



Tenant News

Churches of Christ Care Housing Services newsletter
Christmas edition



Message from the Housing Operations Manager

Welcome to the Christmas 2014 edition of Tenant News



This year has been another busy one for our housing team with continued growth and change.

In July 2014, Churches of Christ Care acquired the management of the Bongaree Long Stay

Caravan Park on Bribie Island, previously managed by the local council. The caravan park is a welcome and complementary addition to our Churches of Christ Care Bribie Island Campus consisting of community housing units for seniors, retirement living units, residential aged care, and home and community care services, as well as Bribie Island Church of Christ.

The demographic of the park is predominantly over 55 singles and couples who own their moveable dwelling/caravan but lease their site.

We are also very excited to announce that Churches of Christ Care has been granted funding from the Department of Housing and Public Works to construct 40 units for seniors in Brisbane's south. This will be our third integrated community campus for seniors and will be similar to our Mitchelton and Bribie Island campuses. We will work closely with the Department of Housing and Public Works to identify social housing tenants under-occupying their existing public housing properties, or who are no longer coping with the upkeep of their larger home, and who will

benefit by downsizing and enjoying the design features of seniors' accommodation. This will in turn free up these larger houses for the many families in need waiting on the housing register.

You may be aware through media, that there have been a number of recent government reforms for public housing tenants (managed by the Department of Housing and Public Works). In particular, from July 2014, the way rent is calculated for public housing tenancies has changed.

While these reforms do not yet affect our community housing tenants (managed by community organisations such as Churches of Christ Care), it is likely that these reforms will be rolled out to the community housing sector in the near future.

If you would like to know more about these changes please refer to hpw.qld.gov.au and search 'rent policy update'. Alternatively, a Rent Policy fact sheet can be requested at any Department of Housing and Public Works service centre.

It is always busy in the housing sector, and particularly over the last few years we have experienced continuous growth, change and reform, which doesn't look likely to slow down any time soon.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our tenants for a wonderful year and wish everyone a very happy and safe Christmas.

Karen Bozier – Housing Operations Manager

Bringing the light of Christ into communities

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





Hello summer

Seasonal fruit

It's summer time again and that means delicious tropical fruit!

Pineapples, guavas, lychees, passionfruit, mangos and cherries are all in season at this time of year; head to your local markets if you want to buy them as fresh as possible. Visit marketguide.com.au/qld-1.htm to find a market near you.

Mosquitos

If whining mosquitos are interrupting your summer entertaining, try the following tips:

- Change the water in pet dishes, bird baths and other containers every few days as mosquito larvae thrive in still water.
- Place fans on your balcony or outdoor living areas. Fans deter mosquitos because they disperse the carbon dioxide (which is what attracts mosquitos to us) as we exhale.
- Change to yellow light bulbs on your balcony or outdoor living area. Yellow light is less attractive to insects than standard white light.

Storm season

Are you prepared for storm season?

Start by ensuring loose objects in your yard or on your balcony are tied down or stowed away, and report any large dead trees which could be hazardous during a storm, to your local council or to our office.

The SES recommends all households create a home emergency kit for use in the event of severe storm damage to infrastructure. For more information including links to information on road closures and power outages go to stormwise.com.au.

**FLOOD STORM
EMERGENCY
132 500**



Message from the Community Chaplain Team Leader

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Churches of Christ Care tenants a merry Christmas and a happy and joyous New Year.

Christmas can be a really special time for many, but for some it can also be a really lonely time. I encourage you all to watch out for others and include them if they are in need of company, as in many ways this relates back to the reason for the Christmas celebration when the angels said "Peace on earth and good will to all men", when announcing the birth of the baby Jesus.

Calvin Coolidge once said "Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas."

I would also like to thank everyone for their participation in the Churches of Christ Care Housing Services' Tenant Advisory Group this year.

Although this group has only been going a short time, your participation has been really valuable in assisting Housing Services improve the way it communicates and the service it can deliver to clients.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2015.

