

Summer Wrap



It's hard to believe that it's time for our final newsletter of 2021!

While the year had many challenges – particularly with the impact of COVID-19 – the Bric team has been focussed on providing a high-level of service to tenants.



I'm particularly proud that Bric established several new partnerships during 2020-21 to assist in supporting tenants. These partners include Communitify Qld, Mission Australia, The Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul. Each partnership helps to ensure that our tenants are well supported and successful.

Also in 2021, the Queensland State Government approved funding for Bric to build 18 new social housing apartments in Redcliffe. We also added 80 properties leased from private landlords in Brisbane and Moreton Bay.

We look forward to 2022 with excitement and hope for the future as we continue to grow and develop our services. This newsletter looks back on recent successes for Bric and our tenants. It also includes some ideas for enjoyment and support if needed at Christmas.

On behalf of everyone at Bric, can I wish you and your family a safe and happy festive season.

Craig

Christmas opening hours

The Bric offices will close from 1pm on Friday 24 December 2021 and will re-open at 9am on Thursday 30 December 2021.

New phone options

Please note our phone options are changing.

When you call the main number 3230 5555, select:

- 1 for tenancy matters;
- 2 for repairs;
- 3 if you are looking for housing and
- 4 for other matters.

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COVID Update:

Visiting the Bric office after 17 December 2021

Keeping us COVID safe

Due to the Queensland Border re-opening on 17th December, we are introducing some new requirements to keep us all safe.

All visits to our offices will be by appointment only.

Visitors will be required to sign-in on the Qld Check in app or sign a written declaration.

The use of masks may also be required.



A place to **rest**

Bric has a Share House in New Farm. The accommodation gives older women experiencing homelessness a place to rest, feel secure and support each other.

Many older women are known to be less likely to ask for assistance, even though they might be homeless – indeed some of the new tenants were previously living in their cars.

The tenants are grateful for the sense of community and stability the house brings. For some, it may not be a ‘forever’ home, but it is there for the time that they need it, as a stepping stone in their future housing journey.

For Bric, we take great pleasure in providing stability and a sense of community to such a vulnerable part of the Queensland community.

We thank the Department of Housing, with Mission Australia Older Women At risk of Housing Insecurity Project, New Farm Patrons Group and Communitify Qld for their support.

The Woman in Room 6

I was never safe. The adults who should have cared for me as a child; the institutions whose job it was to protect children; the men who said they loved me (even the ones who did); and the children who loved me and moved on; all failed me when it mattered.

I believed love would be returned and all I had to do was give more, give better, give freely. And just when I had given up; when I had nothing more to give; when even I stopped loving me, I met Honey. She’s a healer and she loves me. She’s done the times of want with me, kept me warm and safe in the car during the months of nights sleeping rough, Honey licked my tears and made me laugh.



Honey has shown me I am right about love; it is meant to be unconditional and will be returned in spades. She saved my life, gave me a reason to live. For her, I sought out the help I needed, because she needed me. Thanks to Fi from Mission Australia and BRIC Housing we now have a safe place shared with women I am learning to trust. Thanks to Honey I’m caring for myself again and feeling optimistic - I am even planting vegetables I know I’ll be around to harvest.

The Woman in Room 1

I lived in my car since October 2020. I had to flee an abusive relationship and due to family breakdown, I had no place to go. Sleeping in the car was incredibly stressful and scary at times. Having a tenancy with Bric means everything to me. It means I am safe, secure and I finally have stability and normality back in my life. Everything depends on having a home base. Bric has introduced me to supports at Communitify who are working with me to get back into the workplace. I will be taking courses soon. The best thing about living where I am is the freedom. Freedom to eat, drink, sleep and be – freely.

The Woman in Room 3

Our tenant M wants to express big thanks to Bric, for providing her with a home. Not just a house, but a home - in a place that she already knows is going to bring her so much joy and community. She hopes you enjoy the below photos she took on her morning walk. Something that she is thrilled will be a regular occurrence. Already, she feels that this accommodation is going to change her whole life. The loneliness that she was so terrified of experiencing on her own at 70 years old, has for now abated.



