

YOUR CITY OF MELBOURNE MAGAZINE

# MELBOURNE

SUMMER 2023-24



**MELBURNIAN  
OF THE YEAR**

REFUGEE ADVOCATE  
LEADS WITH LOVE

**ARTPLAY  
TURNS 20**

RIVERSIDE HUB FOR  
NEXT-GEN CREATIVES

**NARRM NGARRGU  
NOW OPEN**

NEW CBD LIBRARY  
AND FAMILY SERVICES



CITY OF MELBOURNE



Lord Mayor Sally Capp AO on Princes Bridge, overlooking Southbank and the future site of the Greenline Project on the north bank

**Welcome to the summer edition of Melbourne magazine.**

In these pages, we celebrate the kaleidoscope of creative expression in our community. From history-making urban design to artful play – there’s a reason we’re hailed as Australia’s most creative capital.

Read more about our fabulous ArtPlay team, which has been nurturing the creativity and imagination of Melbourne’s youngest artists for 20 years. Find out the meaning behind the new Aboriginal artwork unveiled at narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services.

Discover the ultimate act of civic creativity through the story of our former City Architect, Rob Adams AM. Rob has made a legendary contribution to Melbourne – designing our world-famous urban realm with a focus on welcoming, green and lively spaces. From Postcode 3000 to our bustling Swanston Street, it’s thanks to Rob’s expertise and vision that we’re one of the world’s most liveable cities.

Join us in congratulating the newly crowned Melbourne Award winners who received our city’s highest accolade in the program’s 21st year. We applaud all finalists and winners for helping to shape our city through inspiring and innovative achievements.

In this edition, you will also find our Wellbeing and Connection Map to help you reset your wellness goals over summer and start 2024 with a burst of fresh energy.

Melbourne shines in the warmer months with an array of major events coming to town. There’s our popular Christmas Festival and New Year’s Eve celebrations and the much-anticipated Australian Open and Midsumma – which always set the rhythm for the year.

Finally, I would like to recognise the result of the referendum. Although the decision was made by Australians not to proceed with the Voice, the City of Melbourne remains committed to a reconciliation journey between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

We will continue listening to the First Nations community and work together to ensure the voices of Aboriginal people are amplified and central to our planning for the future.

I also recognise discussions and debates around the referendum have been difficult for many. I encourage you to seek support if you need it, and continue to act with compassion and care for each other.

Wishing you all a safe and thoroughly enjoyable summer in our city.

**Sally Capp AO  
Lord Mayor**

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Members of the By Kids for Kids Collective celebrate ArtPlay’s 20th birthday



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Artists Hilary Jackman, Lucy Foster, Ellen Sayers and Maree Clarke at narm ngarrgu

## First Nations stories flow through narm ngarrgu

**Meaningful art by local Aboriginal creatives is around every corner at narm ngarrgu, our new library and family services centre on Therry Street, near Queen Victoria Market.**

narm ngarrgu is located on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country, and we have worked closely with Elders, artists and community to bring this warm, welcoming space to life by drawing on deep knowledge systems. The name, materials and artworks – even the design of the carpet – honour and celebrate the First Nations community.

Maree Clarke, a Mutti Mutti / Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba / Boon Wurrung artist from north-western Victoria, collaborated with other creatives and designers to create immersive spaces that tell the stories of the site and its context.

Designed to invite reflection, learning, ceremony and play – the artworks celebrate the rich contribution First Nations people make to the life of the city, share stories of Country and speak to the impact of colonisation.

Maree described the three-level, 3000 square metre space as a super-giant blank canvas.

“In the Children’s Library I’ve designed the carpet to represent the seven seasons of the Kulin Nation through plants and animals,” Maree said.

“And I’ve also designed the forest on the mirrored glass that’s down the passageway, so children again will be able to see themselves reflected in the forest on the way to the beautiful library.

“We also cast my husband’s coolamon in cast iron and fabricated a six-metre eel trap with a three metre flute, which is on the terrace for the children to climb on and crawl through.

.....  
***“Through the main library carpet – with the beautiful watercolour and the maps over the top – people will get to learn about the five clans of the Kulin Nation. And what better place to learn than in a library.”***  
 .....

narm ngarrgu – which means ‘Melbourne knowledge’ in Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language – is the city’s first new library in almost a decade. Here are some more of its key features:

- holistic family services including maternal and child health care, parenting services and family support
- a decked-out makerspace with 3D printers, laser cutters, sewing machines and sound studios
- activities and events for all ages, including digital literacy classes, storytimes, craft and book clubs
- a rooftop terrace with the giant eucalyptus-burl coolamon for smoking ceremonies, and a secure outdoor play area
- low-cost bookable spaces that are free for the First Nations community
- more than 30,000 books for all ages, in multiple languages.

Visit us online to discover our other neighbourhood, pop-up and roving libraries, and browse the catalogues.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [melbourne.vic.gov.au/narmngarrgu](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/narmngarrgu)

## CITY FLASHBACK

An older couple receives a food delivery from the City of Melbourne in 1959. This photograph is one of more than 13,000 eclectic pieces preserved in our City Collection. Browse the fascinating collection of images and artefacts at [citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au) or search for

“Art and Heritage Collection” at [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au) to book a tour.

These days our programs for older people span everything from a sensory garden suitable for people living with dementia to intergenerational tai chi.

Visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/olderpeople](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/olderpeople) or 9658 9190 to browse services and support, free and low-cost events and much more.



## WALKING TOGETHER TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE

While Australians have voted not to proceed with the Voice, the highest yes results were recorded in the Melbourne electorate. As your local council, we will continue to listen to, learn from and work in partnership with First Nations people.

While everyone comes to terms with this referendum result, we ask you to please act with compassion and care. As always, prejudice, discrimination and racism have no place here. If you need support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can also call 13 YARN (13 92 76).



