



## Brahma Green giving first home buyers a start

Todd and Sabina from Salisbury thought they would have to put their dream of home ownership on hold, until Todd's mum saw an advert for a new development at Brahma Lodge.

'We had been looking for about six months; and were ready to give up and try and save some more money when mum told us about Brahma Green,' Todd says.

The Brahma Green initiative was available to first home buyers who were living or working in the Salisbury area, and it was just what Todd and Sabina were looking for.

When Todd and Sabina looked into the application process, they found that they were eligible to apply. Due to the lack of homes in their price range, once they had applied for Brahma Green they decided to stop looking and continue saving.

Todd and Sabina were successful through the application and selection process, and now own one of the eleven properties at Brahma Green. The opportunity has given Todd and Sabina the start they needed to get into home ownership.

'We're very happy; it's helped us with everything. We wanted to get into home ownership but didn't want to rent first, and Brahma Green has allowed us to do this,' Todd says.

Prior to buying their home, Todd and Sabina were living together at Sabina's family home; however

they both shared the same dream of owning a home together. Now that they have achieved that dream, they are discovering many different aspects of home ownership to enjoy.

'My favourite part of having our own home is the sense of freedom it gives us, and my other favourite part is that I finally have my own wardrobe!' Sabina says.

While buying a house is enough to keep many people busy, that's not all Sabina and Todd have been up to. As well as buying their first home together they have also become engaged.

The couple were keen to buy a home together before getting married, and now they have their home they are able to concentrate on their wedding and future together.

'We are saving up for the wedding and planning to get married towards the end of next year,' Sabina told us. But it doesn't stop there, 'We'd also like to do a little travel!' Todd says.

HomeStart recently celebrated the completion of the Brahma Green development, see the back page for photos of the event and details of the day.

## Help us keep in touch

Email provides a quick and convenient method of communication, and because it saves paper it's better for the environment too. To help us stay in touch with you, update your email address online and you'll go into our draw to win \$100 Coles/Myer voucher. Simply go to [homestart.com.au/email](http://homestart.com.au/email) to update your details.

Terms and conditions on the back page.



### Page 2

- Create a veggie garden
- Top loan tips

### Page 3

- How our loans help
- How are we doing?

### Page 4

- Brahma Green
- Green fingers comp



# Create a veggie garden that will bloom in spring

Whether you've got poorly drained soil or you just want to make gardening easier, raised garden beds are a modern accessible option.

Waist high beds are also the perfect height for planting and harvesting, so why not grow your own tasty, seasonal food without all the hard work.

Raised garden beds can be built to any size or budget, and provide a fun family activity which not only brings hours of enjoyment for the whole family but also provides health and cost saving benefits.

## Fill the raised bed

Layer the bottom of the bed with about 10cm of gravel to aid drainage, then fill your raised garden bed with a generous combination of organic garden soil mix and compost. Dig some composted animal manure through the soil too for extra goodness.

If you would rather use the no dig method, then fill the bed with layers of organic matter like pea straw, lucerne mulch, compost and manure that will rot down into a nutrient-rich soil. Top it off with a good layer of garden compost. As the organic matter breaks down just top the beds up with more compost.

**TIP:** In a no dig garden it's best to start with shallow rooted plants like brassicas, lettuce and cucurbits until the organic layers begin to break down and then you can experiment with larger crops.

## Growing inspiration

Why not capture old fashioned flavours by growing a range of mini capsicums and green and yellow striped tomatoes to bring a



zing to your salads. Don't forget to add some fresh herbs to your plot to tantalise your taste buds.

## Growing tips for success

- Most edible plants like a sunny spot. Six hours of sunlight is ideal. Beware of nearby trees which may cast shade on your plot or have invasive roots
- If you're placing the raised bed directly on soft ground (i.e. grass or soil) then cover the area first with wads of newspaper or porous weed mat to smother out potential weeds
- Apply a seaweed based tonic at planting time and throughout the growing season to get your veggies off to a flying start
- Liquid feed your raised beds every few weeks – check your local Plants Plus garden centre for the best option for your garden
- Apply a good layer of mulch to your bed after planting to help retain moisture, reduce weed growth and gradually improve the soil.

If a raised garden bed sounds like the perfect thing to get your garden ready for spring, or if you have your own ideas on how to make your garden bloom, enter our competition to win a \$500 Plants Plus voucher and help get your garden growing. See competition details on the back page.

## Top loan tips

### Set up salary sacrifice and save

Check with your employer to see if they can offer you a salary sacrifice package to help you manage your home loan

repayments. Salary sacrificing your home loan repayments could help you save on the amount of tax paid on your earnings.

Any decision to salary sacrifice should only be made after seeking independent financial advice.

### Register on eHomeStart

Did you know that with eHomeStart you can print additional statements for free? If you still need to complete your tax

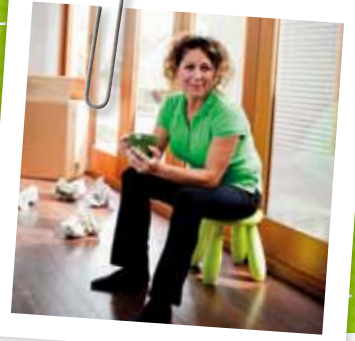
return, this can help you save time and money. Register on eHomeStart to take advantage of the many benefits such as access to statements and much more. Go to [homestart.com.au](http://homestart.com.au) and register for a password today.

