



The Tenant's Voice

CEO Message

February was a significant month for Hume Housing as we celebrated the official opening of our new developments in Guildford and Warwick Farm.

Both events marked the achievement of a lot of hard work by Hume staff and support partners and the creation of homes for 33 families. Work continues on our brand new construction at Hamilton Road in Fairfield and I am delighted to see the construction taking shape.

Not only will it house Hume staff in new offices but it will provide much needed affordable accommodation to the Fairfield area. If you would like to check on our progress we have a time lapse camera set up at the following link: hume.netcam.net.au

Earlier this year we received the results from the Annual Customer Service Survey that was conducted in late 2016. While the new construction projects may be exciting, we acknowledge that we need to deliver high quality service to our existing Hume customers.

The results indicated that there are a few areas that require our attention in order to improve on satisfaction levels. Areas of concern that are being addressed include how we can improve on our overall repairs and maintenance service and how we handle your complaints.

We also acknowledge that it can be difficult to contact our office during busy periods. There are many ways to reach us and I invite you to attend our Parramatta Office at Level 4 79 George St with any queries or send us an email at hume@humecha.com.au

If you would like to become more involved with Hume and help improve our service levels from a customer perspective, there are currently opportunities available to join our Tenants Voice Committee. Details are included in this newsletter and we welcome your participation.

Sincerely,

Nicola Lemon
CEO
Hume Housing



Hume Opens Two New Housing Developments

In February Hume officially opened two new housing developments designed to support people on low to moderate incomes by providing safe and affordable housing.

An event showcasing our \$8.5 million dollar Social Housing development in Guildford was held on the 2nd February and was attended by Senator Doug Cameron, Tania Mihailuk MP, Dr Geoff Lee MP, board members, staff and customers.

Senator Cameron acknowledged "This development of 21 social housing units will provide safe, secure homes for people from different cultural backgrounds, people who have been homeless, people who have suffered from domestic violence and people who have made the transition from Supported Housing".

"It represents a milestone for Hume Community Housing Association, as it is Hume's first design and construct development" and assists with relieving the pressure on the social housing waiting list.

On the 22nd February 2017 Federal Member for Fowler Chris Hayes, along with Hume's Chairman Robert Vine and CEO Nicola

Lemon opened our new development of 10 townhouses and 4 villas in Gallop Street, Warwick Farm.

This development incorporates a mixture of social and affordable housing and includes an adaptable platinum standard unit for customers with disabilities.

The addition of these homes will assist in reducing the shortfall of affordable housing in the Liverpool area and will provide accommodation for more than 35 customers.

The Guildford and Warwick Farm developments are a good example of what can be achieved when Community Housing, government and service providers work together to achieve a common goal.

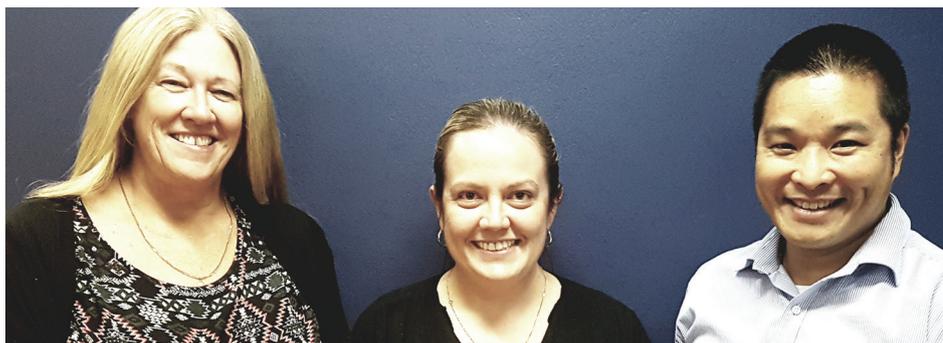
If you would like to apply for a current vacancy, be placed on our wait-list for upcoming vacancies or are interested in learning more about Hume's developments, please contact our Housing Options team on **02 9722 4370** or via email housing.options@humecha.com.au



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INTRODUCING: Humes New Customer Service Team Leader



Income Recovery Team: Debbie Doggett, Sheree Bernal, Julian Yuen

Sheree Bernal started work at Hume in February as our new Customer Service Team Leader. As part of her role she is responsible for supervising the Customer Service Officers at Fairfield and Parramatta and also our Income Recovery Team.

With a background in Performance Management in the finance industry she has over 10 years experience in ensuring service levels are being met and continuously improved.

As part of her role she will also be managing an Income Recovery portfolio. If you have fallen behind in your rent, water, bond or maintenance payments you can expect a call or letter from Sheree, or Income Recovery Officers Julian and Debbie.

All three officers are available to speak to any of our customers experiencing financial difficulty and they can provide budgeting or referrals to aid agencies if needed.

You can contact the team on:

☎ Sheree – 02 9722 4313
✉ sheree.bernal@humecha.com.au

☎ Julian – 02 9722 4311
✉ Julian.yuen@humecha.com.au

☎ Debbie – 02 9722 4309
✉ Debbie.doggett@humecha.com.au



Social Housing Rent Subsidy

Have your circumstances changed lately?

Hume Housing 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 Housing 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 Level 1, 119 The Crescent in Fairfield or Level 4, 79 George Street in Parramatta.

The Importance Of Paying Your Rent On Time

As a customer of Hume and under the terms of your Residential Tenancy Agreement you are required to pay your rent in full and on time. Your account must also be 14 days advance to your next payment.