Certificate 1 in Construction at 593 Boundary St – **building on this for the future**



A proud moment for the trainees and for Bric

Trainees enjoyed a celebration at Boundary Street to mark their graduation from a Certificate 1 in Construction course. This was the third Cert 1 in Construction delivered at 593 Boundary Street since 2019, funded through Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW). All of us who attended were moved to hear the ten trainees speak about their hopes for the future, and about the confidence and skills they have gained from the 18 week course.

The graduates have life stories full of extraordinary challenges – coming from war torn countries with family members killed or incarcerated, histories of drug addiction, incarceration and lengthy periods of homelessness.

Some admitted that they had not held out any great hope at the point of joining the course. But the group came together led by Construction Manager Joey, who they quickly learned could teach them valuable skills and who they could relate to.

Community organised the program to ensure structure, and support for trainees where their attendance dropped off. By the end, there was a strong sense of camaraderie – trainees felt their individual achievements were part of something bigger – there was a real shared sense of purpose.

Positive outcomes

Three trainees were not able to attend the graduation because they already had work! Most of the others had work lined up – for example as Construction Site Trades Assistants (cleaning and carpentry), a painting apprenticeship, landscaping, and others in hospitality and distribution. The trainees will continue to get support from Community, as they transition into work.

There are good employment opportunities in construction, which is promising for the trainees. Each of the trainees has stable and affordable housing – much of it in Department funded Bric headleased accommodation.

“This course has been amazing, it has helped with many areas of my life. I have purpose now, I have strong friendships from this course, we had to learn how to get along, that is a skill in itself, I want to come back for the next course and be the 2IC and motivate others to do it.”

Lavina



“This course has given me opportunities that I never had before.”

Khin



Graduates, Community and All Trades staff on graduation day

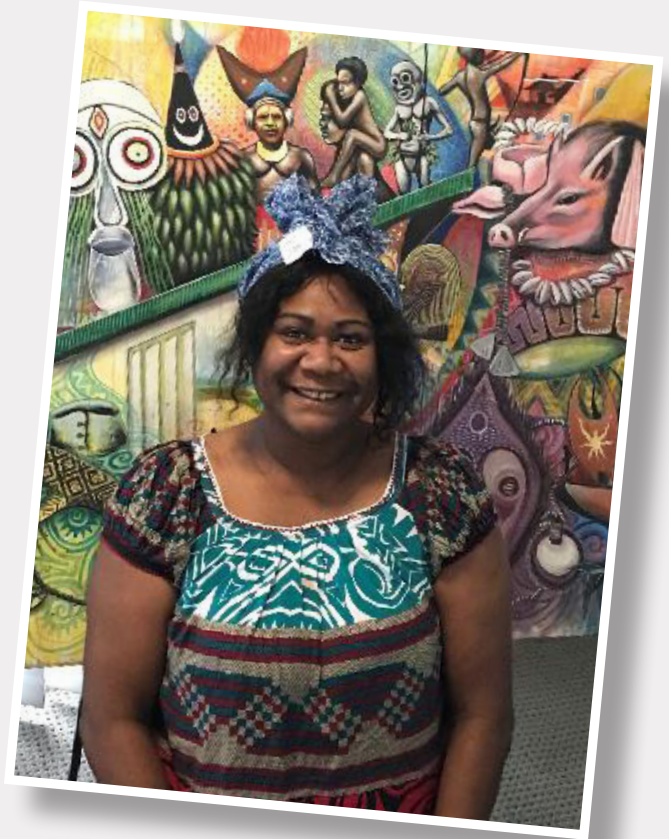
Rose

My name is Rose and I have 2 sons, 11 and 3 years old. I have been a tenant with Bric Housing for 1 year. I'm originally from PNG and I moved to Cairns in 2015. In the photo, I'm wearing a traditional garment with traditional artwork behind me. I bought this artwork with me from PNG, I had it rolled up, but I've been able to have it framed and now I display it in my home.