Artwork: 'My Grandmother's Totem' by Bushka, a mural from North Melbourne Children's Centre



## BUILDING COMMUNITY, ONE CHILD AT A TIME

After 44 years as an early childhood educator, North Melbourne Children's Centre coordinator Maree Rabach knows that providing a solid foundation for young children is the first step to building strong communities.

“It is immensely rewarding to see the impact our early educators have made on the lives of children. Older children or even adults who attended when they were younger often come back and ask to have a look around, reminisce and say hi to our staff.”

Visit [news.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://news.melbourne.vic.gov.au) to learn about Maree's role and meet more City of Melbourne staff.



### MELBOURNE NEWS, YOUR WAY

Read the latest city-shaping news and celebrate community champions online at [news.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://news.melbourne.vic.gov.au) and subscribe to receive updates direct to your inbox. You can also subscribe using this QR code.

This print magazine can be found at local libraries, community hubs and cafes. If you'd like to receive a copy in the post, email [melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

We'd love to hear your feedback about *Melbourne* magazine. To share your thoughts with us, write to [melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

# CELEBRATING THE CITY'S LONG-STANDING BUSINESSES

Melbourne is full of fantastic small business success stories. We celebrate the people behind inner-city businesses that have stood the test of time with our Lord Mayor's Small Business Achievement Awards.

Among the recipients are legends who have been in business in the city for 10+, 20+ and 40+ years. Below are just three of this year's 50 impressive awardees. Head to [news.melbourne.vic.gov.au](https://news.melbourne.vic.gov.au) and search for "small business awards" to read their full stories, and many more.



*Prabjeet (Pat) Oberoi from Le Taj Restaurant and Lounge*

## Le Taj Restaurant and Lounge 17 years

Do you dare to taste Melbourne's hottest curry? If it's heat you seek, Le Taj Restaurant and Lounge in West Melbourne serves a bhut jolokia made with Naga Viper or "ghost" peppers. Owner Prabjeet (Pat) Oberoi says it's "five times hotter than vindaloo".

"Each dish on the menu tells a story of the vibrant Indian culinary traditions passed down through generations. All dishes are adapted authentic north Indian recipes," Pat said.

"We feel really honoured to be recognised after successfully running this business for the past 17 years."



*Julie Boening from American Doughnut Kitchen with Lord Mayor Sally Capp*

## American Doughnut Kitchen 73 years

Those queues at Queen Victoria Market lead to one of Melbourne's best-loved treats – a sugar-coated, jam-filled delight of a doughnut served out of a vintage bus since 1950. Julie Boening, whose father was one of the founders, has warm memories of time spent bagging up doughnuts.

"Lots of people come for the theatrics. Early in the morning people stand outside and watch the staff rolling the dough and cutting it out by hand," Julie said.

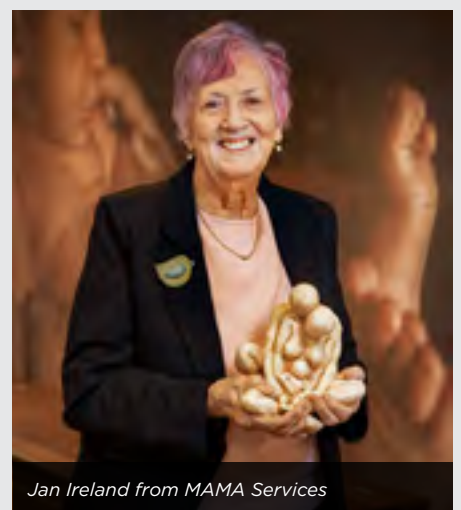
"Once cooked, the doughnuts get turned into a tray. Jam is put in using a hand-pumped machine, then they're put in the sugar bowl to coat them nicely."

## MAMA Services 12 years

Bringing babies into the world with joy and kindness is the life's work of MAMA director Jan Ireland. Based in Kensington, Jan and her team offer holistic care to reduce birth trauma and postnatal depression, and to help new parents have more positive experiences.

"My wish is that every single person who's pregnant has someone who cares about them. I can tell you that doesn't always happen," Jan said.

"MAMA midwives are very special. You're caring about the woman – making a care plan for that woman and her family that reflects her wishes."



*Jan Ireland from MAMA Services*



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards)



# ENHANCING MELBOURNE'S ICONIC MARKET EXPERIENCE

*The new Food Hall at Queen Victoria Market*

Keep an eye out this summer as some of the City of Melbourne's largest, most anticipated works begin, and a score of completed projects open across the city.

## Major projects in the Queen Victoria Market precinct

Step inside the brand-new Food Hall and experience some of Melbourne's best fresh produce, specialty goods and coffee. The Food Hall, which opened in November, complements the market's established food and beverage offerings.

In the heart of the market, works are underway on the new Trader Shed. The contemporary facility will provide traders with the amenities they need to do business and enhance the market experience for shoppers and visitors.

Across a four-storey basement and three above-ground levels, the facility will include lockable storage, climate-controlled storerooms, waste management, loading areas, dedicated trader toilets, showers and lunch rooms. Public amenities will also be available.

Nearby, narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services located in the Munro development is also officially open to the community. Set across three levels, the new space features a children's library, family services, creative makerspace, stunning rooftop terrace and a community study and events space.

## The Greenline Project takes shape

See the north bank of the Yarra River – Birrarung begin to transform as we deliver the first stage of the city-shaping Greenline Project.

Site 1 in the Birrarung Marr Precinct will feature 450 metres of stunning new boardwalks, viewpoints and vibrant community spaces to captivate Melburnians and visitors.

Detailed design and early works are underway, with major construction expected to start in April.

To learn more about the project, the river and the latest developments along its banks, come along to the Greenline Project Hub at Federation Square, opening in 2024.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityprojects](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityprojects)

## Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre

Works are progressing on the redevelopment of the Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre. The foundation is now in place and work on the pool structure is taking shape.

## Princes Bridge restoration

Bluestone restoration and conservation works are now underway on the Princes Bridge. This project ensures the iconic landmark can continue to support residents, workers and visitors into the future.



*narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services is now open in the Queen Victoria Market precinct*

# City architect reflects on 40 years

**Few people have had a greater impact on Melbourne than architect Rob Adams AM, former head of City Design, who has retired after 40 years.**

Rob was recently farewelled by leading Australian architects and Lord Mayor Sally Capp AO, who led the reflections on Melbourne's success.

Since the 1980s, our urban design team has shaped Melbourne into one of the world's most liveable cities. The transformation captured the world's attention.

Forty years ago Melbourne was described as a "doughnut" city that hollowed out at 6pm when office workers returned to their homes in the suburbs.

Melbourne's city design team, led by Rob, brought life back to the inner city through imaginative planning decisions and private partnerships.

Dynamic streetlife, distinctive neighbourhoods and expansive green spaces emerged. The city blossomed as cafes and laneways attracted workers, visitors, creative retailers and designers.

"We and the councillors of the day wanted to take those things that are special about Melbourne and just make them a little better," Rob said.

"Our own suite of furniture and bluestone paving, those kind of things."

Rob calls these design elements small, incremental changes. Yet the Postcode 3000 initiative was transformative over decades.

"We set a target for 8000 people in 15 years in the 1985 Strategy Plan. The property market crashed in the late '80s and a whole lot of office buildings were empty," Rob said.

"We decided we could convert those to residential. Across from the Town Hall, there was a little place and we leased the top three floors and turned it into six apartments. Then we took people through and said, well, this is what living in the city could be."

Melburnians and investors embraced the approach and the residential population swelled from 685 central-city dwellings in 1982 to nearly 40,000 dwellings today.

Rob said his team was then "unwittingly" designing a more resilient city: "by taking space away from cars and giving it to pedestrians, by planting trees, by designing furniture that lasts 100 years. All of that and bringing back a residential population".

Renowned urbanist Jan Gehl was invited to provide guidance and helped write the influential Places for People report.

The winning formula was described as a European lifestyle, but appropriate to Melbourne.

"You need a high-quality public realm and 80 per cent of that is made up of streets," Rob said.

***"I think Postcode 3000 changed the nature of the city dramatically. The streets became much more friendly, much more people-oriented."***

Rob's leadership leaves a legacy of high-quality and sustainable urban design.

Closing Swanston Street to private cars in 1992 helped make Melbourne more appealing for pedestrians.

Council House 2 was Australia's first building to receive a six-star green star design rating. And we have created many more green spaces, planted more trees, as well as investing in stormwater capture and renewable energy.



Rob Adams AM

# ARTPLAY TURNS 20: RIVERSIDE HUB NURTURES NEXT-GEN CREATIVES



Members of the By Kids for Kids Collective

## Head to the riverbank behind Fed Square to discover a creative haven that has enchanted children, families and artists for two decades.

At ArtPlay, children are the drivers of their own creative adventures. With the guidance of artists, children (from babies to 13 years of age) playfully explore how to express themselves through the arts.

Every year, children and families can choose from up to 300 free or affordable workshops, events, immersive installations and performances – at our Birrarung Marr venue or online. These inclusive creative encounters are designed to be challenging, meaningful and unique.

Over 20 years, children have flocked to ArtPlay to explore themes ranging from the climate crisis to what Melbourne may sound like in 100 years' time. The creative experiences encompass many and varied art forms such as drawing, theatre, animation, sound-making and sculpture, to name a few.

There've been collaborations for the city's most iconic events, such as the commissioning of Polyglot's *Tangled* as part of Moomba more than 10 years ago and, in the last five years, co-commissioning shows such as *Crumbs* with Yirramboi First Nations Festival and *The Rainbow Tree* with Midsumma Festival.

ArtPlay has also collaborated with children and artists from around the world. The *Little Nests* program brought together artists from Indonesia and Singapore, in partnership with Melbourne Fringe, while the ongoing *Shadows* project partners with Jeonju Cultural Foundation in Korea.

### Where it all began

ArtPlay was inspired by The Ark, a dedicated cultural centre for children in Dublin. And in turn, ArtPlay has inspired the Artground in Singapore and Palbok Art Factory's children's creative program in Korea.

Established with a contribution from the Sidney Myer Fund, ArtPlay's red-brick warehouse home was once part of the Melbourne rail yards, located where Fed Square stands today. Inside, there is a large open space that continuously transforms with each creative offering.

Since those early days, ArtPlay has gone from strength to strength, supported by the City of Melbourne's ongoing commitment to the provision of quality arts and cultural programs for children and families.

Dedicated to continuous improvement, ArtPlay has partnered with researchers and universities including the University of Melbourne and RMIT to help define ArtPlay's special role in the community and shape its onward path.

ArtPlay is recognised as a leader and innovator in the field locally and nationally, for both its in-venue and digital offerings. Last year, three ArtPlay projects were recognised in the Green Room Awards, which celebrate leading work in the arts sector.

One of ArtPlay's flagship programs is the New Ideas Lab, where artists co-create new works with children, with some projects going on to international acclaim.

### Meet the By Kids for Kids Collective

The cover stars of this magazine are members of By Kids for Kids – a two-year program where a selected group of children aged 9 to 13 come together to develop and deliver arts experiences for their peers at ArtPlay.

Working alongside artists Alex Walker and Hannah Liddeaux from House of Muchness, the collective created a program of exciting events called *Don't Panic, Everything is Urgent* last year.

When faced with a relentless atmosphere of crisis, the children decided to disrupt it with play. The arts events they've dreamed up are both disruptive and joyful.

Two By Kids for Kids events will be remounted in the July school holidays this year – a great source of pride for their enthusiastic grown-up guides, Alex and Hannah.

.....  
**“I’m always excited about young people being armed with surprising responsibilities, reframing our expectations of them,” Alex said.**  
 .....

“Having this ensemble as co-designers with us was a powerful way for them to be centralised in meaning-making, in deciding what matters, and how we should turn what matters into an arts experience.

