix the traffic light type issues”.

However, don’t think this prevents her from getting out in the community to hear from her constituents on all fronts. If anything, providing independent access to government through advocating and holding decision-makers accountable makes her the most effective representative locals could ask for.

Having first been elected to state parliament in 2014 as the leader of the Sex Party, which she founded with her partner Robbie Swan in 2009, Fiona’s acute rise in the Victorian political sphere has been no accident.

While she now represents her constituents under the admittedly “less-catchy” Reason Party, her movement to instil a “voice for reason” in parliament has garnered support from all sides of politics.

And it’s this approach, underpinned by respecting the government’s mandate and being willing to compromise and negotiate in good faith, which has seen her effect change on a diverse range of issues during her time.

She told *Docklands News* that when it came to getting things done in parliament, she had always abided by a philosophy of not allowing “the perfect to get in the way of the good”.

“I wouldn’t call it horse trading, but the government does need my vote from time to time,” she said.

“So that does provide a relatively open door and I’ve always seen it as my role to work with the government, so I try and maintain good relations with the government. And that’s meant that a lot of the campaigns that I’ve been passionate about I’ve been able to successfully progress.”

“You can have an effect and it’s remembering that you’re not there to be the opposition. The government holds the chequebook and they’re the government.”

“As an independent it’s an interesting position because every vote is a conscience vote. Every week this office has to get its head around anywhere up to five pieces of legislation, plus the amendments that my crossbench colleagues or the opposition will put forward.”

“I go into all that with an open mind and we look at and assess the legislation, we talk to stakeholders about it, we ask questions of the government, we then talk to opposition about their amendments and there will be time I support their amendments. There will be times I don’t. But I won’t be opposing things just for the sake of opposing things.”

“I think you also have to take into account that governments do have a mandate. I do recognise that I’m not government. That’s not my role. My role is to represent Northern Metropolitan and to advocate for the policies that I took to the election as well.”

A proud “Canberra girl”, the 55-year-old Ms Patten said she came into politics “somewhat unwillingly” off the back of 20 years of advocating for small business, sexual health organisations, sexual freedoms and censorship reforms.

Before relocating to Victoria in 2010, she ran a small fashion design business during “the recession we had to have”, which is when she first became politically active after meeting a lot of people working in the sex industry.

This activism was brought into particularly sharp focus with HIV/AIDS, which she described as a “moment in time” through which she passionately fought against the discrimination and stigmatisation of those affected by the disease.

And off the back of such tireless advocacy and



lobbying, Australia became the first jurisdiction in the world to decriminalise sex work and continues to be a leader in dealing with a range of complex public health and social issues.

Today, with the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19 representing another “moment in time”, Fiona finds herself at the coalface once again, and like HIV/AIDS, she said the pandemic presented a significant opportunity to “do things differently”.

One such opportunity she said was ending homelessness in Victoria, which as the first independent to ever chair a parliamentary committee in Victoria, she recently led a landmark inquiry into (as reported in the April edition of sister publication *CBD News*).

But in addition to chairing the Legal and Social Issues committee, she has been central to a lot of important work through her positions on the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations committee and the Procedure committee.

Having been able to drive reform on issues including ride sharing, voluntary assisted dying, spent convictions, supervised injecting rooms, cannabis, firearms prohibition, and more recently, contact tracing and testing, she said she “loved the work of committees”.

“Victoria will be the first state to have pandemic specific legislation. Now I don’t think I’m boasting when I say that was because of the work that we did,” she said.

“We have been working with the government to ensure we have legislation that doesn’t require us to go into this State of Emergency constantly, that we can go ‘yep, we need to quarantine incoming travellers, we need to isolate people when they’ve come into contact with

*“I think you also have to take into account that governments do have a mandate. I do recognise that I’m not government. That’s not my role. My role is to represent Northern Metropolitan and to advocate for the policies that I took to the election as well.”*



make sure that happens.”

But when it comes to representing her local electorate – one of the fast growing in Australia – Fiona said the vast range of issues and “big pockets of disadvantage” meant her to-do list was constantly getting bigger.

Maximising her parliamentary communication budget by employing people to communicate with her constituents, she said her Sydney Rd office in Brunswick was always there to answer the phone and advocate on behalf of the community.

“Specifically for people in my electorate, I’m more than happy to advocate for better roads, or better trains or better transport and I do that, and I certainly get to put in bids to the budget for certain special projects, but I think more importantly it comes back to that policy area and I think that’s where we can have the greatest effect.” ●

**For more information:**  
[fionapatten.com.au](http://fionapatten.com.au)



*Sean Car*  
EDITOR

SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

COVID’ but we don’t have to have that sense of emergency.”

“I’m still digesting the homelessness report. It was all-consuming for most of 2020 and now that we’ve got the recommendations and now, I’m looking at those and thinking how can I progress them? And to me, that’s my job to

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# MELBOURNE'S ROAD TO RECOVERY

## Enjoy the city's revival by exploring upcoming events that bring the buzz back to Melbourne and boost local business.

Festivals, events and a host of not-to-be-missed experiences will be the talk of the town thanks to a recent \$5 million investment in events as part of the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund, a joint initiative from the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government.

The funding will support events such as the RISING festival, new night markets and the Jurassic World by Brickman exhibition, among many others.

With more than 100 COVID-safe events receiving funding support, organisers are anticipating a combined audience of up to five million people to the city – which will help support jobs and businesses in the city.

'Supporting events with this joint fund is another way we are working to bring back the buzz to Melbourne,' Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

'Our city is famous for its world-class events – whether it's sport, art, food or fashion – and it's critical we support this sector to create jobs and deliver a boost to local hospitality and retail businesses.

'Every visitor we can attract to Melbourne through events and activations provides more opportunities for local businesses for their cash registers to be ringing with more sales.'

Local businesses can also expect a boost from a five-month marketing campaign encouraging people to 'Get to the city or get FOMO'.

## Businesses during COVID-19

Melbourne's businesses were hit hard this past year. Early and effective support has been crucial in helping businesses keep their doors open and

find new and innovative ways to offer their services.

This support included targeted COVID-19 grants and an expanded Business Concierge Service.

In 2020 the City of Melbourne's business grant programs delivered \$17.3 million in funding for almost 3000 businesses.

The funding helped businesses adapt through digital and online measures, business transformation, and reopening costs including COVID-safe equipment, small-scale capital works and outdoor dining furniture and infrastructure.

The Business Concierge Service was established in March 2020 to provide direct support and advice to businesses impacted by COVID-19.

The service has made more than 11,000 outbound calls and responded to almost 9000 inbound calls, providing information about ways businesses can access funding and support.

Earlier this year, the City of Melbourne sought feedback on business grants and the Business Concierge Service.

A survey of 675 inner city businesses found that two in five respondents (38 per cent) said their business would not be operating without the support, and 89 per cent said the support had had a direct positive impact on their business.

'The past 12 months have been the toughest trading conditions in living memory for many businesses and that's why it was so critical to deliver timely and valuable support to help keep Melburnians in jobs,' the Lord Mayor said.

'Many businesses indicated that the grants helped them keep their teams together or get the right equipment to help keep customers safe.'

## Support your local retailers

Right across Melbourne, businesses are seeing foot traffic pick up as people rediscover their neighbourhoods.

The City of Melbourne supports local precinct associations, which are at the heart of their communities.

We recently provided nine recognised precinct associations with an

additional \$100,000 one-off payment for activation programs, to further stimulate economic activity in areas such as the central city, Docklands and Kensington.

Among the many creative initiatives being delivered, the Docklands Dollars program will offer rebates for people taking a two-night 'staycation' near the harbour.

To find out more about what's on in your local area, browse [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](https://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### RISING FESTIVAL

See stunning art and performance in secret spaces

26 May to 6 June

Visit [rising.melbourne](https://rising.melbourne)

### WINTER NIGHT MARKET

Enjoy cosy meals at the Queen Victoria Market

3 June to 25 August

Visit [qvm.com.au/whats-on/night-market](https://qvm.com.au/whats-on/night-market)

### JURASSIC WORLD, BRICKMAN

Explore a prehistoric world build from Lego

1 April to 31 May

Visit [exhibition.thebrickman.com](https://exhibition.thebrickman.com)

### OZ COMIC-CON

Experience cosplay, gaming and comic art with fellow pop culture fans

3 to 4 July

Visit [ozcomiccon.com/melbourne](https://ozcomiccon.com/melbourne)



## SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

Local businesses, services and organisations are the lifeblood of Melbourne, and our support for them is multi-layered and ongoing.

Visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/business](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/business) to subscribe to the Business in Melbourne newsletter and explore the help on offer, including grants, rate relief, marketing support and free outdoor dining permits.

For one-on-one advice, call our dedicated Business Concierge Service on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business), or enquire online at the above website.

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# 10 HIGHLIGHTS OF YIRRAMBOI FESTIVAL

Explore more than 150 dynamic events that celebrate First Nations culture presented by YIRRAMBOI Festival between 6 and 16 May.

Meaning 'tomorrow' in the shared local languages of the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung peoples, YIRRAMBOI Festival is a celebration of the diversity and continuous evolution of the longest living cultures in the world.

The festival features a dynamic program of free and low-cost events spanning genres and art forms including music, dance, theatre, film, exhibitions, markets, fashion parades, family-friendly events, talks and symposiums.

Creative Director of YIRRAMBOI Festival and Boonwurrung and Wemba Wemba woman Caroline Martin said this year's festival is all about what's next.

'When you immerse yourself in the many free and paid events you will be a part of the first live audience that many of our creatives have had in more than 12 months, and we can't wait to celebrate with you,' Caroline said.

Here are 10 of the festival's highlights:

## 1 Women's Healing Place

Thursday 6 to Saturday 15 May, various dates and times  
Queen Victoria Women's Centre

Attend a series of workshops led by proud First Nations women that explore identity, culture, trauma, healing and self-care through storytelling, yarnning, visual art, song and movement.

## 2 Arterial

Friday 7 to Sunday 9 May, 8.30pm  
Meat Market Cobblestone Pavilion

Marvel at a breathtaking acrobatic performance by the Na Djinang Circus, led by award-winning entertainer Harley Mann, that explores the ancient connections that tie First Nations people together.

