



MISSION AUSTRALIA | Housing news



Summer 2016



From our Executive



Reflecting on what has been a very busy year for the housing sector in NSW it has become very clear to me that in order to provide more people with a decent home, access to opportunity, and vibrant communities where everyone has a strong sense of belonging, we have to work together!

Community improvement projects such as garden and BBQ installations, community celebrations like Harmony Day, NAIDOC and Seniors Week, our largest community event in Greater Western Sydney- the School Holiday Fun Day, and celebrating the momentous 5 Year Anniversary of Common Ground Sydney with our tenants and supporters, are just some of the fantastic examples of us all coming together and achieving much throughout the year.

This is because, for us here at Mission Australia Housing, we believe 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 that come from the heart to those you love. Or just lending a helping hand can be worth 1000 gifts to some!

At the heart of what we do are our 5 core values: compassion, integrity, respect, perseverance and celebration. So, although it is a season of celebration, it is also a time to respect our neighbours and to look out for 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.

Chris Bratchford
Executive,
Mission Australia Housing

Earlier this year, Mission Australia Housing was successful in securing funds through NSW Department of Family and Community Services for community improvement projects across 8 sites in NSW.

At Beames Ave this project will see significant improvement works made to the rubbish bin bay area, along with a waste and safety management program for tenants.

To kick off this project residents living in Mission Australia Housing units on Beames Avenue in Mount Druitt were treated to an inaugural Community Day extravaganza in September this year with a sausage sizzle, face painting, hand pampering and giveaways.

To join in the celebration, Hillsong, Blacktown City Council and Mount Druitt Police, including celebrity chef/police woman - Sarah Moore who appeared in the last season of My Kitchen Rules, also attended on the day.



Contact us



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Mission Australia Housing calls for 'Housing First' at Common Ground

On Friday 4 November at the fifth anniversary celebrations of Mission Australia Housing's Common Ground Sydney building in Camperdown, Mission Australia called for more Housing First models across the nation for people experiencing long term homelessness.

The celebrations also coincided with the Housing and Homelessness Ministers' Meeting in Sydney.

With more than 50 tenants, community members, staff and community groups, festivities included a tenant art exhibition, street art, information stalls, gift bags and a barbecue.

The official ceremony included speeches by **Clover Moore, Lord Mayor of Sydney, Tanya Plibersek MP, Member for Sydney, Mission Australia CEO Catherine Yeomans, Mission Australia Housing Executive Chris Bratchford** and two moving and powerful speeches by **Common Ground Sydney tenants, Cheryl and Jody.**

Both receiving standing ovations, Cheryl and Jody gave emotional and confronting accounts of their journey out of homelessness and into independence with the support of Common Ground Sydney staff.

A tenant of Common Ground Sydney since 2013, Cheryl spoke about her time of living on the streets, being addicted to heroin since the age of 8 and her day to day struggle for survival.

Jody, a tenant at Common Ground Sydney since March 2012 shared his story about moving to Sydney where he slept rough in and around Central Station for 10 years. His story was about rehabilitation and reconnection with his son and today he declares that he is 'dry drunk and it's good!'

Average length of homelessness

for tenants at Common Ground Sydney is

13 years 

Outcomes achieved by tenants since the building's opening in November 2011 point to the need for more Housing First models to be built across Australia.

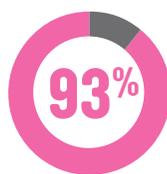
"We have more than 110 people who currently call Common Ground Sydney home and 10 staff operating at the facility. Celebrating five years is a momentous occasion that we are proud of, particularly as we reflect on some major achievements by our residents," said Catherine Yeomans.

The six story residential building at Common Ground Sydney includes 104 units, 24/7 concierge service, proactive on-site tenancy and support services as well as a gym, community kitchen, art room, computer suite, clinical consultation rooms, roof garden, communal lounge, library, courtyard, BBQ area and secure bicycle storage.

