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Community street library proving a hit with avid readers in Chisholm

A Chisholm-based community street library is doing its part to reverse Australia's declining reading rates while also building important social connections.

One in four (25 per cent) adult Australians told the 2021 National Reading Survey they didn't read or listen to a single book during the year¹ – significantly up from 8 per cent recorded in a separate survey in 2017².

The Chisholm street library, which commenced in a local neighbourhood café in AVID Property Group's (AVID) Waterford community during the COVID-19 lockdown in early 2020, has now amassed more than 30 books and welcomes readers from across the wider Chisholm region.

AVID Property Group this week bolstered the exchange's book shelves with a donation of children's titles to encourage a love of reading in the region's younger citizens.

"To mark Book Week (20-26 August), we have shopped the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) 2022 Book of the Year Awards shortlist to ensure we're celebrating Australian authors and including reads for the younger book lovers in the region," said AVID New South Wales Project Director Nathan Huon.

Mr Huon said the exchange – which was installed outside The Kitchen at Waterford café – had helped build community spirit during a difficult time by encouraging residents to share books without having to physically be in each other's presence.

"The initiative has gone from strength to strength with adults and children from the wider Chisholm community now sharing their favourite reads with other community members through the exchange," he said.

"AVID is proud to support such a positive initiative through the annual donation of new books that we hope become worn and dog-eared over time from passing through the hands of so many avid community readers."

Waterford residents Bianca Draffin and Daniel Dwyer said their children were big fans of the street library.

"My girls love going to the community street library on a weekend," Ms Draffin said.

"We have a milkshake and coffee while reading the many books that are available."

Mr Dwyer agreed. "Our family walk up to the community street library and my son borrows a book for the week. It's such a great idea."

¹ [National Reading Survey - Australia Reads](#)

² [National Reading Survey, 170526-revealing-reading-sur-592776a9aaa7e-1.pdf](#)

Jumping on board the *dreaming with eyes open* Book Week theme, young participants of the street library can expect to see reads from authors including Shirley Marr, Katrina Nannestad and Gary Lonesborough.

“Over the past year we’ve contributed books for all ages and genres, including picture books for children, popular reads for teenagers, and fiction and non-fiction books for adults,” Mr Huon said.

“The community street library works on a system of trust – residents are encouraged to donate books they no longer want and swap them for others they’d like to borrow,” he said.

“On the walk to the street library located at The Kitchen at Waterford, people are able check in on their neighbours, have a chat outside and give each other a smile and a wave, which fosters social connections whilst also supporting the benefits of reading.”

To borrow one of CBCA’s Book Week reads or add a great book to the collection, residents of the region can visit the outdoor library at any time, located on the deck outside The Kitchen at Waterford at 2 Settlers Boulevard, Chisholm.

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

– ENDS –

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.

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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