

MISSION AUSTRALIA | Housing news

Spring 2016 edition



From our Executive



Over the past few months there has been a lot of movement within the housing sector and so it has been a very busy but exciting time for us here at Mission Australia Housing (MAH). In particular, the first phase of the NSW Social and Affordable Housing Fund will run for up to 25 years and will deliver access to up to 3,000 additional Social and Affordable homes across metropolitan and regional NSW.

For the first time, the NSW Government called for a package that required a combination of Asset and Tenancy Management along with Tailored Support Coordination Services for tenants. This meant that we were in a very fortunate position to work in close collaboration with Mission Australia community services in delivering support packages to help tenants sustain their tenancies.

We also received our Annual Tenant Survey results from the NSW Federation of Housing. Whilst there is always room for improvement I am really pleased with what has been achieved. This year we were above all 3 National Regulatory System of Community Housing thresholds and we had an increase in satisfaction levels in 20 out of 23 survey questions. You will see more about these results throughout the newsletter.

I am also very excited to announce that the dedicated Mission Australia Housing website has "gone live"! This website has been developed for you, our tenants, so that you can quickly and easily access information on our services and on housing more broadly.

You can check it out here and also find out more about the Annual Tenant Survey results: www.missionaustralia.com.au/housing. Your feedback is very welcome!

I hope you are all enjoying some of this lovely spring weather after a chilly winter!

All the best

Chris Bratchford
Executive,
Mission Australia Housing

Contact us

- ☎ Mission Australia Housing hotline: **1800 269 672**
- 🏠 Level 2, 81 Flushcombe Road, Blacktown NSW 2148
- 💻 missionaustralia.com.au/housing



Annual tenant survey 2016

An overall increase in satisfaction levels.

- 8% ↑ staff advised how long it would take to make the repair,
- 6% ↑ increase on how their complaint was dealt with.

Welcome to the future of Housing Pathways applications online!

From Monday the 31st of October 2016, Housing Pathways clients will be able to apply for housing assistance online at a time and place that suits them.

Housing Pathways Applicants will be able to:

- ✓ Apply for housing assistance online
- ✓ Apply 24hrs/7 days a week
- ✓ Confirm their identity online
- ✓ Attach supporting documents
- ✓ Save, exit and return to the form later
- ✓ Make changes to their current applications online

Tenant news and events

Would you like to be supported through subsidised training that leads to job opportunities?

If you are a social housing applicant, tenant, living

in crisis/supported accommodation or receiving private rental assistance, you may be eligible for the CareerPathways program.

This program is successfully helping people train and move into jobs while

supporting them through the process.

Choose from interesting careers such as aged care, disability, business, hospitality, horticulture and cleaning operations.

To find out more information go to:

W: www.training.nsw.gov.au/careerpathways
E: career.pathways@industry.nsw.gov.au
P: 02 4974 8535



Dispute resolution roles in NSW



The NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)	The Housing Appeals Committee (HAC)	The NSW Ombudsman/CHP Boards
<p>Resolves disputes between tenants and landlords under the Residential Tenancies Act.</p> <p><i>*Refer to the Tenancy Agreement for the relevant clauses that would apply.</i></p>	<p><i>Reviews decisions made under social housing policy by public and community housing.</i></p> <p><i>*The 1st tier appeal is undertaken in-house by the housing provider.</i></p>	<p><i>Investigates complaints against the conduct of public sector agencies.</i></p> <p><i>*Note that Boards normally deal with complaint issues for CHPs. Complaints are generally in regard to service provision and not decisions.</i></p>

Meet Gafa

Without safe, secure and sustainable accommodation, Gafa says his family's arrival in Australia from New Zealand in 2010 would have been a very stressful experience and may have resulted in homelessness.

"Coming to Australia, the land of opportunities, and having a roof over my family's head has been such a great support. We would have been homeless without Mission Australia Housing. Starting a new life with the family in a new country can be daunting", said Gafa.

Gafa's wife who had always aspired to be a nurse has completed an introductory course for aged care and Certificates III and IV in aged care. She now works as a nurse at Liverpool Hospital up to four days a week. Their youngest 17 year old son is completing his HSC and hopes to build a career as a musician and secure a scholarship.

As for Gafa, he has since been on a mission to give back to the community and participates in several volunteer



Gafa tells his story

roles. He volunteers for The Pantry at Kingswood Church and distributes food to vulnerable members of the surrounding community. He also joins the cooking community every Wednesday at Christ Mission Possible in Kingswood which then visits communities and distributes the cooked meals to those in need. Gafa is also a volunteer presenter on WOW FM 100.7 on Monday nights and provides a program for Pacific Islanders.

Gafa and his wife also started a Multicultural Covenant Ministries dance group, Island Praise in 2013. The entire family gets involved in dance performances, with the dance

group performing at Mission Australia Housing School Holiday Fun Days.

When reflecting on fatherhood, Gafa says, "In my eyes, my role as a father is firstly to be a provider and secondly to protect my family. I'm so thankful to be here living in a Mission Australia Housing home. My son is at school, we have a home and food in the kitchen. We have all the basics for living. **Slowly from there, we are looking for ways to share our gratitude with the Australian community."**





School holiday fun day

More than 300 children and parents flocked to Blacktown International Sports Park in Rooty Hill in July to enjoy our Greater Western Sydney school holiday fun day.

