# Designing places to ‘hang-out’: A case study of one Melbourne high-rise apartment complex

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Project</th>
<th>Suitable for either Honours or Masters Major project</th>
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| Supervisors     | Dr Fiona Andrews, Faculty of Health Burwood  
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|                 | Dr Elyse Warner, Faculty of Health Burwood  
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| Project Time Frame | 2020 full time preferable |
| Expected Student Contact | The student would be expected to meet weekly with at least one of the supervisors for around one hour. This can be via skype or telephone if the student is not located nearby. |
| Project Description | The number of Australians living in private, high-rise apartments has increased significantly over the past ten years, with apartments likely to be a major source of housing for Millennials, as they rent or purchase their first home. Despite the benefits of providing an affordable home, our previous research has shown that high-rise living can be a socially isolating experience (see recent article in The Conversation - [https://theconversation.com/apartment-life-for-families-means-living-at-close-quarters-but-often-feeling-isolated-too-120983](https://theconversation.com/apartment-life-for-families-means-living-at-close-quarters-but-often-feeling-isolated-too-120983)). This project has come about after we were approached by an Owner’s Corporation of a large, private apartment complex in the Melbourne CBD, who have retrofitted an unused courtyard in their complex to try and promote social connectedness amongst residents. The aim of this project is to explore residents’ experiences of their retrofitted communal space and what this means for their social health. The Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have already expressed an interest in the outcomes of this work. Findings will be used to help inform housing policy development and apartment design guidelines. |
| Methodological Approach | Qualitative methods will be used in this project, specifically photo-elicited interviews with a small sample of residents living in the apartment complex. Interviews will be complimented by residents’ photography to capture their experiences of communal spaces as a place to interact with their neighbours/entertain friends, aspects of these spaces that support/fail to support these activities and what this means for their social health. |
| Ethics | The supervisors will ensure ethics approval is secured prior to the student commencing. |
| Necessary Skills / Knowledge | The student will require good communication skills and experience with, or a willingness to learn, qualitative methods. |
| Additional Details | The student will need to be able to travel independently to the Melbourne CBD to interview participants and make observations of the study site. |
| Could the project result in a conference presentation/publication? | Findings from the project could be presented at national conferences such as the State of Australian Cities, Liveable, Healthy & Sustainable Cities, Australian Institute for Family Studies etc. The student would be encouraged to be involved in and supported in, preparing an abstract and presenting their findings. |