## 3 Barring Yanabul: City-wide Blak Out

Saturday 8 May, 8.30am to 8.30pm  
Across the city

See 40 top acts pop-up across the city in this all-day celebration of Blak culture. Explore the city's iconic public spaces and laneways to discover art, music, dance, theatre and fashion. Free.



## 4 Crumbs

Saturday 8 to Sunday 16 May, various times  
ArtPlay, Birrarung Marr

Bring kids aged 5 to 10 to enjoy a magical story of a cubby, a sneaky neighbour and a fight for survival. See the epic battle unfold in this hilarious show from writers NazAree Dickerson and Nathan Maynard.

## 5 Blak Makers Market

Sunday 9 May, 10am to 5pm  
Malthouse Outdoor Stage, Southbank

Discover something new, handmade or delicious at this outdoor market. Browse stalls showcasing fashion, jewellery, crafts and bush food - all from proud Blak makers. Free entry.

## 6 Madhanbaa Mayrra

Saturday 8 May, 8pm  
Melbourne Town Hall

Hear traditional-style songs in Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay languages infused with techno rhythms and the rich sounds of Melbourne Town Hall's Grand Organ. James Henry blends unlikely genres in this unmissable gig.



## 7 BRED

Wednesday 12 to Saturday 15 May, various times  
Meat Market, North Melbourne

See the stars of Briefs Factory interrogate First Nations history with trademark drag, sass and performance art at Meat Market. This cabaret creates space to salvage cultural connections and closeness post-lockdown.



Nartarsha Bamblett will facilitate a workshop as part of the Women's Healing Place program

Photo: Yotography

## 8 Deadly Funny Showcase

Friday 14 May, 6.30pm  
Malthouse Outdoor Stage, Southbank

Giggle and guffaw at some of Australia's freshest and funniest Blak comedians. Cheeky and loud, Blak and proud, these side-splitting acts will be welcomed to the stage by your host, Gurindji showgirl Constantina Bush.

## 9 Blak Fillums

Tuesday 11 to Thursday 13 May, 7pm nightly  
The Capitol, Melbourne

Settle in on Swanston Street for three nights of films from First Nations creatives, including a documentary about an Australian company mining in Greenland and a revealing look into the lives of Transblack people.

## 10 Considerable Sexual Licence

Wednesday 5 to Saturday 15 May, various times  
Northcote Town Hall

Take a flirty, filthy and passionate look at the true history of sensuality down under. This provocative performance led by proud Wiradjuri man Joel Bray celebrates country, community, consent and kinship.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the festival showcases the diversity and creativity of First Nations arts and culture.

'We're bringing the buzz back to Melbourne through Australia's largest and most exciting First Nations festival, celebrating a cultural history stretching back more than 65,000 years,' the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

'Melbourne's First Nations people make significant contributions to our city and we're incredibly proud to have this opportunity to appreciate and recognise their culture and their talent through the YIRRAMBOI Festival.'

'Not only is YIRRAMBOI Festival a celebration, it also provides genuine economic benefit to more than 200 First Nations people working in the creative sector.'

For bookings and further information, visit [yiramboi.com.au](http://yiramboi.com.au)

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.

## 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* magazine online at [magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

You can also join conversations to influence plans for your neighbourhood through Participate Melbourne at [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

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# The urban forest

*What is an important and probably one of the cheapest ways to increase urban amenity? Answer: Improving the urban forest – in particular street trees.*

Street trees along with parks and gardens have a large number of benefits including being powerful pollutant filters, improving nearby residents' life satisfaction, adding beauty, helping control water runoff, reducing the urban heat island effect and plenty more. To maximise those benefits the City of Melbourne has a stated goal of increasing public realm canopy cover from the present high-20s percentage to 40 per cent by 2040.

Docklands has a relatively young urban forest and still has some way to go before our forest reaches maturity. Some areas have been rather successful such as the quirky mini pine "forest" on the western side of Docklands Park (which wedding photographers seem to particularly love) while others have been less so; think Norfolk Island Pine trees on Harbour Esplanade which are constantly dying and being replaced. Why the council doesn't just bite the bullet and replace all the struggling trees in one fell swoop is beyond me! In the latter list of strugglers, I would also include the Hills Weeping Fig trees which are planted everywhere (for example Merchant St). Docklands is a windy place and these trees are obviously too brittle for the environment as they constantly have large limbs ripped off in high winds, often necessitating replacement of the tree.

If we want the urban forest to be the best it can be, it's important we take an interest. I remember shortly after moving to Docklands in 2013 attending a breakfast workshop with the City of Melbourne where it surveyed Docklands residents' desires regarding the urban forest, to inform its planning. Some of the items on the wish list were a variety of trees with colourful autumn foliage as well as plantings of various heights and lots of flowering plants. While there have been plenty of plantings since, much of it has not been aligned with those desires. I really think avenues of trees that turned wonderful colours in autumn would be a real drawcard to the area.

One example that is aligned with those desires, however, is the northern end of Village St in Batman's Hill. A few years ago the council spent what must have been a lot of money narrowing the street to one lane, paving it with cobblestones and planting one side of the street with Cimmarron Ash and the other side of the street with Japanese Zelkova. There are underplantings including patches of some sort of creeper (possibly a type of jasmine) which

flowers in spring/early summer for a number of weeks creating an atmosphere of powerful scent which can be enjoyed by passing pedestrians. The street will be really magnificent when the trees mature. Elsewhere in Batman's Hill, it will be interesting to see how the new park adjacent to the Mission to Seafarers building turns out. I'm led to understand it will be completed in 2023.

While not part of the public urban forest the street level and sky parks at Melbourne Quarter on Collins St still contribute the same benefits and are very pleasant places to spend time. Also, at the northern end of Village St on the Medibank building are a couple of spectacular vertical plantings which must be some of the largest in Melbourne at more than four storeys high. While their benefits are probably less than that of street plantings they are nevertheless very worthwhile and add to the amenity of the area.

It's hard to talk about the urban forest without a brief mention of Melbourne's beautiful but struggling London Plane trees. Fortunately, there are not too many of them in Batman's Hill as they don't do well in extended hot spells and I wonder how much longer many of them will last. I believe the council has plans to progressively replace them as they reach the (often premature) end of their lives. I especially wonder about those planted on the Collins St overpass. It is very obvious which of them are planted in pots (as opposed to in the open earth) as they suddenly reduce significantly in size as you move up the overpass. I suspect they will not last too long. I hope I'm wrong but time will tell.

Given the importance of our urban forest to the beauty and liveability of our beloved suburb, I would urge everyone to take responsibility as the council can't be everywhere at once. If you see a plant in need of maintenance report it to City of Melbourne at [melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/greening-the-city/tree-protection-and-management.aspx](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/greening-the-city/tree-protection-and-management/Pages/tree-protection-and-management.aspx) using the button near the bottom of the page. In my experience they are very responsive. I have lodged very many reports and they are generally acted on fairly promptly. Kudos to City of Melbourne for not rolling their eyes at yet another report from this bloody guy and filing it in the circular filing cabinet! On that note, until next time, please notice, enjoy and appreciate the greenery as you traverse our suburb ●



**Tim Martin**  
BATMAN'S HILL RESIDENT  
[TWMARTIN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TWMARTIN@GMAIL.COM)

# The untold stories of Victoria Harbour and Central Pier



*The past month has seen progress on a wide range of issues with great potential to enhance recognition of Victoria's maritime heritage. At the same time, there is ongoing lack of clarity around future plans for Victoria Harbour and Central Pier and indications of some missed opportunities. In this column, we summarise some of the latest developments.*



## Upcoming seminar: Victoria Harbour and Central Pier – A Story Waiting to be Told

At Magnet Galleries in Waterfront City on Saturday, May 1, from 2pm to 3pm, Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN) director Michael O'Brien will be delivering a presentation which aims to shed light on the largely untold stories of Victoria Harbour and Central Pier.

In the heart of Docklands, MMHN will share the "untold story" of Victoria Harbour and the currently controversial Central Pier explaining why both these iconic maritime heritage assets are significant – and fascinating. Failure to understand such maritime infrastructure has resulted in incremental neglect and threatened demolition.

Melbourne's maritime heritage infrastructure of all types is little understood by the wider public or by the plethora of authorities responsible for asset preservation. Two iconic maritime infrastructure assets remain in the CBD – Victoria Harbour and Central Pier. Both were recognised as technically advanced civil engineering projects at the time they were constructed; complex and complementary structures built to enable the great volume of maritime trade which generated prosperity for Melbourne and the hinterland. The "untold story" underpinning these structures – conception, design, and construction – reveals that they deserve recognition, respect and, of course, preservation.

This free MMHN seminar is held as part of the Australian Heritage Festival celebrating "Our Heritage for the Future". It will present historical information and images and will offer – weather permitting – an optional short walk to Victoria Harbour and Central Pier.

Recently, the state government announced it will fund a \$225 million upgrade of Marvel Stadium. Early designs for this project visually reflected its prime waterside location. However, despite the Victorian Government's stated position that it will help reposition Docklands as Melbourne's key waterfront destination, the recently announced "new" design literally "turns its back" on Docklands.

The latest AFL design focuses on refurbishing public and function areas that overlook the Wurundjeri Way side of the ground, not the harbour side. If approved, construction may begin as early as mid-2021.

The significance of Victoria Harbour is hard to overlook. It is the second-largest excavated harbour in the world, and a masterpiece of 19th century civil engineering. However, these latest developments suggest that both the AFL and Development Victoria, the government's development arm, have decided to ignore this magnificent civic asset in their redevelopment plans for Marvel Stadium. Development Victoria, which has been "partnering" with the AFL, has been inexplicably passive in responding to concerns about the AFL about-face.

As things stand, this is a major lost opportunity. These events are a reminder of the importance of MMHN's ongoing mission to influence key decision makers in our city and state who, surprisingly, regularly demonstrate a reluctance to appreciate, and staunchly defend,



our waterways.

MMHN is still paying close attention to unfolding developments surrounding Central Pier. The future refurbishment of the pier has potential to be a focal point for the re-activation of the Docklands area, attracting both tourism and renewed local business activity. At the same time, well-designed solutions should provide recognition of the past and ongoing importance of maritime heritage and maritime industries to Melbourne and Victoria.

