



2022 - 2023

Annual Report

Together we can end
youth homelessness.

Bridge it

Welcome to our second annual report!

Bridge It turned two this year! It's been a huge year of creating homes and transforming lives. And the really exciting thing is that we're just getting started!

Acknowledgement of Country

Bridge It operates on Bunurong Country. We proudly acknowledge the people of the Yalukit Willam Clan of the South East Kulin Nations, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live, work, and play. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present. Australia always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Contents

Welcome To Bridge It By Carla	4
Welcome To Bridge It By Greg	6
What We Do	8
Why We Do It	8
Our Mission & Vision	9
Bridge It Turned Two!	10
The Cocoon	12
The Cocoon Model	13
A Cocoon Resident Shares Her Story	14
Cocoon Expansion Plans	15
Our Strategy	18
A Gap In The System – Why We Are Needed	19
Meet Sage, Our Housing And Wellbeing Coordinator	20
Bridge It: Supporting Future Social Workers	21
To Students And Social Workers In The Future	21
Key Partners	22
Shout Out To Some Of Our Bridge It Backers	23
Amazing Supporters	23
Creating Homes Crew – Board Of Directors	24
Creating Homes Crew – Our Team	26
Financials	28
Social Ventures Australia Evaluation	29
Our Future	30



WELCOME TO BRIDGE IT BY CARLA

Wow, what a year! Welcome to Bridge It's second Annual Report. I am so excited to share what we have been up to.

This year, The Cocoon welcomed 10 incredible young people into a safe, affordable, and supportive home. Having a home and support has made a huge difference to their lives, and empowered them to achieve so many incredible things, including finding employment, returning to complete year 12, and studying to become peer workers! I am deeply proud of all of them.

This year, we also made the hard decision to end our Sanctuary program after its pilot year, so that we could focus our attention and resources on scaling The Cocoon program. We wanted to focus our efforts on early intervention, and setting young people up for successful lives.

We also continued to provide support through the Homelessness to a Home program, which saw many people housed and assisted through the COVID-19 pandemic. We are currently in the process of transitioning people into stable housing before the program concludes. It was a great experience to partner with the State Government, South Port Community Housing Group, and Star Health to deliver this program – after all, we are stronger when we work together.

Our team has also grown to a powerhouse of seven of the most compassionate and skilled people in the sector, whose hard work and dedication I am so thankful for. This year, our incredible Board of Directors has continued to courageously lead Bridge It in its mission to fill gaps in the existing homelessness and leaving care system. We said goodbye to our Founding Secretary, Tom Jessup, and welcomed the amazing Kim Dema as our new Secretary and Chief Finance Officer.

Kim brings to the table decades of experience in the corporate and not-for-profit sectors, and has already proven herself to be a valuable member of our team.

Foundations, philanthropists, and corporates like MECCA and Virgin also continue to back us in the fight against youth homelessness. This has enabled us to increase our total revenue by 44%, so we can do more for the young people we support. We also had visits from Julie Collins, the Federal Minister for Housing, and our local Federal MPs, Zoe Daniel and Josh Burns. There is interest in what we are doing, and we hope that the government will partner with us in the near future.

Finally, Social Ventures Australia completed an external evaluation of The Cocoon model, which identified very positive outcomes. This also showed that demand for our Cocoons is very high, and we urgently need more homes for young people. To meet this demand, we will be opening a second Cocoon in 2024, and will also be expanding the current Cocoon, growing the number of young people we can provide a home to from 7 to 27!

Thank you to everyone who has backed Bridge It over the last year. We will continue to do great things with you by our side.

TOGETHER, WE CAN END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

Carla Raynes
Founder/CEO



WELCOME TO BRIDGE IT BY GREG

Our second year has seen Bridge It continue to mature. We delight in seeing our young people grow and thrive, and their experiences and stories continue to shape us.

Over the past year, our remarkable Founder and CEO, Carla Raynes, has continued to be a passionate advocate for programmatic change within the sector, particularly through early intervention. We believe Bridge It is modelling that. We have also continued our program evaluation throughout the year, and adapted our focus to concentrate our efforts on The Cocoon model. We have well advanced plans to extend the program substantially in the coming year, to better meet the needs of the young people and communities we are supporting.

