



# news



HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENTS PROGRAM

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## A Word from the Director

**Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter! 2014 got off to a busy and somewhat unsettling start with lots of changes at the HBEP.**

The team welcomed Ms Rema Hayek - Senior Policy Analyst, Strategy and Partnerships Branch in the Centre for Population Health, at the Ministry of Health who is now managing the HBEP Contract. Rema is a champion of healthy built environments and a few years back undertook the [Health Built Environments Course](#) at UNSW.

There have also been some big changes in the HBEP team. In late January we farewelled Dr Jennifer Kent, who has accepted an academic position at Macquarie University. Jen has been involved with the HBEP since its inception. Her contribution has been considerable and will be missed – along with her skills set, knowledge of healthy planning issues and hard work. We wish Jen well in her academic career, particularly her research on car use and the uptake of alternative modes of transport.



Emily in the Rock Garden in Chandigarh, India

Fortunately for HBEP, this departure was followed by some good news. Ms Emily Mitchell has agreed to take on the HBEP's Senior Research Officer role. Emily has worked as a Research Officer with the HBEP since 2011. She has primarily been responsible for our ARC Linkage Grant project entitled *Planning and Building Healthy Communities*, which you can read about [here](#). And when Emily's not at the University she might well be travelling or reading a good book! Here she is in one of her favourite healthy built environments – the Rock Garden in Chandigarh, India!

And we have a new addition to the team. Dr Greg Paine has joined as a part-time research officer. Greg comes to HBEP with extensive experience as an environmental planner in both state and local government here and overseas, and in both policy setting and implementation. Originally a Bachelor of Town Planning from UNSW, Greg has since completed a masters degree in environmental management through the WHO Collaborative Centre for Environmental Health at the University of Western Sydney and subsequently a doctorate in sustainable development. This research involved working collaboratively with a group of people who had sought to live more sustainably, revealing their successes, joys and frustrations, to establish lessons

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## A Word from the Director continued

for others with similar aspirations. Greg has a keen interest in integrative approaches and to this end has recently completed a draft for a book detailing the experiences of a group of practitioners who operate in this way through the use of “pattern” as a tool in their thinking and doing processes. Otherwise, you might find him sailing, kayaking or swimming; or planning another trip somewhere.

This Newsletter details our activities for the first few months of 2014. The highlight has undeniably been the HBEP *Making It Happen Symposium*. As well, we have been involved in FitNSW Forum, different writing tasks, teaching and research projects. On behalf of the HBEP team, I hope you enjoy reading our news.



Greg Paine

## Making It Happen Symposium

The **Healthy Built Environments Program** marked **World Health Day** on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014 by hosting a day long Symposium entitled ‘Making It Happen’. The aim of the Symposium was to explore different ideas about activating healthy built environments. This comes after four and a half years of hard work by the HBEP and colleagues getting many of the foundations for a healthy built environment in NSW in place. Keynote speakers Dr Iain Butterworth (Manager Public Health, Victorian Department of Health and Honorary Associate Professor, University of Melbourne) and Mr Jonathan Daly (Director of **mutfung** – interdisciplinary design practice) presented their ideas to enact real change to create environments that are more supportive of human health. The second session of the day involved everyone working together to envision a future where environments support human and environmental health. This was run by HBEP Advisory Board Chair, Professor Peter Sainsbury. The day concluded with an afternoon field trip to Victoria Park, one of the case study sites for our current ARC Linkage research project, and the suburbs of Lewisham/Summer Hill (located in the inner west of Sydney). HBEP Director Susan Thompson led the field trip (see images below).

See the Healthy Built Environments website for **more information** about the Symposium, including the program brochure which has detailed notes about each of the Symposium sessions.



