



# HMinfo Newsletter

Edition 30 - December 2013 | [Visit our Website](#)

## From the editor

### Staff News:

In September we welcomed [Michael Bleasdale](#), Senior Policy Officer (Research), to the team. Michael originally worked as a direct service provider with people with disability, and recently as Executive Director of People with Disability Australia and the Attendant Care Industry Association. He also headed the Disability Studies and Research Institute and taught Habilitation subjects to students at the Australian Catholic University and Charles Sturt University. Michael is currently working on the DIY Home Modifications: Point of Sale Support for People with Disability and their Carers project. Scroll down for more on this exciting project in the newsletter.

This month we welcome [Hamish MacLennan \(PhD\)](#) to the HMinfo team as an Adjunct Associate Professor. Hamish has international experience in human factors and building design, human movement in the built environment, crowd movement, falls assessment, inclusive design, user driven solutions in circulation and egress, human behaviour in fire and emergencies, and performance based fire engineering. His work experience extends over a 31 year period in these areas, with a further 15 years in building and construction.

### Website News:

We have recently updated the style of our HMinfo publications, as shown in our two new publications:

[\*A user appraisal of the contribution of built environment factors to the independence and wellbeing of older people in two NSW regional town centres\*](#) and [\*Specialist Review Panel: Terms of Reference 4th ed.\*](#)

In early 2014, the HMinfo team will be reprinting a number of our existing publications in this new style with minor updates and editorial changes. We will include a list of reprinted publications in our next edition of the newsletter.

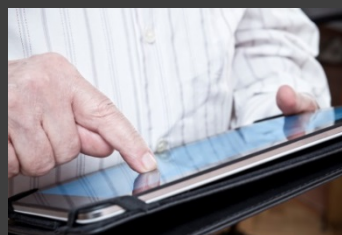
### Conference News:

A/Prof Catherine Bridge recently attended the AHURI [National Housing Conference](#) in Adelaide which ran from Oct 30 to Nov 1 at the Adelaide Convention Centre. Prior to the conference, A/Prof Bridge convened a day-long workshop entitled [Improving 21st century housing outcomes for older people: maximising choice and preventing housing discrimination](#). The workshop was a resounding success and received positive reviews, including an article in the Australian Ageing Agenda magazine online. [Read the article here.](#)

### Feature Publication:

***A user appraisal of the contribution of built environment factors to the independence and wellbeing of older people in two NSW regional town centres***

*Catherine Bridge, Vijay Sivaraman, Margaret Kay, Aolly Li, Jason Thorne, and Laura Davy*



People over the age of 65 are an increasing demographic in regional cities, and there is a need for neighbourhood built environments to be as supportive as possible to enable the ageing in place of local residents. Knowledge of what older people regard as key issues of concern in their built environment is crucial to ensuring age-friendly towns. As part of a strategy to identify the most effective application of Local Government Authority resources to create age-friendly town centres, this project developed an innovative system for auditing the built environment from the perspectives of older people. An iPad application was developed to allow people on the move to audit issues with the built environment when they are encountered, which then collates the information for council action.

This report outlines the new interactive system for auditing town centres, and presents the results of walk and talk auditing sessions and quality of life surveys conducted at two regional Australian cities, Tweed Heads and Wollongong, using this system.

[Read the full publication here...](#)

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## Current Research Projects

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### **DIY Home Modification: Point of Sale Support for People with Disability and their Carers**

***Michael Bleasdale, Nicole McNamara and Catherine Bridge***

With the launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in July 2013, and consumer-directed and person-centred approaches now at the forefront of disability and aged care reforms, increasingly people will be encouraged to receive their supports and services within their homes. The insurance approach favours the upfront funding of early intervention, as well as modifications and the provision of equipment, which will increase functional capacity and decrease reliance upon funded supports across the life course. The anticipated increase in the numbers of people seeking to modify homes will be accompanied by a change over time from reliance upon grant-funded schemes to individual allocations of funds, and a greater emphasis on choice and decision-making by people with disability and their carers.

There have been no studies undertaken in Australia into the extent to which people have modified their homes to accommodate mobility impairment, outside of the various funded programs which exist across the country. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reasonably widespread, and with the promise of increased home support to people with disability, and to people who will develop mobility impairments as they age, it is possible that more people will choose to have various modifications done to their homes so that they can remain there as they age. There is also an increased possibility that people will opt to make these modifications themselves (DIY), rather than contract a specialist to do the work for them.

The link between accessible homes and increased independence and confidence amongst people with disability is well established, and the need to ensure worker health and safety when providing support to people in their own homes is very important. The proposed research aims to identify

### **Occasional Paper: Home Design For Carers** ***Laura Davy and Catherine Bridge***

This research paper reviews available literature on home design for carers. The key research questions it seeks to answer are:

- How can the design of physical space in the home and particular home environment features support the roles of family (informal) carers?
- When designing home environments, what design features and considerations should Occupational Therapists and other home design professionals keep in mind to cater to the needs and preferences of family carers?