Despite the state government's decision in August 2019 to permanently close Central Pier, MMHN has received assurance that the government remains committed to ensuring a future for the pier, as an important heritage asset at the heart of Docklands. We understand that Development Victoria has been instructed to continue to work with Heritage Victoria, the City of Melbourne, local businesses and the community on a long-term plan for Central Pier – one which will support the ongoing development of the Docklands precinct.

MMHN is committed to watching developments closely. We stand ready to help the state government in any way we can to deliver outcomes which will benefit the City of Melbourne and Victoria.

The Victoria Harbour wharves, and Central Pier in particular, are some of Melbourne's greatest maritime assets. In its heyday, this key maritime heritage infrastructure underpinned Victorian prosperity – urban and regional. The civil engineering of this infrastructure was world renowned in the 19th century, delivering Melbourne its reputation as a strong go-ahead city and port on a global scale.

On a positive note, we have been very pleased to observe the progress the City of Melbourne has been making to achieve the vision of a maritime heritage precinct within the city.

For the past two years MMHN has been advocating creation of a Melbourne Waterways Maritime Trail. There is potential for a world-class maritime heritage precinct to be formed by linking together existing maritime assets along the Lower Yarra River and Docklands, with the remarkable Mission to Seafarers building and the new Seafarers Rest Park at its hub. The City of Melbourne is to be congratulated for its high level of engagement with community stakeholders in this project during recent months ●



**Jackie Watts**  
CHAIR OF MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK  
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# Olivia gets the ball rolling on council

*First-time councillor Dr Olivia Ball is bringing a renewed focus on human rights to the City of Melbourne.*

As a member of The Greens, Cr Ball joins her experienced Greens colleague Rohan Leppert on the new-look council and fills the party's void left by the departure of former Cr Cathy Oke, who served three terms at the City of Melbourne.

While the experience of an election campaign last year wasn't new to her having run on the Greens ticket at the previous two City of Melbourne elections, she told *Docklands News* that nothing could have prepared her for stepping inside Town Hall.

"I've run twice, but you don't know until you get inside really the magnitude and the detail," she said. "There's no way of campaigning on any of that. It's just massive – you have no idea!"

"I mean people say it's just roads, rates and rubbish and that's the least of what council does. I have two portfolios now, which I'm delighted with, and they have nothing to do with roads, rates or rubbish!"

Born in East Melbourne, a current resident of Carlton and having lived, worked and studied in the City of Melbourne for most of her life, you'd be hard pressed to find a more "local" councillor if you tried!

As the chair of the council's health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio and the deputy chair to Lord Mayor Sally Capp on the Aboriginal Melbourne portfolio, Cr Ball's wealth of human rights expertise is already being put to good use at the council.

With a Masters and PhD in human rights, Cr Ball began her career as a psychologist working with refugees and survivors of torture and trauma. She is also a published author, a founding director of the non-government organisation Remedy Australia and currently works at Fitzroy Legal Service. And as if that's not enough, she is also currently studying urban planning.

When it comes to the portfolio she chairs, which focuses on the city's health, recreation and community services, and oversees critical issues like homelessness, she said she was "delighted" to be playing a leading role.

"I think human rights is relevant in all levels of government but the most obvious issue for me is homelessness, which falls under my portfolio. We have some very exciting potential there," she said.

"Housing lies with all levels of government so it's not just an advocacy role. We have a role. We can provide land and build social housing as we've done before, and we can do again. And we certainly provide services for people experiencing homelessness."



*When it comes to the portfolio she chairs, which focuses on the city's health, recreation and community services, and oversees critical issues like homelessness, she said she was "delighted" to be playing a leading role.*



"But I'm pleased to say that the council already has a housing-first model which is a philosophy or approach in homelessness that is not focusing on services which basically allow people to remain homeless. That's not what we want to do."

While originally a Labor Party member as a student, Cr Ball has been a member of The Greens for the past 20 years. She said like many other generational Greens members, she was drawn to the party by the then-federal government's handling of the Tampa affair in 2001.

But she said her political activism first began as a student when she campaigned against the apartheid in South Africa, kickstarting a life-long passion for human rights which has since extended to a range of other issues, including the environment, refugees and indigenous affairs.

And now as the deputy lead on the council's Aboriginal Melbourne portfolio, which last year passed its new Reconciliation Action Plan complete with a landmark component of "truth-telling", she said her experience from South Africa was very applicable.

"Coincidentally, I wrote a book with a Zimbabwean activist named Paul Brady, he's a British academic and specialised in the Truth Commission [South Africa], and that winds us back to Victoria – we're going to have a truth commission in Victoria."

"It's a very exciting time to be alive! It's terrible in many ways but I'm very thrilled to have this [Aboriginal Melbourne] portfolio."

"Of course, we have an Aboriginal department that is fully staffed by indigenous people. But we [the council] are keen to look at ways of how we can govern with the five sovereign nations that are components of this municipality. What does it mean to recognise their sovereignty?"

While she is still learning the ropes as a councillor, she said the new council was a diverse and hard-working group of individuals who were all equally committed to "revitalising" Melbourne amid COVID-19.

But while the pandemic has caused a great deal of devastation on the city, Cr Ball said it had presented new opportunities to do things differently.

"Revitalisation of Melbourne is our biggest priority. I won't use the word 'recovery' because it implies going backwards. I don't want to go back. A lot of what he had before wasn't working. We have, in fact, worsening inequality," she said.

"We have just finished a community consultation and the number one issue is health and wellbeing, which is hardly surprising in these crazy times. If you haven't got your health, what have you got?"

"But the number two issue, is climate. We [the council] have declared a climate emergency and we need to make that part of our everyday activity on council. Economic revitalisation is primary, but we don't have an economy without the environment."

"I know we [councillors] can work together and grow to understand and listen to each other. I'm adamant that we have to work together – I'm not interested in party politics for its own sake. I want to get the outcomes." ●



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## Connect with your local community

The **Docklands Community Hub** is a free online space to connect with fellow Docklands locals, stay in the know, post requests for help, share skills and local knowledge, ask for recommendations, discover local services, classes, retailers, events and more!

This Facebook group is owned by **Docklands News**.

If you're a local resident or business you can join up here:

[www.facebook.com/groups/docklandscommunityhub/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/docklandscommunityhub/)



# The need for clear rules on accessible housing

“

Welcome to the ninth of our 12-part series, which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians, rich or poor.

”

This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centered around housing and homelessness. We will hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity.

This month we have asked Dr Ben Gauntlett, Disability Discrimination Commissioner, to share his thoughts about why the objective around housing all Australians is important, and in particular, for those of us who have disabilities...

Good disability policy benefits all Australians. Sometimes it requires governments to mandate outcomes to overcome market failures.

It is important that we house all Australians, rich or poor, because it reduces pressure on Australia's health, welfare, disability support and aged care systems.

More than four million Australians presently have a disability and to future-proof the country from health and disability policy challenges it is necessary for all levels of government to act decisively (and cleverly) on housing policy.

It is not enough that governments give someone a roof over their head and ignore their other needs. The housing must be adequate and appropriately designed for a person's circumstances so they can remain healthy and undertake social, community and economic participation.

For Australia to have enough accessible housing will take a combination of well-designed social housing, mandatory laws regarding the incorporation of accessibility features into new houses, and the temporary or permanent renovation of existing housing. The scale of the problem requires action from both government and non-government organisations.

Some people and organisations think social and economic policy concerning housing can be divided into “disability” and “non-disability” silos. This siloing ignores that around 80 per cent of disability is acquired in a person's life, universal design principles benefit everyone and the majority of disability is invisible. For example, parents of young children can benefit from step-free access to a house and a bathroom area just as much as a retiree living at home and dealing with mobility challenges.

In addition, accessible housing is not just of benefit to individuals who presently have mobility challenges. It may also benefit individuals of all ages with a significant intellectual and cognitive disability (e.g. early-stage dementia), sensory disabilities (such as people with low vision) and people who are neurodiverse. When care or support is provided in the home, it is cheaper, safer and easier if it is provided in an appropriately designed space. Furthermore, a well-designed home can mean care or support does not need to be provided.

In the United States of America, it has been estimated that there is a 60 per cent probability that any new house will be occupied by a person with a disability over its life span. In Australia, more than 90 per cent of people with disability live in private housing. There is no reason to expect this US figure to be different in Australia. This highlights the need for private housing to exhibit accessibility features.

But it has been estimated that only five per cent of new private houses built in Australia are accessible. This is troubling given the human rights imperative to live in appropriate housing, the likelihood of people with disability living in poverty, the wish of many Australians to remain in their own home as long as possible and the dangers created by institutionalisation.

All Australians have a human right to an adequate standard of living, which includes appropriate housing. This right has been recognised in numerous human rights' treaties that Australia has signed and ratified. For example, the right has been recognised in Article 25 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)* and Article 11 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1996)*. Later human rights treaties, including those relating to violence against women and the elimination of racism, have also acknowledged the importance of an adequate standard of living and appropriate housing.

For people with disability, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities acknowledges the right to an adequate standard of living (which includes housing) and social protection. This right has been recognised together with a need for accessibility in the community and a right to live independently as part of the community.

However, in 2019, when Australia's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was reviewed by the supervising Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it was found Australia needed mandatory rules regarding accessibility of new houses. Furthermore, it was concerning to the committee only limited consideration of persons with disabilities, particularly indigenous persons with disabilities, had occurred in strategies to reduce poverty and homelessness – including the National Affordable Housing Agreement and National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Any organisation advocating for compliance with human rights or sustainable development goals should be concerned by these findings of the committee.

People with disability are more likely to live in poverty, be jobless and require social or public housing than people without disability. The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare has reported in 2020 that 41 per cent of all households in social housing include a person with disability and 62 per cent are single adult households. Therefore, social housing policy must be informed by the ongoing and future needs of people with disability in Australia.

Perhaps unsurprisingly Australians want to remain in their communities near families and friends for as long as possible. When the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety commissioned a research paper in July

2020 concerning, “What Australians Think of Ageing and Aged Care” the following question was asked: “where do Australians want to live if they need support or care?” Older Australians indicated a strong preference to stay in their own house if they need support or care. Only 25 per cent stated they would prefer to live in a residential aged care to access required care.

Care institutions, which includes aged care facilities, can unfortunately be gateways to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The World Health Organisation has found that people in aged care facilities are twice as likely to experience abuse. Institutions for people with disability are unlikely to be any different.

