

The Green Ingredient - Finding the recipe for a healthy mind through green design

Caitriona O'Dowd¹, Lauren Harding²

1 GHD Pty Ltd

2 GHD Pty Ltd

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

— ***Greek proverb***

In our increasingly busy lives, many of us are rushing through each day trying to juggle hectic work and family schedules, often to the detriment of our mental wellbeing. For Western Sydney residents, this can also be compounded by long commutes.

While our lives will no doubt always be busy, Western Sydney's growth and densification brings significant opportunities to bring the 'Green Ingredient' into our cities and towns through high quality green design and planning, and through new technologies.

Our presentation will explore the idea that attractive, comfortable, convenient green spaces that are designed to merge seamlessly with the public and private realms will encourage us to slow down, be present, enjoy our lives, and ultimately be healthier and happier.

We will focus on:

- New research about benefits of green spaces for mental wellbeing and healthy communities
- Interviews with leading health industry researchers and professionals on how design can positively influence mental health
- Case studies for developments which encourage slow living through green and integrated design
- New technologies which enhance green connections in our everyday lives
- Movements and philosophies such as:
 - Life by design – sustainable design inspired by a collection of or core life values e.g. family, work, shelter, environment, community
 - Slow living movement – being present in our lives and living more slowly