An annual highlight of the Mission Australia Housing calendar, the event strengthens the local community by engaging and connecting families in the region.

A hilarious tug-o-war tournament between MAH and staff from partner organisation Evolve Housing resulted in Evolve taking home the trophy for the second year running. (Until next time, Evolve.....)

MAH owns and runs 1051 long-term social and affordable rental properties across Western Sydney, providing much-needed housing for low- and moderate-income households.

With activities including bubble soccer, AFL and hip hop dance workshops and cheerleading demonstrations, the fun day had something for everyone. Children danced with Mr Germ – the Department of Health’s green bug-eyed mascot – and the MA Partners in Recovery (PIR) team oversaw the collaboration of a mindfulness artwork. The colourful creation will go on display at MAC Kingswood in the coming weeks.

MAH Executive Chris Bratchford attended the day and applauded our Community Engagement Officer,

Stella Jean-Louis, for all her great efforts.

“Once again, Stella was instrumental in bringing this fantastic event to fruition. With endless enthusiasm she juggled activities, publicity, volunteers, managed media and logistics and even did her first radio interview with SWR FM. Well done, Stella.”



Mini tenant forums

The MAH Tenant Action Group (TAG) members have been meeting with tenants at various complexes as part of their on-going support to represent our tenants.

Tenants met the TAG over lunch and were happy to talk about and share some of their experiences. The TAG has compiled a list of issues they can work through and provide recommendations to MAH Senior Management.



Meet Tunel, our resident blue tongue lizard

Tunel has made himself quite at home with one of our tenants residing in Blackett. Tunel loves the approaching warmer weather and sits quietly on the brick edge to sun herself. I think Tunel agrees that it is good to bid winter goodbye and say hello to **SPRING SUNSHINE!!**



Senior Constable Dave Fish

This month we had a special guest at our Harbour Drive Tenant Meeting in Coffs Harbour! Senior Constable Dave Fish provided tenants with information around harassment, illegal activity and

noise complaints. **If you are experiencing any of these issues on site please contact your local police station to lodge a complaint,** also advise your Housing Manager of the action you have taken.



NSW Affordable Housing Conference

The 2016 Affordable Housing Conference kicked off on Thursday 28 and Friday 29th July at the Sydney Masonic Centre. We were proud to have two of our Tenant Action Group (TAG) members representing the tenants at the conference which proved to be quite an eye opener. Both enjoyed attending some of the workshops and speeches but felt a little confused by others. They both agreed it was a great opportunity to network and hear experts talk from the around the world to discuss clear directions ahead for the sector.

Misson Australia Housing's Executive, Chris Bratchford highlighted our flagship supported housing program in Camperdown, Common Ground Sydney. This program is modelled on the successful New York-based Breaking Ground program that integrates stable housing with intensive case management support.



Communication performed highly

86% Tenants satisfied with information provided by Mission Australia Housing

84% Overall tenant satisfaction with communication from Mission Australia Housing

*Annual tenant survey, 2016



Meet Angela,

Housing Officer on the Mid North Coast

My name is Angela Simpson, I work in the Sawtell Office of Mission Australia Housing. As the Community Engagement Officer you may see me pop up at some of your events in the near future... I'd like to get to know you all better... so here is some info about me - only seems fair that you get to know me too!

My favourite things!

Book: My favourite book is 'Wolf of the Plains' by Conn Iggulden. It is about Genghis Khan, the first book in a 5 part series. I love ancient history and have read other historical fiction books by Conn Iggulden, but I had never learnt about the Mongols before. It is just a great book and totally captivated me.

Flower: Hydrangeas! Pick one flower and you get a whole



bouquet. My nan used to have a lot of them planted in her garden, the colours are so soft and pretty. I actually picked a large blue flower to use as my bouquet on my wedding day. So I had something from

my nan and something blue all in one!

If you live on the Mid North Coast of NSW and have any tips, stories, jokes or anything you would like to share email me, simpsonan@missionaustralia.com.au

If you have any special talents, interests or are a member of a wonderful group let me know... I'd love to speak with you for a story that could help your fellow tenants.

Silly lilly pilly recipes



It's time to enjoy deliciously warm toast and your fresh homemade lilly pilly jam straight from your backyard or community garden.

Place the fruit in a saucepan, just covered with water. Bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for around 30 minutes or until the fruit has lost its colour and the seeds have separated from the pulp. Then add equal amounts of sugar (if two cups of fruit then two cups of sugar).

Once the sugar has dissolved, remove the seeds and flesh or you may prefer to leave the flesh in

the mix. Add some lemon juice and lemon myrtle leaves to taste — I use half a lemon and about 5 leaves coarsely diced. Simmer the mix for another 30 minutes and the mix should start to thicken and then place in the fridge.

Lilly pilly and lemon myrtle are Australian bushes that can be grown locally and found in Bunnings or at your local nursery.

Courtesy of one of our partners, The Royal Botanic Garden Community Greening

Nice neighbours



Maureen C has been nominated for a \$50 voucher for helping her neighbour with some house chores while she was ill. Thank you Maureen for your helping hands!

My all-time favourite movie is 'True Lies' with Arnold Schwarzenegger. I used to watch it with my dad as a kid and I just love all the corny lines and bad CGI action sequences!