



# Tenant News

Churches of Christ Care Housing Services • March 2014

## A message from the Churches of Christ Care Housing Services team

Welcome to the March edition of our newsletter.

The start of the year has flown by and Easter is fast approaching. Symbolising a lot more than just chocolate, Easter is a time of hope and joy; a wonderful time to spend with family, friends and loved ones.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and joyful Easter.

### Easter office hours

All Churches of Christ Care Housing Services offices will be closed from Friday 18 April to Monday 21 April, reopening on Tuesday 22 April.

Please keep in mind that during the working week our staff have a number of appointments they must attend. It is important that you call ahead if you wish to see a particular staff member.

We will always try to assist you but cannot guarantee a particular staff member will always be available if you stop by the office unannounced.

Office hours are:		Monday to Friday
<b>Brisbane</b>	<b>Ph 3327 1674</b>	8.30am - 4.30pm
<b>Ipswich</b>	<b>Ph 3436 8900</b>	8.30am - 4.30pm
<b>Gold Coast</b>	<b>Ph 5503 0974</b>	8.30am - 4.30pm

### New staff members

Churches of Christ Care would like to introduce Belinda Woodward and Rob Hick to the team.

Belinda recently joined our Ipswich Office as an Administration Officer while Rob has taken on the role of Site Coordinator and Caretaker at Coogera Apartments in Caloundra. Please join us in welcoming Belinda and Rob.

## Inside this issue

Office hours	1
New staff members	1
Tenant Advisory Group	1
Healthy living 101	2
Tenants of the season	2
Updated website and brochure	2
Tenant Satisfaction Survey	3
Activities and events	4
Emergency phone update	4
Quote of the season	4

### Tenant Advisory Group

Churches of Christ Care's Tenant Advisory Group aims to provide tenants with greater access to information, advice and opportunities to be actively involved with and have a say about the way in which services are delivered. It is also a great opportunity for tenants to connect with their local community.

So why not become a member today!

As a Tenants Advisory Group member, you will be more involved in the provision of services you receive, use your knowledge and skills to contribute to improving those services, and have your voice more widely heard within the Churches of Christ Care Housing Services community.

It is also a great way to meet new people.

The group comes together to discuss various issues affecting tenants and their communities, and develop ways to address them.

For further information about the Tenant Advisory Group, please contact Churches of Christ Care Housing Services by phone on 07 3327 1674.



*Bringing the light of Christ into communities*

A division of Churches of Christ in Queensland and working with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas





## Healthy Living 101

*Healthy Living 101* is a lifestyle column focused on health and wellbeing, with options designed to give all bodies a boost. It is written by Ipswich Office Service Support Officer and healthy living guru, Meredyth Ferguson.

### Lemon water and its benefits



Drink a glass of warm lemon water each morning. "Why?", I hear you ask, "What does it do?". There are a multitude of reasons why it's such a great start to your day, but here are eight of my favourite.

- 1. It cleanses your system** - Lemon juice helps flush out the system and aids in detoxification.
- 2. It boosts your immune system** - Lemons are high in Vitamin C, which is great for fighting colds.
- 3. It clears you skin** - The Vitamin C contained in lemons rejuvenates skin from within the body.
- 4. It energizes you and enhances your mood** - The smell of lemon juice can brighten your mood and help clear your mind. Lemon can also help reduce anxiety and depression.
- 5. It promotes healing** – The Vitamin C in lemons promotes wound healing and is an essential nutrient in the maintenance of healthy bones, good health and recovery from stress and injury.
- 6. It freshens breath** - Besides fresher breath, lemons have been known to help relieve tooth pain and gingivitis. Citric acid can erode tooth enamel though, so you should be mindful of this. Do not brush your teeth just after drinking your lemon water. It is best to brush your teeth first, then drink your lemon water, or wait a significant amount of time after to brush your teeth. Additionally, you can rinse your mouth with purified water after your lemon water.
- 7. It hydrates your lymphatic system** - Warm water and lemon juice supports the immune system by hydrating and replacing fluids lost by your body. When your body is deprived of water, you can definitely feel the side effects, which include feeling: tired, sluggish, unable to sleep, without energy, mentally unclear, stressed, constipated, blood pressure changes (low/high), immune function changes (decreased) and much more.
- 8. It aids in weight loss** - Lemons are high in pectin fibre, which helps fight hunger cravings. Studies have shown people who maintain a more alkaline diet lose weight faster.