Murray Thomson – Community Chaplain Team Leader

Change of circumstances

Tenants must notify Housing Services immediately if there is a change in circumstances. You may be in breach of your tenancy if you fail to notify us of a change to your household circumstances. In some instances your rent subsidy may be removed and back charged to when the change occurred.

We encourage you to keep us informed of any changes to your household (e.g. change of income or new household members). Further information about reporting changes to your household is available in your Tenant Handbook.



Good neighbours

The festive season is upon us and it's time to celebrate, but please remember to be safe and think about your neighbours. Here are some quick reminders about your obligations:

- Keep noise in or near your home to a minimum—particularly between 10pm and 7am.
- Noise travels in unit developments, so make sure you don't slam doors, sound car horns or shout. Also think about the volume of your television.
- Do not leave access doors open or use the fire exits to enter or leave the building.
- If you have a dog or cat, ensure you clean up any mess it makes and make sure dogs don't bark constantly.
- Talk to your children about how their behaviour might affect neighbours.
- Talk to your visitors and ensure they understand and respect the communal rules. Ask your visitors not to slam doors and (for those with intercoms) do not let people in if you do not know who they are.
- Report anything suspicious to the police.

Everyone is entitled to the quiet enjoyment of their home and to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours. We will take all reasonable steps to support this; however, we can only intervene when there is a breach of tenancy legislation.

Should you have trouble with your neighbour, you can ask for a copy of the Resolving Your Neighbour Issues information sheet for tips and advice on handling the situation.

You should always attempt to settle any disagreements or disputes with your neighbours before they become serious and before you make a complaint. Consider how you would feel if someone made a complaint about you without talking to you first. If you do not believe it is possible to resolve the issue with your neighbour, make a complaint.

We will document and investigate all alleged breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement, but cannot investigate criminal matters. These should be referred to the police.

Anti-Poverty Week

Churches of Christ Care staff donate to Anti-Poverty Week



The aim of Anti-Poverty Week is to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship in Australia and around the world. It's also about encouraging research, discussion and action to address these problems, including action by individuals, communities, organisations and governments.

Everyone is encouraged to help reduce poverty and hardship by organising an activity during the week or taking part in an activity organised by others.

Churches of Christ Care staff participated in a toiletry appeal and collected 12 boxes, filled to overflowing.

"The organisers of the appeal were very happy with the response," said Housing Coordinator Floyd Stephens. "The generosity from the Head Office staff and those from other areas including Gold Coast, Caloundra and Bribie Island has been fantastic."

"We had a great response and received donations from Johnson and Johnson, Coles Ipswich and Riverlink," said Housing Coordinator Arlene Lewis. "Thanks to everyone who contributed."

The toiletries will be distributed to people in need in Brisbane and Ipswich by the Ecumenical Coffee Brigade, Community Friends, Footprints in the Park and Helping Hands Queensland.



THE A TEAM

The A Team



This is the story of how a group of people saw the needs of some other people within their housing complex and decided to do something about it.

It all started when a resident of Churches of Christ Care Pavetta Apartments asked her Community Chaplain, Graham Wheat, if someone could help her to move her bed and some other furniture so that she could clean underneath.

Graham and another resident decided to help and soon the job was done. With a job well done and feeling proud, they jokingly called themselves the A Team. The name caught on and now the team has evolved into a group of men who do jobs around the housing complex, helping out where needed.

The A Team comprises of a builder, carpenter, mechanic, painter and general helpers. So far they have moved, repaired and painted furniture; dumped rubbish; fixed small faults on cars; transported people to appointments; adjusted fridges; helped other residents with physical challenges; and much more.

One of the residents needed to get rid of a king-sized bed from his unit. The bed was built out of Canadian mahogany and Graham asked if he would mind if it was cut up and turned into a workbench.

A member of the A Team sprung to action and before Graham could check for any restrictions or concerns, it was transformed and sitting in the underground car park ready for work.