Early findings from this review include the need for space/s in the home for carers to retreat to for 'time-out' for themselves, and the need for home design professionals to consult more with carers in a 'whole of family' approach in order to take into account their built environment needs and perspectives and to ensure the continued effectiveness of home modification interventions. The report will adopt a thematic/exploratory literature review methodology rather than a systematic review methodology due to the limited body of research on this specific topic. As such, a key aim of the project is to identify broad themes and issues around the home environment and carer needs as a guide to future research, and to make a list of general recommendations for home design professionals to consider when implementing home modification interventions.



the reasons why people choose a DIY approach to a range of relevant and high priority modifications, and to assist future consumers by providing information resources at the point of sale.

[Read more about the NDIS below...](#)

### **Summary Bulletin: Gardening at Home** *Phillippa Carnemolla and Catherine Bridge*

*Gardening at Home: a Summary Bulletin* was first published by the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse in 2007.

Many of the available services, technologies and evidence bases have developed and changed - meaning that a full update of this document is timely.

The review and re-write of the Summary Bulletin is intended to inform stakeholders about outdoor modifications, gardening safety and the benefits associated with being able to access and experience the outdoors safely at home.

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**Websites we like:** [\*\*National Disability Insurance Scheme\*\*](#)

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[\*\*http://www.ndis.gov.au\*\*](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

**The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)** is "a new way of providing community linking and individualised support for people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers."

The NDIS website provides information about how to access the Scheme for people with disability and families and carers. The website also provides detailed information on the roll out of the Scheme across Australia, contains answers to frequently asked questions, provides a sample NDIS Agreement, and information about the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP). [\*\*Read more about NDAP here.\*\*](#)

An online newsroom on the NDIS site contains the latest information on the Scheme for interested persons, as well as media releases and tools for journalists.

Participants and Providers can also access their respective Portals through the [\*\*NDIS website\*\*](#).

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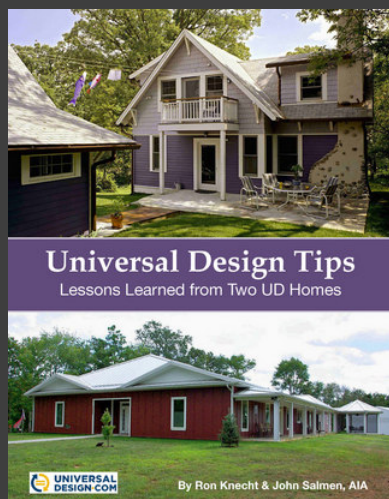
# Book Review: Universal Design Tips : Lessons Learned from Two UD Homes

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## *Universal Design Tips : Lessons Learned from Two UD Homes*

*Universal Design Tips : Lessons Learned from Two UD Homes* aims to assist people to design and build a Universally Designed home so that they can 'age in place'. It follows the processes undertaken by the authors when planning, designing, and building a home that would support them and their families as they age.

As a background to the home building projects, the book provides an overview of the 7 Principles of Universal Design and an explanation of the three "pillars" supporting the authors' Universal Design goals: energy efficiency, durability, and usability. It also discusses the important role that Universal Design can have in improving the quality of life of all individuals.



The authors completed two distinctly different Universally Designed North American homes. Knecht designed and built a new single-storey home in rural Virginia, and Salmen renovated his existing two-storey historic home in urban Maryland.

The book takes you through each author's journey to create their Universally Designed home; from the planning stages, site selection and drawings, to selecting contractors, building materials, fixtures and finishes, and constructing and completing the build or renovation. The application of Universal Design is examined in all aspects of the homes, including external access such as driveways and paths, internal and external doors and doorways, windows, lighting, level-access entries, horizontal circulation, accessible and efficient appliances, heating and air-conditioning, bathroom and laundry design, kitchen design and the design of living and sleeping areas. A range of alternative design approaches and products from the two homes are provided as examples of Universal Design features. When reading the book it is necessary to keep in mind that the measurements, Standards, and some terminology are American specific.

*Universal Design Tips* is filled with lavish photographs, illustrations, and floor plans from the authors' own homes, as well as personal stories and advice for implementing Universal Design in the home environment. It is a useful resource for people interested in designing and building a new home, or renovating an existing home, to meet their needs now and as they age.

Authors: Ron Knecht & John Salmen, AIA  
Editor: Daria Rogers  
Publisher: UniversalDesign.com  
Place of Publication: Takoma Park, MD  
Year: 2013

Read more about Universal Design on the publisher's website:

<http://www.universaldesign.com/>

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## Events

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## Housing 2020 Workshop - November 2013

The Housing 2020 Workshop, held on 7 November 2013, was organised by Rights Inclusion Australia and the Australian Network for Universal Housing Design (ANUHD), and was hosted by Stockland in Sydney. The day-long event was an opportunity to take stock of the progress being made by Livable Housing Australia (LHA) towards the 2020 Liveable Housing target of 100% of new housing stock built to the minimum silver standard, and to identify drivers which could speed up the process and encourage industry to build to the higher gold or platinum levels (for the specifications required of each level go to <http://livablehousingaustralia.org.au/design-guidelines/>).

