



## From our Executive



**As 2015 comes to a close I would like to take the time to reflect on Mission Australia Housing and "why we do what we do". At the heart of what we do are our 5 core values: Compassion, Integrity, Respect, Perseverance and Celebration.**

For us here at Mission Australia Housing, this means that housing is much more than providing a place to live for our tenants. **It's about creating safe, inclusive and vibrant communities where people feel valued and everyone has the opportunity to contribute.**

**Already Christmas lights and decorations are beginning to adorn home windows and front yards**

**and it is time to celebrate our loved ones.** This can also become an expensive and exhausting time of year for some. Remember that gifts do not always have to cost you money. Sometimes the cost can be your time, your thoughts and your efforts in creating personalised presents for family and friends. See our suggestions for some great ideas on inexpensive Christmas gifts that come from the heart to those you love.

And although it is a season of celebration, it is also a time to respect our neighbours so please be conscious of their expectations. This is also a time to look out for others and check in on those around us who maybe spending this time on their own.

Wishing you all a safe and very happy holiday season from all us at Mission Australia Housing.

Kind regards,

**Chris Bratchford**  
Executive,  
Mission Australia Housing

## Clever Christmas gift ideas

**Three fun ideas to create a special gift for family members or friends this festive season:**

### 1. For the little artist

If you have kids who love to draw or colour in, why not surprise them with a special binder you have filled with plastic page protectors and decorated with colourful paper and stickers? You could throw in some pencils, crayons and paper too, setting them up to save their artwork in one inspiring place.

### 2. Personalised gift certificates

Know some new parents? Give them a much-needed break with a gift certificate for a night of babysitting. A friend or relative in need of some help for odd jobs around the home? A gift certificate for handyman work will be well received.

### 3. Teacup candles

To make one of these gorgeous teacup candles, simply melt wax in a pot, add a fragrance if desired, then support a craft-store wick standing in an old teacup (tip: try local op-shops) while carefully filling the cup with wax.



## Contact us

 Mission Australia Housing hotline: **1800 269 672**  
 Level 2, 81 Flushcombe Road, Blacktown NSW 2148  
 [missionaustralia.com.au](http://missionaustralia.com.au)

## Community garden at Bungarribee Road, Blacktown

**It was a very hot day on Friday, 16 October 2015 in Blacktown – climbing as high as 32 degrees Celsius by midday! But that didn't stop a number of tenants at Mission Australia Housing's Bungarribee Road complex for tenants over 55 years of age.**

Despite the heat and a few aches and pains, Phil from The Community Greening Program assisted tenants to build veggie patches and plant fruit trees in a small pocket park that is part of the complex.

The Community Greening Program is a partnership between the Botanic Gardens Trust and Housing NSW. Assisting over 100 community groups and several thousand social housing tenants since it began in August 2000, its goal is to turn unused and neglected vacant land (mostly Housing NSW and

Council land) into community gardens by involving and training social housing tenants across NSW.

After a well-deserved sausage sizzle lunch provided by our local community partner – Hillsong – the garden of tomatoes, parsley, a variety of lettuce, chives, eggplant and cucumber was given its first watering and tenants began making up a roster to care for their fresh produce crop. There was lots of laughter over negotiating veggie plots and discussion around who had the “greener fingers!” There were also a number of recipes exchanged from different cultures; ranging from the Philippines, Spain and South Africa.

Finishing up for the day, tenants suggested installing a small shaded gazebo area and BBQ in the garden so they could relax over regular social gatherings and get to know their neighbours over a sausage and a home grown salad!



## Bags of fun at Beames Avenue

**On Saturday 17 October around 20 tenants and their children turned up the Beames Avenue community event in Blacktown.**

It was sunny and hot, tenants mingled with staff and volunteers and everyone had great fun!

Brendan from Waste Management Service Blacktown City Council had a stall while children played soccer, young people picked up some hip-hop moves and winners of raffles for toys and hampers were announced.

There was music and laughter all round and volunteers from our community partner Hillsong City Care, helped out with a thoroughly enjoyed morning tea and BBQ!

At the end of the day each unit received a food hamper. For those not well enough to attend, Mission Australia Housing staff hand-delivered food hampers to them.



From right to left: Paul Morgan, Stephen Vincent, Steven Nolan, Phil Pettitt, Josephine Estaris, Anne Ramdoe

## Tenant profile: Terrey Simington

**Terrey Simington, a tenant of Stokes Circuit in Taree on NSW's Mid North Coast, has taken up planting pumpkins and vegetables wherever he can find a small unoccupied patch of land.**

Twelve months ago Terry found a tree that provided a well mulched spot of soil and decided to plant

some seeds. Today neighbours and friends get to enjoy lovely pumpkins, most weighing in between 3-4 kilos each, chilli plants, and lemon and mandarin trees.

Terry says he's "got the green thumb from his father and enjoys it when other people can reap the benefit from his planting."



## Opening of 41 Lardner Road, Victoria

**On 16 October, Mission Australia Housing, along with Yooralla, Monash University and the Summer Foundation celebrated the opening of 41 Lardner Road, Frankston in Victoria.**

This new accommodation is designed for six young adults with disability to help them transition into the community and aims to reduce the number of young people with disability who reside in nursing homes and aged care facilities.

