

Winter 2018

Building Strong Communities

## Welcome to our first tenant newsletter as HousingFirst.



CEO - Haleh Homaei

Crisp frosty mornings, rugged up evenings in front of the heater, winter is well and truly here. So it's time for Home News – the winter issue.

The results are in! The tenant satisfaction survey results that is. We are now undertaking these surveys annually to track how you think we are doing. So in this issue of Home News, we share the results and our plans to address the concerns you have raised.

We had a mostly positive result this year. Thank you for taking the time and filling out the surveys with so much care and passion, after all it's your views and opinions we need, to make sure we do

even better next year. The main areas you said we need to work on are maintenance and customer service and we'll show you how we plan to do that over the next year.

Also in this issue, we put the call out for those of you with an artistic streak. As I look around our office, I see amazing artwork by our tenants and I'm reminded how talented you are and what an amazing vehicle for expression art can be. So I encourage you to submit a piece of work for the annual art show, which will be exhibiting at Gasworks in Albert Park, in September. The theme for this year's show is the Space Within. You can interpret this however you like through a variety of mediums, but I think you'll agree it's a very powerful theme.

And of course by now you know we are HousingFirst (formerly Port Phillip Housing Association), after 30 years we changed name and location. Our website and logo have been updated, but most importantly for our residents, nothing else has changed. We are still the same organisation, with the same people providing the same warm, compassionate and professional services to those in need.

Just to confirm, our location has changed to: Suite 3.01, Level 3, 492 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

Our phone number stays the same: 9534 5837

Office hours:  
Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm

Hope you enjoy this edition of our Tenant Newsletter. Keep warm and take care.

**Haleh**

## Chris Sleeps at the G



On Thursday 17th May, HousingFirst's Chris Chaplin, took part in Melbourne City Mission's annual Sleep At The 'G' event. Over 1,400 volunteers braved a wet and chilly night to bed down on the concrete floors of the Melbourne Cricket Ground, to raise funds for homelessness services.



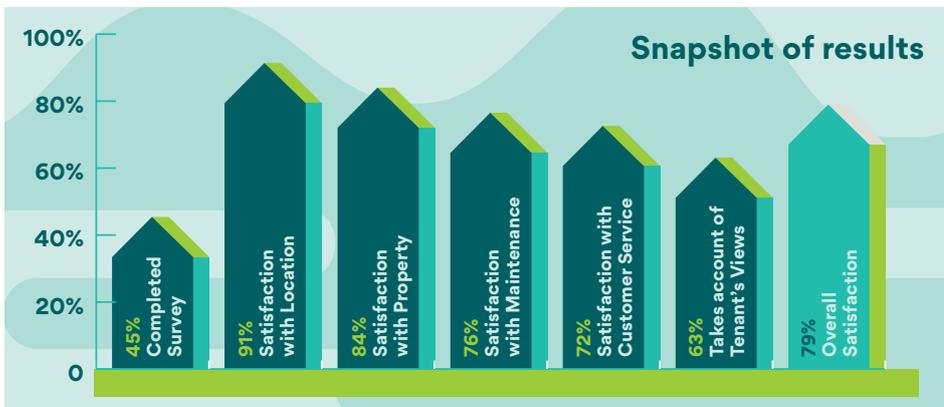
Sleeping rough at the MCG

The event was a huge success, raising nearly a million dollars towards building Australia's first-ever fully integrated 24/7 youth crisis accommodation centre.

Chris set himself an ambitious fundraising target of \$1,000 – and so far, he's raised over \$1,200 from friends, family and HousingFirst workmates. His message: "I can't say I enjoyed the concrete bed and a poor sleep, but it was great to support such a worthwhile cause." Chris says he'll be doing it again next year – but is already aiming to double his fundraising target! Congrats Chris. We know you can do it!

*“Thank you to HousingFirst for the opportunity to be safely and comfortably housed”*

## What you said? Tenant Satisfaction Survey



We engaged an independent external consultant to oversee our Tenant Satisfaction Surveys. We had an excellent response rate of 503 surveys, completed, the highest ever.

We had some great results this year and some areas you've said we need to work on. Down on previous years were satisfaction with maintenance and customer service.

Overall satisfaction was 79% (a small decline from 2015 82%) but still a strong result.

We really value your feedback and the time it took you to fill out the surveys, and have put together a plan of strategies to address your feedback.

### Satisfaction with property: 84% satisfaction

“I feel very lucky to be in an apartment that is beautifully appointed, in a pleasant and convenient place”

#### Concerns

- Heat in Summer and insufficient cooling.
- Noise levels from the street and other residents.
- Lack of parking.
- The state of common areas.

#### What we are doing about it?

- There are limits to what HousingFirst can do to modify existing properties.
- Working with the Tenants Advisory Groups (TAG) to come up with possible solutions to green retro-fit existing properties in the future.
- Take into consideration this feedback when building new properties.
- Working on a plan to improve amenities in common areas.
- Educate tenants (and provide regular information) about hard rubbish removal.

### Satisfaction with location: 91% satisfaction

“Love my home, love the location”

#### Concerns

- Security.
- Drug problems.

#### What we are doing about it?

- Security audit of common areas and identify remedies for vulnerable areas.
- Consider security measures in designs of new properties.
- Review anti-social behaviour procedures.
- Review rooming house rules.

### Satisfaction with Customer Service : 72% satisfaction

### Satisfaction with taking into account Tenant's views : 63% satisfaction

“All I can say is keep up the good work, we have never had a problem, attentive and considerate”

#### Concerns

- Phone calls not always returned.
- Level of politeness from some staff.
- Not being able to contact Ashwood directly.
- Lack of responsiveness.
- Staff listening, but not following up.

