

# Tag Newsletter

December 2012 / 7th Edition

[www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au)

## 2012 Tenant Survey Results



*In the last TAG newsletter we reported the overall results about tenant satisfaction. Now that the results have been analysed, it's time to give you the full report.*

### ABOUT THE SURVEY

We asked a group of tenants to review and re-write the survey questions – to make sure they were clear and relevant before sending it out.

We asked all boarding house tenants (163 people at the time of the survey), a random sample (20%) of community housing tenants (203 people at the time of the survey) and all National Rental Assistance Scheme (NRAS) and Stimulus tenants (217 tenants at the time of the survey).

45 people (28%) from the boarding houses responded

149 people (35%) from the sample of housing tenants responded

That means we had an overall response rate of 33%, 194 people, which is considered very good compared to similar surveys. 'Member surveys' generally get a response rate of around 25%-45%.

### WHAT YOU TOLD US

**“Overall, 93% of survey participants were satisfied or very satisfied with their accommodation.”**



### Snapshot of boarding house tenants

- 91% were satisfied to very satisfied with their current accommodation
- 98% found that their contact with Unity staff were positive
- 93% were satisfied to very satisfied with the way maintenance is handled
- 95% were satisfied to very satisfied with the information and services provided by Unity
- 92% were satisfied to very satisfied with Unity staff visits to their property
- 87% were happy with the way in which Unity dealt with their problems or complaints
- 91% reported that they understood their rights and responsibilities as tenants under the Residential Tenancies Act and Unity's policies

### Snapshot of housing tenants

- 94% were satisfied to very satisfied with their current accommodation
- 91% found that their contact with Unity staff were positive
- 89.5% were satisfied to very satisfied with the way maintenance is handled
- 93.5% were satisfied to very satisfied with the information and services provided by Unity
- 98% were satisfied to very satisfied with Unity staff visits to their property
- 91% were happy with the way in which Unity dealt with their problems or complaints
- 95% reported that they understood their rights and responsibilities as tenants under the Residential Tenancies Act and Unity's policies

# 2012 TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

There were four key areas where you said we need to improve our game. Thank you for letting us know. The full recommendations from the survey are still being considered. When they are finalised, we will include a summary in the next TAG.

### 1. MAINTENANCE

A number of people mentioned that they would like to see improvements to aspects of the maintenance process. Unity is currently reviewing this including the notice before a tradesperson or Unity staff members arrives on your doorstep.

**"Tenants need to be given plenty of notice when a contractor is coming to make repairs."**

### 2. REPORTING PROBLEMS, DISPUTES, COMPLAINTS OR FEEDBACK

Tenants need a clear, systematic and easy way to provide feedback – whether it's a complaint or a compliment. Unity put a new process in place in July and since then about 110 people have used it. The article on the following page explains more about the process.

### 3. COMMUNICATION

A few tenants said they would like to see more frequent and different methods of communication. For the moment Unity will use letters to communicate about things like scheduling repairs and maintenance or house inspections.

But there are plans to improve communication and engagement across the board. Unity has developed a Community Engagement and Participation Framework and is currently drawing up plans to put it into practice.

The first cab off the rank in the new plan is to produce the TAG newsletter three times a year from 2013 – and we'll be looking to you for input.

If you have an interest in investigating and writing stories for the TAG, please contact Anna, Project Officer, Community Connect on 8237 8786 or at [a.minges@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:a.minges@unityhousing.org.au)

### 4. AIR-CONDITIONING AND HEATING IN COMMUNITY HOUSING

Unfortunately, Unity's funding model doesn't stretch to heating and cooling. However, feedback from community housing tenants is interesting, 67% of community housing tenants said that they would be willing to pay a fee. Unity is researching a new scheme where tenants could pay a fee for air-conditioning and heating.

Thanks to all of you who participated in the survey.



Matthew Woodward  
Unity Chief Executive



## RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT BILL

On Wednesday, October 31st, the Minister for Business Services and Consumers, the Hon. John Rau, presented a Bill to the South Australian House of Assembly to amend the Residential Tenancies Act of 1995.

You can find a copy of the bill at [www.legislation.sa.gov.au](http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au)

## REAL ST ART - STORY CREDITS

The last edition of the TAG Newsletter featured a story about REAL ST ART at The Terrace. What we forgot to say is that the photos were provided by Darrin Riddle and the paintings were done by Helen Agius, Julie Cutts and Darrin.

