

Hello to all,

I trust that everyone survived the Christmas mayhem and life is settling down somewhat as Easter is now upon us.

Our next Tenant Council Meeting is being held in Grafton on Wednesday, 8th April.

The NCCHC offices will be closed over the Easter break. Please see the "Emergency Numbers" section for emergency maintenance issues over this period.

From all the staff NCCHC, we wish every tenant a great Easter and a safe holiday. May the Easter Bunny shower each of you with loads of chocolate eggs.

To all the Tweed tenants, we look forward to seeing you on 10th June at our Tenant Council meeting at the South Tweed Sports Club.

Cheers, Ed.

News from the Board

Mark Dansie has resigned from the position of Executive Officer as of 18th March, 2009.

The Board of Management is currently in the position of recruiting a new General Manager. We are confident that this process will be finalised within the next two months. In the meantime, Ms Lydie Boyd has been appointed as Acting Executive Officer.

News from the Finance Department

Kelly worked for the Finance section for over two years mainly entering tenants' rent and non-rent from payment to us to tenant rent account and also preparing payment requisition for contractors and landlords. Kelly resigned in January to start another position closer to home and full time. We wish her but wish her all the best.

Linda started work in February to replace Kelly and we are sure Linda will be as efficient as Kelly and we are happy to welcome her to the Finance section team.

Lydie

New Staff Profile

***Alan Teague,
Housing Worker Lismore Branch***

Alan began work with NCCHC in late January 2009 where he manages Evans Head, Byron Bay and Casino.

Alan moved to Australia three times as a child from North London. The first time in 1967, staying for six months at the Wacol Immigration Hostel, which is now the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre.

Alan studied Literature and Community Work at University, majoring in sociology and Honours in creative writing.

Alan has worked since October 2006 with homeless people as an outreach worker monitoring public space, engaging with homeless people in inner city and inner city suburbs of Brisbane, and on reception at the front desk of Brisbane Homelessness Service Centre until November 2008.

He began work as a Housing Manager with Brisbane Boarders/MATCH (which was located in the one stop shop of homelessness, along with employment – Big Issue, and other agencies involved in maintaining tenancies, early intervention, in home support, etc.) looking after properties in Woolloongabba, Kangaroo Point and Holland Park West.

Alan's interests are football (old soccer), literature, philosophy, life-long learning, and the lives of poets.

News from Grafton

A warm hello to all!

Helen, Jenny and Chantelle would like to welcome all of our new tenants and we hope they are settling in to their new homes.

The Grafton Branch of NCCHC would like to let all of our tenants know that we have new office hours. These are:

Tuesday 9:30am to 3:00pm (closed between 12:30pm and 1:00pm for lunch)

Wednesday 9:30am to 12:30pm

Thursday 9:30am to 3:00pm (closed between 12:30pm and 1:00pm for lunch)

As it is coming into the cooler weather, staff at Grafton Branch of NCCHC urge our tenants to be mindful of having electric blankets and heating appliances tested. It would be terrible if we had a fire.

If there are any tenants with maintenance issues, please give us a call so that we can get these matters attended to promptly.

Thankyou.

Helen, Jenny and Chantelle

News from Tweed

We would like to thank tenants for their patience and understanding with staff having to implement the changes to the Commonwealth Rent Assistance program. After much perseverance by tenants and staff, we seem to have reached the light at the end of the tunnel! Once phased in, the differences that have occurred between the after housing incomes of Community Housing Tenants receiving Rent Assistant and Department of housing Tenants will be resolved.

Arian Schaap has taken on the role of Tenant Liaison for the Tenant Council and Tenant Forums, so if people have any issues that they would like to have raised for discussion, please do not hesitate to call. North Coast Community Housing is eager to work with tenants on improving the service wherever possible. Any ideas of how, as an organisation, we might be able to support each other are also welcome, whether this is through community gardens, social groups, interest groups, etc. These can be explored for their viability through avenues such as the Tenant Council and Forums.

The office is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30am to 3:00pm (closed for lunch from 12:30pm-1:00pm) and on Wednesday from 9:30am till 12:30pm.