“The first version of these works was electric. We love that we’re going to get the chance to invest more in them and re-deliver a finessed, vamped iteration.”

Parents of By Kids for Kids members say that their children have shown remarkable growth in response to being charged with new creative responsibilities – collaborating with joy in a supportive environment of artistic invention.

“A really important part of this process has been working with our collective of children on how to guide and lead – not with a kind of self-importance, but with warmth and kindness,” Alex said.

“The richest of processes and outcomes happen when different ages, minds, diversities and lived experiences join up.”

### Thoughts from some By Kids for Kids members

“I’ve loved meeting these people. And working together in this way, which is chaotic and organised at the same time. I hope kids walk away saying: ‘I want to do this again. Can we stay longer?’”

**Abel**

“I hope kids walk away thinking that kids can run some things. I hope leading an experience will make me ready for all the other things I want to do.”

**Jude**

“We hold lots of different opinions, so the ideas get better as we ask questions about them, saying ‘yes and..’ and ‘yes but...’. I hope kids love it and want to come again.”

**Otto**

“Kids know quite well what kids enjoy so it makes sense to do it like this. Just because we’re children we’re not the wrong person for the job, we’re the right kind of people for the job – to guide the fun.”

**Tilda**

### What’s in store at ArtPlay in 2024



#### Wild City

*Kathy Holowko*

Explore a thriving green metropolis where humans and animals share their habitat in this exhibition co-created with children and urban ecologists. Developed through the New Ideas Lab, this award-winning program has toured far and wide, and this year we welcome it back to ArtPlay. January to June. For ages 3 to 13.



#### Rain

*SEAM, Drop Bear Theatre and Threshold*

Parents with babies and pre-schoolers are invited to experience the mesmerising sounds, shapes and wet embrace of rain. Created at ArtPlay in 2013, *RAIN* has gone on sold-out national and international tours. Slow down and wonder amid this intimate, interactive installation from August. For ages 0 to 5.



#### The World is Lava

*By Kids for Kids Collective*

Navigate “emergencies” – from everyday anxieties like eating the worst vegetable to natural disasters – in an obstacle course of tasks. This event is delivered in a game format, with a scoreboard and trophies awarded for surviving daily life. For ages 5 to 11. July school holidays.

### Can Everyone Please Calm Down?

*By Kids for Kids Collective*

Peace out with plants, put cucumber slices on your eyes and try tai chi at test stations designed to help you achieve maximum calm. Then cast your vote for the best method. For ages 5 to 11. July school holidays.



Photo: Darren Gill

### New Ideas Lab projects

*Various artists*

Cook up a storm in *Maa Maa and Nonna’s Kitchen* (pictured above), wow your audience with a super-fun storytelling game in *Then What?!*, discover a world where no books are banned in *The Censor*, and create a safe, sustainable environment for the last living creature of its kind in *Endling*. These four new projects will empower and entertain from January to May. For various ages.

### For artists

ArtPlay works with a range of artists, arts organisations and festivals who are interested in sharing their artistic practice with children and families. We have opportunities for emerging and experienced artists from all disciplines.

If you have an idea for a workshop, performance or exhibition, consider applying to ArtPlay’s New Ideas Lab, which calls for expressions of interest every two years.

Visit the ArtPlay webpage to browse past projects, interviews with artists and guides outlining specialised areas of practice such as technology and live art, as well as consulting and working with young children.

“The dedication and focus the whole of ArtPlay’s team put on the children’s experience is inspiring and quite rare to find. I’m sure this is one of the best available opportunities, and the best resourced environment, to discover how to work with and for children.”

**Daniele Poidomani**

**New Ideas Lab artist and puppeteer**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay)

## EVENTS CALENDAR

# WHAT'S ON IN MAGNETIC MELBOURNE



Event dates and details may change.  
Check online for updates at  
[whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au)



21 JAN - 11 FEB

Midsumma Festival

9 DECEMBER

### A VERY MERRY FRIEND-MAS IN SOUTHBANK

Join the second annual festive celebration at Boyd Community Hub in Southbank. There'll be live music, a doggy parade, food trucks, ice cream, face painting, entertainment, kids' crafts, prizes, Santa and more. Hosted by resident group Southbank3006.

16 TO 19 DECEMBER

### MELBOURNE CITY SLAM

Head to Queensbridge Square for a four-day festival of basketball for players of all skill levels. Events will include games between community groups, free play for people walking past, a slam dunk competition and a skills competition featuring basketball legends and giveaways.



Melbourne City Slam

22 TO 31 DECEMBER

### UNITED THROUGH FOOTBALL AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL

Come together with diverse families for a week-long celebration of community sport and culture. This festival encourages young people of all backgrounds to participate in sport. Join the fun at JJ Holland Park in Kensington.

UNTIL 25 DECEMBER

### CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Explore a wonderland of Christmas events and dazzling decorations. Check off your Christmas list at hundreds of shops. Feast under festive lights or celebrate from rooftop bars. Celebrate Christmas - only in the city.

31 DECEMBER

### NEW YEAR'S EVE

Celebrate this New Year's Eve with wonder. A shimmering showcase of fireworks and mesmerising laser displays will light up the glittering night sky as city hot spots and official Celebration Zones are filled with Melburnians ringing in the new year together.

FROM JANUARY

### ARTPLAY HIGHLIGHTS

Discover all that's on offer at ArtPlay as the creative space for children and families celebrates 20 years. Explore a thriving

green metropolis where humans and animals live in harmony, cook and feast in a multicultural kitchen, and discover remarkable events made by kids for kids. Various dates and times. Located at Birrarung Marr. Learn more at [melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay)

8 TO 14 JANUARY

### NGV KIDS SUMMER FESTIVAL

Experience new artist-led workshops, performances, and free activities for children and families at National Gallery Victoria. Bring all the family and enjoy a great day out - there's something for everyone.

12 TO 14 JANUARY

### VIDA MELBOURNE LATIN SUMMER FESTIVAL

Feel the joy this summer as an uplifting array of Latin culture and entertainment takes over Tom's Block in Kings Domain. Expect authentic food, a beer garden, a kids' area, toe-tapping entertainment and more.



12 - 14 JAN

Vida Melbourne Latin Summer Festival



Photo: Nikki Russian Photography



Photo: Eugene Hyland

**8 - 14 JAN**

NGV Kids Summer Festival

**14 TO 28 JANUARY****AUSTRALIAN OPEN**

In a historic first, the Australian Open is being extended – so take your seat for 15 days of thrilling singles, doubles, wheelchair, juniors, legends and exhibition matches. Birrarung Marr is a great place to experience the atmosphere of this iconic event against a cityscape backdrop.

**20 TO 21 JANUARY****AFRICAN MUSIC AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL**

Bring friends and family to Queen Victoria Market for a summer pop-up event featuring a diverse showcase of African cultures. The event will include food, music, drumming, fashion and cultural activities.

**21 JANUARY TO 11 FEBRUARY****MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL**

Take your pick from more than 200 theatre, performance and visual art shows created by LGBTQIA+ artists and culture-makers in more than 150 venues state-wide. Everything begins with the huge Midsumma Carnival at Alexandra Gardens in the CBD.

**11 FEBRUARY****CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR**

Welcome the year of the dragon at a free event organised by the Melbourne Chinatown Association featuring traditional cultural performances, a dragon parade, market stalls, lion dancing, traditional Hanfu dress-ups and more. This Chinatown event is among many festivities taking place across the city during February as diverse Asian communities come together to celebrate Lunar New Year, Chinese New Year and the Spring Festival.

**14 FEBRUARY****LIBRARY LOVERS' DAY**

Celebrate the valuable roles that libraries play in our lives with a visit to your local branch, the new narm ngarrgu library in the Queen Victoria Market precinct, a pop-up library or our roving Mel-Van. And books are just the beginning. Our libraries also offer movies, music, games, 3D printers, sewing machines, recording studios and much more. Start exploring at [melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries)



Chinese Lunar New Year

**19 TO 23 FEBRUARY****UNIVERSITY ORIENTATION WEEK**

Welcome students back to the city as a flurry of events mark the start of another year of studies. Are you an international student? Check with your university for their program of events and visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents) for the City of Melbourne's plans for O-Week and beyond. Plus, don't miss our popular Lord Mayor's Student Welcome event.

**16 TO 25 JANUARY****SIGNAL SUMMER**

Get set for two weeks of art, creativity and inspiration. Young people aged 12 to 25 will work alongside professional artists to develop skills across a wide range of art forms and create new work. There'll be workshops in screen printing, street art, writing, and sculpture. Learn more at [melbourne.vic.gov.au/signal](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/signal)

**UNTIL 7 APRIL****RIFI: JEAN JULLIEN FOR KIDS**

See the NGV's dedicated kids' gallery transformed into an enchanting underwater world designed by French visual artist Jean Jullien. Kids can freely explore a vibrant ocean scene, join a beach clean-up activity, create their own sea creature artworks, and more.

**COMMUNITY CORNER****EAST MELBOURNE****INTERGENERATIONAL WALKING TOURS**

Take a gentle walk from Powlett Reserve Community Centre with neighbours and children from the local childcare centre. The Powlett Group explores East Melbourne on the first Thursday of the month from 10am, with a break in January. Email East Melbourne Neighbourhood Network at [emnn3002@gmail.com](mailto:emnn3002@gmail.com) to register.

**SOUTH YARRA****COFFEE CLUB**

Make friends over coffee and a chat on the second Wednesday of the month. No bookings are needed, so show up to Domain Brasserie on 13 December at 2pm, find future locations by emailing [southyarracoffeeclub@gmail.com](mailto:southyarracoffeeclub@gmail.com), or follow @SouthYarraCoffeeClub on Instagram. This group also takes a break in January.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au)



Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM

**Be part of building a more compassionate Australia, where everyone has a seat at the table, inspired by Melburnian of the Year Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM.**

From a Greek-Australian child experiencing racism in a country town to CEO and founder of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Kon has turned trauma into action that positively impacts countless lives.

As a human rights lawyer, social worker, Children’s Ground board member, philanthropist, masseur and cooking enthusiast, Kon is both a passionate advocate for people in need and a voracious learner.

“Education is power – the power to do good, and the power to influence and change things for the better. Thanks to my parents’ legacy, I get to live this dream. I can’t waste that opportunity,” Kon said.

**Family values**

Kon’s grandparents came to Australia as refugees, and his parents made great sacrifices for their children.

His dad spent humiliating and gruelling years working on a tobacco farm to support the family, and his mum never fulfilled her dream of being a maths teacher. Kon was the first in his family to complete high school.

Kon and his sister, Her Honour Nola Karapanagiotidis – who was the first Greek-Australian woman to be appointed a judge in the County Court of Victoria – remain ever grateful for these sacrifices, and their family’s strong Greek values.

“The Greek term ‘philoxenia’ means to welcome the stranger, or to love the stranger. ‘Philotimo’, too, means being a servant to love. These values are like breathing for Greeks,” Kon said.

“Society so often forgets it, but everyone deserves to be seen and valued. After all, with a change of the wind we could be the ones in search of safety and welcome.”



**A Seat At My Table: Philoxenia**

Kon’s strong family values have made their way into the title of his Greek cookbook. Created with his mother Sia, *A Seat At My Table: Philoxenia* includes 100 vegan and vegetarian recipes. The book has raised more than \$200,000 for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

**The power of compassion**

Motivated by generational tenacity and a conscious decision to “lead with love”, Kon’s journey has seen him support the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Among Kon’s many roles, he has worked the midnight shift on a crisis line, run support groups for male survivors of incest, promoted safety for sex workers on the streets of St Kilda, and provided massage clinics for men experiencing homelessness.

“I was working with men sleeping rough – tough guys who’d been in prison – and they’d be like little lambs. They told me it was the first time they’d been touched without being harmed. We don’t often think about that, with men,” Kon said.

“People we turn our backs on have trauma at the heart of their journey. That’s the common thread. Whether it be displacement, abuse, serious health issues, bereavement or family breakdown, trauma is the universal story. Intergenerational trauma, in particular, places people at the margins.

“Everyone is worthy – there’s no such thing as a broken person. Most Australians are just a step away from being on the streets, so we need to show each other compassion.”

**A charity begins**

At 28, Kon founded the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre with TAFE students he was teaching to become welfare workers. Their first task was to provide meals for refugees who couldn’t find food in Melbourne.

“The TAFE students were migrants, refugees and lots of Australian mums in their 40s and 50s returning to studies – they were people about whom the world had low expectations,” Kon said.

“This project taught them that they could make a difference and change the world for the better – all you need is the intention, passion and ideals to do so. There’s not much more to it than that.”

The eight-week TAFE project became a charity, and thousands of people began to volunteer and donate in the wake of the Tampa affair. At its peak, meetings of 1400 people were held at Melbourne Town Hall, hosted by former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser.

Melburnians who came along told Kon they were feeling helpless, and ashamed to be Australian. They brought with them cash donations, boxes of veggies they’d grown, and blankets they’d knitted.

**Astonishing impact**

Twenty-two years later, the non-profit has made a huge impact – supporting 30,000 people in need, raising a quarter of a billion dollars and saving thousands of lives. This success was based on three core principles:

“I decided that the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre would never take money from the Australian Government, that we would be outspoken and fearless, and that we would never turn anyone away in need,” Kon said.

Today, 200 staff members and 1000 volunteers deliver English classes, a full-scale legal service, an incubator for refugee-led businesses, two social-enterprise cafes, numerous programs in health, education, housing, meals, financial aid and women’s empowerment, and much more.

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre has also worked tirelessly to support and evacuate refugees from Nauru and Papua New Guinea.

And the organisation is training the next generation of advocates as Australia’s largest investor in refugee leadership.

“We are Australia’s most influential and effective refugee organisation when it comes to creating change – we have relationships in parliament with the entire crossbench, and members of the coalition,” Kon said.

“The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre is trusted because we don’t endorse any political party and we are not aligned to any faith. We are just seeking to create positive change.”

**Walking together for unity**

After the defeat of the Voice referendum, a devastated Kon reflected on the parallels between First Nations people and refugees – two groups with vastly different journeys, both seeking to be safe, free and heard.

“We must stand with First Nations leaders, because they have the solutions. We must listen, learn, and walk the journey as allies. We need treaty and truth now, as well as a Voice,” Kon said.

“Facts and figures don’t work when others are pushing fear, racism and division. So we need to turn to our shared values. We must respond with what matters to everyone – love, community and family. This is our common bond.”

**How to make an impact in your neighbourhood**

For people seeking to follow in Kon’s change-making footsteps, he has some encouraging advice:

“Be proud of where you come from, work hard, remain humble and make a difference. Everything you build, you build through your own hard work,” Kon said.

.....  
**“There is a long way to go, and the work is ahead of us, but we cannot despair. Despair is not a strategy. We’ve got to come back and be more prepared, and more compassionate.”**  
 .....

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre website offers a wealth of information about how to support refugees, from volunteering to booking catering with social impact. To learn more, visit [asrc.org.au](http://asrc.org.au)

**About the Melbourne Awards**

The Melbourne Awards are the City of Melbourne’s highest accolade, recognising the people and organisations who make a significant impact on community life.

Visit us online to be inspired by this year’s Young Melburnian of the Year, actor and transgender rights advocate Georgie Stone, and other Melbourne Award category winners and finalists.

 FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards)



*Kon believes that everyone should have “a seat at the table”*



Nas Mohamud



Ash Lee



Melanie Del Monaco



Rei Chin



Tallia Gilarry



Fadi Qunqar



Kimberley Pierzchalski

# Spotlight on your neighbourhood

**Our neighbourhoods are as unique as the people who live, work and play within them, so we're working to better understand and respond to community needs in a more localised way.**

Through our neighbourhood model, we aim to connect the dots between council, residents and businesses, to empower local people, build community capacity and guide city projects.

This work is led by passionate neighbourhood partners. Read on to hear from each of the partners, who are always on hand to receive your questions and suggestions for your suburb.

To learn more about each neighbourhood, browse community priorities and have your say on issues that matter to you, browse our neighbourhood portals at **participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods**

## CARLTON

18,004 residents

28 median age

55% born overseas

82% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

68% of households are renting

"There's something for everyone in Carlton. Dive into a world of wonder at Melbourne Museum and IMAX, or stay cool at Carlton Baths. Satisfy your taste buds with baklava at Alba's, pizza at DOC, or affordable fresh produce from the Community Grocer's market at the Carlton public housing estate.

"I love embracing the local spirit and diversity in Carlton, working with members of our community to create and celebrate initiatives that support and encourage inclusion, diversity and community connection."

**Nas Mohamud**  
Carlton neighbourhood partner

## CBD

46,780 residents

28 median age

69% born overseas

99% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

69% of households are renting

"The CBD is an amazing patchwork of micro-neighbourhoods. I love that I can choose my own adventure in the CBD - I can go from waltzing through the elegant streets of the east end to meandering through the laneways around Flinders Street.

"Because the CBD is so diverse, I am passionate about supporting the community to be inclusive and accessible to everyone. It's important to me that every person can identify with and participate in something that the CBD has to offer."

**Rei Chin**  
CBD neighbourhood partner

## DOCKLANDS

16,456 residents

32 median age

62% born overseas

98% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

61% of households are renting

“Docklands is really one of a kind. It’s a wonderful place to live, work and play, with water views and an offering for everyone.

“You can feel that a real sense of community is being built in Docklands, which is amazing for the new families in the area. Docklands has so much to give, with a vibrant community eager to participate and engage with one another.”

