

THE TENANTS VOICE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018



CEO Message

Welcome to the spring edition of the Tenants Voice Newsletter.

In August, many of our team members ventured down to chilly Canberra for the 2018 PowerHousing Member Exchange and Awards. With numerous discussions, networking events and think tank sessions, we contributed and gained insight to the housing sector and have been inspired by international and local experts in the field. As Chair of PowerHousing I enjoyed being at the centre of many of the sessions and promoting Hume whilst doing so.

It was an exceptionally interesting week to be at meetings in Parliament House. Our own Keelin was nominated for the PowerHousing Rising Stars award and participated in many networking activities with other nominees throughout the three days. Although she did not win, we are all extremely proud of the work Keelin does and are extremely grateful that she is on our team.

On the 10th August 2018, our Housing Options team camped out to sleep rough at the Nite Under the Stars event in Liverpool. Their passionate efforts led to the team raising \$1,400. The Hume Executive Team was so impressed that they decided to match the amount raised, bringing the total raised by Hume Housing to nearly \$3,000!

From all of the staff at Hume I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season and we look forward to working with you in 2019.



Sincerely,

Nicola Lemon
CEO Hume Housing

Residents went Treasure Hunting in Telopea

On Saturday, 16 September, our team along with Sylvia, Jason Q, Julie C, Siri and Poppy battled the wind and the heat to help out at the Telopea Community Fair.

We hosted a chill out zone and a treasure hunt, complete with Connect Four and community surveys.

More than 600 residents from Telopea and surrounding suburbs dropped by to see the puppet show, hear the police band, eat fairy floss, get their face painted and learn some circus skills.

Thank you to all who attended the Treasure Hunt in Telopea.



Rent Payments During the Holiday Break

Hume would like all our customers to enjoy the festive period and realise that it can be a difficult time when you are trying to balance your budget.

With the holidays just around the corner and the extra cost this brings, paying your bills is a worry that you can do without. However, paying your rent is the most important aspect of your tenancy with Hume whatever the time of year. Ensuring that you pay it on time gives you one less problem to think about.

It is important that your rent is paid on time and that your arrears do not increase as a result of delayed or non-payment. We cannot make special allowances and it is important that you budget for your rent over the next few weeks.

Our offices will be closed from 1pm 24th December and will re-open on Wednesday 2nd January 2019.

We may be closed but you can continue to pay your rent via Centrepay, at a local NAB bank, via internet banking or through BPAY.

Our account details are:

National Australia Bank – BSB 082 343
Account - 627952830
and your Tenant Code as a reference.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties our team of Income Recovery Officers can help you. Please contact:

- Julian - 02 9722 4311
- Debbie - 02 9722 4309
- Nara - 02 9722 4369
- Sheree - 02 9722 4313



Spring Clean

In the past few weeks Melanie one of our Neighbourhood officers has been holding workshops at different sites to educate the community on ways to recycle, reduce waste and extend the life of no longer wanted items.

Is it time to clean out your home?

Empty all the cupboards, wipe them down, grab a box and put items in that you no longer want or need.

You can sort them into four piles. One for recycling, one for donating, one for problem waste and one for rubbish.

Extend the life of your items

Extend the life of your items by donating them to friends, family or a local charity. Furniture, clothing, toys, and more can be donated. For more ideas visit your local council's website or call The Bower Reuse and Repair centre on 9568-6280 (The Bower is an environmental charity committed to reducing landfill).

Hang onto the bag! No plastic bags in the recycling bin

Ever wonder why your recycling bin isn't being picked up? Usually it is because it is contaminated. Contamination includes food,

clothing, furniture, and e-waste. Items that you place into your recycling bin need to go in loose and not in plastic bags. Remember you can recycle glass bottles and jars, cardboard and clean pizza boxes (remove any left overs), plastic bottles and containers, paper, newspapers and magazines, aluminium, steel and left over aerosol cans, cardboard cartons.

Return & Earn

Return and Earn is about different containers like bottles, cans and cartons that make up a large proportion of the litter in our neighbourhoods. So, not all containers are eligible for a Return and Earn refund but they can still be recycled through your household recycling collection. Most drinks containers between 150ml and 3 litres can get you a refund. They need to be in good condition (not broken or crushed), be empty and have the label attached. The containers can be made of glass, plastic, aluminium, steel or liquid paperboard (cartons). Find a return point near you and a container eligibility tool on <https://returnandearn.org.au>

If you have any questions about how Return and Earn works, have feedback about a return point or simply want to know more about locating and using the return points, contact the Customer Service Centre or **1800 290 691**.



Social Housing Rent Subsidy

Have your circumstances changed lately?

Hume conducts a rent subsidy review twice a year, however if your household circumstances change during the year, it is your responsibility to initiate a 'Change of Circumstances Rent Subsidy Review'.

You must always notify Hume if:

- someone leaves or joins your household
- you or another household member has a new baby
- you or another household member starts a new job or leaves a job
- you or another household member consistently work more hours and receives a pay increase of more than 10%
- you or another household member becomes entitled to a different type of pension. For example, Carer Payment instead of Newstart Allowance
- anything else changes that affects your household income and therefore your rent.

You must advise us within 21 days of the change occurring by completing a Rent Subsidy Application and providing your income documents.

If you do not advise us of an increase to your household income, we have the right to cancel your rent subsidy and backdate market rent charges.

To apply for a rent subsidy, you need to fill out the Rent Subsidy Application form as well as provide proof of income details for the last 12 weeks for yourself and all other household members aged 18 years and over.