Concluding the official ceremony, Rebecca a tenant of Common Ground Sydney since 2012 gave an outstanding singing performance of 'Rise like a Phoenix', originally performed by Conchita Wurst, the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest winner. Rebecca began singing, dancing and acting lessons at 7 years of age and got her first job performing at the age of 9 touring Australia in a pantomime.

Resonating with the day, the lyrics spoke of someone who has struggled and survived hardship, 'rising from the ashes', like the legendary Phoenix, to begin a new life, one where there is respect and tolerance.

Over the past 5 years



of tenants have sustained tenancies longer than 12 months

30 formerly homeless tenants

have sustained tenancies for over

4 years 



The new Christmas snow dome

Here's one Christmas idea that's definitely worth its salt! Turn under-a-dollar shakers in to mini Santa wonderlands by displaying Christmas miniatures atop salty snow-like mounds! These little table sensations will bring a bit more festive joy to your Christmas lunch.

Tip: Christmas miniatures can be found at any craft shop, newsagent or even your local supermarket. Or you can recycle parts from other older Christmas decorations that are past their use by date!

Local businesses in NSW's Mid North Coast raise the bar and community spirits with their enormous Christmas generosity!!

This year we have received donations from Sawtell RSL, Just Cuts, Coles, C.Ex Coffs and Target in Coffs Harbour; Fayes Twin Cinemas, Ambience Day Spa, Manning Aquatic Leisure Centre and Just Cuts in Taree; Target in Port Macquarie; K Mart in Forster; and South West Roxy Cinema in Kempsey.

Thank you from all of us at Mission Australia Housing for helping to make Christmas a little bit more special for our tenants!





Getting ready for spring Mission Australia Housing tenants, volunteers from the Westlink M7, Lendlease along with Mission Australia Housing and Mission Australia staff mustered bright and early over a bacon and egg roll at our Bidwell social housing complex to start the backyard blitz on community garden areas.

Starting at 7.15am on the dot, tenants moved their cars out of the car park to make way for delivery trucks dropping off mounds of mulch, soil, gardening tools and equipment, all donated by the Westlink team, and an enormous amount of native trees and plants of all varieties and colours donated by the Royal Botanic Garden.

With all hands on deck, the project saw the construction of three new vegetable gardens and a flowering box, building a pebble footpath, a new bench seat to relax and meet up with friends in the garden, re-soiling, weeding, mulching and planting new plants.

MAH Community Engagement Officer, Stella Jean-Louis said the garden makeover is an important addition to the facilities saying, **“with the rising costs of fresh produce it will be fantastic that tenants will be able to access fresh fruit and vegies from their own backyard”**

Summing up the day, Quita, a long term tenant at MAH’s Bidwell complex and a member of MAH’s Tenant Action Group thanked the volunteers for all their hard work, saying **“they really have made a huge difference to this place. It makes me really proud to be able to call this home.”**

Nice neighbour!

The nice neighbour prize is a double act this time! Geoff and Peter from Bidwell will share a \$50 gift voucher for their kind and thoughtful act of looking after their neighbour’s garden who was unable to after major surgery. Overgrown with weeds their much appreciated “green thumbs” brought it back to life!

We thank them for their kindness and if you have a story to tell us about a nice neighbour act please let your community engagement officer know on 8886 4906 (GWS) or 6658 1962 (MNC NSW).



Always excited to be a part of these projects, Helen Kennedy from Lendlease said that what she enjoyed most was **“being able to deliver a finished product that tenants have had input in to and who appreciate and benefit from it.”**

Blacktown City Council also assisted on the day, running composting and worm farming workshops with the tenants. With one lucky participant taking home the prize of a worm farm with 1000 worm residents!



Proud to call this home

This year a limited number of Mission Australia Housing tenants got to experience a brand spanking new outdoor event held over three days in the October school holidays.

The first ever Kidtopia Festival held at Parramatta Park was jam packed with live music, delicious food from Sydney’s best and tonnes of activities for kids and grown-ups to enjoy together.

