

MEDIA RELEASE

29 November 2016

SENIORS 'BUTTON ON' TO DIGITAL 3-D INSTALLATION AT AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

A giant 3-D art project that allows seniors to plan social outings with the click of three giant wall-sized buttons is lighting up an award-winning affordable housing complex in Brisbane's east.

'Social Buttons' has been unveiled at Mt Gravatt's popular Caggara House, a complex developed by Brisbane Housing Company (BHC) to accommodate seniors who downsized from under-occupied Queensland Government housing a year ago.

When pressed, the cartoonish, over-sized buttons located on the wall of the lobby illuminate with scrolling text allowing residents to choose social events from a list of options and nominate a location and preferred day of the week.

The most popular choice becomes that month's outing and the details are automatically texted to their phones.

BHC CEO David Cant said the large, colourful design was a fun and playful way for neighbours to connect with each other.

"Caggara House brings together seniors from all walks of life and sometimes it can be a bit daunting moving in with dozens of new neighbours," Mr Cant said.

"We wanted to make it enjoyable and easy for residents to meet and develop friendships and a community."

The project's designer, Jason Grant from Inkahoots said residents were closely involved with its production via a series of workshops.

"We learned about their rich personal housing histories and talked about their aspirations for their new home," Mr Grant said.

"The residents said they relished chance interactions when going to collect mail or passing in the hallway, but wanted a way to coordinate larger social events.

"That collective aspiration was the seed of the project."

Caggara House tenant Michael Fisher, 56, said the bold, new installation was already the talk of Caggara House.

“Residents will certainly show the buttons off to their friends and family,” Mr Fisher said.

“The more tech savvy residents will have a lot of fun with them and I’m sure the other residents will too.

“I like the fact that they are at a handy height because I use a motorised wheelchair to get around and access them easily.”

‘Social Buttons’ is the latest design innovation at the \$15 million dollar Caggara House complex which opened in February 2015.

Since then, the development has earned both a coveted UDIA QLD Award for Excellence and an Australian Institute of Architects State Architecture Award for residential multiple housing design.

The 57-unit complex on Bothwell Street has allowed 60 seniors to transition from government housing that had become too big for their changed needs into new, accessible purpose-built units.

“Caggara House has freed up larger government homes for families in need and provided this group of seniors with a much more liveable manageable home that is still situated in their familiar community,” Mr Cant said.

“In a short time, residents here have forged strong neighbourhood ties, but projects like Social Buttons provide another avenue for social engagement.”

Caggara House is the result of an innovative partnership between BHC the Department of Housing and Public Works, which provided the land and 50 per cent of the funding

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

Corrine Donaldson
BHC Marketing & Communications Officer
Phone: 3307 3033
corrine.donaldson@bhcl.com.au