We continue to be buoyed by the support and encouragement of so many who believe in our work, and our vision for ending youth homelessness. Their generosity and belief manifests in so many ways – from pro-bono professional services and advice to the sharing of wisdom and experience, volunteering, in-kind contributions, and philanthropic support. It is humbling to know those supporters are there, and we do our best to honour their good intentions in everything we do.

Mostly due to our supporters, who made up over 75% of our income in the last financial year, we have a solid financial runway for the coming year. However, our model does cost more to run than many other programs. We do not shy away from that as we focus on providing young people with a home that is supportive, safe, secure, and dignified. In our view, this early intervention is money well spent.

By building young people's capacity to excel in everyday life, we believe we can achieve lower lifetime costs for the government. Moving into our third year, we will continue to encourage governments to contribute more funding to support programs with evidence-based outcomes that work. We are not there yet – but working on it.

Finally, I would like to call out the amazing work and commitment of our staff. Whilst we are still small, we are being noticed, and your hard work and commitment is at the epicentre of why that is. I am indebted to my fellow board members, and more recently, a group of experts who have generously given us their time and expertise.

Thank you all for the support you have provided us with on this journey. You can look forward to us achieving lots more great things together in this coming year.

Greg Ridder
Chair and Director



WHAT WE DO

Bridge It's Cocoon provides young people aged 17–21 who are exiting out-of-home care with a home, a community, and the support to thrive. We provide the home for around 18 months, so there's time for residents to recover, stabilise, and learn independent living skills. This means they can transition into adulthood and long-term housing.

WHY WE DO IT



1. See Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2022), **Specialist Homelessness Services Historical Data 2011–12 to 2021–22**, for statistic referring to young people (aged 15–24) ‘presenting alone’ for support; and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2022), **Estimating homelessness: Census, 2021**, for statistic estimating homeless young people (aged 12–24) on census night.
2. AHURI (2021) **Accommodating transition: improving housing outcomes for young people leaving OHC**. “The rates of service use by OHC leavers are much greater than for other young Victorians; with hospital admissions 2.7 times greater; emergency presentations 4.5 times greater; alcohol/drug treatment 21 times greater; homelessness services 17.5 times greater; and youth justice clients 9.6 times greater.”

OUR MISSION & VISION



OUR MISSION

To end youth homelessness by providing homes, community and support so young people can lead independent lives.



OUR VISION

Micro Vision

There's a Cocoon in every State of Australia.

Macro Vision

We inspire new ways of thinking so homelessness support is life-changing and long-lasting.

Mega Vision

We play a role in ending youth homelessness in Australia.

Bridge It Turned Two!

Happy birthday to us! To celebrate our special day, we brought together our young people, team, board members, and some of our key supporters to reflect on the last two years.

Most importantly, we also heard from our residents about the power of The Cocoon. One of our lovely residents shared their powerful story with us. These words stood out for everyone:

“I came here because I was homeless. I had nowhere to go. I feel so lucky to now have a home and friends.”





Our incredible Peer Mentor, Sam Jones, also spoke passionately about what it's like to work at Bridge It:



“I am so proud of this amazing place where we have the privilege to support the bravest, kindest young people you could ever meet. I spend my days in laughter, in tears, in joy, and in awe. Carla had a vision for this place that is incredible, and it's not just saved the life paths of our young people, but it's also saved mine as someone living with bipolar. Life got bleak. Now, we have hope. Today, we celebrated two years of Bridge It with a crepe van, cake, chats, love, laughter, and tears. Bridge It – keeping it real since 2021 and making memories forever.”



A huge thanks to For Change Co. for bringing their crepe van, Attica for donating the drinks and staffing, and to The Icing Artist for the beautiful and delicious cake.





The Cocoon

“I am surrounded by people who actually care about me and help me with things I struggle with on my own.”

Cocoon resident

The Cocoon is a beautiful heritage-listed property in St Kilda, owned by HousingFirst. It provides a safe home to 7 female-identifying young people who have transitioned from out-of-home care.

The Cocoon provides a home to recover, stabilise, develop living skills, and prepare for long-term housing.