Thanks to the enormous generosity of Fairfax Media 50 MAH kids and close to 100 MAH parents or carers were able to enjoy a stellar line-up of musical performances, a petting zoo

and animal enclosures to learn more about Australia’s wildlife and farm creatures, face painting and the chance to bust some moves to the silent disco, along with unlimited rides passes at the fun fair.

Kids got to stretch their limbs and muscles at a yoga class, while explosions (controlled, of course!) and experiments were held at daily science shows. Families also got to flip and twirl at circus school, pop a musician’s hat on and channel their inner drummer at a jam session, or be entertained by roving performers all day long.

As the sunset picnic rugs were thrown down as everyone sat back and relaxed over open air cinema before heading off with big smiles and a bunch of great memories!

Thank you once again for the tickets to Kidtopia. The kids can’t stop raving about their time there today.

It really took a financial burden off me and allowed my kids to get out and do something really fun this holidays. I really do appreciate the tickets and opportunity to go.

From us to the Mission. We’re thankful! God bless you.



Thank you from the Salvo's!

My name is Kerri-Ann and I am an Adolescent and Family worker employed by the Salvation Army-Youthlink program.

I contacted various agencies many months ago regarding a young man I was working with who was living in an overcrowded boarding house and struggling on a daily basis.

With the help of the various people and agencies he has been stable for

some time now, has his own secure accommodation and is in the process of studying a Certificate 4 course in Mental Health.

I would like to thank the various agencies for their assistance that resulted in him being housed.

A few weeks ago I asked him if he was happy? He turned to me, smiled and said "indeed I am!"

TAG planning day

The TAG Planning Day is scheduled for mid-January 2017. If you have any suggestions, ideas and comments please email them through to the chairperson by **5th January, email tag@missionaustralia.com.au or call the Community Engagement Officer on 8886 4906.**



Bobby makes history!

You may have spotted Bobby at one of our various tenant events but in August this year, Bobby made it to the big stage! At 16 years of age and the youngest Fil-Aussie to win a Mo Award, Bobby, was one of seven artists nominated under the 2016 Mo- Awards-Junior category at the star studded 40th Mo Awards.

Congratulations Bobby from all of us at Mission Australia Housing!



3 steps to making your very own Christmas ice-cream

Ingredients

- 2 litres vanilla ice-cream
- 2 cups of marshmallows mini assorted
- 200g glacé cherries
- 3 crumbled chocolate flake bars

Method

1. Soften 2 litres vanilla ice-cream by leaving out of the freezer for 15 minutes. Line 8 individual pudding moulds with plastic wrap.
2. Chop 2 cups marshmallows mini assorted and red glacé cherries and 3 crumbled chocolate flake bars and carefully fold through ice-cream. Spoon into moulds, pressing in firmly.
3. Freeze puddings for 2 hours or overnight until firm. Using the plastic, lift puddings from the

moulds. Place on serving plates and remove plastic wrap. Top with extra glacé cherries.

Tip: to help prevent the ice-cream melting straight away, chill the plates in the fridge for a few hours so they are nice and cold.

Serves 8



Meet Tahlia

I started working for MAH in July this year after graduating from Year 12 in 2014. I am currently completing a Business Administration traineeship over the next 12 months and will finish with a Certificate 3 in Business Administration.

My interest for working within Community Housing stemmed from moving houses a lot as a young child. I moved about 6 times including to another state (Queensland) by the time I was 13 and I have faced potentially moving into community housing.



I was so excited and grateful for the opportunity to work for MAH because I truly love what MAH stands for. I am simply very passionate about helping and believing in people.

Over the course of my traineeship, I'll be studying units such as: delivering and monitoring a service to customers, working effectively with diversity, promoting innovation in a team environment, maintaining business resources, processing customer complaints, organising workplace information and applying knowledge of Work Health and Safety legislation in the workplace.

Over the past few months, I've extremely enjoyed taking on my responsibilities as a Business Trainee and working as part of the Client Service team. I am very excited to see what opportunities the future has in store for me.

