



With the fresh scents of early spring in the air, it's the perfect time to celebrate the beautiful gardens that brighten not just the environments, but the lives of the residents at our seven sites across metropolitan Adelaide.

We aim to create attractive environments for our 130 residents to live in surrounded by pleasant and inviting grounds and gardens. While the main grounds and communal spaces at each site are maintained by external contractors, residents have access to their own garden which many tend lovingly.

We spoke to gardening expert and ABC presenter Sophie Thomson while she was busy setting up her display at the 2024 Royal Adelaide Show.

Sophie passionately shared the benefits of gardening and all the ways it connects us. "I might be biased, but I truly believe gardening can bring positive change into your life and give great pleasure," she said.

"Gardens and gardening help improve physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. It is a form of exercise and an opportunity for relaxation and mindfulness. It can improve moods, relieve stress, stimulate the mind and increase energy levels."

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Above: Ascot Park residents Tony, Alice, Carla and Tony in their flourishing garden.

MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The recent purchase of a property adjoining our Ascot Park site is part of Cottage Homes' growth strategy to meet current and future housing demands. The Board has plans to eventually build units on this site and is exploring additional opportunities to increase its offerings.



RESIDENT PROFILE

Coming from a farm in Millicent, gardening has been a big part of Parkside resident Elizabeth Bonney's life. "It's something I've always loved."

Elizabeth (pictured) was drawn to The Cottage Homes at Parkside in 2006 because she was looking for somewhere "quiet, secure, and with a garden – and all of those things are here!" She came to a garden which she has expanded, tended and loved for 18 years.

In Elizabeth's garden you will find bulbs, star jasmine and sweet peas, as well as many Australian native varieties. These were inspired by her husband, plant expert Neville Bonney who wrote 23 books including many on indigenous plants of SA.

Elizabeth now has help to maintain her garden but still very much enjoys spending time outdoors. She considers herself lucky to be a resident at Cottage Homes. "Don't underestimate the value of Cottage Homes. I'm very happy to be here!"

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"Gardening can be a fantastic hobby as we age because it can be easily tailored to everyone's needs and abilities. It can be made accessible through raised garden beds and tools designed to make gardening easier."

Sophie said gardening gives a sense of purpose and is a great way to get to know your neighbours and build relationships with those in our community. "Gardening can also give us great rewards when we can sit back and enjoy the fruits of our labour," Sophie added.

Parkside resident Emilie does just that. She says her garden "gives her peace." The Cottage Homes resident of almost 30 years has filled her garden with perennials and annuals; a vibrant mix of flowers, herbs and vegetables (including potatoes!) which she trades with her daughter for fresh eggs! Emilie says, "I enjoy my garden and it's nice to live with others so you have someone to talk to."

Sophie left us with one last piece of gardening advice – "It doesn't matter whether you've got a pot or a garden bed – just get your hands dirty!" 🏡

FOR MORE ADVICE...

Follow Sophie Thomson on Facebook, visit sophiespatch.com.au or catch her weekly segments on ABC TV's 'Gardening Australia' and ABC Radio 891.

Former Mayor brings 30 years' experience

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD CHAIR

The Cottage Homes is thrilled to welcome Non-Executive Director David O'Loughlin to the role of Board Chair. The former City of Prospect Mayor was appointed to The Cottage Homes board in 2022, bringing more than 30 years' construction experience in private and public sector.

His background and long-term interest in architecture, planning and heritage buildings, (he and his wife are lovingly restoring a home built in 1938), drew David to Cottage Homes, which he refers to as a "terrific organisation doing

Anna helps care for our Findon site.



GREEN THUMBS ALL AROUND US

You don't have to dig too deeply to find some green thumbs across The Cottage Homes organisation and residents! There are some very dedicated residents among us taking care of gardens for all to enjoy.

Some dedicate their time to growing produce to share, like the orange trees you'll find at Prospect, and the multiple fruit trees at Toorak Gardens, where they'll soon grow vegetables in some new raised garden beds.

Our Patron, the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia is opening the 5.6-hectare, 184-year-old

Government House gardens to the public on the first Friday of the month from September to May.

A love of gardening has led some residents to volunteering in community projects. Long-term Glenelg resident Joan has volunteered in the Michael Herbert Memorial Garden, which honours the local pilot who gave his life serving in the Vietnam War aged just 24. Fiona from Toorak Gardens has volunteered at The Monastery Garden in Glen Osmond for several years. Mitcham resident Faye, who volunteers at Carrick Hill Garden, highlighted her

love of trees when she climbed a tall tree in a Tasmanian forest on a recent 'significant' birthday instead of having a party!

Many celebrations are held in The Cottage Homes communal areas including the new pergola at Findon and the garden at Ascot Park which recently hosted the 90th birthday of resident Alice.

Some residents love gardens or pot plants inspired by childhood memories. Glenelg resident Patricia fondly remembers helping her father to establish trees, preserve fruit and build a chicken coop in their family garden after the war. Patricia still enjoys getting out in the sunshine, feeling nature's energy and having her hands in soil.

For some no longer physically able to tend gardens, pot plants including orchids, ferns and bromeliads are now their focus. You may have noticed how much they brighten a walk around any of The Cottage Homes sites thanks to our green thumbs. 🏡

great work to really make a difference in people's lives."

During his 3-year tenure, David intends to explore ways to grow and help even more people who are looking for secure and affordable housing.

"Given the growing number of ageing people in our society, more older people will retire without owning their own home. To build on the 152-year legacy of Cottage Homes and

see growth in the number of homes would be fantastic," said David. "The board is keen to explore how we can do that with others and help more people in need."

For David, it's the Visitors that are a real point of difference for Cottage Homes. "We care deeply about people's welfare. The Visitors give us a chance to make sure people are OK. We love the feedback which we review at every board



David O'Loughlin

meeting and act on where we can. It helps our work to stay focussed not just on the accommodation but what matters most, wellbeing."

A GIFT THAT LASTS LONGER THAN A LIFETIME

Imagine heading into the latter years of life without the stability of safe and secure housing.

Sadly, many senior South Australians are faced with the reality of limited access to affordable housing. Older people living on the Age Pension who don't own their home confront high rental prices, placing them at genuine risk of homelessness.

Since 1872, Cottage Homes has been delivering affordable rental accommodation for vulnerable ageing South Australians. We currently provide housing in community settings for 130 residents to live independently. But increasing demand is outstripping supply.

Your bequest or a donation will make a difference!

Donate at [givenow.com.au/the-cottage-homes](https://www.givenow.com.au/the-cottage-homes) or send a cheque to Cottage Homes C/- Knight Frank Level 29, 91 King William St, Adelaide SA 5000.

All gifts are tax deductible.

Your bequest or donation will help ensure older South Australians have access to safe and secure housing

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Above: Erlinda and Colleen enjoy their Prospect garden.

Left: Herbs thrive under Ann Oliver's care at Parkside.



Right: Spring vista at Glenelg.

Below left: Veranda pots at Mitcham.

Below right: Blossoms on show at Toorak Gardens.