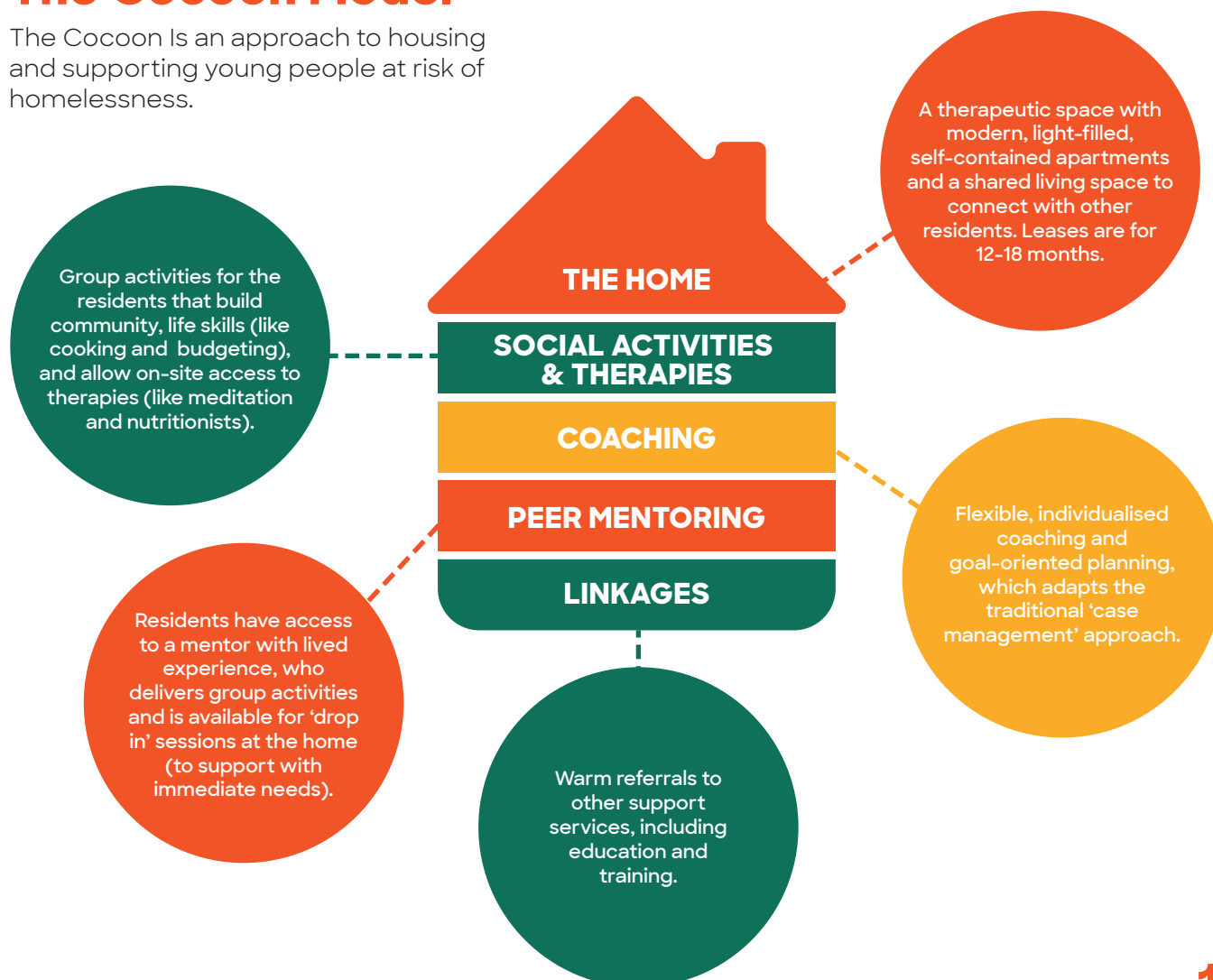


See our Virtual Tour of
The Cocoon.



The Cocoon Model

The Cocoon is an approach to housing and supporting young people at risk of homelessness.



Group activities for the residents that build community, life skills (like cooking and budgeting), and allow on-site access to therapies (like meditation and nutritionists).

A therapeutic space with modern, light-filled, self-contained apartments and a shared living space to connect with other residents. Leases are for 12-18 months.

Residents have access to a mentor with lived experience, who delivers group activities and is available for 'drop in' sessions at the home (to support with immediate needs).

Flexible, individualised coaching and goal-oriented planning, which adapts the traditional 'case management' approach.

Warm referrals to other support services, including education and training.

A COCOON RESIDENT SHARES HER STORY

*Trigger warning

“So many horrible things happened to me when I was a little kid. I was not safe with my family, so I was moved to multiple foster homes. Some of them would refuse to give me food, so I would mix water and toothpaste in a glass sometimes because I was so hungry. I was sent to live with a foster carer who had significant mental and physical health issues, which resulted in me having to look after her.