In May 2020, my partner walked out and never came back and the boys and I became homeless. I didn't know anything about social workers then or where we could get help. So, I moved to Brisbane to stay with my sister but that didn't work out and we became homeless again.

The next day I contacted the Romero Centre, Red Cross and HART400 and we were given crisis accommodation in a hotel. I really appreciated having a roof over our heads but the hotel room was very cramped for 2 boys.

In November 2020 I moved into this unit with Bric Housing. The kids are really happy to have our own place, where they can move around. The place we are living in is really nice and it is close to the school, shops and the train. We really appreciate Bric Housing and everything you have done for us.



Two months ago, I started working doing cleaning and laundry work. I told my boss I was happy to take any work available so that I can make a better life for us. I have increased my hours from 2 days to 3 days per week and I'm hoping to become full-time in the New Year. Now I just want to work hard so that I can rent my own place in the future.



Meet the **Team**

Natalya Shikina, Asset Services Assistant

How long have you worked for Bric?

I started working for an organisation named Better Housing Projects in 2007, which was one of four community housing providers which amalgamated to form BRIC in 2008.

What is your favourite part of your job?

My favourite part is completing repairs to extensively damaged properties which required repairs as I would see the improvements on completion which was rewarding after all the hard work involved.

How do you think Bric makes a difference to tenants?

I believe BRIC makes a difference by providing tenants with security of tenure and concentrate on themselves and their future.

How does your role connect with tenants?

I am the first person our tenants call to request repairs or assistance with the property: from losing their key to flooding.

What's the best thing about working for Bric?

The team and an opportunities to grow within the company.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Riga the capital city of Latvia, previous part of the USSR until its collapse in 1993.

How do you like to relax?

I love nature and enjoy the beach and hiking.

Do you have any pets?

Not at the moment, however, my daughter has a puppy Boston Terrier named Jasper which I love to baby sit and take for long walks.

If you won lotto, what's the first thing you'd buy?

I would work out how to do good with the money and then buy a ticket for a trip around the world.

What was the best holiday you ever went on?

In 2011 I travelled back to Latvia and spend 3 days in Italy, it is a Dreamworld.



Need emergency Help during a flood or storm?

As a Bric tenant, if you need the assistance of the State Emergency Service (SES) in non-life-threatening emergency situations, during floods and storms or other similar events 132 500 is the number to call. If the situation is life threatening, always call Triple Zero (000).

When to call 132 500



SES volunteers undertake temporary emergency measures to make your home and the situation safe. It is important that you contact Bric Housing to make permanent repairs to damage resulting from extreme weather conditions, or to remove any remaining debris.



To request assistance from the SES, you can:

- Call 132 500; or
- Lodge a request at 132500.qld.gov.au; or
- Lodge a request on our SES Assistance QLD App, available for both Apple and Android devices

Information to have ready when calling 132 500

- Do you, or someone else, need assistance?
- Exact address of the incident.
- Contact number for yourself or the resident.
- Property information, including number of storeys, roof type — tiles, metal, fibro.
- Any hazards present that you are aware of — power lines, dogs, solar panels, fibro/asbestos roofing.

What to do after logging a call with 132 500

- Record, and keep handy, the reference number provided.
- Keep your phone close by so the SES can easily contact you about your request.
- Stay away from any fallen trees and/or power lines.
- Follow any safety recommendations you are given by the SES.
- Call Bric Housing on 3230 5555 letting them know the SES have been requested and continue to provide updates as things change when it is safe to do so.

The SES experience many calls during flooding, storms and cyclones. Assisting people in our communities who are overwhelmed by damage and impacts of extreme weather conditions as quickly as possible is important to us. The SES attends requests for assistance in priority base order, based on the information provided. If you no longer require emergency assistance, call 132 500 quoting your reference number to cancel the request. This helps free up emergency crews to help others in need.

