



news



HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENTS PROGRAM

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A Word from the Director

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2013. It has already been a big year for the HBEP!

On Tuesday the 16th of April, the NSW Premier and Minister for Planning released the White Paper for the ongoing review of the NSW planning system. The draft legislation contained in the White Paper includes the promotion of health as one of eight principle objectives. This is highly significant. The NSW draft Act represents the first time a state/territory Planning Act has included the promotion of improved health as one of its key objectives. The HBEP has advocated strongly for the inclusion of health and wellbeing as an objective of the new Planning Act, and will continue to do so through the upcoming consultation period. Keep reading below for further details of the health objective and information on how you can make a submission.

We have now completed three out of the series of ten 'Planning for Health' workshops that we are delivering across the state. Participants at the workshops provided valuable feedback, and this has been incorporated into the planning and preparation for future workshops. You can find out more about these workshops below.

In February we farewelled Dr Klaus Gebel, who left the HBEP to pursue his passion for public health research. We wish Klaus the best for his future endeavours. I'm delighted to announce that Jennifer Kent has now officially been appointed as the HBEP's new Research Associate. Jennifer has worked with the HBEP as a Research Assistant since its inception and joins us fresh from recent submission of her PhD thesis, which I had the pleasure to jointly supervise. There will be more about Jennifer in our next newsletter but in the meantime, you can find details of her background [here](#).

The CRC for Low Carbon Living

On 12 December, the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Low Carbon Living was launched at UNSW. You can find out more about the CRC [here](#). HBEP Director Susan Thompson is the Research Leader for one of three Program areas in the CRC – titled *Engaged Communities*. As Research Leader, she acts as a liaison between researchers and industry partners, meets with prospective PhD students, and is involved in the development of specific CRC research proposals. Most recently, along with HBEP Strategic Consultant Tony Capon, Susan started work on a proposal for a key deliverable of the CRC – a health and productivity co-benefits calculator. Subject to approval by the CRC board, this project will commence later in 2013.

Planning for Health Workshops

The HBEP is currently presenting a series of day long workshops on the NSW Planning System across NSW. Designed to enable health professionals and related stakeholders to better engage with a range of planning proposals, the workshops are being presented by HBEP Director Susan Thompson and HBEP partner, Dr. Danny Wiggins throughout 2013. Workshops have been held in Port Macquarie (December 2012), Belmore (February) and Newcastle (April). Workshops will shortly be delivered in Shellharbour (21st May) and Penrith (23rd May). For more information on the series, including details for upcoming workshops and how to register, please visit our [website](#).



Participants with Dr Danny Wiggins at the recent Newcastle 'Planning for Health' Workshop

NSW Planning System Review

As previously reported, the HBEP has made several submissions to the NSW Government as it undertakes the first comprehensive review of the State's Planning System in over 30 years. All HBEP submissions on the Planning System Review (made in 2011 and 2012) can be accessed [here](#).

On the recent release of the review's White Paper, we were very encouraged to see that the draft NSW Planning Act for comment includes the promotion of health as one of eight objectives. The specific objective addresses 'health, safety and amenity in the planning, design, construction and performance of individual buildings and the built environment'.

Comments on the White Paper, including the draft legislation, are now invited from stakeholders and the public. Individuals and groups can make submissions online by either uploading a prepared attachment or using the online feedback tool to submit comments on specific sections or chapters of the White Paper. You can also join the discussion by participating in online discussion forums or attending one of the briefings, feedback sessions and meetings being held across NSW. For details on how to make a submission or attend a session, please click [here](#).



What will our environments look like if health is an objective of the new planning Act?

HBEP in the Media

'How we can improve the impact of urban living on health and wellbeing': HBEP Director Susan Thompson was interviewed for an article in The Guardian's Online Sustainable Business Section. The article, which can be accessed [here](#), provides a discussion of the growing global recognition of the relationship between the built environment and health.

'In the driving seat': HBEP Research Associate Jennifer Kent contributed to an article in the Sydney Morning Herald on the growing popularity of car sharing schemes. You can read the article [here](#).

Social Connection Across the Generations

HBEP Director Susan Thompson recently took part in a UNSW TV [video](#) about the importance of fostering social connections across generations. The video depicts the relationship between the children of Tigger's Honey Pot, a child care centre at UNSW, and residents of Milford House, an aged care facility in nearby Randwick. It illustrates the multiple well-being benefits both groups gained from regular interactions and friendships that developed over time.

What's New on the HBEP Website?

New Planner column: The most recent Healthy Built Environments column in New Planner provides a discussion of the key issues planners must consider in balancing the environmental, health and economic needs of Australian cities. Click [here](#) to read the column.

HBEP Annual Report 2012: The Annual Report details HBEP activities and achievements across the three core strategies of Research, Leadership and Advocacy and Education over 2012. Click [here](#) to read the report.

And don't forget to check out our **Fortnightly Literature Review** where we compile new research relating to the three key domains of healthy built environments (as defined in the HBEP Literature Review).

Conference Notices

The 6th State of Australian Cities Conference (SOAC) will be held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Sydney from 26-29 November 2013. The conference will showcase the latest research across a range of urban issues, including environment, economy, community, governance, design and transport. You can find out more information about SOAC [here](#).

HBEP Director Susan Thompson will also be presenting a paper on the HBEP at the Joint AESOP/ACSP (European Schools of Planning and the American Collegiate Schools of Planning) Conference, which will be held in Dublin, Ireland from 15-19 July 2013. You can find out more information about this Conference [here](#).

Supported by



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