One foster carer made me sleep outside in winter in a dog kennel, and it was only when I climbed inside through the cat door that I was able to sleep inside. When I told child protection, they said that I was lying. I remember staying with my mum's foster carer (yes – she had been in the system too!), and I was made to bathe in filthy water which was only replaced every three days.

I was continually passed through different foster care homes and never felt loved. I'm mature for my age because I had to grow up quickly. When I was 16, I was put into accommodation that is called “lead tenant”, which is rental property where I was supposed to be living with an adult, but he was never there. I had the house broken into and everything stolen – it was so scary.

Now, I am living at the Cocoon in Melbourne, and completing my year 12 equivalent. I have also recently finished a mechanic course and have been offered a job. I'm currently learning how to drive. I feel safe and supported, and like I have a real home.

The Cocoon has offered me a safe and cozy space to be able to let my walls down, and enjoy doing the little things in life. I have grown so much as a person in the past few months, whilst having a little support group by my side.”



HERE IS WHAT ONE OF OUR OTHER COCOON RESIDENTS SAYS ABOUT THE COCOON:

“The Cocoon is place where you can choose your own friends and family. Living at The Cocoon has allowed me to focus on my mental health without being judged, and to live and work at my own pace. There is no judgement or unhealthy expectations from the community. I really love the openness and kindness of the community, and I love getting together for cooking groups.

I am also more hopeful for the future. I'm doing a traineeship as a barista, and I am looking forward to studying mental health to support lots of people in the future.”

COCOON EXPANSION PLANS

ST KILDA

The Cocoon property will be undergoing a significant probono renovation in early 2024. This has been made possible through our collaboration with the owner of the property HousingFirst and Housing All Australians who have galvanised the building and construction industry to donate time and products. Once this renovation is completed, we will go from being able to provide homes for seven to 16 young people at any time!

A big thank you to the following stakeholders providing so much support on this project -

- Housing All Australians
- K2LD
- RPS Group
- HousingFirst
- Simon Ellis
- Urbis
- RPS Group
- PLP
- Digital SS
- SEMZ
- BRT
- Mirvac

SANDRINGHAM

We are working to open our second Cocoon in Sandringham in 2024! This project is also being delivered in collaboration with Housing All Australians. Our second Cocoon will be able to provide homes to 11 young people. **Watch this space!**

The Cocoon

ST KILDA





OUR STRATEGY

	If we...	By...	Then it results in...
1	Understand the needs of the people we support	Engaging residents in co-design processes to inform the support model	Continuous improvement of our processes, programs, and outcomes
2	Increase the number of people we support each year	Building and continuing partnerships with housing providers, funders, and other service providers	More young people exiting homelessness through our programs annually
3	Are a high-impact service	Designing and implementing housing and support programs that respond to needs and gaps in the homelessness system	Individuals accessing housing, and staying housed
4	Evidence outcomes	Interviewing residents pre and post-support; continuously seeking feedback from residents, other organisations, and partners; and engaging in longitudinal tracking of impacts of the service and intervention	Building an effective evidence base to support funding submissions, and collating data that highlights impacts, shares learnings, and informs the sector
5	Increase our sources of income	Increasing the fee-for-service element of Bridge It's work	Reducing our reliance on philanthropy, and driving income through Home Stretch funding

And eventually...

Provides creative solutions to divert or exit young people from homelessness

A reduction in rates of youth homelessness in Australia

The people we support do not return to homelessness

Enhances Bridge It's reputation as an industry leader

Ensuring Bridge It's long-term sustainability



A GAP IN THE SYSTEM - WHY WE ARE NEEDED

Young people who are accommodated in residential care are exited on their 18th birthday. For many, this is their first night of homelessness. We exist to bridge the gap between care and independent living. In providing this support, we can stem the flow of young people entering into the homelessness system when they exit care.

MEET SAGE, OUR HOUSING AND WELLBEING COORDINATOR

Sage joined the Bridge It Crew a month before we opened the doors to The Cocoon. She has a Master of Counselling, and was providing support to women escaping family violence prior to joining Bridge It. Sage felt that the main challenge for many of the people she supported was the lack of a safe and stable home.

“I love working at Bridge It because I get to be a part of making a real and lifelong impact on people who have experienced the out-of-home care system,” says Sage. “I see the power of having a safe and stable home, and I know that it can make all the difference in someone’s life.”