Following collaboration with the housing team, a risk management assessment was completed, safety regulations were posted up and the bench was approved to be utilised by anyone in the complex. As part of this, a protective screen was further required and in no time the boys from the A Team found a large old door and fixed it in place.

The A Team needed to raise money to cover expenses outlaid for securing donated tools in a cabinet, and for shelves, signs and fittings, so they decided to hold a raffle. One member baked a cake, and one donated chocolate while other residents donated fruit, vegetables and a DVD. All the monies needed were raised and a good amount of community-building among residents transpired in the process. When a new resident recently moved into the complex, at their first meeting with Graham they said, "...and I want to join the A Team".

Graham took the A Team to visit local Churches of Christ Care retirement villages where they secured access to the Golden Age Retirement Village's Men's Shed and the use of a ute and trailer from Lady Small Haven Retirement Village for any bigger jobs that might be requested.

It is so good to see a few kind-hearted people doing small things that make a big difference in the community in which they live.

Congratulations

Big congratulations to Debbie from Ipswich, who was a winner in the local Artsability Art Competition. Debbie's group won four first prizes in several different categories and also a second place.

Debbie is also a committed volunteer and is active in numerous community projects and organisations. Well done Debbie!



Operation Christmas Child



Churches of Christ Care Housing Services' staff filled over 24 shoe boxes with Christmas presents as part of Operation Christmas Child.

The appeal, organised annually by the missionary charity, Samaritan's Purse, involves donating gifts inside a shoe box for disadvantaged children. This is the first year our housing team has participated in the appeal.

Staff filled their shoe boxes with gifts including skipping ropes, dolls, toy cars, jewellery, hair accessories and socks.

The shoeboxes collected were posted and joined a stream of red and green shoe boxes to be distributed to children in numerous countries across the Asia Pacific region just in time for Christmas.

"I believe the plan will be to track the boxes and I'm personally looking forward to seeing where they end up," Fiona Kerr said.

Back to basics natural cleaning

Today's modern marketing tells us that cleaning our homes can only be effective with the help of expensive chemical cleaning products. But natural cleaning options can save time, money and reduce chemical exposure. This is particularly important for asthma and allergy sufferers.

Some of the general products you can use like vinegar, salt and baking soda are probably already in your pantry or can be purchased at minimal expense. There are plenty of solutions and ideas on the internet, simply search 'natural cleaning'. Here are a couple you can try.

Please note, always test mixtures on a small area before you start. Also ensure you follow any manufacturer care instructions where applicable.



Antibacterial spray

- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- Five drops of liquid soap

Add mixture to a spray bottle. This can be used for cleaning kitchen and bathroom surfaces including stainless steel and glass.

Natural drain cleaner

Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda into your drain followed with 1/2 cup of vinegar. It will bubble furiously. Follow with two litres of hot water. (DO NOT use this method if you have recently used commercial drain cleaners).

Vinegar basics

- Spray vinegar full strength on tile grout. Let sit for a few minutes, and then use a scrub brush to brighten grout. Vinegar will also help kill any mould.
- Soaking your shower head with vinegar and water is a great way to remove mineral deposits. Spray the shower head and then cover with a small plastic bag. Let it sit for a few hours or overnight.
- White vinegar works well to kill weeds between brick pavers and concrete sidewalks. Use it full strength in a spray bottle but make sure you aim carefully to avoid killing anything else in your yard.

Baking soda basics

- Baking soda is a natural deodoriser. Use some of your baking soda cleaning solution in a microwave safe cup and microwave on medium for one minute to banish food odours.
- Sprinkle dry baking soda on your carpet to freshen, let sit for a few minutes, and then vacuum.