Helaine (Office Assistant) works Tuesday and Wednesday, Arian and Gianna (Housing Workers) work Tues/Wed/Thurs. Please call in if you would like to speak to someone.

Arian, Gianna and Helaine



PEST CONTROL



NCCH has embarked on a program of annual termite inspections in order to detect any possible damage to the property as early as possible. Pest inspectors have been appointed for each area and will contact our tenants within the next 2-12 weeks to carry out the first inspection.

The companies involved are:

Elders Pest Control for tenants of our Tweed and Clarence offices and some tenants of our Richmond office;

Richmond River Pest Services for all other Richmond tenants.

The contactors are obliged to make an appointment with our tenants and to show identification when they enter your property.

Please assist them in their job by tidying up the house along the walls and floors before they come, to make sure that they find all of those pesky termites if you happen to have an infestation.

Please note that these companies won't be dealing with any other pest problem you may have, such as cockroaches or rodents. If you have an infestation of pests other than termites, and you are sure that you did everything in your power to control the pests yourself, please contact your Housing Worker to discuss the matter.

The termite inspection alone does NOT use any chemicals and does not produce any odours. If termites are found and need to be eradicated, an approved termiticide will be used for that purpose. The chemicals used today have been extensively tested and are not known to be harmful to humans, including small children and pets. If you have any concerns or special requirements, please talk to your Housing Worker.

Michael Qualmann, Assets Officer

Property Inspections

We have received reports of unauthorised people claiming to be inspectors sent by NCCHC or Housing NSW in order to gain access to tenants' properties. This is a serious concern as the safety and security of tenants is of utmost importance to NCCHC. If there are to be inspections in your area, you will be informed by mail. Inspectors are also required to show identification.

Please do not allow anyone claiming to be sent by NCCHC or Housing NSW to enter your premises unless:

- you have received notification of inspections happening in your area and,
- you have been shown the appropriate ID or authority.

If you have any questions regarding the authority of anyone trying to gain access to your property, do not hesitate to contact your local office. If you know someone has tried to gain access to your property without authority from NCCHC please contact the police immediately.

Tenant Council meetings and Tenant Forums for 2009

The dates and venues for the Council and Forum meetings are:-

- 10th June – South Tweed Sports Club
- 12th August – Lismore Workers Club
- 14th October – Grafton New School of Arts
- 9th December – South Tweed Sports Club

For more information, or if you would like to attend, please contact your Tenant Council rep.

Tenant Council Contact Details

Dolores CLOSE (Secretary)	(02) 6643 1209
Barbara WATERS (Tweed)	(02) 6672 1660
David SOLOMONS (Tweed)	(07) 5524 9210
Kathy NOLAN (Grafton)	0417 798 637
Peter HARRIS (Lismore)	0407 120 599

Rental Rebate

Every tenant claiming a rebated rent has signed a rebate agreement.

It is important for you to understand the terms of the agreement in order for rental rebate to be worked out correctly. We will ask to verify your income twice a year to make sure that you are paying the correct rebated rent. Please note the following provisions of the agreement:

RENTAL REBATE ABATEMENT

- 1 **The tenant agrees:** that North Coast Community Housing Company (the landlord) may implement a policy for the rebate or waiver of rent for this agreement.

RENTAL REBATE PROVISIONS

- 2 **The tenant agrees:**
 - 2.1 to notify the landlord in writing within 14 days of any change in the tenant's income or the income of any other persons residing in the premises.
 - 2.2 if the landlord asks, to allow verification of the income and assets of all persons residing in the residential premises.

NOTIFY THE LANDLORD OF ADDITIONAL OCCUPANTS

- 3 **The tenant agrees:** to notify the landlord in writing within 7 days of any change in the number of persons residing in the premises.

If these provisions are not met your rebate may be withdrawn and you will be required to pay the current market rent on your property.

If there have been any changes in household income you will be required to notify us within the time frames specified in the agreement, submit your full income details and fill out the income declaration form. You will need to state these changes on the declaration (Question 2), fill in the details of the changes and the date these changes commenced. Failure to declare income or not declaring changes in income until the next round of rent updates are breaches of your rebate agreement and serious penalties could apply. If you have any further questions about the rental rebate provisions, please contact your housing worker.