Sage provides support and coaching to our residents, assisting them with many of their life aspirations like accessing employment opportunities, returning to study, or learning to cook. She also manages all things to do with wellbeing at The Cocoon, including the groups and therapies program which runs 4 days per week.

“Some of my favourite experiences while working alongside the young people at The Cocoon have been in the small moments; when you see a young person achieve a personal victory, whether it be going back to education, getting their first job, or navigating some of life’s more challenging moments,” says Sage. “Seeing young people who come into The Cocoon without self-belief, who then begin to feel worthy and learn to value themselves has been incredible to see. It feels like such an honour and privilege to experience these moments with them.”

Sage is also a key part of the Bridge It team culture. She is always willing to go the extra mile to help her colleagues, and create a positive and supportive environment for everyone.



Sage even arranged our equine therapy focused team day and dinner afterwards. It was great to be all together as a team, doing something fun and therapeutic together!

“Sage is an asset to our team,” says Kate, Bridge It’s Team Leader. “She has a talent for making people feel heard and understood, which is so important in her role. Sage is extremely passionate about the work that she does, and she is great at working alongside people in a personalised way that works for them and where they are at. She is also fun to be around, and has a great sense of humour, which I know is much appreciated by our residents!”

We are so grateful to have Sage on the Bridge It team. She is a passionate and dedicated advocate for young people experiencing homelessness, and she makes a real difference in the lives of the people she supports.

BRIDGE IT: SUPPORTING FUTURE SOCIAL WORKERS

From January – July 2023, two social work students, Georgia and Pip from RMIT University, completed their placements with Bridge It. Their fresh ideas, energy, and support were invaluable with the following projects:

- ✓ Developing a resident handbook
- ✓ Supporting the development of new organisational policies
- ✓ Assisting with the intake of new residents
- ✓ Running groups and drop-in support
- ✓ Spending meaningful time with residents

Georgia and Pip were both very positive about their experiences at Bridge It. Here's what they had to say:



"It's been such an incredible five months working with you all. I can't believe how patient and kind everyone has been with me. I truly look up to everyone who works at Bridge It, and I'm beyond grateful to have learned from the best in the biz. I'm so keen to tell everyone about this place forever."

Georgia



"I feel so lucky to have been given the opportunity to be part of the Bridge It team. My highlight was taking a resident to the viewing of her new home, which was a large and beautiful studio apartment not far from The Cocoon. The young person said that it was the best day of her life, which was so awesome."

Pip

WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE WORKED WITH GEORGIA AND PIP, AND CAN'T WAIT TO OFFER MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE FUTURE.

Moving forward, we are committed to providing ongoing training and support to social work students. This training is helping to ensure that social workers who are joining our sector have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective in their future roles.

KEY PARTNERS

HOUSINGFIRST

HousingFirst is a multi-award winning, regulated, not-for-profit organisation that provides social housing to over 2000 people across Melbourne. HousingFirst provides Bridge It with access to the beautiful building that The Cocoon operates out of, so that we can offer high quality, well located, affordable housing to the young people we support.

“Collaborating with Bridge It has been an easy and positive experience through our shared belief that supporting those who are most vulnerable at the right time, through connected housing and support programs, can positively change the direction of their lives.”

Giovanna Savini, Chief Residents Services Officer - HousingFirst.

FOR CHANGE CO.

For Change Co. is a social enterprise with a focus on ending youth homelessness through paid training and employment at their cafes. For Change Co. has provided work and training to half of our Cocoon residents over the last 12 months. Together, we believe that the key to ending homelessness is having both a home and paid employment. Our collaboration makes this a reality.

“Working with Bridge It ensures that we are able to create an environment where the young people that we jointly support can thrive. It has been an overwhelmingly positive experience to collaborate with the team at Bridge It, and to have the opportunity to work with the incredible and resilient young people at The Cocoon.”

Tenille Gilbert, Co-Founder & Managing Director - For Change Co.

HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS

Housing All Australians offers a private sector voice and commercial lens, to help address Australia’s chronic shortage of low-income affordable housing. One of their initiatives is to find unused properties, and engage the building and construction industry to renovate them for free. They are currently assisting Bridge It with the renovation of the St Kilda Cocoon property, with up to \$1.8M of pro-bono trades and products. Additionally, they located the second property in Sandringham which is to become our second Cocoon. They are facilitating the pro-bono renovation of this site too.