#### What we are going to do about it?

- Review and revise the customer service charter and standards of responsiveness.
- Additional training for customer service staff.
- Introduce random courtesy calls to tenants to build feedback between surveys.
- Educate tenants about rights and responsibilities.

### Satisfaction with Maintenance: 76% satisfaction

“Overall I have found any problems regarding maintenance has been attended quickly and professionally. It is a pleasure to have the maintenance team members in my home”

#### Concerns

- Response time can sometimes be slow.
- Consistency and quality of repairs.

#### What are we doing about it?

- Review contractor services.
- Establish a program to monitor the quality of maintenance work through random quality-control checks.
- Educate tenants re: timeframes for maintenance turn-around times.
- Ensure tenants receive advance notice about contractor / staff visits.

“Very thankful you are here when needed for any personal or safety issues”



## Winter jobs and reminders

**Winter is a great time to get those jobs done that you've been putting off for a while.**

**Rangehood:** Ensure your rangehood filters are cleaned on a regular basis. A build-up of grease can drip onto gas burners and cause a fire.



**Heating / airconditioning:** Clean filters on your heating and / or airconditioning units. Cleaning them regularly will ensure the appliances run efficiently.

**Light globes:** Just a quick reminder that it is the tenants responsibility to change light globes within their home.

**Hard rubbish:** Depending on where you live, there are different options for removing and disposing of hard rubbish. This is a tenant's responsibility to manage.

**Toilet:** Please do not flush anything but toilet paper down the toilet. Wipes cannot be flushed.

And finally the **kitchen sink:** Please do not pour cooking oil down your kitchen sink.

### Maintenance

If you have any maintenance to report during business hours - 9am-4.30pm - please call 9534 5837.

Outside business hours - 4.30pm-9am - emergency maintenance only, please call - 0419 505 073. (Please do not SMS).

## Calling local artists: The Space Within

HousingFirst's annual Artist Collective Group Show is looking for local artists to exhibit as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival.

This is your chance to have your work exhibited at the beautiful GasWorks Arts Park, in Albert Park.



The show runs throughout September and attracts thousands of visitors each year and is an amazing opportunity to not only get your art seen, but sold as well.

This year's theme is "The Space Within" and we are looking for artists working across a broad range of mediums and art forms, including painting, drawing, photography, ceramics, digital art, textiles, sculpture and more!

Deadline for getting your work into the show is **Friday 27th July.**



Artwork by Adam Copping

For more information, call Philippa on 9534 7830 or email [community@housingfirst.org.au](mailto:community@housingfirst.org.au).

All artists must currently be living in HousingFirst properties.



Artwork from the 2017 art show: Art Me Up



Artwork from the 2017 art show: Art Me Up



The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing support for Australians living with a disability, their families and carers. The NDIS is for people with a disability, including psychosocial, who need support to undertake activities of daily living and participate in community.

The timing of your move to the NDIS depends on the services you currently receive. It is currently being rolled out in most areas.

For more information please call: The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) on 1800 800 110 or go to [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

## The amazing Joy Tansey

After 11 years at HousingFirst, the smiling face that is Joy Tansey has decided to retire. We are already lost without her and she hasn't even finished yet. Joy will officially retire in August, 2018.

Many tenants know Joy from her years as Tenancy Housing Manager and more recently as she segued into being our Business Reporting Officer. Years back she started the tenant newsletter and still talks to our tenants regularly as she runs our footy tipping competition.

Joy started her working life as a petrol pump attendant while studying and then worked for welfare organisations. She looked after residential youth in Broadmeadows for 15 years and then worked for both the YMCA and YWCA. She has been a board member and even chair of a number of community housing organisations.

She believes in social justice, everyone has a right to a roof over everyone's head and there should be consequences for your actions.



Waiting for that bird

When she started at HousingFirst 11 years ago there was total of just 12 staff (now over 40) and John Howard was Prime Minister.

She has seen many changes, but 2 things remain unwavering, she's a Blues supporter through and through and an avid twitcher.

Her enthusiastic support of the Carlton football club (even if they are having their worst season in 120 years) has seen many a heated Monday-morning in-office discussion. But her one true love is without a doubt bird watching or "twitching". She has ticked off nearly every bird in Australia. Spent quite some time in Broome as a paid birdwatcher and a few months ago on a quick trip to the Torres Strait, clocked up her 800th Australian bird!

She once took a "mental health day" to chase a Fiordland penguin from NZ and took a day trip to Broome - yes a DAY trip to Broome - to chase the Eurasian Hoopoe bird.



Joy and her dancing partner in 2005

She competed in the Gay Games twice as a star ballroom dancer where she favoured the Rhumba and the Waltz and in 1975 worked for a few years as a taxi driver, where she was one of only 4 female taxi drivers in Melbourne.

This remarkable, stoic, extraordinary woman will be sorely missed by all of us.

So what's on the cards for Joy in her retirement? She's already mentally packing up her massive 4-WD Nissan Patrol "The Beast" and hitting the road to - as you may have guessed - bird spot some more... on her list "the Carpenterian Grass Wren and Western Quail Thrush".



Joy and "the beast" on another adventure

### Do you have a creative flair or an amazing story to tell?

We would love you to contribute to our newsletter. Whether it's writing, photography, artwork or telling us your story. Please email [community@housingfirst.org.au](mailto:community@housingfirst.org.au) or speak to your Housing Officer for more information.