



## CEO MESSAGE

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the Winter edition of SCH news.

We hope that you will find this edition full of helpful and interesting content. If you would like to hear from us about a particular subject or have a contribution idea, please get in contact with us and let us know. Better yet, you can read more information about our drive to generate tenant interest in being part of an Advisory Group. Where YOU the tenant get to have a voice in your local area. Hopefully you have been keeping warm during the chilly months, and we have some utilities tips for you to think about to keep you (and your family) warm whilst also trying to keep bill costs down.

Our teams have been working hard to keep things ticking along for you, our tenants, in their homes. This includes maintaining your properties, targeting some clean-up work in the Shoalhaven area, visiting you regularly to ensure your tenancy matters are addressed, working closely with the Support Partners that provide case management and support for many of our tenants and devising new ways that we can continue to build great communities into the future. Over time SCH will seek to improve our business so that tenants get the best possible service, we hope that as we start to make improvements and changes, that service delivery remains largely uninterrupted for you. If you are not happy with the service you have been provided, we encourage our tenants to provide us with this feedback. There are a number of ways you can do this, including visiting our website and lodging a Complaints Form on line or going into your local office.

We know that sometimes, the cost of living can be expensive, so SCH are always looking at ways that we can ease the burden on tenants to ensure they are able to live life to the fullest, despite any income limitations. That's why we have continued to offer our scholarship program and have recently partnered with NSW Health to deliver the Homelessness Mental Health Program, which aims to assist people living with a mental health condition with case management and funds they might need to sustain their tenancy. For tenants living in the Shoalhaven we have also continued our free rubbish removal drive, we all have moments where we feel consumed by having too much stuff, what better way to take advantage of this free service than organising a clear out of all your unwanted things.

Lastly, we really want to hear from you if you have a great story to tell. Have you recently become a tenant of SCH or moved into a SCH property, did this change have a positive impact on your life – in what way? SCH wants to hear from our wonderful tenants, all of the positive good news stories that help inspire us every day. It's your stories of strength and determination through challenging hard times that help keep us coming into work every day, we would love to share your story with other tenants to inspire them too! Maybe you are a budding artist, do you sing in a local singing group, have you got a beautiful garden that you're proud of and want to show off? We want to hear from you!

Alex Pontello  
CEO



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## TALK TO US



|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Nowra        | (02) 4421 5145 |
| Bomaderry    | (02) 4421 5145 |
| Ulladulla    | (02) 4455 4543 |
| Batemans Bay | (02) 4472 7681 |
| Cooma        | (02) 6452 1298 |

## GETTING TO KNOW SCH PEOPLE

To improve our service to you, we have recently recruited new staff members to join our fast growing team. We're pleased to introduce Adrianna and Chloe.

### Adrianna [Nowra]

Adrianna is new to SCH and started in the role of General Manager, Operations in May of this year. She oversees the areas of Access & Demand, Tenancy and Customer & Communities, and is based in Nowra. Adrianna travelled all the way from Adelaide, South Australia to join the team at SCH, after holding a similar role for another Tier 1 Community Housing Provider for over 6 years.

Adrianna is passionate about social housing, and believes in working with community to achieve positive outcomes. Having worked in Social Housing for over a decade, she once held the position of Housing Officer, so knows well how challenging yet rewarding the role can be.

Adrianna has also personally experienced social housing first hand, having grown up in a house provided by the South Australian Housing Authority, until she left home to attend university. She is very grateful for the stable housing she was afforded and seeks to give back to a sector that she believes in.



### Chloe [Nowra]

Chloe has recently joined Southern Cross Housing as a Housing Assistant in the Nowra office, Chloe has already worked with a number of clients in the short time that she has been with SCH where she has provided them with a high level of service and achieved positive outcomes.

Chloe enjoys helping people who are in genuine need and making a difference in their lives, she is passionate about empowering people to make a positive change for themselves and for them to have safe and secure housing.

## WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT ?

### Shoalhaven

- Men's get together BBQ - First Wednesday monthly
- Caring Dad's program - 6th August 2019
- Tuning into Teens - 30th July 2019
- Ulladulla Tenant Forum 13th July 2019
- Go4Fun - 24th July 2019

### Eurobodalla

- Story time for kids – Mondays and Thursdays (School Terms)
- Eurobodalla Orchid Show – 24th & 25th August 2019
- Guided Garden Walk – 1st September 2019

### Monaro

- Men's Breakfast - 1st Saturday Monthly
- Dorothy's book club - 2nd Wednesday monthly
- Local Produce Market - 3rd Saturday monthly

If you want to know more about any of these or other events please refer to our website: [www.sch.org.au](http://www.sch.org.au) or contact your local housing officer



# TENANCY TIPS

## PEST INFESTATION



Are you finding that there is an unusually large amount of unwanted pests inside your property and outside in the gardens?