### Use your payment card

HomeStart provides you with a payment card which holds all your loan details. Your card can be used at any Australia Post outlet to make additional voluntary repayments to your primary loan and/or to Advantage or EquityStart Loans. Contact HomeStart on 1300 636 878 if you need to arrange for a replacement payment card.



# Looking into how our loans help



In March 2010, HomeStart and the University of Adelaide conducted a research study looking at the wider social and economic impacts of our Breakthrough Loan.

The study will help us to identify and measure the effects the Breakthrough Loan is having on our customers' lives and the South Australian community. These impacts may include taking pressure off government assistance programs, any employment or additional education generated, and the benefits of being able to live in closer proximity to facilities such as schools and public transport.

Additionally, the study will provide valuable insights into how Breakthrough Loan customers have utilised the benefits of the loan – primarily the boost to their borrowing power of up to 35%, as well as help us identify any gaps in people's understanding of the loan.

Stage two of the study has recently been completed, and included surveying our Breakthrough Loan customers via a survey mail out. 342 valid surveys were received (return rate of 33.2%), exceeding our original goal of 250. In return for customer participation, valid surveys were entered into a draw to win a one-off prize of a \$1500 loan repayment made to their loan, which was won by HomeStart customer, Anne of Manningham.

The survey results conclude that the Breakthrough Loan has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on our customers' lives:

- 91% of participants report some degree of increased feeling of financial security
- Many participants (within a range of 35-44% of the whole Breakthrough Loan population) were able to purchase a home in a better suburb and a larger home (within a range of 28-39%) than would have been possible with a traditional home loan
- Customer satisfaction also came in high, with almost 79% experiencing some level of satisfaction and over 45% agreeing that they would definitely recommend the Breakthrough Loan to others.

Stage three of the study, which is about to commence, will seek to measure the impacts (particularly economic) on both Breakthrough households, and the South Australian community and economy.

We would like to thank our Breakthrough Loan customers for their participation in the pilot study, and the survey. Your insights have been invaluable to the study's progress so far.

## Tell us how we are doing

At HomeStart, we are committed to making your home ownership journey with us a positive experience. From the very first contact we have with you, right through to when it's time to payout your loan, your satisfaction with our products and our service is important to us.

To help us find out how we are tracking, at different stages of your journey with us we will be sending you a short survey to provide us with feedback on our performance. The survey will ask three questions relating to your experience with HomeStart or our Loan Managers



or brokers. In the survey, we will give you the opportunity to have one of our Loan Consultants follow up your feedback; however, you can remain anonymous if you wish.

Please rest assured, if you choose to participate, your response will remain private and confidential in line with HomeStart's privacy policy.

While some customers may receive the survey in the post, in the long run, we aim to send out the survey via email as a more convenient way for you to participate, and to provide us with immediate feedback on our performance. If you haven't updated your email address with us for some time, or would like to provide your email as another way to contact you, go to [homestart.com.au/email](mailto:feedback@homestart.com.au), update your details and go into a draw to win a \$100 Coles/Myer voucher.

Of course you don't have to wait for the survey to come out to provide feedback. You can let us know what you think at any time, just send an email to: [feedback@homestart.com.au](mailto:feedback@homestart.com.au), or phone 08 8203 4725.

# Brahma Green celebration

As you heard from Sabina and Todd, Brahma Green helped them into home ownership. It also helped ten other South Australian households achieve their home ownership dreams.

In July, HomeStart along with the City of Salisbury and McCracken Homes held an event to celebrate the completion of the development. The event was attended by local, federal and state government members.

The attendees at the event were able to see the completed houses, and hear about how the development has helped people in the community into affordable home ownership.

Brahma Green is the first of its kind in Australia – an affordable housing collaboration between local council, developer and financier, and was available to first home owners who either worked or lived in the Salisbury area.

The properties were kept affordable by using a shared appreciation finance package. Under the arrangement the Council retains a portion of the land value, until the property is sold or the owner is able to buy back the Council's share, helping reduce repayments by up to 30%.



The houses have a seven star energy rating, which includes solar heating, recycled water and landscaping. All residents moved in to their homes in June 2010 and are enjoying the many benefits owning a home brings.

The success of Brahma Green shows that innovative finance models such as shared appreciation can produce positive affordable housing outcomes which benefit the community, and provide people with a viable way into home ownership.



## Email draw terms and conditions (from front page)

Conditions of entry: The competition commences on 4 October 2010 and ends on 15 November 2010. Total prize value is \$100. The draw will be conducted by HomeStart Finance, 153 Flinders Street, Adelaide on 22 November 2010 at 12 noon. There will be one winner and they will be notified by phone.

## Get your green fingers going with \$500



Do you want to step into spring with a garden of lush vegetables? Perhaps the raised garden bed has caught your eye. Start your veggie garden on the path to fruition with a Plants Plus voucher worth \$500.

Simply fill in the entry form below, and send it to **'HomeStart Green Fingers competition, 153 Flinders Street, Adelaide 5000'** in the reply paid envelope by 15 November 2010 for your chance to win.

You must be an existing HomeStart customer to enter, and you will need to include your current loan number (which you can find on your HomeStart loan statement) to be eligible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Loan number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Conditions of entry: The competition commences on 4 October 2010 and ends on 15 November 2010. Total prize value is \$500. The draw will be conducted by HomeStart Finance, 153 Flinders Street, Adelaide on 23 November 2010 at 12 noon. There will be one winner and they will be notified by phone. Plants Plus vouchers are also redeemable at Home, Timber & Hardware and Thrifty-Link Hardware stores.