Easy lamingtons



Ingredients

- 400g golden sponge cake slabs
- 1/4 cup strawberry or raspberry jam
- 3 cups shredded coconut
- 2 1/2 cups chocolate icing mixture
- 1/2 cup boiling water

Method

1. Separate sponge slabs. Spread jam over bottom piece of sponge and replace top sponge to sandwich together.
2. Cut filled sponge into 3, lengthways. Cut each piece into 4 to make 12 lamington squares.
3. Place coconut onto a tray.
4. Mix icing mixture and boiling water in a large bowl until smooth.
5. Using 2 forks, dip a lamington square into chocolate icing, turning to coat all sides. Remove from icing, allowing excess to drip off.
6. Place lamington directly into coconut rolling over to cover. Transfer to a wire rack. Continue with the remaining ingredients to make 12 lamingtons.

New staff member

Please join us in welcoming Housing Administration Officer Bryony Sobey to our Ipswich office.

After hours service

Remember, the **1800 446 604** after-hours phone service is turned on when our offices are closed and is for **emergencies only**.

Holiday period office hours

Please note that Churches of Christ Care Housing Services' offices will be closed on public holidays over Christmas and New Year. The holiday period is a very busy time of year for everyone and with limited staff working over the break we cannot guarantee that the person you are phoning will be available. However, we will always try to assist you wherever possible.

Office hours are:		Monday to Friday
Brisbane	07 3327 1674	8.30am - 4.30pm
Ipswich	07 3436 8900	8.30am - 4.30pm
Gold Coast	07 5503 0974	8.30am - 4.30pm
Public holiday closures		
25 December 2013		CLOSED
26 December 2013		CLOSED
1 January 2014		CLOSED

Tenant of the season awards

For your chance to win a \$20 gift voucher and a 'tenant of the season' award, ensure your rent account is two weeks in advance, and you have no outstanding charges or ongoing tenancy issues. The lucky winners will be selected from these eligible tenants.

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

Ipswich – Joy and Debra

After a hot water system burst in a communal area, these ladies spent hours mopping up water and sweeping wet leaves out of the storeroom. The same week a sliding door was smashed and they both helped sweep up until the glazier arrived.