Reliance upon institutional care options has led to the need for Royal Commissions and compromises the efficacy of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

But what is the solution? The National Housing Dialogue on Universal Housing Design in 2010, which led a consensus agreement by industry, the community, government and human rights organisations to seek to have minimum liveable housing design standards by 2020 has failed.

It is obvious we need clear rules.

I hope you found the above perspective by Ben interesting and insightful. While what was said may not align with our view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground. This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations.

As I said in my first article, doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act and we need to act now. All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts ●



Rob Pradolin

FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)

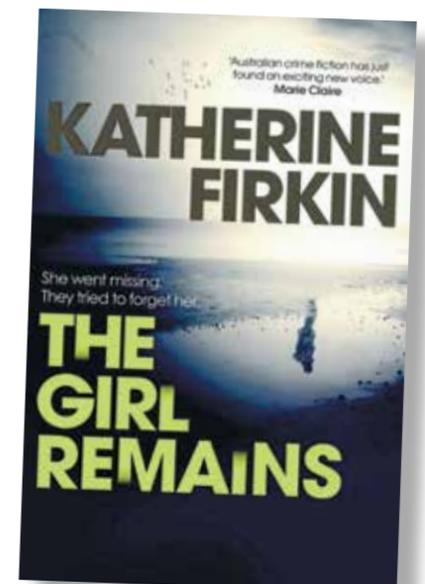
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## CRITIC

▼ Katherine Firkin.



▼ *The Girl Remains*, Katherine Firkin, Penguin, 2021.



## Emmett and Cindy return

In June 2020, Docklands News published a positive review of Katherine Firkin's debut crime novel *Sticks and Stones*.

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

Firkin's second crime novel is already out with the same detective Emmett Corban.

In *Sticks and Stones* Emmett's wife Cindy got caught up with a dodgy photographer at District Docklands.

In *The Girl Remains* she has matured and is moving into press photography as a stringer for AAP.

This aspect of the novel is far more satisfying that the rather shallow, naïve portrayal of Cindy in the first.

You couldn't actually say that Cindy has developed into an interesting character but at least she has learned how to stand up for her own career prospects.

Her interference in Emmett's case leads to some pretty amusing scenes, including one in which his small son runs into the middle of a police raid and grabs onto Emmett's leg.

Many of the scenes in this murder mystery are well-conceived with the added inside

knowledge Firkin brings to the role of the press from her own experience in the media as a reporter for the *Herald Sun* and other newspapers.

Unfortunately for those seeking local colour the action has been moved to Blairgowrie which is wooded and wilder than Docklands.

Once again there are sex crimes and twists and turns in the plot in terms of hunting down the murderer.

Firkin writes in a solid, police-procedural way that is gripping, fast-paced and convincing.

My only criticism is of the end when the perpetrator is unveiled. He seems to accept his fate just a bit too readily. It might have been more satisfying for the reader if he slipped off a cliff instead of going quietly.

There are some great cameo appearances, however, particularly DSC Lanh Nguyen who works undercover as a gas meter reader to befriend the main suspect, Warren.

The scene in which Lanh follows Warren on a bike is sublime, given that the enthusiastic and

intellectual Lanh has never ridden one before.

These character quirks are what make a novel sing rather than plod along.

The teenage girl victims, now 20 years older, are a bit tiresome but the description of Blairgowrie is brilliant and a long-lost daughter who sleeps rough is inspirational.

This is a complex yet extremely well plotted novel that is a pleasure to read. Hopefully Emmett and Cindy will return, even if Emmett is still trying to catch up with his son's footy practice ●



Rhonda Dredge

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# Insurance snub to short-stay risks

*Insurance companies seem to have developed a distinct distaste for Airbnb and short-stays in general.*

Check out the small print in your latest home insurance policy Product Disclosure Statement (PDS). Just below the charming exclusions for hazardous materials or illegal drugs, you may find another squeamish aversion: short-stays.

Your policy may well have something like this:

*"No cover unless the property is leased to permanent tenants.*

*This policy does not provide any cover unless the property is used by tenants as their permanent residence. This means if the property is used for short-term rental, holiday letting or house sharing (including arrangements booked through an online booking platform) - this policy does not provide cover."*

If you are an owner-investor, you will be responsible for ensuring that your tenant does not use your property as part of a short-stay business. Even if you have no knowledge of the activity, you would be hard-pressed to get a payout if your apartment were trashed, or worse still, if there were a personal injury relating to a short-stay.

The insurance industry's unequivocal disinclination to support short-stays is bound to have knock-on effects. Specifically, we anticipate an uncomfortable tightening of restrictions in leases and, potentially, the introduction of indemnities.

We now have explicit and empirical evidence that insurance industry accords a significantly

higher-risk rating where a property is used for short-stays.

Here it gets very interesting because of the recent update to the Victorian short-stay legislation. The *Owners' Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Act 2021* was passed by both houses of the Victorian Parliament in March and will take effect from the beginning of December this year, unless an earlier date is proclaimed.

The "benefit principle" in the new legislation will allow owners' corporations (OCs) to charge more for an individual property based on attributable costs. The logical extension is that a higher percentage of insurance can be levied on lots that carry on short-stay business.

The "benefit principle" clauses are very clear that other costs such as increased wear and tear and additional security can be sheeted home to those lots that obtain the benefit. Previously only "works" were captured as a cost that could be charged to a beneficiary lot. The new legislation broadens that catchment immensely.

OCs may finally realise the right to have a fair and equitable distribution of expenses beyond lot liability.

### Too chummy?

An unsavoury aspect of the *Owners' Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Act 2021* is the fate of owners in large apartment complexes.

In very large buildings, it is almost impossible to reach a 75 per cent vote to take legal action against companies responsible for the use of flammable cladding.

The Greens had proposed amendments to the legislation including a reduction in the threshold to 50 per cent, the standard benchmark for a plebiscite of just about any description. Those sensible amendments were desultorily

dismissed by the government and the legislation remained silent on the issue, maintaining a cloak of protection for the culpable parties in the building industry. It all sounds excessively chummy.

### Cladding and your health

We promised to update our readers on the second research paper from RMIT researchers on the health impacts of the cladding issue. The paper, by RMIT researchers David Oswald, Trivess Moore and Simon Lockrey, presents a sobering illustration of the far-reaching impacts.

The reports state that in Victoria alone, hundreds of buildings with flammable cladding have been officially classified as posing a risk to the safety of residents: 71 extreme-risk, 368 high-risk and 342 moderate-risk, plus more at the lower end of the scale.

These owners are being forced to find solutions, and it's not easy because it is often unclear who caused the defect and who should bear the cost of rectification.

The report described the cladding issue as a major stressor, detailing reactions among participants including shock and a sense of feeling unsafe in their own homes, particularly those in the high-risk buildings. A common response was uncertainty about the future. Financial anxiety was also a recurring theme.

The participants also expressed frustration and anger, with a litany of complaints:

*"... no-one is listening, unfair costs, insurers refusing to insure their buildings, builders liquidating their existing business and starting a new one if legal action was threatened, etc."*

The report also included a community swipe at short-stay operations being responsible for

a growing inclination to ignore fire alarms – certainly not a good outcome for any building, especially those with cladding:

*"... every short term let person doesn't know what they're doing, doesn't understand that if they burn the toast, you open the window. No, they open the door to the passageway which sets off the fire alarm and the fire brigade turns up. So, every time this happens is an evacuation call, which we've all learned to ignore."*

Most respondents saw the cladding issue as a very long-term problem with serious effects requiring residents to adapt. Liveability and behaviour have been impacted, with some participants believing it will be at least five years before the cladding is rectified on their building.

The full report is available online – just search for "flammable cladding and the effects on homeowner wellbeing".

### Campaign donations

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



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## STATE MP

# "Cash for cans" is finally coming to Victoria!

*After more than 10 years of campaigning from the Greens and community groups, Victoria is finally about to introduce a "cash for cans" scheme! The final design of the scheme was announced in April and we're really pleased.*

South Australia has had a scheme like this for more than 20 years, and almost every other state and territory now has one too. Victoria is late to the game, but it's better late than never.

From 2023, Victorians will be able to take their bottles and cans to depots at convenient and accessible locations across Victoria to return containers, including shops, reverse vending machines, depots, pop-ups, and drop-off points. These will be run by recyclers, small business, and charity, community, and sports groups.

This will get litter off our streets and clean up our waste stream so recyclable materials like bottles and cans don't end up in landfill, but are actually recycled. It will also add welcome cash to sports clubs and other organisations and people who can collect the money for the cans and bottles.

This scheme is a direct result of the Greens in Parliament. When China stopped taking our waste, it led to a crisis in Victoria which finally shone a light on the fact we were shipping our rubbish overseas and not dealing with it here at home. The problem was, the state government had very few plans for what to do next. So, the Greens initiated a Parliamentary Inquiry to look at solutions. This inquiry recommended a cash for cans scheme, among other solutions, like a fourth glass kerbside bin, and building more recycling factories right here at home.

We're really pleased the state government has taken up so many of these solutions.

While 2023 isn't as soon as I'd hoped for when it comes to a "cash for containers" program, it will be a major step forward to reducing our waste and cutting out dangerous litter pollution on our streets and in our local parks, rivers and creeks.

I'm also pleased that companies like Coca-Cola and other big corporations didn't get their way when it comes to the design of the program. They were lobbying the state government to design a scheme that would've locked out local community groups and kept more profit with big corporations, which we fought against.

I will now be turning my attention to what needs to happen next. Many people in the CBD and Docklands still don't have access to composting, and this needs to change.

One of my personal pet peeves is pointless single-use plastics, like bananas and other fruit wrapped in plastic, and the enormous plastic packaging that confronts us when we head to the supermarket. We need to end pointless unnecessary plastics packaging and take solid steps to move away from this disposable society.

I'll continue to advocate in the State Parliament to reduce the amount of waste we produce, by banning unnecessary single-use plastics and ensuring food scraps are composted (not sent to landfill) in our green waste bins,

▼ Ellen Sandell MP at the Recycling 2 Parliament action in 2019 calling on the state government to implement a 10-cent refund scheme for cans, bottles and containers.



among other solutions.

