



From our General Manager



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upgraded over 100 heaters. We still have a long way to go and are working hard with Lake Maintenance, but we also have a tight budget – a budget that only tightens when impacted by things like arson, rent arrears, theft and deliberate damage (so always let us know if you see anything).

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In the coming years we aim to use our resources as effectively as we can to provide additional housing and individual and community support and are committed to building 40 additional homes.

We are dedicated to achieving better outcomes for you and will continue to pursue new opportunities to further this aim.

Kind regards,

Chris Bratchford
General Manager,
Mission Australia Housing

Smart ways to save on call costs

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NSW Community Housing Conference

In May, the NSW Community Housing Conference was held at Rydges World Square.

This two day bi-annual event is an opportunity for social housing providers to get together through panel discussions, workshops and master classes to explore various topics important to the social housing sector. A number of staff from Mission Australia Housing attended along with members of our Tenant Action Group (TAG).



First tenant forum a success

In March, Mission Australia Housing held their first tenant forum at the offices of the Blacktown City Council.

The event was an opportunity for the tenants to get to know the members of the Tenant Action Group (TAG) and the Mission Australia Housing team. There were also opportunities for tenants to have their say about the services provided by Mission Australia Housing. The meeting was attended by Councillor Benjamin Susai, who in his speech addressed the need for the community to work closely with

service providers and the council in addressing anti-social behaviours. He highlighted the importance of working together to make a difference.

At the end of the forum, Mission Australia Housing tenant, Walde, was presented with an award in recognition of his work to improve his housing complex and support his fellow tenants.

Feedback from both staff and tenants has been positive and we are keen to make this a regular occurrence, so stay tuned for details of the next forum.



Fee-free training



TAFE scholarships are available to NSW social housing tenants

The NSW Government has launched the Smart & Skilled Fee-Free Scholarship Program allowing students to get the skills they need to get the job they want with their course fees covered.

From 1 July 2015, young people aged 16-30 years who meet the criteria, will be eligible for a government subsidy which covers their course fees on selected courses. This program will provide 200,000 fee-free training places over the next four years with 50,000 available in the first year. Priority will be given to people living in social housing or on the waiting list for social housing.

For more details, contact your local Mission Australia Housing office, visit the website www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au, or email smartandskilled.enquiries@industry.nsw.gov.au

Smart and Skilled
www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au

Annual Tenant Survey results

Earlier this year, we sent our Annual Tenant Survey to 1900 tenants across NSW and Tasmania. We asked a range of questions to find out what is important to you and how we can improve the services we provide.

We received a fantastic response, with 641 tenants completing surveys. Overall your feedback was positive, indicating that you are satisfied with our services, but you also highlighted some areas that we needed to improve.

Your feedback was as follows:

- 76% overall satisfaction with Mission Australia Housing services, up from 73%
- 76% said that queries were responded to in a reasonable timeframe and 79% found staff to be helpful
- 96% of tenants have had a property inspection in the last 12 months
- 83% of tenants happy with condition of their home
- Repairs and maintenance was identified as the biggest priority for tenants
- Biggest communal area/neighbour issues are – parking, rubbish, noisy neighbours

76% 

overall satisfaction with Mission Australia Housing services (up from 73%)

83% 

of tenants said they are happy with the condition of their home

96% 

of tenants have had a property inspection in the last 12 months

76% 

of tenants said their queries were responded to in a reasonable timeframe

- Knowledge and satisfaction of the appeals and complaints process was low
- A number of tenants are unsure of how their rent is calculated

Your feedback is invaluable. We've already started to look at how we can address some of your concerns.

Over the next 12 months, some of the things you can expect from us include:

A policy on car parking for unit complexes that have onsite parking

A full suite of tenant fact sheets on key housing policies and procedures

More information and policies available on our website

Workshops in all regions on key tenancy topics such as appeals, rent calculations etc

As part the survey, everyone who completed the survey was put into a draw to win a gift voucher. We would like to congratulate the following people: Kathy G – Mid North Coast; Takira – Tasmania; June – Western Sydney; Tania – Western Sydney; Bruce – Tasmania

Thanks to everyone who completed the survey and to the NSW Federation of Housing for managing this survey on our behalf.

Mission Australia Housing tenant nominated for award

Earlier this year, we proudly supported one of our tenants, Quita Cox, who was nominated for the Blacktown City Council International Women's Day Award.

This event is celebrated worldwide each year to commemorate women's achievements and highlight the need for gender equality.

The celebration was held at the spectacular Blacktown Arts Centre. It was an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the countless contributions made throughout the year by women within the Blacktown area. Quita deserved her award and was extremely proud to receive her certificate.

Congratulations Quita! If you know someone who deserves this sort of recognition, please get in touch with Stella Jean-Louis on 8886 4906.



Save power, save money

Follow these savvy tips to keep your energy bills in check

Don't leave your electrical goods on standby: standby power is the energy used by appliances when they are not in use. Even though it's a small amount for each appliance, it all adds up. On average, the cost is 12% of your home's total energy use – that's 12% of your bill!

Buy and rent 'energy efficient': large appliances such as fridges, washing machines and dryers cost a lot upfront. But they can last 10-15 years. The energy efficiency of the model you buy or rent will make a big difference to the running costs and power use over its lifetime. Before you buy or rent, ask yourself – is it energy efficient? For any appliance, ask yourself: can I turn it off when I'm not using it?

Consider the energy rating: if you're buying or renting white goods, check the energy label to see how many kWh (kilowatt hours) per year it uses - the lower the better. A fridge or freezer with a 5-star energy rating uses half as much energy as one with a 1 star. You can



even work out how much an appliance costs to run. Power costs about 25c per kW. This means that a fridge with energy rating 530kW per year will cost about \$150 per year to run: **530kW x \$0.278 = \$147.26**

Congratulations to our adorable pets winner

Thank you so much for sending in photographs of your pets for the adorable pets competition.

Our winner is Yvonne from Marayong who sent in this adorable picture of her dog, Chad. We agree with you Yvonne, he is very cute and we hope he enjoys his pet hamper!



Ella's Stuffed Mushrooms

A comforting classic, these stuffed mushrooms make a warming winter meal



Serves 2 people

Recipe ingredients

2 large mushrooms	1 finely chopped tomato
1 tbsp BBQ sauce	1 tbsp thyme
2 tbsp sour cream	1 spring onion
¼ cup chopped parsley	Pepper and salt
Two slices of finely chopped ham	1 tbsp bread crumbs
1 egg	½ cup grated cheese

Directions

1. Take stems out of the mushrooms and chop.
2. Chop the rest of the ingredients finely and put in a bowl then mix.
3. Sit the mushrooms on a lined baking tray, top down, to make "mushroom cups".
4. Place heaped spoonfuls of the mixture in the middle of the mushrooms. Sprinkle bread crumbs on the top and bake in the oven for 20 minutes at 170C.

Serve with BBQ sauce.

This recipe comes from Ella aged 9 years, who was the winner of this year's Paddock 2 Plate cooking competition in Tasmania. Thanks Ella!

Calling all budding photographers!

Please send in your best landscape photograph to go into the draw to WIN A \$50 GIFT VOUCHER.

Send your photo to:

jeanlouiss@missionaustralia.com.au
by 20 September for your chance to win.





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