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The importance of good neighbourly relations isn't lost on Chisholm's Waterford community

BELOVED Australian television soap *Neighbours* might be wrapping up, but in the Skimmer, Goldring and Tigertail streets at Waterford in Chisholm neighbourly relationships are in full swing.

In fact, it is in these streets at Waterford by AVID Property Group that neighbours really have become good friends, and they insist their relationships come without all the scandals and drama the long-running soap depicts.

Residents have spoken about the importance of their neighbourly connections following Relationship Australia's annual Neighbour Day that took place on Sunday, March 27. Now in its 20th year, the event aims to raise awareness about loneliness and the importance of social connection.

For Harriet Stewart, who moved to Waterford a year ago, her neighbours have become like family.

"We talk every single day, all our kids play together, and we help each other with everything from borrowing milk to helping in emergencies, to organising weekly BBQs, birthday parties, having little presents and baked goods left as surprises at our door and always looking out for each other," Ms Stewart said.

"People who visit us comment on how unbelievably lucky we are to have been to find such an amazing community of people in Waterford and how rare it is these days to have such strong bonds with neighbours like we do."

Interestingly, the ABC's *Australia Talks National Survey* last year found only 62 per cent of Australians knew many of their neighbours by name. Survey data also found older people and those living in regional areas were more likely to know their neighbours.¹

There is widespread opinion by Australian social researchers that there needs to be a much greater emphasis on "neighbourliness".^{2,3}

Curtin University released a report at last year's end, detailing the cost of loneliness and associated poor health outcomes was costing up to \$2.7 billion per year, with Covid-19 restrictions amplifying a steady decline in social connectedness.⁴

For many people, knowing their neighbours and feeling connected is an essential part of the human condition. There have been many studies to suggest neighbourly support is also associated with better well-being.

¹ ABC News, [Do you know your neighbours by name?](#)

² The University of Sydney, [Problematic levels of loneliness widespread in many countries](#)

³ The Guardian, [Ill health due to loneliness costs Australia \\$2.7bn each year, report suggests](#)

⁴ Curtin University, [Pandemic increases loneliness among Australians with adverse health outcomes costing up to \\$2.7 billion per year.](#)

Take Catherine Saba for instance. She moved to the Waterford community more than 6 years ago the Blue Mountains and said she pleasantly surprised to see established friendships in her street, Tigertail.

“I can honestly say my neighbours are my new best friends,” Ms Saba said.

“The first year we moved in we had a street Christmas party to get to know our neighbours which turned out to be a great experience and from then on, we have watched our kids grow up together and now go to high school together. We couldn't have asked for a better street to live on.”

Neighbour Bianca Draffin echoed that sentiment.

“We have the most wonderful neighbours who treat our family like their own,” Ms Draffin said.

“They often bring over home grown vegetables and look after our dog when we are away and even do the weeding in our garden when we've been too busy to do it.”

To find out more about Waterford by AVID Property Group, visit www.waterfordliving.com.au.

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About Waterford

Waterford is part of AVID Property Group's growing portfolio of exceptional master-planned communities, Waterford is a 173ha community in East Maitland, New South Wales.

Offering residents large blocks, beautiful parks and open spaces, the community's residents enjoy close access to new and emerging amenities including new local schools St Bede's Catholic College and St Aloysius Catholic Primary School, childcare, retail amenities and Maitland Private Hospital.

Having acquired the development in mid-2017, AVID will deliver the remaining blocks in the community, and continue to oversee existing plans for a sport and recreation fields, along with additional parks and open spaces.

For more information visit: <https://waterfordliving.com.au>.

About AVID Property Group

AVID Property Group (AVID) is responsible for an award-winning portfolio of residential and industrial developments in key growth precincts across Australia, having delivered \$2.3 billion worth of projects over the past 12 years.

AVID acquired residential property developer Villa World in October 2019. The combined business portfolio includes 37 projects, more than 12,000 residential lots and a gross revenue pipeline of \$4.7 billion. This includes a diverse mix of development types, including masterplanned communities, housing, medium density living, apartments and more than 350 hectares of industrial land.

Led by highly experienced senior management and development teams with a broad range of expertise, AVID is ideally positioned to add significant value at each stage of the project lifecycle. For more information, visit www.avid.com.au.

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