Supporting residents to live independently, Mission Australia Housing was responsible for building the house tailored for people with disability, including widened doorways to allow ease of mobility and modern hoists in bedrooms



and bathrooms. The design of the house also allows for independence and security as residents can do many things at the touch on an iPad such as contact support staff in an emergency, adjust the lighting,

heating and cooling in their room, and open and close gates and doors. Mission Australia Housing is very excited to be a part of this new housing initiative in Victoria that will help transform the lives of those living with disability.

## Tenant Action Group Outreach Program Launch

**On Friday 18 September the Mission Australia Housing Tenant Action Group (TAG) launched their Outreach Program at the Luxford Road Bidwill over 55 complex.**

This Outreach Program addresses issues of isolation and loneliness that some of our tenants experience.

Members of the TAG Outreach Program are only a phone call away, putting a human face to Mission Australia Housing. It was a fantastic turn out with approximately 15 tenants attending the launch that included a BBQ lunch and a brief opening speech from the TAG chair, Brian Perry. Brian reiterated the need for tenant-to-tenant support and the importance of feeling connected within your community.

Established in June 2014, the TAG meet every fortnight to plan for community engagement activities such as a school holiday fun day, Harmony Day and the tenant Christmas party.

They also participate in workshops, including a 2-day learning and development workshop. The TAG are responsible for reviewing tenant fact sheets, provide regular input into the newsletter and are involved in developing and attending forums and conferences such as the 2015 Tenant Forum.

**Peter was experiencing significant grief after losing his wife of 50 years. His children had moved interstate. Mission Australia Housing took care of his rent and maintenance but he needed someone to talk to. Through the TAG Outreach Program Peter connected with a TAG Outreach Volunteer who would visit him for a chat over a cuppa each week.**

**Earlier this year, Mission Australia Housing conducted a survey. Peter was enthusiastic about the Outreach Project and its impact on his life.**



**"Being part of the TAG has completely changed my life. I really enjoy advocating on behalf of tenants and I am proud of the difference we've been able to achieve as a group.**

**The TAG is a very supportive group where everyone is given the opportunity to have a say and that is what is great about it."**

Brian Perry, TAG Chair

## Trolley collection

**Help your community to stay neat, clean and safe: report abandoned and stolen supermarket trolleys to be collected and removed**

Woolworths, Safeway and Big W stores have around 300,000 shopping trolleys in over 900 stores around Australia. The cost of collecting, maintaining and replacing trolleys each year is over \$50 million. Approximately 5% of all trolleys are replaced each year either because they go missing, are stolen or damaged beyond repair. The average trolley costs \$150 to replace, while trolleys with special features (such as child seats) can cost up to \$600.

**Did you know you can have any dumped trolleys collected from around your area? It's as easy as calling a 1800 number and providing the trolley location and company (eg. Woolworths, Target, Big W, etc). The trolley/s will be collected within 24 hours.**

**Have the trolley/s collected by calling:**

**Trolley Tracker Australia**

1800 641 497

**Coles Trolley Tracker**

1800 876 553



## Communal seating

**Geoff Gibb, a tenant from our complex at Luxford Road in Bidwill volunteers as one of our TAG members and is also an amateur woodworker.** As a hobby Geoff has been busy making shelving for his home for storage. In his professional life Geoff was a mechanic and likes to keep his hands busy. Working on small woodwork projects makes Geoff happy, especially when his fellow neighbours get to enjoy his craftsmanship. This is a bench Geoff recently made so that tenants can have somewhere to sit whilst they wait for the bus or their lift.



## Advance rent competition 3 x \$100 gift vouchers on offer

**Mission Australia Housing is again offering all tenants who are in advance with their rent the chance to go into a draw to win one of three \$100 Coles or Woolworths gift vouchers.**

If your rent account is in advance you will automatically go in the draw. This prize is sure to come in handy!

## Naughty & Nice Christmas Cakes

**Enjoy your choice of naughty or nice this Christmas with these easy cake recipes**



### Naughty:

Soak 1kg of mixed fruit in 600ml of chocolate (or coffee flavoured) milk and refrigerate overnight.

Next day, add 2 cups of sifted self-raising flour and pour into well greased 25cm x 25cm tin lined with baking paper.

Bake in pre-heated oven (150 degrees/or fan-forced 130) for 1.5 hours. Check with skewer that no mixture is uncooked/sticking to skewer. Leave to cool in tin. Freezes well.

### Nice:

Soak 1kg of mixed fruit in 3 cups of orange juice for at least 1 hour.

Add 3 cups of sifted self-raising flour to the fruit and mix well. Put into greased and lined tin. Bake in pre-heated oven (180 degrees) for 1.5 hours.

## Christmas vanilla balls

**A great Christmas activity for the kids**

Crush a packet of plain biscuits finely (with a blender or by hand). Add 1 cup of coconut and 2 to 3 tablespoons of drinking chocolate and mix well. Add vanilla essence (to taste) and stir in 1 can of sweetened condensed milk.

Roll into small balls and roll in either dessicated coconut or chocolate sprinkles.

Set on tray in fridge then store in airtight containers or freeze.