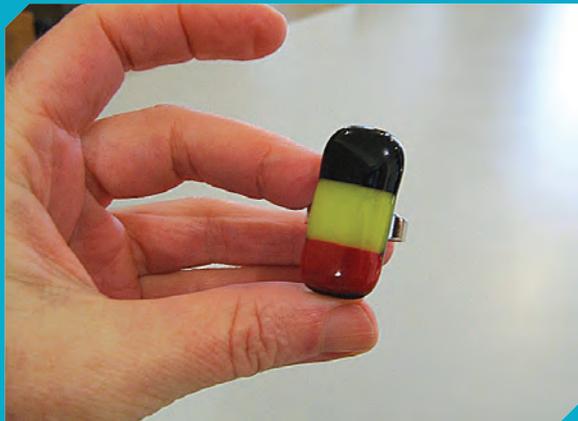
We apologise for leaving that information out and a big thanks to all the artists who participated and to Darrin for the photos.



## GLASS WORKSHOP AT GILLES LODGE

Two glass art workshops were held at Gilles Lodge, a Unity women's boarding house in the city, in October. The project was funded through the Community Arts Network SA.

Glass artist, Jennifer Taylor, led sessions to learn glass design and glass cutting to make jewellery or glass dishes. Participants created their own work which Jennifer fired in a kiln to harden the finished product.



# Feedback for us

## UNITY WELCOMES COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

In July 2012 Unity put a new complaints and feedback process in place and produced a brochure which explains all the details. The new process ensures that you will be heard because there is a written record of your complaint. When someone makes an informal verbal complaint, it's very easy to forget the details. Unity then has accurate written records which we can monitor over time. This shows us exactly where we need to focus our efforts at improvement.

There are four ways to make a complaint or give *feedback*

- by post
- by fax
- online at [www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au)
- in person – all boarding houses and Unity offices have feedback boxes
- call Unity for assistance with the process or have a brochure sent to you – 8237 8777

Our promise to *you*

- all complaints will be acknowledged within five business days of being lodged
- all complaints will be investigated within 15 business days once it is received
- you will be contacted regarding the outcome within five business days once the investigation is complete

If you need help or an interpreter, talk to a member of the Unity staff. If you would like to discuss the process, please contact your Housing Officer or their Regional Manager as below.

### Northern region -

Adrianna Burnes-Nguyen  
on 8287 8600

### City or NRAS properties -

Jo Maloney on 8237 8777

### Southern region -

Carole Strong on 8198 1600

### Boarding houses -

Jane Wrigley or Danielle Wakefield on 8232 5459



# TOP FIVE FREE

activities for a fun and healthy summer



## 2 West end Xmas Arts Market

Sunday 16th December 2012  
12 noon to 10pm on Leigh Street,  
in Adelaide's west end.



## 1 Creating the Christmas Pageant Magic: 80 years on Exhibition

8 December to 27 January 2013

Artspace Gallery and Festival Theatre foyer

The exhibitions will be filled to the brim with pageant paraphernalia and historic anecdotes reliving the magic behind Adelaide's internationally renowned Christmas Pageant. Emerging from the Great Depression in 1933, the Christmas Pageant spirit is alive and well bringing enjoyment across generations.

## 3 Visit the Adelaide South West Community Centre

171 Sturt Street 8212 3533

Open: Mon-Fri from 9am-5pm

*The Centre will be closed from 19 December,  
reopening 9 January 2013.*

### Borrow books, videos and puzzles

These have been donated by the community. Eventually items are passed onto other groups or participants at the Centre so that we continue to have different books, videos and puzzles available.

### Borrow equipment and tools

The Centre is able to assist with lending a variety of items including a folding machine, urn, kitchen and gardening items, petanque balls, a sack truck, electric drill and a small range of tools, a wheel barrow, a home energy toolkit, a fruit preserving kit, basketballs, a portable PA system and a data projector. Please bring formal identification at the time of borrowing.

### Community Access Computers

There are three public access computers which are integrated with the Library and Customer Services computers and provide up to two hours per day of access for ACC Library members and up to one hour a day for visitors. The Centre is a Wifi site.

### Exhibitions

The Centre displays works of art on its walls and also in a display cabinet for special items of interest. There is a new exhibition every 6 weeks or so and this provides the opportunity for budding and established artists to show their work. These Exhibitions help to create a welcoming atmosphere and often provide the focus for people visiting the Centre. The community also benefits from having an additional local gallery.

