



## Australia Day in Rokeby

**Mission Australia joined the annual Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre Australia Day BBQ again this year on what was one of our cloudier and cooler Australia Days.**

In spite of the weather, around 60 locals came along to share a burger and scones with jam and cream. Kids had a great time making paper planes, watching their balloon creations being made by the Balloon Lady and making badges with our friendly Mission Australia Youth Beat staff. The annual Gum Boot Throw provided one of the highlights of the day but most of us are still none the wiser about how best to fling a boot – **please let us know if you have any tips!**

We also got to talk to residents about the work of One Community Together – that aims to improve safety across

Clarence Plains over the coming years. There was great interest in what we are doing and a number of locals signed up to hear more.

One Community Together will only succeed if we all work together to help create the community that we want.

**To hear more or be involved please call Matt on 1800 269 672.**



## From our Executive



**A very warm welcome to 2016 to all our tenants. I hope that you had an enjoyable festive season spent with family, friends and neighbours. And warm is what is has been over the past month or so! Despite all the unseasonal rain and storms across the country, Tasmania experienced an unusually warmer Christmas period while January was still the hottest it has been in 30 years for NSW.**

As we move in to the New Year, Mission Australia Housing is committed to providing more people with quality, safe and secure homes, access to opportunity, and creating vibrant communities where everyone has a strong sense of belonging. For Mission Australia Housing, a good home is about more than just bricks and mortar.

Across Australia more and more people are experiencing homelessness and many low to medium income households are struggling to get by. We are determined to work in partnership with local communities, drawing on their strengths, linking people with community supports and creating opportunities for everyone to thrive. Your involvement is critical to this and I encourage all of you to share your thoughts, concerns and feedback through our local tenant groups, tenant forums and more importantly, through our annual Tenant Survey that will be released in March. It is your knowledge that will make sure that Mission Australia Housing is providing the best possible housing services and options for you.

By working together, I am confident that we can achieve our goal to reduce homelessness and strengthen communities across Australia. I look forward to continue working with you closely throughout the year.

Kind regards,

**Chris Bratchford**  
Executive,  
Mission Australia Housing

## Contact us

☎ Mission Australia Housing hotline: **1800 269 672**  
🏠 9/7 Saladin Circle, Clarendon Vale Tasmania 7019  
💻 [missionaustralia.com.au](http://missionaustralia.com.au)

## Soil and bricks - School options in Clarendon Vale

**Mission Australia Housing has joined the School Options program at Clarendon Vale Primary School since arriving in the community three years ago. The school wanted our activities to focus on future employment opportunities and so far we have done this in two ways:**

**Garden creation** – students build a small garden in the yard of a local resident. Mission Australia Housing helps with the costs of materials and plants. Students learn great skills in building and planting gardens over a few Friday sessions. It is the students who make it happen and we congratulate all who have been involved so far.

**Landlord Lego** – students act as owners and landlords. They start by designing and then building a home out of lego. They learn about mortgages, collecting rent and paying for repairs (even damage that is not an accident like when a dog chews a hole in the door) and they see that, if a tenant causes the damage, they then have the challenge of getting the tenant to pay. And through all of this they get to meet the (lego) trades people who help to repair the damage.



**We thank Clarendon Vale Primary School for the opportunity to be involved in their School Options program. And to all the students we say - keep being creative and keep chasing your dreams!**

## Household rent review

**Within our social housing program, Mission Australia Housing aims to undertake general income and rent reviews of households every six months to make sure tenants are paying the correct amount based on their household income. This meets the Community Housing guidelines.**

### Next rent review

The next Social Housing Household Rent Review will happen in April 2016. Letters will be mailed out to tenants in early April and tenants will be required to complete a household declaration form and provide income details for all household members.

### Key dates:

**11 April** – We will write to you letting you know of your income and rent review. We will describe what will happen next.

**29 April** – Tenants will have to return requested information to the rent review officer.

**17 June** – Any increase takes effect from this date. Decreases take effect from the date all income details are returned.

### What do you need to do?

It is really important that you return the household declaration form and all income details by the due date, otherwise your rental rebate may be cancelled and your rent will be increased to Market Rent.

### Providing income details

If you or any household members receive a Centrelink income, you can sign the Centrelink consent form which will allow Mission Australia Housing to contact Centrelink directly to get up to date income details.

If you are working you will need to provide 6 weeks' payslips, one after the other.

If you are self-employed, you will need to provide your completed and submitted Australia Tax Returns for the financial year (2014/2015) or a profit and loss statement from a registered accountant to confirm your income and expenditure.

### Rent changes

Mission Australia Housing will notify you in writing of any changes to your weekly rent. It is important that you understand the rent change and date of change, and make sure you start paying your new rent amount. If you pay your rent by Centrepay, Mission Australia Housing can inform Centrelink of your new rent payments if you have signed a consent form.

**If you need any help completing the rent review forms or have any questions about your rent, please contact your local Mission Australia Housing office.**

## Have your say - 2016 annual tenant survey!

**Every year, we ask tenants to complete a tenant survey to help us know how you think we are doing, how we can improve services we provide and learn about what is important to you.**

As a result of the feedback in the 2014 and 2015 surveys, we have:

**Created fact sheets on important housing topics (e.g. Lift Safety)**

**Held our first tenant forum in Western Sydney**

**Updated and developed new policies**

**Made more information available on our website**

**Worked with tenant groups and councils to manage key issues (e.g rubbish dumping at complexes)**

In March you will receive a copy of the 2016 tenant survey in the mail.

