

Hello

We welcome you to our first newsletter and look forward to catching up with you at some of the events.

*Social Gatherings*



On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month we have been having a Social Gathering for a coffee and chat or a bite to eat.....

Our next get together will be AT

*“The Curious Goose”*

307 Sydney Road BRUNSWICK

Sunday 16 December

2-4pm

*“Everyone Most Welcome”*

*Housing*

There is an exciting new co-housing/social housing project that is on the horizon. Last month Anneke had a call from Jeanette Large, now the CEO of WPI. (VWHA has changed its name to Women’s Property Initiatives – WPI). Jeanette was wondering if Matrix was

interested in providing tenants for a new co-housing development and supporting an application for a Macquarie Foundation Innovation Award that would provide some seeding funding.

Matrix will probably form a 3-way partnership with the feminist (WPI) and a co-housing group called Urban Coup. UC is committed to sustainable and accessible building principles, as well as seeing intentional communities as an answer to social isolation and expensive urban sprawl. At this point land been bought, so it is not definite that the project will actually happen, but it is looking promising. The planned co-housing development is not for everybody, it requires a commitment to sharing certain green community principles, spaces and possibly weekly meals. Residents might need to contribute by preparing a regular meal, help to maintain the veggie garden and the chooks etc. In return they would have a supportive community around them, rather than living in anonymity in a standard apartment building. Although women will be the majority of residents, the lesbians who decided to participate would be part of an intentional community that included heterosexual men.

The deal is: WPI acts as the developer, they build 30 green apartments within 10km of the CBD (north-facing, double glazed, 8-star energy efficient, solar hot water, solar panels, “green” roofs, individual balconies, with a community building housing a workshop, yoga/meeting spaces, dining area, kids play areas, music room, veggie patch, chooks etc).

Then 24 are sold to Urban Coup members as Strata Titled flats. The “profit” allows WPI to retain 6 to lease to low income lesbians found by Matrix. WPI/Matrix tenants would have to meet the social housing criteria – assets of no more than \$30,000 and income below \$831 per week, but preference will be given to those on very low incomes eg: full Centrelink payments. It is not proposed that Matrix puts any funds toward the project, we will be providing tenants and also “*in-kind*” support.

At the moment Urban Coup and WPI are looking at sites in Brunswick and North Coburg.

Anyone who buys an apartment off-the-plan from a conventional developer is paying about 20-30% of the purchase price as profit to the developer. With this proposal, this “profit margin” is instead funding units to house lesbians who are experiencing financial disadvantage rather than providing straight profit for the developer. I love the way it is not reliant on government funding (unlikely in the present political climate), but instead uses the existing capitalist system where people expect that a percentage of the purchase price will be profit. The idea acknowledges that most of us are unlikely to pool finances, that we need the independence that Strata Title gives us to buy and sell as we wish. The sharing of resources that not every household has to own individually has precedents in conventional developments, but normally takes the form of pools, gyms etc

You can read more about Urban Coup at <http://www.urbancoup.org>  
<<http://www.urbancoup.org>>

The documents section of their website has a few articles and interviews that have been published.

See

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/with-peace-in-their-huts-an-urban-utopia-beckons-20110409-1d8ky.html>

<[\[peace-in-their-huts-an-urban-utopia-beckons-20110409-1d8ky.html\]\(http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/with-peace-in-their-huts-an-urban-utopia-beckons-20110409-1d8ky.html\)>](http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/with-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

I dream of a future where we replicate this proposed development, WPI builds another 30-apartment co-housing community and offers 24 of them for sale to lesbians and another 6 are retained to lease to lesbians on low incomes. This would have to have a fallback plan that if not enough lesbians buy in by a set date, and then the apartments would be offered to others who share our values.

Matrix and WPI are also discussing shared ownership options for women who have more than \$30,000 in assets, (so don't meet the social housing criteria), but don't actually have enough assets or income to buy property.

I think this method of providing social housing will be groundbreaking and this project will inspire many other groups to create more such developments.

If you're interested in being either a tenant or a full or part owner of one of these units, please contact Anneke On 0427 482 976 or email [housing@matrixguildviv.org.au](mailto:housing@matrixguildviv.org.au)

### [Aged Care Education & Training](#)

Matrix has been in demand to speak to Aged Care providers about how to provide a service more inclusive of lesbians and to make them aware of the discrimination our vulnerable elders face. We are considering charging for training sessions because they are used to paying for training and are likely to get more staff to attend. Funds will go towards printing more teaching resources such as the

“We Live Here Too” booklet.

27th November 2012: Met with Mecwacare's Managers of Residential Aged Care and Business Planning and Development to discuss ongoing training for their staff and

supporting their application for LGBTI inclusive in-home Care packages

**“Merry Christmas and Happy New Year”**



For those who celebrate the Christmas Season we hope you have a wonderful Christmas with you and yours. We are aware that the festive season can be an isolating and lonely time for many. Please don't feel alone and if you wish to speak with someone please feel free to contact Sharon on **0419 992 966**

**Sudoku**

	5	9			6	4		
	8			7	4			
7						3	6	1
8	9		5	2				6
	7		9		3		1	
4				6	8		3	5
2	1	8						7
			6	5			8	
		4	1			2	9	

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and stay tuned.....If you would like further information or perhaps become a financial member please feel free to contact us and we will assist you

Cheers

Sharon Stanton

**Matrix Guild**  
VICTORIA INC.

**A VOICE FOR OLDER LESBIANS**

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