“Housing All Australians is proud to support the work that Bridge It is delivering to the community. It is practical, essential, and delivered with the care and attention that the young people who are residents of Cocoon so desperately need. Due to the generosity of our HAA partners, we are able to deliver properties that are created specifically for their requirements. We are excited about what we can achieve together in the future, so we can see our young people flourish.”

Louise Rutten, Chair and Co-Founder - Housing All Australians.



SHOUT OUT TO SOME OF OUR BRIDGE IT BACKERS

MECCA

MECCA M-POWER is a social change movement that champions equality and opportunity for women and girls. Bridge It has been part of the M-POWERED Collective for one year.

“Bridge It is a smart, scalable organisation with the capacity to really change the way young people emerging from institutional care are supported. It’s trying to change the way things work, rather than just adapting to a reality that’s not working any longer. It’s a model that prioritises genuine care and a sense of family,” says MECCA M-POWER Executive Director Lisa Keenan.

BRIAN M DAVIS FOUNDATION

The Brian M. Davis Foundation seeks to achieve transformational change in the lives of young Australians. “Our core area of work is supporting disadvantaged children and young people, which is why Bridge It is such a close strategic fit for us,” says Anita Hopkins, Executive Officer at the Brian M Davis Foundation. “We focus on a number of areas around seeking to break the cycle of disadvantage, and addressing childhood poverty, abuse, and neglect.”

A HUGE THANK YOU TO SOME OF OUR OTHER AMAZING SUPPORTERS LISTED BELOW

Antipodean Endowment Fund
Alfred Felton Bequest
BeBlueRock Foundation
Betty & John Laidlaw Legacy
Brian and Virginia McNamee Foundation
Brian M Davis Foundation
Equity Trustees
Grant Foundation
Harris Capital
Igniting Change
LL Group Holdings PTY LTD
Mamoma Foundation
MECCA
Merry People
Mondara Pines Charitable Foundation
Mutual Trust
P&S Bassat Foundation
Payton Foundation
Pressroom Philanthropy
River Capital
Robuck Foundation
Sisters Of Charity
Social Garden
Spotlight Foundation
StreetSmart
TANK Foundation
The Funding Network
Tutus McDonagh Foundation
UHG Foundation
Virgin Unite

EXPERT ADVICE

We engaged top experts in the field to support us to strengthen our model and to ensure that best practice is embedded into the Cocoon model.

We're so grateful to the following people -

Phillip Mendes

Leaving Care Expert and Researcher.

Sarah Morris

Forensic Social Worker and Lived Experience of out-of-home-care.

David Forbes

Trauma Expert.

Greg Denham

Drug and Alcohol Specialist.

CREATING HOMES CREW

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors brings together a wealth of experience and connections from a diverse range of industries. Having a solid team means a strong foundation.



Greg Ridder – Director, Chair

Greg is a seasoned Non-Executive Director and Chair with extensive experience in business strategy and leadership in Australia and internationally. A commercial leader with a strong ethical focus, Greg is currently Chair at Kogan.com and Life Without Barriers. He is also on the Boards of Spirit Technology Solutions and the PNG Sustainable Development Program.



Carla Raynes – Founder, CEO, Director

Carla has worked in frontline and management positions in the homelessness sector in the UK and Australia for nearly 20 years. Her experience spans crisis accommodation, drug and alcohol support services, tertiary hospitals, and youth residential units. Carla co-founded a social enterprise before bringing her creative solutions to Bridge It.



Jane Tewson CBE – Director

Jane is the Founder and Director of Igniting Change. She is passionate about bringing lived experience into all aspects of her work, and in the process, has spent her life turning old-fashioned ideas of charity upside down. She's a true innovator and lateral thinker, with a global reputation for inspiring individuals and organisations to work together for social change. She's founded five charities, all of which are flourishing today. She's known for her creative initiatives, including Comic Relief (Red Nose Day) in the UK, which has raised more than a billion pounds.



Christa Malkin – Director

Christa brings a wealth of corporate operational experience, having spent most of her career in the financial services industry. She is experienced in leading large teams of high-performing salespeople, often in fast-paced and challenging environments with robust regulatory frameworks. Christa has extensive experience in sales, relationship management, P&L management, and HR.