I'd love to hear about your experiences with recycling or ideas for how we can move to a less wasteful city. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to get in touch at 146 Peel St, North Melbourne by emailing [office@ellensandell.com](mailto:office@ellensandell.com) or calling us on 9328 4637 ●



Ellen Sandell  
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DOCKLANDER

# “Took the plunge and never looked back”

*New Quay resident Sam Marasco is about to chalk up five years of Docklands living, and he said that the move had been a positive one.*

Back in 2016, Sam and his wife Rosanna were living in Melbourne’s northern suburbs and things were pointing towards a move.

Upkeep on the family home had become laborious, travel time had become “horrendous” and their children were living in Docklands and North Melbourne, too.

“We always thought ‘what would it be like living in the city? We wouldn’t mind doing that,’” Sam told *Docklands News*.

“So, it became a ‘will we/won’t we’ thing and we eventually took the plunge. And in all honesty, we’ve never looked back.”

In particular, he is drawn to a waterfront “backyard”, accessible trams, the nearby Library at the Dock, shopping without a car, and the general ease of a newfound way of life.

“A lot of people thought we were absolutely crazy. But life is made of challenges, and doing something different if you can. We always thought it would be nice to live somewhere you don’t have to drive everywhere, and wanted to downsize; we had just two of us living in it and the upkeep was just incredible. But now I’m looking out of my window and see a palm tree

and know I don’t have to lift a finger to pick up the leaves! It’s great.”

His main gripe is the cost of parking when having family around.

“One major problem for us is about visitors – there’s just not enough parking. There is parking, but with exorbitant fees. We like to get our uncles, aunts and cousins out to visit occasionally but no one is wanting to come out here and pay \$30 to \$40 to park. We don’t get many visitors anymore because no one wants to pay that much for parking.”

Sam is the father of the Docklands Sports Club’s founding president Carina Parisella (also a nearby Docklands resident) and can be seen on most weekends helping out at Ron Barassi Snr Park near the Bolte Bridge.

The club, which started in 2019, has quickly grown its membership base since formation.

Despite a 2020 heavily impacted by COVID-19, it kicked back into gear and re-started junior soccer and cricket programs from late last year.

“Obviously when you first start off a club you’re desperate for people to help because it’s quite involved when you think about it. So I’ve been involved since day one,” he said.

That involvement includes setting up the ground on a Sunday morning, stepping in as assistant coach when required, helping in the canteen, working the club’s new coffee machine, and when the kids go home, packing it all up.

Sam said the club was an important step in establishing community ties in the local area.

▼ Sam Marasco, a dedicated volunteer at the Docklands Sports Club, pictured at the Docklands Gift in March.



“I think it’s very important. I know when I was a kid I’d be out on the street playing football or cricket but I never had that privilege of going to a local sports club to do it. The park is fantastic and the facilities are great, I think it’s a great way to get kids involved. But also, for the parents; you see them out there getting to know each other. Obviously when they first meet it’s a bit awkward, but once they start talking and coming every week, they start to form friendships and it’s really great for the community. I see it growing.”

Sam said COVID-19 had a visible impact on local shops, and asked other Docklanders to — where they could — buy local.

“There’s been a lot of shops, particularly at The District, that have closed up. We try our best to support our local shops here first, as best we can. But I think a lot more people need to get together and follow suit, because they really need some support.” ●



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ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE



# More than a walk

*For many of us, the walk from the city to the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) usually signifies one thing. Bright lights, colourful scarves, meat pies and butterflies running rampant. But for indigenous man Rob Hyatt, the walk to Melbourne’s cultural home of footy means much more. “There was a ceremony camp at the site of the MCG,” he said.*

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

“In the modern context, whether it’s a major event, we still have Welcome to Country, and elders practising ceremonies there where their ancestors before them practised.”

As Koorie Heritage Trust’s (KHT) manager of education and visitor experience, Mr Hyatt takes people on walking tours across Melbourne, educating and informing the public about indigenous culture, language and diversity. “Culture is practiced in the urban landscapes, and that means the broader public, tourists and visitors can experience Culture as well,” Mr Hyatt said.

“I enjoy promoting Aboriginal Victoria and Aboriginal Melbourne because there’s still sometimes a lack of understanding, or a lack of knowledge if you like, of the fact that Aboriginal people are present in our urban spaces.”

The Birrarung Wilam walk begins with an introduction to Aboriginal artefacts at the KHT centre at Federation Square. Along with providing a space for the broader community to engage with culture, Mr Hyatt said the KHT also enabled local Aboriginal

community members to visit and experience the artwork in their own ways as well.

“One of the things our visitors come to learn is that there is a diversity to Aboriginal Victoria, and the Heritage Trust and the site that we’re on actually is the lands of a particular nation, and in this case, we talk about the Wurundjeri people,” he said.

From there, walkers amble along the banks of the Yarra River adorned by Aboriginal art installations, while Mr Hyatt explains the nuances of life by the river and the impact of colonisation.

He also highlights the towering legacy of Wurundjeri elder, William Barak, who became a spokesperson for Aboriginal social justice in the 1800s during Melbourne’s formative years. Known for his artwork depicting indigenous life and encounters with Europeans, Barak also played a key role in the survival of his own people while gaining the support of non-indigenous people, Hyatt said.

The William Barak building in Swanston St – a visually striking 32-storey residential apartment block – displays Barak’s face through the ingenious use of negative dark spaces flowing through balconies.

As part of the walking tour, Mr Hyatt explained how the building was the largest piece of Aboriginal artwork in Victoria.

“The entire building is the canvas,” he said.

“He’s looking over his traditional country right across the CBD.”

Up until recently, the Aboriginal walking tour was delivered only in person.

But now, in the wake of COVID-19, the walk is also delivered online, ensuring regional Victorians, including students, can gain the same experience as Melburnians. And for city and country folk alike, Mr Hyatt said the experience “blows people away”.

“It’s about understanding your own backyard and understanding the connection,” he said. “It takes people away from the typical or romanticised perspectives of Aboriginal environments.”

“Aboriginal culture is everything – it’s connection to country, it’s connection to your ancestors, it’s connection to our stories.” ●

**For more information:**  
[korieheritagetrust.com.au](http://korieheritagetrust.com.au)

# A gateway to the docks

*If you were a cart or lorry driver delivering or picking up goods during the 1920s, this concrete gate adorned with the Melbourne Harbour Trust crest would be your last barrier before entering Victoria Dock.*

There were two sets of Customs gates. This set of gates was located on Cowper St, now known as Harbour Esplanade (west of Marvel Stadium). The picture is cited by multiple sources as the gate near the corner of Cowper and Piggot streets, now located where the Esplanade meets up with the Bourke St extension. The second gate was located at the corner of Pitt St, which is now swallowed up by NewQuay Promenade. These gates were erected around 1927 and housed watchmen who monitored the traffic and cargo that came and went through the docks.

For as long as there have been ports, wharves or docks, there have been opportunistic thieves who have taken advantage of unwatched cargo, and Melbourne was no exception. *The Argus* in 1918 (August 21) identified that stolen items ranged from beer, condensed milk, medicine, tin, meat and women's wear. At Victoria Dock, the Harbour Trust attempted to combat the problem by installing watchmen, and then replaced their own patrol team with a police patrol in 1913. However, with each passing year there was an increase in prosecutions and convictions, rising from 36 and 30 respectively in 1913, to 127 and 117 in 1920. Some of the workers on the wharves were accused of having criminal records, and others used their jobs to exploit some extra cash. A report from the *Dookie and Katamite Recorder* (February 26, 1920) reported a carrier who was caught stealing tinsplate as he was "short a couple of bob". After stolen oilcloths and women's shoes were found at his home, he received a combined seven-month stint behind bars.

In a 1920 report in *The Herald* (October 23), the Watchmen leader, Mr. P Wade, speculated that there was "an organised gang at work", with the head acting as "the financial man and

brains". Wade went on to add that gangs would usually target cargo in the daytime, using hooks to open bales, then the goods would be hidden and smuggled out by boat in the dead of night. Regardless how much of his speculation was fact, shipowners were spending thousands on preventative measures, while the Harbour Trust paid the police more than £3000 a year for their wharf duties.

Pilfering from wharves became such a nation-wide issue that in 1921 a Royal Commission was put together to investigate the matter. In Melbourne alone, it was found that shipowners, insurance companies and railway authorities paid pilfering claims worth more than £100,000 a year. Goods were found to be stolen before being shipped to Australia or during the voyage (the contents of crates would be replaced with rubbish to give the illusion of weight) as well as within Melbourne's ports and before inspections at warehouses. The commission also made suggestions to quash the threat altogether, ranging from the closing of sheds during meal hours, and increased surveillance, and to install lighting and fences around the docks.

The Harbour Trust would soon give more attention to the dock's security. In 1921, the police unit was expanded from 12 to 26 people to increase dock surveillance. Construction projects later in the decade also helped to discourage thieves, with the dusty Cowper Street Road being reconstructed, and a 15-foot-high wall built alongside to enclose the whole dock area. The wooden customs houses were moved to new locations, and newer, concrete customs houses were built. The construction of fencing in the docks required around 126 linear feet (38m) of steel gates, 1531 feet (467m) of reinforced concrete wall and 610 feet (185 m) of



▲ The Victoria Dock customs gate at Cowper St, erected in 1927.

galvanised iron. That's not to say their problems disappeared altogether when the gates opened. Newspapers continued to report arrests of dock thieves into the 1930s, and the roadways along the gates were prone to becoming gluepots of mud that damaged lorries and other vehicles. Despite these issues, the gates would remain a feature of the docks for nearly six decades

Curiously, a year after the gates opened in 1927, the walls would find another use as a protective barrier during the waterside workers strikes (see last month's article in *Docklands News*). According to *The Herald* (September 21, 1928) during the strikes, the dock's No.3 shed was prepared to temporarily accommodate 800 volunteers, to avoid any violent beatings from irate strikers. The walls and gates would allow volunteers to freely "work without fear of intimidation".

Today, with the dock no longer a site of industry and trade, there are no longer any walls or fences or gates needed. Instead, when one walks by Marvel Stadium to see the Esplanade, they are treated to the wide expanse of the docks, and the many parked boats. The only security needed now is to prevent anyone trespassing on the deteriorating Central Pier, but that's a story for another time ... ●



Ashley Smith

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## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

# Sore back? Consider a chiro

*Is an exercise injury stopping you in your tracks? Maybe you've been practising some bad habits lately, or want to keep a healthy back?*

WORDS BY Dr Carla Cerra

This Spinal Health Week (May 24 to 30) we are asking the Docklands community to "consider a chiro" for their back pain.