Stay safe and connected over Christmas

Dial 000 for Police, Fire and Ambulance in an emergency

- **Non-urgent Police matters** – Police Link website or T: 13 14 44
- **Power outages** – Energex website or T: 13 62 62
- **Water outages** – Unity Water website or T: 1300 086 489
- **Poison's Information** T: 13 11 26

Christmas can be a challenging time. If you are experiencing difficulties, you might like to reach out to one of these services for support:

- **Lifeline** T: 13 11 14
- **Kids Helpline** T: 1800 55 1800
- **DV Connect Crisis Support:**
 - **Womensline** T: 1800 811 811
 - **Mensline** T: 1800 600 636
 - **Sexual Assault** T: 1800 010 120
- **Beyond Blue** T: 1300 22 4636 or chat on line via their website
- **Suicide Call Back Service** T: 1300 659 467
- **Gamblers Help** T: 1800 858 858



New website focusses on tenants

Have you noticed we have updated our website? We've given it a fresh new look and rebuilt the site to make it easier for tenants to find the information they need.

The first link you will see is "Tenants" and in that section, you'll find information about your tenancy, rents, how to report a repair and how to get support for your tenancy.

We'd love to know what you think – is there more information or features you would like? Tell us by clicking on the contact us page.

More ways to connect with Bric

Bric also has a Facebook page at facebook.com/bricHousingAU

Follow us to get updates and information as it happens.

Enjoy some Christmas cheer!

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	GOODIES	CONTACT
Pine Rivers Christmas Carols	19/12/2021	16:00-20:00	Pine Rivers Park, Strathpine	Entertainment, fireworks, Christmas llamas!	www.moretondaily.com.au/christmas
New Farm Neighbourhood Centre Christmas Lunch	21/12/2021	11:00-13:00	967 Brunswick St, New Farm	Lunch, hampers	New Farm Community Centre 3358 5600
Jeays St Park Feast (Valley Feast)	23/12/2021	From 10:30	Jeays St Park, Bowen Hills	Lunch, hampers	Valley Hearts 0412 078 114
Community Christmas Event	24/12/21	10am to 2pm	Caboolture Community Care, 9 George St, Caboolture	Toys & Gifts, Christmas Pantry, Sausage Sizzle, Christmas Food, Games & Activities	Phone 5495 6503
Communiy/ Suncorp Christmas Lunch	25/12/2021	From 11:30	Suncorp Stadium, 40 Castlemaine St, Milton - Gate D (behind the Wally statue)	Lunch, goodie bags, Santa	Kate 3510 2700 or kater@communiy.org.au by 15/12/2021
Wesley Mission Christmas Lunch	25/12/2021	From 11:45	316 St Pauls Tce, Fortitude Valley	50 seated, takeaway between 12:15-13:15	Wesley Mission Fortitude Valley 3216 1579
Wesley Mission Red Bags	From 06/12/2021-23/12/2021	Daily	316 St Pauls Tce, Fortitude Valley	Non-perishable Christmas food items (Proof of low income, e.g. Centrelink, AND photo ID)	No appointment necessary; arrive between 11:30-3pm
Wesley Mission Gifts for Children (under 16)	From 06/12/2021-23/12/2021	Daily	316 St Pauls Tce, Fortitude Valley	One toy (Proof of low income, photo ID, proof of custody)	By appointment only - register your name and details now
St Vincent de Paul				Hampers	Call 1800 846 643, choose Option 1, enter your postcode
Encircle hampers					Register interest via Pine Rivers Uniting Church 3285 6126 or Encircle (waiting list) 3889 0063
Salvation Army Christmas meals					www.salvationarmy.org.au/christmas/need-help-this-christmas/join-us-christmas-meal/

All events are free unless otherwise noted.