To avoid getting behind in your rent:

- Have your rent paid to us directly from your benefit by Centrepay
- Set up a direct deposit from your bank account to our of a weekly OR fortnightly basis
- Set Hume up as a biller on BPAY and pay online or over the phone

It is your responsibility to check that the correct amount is being paid to your account – even if you have given us authority to check or amend your Centrepay payments. If for any reason you are finding it hard to keep up with your rent payments then you need to contact us straight away.

Our Income Recovery team are required to send out reminder letters if you fall behind in your payments.

We will always try and help you to find a solution to sustain your tenancy with us - by discussing your situation and setting up repayment plans when needed. It is only where you won't allow us to help you that we will take further action.

Come in and speak to one of the team at our Fairfield Office at Level 1, 119 The Crescent or call us to book an appointment for our Parramatta Office.

Do you have a repair to report?

You can call our Maintenance Team direct on ☎ 02 9727 0688 or send us an email to ✉ repairs@humecha.com.au



Join the Tenants Voice Committee

Tenant's Voice is a customer advisory group that circulates between three different locations; Parramatta, Fairfield and Liverpool. This group provide a platform for customers to address housing issues, safety concerns, antisocial behaviour, work on group projects, volunteer for different events, review policies and procedure, chose social club events and meet some great people.

If you are interested in attending, contact **Jason Newton at Hume Housing on 9722 4329**.

2017 Dates:

19 Apr	- Parramatta Office Boardroom	5:30pm - 7:30pm
19 May	- Fairfield Office Boardroom	10:30am - 1pm
21 June	- Liverpool Library	12:30 - 2:30pm
19 July	- Parramatta Office Boardroom	5:30pm - 7:30pm
18 Aug	- Fairfield Office Boardroom	10:30am - 1pm
20 Sept	- Liverpool Library	12:30pm - 2:30pm
18 Oct	- Parramatta Office Boardroom	5:30pm - 7:30pm
17 Nov	- Fairfield Office Boardroom	10:30am - 1pm
15 Dec	- End of Year Meeting – Fairfield RSL	10:30am - 1pm

Address:

- **Parramatta Office:** 4/79 George Street, Parramatta
- **Fairfield Office:** 1/119 The Crescent, Fairfield
- **Liverpool Library:** 170 George Street, Liverpool

** All customers will be reminded via SMS pending on which LGA you are closest too.*

Mental Health First Aid Courses

All MHFA courses we offer are FREE for Hume Housing customers. You can usually expect to pay between **\$60 to \$275** per person to be accredited by other organisations. This course will provide you with the tools and knowledge to help those around your living with a mental illness or experiencing a crisis. To learn more about MHFA you can visit: www.mhfa.com.au.

If you are interested in attending these future courses or would like further information please call **Jason Newton on 9722 4300 or by email on jason.newton@humecha.com.au**

2017 Dates:

13 + 20 May	- 15 Sturt Street (Community Room)	10am to 4pm
14 + 21 July	- Liverpool (Exact location pending)	10am to 4pm
29 Sept	- Claymore (Exact location pending)	10am to 4pm
6 Oct	- Claymore (Exact location pending)	10am to 4pm

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- **Parramatta Office:** 4/79 George Street, Parramatta
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Customer Participation Needed

Home Energy Efficiency Project

Hume's Home Energy Efficiency Project has progressed. The funding agreement was signed last year and the project management plan has recently been approved by the funding agency, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

- The project is funded by OEH to implement energy efficient upgrades to a limited number of properties.
- Upgrades include; solar, insulation, fans, water heaters, LED lighting.

Hume is still recruiting a customer involvement panel. We are keen to hear from customers willing to attend regular monthly meetings and be involved in planning and evaluating the procurement, installation and reporting stages of the project.

Interested customers please contact the project manager, Paul Riordan at paul.riordan@humecha.com.au or **0418 921 659**.

Interested In Exploring Your Local Community?

Hume Community Housing Association is partnering with Liverpool City Council to organise a series of Liverpool Discovery Tours in **April, June, August, October** and **December**. Open for Hume customers and their friends and family, trips will be arranged to places of interest in the area.

If you would like to join us or have a suggestion on where we can go then contact **Community Cohesion Officer Sarithya Tuy** by email at sarithya.tuy@humecha.com.au or phone **0438 095 950**.



Complaints, Compliments and Appeals

Hume Housing constantly looks at ways in which we can improve our customer service levels. Our recent survey results indicated that many of you may not understand how the complaints process works.

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

How do I make a complain?

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 be sent to you. You are also able to download a copy from our website www.humecha.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

I'm still not happy with the outcome. What can I do now?

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.humecha.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.

Disability Care Training

With the NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS), being rolled out by June 2018 in NSW and 2020 across the rest of Australia, creating 70,000 new jobs.

Have you thought about a career in supporting people with a disability?

Hume wants to understand how many of our tenants would like the opportunity to gain training in the certificate 3 course in Disability Care.

Once completed this would allow you to gain employment in the disability care sector. Jobs would include supporting people living in their home, helping people to be independent in their lives i.e. taking them shopping, helping them with travel etc.

This is a very rewarding career and once you have received the training (12 months) Hume has a large number of partners that will have roles to fill.

If you are interested email us at hume@humecha.com.au by the 30th April 2017.

Hume will then review the numbers to see what support or funding we can gain to allow you to receive the training at no cost or heavily discounted rates.

Having Difficulty Contacting Us

Our phone system is being upgraded and we know some calls are not getting through.

We are working very hard to fix the problem as soon as we can.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

Get help using these ways to contact us:

- To request Repairs or Maintenance, email us at repairs@humecha.com.au
- For General Enquiries email us at hume@humecha.com.au
- Message us on **0447 301 433** leaving your name and contact number
- Ask for your Hume Officers mobile number or check our website on www.humecha.com.au