Back pain is one of the most burdensome physical conditions facing Australians and the prevalence of back pain in society is astonishing. The Institute of Health & Welfare estimates around four million Australians (16 per cent of the population) have back problems.

With pain being the main symptom of most back problems, it is also estimated that 70 to 90 per cent of people will suffer from low back pain at some point in their lives. This can also take a toll on your mental health, impacting your social relationships, ability to work and quality of life.

With the average Australian sitting for more than half their day, this certainly doesn't help. Your back pain can be triggered by sedentary behaviour caused by inactivity. However, we don't want your pain to stop you from being your most active self. As a nation of sports lovers and weekend warriors, it's important that back pain from exercise injuries doesn't stop you in your tracks.

Living with back pain does not have to be part of everyday life. We at Docklands Health

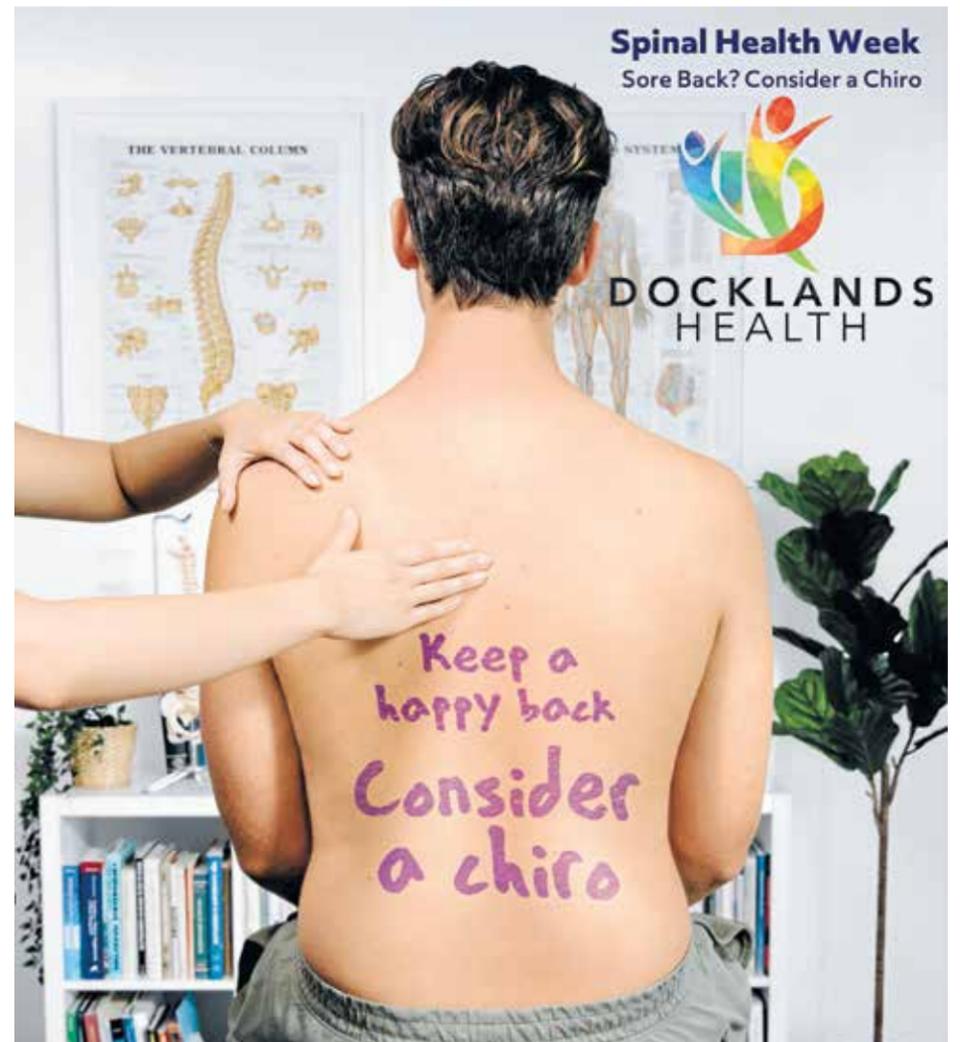
are well equipped to care for back pain whether it be a new episode of pain or a pre-existing condition. Chiropractors carefully assess each patient individually and tailor their care accordingly, by using a variety of non-surgical techniques, such as specific spinal adjustments, manual therapy and low-force intervention.

If you want to simply keep your spinal health in check, then we can also provide you with care, including exercise programs, lifestyle advice and assistance to help you maintain your spinal health as well as your wellbeing.

For those who wish to keep a healthy back Dr Carla and Dr Mike at Docklands Health also suggest utilising chiropractic as a preventative healthcare option, as they offer exercise programs, lifestyle advice and assistance to help incorporate positive health habits into your everyday.

This Spinal Health Week is a great time to Consider a Chiro and to make an appointment with us to take control of your back pain!

Contact us at Docklands Health by phone at 9088 3228. Online at [docklandshealth.com.au](http://docklandshealth.com.au), or you can come in and speak to us at Shop 4/860 Collins St, Docklands to book an appointment with us today ●





RHYS MCCLEARY

“Other than the beautiful scenery and my family who live in these towers, it’s got to be COSTCO. It has a great range of products at low, low prices.”



SEBASTIAN GOMEZ

“I like coming to Docklands to sit by the river, dine at the waterfront and do some shopping.”



DOMINIC BUCKLEY

“I work at the KFC in The District Docklands and I quite enjoy working with my colleagues here and I do enjoy coming to Docklands from Coburg especially on sunny days.”



TODD DAVIS

“I often cycle down to Docklands from Essendon on my bike; I enjoy the bike tracks and the open spaces. I like supporting the business Cycles Galleria on Docklands Drive.”

# Faces of Docklands

*Question: When it comes to Docklands, what are you grateful for?*

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SWA113E

## CHAMBER UPDATE

### Docklands Dollars success

*One month into Docklands Dollars and wow, just wow. What an update we’ve had from the public, stakeholders and businesses.*



To give you an example of some of the success – the City of Melbourne and What’s on Melbourne had to stop advertising the program outside of release times as there were too many enquiries. Too many enquiries. It’s not a bad problem to have!

We’ve logged more than 500 phone call enquiries since the first launch, not to mention many, many more website and social conversations. Speaking of which, it’s nearly impossible to track all the hits and reach of the program, but just on our socials alone we’ve reached more than four million people.

For those interested in taking advantage of the offer we will be releasing allocations every two weeks through to September. Head to [docklandsdollars.com.au](http://docklandsdollars.com.au) to register your interest.

Also follow our socials [instagram.com/docklandsmelb](https://www.instagram.com/docklandsmelb) and [fb.me/melbdock](https://www.facebook.com/melbdock) for updates and to see all of our 400 members featured during the duration of the program.

#### Market Fresh

Clearly one of the successes of the COVID era has been Market Fresh at The District Docklands.

So much so I now have to drop the word “District” from that sentence. Rebranding and branching the marketing out separately, the fresh food precinct will now be known as Market Fresh in Docklands. I for one have loved the addition and couldn’t think of getting my fresh food from anywhere else •



Shane Wylie  
 MEDIA DIRECTOR  
[DOCKLANDSCC.COM.AU](http://DOCKLANDSCC.COM.AU)  
 DOCKLANDS  
 Chamber of Commerce

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Celebrate “sticks-on-sticks” architecture

Due to the dire state of architectural standards of CBD commercial buildings, Melburnians need to shift gear, and instead of trying to find any buildings with any design standards, we should look for excellence in what Australian architects can do best ... be derivative followers of fashion.

But gone are days when an architect could win an award by ticking the three compulsory boxes of at least one curved corner, some feature timber, and some vertical plants.

I propose a new award for CBD architects of the “stick-on sticks” school of design.

This school’s philosophy is not to waste valuable time on creativity or design excellence, but instead, go straight to the client’s core objective of saving money.

Architects know the answer is an uninspiring glass box (it’s worked for decades). But the creative young things now have an inspired extra creative element the box of tricks ... the “box of sticks”.

The technique is to take the boring glass box and glue sticks onto the facades.

At first this school of design was hesitant to apply sticks with gusto. In fact, early examples were just coloured lines stuck on facades (check out the creative yellow stripes on the tower opposite Spencer St Outlet) I am reliably told this was a result of the architect’s preschool child taking to the drawings with a crayon when he took them home to work on them.

But now all restraint has gone, and architects confidently smother facades with “stick-on sticks”. Bravo.

One positive side of this design school is the inclusivity. Architects now include their children in the process.

Just take home a model of the glass box, together with a box of sticks, some glue, and away they go. Fun for all.

Even Fender Katsalidis has seen the light, and thrown some sticks on the uninspiring box (which looks like a fishnet stocking has been pulled over the glass extrusion) opposite the Republic Tower at Queen/La Trobe (Republic is an old Katsalidis building, pre-sticks, which can now be refurbished with some left-over sticks from the building opposite).

The new police headquarters on Spencer St is one of the most beautiful examples of “stick-on sticks”, and will no doubt win many awards, and certainly gets my vote.

So, I propose a new award for the architects’ institute prizes to recognise these trojans of creativity ... a prize for the maximum number of sticks on a building called “GUSTO WITH STICKS”.

Stick manufacturers will clamour to sponsor this prize.

This will be a world beater in architecture, and will cement the reputation of Australian architects they deserve on the world stage.

Look out Santiago Calatrava and Renzo Piano. I believe this “design school” will soon expand to houses.

Owners can even do it themselves. I predict Bunnings will have a DIY “box of sticks” for home owners before long.

With Australia’s sophisticated sense of aesthetics and design (including architects) we are on a winner.

I would love to hear from readers with more great examples of “stick-on sticks” buildings for the people’s award.

Daryl Mead



SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:  
NEWS@DOCKLANDSNEWS.COM.AU

ABBY’S ANGLE

A mid-life crisis

*It’s terminology that’s been floating around since the ‘80s and conjures up images of sports cars, gold chains and mistresses – men who have “lost” who they are in a desperate bid to cling to their youth.*

For women it was more hopelessly represented as a time of self-judgement worrying about signs of aging, and losing their self-identity as their children move out, a time of depression and sadness.