To obtain an application form, come and see us at **7 Hamilton Road Fairfield or Level 4, 79 George Street in Parramatta.**

Cherry Blossom Festival

37 seniors from Fairfield, Liverpool, and Telopea set out with Sarithya in August to experience the Cherry Blossom Festival at the Auburn Botanical Gardens.

The seniors were in high spirits as they witnessed the beauty of the cherry blossoms and socialised with one another. Anne of Charles Street, Liverpool said that the event was “an interesting experience to see all the beautiful blossoms and taste food I never had before”.



Hume has a dedicated after hours contact centre

We are extremely excited to announce that Hume now has a dedicated after hours contact centre to assist us with our after hours calls and emergencies.

Our continued aim is to provide customer care to our valued customers and if there is an emergency repair required at your home we are able to ensure all emergency matters are rectified with minimal inconvenience & time.

You will no longer speak with an answering machine, there will be a dedicated person to answer your call.

We would like to remind you that our office hours are from:
9am to 5pm - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.
1pm to 5pm - Wednesday

Our General contact number is **02 9722 4300** and our Maintenance Line is **02 9727 0688**

What's coming up next?

- Cabramatta Community Room Weekly Wednesday, English Class
- YMCA Street Gym in Telopea Weekly Wednesdays through school term
- Tenants Voice visit recycling plant Mid October
- Parramatta Tenants Voice Meeting Wednesday, 17 October
- Employment and Resume Workshop Monday, 22 October
- CORE at the Miller Hub Mid November
- Tenants Voice visit water desalination plant Thursday, 8 November
- Sturt Street, Telopea Morning Tea Friday, 16 November
- Fairfield Tenants Voice Meeting Friday, 30 November
- Children and Families End of Year Celebration Wednesday, 12 December
- Tenants Voice Seniors Celebration Lunch Thursday, 13 December
- Shortland Street, Telopea Morning Tea Friday, 22 February
- Fairfield Tenants Voice Meeting Monday, 25 March

If you want to know more about any of these or other events come ask us!

Scooting into Telopea

Hume has been working with our partners in Telopea to come up with some effective ways to respond to the increasing drug, alcohol and incidents of violence experienced by young people.

On Wednesday, 19 September, Hume along with Hope Connect, Parramatta Council, YMCA and Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre hosted a drug and alcohol forum for young people and their families.

We had fifty residents attend, including five Hume customers and their children. All attendees walked away with movie vouchers and two lucky attendees won a scooter and helmet each, donated by Scooter Hut.

Resumes That Get Results

Write a cover letter

This should be no more than four to five short paragraphs responding directly to points on the job advertisement.



Keep it brief

A resume is a quick snapshot of your work history and skills, and a place to show off a select few achievements. The number of pages in your resume will depend on the role.

Keep it relevant

If you're applying for an accounting role for example and in between roles you had temped as a receptionist, there is no need to include the duties you performed as a receptionist. Instead, note that you temped as a receptionist between roles and move on to the relevant positions.

Make it easy to read

Use subheadings and headings so the reader can easily navigate it. Bold the important headings and underline or italic the sub headings underneath. Using a different colour for headings will help them stand out and catch the reader's eye.

Use correct grammar and spelling

Ensure that you read over the resume to check for errors and sentences that don't make sense. Get a friend to read over it if you want to double check.

Use simple layouts

Make it easy to read using a simple well-sized font and steering clear of tables. If you do use a table you should remove the borders for a much more professional look.

Be yourself

Ensure that you highlight your relevant strengths and show the reader what you can bring to the organisation.

Complaints, Compliments and Appeals



Hume is constantly looking at ways we can improve our customer service levels.

Come and see us at our Fairfield or Parramatta offices if you would like to know more.

How do I make a complaint?

If you would like to make a complaint about our services, then you are welcome to discuss it with a member of our staff.

After the initial discussion all customers of Hume are able to lodge a formal complaint if the informal procedure is not satisfactory or the issue at hand is of a serious nature and further investigation is required.

You can obtain a Complaints form from our Customer Service Officers either by coming into Fairfield or Parramatta or requesting one to be sent to you. You are also able to download a copy from our website www.humehousing.com.au

What happens next?

Your written complaint is added to our complaints register and you will be sent an acknowledgement letter within 48 hours of us receiving it.

Your complaint will be assigned to the appropriate manager and an investigation will be conducted.

You will be advised of the outcome in writing within 15 working days. The letter should explain clearly what we looked at to reach our decision and any policies and procedures that were considered.

If no policy or procedure has been breached or no improvements can be identified, we will explain that no further action will be taken and why.

Alternatively we may provide:

- An apology
- An explanation
- An assurance about future actions.
- Immediate change to how things are completed

If you are still not satisfied, then you can make a request to have your complaint reconsidered by a Senior Manager. You also have the right to lodge an appeal once the initial complaints procedure has been finalised.

Lodging an Appeal

If you are unhappy with a decision made as a result of the initial complaints process, then you can submit an appeal and we will review our decision.

You can obtain an Appeal form from our Customer Service Officers either by coming into Fairfield or Parramatta or requesting one be sent to you. You are also able to download a copy from our website www.humehousing.com.au.

Requesting an Independent Review

If you are still not satisfied with our internal complaints process then you may be able to lodge an appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC).

Further information can be obtained from www.hac.nsw.gov.au or from a Hume Housing Officer.

Compliments

We always welcome positive feedback on anything you think we are doing well and look forward to hearing your good news stories.



Call us on (02) 9722 4300 during the hours of:

Monday	9 am	–	5 pm
Tuesday	9 am	–	5 pm
Wednesday	1 pm	–	5 pm
Thursday	9 am	–	5 pm
Friday	9 am	–	5 pm