I personally find myself making better choices throughout the day, if I start my day off right, by making a health conscious choice to drink warm lemon water first thing every morning.

Pretty amazing right? Why not add some lemons to your next grocery list.

## Tenants of the season

To be one of the lucky quarterly winners of a \$20 gift voucher, ensure your rent account is two weeks in advance and you have no other outstanding debts with us or any other tenancy issues.

Lucky winners will be selected from those eligible tenants.

For this season, we would like to thank and congratulate the following tenants:

### Ipswich - Dianne

Dianne's gardens are a work of art, and a campus that she is always improving upon. She also cares for some of the communal gardens around her unit.

Dianne's unit is always pristine and she is a pleasure to deal with.

### Gold Coast - Susan

Susan is a model tenant to others around her. She has a willingness to engage with others and be involved in activities and events at her complex..

Susan's rent is paid on time and her unit is well kept.

### Brisbane - Mila

Mila's house is always spotless and her rent is always paid on time.

Mila has also started working full-time and is over the moon about it as she had struggled with a language barrier.

### Updated website - [www.carehousingservices.com.au](http://www.carehousingservices.com.au)

We have recently undertaken a review of our website and have made some changes to provide you with more information and better access to our service.

You can now log maintenance requests and feedback online, download forms and information sheets and soon you will be able to check your rent account balance online. We still have some work to do but invite you to take a look.

Let us know if you have any suggestions for further improvement and please keep your eye out for the next update.

### New Feedback, Complaints and Appeals brochure

Churches of Christ Care is committed to providing high quality housing services. To achieve this, client feedback is encouraged.

We have recently developed a new, easy to read Feedback, Complaints and Appeals brochure containing all the information you need to know about the process.

It is now available to download from our website and will soon be in all of our offices.





## Tenant Satisfaction Survey

In September, all tenants were sent a Tenant Satisfaction Survey. The purpose of such surveys is to ensure the continuous improvement of our service.



If you provided feedback that you would like a direct response to from your Housing Officer or Churches of Christ Care, or have additional comments you would like to provide, please submit your thoughts again in writing to [housingservices@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:housingservices@cofcqld.com.au), as the survey was anonymous.

Churches of Christ Care thanks all who participated in the study. Your feedback was reviewed and the following results collected:

### Entry information

- **88%** of respondents were satisfied with the information provided upon entry to the service (handbook, brochures, contact info)
- **87%** of respondents agreed the lease was clearly explained
- **83%** of respondents agreed the calculation of rent was clearly explained
- **81%** of respondents were satisfied the process for feedback and complaints was explained clearly

### Communication

- **81%** of respondents agreed they felt comfortable to provide feedback and complaints
- **66%** of respondents were satisfied that feedback and complaints were actioned in a timely manner
- **82%** of respondents agreed they were informed about things that may affect them
- **81%** of respondents agreed that staff were accessible when needed and 90.5% were satisfied they knew how to contact the service
- **69%** of respondents agreed they knew how to contribute ideas for improvement
- **92%** of respondents agreed they knew how to make a maintenance request

### Privacy and dignity

- **91%** of respondents agreed their privacy and dignity was respected
- **86%** of respondents agreed their personal property was treated with respect

### Management/Staff

- **88%** of respondents were satisfied with the helpfulness and knowledge of staff
- **84%** of respondents agreed property management are helpful and knowledgeable
- **75%** of respondents were satisfied they felt valued and understood by the service
- **71%** of respondents were satisfied staff are sensitive and responsive to their customs, traditions, culture, beliefs and background
- **67%** of respondents were satisfied with how neighbourhood issues are managed