## New HBEP Submission – West Connex

Announced late last year, the \$11 billion **West Connex** scheme is set to become Australia’s largest-ever road building project. Reducing traffic congestion across Sydney, better handling heavy freight transport and the potential revitalisation of choked thoroughfares such as Parramatta Road, are among the stated motivations for the initiative. Not surprisingly, it has evoked considerable community concern about impacts on local neighbourhoods – both during construction and operation. In the HBEP submission on the proposal we argue that Government must commission a health impact assessment (HIA) on the project. You can read our submission [here](#).

## The GreenWay Project

The **GreenWay** is an urban green corridor in Sydney's inner west, stretching from the **Cooks River to Iron Cove Bay**. It is a bush corridor with a shared walking and cycling pathway and spaces for recreational activities. It also plays host to a range of arts, bush care and other community projects. As part of her undergraduate **Healthy Planning course**, HBEP Director Susan Thompson has developed a class research project with GreenWay Coordinator Mr Nick Chapman. Students, who are from health and the built environment, will work in interdisciplinary groups to audit the walkability of the light rail stations along the length of the GreenWay. They will present their findings as a finale to the class. Their work will be presented to the local councils responsible for the GreenWay.



Images L-R: GreenWay signage, public art and the students inspecting the Greenway

## FitNSW Forum

The FitNSW Forum – hosted by the Premier's Council for Active Living and sponsored by HBEP – was held on 26 February 2014 at NSW Parliament House. The purpose of the forum was to examine how walkability and active travel have been prioritised in the planning and design of cities around the world – and how this can be achieved in NSW, in the context of current legislative and policy frameworks. Presentations were made by Dr Karen Lee (NYC Fit City Conference Director), Dr Rodney Tolley (Walk21 Conference Director), Ms Carolyn McNally (Transport for NSW), Dr Jo Mitchell (NSW Ministry of Health), Ms Romilly Madew (Green Building Council of Australia) and Ms Kati Westlake (Parramatta City Council). A video recording of the event can be viewed [here](#).

## HBEP in the Media

The HBEP team has been consulted on a variety of media stories and articles over the past few months. Of particular interest is HBEP Director Susan Thompson's invited piece 'You are where you live: health, wealth and the built environment' in the 'class' series recently published in *The Conversation*. An interview was released on the public affairs broadcast site *The Wire* about community gardens and HBEP has lent its support to the **action for shade** in Western Sydney being run by local newspapers.

## New Publications

HBEP has several new scholarly publications. An article by Dr Jennifer Kent on the potential health benefits of car sharing can be accessed [here](#). Two papers have been published on research generated in the HBEP Literature Review – one in the *Journal of Occupational Science* and the other in the prestigious *Journal of Planning Literature*.

## What's New on the HBEP Website?

Download our 2013 [Annual Report](#) which details the activities undertaken across our three strategic areas of endeavour: research; leadership and advocacy; education and capacity building.

Read the [Healthy Built Environments Curriculum Workshop Report](#) which was held in December last year with visiting Professor Andrew Dannenberg.

We have also added the Cancer Council's Shade Guidelines to our [resources page](#). The Guidelines provide information on understanding issues associated with UV radiation, movement of the sun and shade, identifying different shade needs and conducting a shade audit. The Heart Foundation's Western Australia Guidelines for Healthy Built Environments are also featured on this page.

### And Our Regular Website Features:

**New Planner Column:** Read the latest [Healthy Built Environments](#) column in 'New Planner', which discusses some of the key considerations for planners to take into account in creating walkable environments.

And, as always, don't forget to take a look at our [Fortnightly Literature Reviews!](#)

## Upcoming Events

### Walk21 Sydney

In October 2014, the NSW State Government and City of Sydney will host 'Walk21'. The decision to host the world's leading conference on walking was made shortly after the December 2013 release of [Sydney's Walking Future](#) by Transport for NSW. Recognising the resulting social and economic benefits, the report's proposals aim to 'make walking the transport choice for quick trips under two kilometres'. Planning and public health advocates need to better understand what motivates and encourages walking. Walk21 will showcase a wealth of research evidence, practice initiatives and inspiration to do this. Keep an eye on the [Conference Website](#) for future announcements.

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