



Affordable Community Housing TENANT NEWS

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Head Office

6/75 Parramatta Rd
Silverwater NSW 2128
PO Box 7096
Silverwater NSW 1811

Phone: 8622 1500
Fax: 8622 1599

Email:
community@achl.org..au

Website:
www.achl.org.au

Office Hours:

Monday to Friday
9:00 am-4:30 pm

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Message from the CEO

I am pleased to advise you that Affordable Community Housing Ltd. (ACH) relocated its Head Office to Silverwater in November 2008.

This has been a very good move as it has allowed ACH to grow in the number of staff to work more closely with our tenants, as we are currently 29 staff. It has also promoted growth within the number of houses we manage; currently we have over 1,700 properties servicing 4,600 tenants across 16 Local Government areas.

In order to better service our tenants ACH has now opened four Local Tenant Zones located in Bankstown, Belmore, Blacktown and Wentworthville; and we have now increased the number of partnerships who will support out tenants to 42.

We are now the second largest housing provider organisation in NSW.

Other highlights of 2008 include :

- The tenant satisfaction of 96%;
- The 2008 NSW Awards for Excellence in Community Housing in 3 categories:
 - *“Commendation Overall Excellence in Community Housing”*,
 - *“Service to Tenants”* and
 - *“Tenant Participation”*

ACH is also pleased to announce that recently four new directors have joined our Board of directors; Cliff Haynes as Chairperson, David Mead, Bruce McDonald and Beata Kade. They replace Bob Mulcahy, Steve Lancken and Ian McHugh who recently resigned.

It is a very exciting time for the community housing section as the both Federal and State Government are gearing up for a huge investment into the sector. We are experiencing the largest social housing expenditure (over 3 years) in the history of Australia. In NSW there will be over \$2 billion and up to 9,000 new homes. A significant portion of these new dwellings is expected to come to the Community Housing sector with title.

At ACH, housing stress and its alleviation remains the key focus of our core business, while offering creative solutions that meet the needs of all stakeholders.



Bernie Murphy
CEO

Rent Review Reminder

ACH is currently assessing your rental subsidy (you would have received rent review documents in the mail).

We need you to provide us with your household's income information to enable us to calculate the amount of your rental subsidy entitlement.

If you do not provide requested information by 1st March 2009 you may be charged market rent.

Please contact your Housing Manager if there is any circumstance that prevents you from supplying your income details.

ACH Team

Since the merger ACH has welcomed the following staff:

Alicia Le Roux (Maintenance Coordinator), Linda Goff (Housing Manager), Lola Treadwell (Admin Assistant), Loretta Atkinson (Housing Manager), Maggie Lee (Financial Accountant), Maria Toalepailii (Housing Manager), Mary Thu Tran (Housing Manager), Melinda Webb, (Admin Assistant), Peter Allotta (Asset Manager) and Stacey Zhang (Bookkeeper).

Other changes in the team include: Geovannella Lopez is an Access/Housing Assistance and Maritza Taylor is a Maintenance Coordinator.

ACH remains committed to providing you with a high standard of service delivery and looks forward to keep working along with you.

Local Tenant Zones (LTZs)

In each Local Tenant Zones you can discuss/avail of the following services:

- Tenancy issues, lodge rent review forms, rent & non-rent arrears issues;
- Collect keys for inspection of properties, collect and lodge application forms; and
- Rehousing applications, sign up of new tenancies, appeals & complaints.

Bankstown

Housing Managers:

1. Helen Ho
2. Loretta Atkinson
3. Cheryl Barrett

Address:

42-44 Leonard St
Bankstown

Days: Wednesdays and Thursdays(9:00 AM— 4:30 PM)

Tel: 8622 1512, 8622 1507, 8622 1509



Canterbury

Housing Manager:

Robert Costa

Address: 438 Burwood Rd
Belmore

Days: Mondays (*by appointment*)

Tel: 8622 1510

Email: Robert@achl.org.au



Blacktown

Housing Manager:

Andrew

Address: 151 Reservoir Rd
Blacktown

Days: Mondays (*by appointment*)

Tel: 8622 1506

Email: Andrew@achl.org.au



Wentworthville

Housing Manager:

1. Adam Cunningham
2. Mary Thu Tran

Address: 88 Station St Wentworthville

Days: Wednesdays & Thursdays (*by appointment*)

Tel: 8622 1505, 8622 1508

Email: Adam@achl.org.au

Parramatta and Auburn LGAs are not in operation as yet—details will be advised at later date

Rent Matters

ACH would like to emphasise the importance of paying your rent and non-rent charges on time. Rent arrears have the potential of affecting the way we run our business with our tenants and the community. For this reason, ACH wants to encourage all tenants to keep up to date with their rent payment.