### Maintenance and home environments

- **74%** of respondents felt satisfied with the quality of maintenance services
- **81%** of respondents were satisfied with the design of their unit/house
- **91%** of respondents were satisfied with the general condition of their unit/house
- **73%** of respondents agreed the communal areas are well maintained
- **67%** of respondents agreed the complex had a good community feel
- **82%** of respondents felt secure inside and outside of their unit/house and were satisfied with the level of privacy

### Overall satisfaction

- **90%** of respondents were satisfied with the overall service offered by Churches of Christ Care
- **90%** of respondents were satisfied with the assistance offered to them
- **82%** of respondents feel their quality of life has improved since moving into their new unit/house

### Tenant feedback

*"Thanks for our new home, it's the first one we've ever had."*

*"I am very happy with our accommodation and all services provided to us. Thank you very much."*

*"It does take a while if you have a problem with maintenance and sometimes communication."*

*"Rent Calculation methodology is difficult for tenants to understand. A more detailed information sheet at commencement of tenancy would help to explain calculation method, rent assistance and assessable income."*



## Emergency phone update

The emergency phone is only turned on after hours. If you have an emergency during business hours, please contact your regional office or the head office at Kenmore on 07 3327 1674.

### **Please do not text the emergency phone – your message will not be received.**

Please remember that you will be interrupting someone's weekend and family time, so make sure it is an emergency, as per the following list;

- Gas leaks;
- Exposed live electrical wires in an accessible location
- Vulnerable tenants being locked out of their home during night time hours
- Burst pipes within building
- Building insecure after forces entry
- No lights or power
- Serious water penetration
- Serious storm damage
- Fully blocked sewerage
- Or any emergencies that damage could put people's lives, health or safety at risk.

Housing staff will not attend the property if you have locked yourself out.

An authorised locksmith will be called and you will be required to make the payment for that service, so please ensure that you keep your keys on you or supply a copy of your key to a trusted friend or family member.

You may also wish to consider an external key safe, which your Housing Officer can help you with.

If a neighbour is making excessive noise or someone is acting in a threatening or aggressive manner, please ring the police immediately and advise your Housing Officer the next working day.

## Tips for preventing the flu

It's nearly that time of year again and it's time to prepare! An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chance that you will get the flu and spread it to others. The more people that are vaccinated against the flu, the less it can spread through the community. There are some other ways you can try to avoid the dreaded flu.

### **1. Avoid close contact**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

### **2. Stay home when you are sick**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

### **3. Cover your mouth and nose**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

### **4. Clean your hands**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

### **5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

### **6. Practice other good health habits.**

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

## Quote of the season

*"Gratitude, like faith, is a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it grows, and the more power you have to use it on your behalf. If you do not practice gratefulness, its benefaction will go unnoticed, and your capacity to draw on its gifts will be diminished."*  
Alan Cohen

## Free or low cost activities and events

### **Gold Coast**

**What:** Surfers Paradise Festival

**Where:** Cavill Avenue, Surfers Paradise

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April

**Who:** General public

**Other:** Free events across four weekends of community fun. Beach concerts, street parties, cinema under the stars and much more.

### **Ipswich**

**What:** 2014 Autumn Garden Spectacular

**Where:** Silkstone State School (Prospect Street Ipswich)

**When:** 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April 9am – 4pm

**Who:** General public

**Other:** \$3 Entry children under 12 free, displays of magnificent Orchids, Bromeliads and Australian plants, lace making demonstrations, craft stalls and floral art sales.

### **Brisbane**

**What:** Davis Park Market – West End

**Where:** Davis Park (West End) off Montague and end of Jane Street, West End.

**When:** Every Saturday

**Who:** General public

**Other:** A weekly community event featuring music with fresh produce and healthy fast food, fashion and fitness set under a canopy of glorious giant fig trees.

### **Sunshine Coast**

**What:** Caloundra Street Festival

**Where:** Bullock Street, Caloundra

**When:** Every Sunday

**Who:** General public

**Other:** Plunge yourself in the best street markets on the Sunshine Coast with over 200 unique stalls, children's activities, live entertainment and fresh local food.