Bribie Island – Maurice

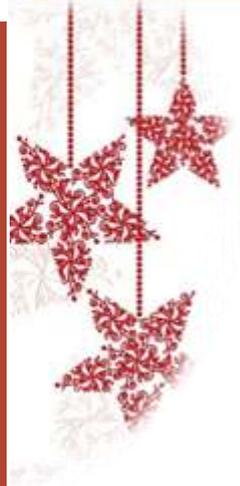
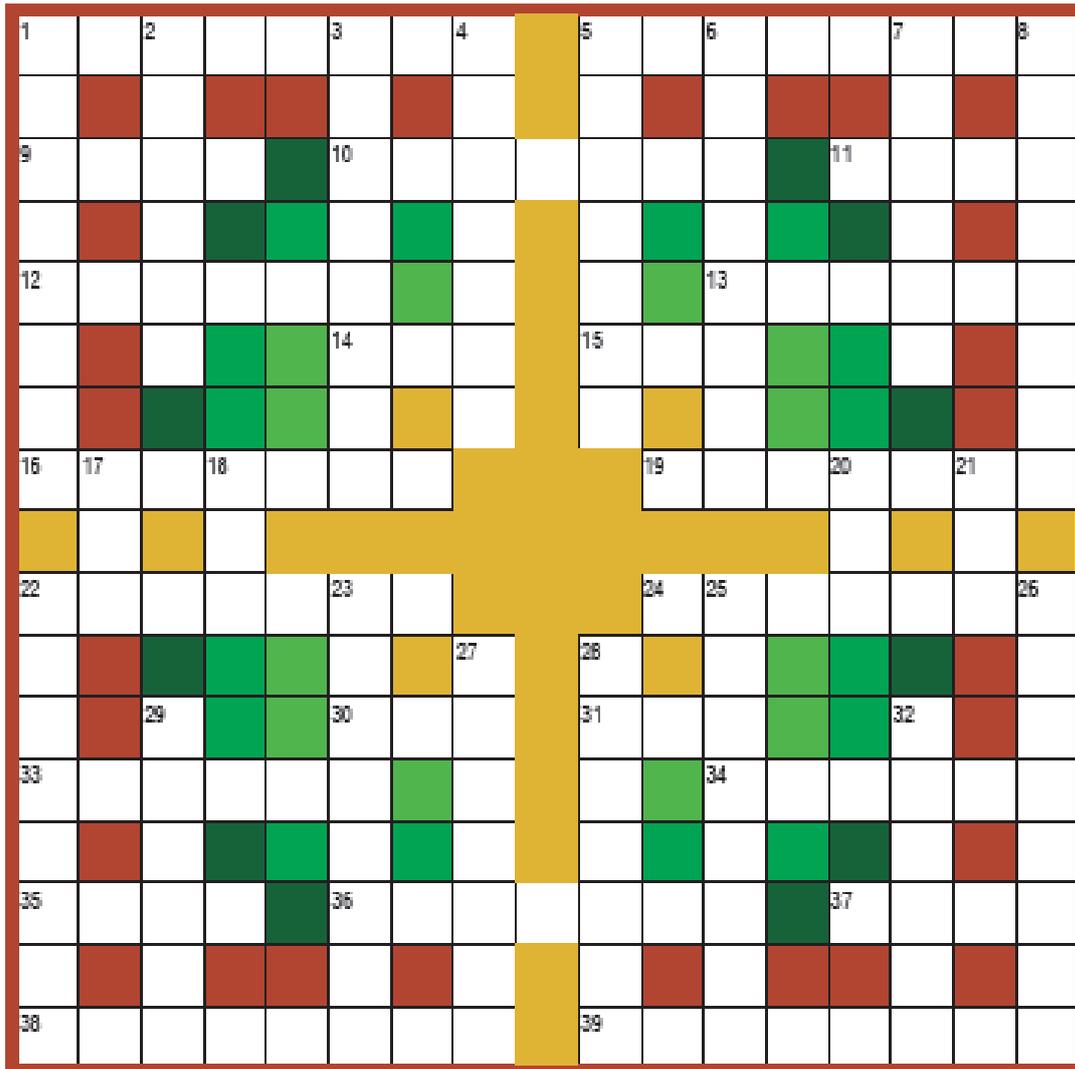
Maurice volunteers his time to drive a bus at the Bribie Island Campus assisting other residents to visit shops or places of interest. He also volunteers at the aged care facility.

Sunshine Coast – Lesley and Dennis

Lesley and Dennis have contributed a lot within their unit complex along with a number of other residents, recently with the Tenant Advisory Group, Coogera Social Club and the Cooma Café.



Christmas Crossword



ACROSS

1. Where a partridge can be found (4,4)
5. Most delicious (8)
9. Who helped good King Wenceslas? (4)
10. Myrh can be burned as _____ (7)
11. Beam (4)
12. Coiled (6)
13. An elf is Santa's little ____ (6)
14. December 24th is Christmas ____ (3)
15. Essential addition to summer drinks (3)
16. Location of Christmas pantomimes (7)
19. What's written on a Christmas card envelope (7)
22. Handel's famous oratorio (7)
24. Worry, eg about what gifts to give (7)
30. "Remember Christ, ____ Saviour, Was born on Christmas day" (3)
31. Expression of surprise (3)
33. Singer of solo passages to which the church congregation responds.(6)
34. Mother Earth (6)
35. Utterance at the end of a prayer (4)
36. Baskets of edible goodies (7)
37. Ancient abbreviation of 'Christmas' (4)
38. Long narrow decorative strip (8)
39. Lamps (8)

DOWN

1. Popular cracker inclusion (5,3)
2. Heavenly messengers (6)
3. Animal that pulls Santa's sleigh (8)
4. Thrilled (7)
5. Bob Cratchit's crippled son in *A Christmas Carol*, by Dickens (4,3)
6. One of the herdsmen who followed the star, to visit baby Jesus (8)
7. Continent where the Christmas tree first appeared (6)
8. Fits of temper, especially in young over-excited children! (8)
17. Tint (3)
18. An animal who warmed baby Jesus (3)
20. Dash (3)
21. Sister, informal (3)
22. Santa's wife (3,5)
23. "O come, let us _____" (5,3)
25. Young male relative (8)
26. Chorus from *Angels We Have Heard on High*: "Gloria, In ____ deo" (8)
27. *The Little _____ Boy*, 1958 carol (7)
28. Coarse flour used widely in Scotland (7)
29. Cause to be loved (6)
32. Australian Christmas season (6)