Edward Ring – Director

Edward is an investment professional who values using capital as a source of good. He works for Conscious Investment Management, a leading Australian impact investment fund that is focused on delivering social housing in Australia. Outside of this, Ed has a management role in two Melbourne-based foundations.



Tom Jessup – Secretary (July '22 – April '23)

Tom is an admitted lawyer and recent first-class graduate of the Master of Public and International Law program at The University of Melbourne. He has experience working as a commercial solicitor, and at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Tom has been identified as a one of the top 30 Under 30 by Out for Australia, and one of the world's Top 100 Leaders Under 30 by Unite2030. Tom currently works as a Policy Officer at the Australian Attorney General's Department.



Kim Dema – Secretary (April 23 –Current.)

Kim has held multiple Board and Committee positions over the past 10 years. She provides a high level of financial acumen, specialising in strategic business growth and scenario-based modelling. Her experience spans both the not-for-profit and for-profit sectors, within both corporate settings and private family groups. Kim has been involved in a range of charitable activities, both locally and internationally. Her focus is on social impact projects, where outcomes are focused on achieving wellbeing and safety within the community.

CREATING HOMES CREW

Our Team



Carla Raynes – Chief Executive Officer, Founder

Carla founded Bridge It in 2021 to address the urgent need to create safe, affordable housing for young people in Melbourne. Carla has spent nearly two decades working in the homelessness space, and is a trailblazer in trialling creative approaches to find a long-lasting solution to homelessness.



Kim Dema – Chief Finance Officer

Kim has 15 years of accounting and finance experience in a broad range of sectors, including finance, investments, and property development. For the past 10 years, Kim has worked for large private family offices as CFO, with responsibility for large investment holdings across venture capital, private equity, property, and operating businesses.



Kate Mackenzie – Team Leader

Kate is a qualified social worker with experience working for homelessness services in Melbourne. She has an in-depth understanding of the service sector, as well as the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness. Kate manages Bridge It's day-to-day operations, leading and supporting the team.



Dorian Hodgess – Projects and Operations Coordinator

Dorian is an experienced youth worker who has worked in youth supportive housing programs across Melbourne. He has extensive experience in leadership roles and working directly with young people. Dorian's work at Bridge It focuses on the development of procedures and overseeing the organisation's growth.



Jenna Wilson – Intake and Partnerships Coordinator

Jenna is a mental health and advocacy professional with experience in the homelessness and mental health sectors. Jenna assisted with the creation of Bridge It, and is committed to ensuring that young people have a beautiful and supportive home. Jenna manages the intake of new residents, as well as Bridge It's partnerships with external organisations.



Sam Jones - Peer Mentor

Sam has lived experience with mental health, and her passion is supporting others through similar challenges. Sam provides invaluable support, guidance, and inspiration to The Cocoon's residents through group sessions, co-design of the programs, and drop-in support.



Sage Leslie - Housing and Wellbeing Coordinator

Sage has completed extensive study in counselling, and has experience working as an advocate in crisis family violence services. Sage provides support to The Cocoon's residents to assist them in achieving their life goals. Sage also manages the groups and therapies program.



Jo McKinney - Housing Coordinator

Jo is experienced in the mental health and homelessness sectors, having worked in both frontline and leadership roles. Jo provides support to The Cocoon's residents to enable them to fulfil their potential, and work towards achieving their aspirational goals. Jo also manages the students who are on placement at Bridge It.



Kathryn Goldsmith - Bookkeeper (July '22-April '23)

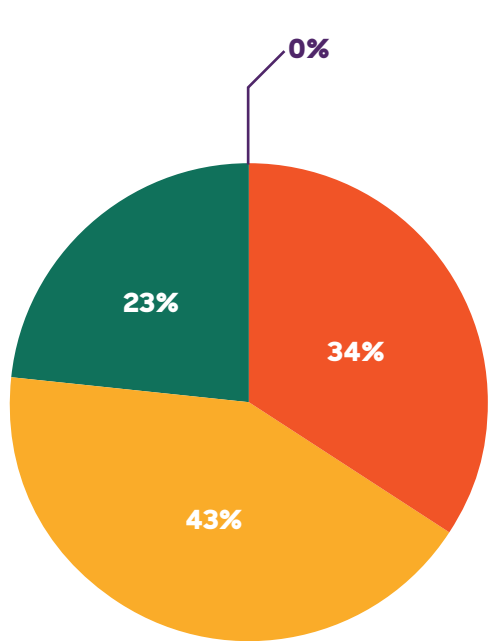
Kathryn has over 30 years of experience in accounting and bookkeeping, including 15 years running her own business. Her focus is on supporting not-for-profits.