2009 NCCHC Bloomin' Beautiful Garden Competition

North Coast Community Housing Company and the Tenant Council invite all tenants to enter the "Bloomin' Beautiful Garden Competition". The gardens will be judged by a locally established Garden Club from Tweed Heads, Grafton and Lismore and your Tenant Council Rep. Judging will take place in October 2009 so start planting and nurturing your garden now! Up to 3 categories can be selected per tenant. See the attached Application Form for details.

Housing Appeals

The Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) is the independent appeals body for all NSW social housing clients and covers many appeal issues such as rehousing, priority waiting lists and rental subsidies.

The HAC reviews the decision made by the Housing Provider, after an internal review has been completed, and determines whether the decision was fair, correct and within policy. The HAC can make recommendations that the Housing Provider change or review a decision or the HAC may agree with the Housing Providers' decision. The HAC also provides regular feedback to the Minister for Housing as well as public and community housing sectors on policy and procedural issues in an aim to promote the highest standards of decision making by social housing providers in NSW.

You may not be aware of your right to appeal or whether your issue can be appealed with the HAC. There are a number of appealable and non-appealable issues, and time limits apply for appeals to be lodged.

For further information, please phone the HAC on (02) 9715 7955 or Freecall 1800 629 794 or visit their website www.hac.nsw.gov.au.

STAFF AT NCCHC OFFICES

Lismore Office:

Lydie Boyd – Finance and Business Manager, and Acting Executive Officer

Lynne Marlow – Housing Services Manager

Robyn Lewis – Senior Finance Assistant

Linda Hovan – Finance Assistant

Vicki Fosett – Finance Assistant

Jade Lister – Housing Worker for Ballina, Lismore and Nimbin

Alan Teague – Housing Worker for Evans Head, Byron Bay and Casino

Naomi Worrall – Housing Worker for Lismore

Ross Knox – Casual Housing Worker

Ann Lees – Housing Assistant, Applications, Front Desk

Tweed Office:

Gianna Rea – Housing Worker

Arian Schaap – Housing Worker

Helaine Hebb – Housing Assistant

Lismore Office:

Helen Maher – Housing Worker

Jenny Nichols – Housing Worker

Chantelle McGrory – Housing Assistant

EASTER BREAK

Friday, 10th April – Tuesday, 14th April

North Coast Community Housing Company will be closed from Friday, 10th April and will reopen on Tuesday, 14th April 2009. Please see below for emergency contact numbers during the Easter Break.

What constitutes an emergency:

If the hot water system stops working, blocked drains, water pipes burst, major water leak, the entire stove/even stops working, all lights are out in the property or inability to secure property. The contractor will ask you what the issue is and they will determine if it constitutes an emergency.

In the event of natural disasters, fire flood or hail, please call:-

- **SES** – 132 500
- **Country Energy** – 13 20 80
- **Police / Fire / Ambulance** – 000
- **Lifeline 24-hr counselling service** – 13 11 14



2009 NCCHC Bloomin' Beautiful Garden Competition

North Coast Community Housing Company and the Tenant Council invite all tenants to enter the 2009 "Bloomin' Beautiful Garden Competition".

Applications close on 1st September 2009.

Judging will take place in October 2009.

CATEGORIES

- ✿ Kid's Garden
- ✿ Restricted Space Garden
- ✿ Edible Garden
- ✿ Fragrant Garden
- ✿ Tenant Group Garden
- ✿ Household Garden

Prizes

*1st, 2nd, 3rd and
Highly Commended for
each category in the
Grafton, Tweed and
Lismore areas.*



I / We would like to enter the 2009 NCCH Bloomin' Beautiful Garden Competition.

Name/s:

Address:

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Phone:

I / We would like to enter the following Competition Categories:

(Remember, you can only enter in up to three (3) categories only)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kid's Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted Space Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edible Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Fragrant Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant Group Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Household Garden |

Please send entries to: NCCHC,
PO Box 145, Lismore NSW 2480