**By completing the survey you will go in the draw to win one of five \$100 Coles or Woolworths gift vouchers.**

**Results of the survey will be published later in the year.**





## It really did look a lot like Christmas!!!

**Fun filled days celebrating Christmas with each other were enjoyed by all our housing communities!**

Together with the Resident Steering Committee

in **Tasmania** the planning of a Street Christmas Party was in full Zumba style swing with one local tenant picking up the hat of event organiser! From co-ordinating people, troubleshooting problems, organising promotional fliers and food, plus a local singer and Zumba demonstration, no task was too big or too small! Meanwhile, another tenant supplied small gifts to over 40 community members that were given out by none other than the bearded man in the red suit! Our most successful Christmas party to date!

In **Sydney**, Mission Australia Housing and Evolve Housing brought together more than 400 tenants and their children at the Power House Museum where everyone was treated to the sensational Global LEGO exhibition!



Up on **NSW's Mid North Coast** over 75 tenants enjoyed their first Christmas party on the banks of the Manning River. A bit drizzly with rain but this didn't stop tenants travelling from as far as Forster and Port Macquarie to enjoy a game of cricket, quoits and Tin Can Alley.

In **Camperdown**, residents from Johanna O'Dea and Alexandria Gardens enjoyed a day of carol singing in the lead up to Christmas followed by a Christmas Festival brunch on Christmas day for our Common Ground tenants.

And a big thank you to Hillsong and Kmart for helping us to make these days really special for our tenants with their Christmas gift donations.



## We are making our policies better

**Over the past couple of months we have been reviewing our policies to make sure they meet any legal requirements and provide the best possible services to you, our tenants.**

The updated set of policies will look different and will have more information. We will let you know about our updated policies in a number of ways:

**Tenant Fact Sheets** – "easy to read" information on important tenancy policies. Fact Sheets are available on our website, displayed in our offices and given to you.

**Tenant newsletters** – we publish four tenant newsletters a year which contain information on new and updated policies.

**Tenant groups** – both Tasmania and NSW have tenant groups who will be told about these changes.

**Tenant forums** – we may hold tenant forums to discuss important tenancy topics.

**Letters to tenants** – we will write to you to explain policy changes if the changes will affect you directly.

**You can always contact us if you would like more information and keep an eye on our website and upcoming newsletters too.**

## Harvest season is here!!



**It is harvest season. The apricots have been wonderful, the mulberries and peaches are going well, and the apples and quinces are swelling in size.**

Time to make some of your favourite fruit crumbles, smoothies, pies, jams, pickles, fruit leathers, and freeze a few tubs of stewed fruit for the winter.

Falling Fruit is an online map where people can find free fruit trees to harvest from. It is a sharing tool, so if you know of any good trees, you can put them on there too. There are not that many entries for Clarence Plains at the moment, so let's get active folks. One of the delicious things that are on the map, and have been feeding us the last months are the mulberry trees on Stokell Creek! Check out <https://fallingfruit.org>

If you love mulberries and cream, mulberry jam, mulberry milkshakes, mulberry pie, or home-made mulberry ice cream, get along and see if there are still any left! If you don't know where they are, you can find out at <https://fallingfruit.org>. If you miss out there is always next year.

**Mission Australia Housing and The GROW Project Clarence Plains are offering foraging workshops. If you would like to learn to identify, harvest, preserve or cook some of the free delicious food growing around your neighbourhood, send a text requesting more details to Andrew on 0476 842 742.**

## How can I lodge an appeal or complaint?

**You can appeal a decision that was made or lodge a complaint about Mission Australia Housing in person at one of our offices, by email, letter or phone, or by completing and returning our appeal and complaint form.**

In most cases, we will investigate all appeals and complaints and provide a full response within 28 days.

If you are not happy with our response you can refer the matter to an external agency. We can provide you with information on external agencies in your state.

*Please note: complaints can be lodged anonymously but we will be unable to respond in person where name and contact details have not been provided.*

**P.S Don't forget! The Clarence Plains Festival is coming up again this Autumn!**

**We hope to see you between 3pm to 8pm on Saturday, the 30 April 2016 at Neilson Park (next to the Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre)!**

**CLARENCE PLAINS  
FESTIVAL**

## Tasmania office hours

### Office opening hours

A reminder of our office opening hours:

- **10-4pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday**
- **10-1pm on Wednesday**

Drop in to see us whenever you need to.

**For urgent, out of office hours assistance, please call the Mission Australia Housing Hotline on 1800 269 672.**

## Mulberry pie

**Curl up on the couch and enjoy a slice of this yummy pie.**



### Recipe ingredients

3 cups mulberries

1 and 1/4 cups white sugar

1/4 cup plain flour

2 sheets short crust pastry, thawed

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon milk

### Directions:

- 1.** In a large bowl, mix berries with sugar and flour.
- 2.** Place one sheet pastry at the bottom of a large pie dish. Place mixture on top of pastry, dot with butter. Cover buttered fruit with second sheet of short crust pastry. Crimp edges, cut slits in upper crust and brush with milk. Let pie rest in refrigerator for 30 minutes.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 200C (400F).
- 4.** Bake pie in preheated oven for 15 minutes. Lower oven temperature to 175C and bake for an additional 30 minutes. Remove pie from oven and cool on a wire rack. Serve with fresh cream and ice-cream.

## Which Mission Australia Housing staff person am I?



**What is your favorite summer activity?**  
BBQ

**Are you a morning or a night person?**  
Morning person

**What is your favorite colour?**  
Purple

**What do you need to have every day?**  
Coffee

**Where is the worst place you could get stuck?** An elevator

**What are you frightened by?**  
Spiders

**What is your favourite movie of all time?**  
Grease

**Come into our office and have a guess and go into the draw to win an \$80 grocery voucher!**