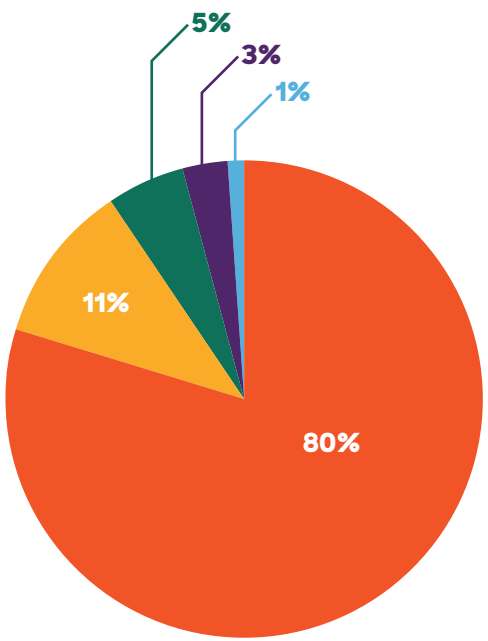
Heather McKee - Fundraising Volunteer

Heather previously worked as a social worker and community services manager. She co-founded and remained on the Board of a community housing organisation for over 30 years. Heather assists Bridge It to raise funds to support our vital work.

FINANCIALS



INCOME	
Grants	252,325
Donations	314,270
Government	169,848
In-kind/Other	0
	736,443



EXPENDITURE	
Staff	(582,489)
Administration	(79,152)
Client Expenses	(38,382)
Research	(21,341)
Other	(7,145)
	(728,507)

Surplus 7,936

SOCIAL VENTURES AUSTRALIA EVALUATION

Bridge It commissioned an independent evaluation to understand the impact of The Cocoon against its objectives.

The evaluation was undertaken by Social Ventures Australia, and focused on documenting the program model, evaluating the short-medium term outcomes, capturing key lessons, and understanding the program's cost.

FINDING 1:

The Cocoon is achieving its intended short-medium term outcomes. Residents have access to a stable home, are developing life skills, learning about healthy relationships, stabilising their mental health, entering work or study, and working towards life goals.



9 people found a home and community at The Cocoon



4 people commenced work for the first time



3/3 residents who engaged in high-risk Alcohol and Other Drug use (AOD) have reduced their usage



4 re-engaged in education, 1 has continued existing education



8/9 of those experiencing mental health challenges are feeling a little or a lot better



All of those who exited The Cocoon are living in housing options of their choice

What are the key lessons from the pilot?

Other key findings and reflections from the program's first year are outlined below:

FINDING 2:

The Cocoon pilot model cost a total of **\$415,000** in its first year, or about **\$60,000** per resident, per year.

FINDING 3:

The Bridge It team have adapted some elements of The Cocoon model during the pilot, responding to residents' perspectives. This is contributing to residents **feeling heard** and **respected**, and maintaining their participation in the program's activities.

FINDING 4:

The Cocoon's staff have reflective practices in place that provide space for them to share **what's working** and **what could be improved**, whilst maintaining the wellbeing of the team.

FINDING 5:

Academic experts have validated that The Cocoon is **serving an unmet need**, and that the model has been designed in **alignment with best practice**. It has all the ingredients that research suggests are required to **achieve the desired long-term impacts**.

Our Goals for the Next 12 Months

Goal 1

Get a second Cocoon up and running to provide a home to 11 young people.

Goal 2

The St Kilda Cocoon will be renovated which will enable us to provide a home to 16 young people at the existing property.

Goal 3

We'll continue to advocate for the need for Cocoons and continue to evidence our successes.

Goal 4

Most importantly, we'll provide a home and community to young people who need it most.

Bridge

Thanks to the incredible team
at Pressroom Philanthropy
for their pro-bono support
designing this annual report.

**We exist thanks
to good vibes,
goodwill, and
good coffee.**



**See our Virtual
Tour of The
Cocoon.**

Seriously, Bridge It depends on donations.
Support us to play a role in ending youth
homelessness, one person at a time.

hello@bridgeit.org.au
(03) 9989 9940
Unit 12, First Floor, Beller House,
285 Carlisle Street, Balaclava, VIC 3183

Bridge it