

In House

A newsletter for tenants of St Kilda Community Housing

JUNE 2016



SCH Photography Exhibition

Opening Night: 6 pm, Thursday 21 July

Gasworks Arts Park, 21 Graham Street, Albert Park

Looking Snappy

It's that time of the year again when the talented members of our SCH photography group showcase their work. This year has seen our biggest group to date – with a dozen regulars. And once again we offered the program to residents of Port Phillip Housing Association as part of a broader partnership between the two organisations.

You are warmly invited to the opening of the exhibition – contact your housing manager if you need assistance with transport.

Bring on the Barbeques!

In the last edition of the newsletter we told you about our success in obtaining a grant through the Federal Government's **Stronger Communities Program** to refurbish the bathrooms at Mitchell Street. More recently, we were again invited by our local member of parliament, Michael Danby, to apply for round two of the grants. Applications closed at the end of April, and this time around we requested funding for the installation of permanent electric barbeques at three of our properties for the use of individual residents and the social meals program. Our application passed the first hurdle

– which was to gain approval from Michael Danby's office - and it has now been submitted to the Federal Department of Infrastructure. We await a response; in the meantime, the actual funds have come through for the bathroom upgrades, and work has begun on the first of these.

Still, there's no resting on our laurels – SCH has also applied to the City of Port Phillip to cover the cost of some portable vegetable gardens which would enable residents to produce their own food. We'll keep you posted as to how these applications go.

Summer Rain

*Does the wall tickle when there's a trickle from a
summer storm?
Day in day out, it's so elemental
So trickles down, the warm summer rain down the
wall
Outside buckets, rain cooling from the heat
Large uncomfortable cotton balls of humidity droops
lower
Now freedom from it feasts
Yes the warm summer rain is tropically cool-licious
But the drip drip drip
Where? Where ? where?
Drips bounce, knee's jump
Check closer nearer to the sound
At the tops of the wall, where the cracks serve
As the outside storm pounds
And heaven's load flares down
Is it caring? Or just sharing?*

In the near future:

*Signs entering Melbourne will say
"Tropical Melbourne without the crocodiles"*

Underneath:

Monsoon season turn around !

Is our atmosphere evolving ?

Interesting? Maybe boring?

*But for now I shall wipe the trickling tears from my
eye's { I wish }*

With a tickle cloth {also wish }

Oh the wall

But the summer rain is so very good for now

And it does get the dust off one's knee's !

Sean Batchelor

Social Meals

In the last newsletter we said goodbye to former social meals supremo, Maggie Mildenhall. Now we say hello to Ernie Austin, who has taken her place. Many of you may have met Ernie as he has already "been around" – preparing and sharing social meals in most of the houses where the program is running. The feedback from residents about the social meals program, which offers a fortnightly group meal and good company, has been fantastic. We look forward to continuing its expansion. This year we received financial assistance from the Kilfera Foundation to help run the program, while the R. E. Ross Trust provided funds for equipment.



Maintenance problems?

If you have a maintenance issue that occurs during office hours, call Trevor on 9534 1809. He'll take down all your details and arrange for someone to come and look at the problem. If the problem is urgent, it'll be fixed within 24 hours. Other jobs will take longer. If the problem occurs on public holidays, weekends or after hours, please call the after-hours number: 1300 311 342.

From the General Manager's Desk

Annual Rent Rise

From July we are increasing rents by \$5 per week for residents on Newstart, and \$8 for all others. This year we have brought these rent increases into line with the organisation's financial year, which is why they are a little earlier than usual.

You should have received a rent increase notice a couple of months ago. Some residents will be eligible for additional Commonwealth Rent Assistance and this will lessen the amount of rent you will pay. SCH has advised Centrelink of this rent increase and the increase in CRA should automatically be adjusted for you. If you think you are not receiving additional CRA, discuss this with your housing manager.

Just a reminder that if your income varies, you should advise us as soon as possible so that we can adjust your rent accordingly.

Coming Soon: the Statewide Housing Register

The state government is soon to introduce a combined register of all social housing agencies, of which we are one. From later this year all allocations (vacancies and transfers) to our housing will be drawn from this single, common list.