And while many emotions may be felt, all through our lives, that have us reviewing our life achievements, auditing our wish list against the reality of our situations and questioning if we are living our “best lives”, I don’t think that’s to do with an age. In fact, I think it’s healthy to constantly review our choices, and change direction as needed throughout our entire lives. Positive approaches to what may be overlooked when other priorities are in play, can really bring the balance back. Let’s face it, there is a lot to juggle in life.

But the negative approach, or perhaps a better description is the condescending dismissal, of a midlife crisis belongs in the past. I am approaching a “zero” birthday and couldn’t be more excited. First up, there are many wonderful and incredible people who have sadly not made it as far as I have along this timeline of life. So, I’m just downright grateful that I have. But secondly, what isn’t there to celebrate?

Often, the hardest yards of child-raising are done. Of course, you’ll always be a parent and your heart literally does beat in your offspring so the love and protective instincts never leave – but it is a hell of a lot easier when there are no more school report cards, no more weekend

sport, no more being taxi that really does free up your life. I understand that perhaps there is a sense of loss, of a role of “mothering” being over ... but seriously, hallelujah! How good is it to know you’ve given them everything, and will continue to love and support – but from the sidelines!

So, this brings me to the crisis bit ... I totally get wanting a sports car. I mean I have been driving a “mum” van for years. And now, I want a BIG change. (Actually, I want a Winnebago but that’s another story). And I get wanting to change your look – I thought I would age “gracefully”, let grey hairs naturally merge and the “laugh lines” deepen to show a life well lived. Turns out, nope, I don’t. I really don’t. And now that I am approaching this big birthday, I want to look the fittest and best I’ve been in my life. So, I’m going to the gym for the first time in 20-plus years. And who knows, I might even go on a date again sometime.

Midlife crisis? I think not. You see, the thing is, I’ve never felt more like me. I know who I am, I speak from my heart, I am proud of my achievements and I regret very little. So, I am walking fearlessly into the next part of my life, and I have big plans. It’s a time to be excited, and to really go for what you want in your life. It’s a time when, yes, I might be less “needed” by my child but that is right, and proper, and natural. And it brings an enormous opportunity to be myself again, to live my life my way. And I just can’t wait. If this is a mid-life crisis? Then I encourage everyone to have one! Personally, I call it next level living. Go on, be the true you that you want to be.

With love, and sadly no sports car,  
Abby x ●



Abby Crawford  
LIFE@DOCKLANDSNEWS.COM.AU

OWNERS’ CORPORATION LAW

Owners’ corporations are like a box of chocolates – you never know what you’re going to get!

*In the major newspapers, there seems to be a negative news story almost every week about the oversupply of apartments in Melbourne, or reasons why the capital values and rents for apartments will continue to fall, or the myriad of reasons why the cladding issues are being poorly managed by the state government and so on.*

While I’m sure there is a measure of truth to these stories, I’d like to point out that for a growing number of persons, the decision to purchase an apartment is not simply an investment or a speculation. For a growing slice of the market, people are buying themselves a home. A home for them to live in, and a home to raise a family in, or a home to escape family if downsizing, retiring or moving in from the suburbs.

Owner-occupier rates through the Melbourne area are growing. While investors and “rent-vesters” still comprise the majority of purchasers in the apartment market, anecdotally I am seeing a large increase in the number of owners that simply wish to live and reside in their apartment, and enjoy the convenience and functionality of a life “in the city”.

And this growing population of owners expect and demand certain things and have high expectations – things such as a spotlessly clean and striking lobby and common property area, an engaging and deeply positive and personal relationship with their building manager and

concierge, higher quality security and security systems, regular communications with their committee, and frequent upgrades to the common property. And they’re willing to pay for it too. But this is going to lead to a divergence with the investors and rent-vesters (especially in a declining market). The annual budgets and the quarterly fees are only going to trend upwards, while the capital values and rental yields may trend downwards slightly or remain static. There are rough seas ahead for many owners’ corporations (OCs) to pilot in the next two to three years.

In my view, the optimum way to traverse the storms will be to appoint wise and experienced managers with good budgeting and financial acumen, ensure that committees are stable and to seek out committee members with a range of skills; the best committees have a mix of young and old, private sector and public sector working experience, men and women alike.

Committees will need to balance the needs of the investors to keep the annual fees and levies static, while meeting the needs of the owner-occupiers who desire personalized service and rigorous maintenance and upgrade of common property areas.

The buildings that are better at doing this will enhance their reputations and preserve and increase the value of their apartments, while the others will dwindle and fall behind. The gauntlet has been laid down. Sink or swim ●



Tom Bacon  
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# Pet's Corner

## A Dachshund of Docklands

“

*When Docklands News asked about the origin behind the name of local black and white Dachshund Lowla, her owner Jeff Eyles almost immediately started singing the song Lola by The Kinks.*

”



WORDS BY *John Tadigiri*

As for the slight variation in the name, he explained that it was his son who came up with the unique title of Lowla.

“When we got her she was still a puppy and she was so low to the ground. So, we started calling her ‘Low-La.’”

“We were looking to buy a Dachshund since my wife and I got married 50 years ago and I left a message with my contact at the Dachshund Australia organisation located in Sale in eastern Victoria.”

“And one day I got a call from a lady there to come down to see this mouse pup; only a few days old. We ordered and they delivered her to us at Royal Park.”

As one of the early settlers here in Docklands 14 years ago, Jeff worked at a firm for 50 years and is

now retired. Residing in NewQuay with a great view, he said their 20<sup>th</sup> floor apartment overlooked Victoria Harbour with no obstruction.

And as for Lowla, she loves Docklands from both high and low vantage points.

“We take her out for walking at least twice a day, and we get stopped quite often to have her photo taken as she is rare being black and white,” Jeff said.

“She is low like a Ferrari. She is very intelligent to know what we are talking about and to prove he calls her and gives some commands, which she seemed to happily accommodate.”

Jeff also explained that his wife – a practicing psychiatrist – took Lowla to work on Mondays.

“Lowla helps people with PTSD; she’ll go and sits on the knees of those visiting police and soldiers and soothe their minds.” ●

10 YEARS ON

### Looking back at Docklands News - 10 Years On

MAY 2011 | ISSUE 64 |

DOCKLANDS NEWS

#### Docklands is offered a primary school

Docklands has been offered a primary school, which could be open by the start of the 2013 school year.

Digital Harbour developer David Napier has revealed plans for an eight-storey community building, and two storeys have been earmarked for a school.

Mr Napier has offered the building to the City of Melbourne under an attractive financial arrangement which means the council would not have to borrow funds and would end up owning the freehold.

The inclusion of the school is part of a bid to secure the proposed Docklands library and community centre for Digital Harbour.

The City of Melbourne and VicUrban want to build a library and community centre in Docklands but don't have enough money. They have allocated \$9 million between them and have called for expressions of interest from developers.

Lend Lease is also bidding for the library and community centre and wants to locate it as part of a civic centre at Bourke Square at the intersection of Collins and Bourke streets on Victoria Harbour.

Mr Napier thinks the inclusion of a school in his bid makes Digital Harbour a more attractive option. As well as a library and community centre, the Digital Harbour option also houses a childcare facility.

The Government is considering sites for an inner-city primary school, including E-Gate to the immediate north of Digital Harbour, but the E-Gate development won't start until November 2014 at the earliest.

A different part of Digital Harbour was last year earmarked for a primary school but the State Government says it has only now instigated a feasibility study despite such an announcement being made last July by former Education

Minister Bronwyn Pike.

A spokesperson for the Minister for Education Martin Dixon said the feasibility study would look at locations and future demographics of an area ranging from Moonee Valley Racecourse to Fishermans Bend.

The spokesperson said the likely footprint of a high-rise school meant the department had to develop a brand new methodology for the study. He said Mr Napier's offer sounded attractive, but any decision about the location of a school would be made by the Education Department.

A spokesperson for the Education Department said: “The department is aware of Digital Harbour's proposal. The department is currently awaiting the outcome of an independent feasibility study into a school for Docklands to assist with its future school planning.”

Mr Napier's plans for a mixed use community centre including a Docklands school are modelled on “ideas centres” which successfully currently operate in multi-storey buildings in London. His suggested plans show seven “open plan learning environment” class rooms on each floor.

“But the really attractive part to the Government is that the school could start with 150 children on one floor only and later expand to the other floor when demand increased in the future,” Mr Napier said.

Mr Napier said the school would be able to use a 1200sqm park at the base of the building but would also have the ability to turn multi-functional activity rooms into outdoor facilities if it chose to. The public library facilities downstairs could also be used by the school.

He said the community building was located off LaTrobe St and incorporated a driveway and short-term parking so parents could safely drop off their children.

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# A family business through and through

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

After opening in late 2019, The Butcher Club Epicurean at The District Docklands has become a favourite among Docklanders looking to broaden their supermarket experience. Why? Because of their “old-fashioned service, delicious meats, and pre-prepared dishes.”

In what was a dream 60 years in the making, The Butcher Club opened its first store in Altona Meadows seven years ago. Now, the family-owned and -run business has 22 stores spread across the state, from Mornington to Geelong, Ferntree Gully to Ballarat.

Of those 22 locations, its Docklands store is one-of-a-kind, not only specialising in its trademark value added, pre-cut meats, but also accompaniments to round off your cooking experience including sauces, pastas, cheeses and pre-prepared meals.

“We tried to take what we’ve done at our other butcher stores and turn it into a more holistic grocery approach,” The Butcher Club marketing coordinator Sarah Mantfeld said. “Still offering quality cuts of meat and that same butcher experience but expanding the store with greater offerings to turn it into a one stop shop for your meal needs.”

“We know that locals and visitors are after convenience and that is exactly what we provide – no mess, no fuss.”

Although 2020 presented many challenges for businesses and locals alike, Ms Mantfeld



said, as one of the few stores permitted to continue trading in the area, her team was able to form a lasting bond with residents, looking for expert service and advice.

“It [2020] was more positive than negative for us. It gave us a great opportunity to meet an abundance of local shoppers and help us show why shopping local and supporting small business is so important,” she said.

“It gave us the chance to get to know locals, get an idea of their tastes, provide cooking tips and sometimes offer up a few alternatives that were a bit more experimental.”

“One of our really popular features of the store is the heat and eat section. We’ve got a number of ready-made meals. Whether it be our pizzas, pastas, pasta sauces or our microwave My Muscle Chef meals which we seem to be selling more and more by the day, locals are enjoying the convenience given they’re back at work and don’t have the luxury of putting on a 10-hour slow cook.”

