

# Authentic placemaking

Social Impact in the Regions conference

5<sup>th</sup> September 2024

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The Community Housing Industry Association NSW is honoured to work on the traditional lands of Aboriginal people across NSW.

We recognise the Dunghutti people as the Traditional Custodians of this land and celebrate their strength, history and enduring culture.

CHIA NSW acknowledges that the land is, was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Artist credit: Nathan Peckham, Yurana Creative

<https://www.yuranacreative.com/about-the-owner>

# What does authentic Placemaking look like?

## Why take a Placemaking approach?

- Improving services, engagement and satisfaction in estate communities research
- Contributing to reducing entrenched disadvantage

## International example: Castle Vale Community Housing (UK)

- Mature state Placemaking

## Home in Place's work with Taree residents

## Summary of key elements of successful Placemaking



# Placemaking is authentic [and more likely to be successful] when.....

It is truly locally led – residents set priorities and co-produce solutions

Trust and confidence have been built

Agencies get the basics right (and continue to do so)

The process is based on and respects residents' sense of place, history and culture

Long term commitments and continuity

Partnerships work

Contributes to tackling entrenched disadvantage



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# Background to the community housing Placemaking project

- Supported under the NSW Community Housing Industry Development Strategy
- To share best practice in placemaking across the UK, Europe and Australia
- To develop a practical toolkit for improving estate communities through placemaking which:
  - Improves community engagement
  - Improves the quality of homes, areas and services
  - Increases resident satisfaction and well being
- Focus on estates, including major property transfers in Australia and internationally
- Build on the excellent work already underway by individual housing associations (UK / Ireland) and community housing providers (Australia)



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## What has the project focused on?

- Improving services, engagement and satisfaction in estate communities
- Focused on community regeneration, management approaches and partnerships rather than physical re-development



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# Placemaking case studies






<https://communityhousing.org.au/placemaking-improving-services-engagement-and-satisfaction-in-estate-communities/>



# Key themes: Placemaking values from the research

- Community empowerment and inclusion
- Safety and wellbeing
- Sustainable and good quality housing
- Social cohesion and sense of belonging
- Resilience and adaptability
- Cultural sensitivity and practices


**Torfaen Borough**

 <b>Borough population</b> 94,000	 <b>Bron Afon Properties</b> 8,000	 <b>Social housing stock</b> 23%
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Previously prosperous area - ironworks, tin plate, coal mining

Now pockets of the most deprived in Wales with the highest level of domestic abuse in the UK

Average life expectancy = 80 years, but only 60 years will be in good health.





# Key themes: Placemaking objectives from the research

- Objective 1: Build trust and communication
  - Objective 2: Improve housing quality
  - Objective 3: Boost community involvement
  - Objective 4: Ensure safety and security
  - Objective 5: Strengthen social connections
  - Objective 6: Promote health and wellness
  - Objective 7: Improve quality of life
  - Objective 8: Enhance access to services
- Audit of good practice takes a chronological approach,
  - Links to values and objectives, suggests actions and links to the relevant case studies