**Fadi Qunqar**  
Docklands neighbourhood partner

## EAST MELBOURNE

4884 residents

42 median age

27% born overseas

67% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

50% of households are renting

“East Melbourne is a thriving and welcoming neighbourhood right on the doorstep of the CBD. I love that you can wander and escape the hustle and bustle and yet still be in the thick of the city. It’s where a place like the MCG can sit among vast green spaces, where towering trees are celebrated, and green spaces are all around.

“I love that neighbours often know their neighbours and you can experience the warmth of community through intimate acts of kindness like a friendly smile on the street, or an impromptu chat in one of the small businesses.”

**Kimberley Pierzchalski**  
East Melbourne neighbourhood partner

## SOUTHBANK

24,154 residents

31 median age

61% born overseas

98% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

64% of households are renting

“Southbank’s ‘vertical neighbourhood’ reminds me of colourful Lego blocks and their endless potential.

“The community of Southbank is so diverse, not only in terms of the residents’ places of birth and ages, but also their ideas, areas of interests and strengths. When I connect people with each other, they immediately create an inclusive space for others to join.”

**Ash Lee**  
Southbank neighbourhood partner

## KENSINGTON

11,000 residents

35 median age

31% born overseas

29% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

48% of households are renting

“Kensington has a fabulous vibe because of its unique village feel and active community. It’s the birthplace of the Good Karma Network, boasts a train station with its own fairy garden, and it has more than eight community gardens and compost hubs. The neighbourhood also offers some of Melbourne’s best East African and Mexican street food.

“Stroll the stock route to the Maribyrnong River, enjoy the new playspace at JJ Holland Park or adventure playground at The Venny. We’re working on a circular economy precinct pilot for the neighbourhood, a new open space by Moonee Ponds Creek, and improvements to pedestrian and bike safety.”

**Melanie Del Monaco**  
Kensington neighbourhood partner

## NORTH MELBOURNE

16,582 residents

31 median age

42% born overseas

64% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

59% of households are renting

“Within a relatively small geographic pocket, North Melbourne manages to pack in so much, and so many interesting people. It’s got stand-up comedy, cutting edge performance art, three cultural clubs, unexpected laneways, a vertical school, a proper local AFL footy team, a gin distillery, churches, a mosque, and a legendary hot chocolate house.

“I find the mix of experiences and people that I bump into in North Melbourne super energising, which is why I’m particularly interested to work with locals on activities that strengthen neighbourhood spirit and relationships.”

**Tallia Gilarry**  
North Melbourne neighbourhood partner

## PARKVILLE

7462 residents

26 median age

37% born overseas

57% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

62% of households are renting

“The bustling presence of bright minds including university students, families and community groups infuses Parkville with energy and diversity. With so much happening around the Parkville neighbourhood, providing accessible and inclusive venues and programs for all members of our community is important to me.

“Strolls through Royal Park – our municipality’s largest open space – give me the chance to admire birds and possums, while the State Netball and Hockey Centre offers sporting activities and events to keep the community engaged. There’s also the charm of places like Walmsley House, one of Melbourne’s oldest homes, preserving the history of the neighbourhood.”

**Nas Mohamud**  
Parkville neighbourhood partner

## SOUTH YARRA

6565 residents

39 median age

33% born overseas

78% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

50% of households are renting

“South Yarra is a slice of glorious gardens, leafy streets and buzzing outdoor action. The Royal Botanic Gardens is an inspiration to visitors, gardeners and landscapers. It’s a cultural hub with Sidney Myer Music Bowl hosting gigs and St Martins Youth Arts Centre, which has developed generations of young creatives.

“The Senior Citizens Centre also hosts free programs, and its bay window view across Fawkner Park is a bit special. I am looking forward to Anzac Station opening, connecting further with schools, supporting those who feel socially isolated and promoting inclusive experiences and access for all people.”

**Kimberley Pierzchalski**  
South Yarra neighbourhood partner

## WEST MELBOURNE

8014 residents

31 median age

54% born overseas

68% of homes are flats or apartments of 3+ storeys

62% of households are renting

“The funny thing about West Melbourne is that, despite it being well-located and objectively cool, many people don’t know it exists. It’s bizarre that a neighbourhood fringed by waterways, a market and container yards – that is also home to a historic lawn bowls club, iconic live music venues, and surely the most recognisable cabaret restaurant – has somehow managed to keep itself secret. I have so much respect for West Melburnians – they’ve got it figured out.

“I love brainstorming how we can transform the Maribyrnong River into a well-known and well-used natural asset.”

**Tallia Gilarry**  
West Melbourne neighbourhood partner

# DRAGON BOATING THE BREAST

## MEDICINE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

**A group of breast cancer survivors has found strength, solidarity and healing through an unconventional avenue: dragon boating in Docklands.**

Having navigated their own personal health challenges, the members of Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix come together each week to navigate the waters of Victoria Harbour, proving that paddling is sometimes the best medicine.

The dragon boat has become a vessel of resilience and empowerment, fostering solace and support among these survivors who, while all having their own lived experiences, share the benefits of camaraderie and an active lifestyle post diagnosis and treatment.

For Andrea Seers, who was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a bilateral mastectomy in 2003, joining Dragons Abreast has afforded her a healthy new life of friendship and adventure in a safe and caring environment.

“After the bilateral mastectomy I experienced lymphoedema in my arms,” Andrea said.

“When I read an article in the Breast Cancer Network of Australia newsletter back in 2011 outlining the benefits of dragon boating for breast cancer survivors I was interested.”

The article profiled Dragons Abreast Australia which has clubs all over the country, including Docklands-based Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix.

“I had been wanting to try a new exercise and it was a perfect fit, along with the social side of dragon boating,” Andrea said.

“This exercise is perfectly suited to me to keep my lymphatic system moving well throughout my body via the gentle repetitive motion of paddling, and it’s keeping my arms quite strong as well.”