With the limitation of some international products, The Butcher Club Epicurean was forced to revisit its business model, focusing almost solely on importing Australian cheeses

and other products.

Other, “non-butchery”, products you are likely to find at their Docklands store include seafood, wine, meat rubs, spices, condiments, chips, fair-trade chocolates, cheese, small goods, soft drinks and ice coffee.

According to Ms Mantfeld, The Butcher Club co-founders Peter Robinson and Andre Van der Linden come from long lines of butchers – grandparents, fathers, brothers, cousins and sons – boasting several decades of industry experience.

“Although we have grown our reach to a number of stores, we are still just a small family run business. Our head office is made up of six people, including Peter’s daughter. I think it is that friendly, family approach that has been so receptive to locals,” Ms Mantfeld said.

The Butcher Club has just launched a rewards program to give back to customers. For points earned customers will receive dollars off their shop.

“We want to thank people for shopping with us because we know how easy it is to throw your meat in while doing your big supermarket shop and we know there is a bit of effort required to come to us,” Ms Mantfeld said. ●

**For more information:**  
[thebutcherclub.com.au](http://thebutcherclub.com.au)

## THE DISTRICT

# When the community comes together, great things happen. Calling all green thumbs in Docklands!

*Did you know there is a community garden at your doorstep? A space where everyone is welcome to come together, connect and grow produce for the community is located right next to The District.*

Funded by the City of Melbourne’s Social Innovation Partnership program and with the support of The District, the community garden has been brought back to life by the Pop-up Neighbourhood House – an initiative of The Centre: Connecting Community in North and West Melbourne. The Pop-up Neighbourhood House is focused on working with the local community to build understanding, social engagement and resilience, and support the growth of a vibrant and inclusive Docklands.

Community development officer at Pop-up Neighbourhood House Jason Butcher saw an opportunity to get involved in the community garden and was inspired to activate the space.

“Gardening is an activity that’s universal, it crosses barriers of age, culture and language,” Jason said.

“There is a wealth of research into the positive benefits that shared community garden spaces can have for their local communities, ranging from increased physical and mental wellbeing, healthy eating habits, fostering greater understanding and connection between people and promoting the growth of social supports and resilience.”

To kick start the clean-up of the community garden, The District hosted a working bee event and sausage sizzle in March sponsored by Woolworths at Market Lane. The working bee was an official relaunch of the community garden, opening the space up to the local community and volunteers. The event has seen a number of volunteers sign up, and a partnership

with the Docklands branch of the Melbourne Community Toy Library was formed.

Jason believes the garden is bringing the Docklands community together through shared experiences and ownership of the space they all call home. So far, the Docklands branch of the Melbourne Community Toy Library has held pop-up play group sessions there, and Jason is keen to see other local groups and organisations involved including Docklands Primary School and the local childcare centres, with an opportunity for children to learn about nature hands-on.

“The District has welcomed the partnership with the Pop-up Neighbourhood House and supportive of their ideas for the garden and we are very keen to continue this partnership into the future,” Jade Smith, The District’s events and marketing manager, said.

If you would like to get involved in the community garden, the Pop-up Neighbourhood House runs sessions every Thursday from 1pm to 3pm and every Sunday from 11am to 1pm. There is always something to be done, from watering and composting the raised beds to tidying, weeding and replanting the walk-through garden. If you are not able to commit to attending every session, join in the many locals who take care of the garden in their own time. If you would like to speak with Jason, visit him at the Pop-up Neighbourhood House located in Wharf St at The District or email Jason directly at [jasonb@centre.org.au](mailto:jasonb@centre.org.au) ●



## 改建旧船 激发活力

随着维多利亚港在春季建立水上活动空间，Alma Doepel号帆船很快将焕发出新的生命，为我们这个艰难的地区带来急需的推动力。

Sean Car

这艘船的买家是Gippsland区的男子 Jake Hughes先生，使得这艘 Alma 帆船获得了新生。

此次交易将为Docklands港区提供一个新的景观目的地，同时也为完成这艘历史悠久的高桅帆船12年的修复工作提供必要的最终资金。

这艘Alma号船将用于音乐活动、婚礼、聚会、公司活动、浮动电影院甚至清晨瑜伽。Alma船届时将会变成ATET，一个灵活的两层活动空间。ATET在埃及神话中是“太阳神”的意思。

安装一个完全可伸缩的屋顶和百叶窗，就可以应付Docklands港区的任何气候条件，ATET将在很大程度上是一个固定的

活动空间，位于Bolte Bridge的桥下North Wharf 路的末端。

Hughes先生告诉本报，该船的活动场地还可以改动到Harbour Esplanade，如果有大型活动，还可以通过连接渡轮服务将船拖入港口或海湾。

这个家族企业一直在与维多利亚发展局、墨尔本市政和开发商Lendlease，商讨有关其它令人兴奋的方法来激活大量废弃的码头。

对于其他试图激活该地区的人来说，这个与码头末端的连接可能会带来问题，但Hughes先生表示，这个位置完全适合“活动地点”的需求。

他说：“我们真的很喜欢这个码头末端的位置，因为在Bolte桥下，几乎给人一种超现实的感觉。完全是一个没人想到的地方。”

“这是墨尔本的一部分，但几乎从来没人来过。与Docklands现有的居民区有点隔开我认为是一件好事，这样可以有些隐秘性，不会有噪音等问题，可以在不干扰当地居民的情况下进行活动。”



## 新幼儿园正式开学

上个月，位于Docklands小学同一地点的新幼儿园正式开学，维州幼儿教育部部长Ingrid Stitt到访剪彩。

4月22日，Stitt部长与学生们和教育工作者、市议员Sheena Watt及Docklands小学校长Adam Bright一起庆祝了Docklands社区的这个重要里程碑。

这个称为Gowrie Docklands幼儿园设在学校的二楼，有两个儿童房和户外学习露台。Gowrie Victoria是经批准的幼儿教育

提供方，为3岁和4岁的儿童提供时段性和综合性幼儿教育。

Stitt 部长说：“我们知道，儿童开始接受教育的时间远远早于进入小学教育。这所新幼儿园为Docklands港区的孩子们提供了所需要和应得的早期儿童教育。”

作为州政府的2.83亿澳元项目的一部分，Gowrie Docklands幼儿园是学校网站上九所新建幼儿园中的第一所，其他幼儿园将在2022年第一学期开始运作。

这项投资确保每年在现有的学校场地提供一些新的幼儿园，让3岁儿童进入幼儿

教育，并确保同样的学习场地，更方便居民家庭。

政府将继续保持这一趋势，确保从2021年开始，每所维多利亚州小学在其本校或隔壁都有一所幼儿园，以减轻家长的负担。

这包括Docklands小学和在2021年开办的其他九所新小学，以及将在2022年开办的所有六所新小学。

欲知更多信息，请访问：[gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/docklands/](http://gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/docklands/)

## 新建海员公园

4月20日，在未来墨尔本委员会(FMC)会议上，市政批准了修建Docklands港区的Seafarers Rest新公园。

Jack Alfonso

这个3500平方米的新公园将位于雅拉河北岸的海员大楼、海员桥和5号码头仓库之间，而这个历史遗产的5号码头仓库目前正由开发商Riverlee进行修复并重新开发。

市长Sally Capp表示，新公园将是连接港区的“宝贵纽带”，同时“将增加公共开放空间”，并“提供进入海滨区域的通道”。

她说：“提供一系列连接的绿色空间和雅拉北岸的舒适性是我的优先工作事项之一。”

社区咨询显示，公园使用者希望为骑自行车者和行人提供一个安全的空间，公园的再开发必须体现当地的历史；市长说，所有这些都将是新公园的设计因素。

市长说：“更新后的公园设计采纳了社区的反馈意见，包括拓宽人行道、提供满足不同需求和体验的座椅选择、以及改善进入公园的通道。”

这个公园项目是根据市政的“开放空间策略”和“港区公共领域计划”而实施的，其中主要的利益相关者团体，包括澳大利亚海军协会、墨尔本海洋遗产网络、当地原住民和残疾人顾问委员会，都经过了相关的咨询。

市政的环境组合负责人 Rohan Leppert说，新公园“将成为一个集合点”来振兴Docklands的河滨区域。

他说：“新公园的设计包括了许多游乐设施、新设备和休闲场所，同时还为行人和骑自行车者提供安全通道、活动平台以及与海洋遗产的连接。”



## 体育馆获准升级改造

David Schout

耗资2.25亿澳元的Marvel体育馆升级改造计划获得了墨尔本市政的批准，期待数月内开工。

此次改造计划中，没有资金对体育馆临滨海大道(Harbour Esplanade)一侧的改造，而是扩建一个新的内部“城市广场”，以及扩展连接“市区边缘”部分，翻新公共区域和功能区域，还可俯瞰Wurundjeri Way道路一侧的地面。

该“城市广场”将让来自Southern Cross车站和穿越Bourke街人行桥的行人

通过。

副市长Nicholas Reece表示，市政的城市规划人员已经批准了这个大型项目的初步计划。

Reece议员说：“Docklands港区已从90年代的工业用地变成了拥有13000多名居民及其住宅、娱乐和商业开发的混合海港区域。”

“Marvel体育馆和周围的区域现在已经有20多年历史了，需要升级改造，对运动员、观众和赛事推广人员来说更具舒适性和吸引力。”

改造工程定于“2021年年中”开始。

尽管之前有过承诺，但迄今为止没有计划对体育馆的临海区域一侧进行升级改造。

澳大利亚足球联盟(AFL)首席执行官Gillon McLachlan去年3月曾说道：“我很高兴墨尔本这个临海区域将得以开放。”

当地居民希望，体育馆临海港一侧能得以升级，无论是在比赛的日子还是在比赛期间，都会给港区带来活力，尤其是希望吸引新客户的当地商家。

Reece议员说，不管怎样，Marvel体育馆将有一个更受欢迎的前景。

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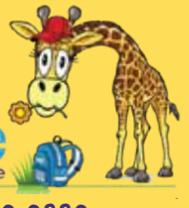
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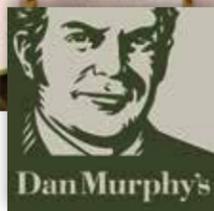
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