If you struggle paying your rent on time or are already behind, you can take advantage of the \$900.00 stimulus package that you will receive from

the Federal Government to arrange your rent repayments.

To receive free financial counselling please contact:

- Credit & Debt Hotline on 1800 808 488
- Creating Links on 8713 7700
- Salvation Army Money Care on 9787 5375
- Mission Australia on 9718 8093

Rent Increase—New Rent Policy

For those who have already received their new rent assessment, you will notice that there is a substantial increase in your weekly rent. This is due to the government new rent policy.

Under the new policy, Affordable Community Housing is required to get 100% of the rent assistance for *new tenants*.

For existing tenants, you will notice that most of the new rent increase will be covered by the higher rate of rent assistance that you are entitled from Centrelink. If there is any effect in your income (after housing income) it will not be more than \$10 per week.

How to get additional rent assistance? You will need to show Centrelink your new rent subsidy documents. They will adjust your rent assistance entitlement .

You might be required by Centrelink to complete a Rent Certificate form (Affordable Community Housing does not need to confirm or sign this document, you just need to show them the rent subsidy documents – evidencing your new rent).

If you need further information please discuss this with your Housing Manager.

Dealing with Social Isolation

We are pleased to introduce community initiative program to reduce social isolation and depression, through a series of craft classes for tenants of any age who struggle with depression or who find themselves with limited social contact.

Participants will be able to enhance their social skills, as well as learn creative and practical living skills, in a safe, friendly and fun environment that will address their social needs for connection and promote a sense of belonging within the community. This project is funded by the Bankstown City Council.

On Wednesdays for 6 weeks
Starting on 22nd April
Finishing on 3rd June
From 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM
(No classes on 6th May)

Venue:
at ACH office
6/75 Parramatta Road
Silverwater NSW 2128

Light Refreshments

Craft Classes Enrolment Form

Due to popular demand, ACH is running again Craft Classes. If you want to enroll for the craft classes, please fill in the form below and return it to our office either in person or by mail no later than **Monday 13th April**. Alternatively, you can enroll by contacting Silvana on 8622 1500 during business hours.

Note: Places are limited. So first in, first served. You will be contacted to confirm your enrolment.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone/Mobile: _____

Award To Staff



On 4th December 2008 the Australian Housing Institute presented Silvana Guerra, Community Development Officer, the award of "Outstanding Contribution to Change – A Resident Led Initiative".

This award reflects her valuable contribution and dedication of working hand in hand with the Tenant Council.

Paying Rent By Cheque

If you pay rent by cheque or by money order please ensure that you clearly write your name and address at the back of the envelope in order to identify who the payee is

ACH invites you to our:

Health Forum



Learn about:

1. Depression & Anxiety
2. Schizophrenia



**Free
halal
lunch**

When? Wednesday 6th May 2009 from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

Where? At Bankstown Council Chambers (Roundhouse)
corner of Chapel Rd and The Mall between
Bankstown Hall Function and Paul Keating Park

RSVP by Monday 27th April by calling the office on 8622 1500

Proudly
Supported by:

ACH Tenant Council
Canterbury Community Health Centre
Schizophrenia Fellowship Foundation
Affordable Community Housing Limited

Sponsored By:

Bankstown City Council

Have Your Details Changed?

Have you recently changed your telephone or mobile number? If so, you can contact the office on 8622 1500 advising us of your new contact details.

Alternatively, you can fill in the form below and return it to our office either in person or by mail to:
PO Box 7096 Silverwater NSW 1811

Name:

Address:

New Telephone/Mobile Number:
