



# Women's Housing Company NEWSLETTER

## Tenants Create, Share and Smile with My Story

The tenant participation project My Story is well underway, with 12 tenants so far actively involved.

As you may know, from our last newsletter, My Story was designed based on feedback from tenants, expressing the desire to take part in a project that was artistic and allowed expression – as well as resulted in something useful, like a calendar.

The calendar is currently being designed and drafted up using images and words submitted by tenants taking part in the project.

### **It's not too late to get involved!**

Contributions of stories and images are still encouraged and can be shared in the Women's Housing Company newsletter and the Annual Report, which is now being prepared.

If you have any questions you are welcome to call the Tenant Participation Worker on 02 9281 1764, ask for Meagan.

### **There are many benefits of tenant participation!**

Tenant participation aims to improve communication between you and Women's Housing Company - which enables you to be more involved with your housing provider.

Tenant participation brings a stronger sense of community.

There are several ways to be involved with your housing association. One of these ways is by being a part of a group such as the NSW Community Housing Tenant Network.

The NSW Community Housing Tenant Network is having a morning tea to discuss tenant participation and all Women's Housing Company tenants are invited. Please refer to details inside this newsletter.

Tenant  
Participation

Rent  
Assessment  
Changes

WIN \$100  
Voucher

Rent  
Statement

CEO Report

Tenant  
Network  
Invite

# From our CEO Bobbie Townsend

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The year has passed so quickly – Women’s Housing Company is preparing for the mad rush towards the end of the year with a number of key events to complete.

## Newsletter & Tenant Participation:

Women’s Housing Company has an ongoing commitment to review key activities and make improvements to all aspects of the organisation. One of these is improved software so this newsletter can have a make over. Further improvements will continue with each edition.

We encourage tenants to contact us and let us know what you would like to see in the newsletter, also to make contributions.

- Do you participate in your community?
- Have you a neighbour who assists others and should be recognised?
- Any comments/stories about what your home means to you?
- Has being a tenant with Women’s Housing made a difference?

Please write and send you articles to Meagan – Tenant Participation Worker.

## Staffing:

Women’s Housing Company has modified its internal structure and we have appointed a Team Leader in Housing Services - we welcome Kay who was recently appointed to this position.

Ongoing changes will be made to ensure service delivery continues to meet a high standard.

The behind the scenes business of providing housing to over 700 women means a number of staff are in the office that you may never meet. You may know front desk staff, Bobby and Daad, when you ring and you have contact with your Housing Workers.

However we also have a team of dedicated staff in finance that receive your rent, process all payments, prepare budgets and generally ensure we meet all our financial obligations.

We now have a team of four in the finance section, Erna, Yan, Siana and Teresa who all work

diligently for Women’s Housing Company.

## End of Year:

In our end of year rush, we are now preparing the AGM, Annual Report, external financial Audit, end of year reporting to funding agencies and our compliance check for ongoing registration under the Housing Act is also due.

Whilst this time is hectic, it’s a good way to end the year as we can reflect on our achievements and plan to address and meet the challenges.

## NEWSLETTER INSERT

### Notice of Rent Rebate Assessment Changes

#### *NSW Budget Announcement*

2009 pension increase to now be included in rent assessments.

Some Tenants will have a higher than usual rent increase at the next two income reviews.

Please see included letter for further details.

# Rent Incentive Program

## A CHANCE TO WIN!



The Tenant Rent Incentive program will award a \$100 gift voucher to two tenants each quarter whose rent payments show no arrears as at their rent due date (i.e, the anniversary date of their lease signing).

Winners of the Tenant Rent Incentive will be contacted by mail and have basic details (first name and suburb) published in the Women's Housing Company newsletter.

**Note:** Tenants cannot be awarded the voucher if they:

- have current arrears on their non-rent account; or
- have been awarded the voucher within the past year.

**For more information please contact Women's Housing Company – details are on the front of this newsletter.**

## NEWSLETTER INSERT RENT STATEMENT



Please check your rent statement and the entries of your rent payments against your own records.

At times mistakes are discovered either due to bank error, WHC entry error, or tenant error. We can only rectify such mistakes once we are aware of them. Please tell us immediately if you believe a mistake has occurred.

The most recent rent statement always slightly overlaps with your previous statement to ensure that no payments are missed or that late entries and corrections can be viewed.

This information is available in following languages: Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Spanish.

If you wish to receive the information in any of these languages, please call the WHC office or send us an email.

Contact details are on the front of this newsletter.

## Notice of Annual General Meeting



Eva Cox

The Women's Housing Company  
AGM 2011 is to be held:

November 24th

The Sebel

28 Albion St, Surry Hills

noon - 3pm

WHC is honoured to have guest speaker Eva Cox - an Australian writer, feminist, sociologist and activist.

**Invites will be mailed out soon!**



## Cleaning Ideas

If you feel like you have been hibernating all winter, at last you can fling open the windows and let in the warm spring air, and why not go further and tidy up the rest of your home with these environmentally friendly spring cleaning tips. There are many alternatives available that can help you make your home squeaky clean—and green.

### It is possible to make your own green cleaning products!

The basic supplies you'll need to make your own green cleaners include;

White vinegar (sold in the cooking section of most supermarkets) baking soda, olive oil, Borax (sold in a box in the laundry aisle), liquid castile soap, essential oils, microfibre cleaning cloths, newspaper

Here are a few basic recipes and techniques to get you started:

**For cleaning glass:** mix 1/4 cup vinegar with 1 litre of water in a spray bottle. Spray on glass and wipe clean with old newspaper or a lint-free cloth.

**Countertops and bathroom tile:** mix 2 parts vinegar and 1 part baking soda with 4 parts water. Apply with a sponge, scour, and wipe away.

**Floors:** mix 4 cups of white distilled vinegar with about a

litre of hot water. If desired, add a few drops of pure peppermint or lemon oil for a pleasant scent. After damp mopping the floors, the smell of vinegar will dissipate quickly, leaving behind only the scent of the oil.

**Wood furniture:** mix equal parts of lemon juice and olive oil. Apply a small amount to a cloth, and rub onto the furniture in long, even strokes.

**Toilet bowl cleaner:** Sprinkle a toilet brush with baking soda and scrub away! Occasionally disinfect your toilet by scrubbing with borax instead. Wipe the outside of the toilet clean with straight vinegar.

**Disinfectant:** mix 2 teaspoons borax, 4 tablespoons vinegar, 3 cups hot water, and 1/4 teaspoon liquid castile soap. Wipe on with dampened cloth or use a spray bottle. Wipe clean.

**Mould and mildew:** wipe with straight vinegar.

**Air freshener:** sprinkle essential oil on a cotton ball, and stash it in a corner of the room.

Note: lavender is a relaxing scent that is great for bedrooms, and cinnamon, clove, and citrus oils are great for the rest of the house. You can place a few in the car too—try peppermint, which may help you to stay alert.

Cleaning up your home for spring doesn't have to be dirty work. When you implement some of these ideas, you can rest assured that you're benefiting your body, your home and the planet all at once. Many of these changes are small ones, but their impact on your health and the environment can really add up over time.

**Happy spring cleaning!**

## MY STORY



"Who never cry and sorrow with the heart, neither to be able to laugh, and joy the life".

~ Amalis

### THE NSW COMMUNITY HOUSING TENANT NETWORK

invites all WHC tenants to a morning tea to discuss Tenant Participation.

**When:** Tuesday 18th, October, 2011

**Time:** 10.30am to noon

**Where:** NSW Federation of Housing Associations; Suite 301, 3rd Floor 64 – 76 Kippax Street Surry Hills, NSW 2010

**Agenda:** Tenant Participation; what it means, and how tenants can be involved with

**Bookings:** (essential for catering) Susan Lucock; (02) 8807 7932

Morning tea provided!