Andrea, who is now club president, said the importance of social connection and belonging after undergoing a serious health diagnosis cannot be underestimated.

“Especially after dealing with the debilitating treatments and psychological stress after a diagnosis of breast cancer, our club is a wonderful supportive environment for people who have been through this,” she said.

“To be surrounded and supported by those who have all been through the same experience is hugely rewarding, and we provide hope and a pathway for these people to experience a new life of wellness and adventure.”

### Join the pink paddling phenomenon

Membership of Dragons Abreast is open to all breast cancer survivors and their support crew – not just those living in the City of Melbourne.

“The club has 27 multicultural members comprising breast cancer survivors and our wonderful male and female supporters, currently ranging in age from 48 to 68,” Andrea said.

**“We welcome breast cancer survivors in our community to come and try dragon boating with us any time. We are always looking for new members.”**

Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix paddle for one hour from 10am on Saturdays and, during the non-winter months, from 6pm on Wednesdays. No prior experience is necessary. Meet at the Community Hub @ The Dock, 912 Collins Street, Docklands.



Members of Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix

### Explore our new Wellbeing and Connection Map

Mental wellbeing is largely shaped by the connection we have to our community and our ability to access quality support close to where we live.

Dragons Abreast – and many community groups like it – are listed on our new Wellbeing and Connection Map. The map is designed to help you find activities, services and initiatives that support social connection and inclusion in your neighbourhood.

Using the interactive map, you can easily find opportunities to connect with your community right on your doorstep. Whether it be health, wellbeing and recreation, arts and culture, lifelong learning, volunteering or a community social group, there’s a group just right for you where you will feel welcomed and supported.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT  
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/  
wellbeingconnectionmap](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/wellbeingconnectionmap)



## YOUR COUNCIL



Councillor Dr Olivia Ball, Councillor Kevin Louey, Councillor Roshena Campbell, Councillor Jamal Hakim, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Councillor Davydd Griffiths, Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Councillor Rohan Leppert, Councillor Philip Le Liu, Councillor Elizabeth Mary Doidge and Councillor Jason Chang

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### Councillor Kevin Louey

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### Postal address for all councillors

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GPO Box 1603, Melbourne VIC 3001

## IN BRIEF

### MAKE ROOM MILESTONE

Construction is underway on the City of Melbourne's landmark Make Room project, which will address the critical needs of people experiencing rough sleeping. A Council-owned building at 602 Little Bourke Street is being transformed into 50 studio apartments for transitional housing, with onsite services and wraparound support.

[melbourne.vic.gov.au/makeroom](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/makeroom)

### A FINE SUCCESS

Two years ago, we made the decision to abolish library fines and introduce an automatic renewal of loans to reduce barriers to borrowing. Not only has this made our library services more accessible, overdue items have fallen by 40 per cent. Explore our permanent, pop-up and mobile libraries online.

[melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries)

### TIMELESS MELBOURNE

We can look for heritage in all sorts of places, traditions and objects. Even culture itself. It speaks to landscapes, buildings, parks, trees, infrastructure, monuments, art, community groups and more. We'd love to hear your stories. Post your experiences of local heritage on social media with the hashtag #timelessmelbourne

[participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/heritage-strategy](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/heritage-strategy)

### SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

It takes courage to move across the world to pursue your dreams. But Melbourne is one of the safest and most welcoming places to study. Browse our website to discover events, friendship, wellbeing support and opportunities for volunteering and career-skills development.

[melbourne.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents)

### CITY GUIDES

Whether you're a pet lover, parent, older person or someone seeking accessible outings in the city, we want to help you get the best out of your neighbourhood. Visit Melbourne News and search for our "guide to" articles, which offer top tips about local services, facilities, events and opportunities for community connection.

[news.melbourne.vic.gov.au](https://news.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

### DECEMBER 2023

|                            |                     |        |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Future Melbourne Committee | Tuesday 5 December  | 5.30pm | Melbourne Town Hall |
| Council                    | Tuesday 12 December | 6pm    | Melbourne Town Hall |

### FEBRUARY 2024

|                            |                     |        |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Future Melbourne Committee | Tuesday 6 February  | 5.30pm | Melbourne Town Hall |
| Future Melbourne Committee | Tuesday 20 February | 6pm    | Melbourne Town Hall |
| Council                    | Tuesday 27 February | 5.30pm | Melbourne Town Hall |

View all meeting dates at  
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil)

## PEOPLE WE MEET IN MELBOURNE



### CLEMENT CHANG

Student and learner driver

“I’m studying health science and soon I’ll have work placements, so it’s important that I get my licence. I’m really thankful that I found the Drive for Life program – it’s amazing.”

We support the Salvation Army’s Drive for Life program, which helps young Melburnians without access to a car or supervising driver achieve independence. Sign up to be a driving mentor to change a life.



### DR BELLE LIM

Cancer genetics expert

“Meeting such a welcoming cross-section of people and seeing all the amazing things that women can achieve in Melbourne really made me think about how I can contribute to the community.”

Belle studied breast cancer genetics at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Parkville, works in health and social policy analysis at Deloitte, and empowers international students through her non-profit Future Forte.



### LILY BEDNIKOV

Southbank gardener

“I learnt about when to plant, plant propagation, zero waste, and gardening for small spaces. There’s a real community spirit in the group around sharing ideas and knowledge.”

Head to Boyd Community Hub to tend to neighbourhood plants at friendly Southbank Sustainability Group workshops designed to help locals live more sustainably and reduce their environmental footprint.



To learn more about Clement, Belle and Lily, search for their names at [news.melbourne.vic.gov.au](https://news.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

#### CONTACT

[melbourne.vic.gov.au/contactus](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/contactus)  
03 9658 9658

#### NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE

Teletypewriter (TTY) users phone  
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#### IN PERSON

Melbourne Town Hall, Administration Building  
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne  
Business hours, Monday to Friday

#### CONNECT



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CITY OF MELBOURNE