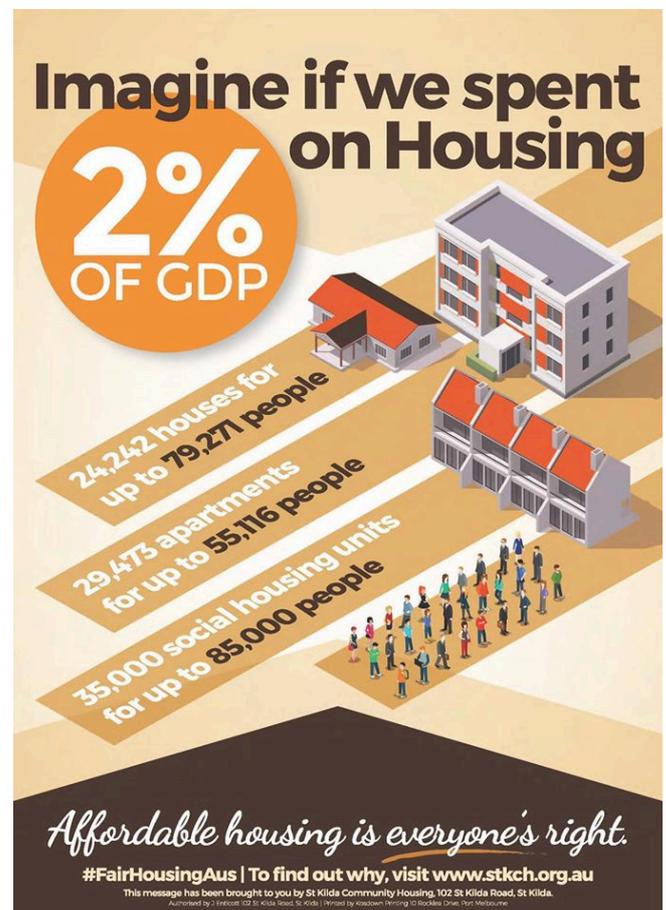
To enable this to happen all new applicants for transfer will need to be registered. Housing managers will be in contact over the coming months to complete registrations. If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please discuss them with your housing manager.

and Finally. . . the Federal Election!

July 2 is the polling day for the Federal Election. You can vote earlier if you need to, or won't be able to on the date. St Kilda Community Housing has a couple of election campaigns under way. One campaign centres around the abolition of negative gearing for investment properties, and one calls on the federal government to allocate 2% of gross domestic product (the equivalent of our Defence budget) to the social housing sector.

Remember- if you fail to vote you might be fined, if you don't have a reasonable explanation. Talk to your housing manager if you need assistance to get to a polling booth.

John Enticott, General Manager



Our 2% of GDP election poster.



Do you have ideas about how your housing could be improved? Are you interested in sharing your views about how St Kilda Community Housing delivers its services? Would you like to discuss better ways of doing things? If so, we'd like to hear from you!

When we collated the feedback from last year's tenant satisfaction survey, one of the most common responses to the question "What do you think we can do to improve our service?" was that you would like to see a Tenant Advisory Group (or TAG) established. Well, we've taken you at your word and are now setting up such a group, which will give tenants the opportunity to provide input on the services that SCH provides, and how they could be improved. We expect that the TAG will meet on a quarterly basis.

We are now calling for expressions of interest from residents who would like to get involved in our TAG. If you see the need for better communication within SCH and have good ideas, then please set aside a few hours per month to contribute to this important forum for tenants and managers.

Nominate by email: mleveratt@stkch.org.au, or call the office on 9534 1809 and leave your contact details, or speak to your Housing Manager directly - if you would like to be on the TAG team! Expressions of interest will be open until Friday 22 July.

Perfect Jacket Potato



Preparation: 5 mins Cook: 1hr Serves: 1

Ingredients

- 50g light soft cheese (eg cream cheese)
- A squeeze of lemon juice
- 1 hot-smoked salmon fillet (from supermarket)
- 1 heaped tsp capers
- A little lemon zest
- 1 big baking potato, rubbed with oil

Method

Heat oven to 220C/200C. Fan bake the whole potato for 25 mins, then turn down the oven to 190C/170C fan and bake for a further 1 hour until the potato is soft and the skin crisp OR prick potato with a fork, wrap in kitchen paper and microwave on High for 8-10 mins until soft. For crisp skin, rub with oil, then turn quickly under a hot grill.

Slice a cross in the potato's centre & squeeze the base to 'pop' the top. For the filling, mix 50g light soft cheese with a squeeze of lemon juice, salt and pepper. Pile into the jacket potato & flake 1 hot-smoked salmon fillet on top. Sprinkle with 1 heaped tsp capers and lemon zest. If you don't like salmon try grated cheese, grated carrot and sour light cream with spring onion sprinkled on top.



ST.KILDA
Community Housing

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