Chronology of placemaking actions	Values driving action	HQN suggested objectives	Relevant case studies	
<b>When residents and your data are telling you something is wrong in the community, take action</b>				
We have seen many times that landlords found themselves in a situation where residents of an estate were unhappy, the estate had become unpopular, and very difficult situations with anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, hoarding, crime and drugs were setting in. Whether the situation was inherited or developed over time from a combination of factors such as unemployment and stigma, action was clearly needed. These places become 'priority estates' for interventions to improve the quality of residents' lives.	Sustainable and quality housing	Improve housing quality		
In some cases landlords felt that the design and/or condition of the estate was itself a major factor in the situation degenerating. In a case study from Australia, the homes taken on by the housing association were in poor condition and the estate had lost its community centre. A respondent to our UK survey said one estate had become a centre of the local on-street sex trade, a problem that residents felt was worsened by the 1960s Radburn design with green spaces, car free walkways and inward-facing homes. This design had been popular in the UK but many estates later suffered problems.	Sustainable and quality housing	Improve housing quality	<a href="#">West Kempsey</a>	
Major redevelopment or refurbishment has proven to be successful - but equally, in some cases it failed because the fundamentals of placemaking were not created or sustained alongside the physical works and in some cases ongoing maintenance was lacking. In one case an award winning recently built scheme had begun to suffer problems, demonstrating that the physical infrastructure is not the only prerequisite for strong communities. In fact, where plans for or actual regeneration had failed, this could cause further damage to relationships and trust with residents. These issues chime strongly with the work of housing researcher Anne Power who more than 40 years ago pointed to the emphasis on physical infrastructure to the detriment of placemaking.	Sustainable and quality housing	Improve housing quality	<a href="#">Clann Housing,</a>	<a href="#">Coffs Harbour</a>
Stock transfer estates offer both issues and opportunities. The transfer often takes place because the existing landlord has recognised problems but feels unable to deal with them itself - generally because of lack of resources. The estate may have begun to suffer stigma and unpopularity.	Sustainable and quality housing	Improve housing quality		
With a new landlord in place there is the opportunity for a fresh start. But this must be carefully handled. Residents may well have become cynical, and they may feel they have little or no say in what is happening in their neighbourhood. In the next section we explore the need for 'slow work' and not rushing into	Community empowerment and inclusion	Improve quality of life	<a href="#">Castle Vale</a>	<a href="#">Coffs Harbour</a>

# Why take a Placemaking approach?

## Housing Association

- Clann and Cluid

## Neighbourhood

- St Mary's Mansions

## Location

- Dublin, Ireland











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# Regeneration, Placemaking and Succession Planning



# Sustaining placemaking: Castle Vale

- As a landlord
  - Be in it for the long haul – we are a bricks and mortar business with a 40-year financial business plan
  - Deliver core landlord services really well
  - We actively take a tenure blind approach to the neighbourhood management
  - Listen to and act on what's important to tenants (their priorities change!)
- As an anchor organisation
  - Investment in non-core housing activity c.£500k per annum (community safety; estate services) and....
  - A dedicated registered charity to focus on people services – community centres; health; employment & skills; family support and youth work
  - The charity helps us access external investment/fund raising
  - Be prepared to tackle socio economic challenges
  - Listen to and act on what's important to the whole community – burning platforms come and go we aim to sustain engagement
  - Have measures that reflect long term trends – we track Census data

# Sustaining placemaking: Castle Vale

- As an anchor organisation
  - Placemaking is our mission – its central to every Corporate Plan
  - We focus on and build on the assets in our communities
- As an anchor organisation
  - A clear approach and commitment to partnerships (lead; partner; get out of the way)
  - Put community governance at the heart of good governance – we lead, facilitate, influence and leverage stakeholders around a long-term neighbourhood plan
  - E.g. education partnership which brings together heads from early years, primary and secondary
  - We have been working towards inward investment as part of a wider anchor institutions network – leveraging opportunities through procurement £spend and linking our residents to employment opportunities within the NHS



# Home in Place, Bushland, Taree

Home  
*in* Place

Home  
*in* Place



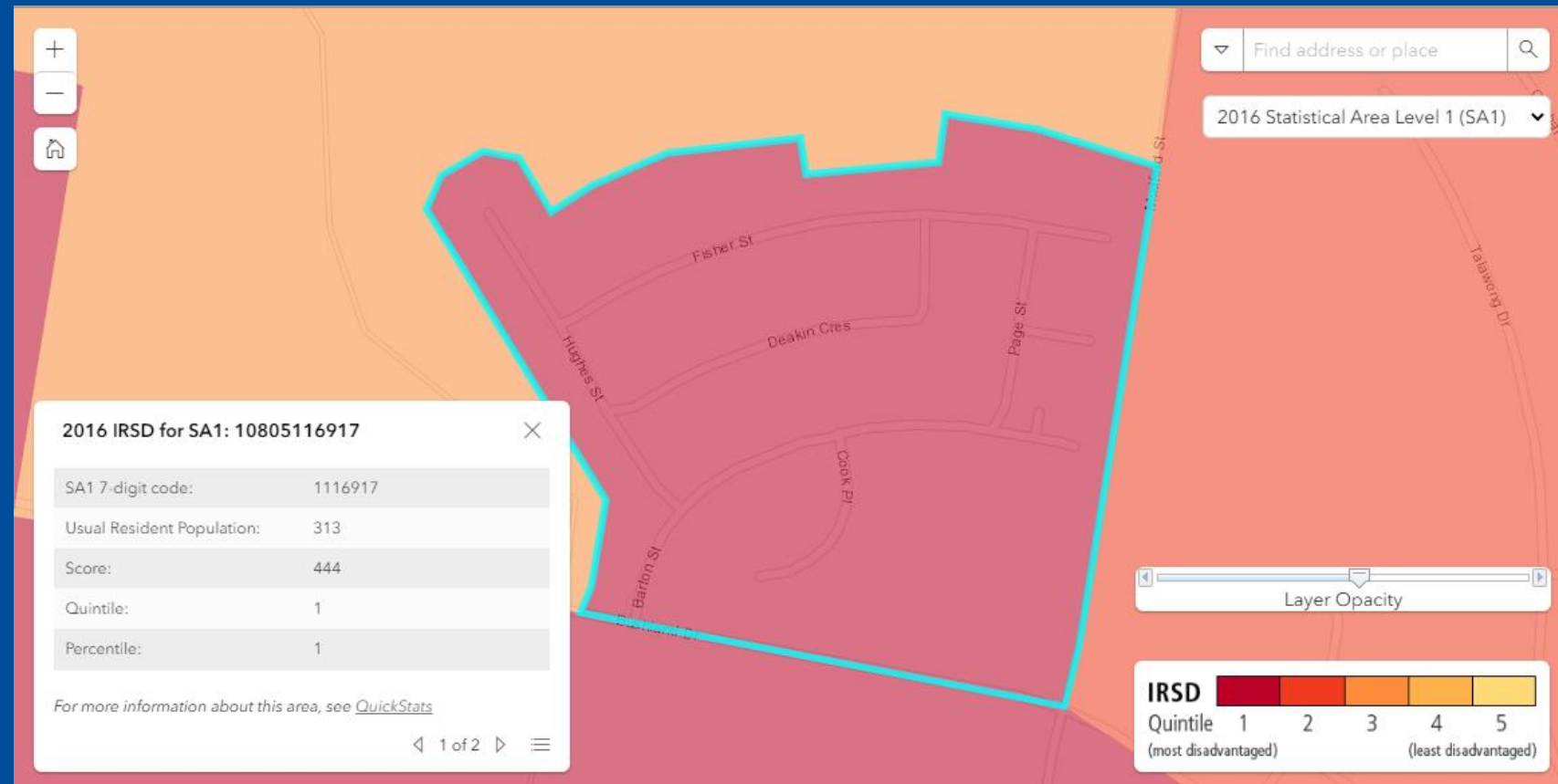
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# Home in Place, Bushland, Taree

- 123 dwellings – 111 are classified as social housing
- Population 374
- 51% of the population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Median age is 24
- It's a location of significant social disadvantage – even compared to surrounding areas.



# In the beginning

- In June 2022 HiP held an event for Men's Health Week in Bushland Estate
- Attendance was low
- In the early days, HiP put time and effort into establishing trust with residents and understanding the area from their perspective



# Continuing engagement

- In August 2022, HiP along with partners from Community Housing Limited, Homes NSW (AHO) and local service provider First Steps Count door knocked every house on the Estate, regardless of who managed it and asked three simple questions:
  - What are the top three things you like about living here?
  - What are the top three issues affecting the community?
  - What three things would make this community a better place to live?



# Starting the conversation

- Feedback was collated and quickly provided to the community by a brand new newsletter called Bushland Beat.
- Unbranded publication that HiP produces and prints for hand delivery throughout the Estate.

## Bushland Beat

**WELCOME TO BUSHLAND BEAT!**  
Providing the Bushland community with updates, information and useful contacts. July 2024

### WORKING TOGETHER TO STOP ROCK THROWING

NSW Police, MidCoast Council and community housing providers are working together to help stop rock throwing in our area.



### WHAT DO I DO IF I SEE IT HAPPENING?

- Call 000 if there is an immediate threat to safety
- Call Police Assistance Line for non emergencies 131 444
- Call Crimestoppers to provide crime information 1800 333 000

### WHAT SHOULD I NOT DO?

Don't take matters into your own hands! Leave policing to the police.

### WANT MORE INFO?

If you've been to our Bushland Breakfast Club, you might have met Inspector Matthew Hinton. He's the Officer in Charge of Taree Police Station. Inspector Hinton can arrange for Officers or Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers to come and chat to you, your family or your community group about the dangers of rock throwing. Ring Taree Police Station on 5594 8299 to book in a time.



### WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We can't do this alone. We need your help. Please talk to your kids. Explain why they shouldn't throw rocks at cars. Let them know it's very dangerous and that people have died from having rocks thrown at their cars.

### WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Throwing rocks at cars is a criminal offence with the potential to face up to 5 YEARS in prison. Young offenders may have a record that follows them for the rest of their lives. Worst of all, rock throwing CAN KILL. If the driver loses control of the car, they can kill bystanders or crash into houses which could kill the family inside. Imagine the trauma of living knowing that what you thought "wasn't a big deal" ended someone's life? In some communities, rock throwing has led to NSW Ambulance refusing to attend some areas. Taxis, food delivery, health providers and other services have also stopped services.

### CONTACTS

Home in Place 1300 333 733  
Community Housing Limited 1300 242 573  
LJ Hooker (02) 6552 1133—Office closed public holidays  
Housing NSW (AHO) (02) 6659 2555

# Bushland breakfast club

- Bushland Breakfast Club is a monthly event that regularly attracts up to 80 community members. No “shop talk” is allowed. HiP coordinate with support from CatholicCare and NSW Police along with regular volunteers from CHL, Community Corrections, Social Futures, Hannah’s Blue Butterflies Road Safety, Service NSW and many more.

Let us help get the kids off to school!

## BUSHLAND BREAKFAST CLUB

Please join us for a FREE community breakfast and send your kids off for the day with full tummies and a packed lunch.



Home  
*in* Place

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# Bushland clean up day

- Bushland Cleanup Day in January 2024 saw the community come together to clean up the streets, open areas and homes of the Estate.
- They formed groups and went from property to property helping those in need.
- Partner organisations helped make the day a success with MidCoast Council providing in-kind support in excess of \$70K.



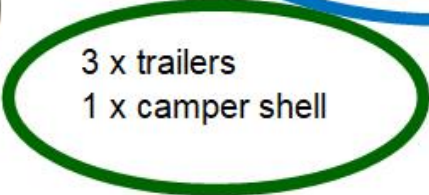




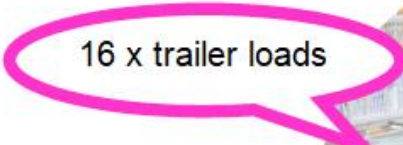
38 x tyres



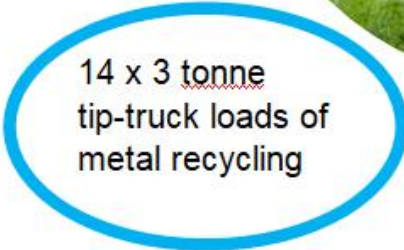
80 cubic metres of rubbish loaded into skip bins



3 x trailers  
1 x camper shell



16 x trailer loads



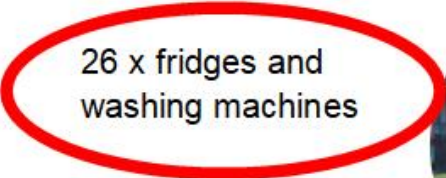
14 x 3 tonne tip-truck loads of metal recycling