# 4

## Shepherd's Hill Recreation Park

*Shepherd's Hill Recreation Park is located 11km south of Adelaide. Access is via Ayliffes Road, St Marys and Ellis Avenue, Eden Hills.*

*Open: Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*

The Park features an old railway tunnel and the remains of a viaduct. It offers 360 degree views of the surrounding Adelaide plains, coastline and hills.

A bicycle jumps track, a pony club and an archery range are also located in the park.

The park supports a variety of wildlife habitats. Be on the look out for the blue wrens, black-faced cuckoo-shrikes and the occasional falcon as you walk beside the creeks that weave through the park.

You can walk your dog in this park provided it remains under your control on a lead.

# Being safe at the beach

Surf Lifesaving SA has three beach safety events this summer.

'On the Same Wave' is a free educational event for new arrivals to Australia, migrants and international students, which will provide a greater understanding of the fun and the danger of a day at the beach. Aimed at 12-18 year olds, it's heaps of fun and helps everybody enjoy summer. But be quick – there are only three dates in December. If you would like to join in the fun, call Steven at 8354 6900.



## Carisbrooke Reserve in Salisbury

# 5

Main North Road, Salisbury Park SA 5109

Bus Route, stop 52 Main North Road, southeast side

Bus routes 228, 228S, 228F and 430

*Open: Sun up to sunset, 7 days a week*

This is the first in a series of reserves at Salisbury Park that are linked by the Little River and its walking trails. It is a large, fully grassed reserve features shade cloth covered junior playgrounds as well as picnic positions and barbeques that are well shaded by trees.

Paths and footbridges cross the river into Boundary Park. On the Carisbrooke side the paths very quickly lead past canoe-cut trees to the Harry Bowey Reserve which is home to many barbeques and sporting options.

Multiple trail options on both sides of the river assist access for those using wheelchairs. Dogs are welcome on leads.



## THE CHEAPEST PLACE FOR SUPER FRESH FRUIT AND VEG

Open Sunday from 6am to 1pm  
Located on the banks of the Port River (Moorhouse Road), the Torrens Island Market is operated by 40 stall holders who sell fruit and vegetables direct from farms.

The produce is local and therefore much fresher – and by purchasing direct from the grower, you're supporting local small business.

*Our website pick*

The playground finder  
[www.playgroundfinder.com](http://www.playgroundfinder.com)

Use this site to find all the playgrounds near you!



## BEAT THE HEAT

- keep out of the heat – look for shade and wear a hat
- drink enough water
- cool your home naturally – close windows and doors and close the blinds during the daytime
- talk to your doctor if you think the heat is causing you health problems
- check on people who might struggle in the heat – like older people and young children
- help people who are feeling unwell – get them out of the heat and give them water



## SAVE \$155 PER YEAR ON YOUR ELECTRICITY BILL

The embertec is a special device that you plug into your appliances. It turns them off when you're not using them, saving you money. They are FREE and each household is eligible to have up to four.

All you have to do is call Tony from EcoVantage on 0401 690 972 or [ajfcollins@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ajfcollins@ozemail.com.au) and he'll come to your home to install the embertec. For more info: [www.embertec.com](http://www.embertec.com)

## DECEMBER AND JANUARY RENT

Christmas is a great time of year and a busy time, too.

We understand that it can be an expensive time and unfortunately we see many tenants get behind in their rent and then struggle to catch up. It is important that rent is made a priority for your benefit. Losing your home leads to many difficulties.

Please make sure you keep your rent payments on track through December and January.

It might help to start paying a little extra every week/fortnight now with your rent payments to build up some credit before the busy season starts.

We all want to enjoy Christmas; let's make it as stress free as possible.

### Central

9 Claxton Street Adelaide, SA 5000  
Phone: (08) 8237 8777  
Fax: (08) 8237 8700  
[admin@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:admin@unityhousing.org.au)  
[www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au)  
Emergency Maintenance 0414 829 690

### South

1/506 Brighton Road, Brighton 5048  
Phone: (08) 8198 1666  
Fax: (08) 8296 7705  
[south@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:south@unityhousing.org.au)  
Emergency Maintenance 0414 829 690

### North

179B Phillip Highway Elizabeth South, SA 5112  
PO Box 1195 Elizabeth Vale SA 5112  
Phone: (08) 8287 8600  
Fax: (08) 8287 6155  
[north@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:north@unityhousing.org.au)  
Emergency Maintenance 0423 781 840

### The Terrace Boarding House

South Terrace Adelaide, SA 5000  
Phone: (08) 8232 5459  
Fax: (08) 8232 4582  
[theterrace@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:theterrace@unityhousing.org.au)