Heaven's Gift

Poem by Gold Coast tenant S. Stallwood

My Kingdom for your love, my love,
 For your love you'll have my Kingdom,
 Said God to us, in you I live,
 We all are relative;
 And in relations tender-hearted,
 Tread the narrow way,
 Of wisdom;
 Which manna of a heavenly gift,
 Untarnished by the hands of man,
 Is given freely.
 My Kingdom for your love said God,
 For your love you'll have my Kingdom.

Tenants' corner

Do you have a story, idea, poem, recipe or joke you'd like to share? We'd love to hear from you! We would like to publish more contributions from tenants on topics both great and small. If you would like to contribute, please email your work to:

housingervices@cofcqld.com.au

Alternatively, post to Churches of Christ Care Housing Services at PO Box 508, Kenmore Qld 4069. Contributions should be 200 words maximum. Due to space restrictions we cannot guarantee publication.

Tenant Advisory Group

By becoming a member of Tenant Advisory Group (TAG), you can be more involved and be heard. It is also a great way to make new friends.

A working lunch is provided at each TAG meeting, and transport arrangements made where required. Meetings alternate between regional group meetings and central full member meetings, as voted by TAG.

If you would like to join us but have never been to an event like this before, give us a call and we can tell you all about it and get you registered.

Details of meeting locations and agenda items will be mailed to TAG members. You can register as a TAG member by phoning 07 3327 1674. The next TAG meeting will be Wednesday 11 March 2015 from 11am to 2pm.



What's on near you this season

free New Year's events

Brisbane

New Year's Eve Fireworks Spectacular
 Wednesday 31 December starting at 8.30pm at South Bank Parklands. This year there'll be two shows – one at 8.30pm for the little ones, and one at midnight for the big kids.

Gold Coast

New Year's Eve Fireworks
 Wednesday 31 December from 6pm to 9pm. Broadwater Parklands - Marine Parade Southport. A family concert finishing with a fireworks display on the Broadwater.

Ipswich

New Year's Eve 2014
 Wednesday 31 December from 6pm – 10pm. North Ipswich Reserve, 43 The Terrace North Ipswich. Kids' rides, street theatre, performers, food stalls, live music and more!

Sunshine Coast

Caloundra Community NYE Celebrations
 Wednesday 31 December from 4pm at Kings Beach Amphitheatre and Lions Park. Rides, food stalls, musical entertainment, petting zoo, feature movie "Frozen"

Christmas crossword solution

S	N	R	E	N	L	A	N	L	A	R	E	M	A	E	R	E	S
I	E	O	A	E	I	A	M	E	N	A	M	E	U				
S	M	X	S	P	R	S	H	A	M	E	N	A	M	E			
L	M	D	M	M	E	M	E	L	D	L							
E	R	E	A	T	N	A	T	U	R	O	R	C	A	N	T	O	
C	S	A	H	A	H	A	R	O	U	R	O	E	S				
X	R	O	D	D	D	D						R					
E	S	I	N	O	N	I	S	E	A	G	O	N	A	H	A	S	S
I	U												S	U			
S	S	R	E	S	A	D	D	R	E	R	E	T	H	E	A	T	
M					R	M	D	E									A
U	E	C	E	I	C	E	E	V	E	S	H						
R	P	E	L	H	T	T						R	O	L	L	E	
T	O	P	Y	I	N												E
I	N	G	R	I	N	S	E	N	S	E	N	C	E	N	I	N	P
A	U	H	I	X	E	N											A
S	T	I	E	S	T	A	S	T	E	R	E	P	E	A	R	T	