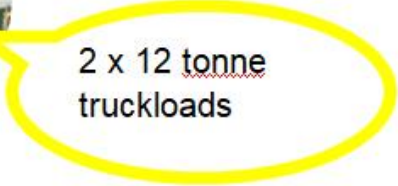
42 x mattresses



18 hours of bobcat use



26 x fridges and washing machines



2 x 12 tonne truckloads





# What's worked?

- It's taken many “micro engagements”: casual conversations, cups of coffee, bacon and egg rolls, hello waves, smiles and listening ears.
- Big engagements and grand gestures don't work until connection is made and trust established.
- It's only after this that we can start working WITH the community to get the outcomes that THEY want



# Placemaking in practice: Beginnings

- Engage at an individual, granular level with household/individuals
- Learn about and draw on the culture and history of the residents and the place
- Listen to residents and act on what they say
- It takes time – address the basics and build trust

If the bins don't get emptied people aren't likely to trust you



Photo: HQN



# Placemaking in practice: Resident empowerment

- Residents are only likely to engage when they feel they are respected
- Listen, innovate and adapt
- Tailor approaches for diverse communities
- Ensure there are safe spaces where residents can meet
- Encourage residents to take on responsibilities and lead initiatives
- Failed engagement makes it that much harder next time



Photo: CHL

# Placemaking in practice: partnership working

- Consider the neighbourhood as a “place to live”
- Multi agency partnerships are essential – health, policing, local authorities
- Embed partnership working for the longer term via neighbourhood plans or frameworks
- Establish longer term programs for, e.g., education, training and employment, health, wellbeing, intergenerational work
- How can your organisation further devolve power to residents – can they participate in partnership working?
- Evaluate and learn – very much a work in progress



Photo: CHL



# Summary themes

- Organisations need to work closely with residents to build and strengthen communities
- To do that, they need to establish a culture of trust and respect, including by getting the basics right
- Cultural sensitivity and knowing the history and geography of a place are crucial
- Build partnerships with other organisations to deliver better services
- Put into place the right infrastructure for long term success
- Enable the community to lead the way wherever possible



Photo: Hume Community Housing



# Placemaking Stage 1 outputs

Microsite for contents / exec summary

Interactive map – case study locations and key facts

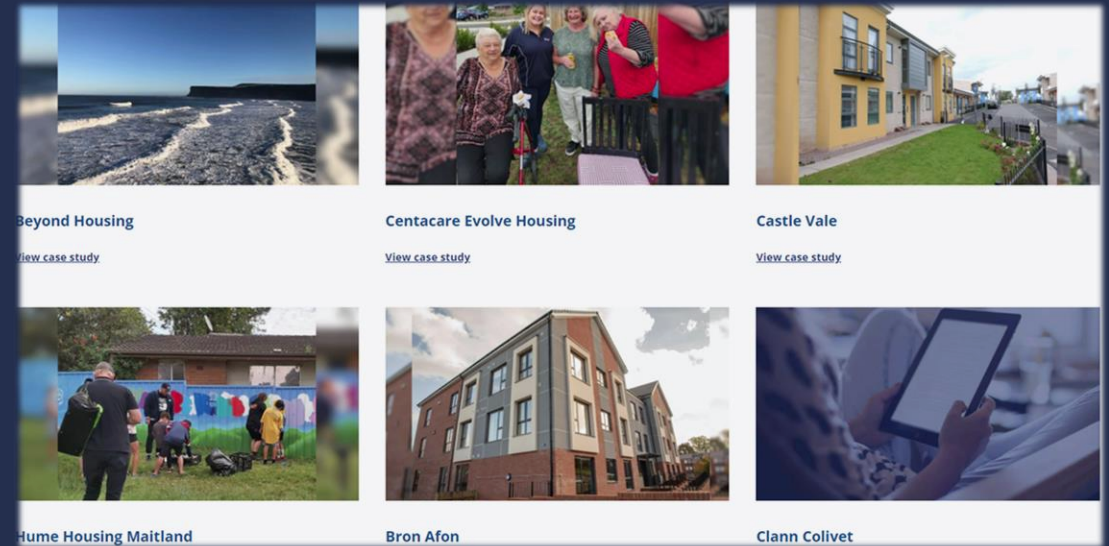
Literature Review

Audit of Good Practice

Case studies, and links to statistical background information

Measurement Framework

International Placemaking Exchange, including slides and videos



Any questions?