At the workshop a range of stakeholders met to discuss the approach being taken in Australia to increase the stock of housing which is built to a standard of access suitable for people of all ages and with diverse requirements. The partnership approach between the building industry and consumer groups was brokered by the Australian Government, and LHA continues to receive funding to guide the industry towards the 2020 goals. Builders are encouraged to register their plans with LHA, and take part in a process of assessment, inspection and verification of the standard to which the dwelling has been built. The number of new dwellings completed to the required standard is well below expectations this far into the strategy (only 9 completed so far), but representatives of industry and LHA pointed out that of the uncompleted houses registered very few are at the minimum silver standard, the majority being at gold or platinum. They also expect the rate of take-up to increase more rapidly from this point on.

Presentations by Stockland and Turner Architects illustrated some of the challenges and lingering disincentives to both designing and building to these standards. Stockland has committed to meeting the 100% target ahead of time, although it will take at least two years before the houses come onto the market. The challenges of design and consumer demand on medium-and high-density accommodation will become increasingly important in metropolitan developments, and here, both economic drivers and strata arrangements continue to pose challenges on the standards being adopted.

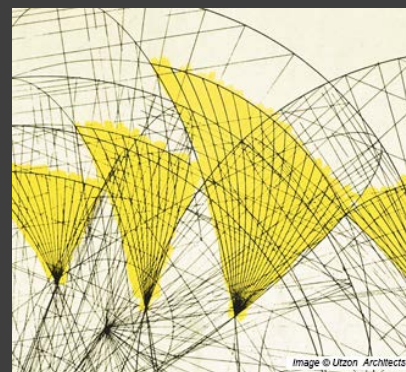
Several of those attending expressed frustration with the slow rate of progress towards the 2020 goals, and pointed out the relative success of regulation in other jurisdictions, especially in Scandinavia. An afternoon "world café" session enabled broad discussion of strategies which could help achieve the goals, and the various key points from these group discussions were voted on to highlight the most popular. In order of preference these were:

1. **Provide national regulation** – uniform, simplified standard across the board for the building industry, through the Building Code of Australia
2. **Develop incentives** – to encourage developers and builders to achieve LHA certification, such as fast-tracking certification and including it as a criterion for 1<sup>st</sup> home owner grants
3. **Educate builders and consumers** – making it a core subject in design and building education, and using mainstream media to encourage Livable Housing as an aspiration.

HMinfo will continue to engage with the LHA 2020 Housing targets, through its membership of ANUHD.

## Utzon Symposium – March 2014

### What would Utzon do Now?



The 4th International Utzon Symposium will take place on March 7-9, 2014.

The Symposium will be held at the [Sydney Opera House](#) and at the [University of New South Wales](#).

A collaboration between UNSW Australia, the Jørn Utzon Research Network ([JURN](#)) and the Utzon Research Center ([URC](#)), the University of Portsmouth, UK and Aalborg University, Denmark, the Fourth International Utzon Symposium will extend previous research on Utzon's oeuvre and ask the question:

"What would Utzon do now?"

Full details, the call for papers, and updates are available on the UNSW Built Environment website [here](#).

Contact Information:

[utzonsymposium@unsw.edu.au](mailto:utzonsymposium@unsw.edu.au)  
[be.unsw.edu.au/utzonsymposium](http://be.unsw.edu.au/utzonsymposium)

### Universal Design Conference – August 2014



The Inaugural Australian Universal Design Conference will be held at the Sydney Town Hall on August 20-21, 2014. The theme for the conference will be "universal design for inclusive and liveable environments".

The [call for papers](#) is now open and submissions close on February 6, 2014.

Further information and contact details are available on the conference website:

[www.universaldesignconference.com.au](http://www.universaldesignconference.com.au)

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## Publications by HMinfo Team Members

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Home Modification Information Clearinghouse. (2013). Specialist Review Panel: Terms of Reference 4th ed. Sydney: Home Modification Information Clearinghouse, UNSW: [www.homemods.info](http://www.homemods.info)

Bridge, C., Sivaraman, V., Kay, M., Li, A., Thorne, J., & Davy, L. (2013). A user appraisal of the contribution of built environment factors to the independence and wellbeing of older people in two NSW regional town centres. Sydney: Home Modification Information Clearinghouse, UNSW: [www.homemods.info](http://www.homemods.info)

More publications are available on [the HMinfo website](#)

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## Staff at HMinfo

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A/Professor Catherine Bridge (OT) - Director  
Joanne Quinn - Research Associate  
Phillippa Carnemolla - Research Associate  
Laura Davy - Research Associate  
Nicole McNamara - Research Associate  
Michael Bleasdale - Senior Policy Officer (Research)  
Toni Adams - Research Associate  
Andrew Clark - Research Associate  
Helmut Hoss - Web Specialist



Any suggestions or feedback you may have on our newsletter would be greatly appreciated, so please feel free to contact us at [hminfo@unsw.edu.au](mailto:hminfo@unsw.edu.au). To unsubscribe from future HMinfo newsletters, please click on the following [unsubscribe link](#)



**Australian Government**  
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