To help combat these unwanted 'guests', Southern Cross Housing are reminding all tenants that if they have a sudden infestation of mice, then they are to buy commercially available products from the supermarkets. Be rest assured that unfortunately it doesn't matter if your home is messy or neat, the mice will still come out to play.

Also if a tenant is having problems with pests, such as cockroaches, fleas, spiders, ants and mice then it is the tenants responsibility to have the property sprayed for eradication—if they have been in the property for more than 2 months.

However, if a tenant has just moved into a property (within last 4 weeks) then we can organize for the pests to be sprayed—at Southern Cross Housing's cost.

## HANDY HINT



If you find that you are having trouble with those annoying pests, then why not spread cloves around the hole or area that is affected.

Apparently once the cloves have been spread around the offending area then the mice wont go near where you've spread it.

## COST OF UTILITIES - WINTER

During winter, the cost of your utilities can rise dramatically, causing you unnecessary distress. There are some easy, low/no cost ways to keep your bills down, such as:

- Wear extra layers
- Keep your feet warm by wearing socks
- Keep curtains, doors and windows closed as much as possible
- Seal off unused rooms so that you are heating smaller sections of the property
- Draught proof your home by purchasing draught 'snakes'
- Reduce the length of your showers. Long hot showers are nice during winter but can account for up to 1/3 of your electricity usage
- If you are using a heating device be careful what temperature it is set at.



## POLICY UPDATE

### KEYS TO PROPERTY

When you moved into your property, you were given one set of keys for each person who signed the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

It is your responsibility to keep these keys safe and return them at the end of the tenancy. SCH do not keep copies of keys to all of our properties, so if you lose your keys you will be asked to pay the cost of a locksmith to replace them, which is expensive.

If you need to change the locks urgently because you have an AVO against another tenant or authorised occupant, you can contact the SCH maintenance line 24 hours to arrange an emergency locksmith, or you can arrange for a locksmith to change the locks yourself. But if you arrange a locksmith yourself it is important that you give SCH a copy of the new keys within 7 days, because if SCH need to enter the property and are unable to do so, we will call another locksmith and charge you again.

### ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

We understand that tenants need to make their house a home, so minor changes to social housing properties are permitted without obtaining approval, provided that they do not disturb materials that may contain asbestos. This includes installing curtain rods, installing up to four picture hooks per room, building a small garden bed or planting small trees or shrubs in appropriate places. If you live in a privately owned property you will need to ask us for permission for all changes. If you are unsure whether you live in a privately owned rental property you should call us for advice.

You will also need to call us for permission if you want to make any other larger modifications, such as changing tapware, painting rooms or installing air conditioners. We will normally agree to small modifications that are consistent with the character, classification and future use of the property, do not impact on neighbours, are done by licenced tradespeople and comply with council and building standards. But we may ask you to remove them and return the property to the same condition when you leave.

We will not normally agree to the installation of swimming pools or spas, because of the ongoing compliance and safety risks involved.

If you have made a modification to your property without approval, please call us and we may be able to approve it retrospectively. It is better to find out early rather than have us demand that you remove it.



## REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE



### PAYING FOR REPAIRS

As your housing provider, Southern Cross Housing (SCH) is responsible for ensuring that your home is safe, secure and habitable. If there is damage to your property that is caused by fair wear and tear, then it is Southern Cross Housing's responsibility to cover the cost of any repairs.

There are however, situations where you request SCH repair damage to your property that has been caused by you, a member of your household or a guest. In these situations, it will be your responsibility to pay for the repairs. For example, one of your children may accidentally hit a ball and break a window. You can either arrange with your own contractor to fix the window or ask us to get it fixed in which case we will charge the cost back to you. You should also be aware that if you ask for a repair to be carried out and no fault is found, you will be charged the cost of having a contractor attend your property.

### WINTER TIPS

As seasons rotate, so does your home's maintenance requirements. In other words, the way you clean and keep your house in check during the winter can be very different from what you need to do for it in the summer.

#### VENTILATE YOUR HOUSE MORE

During winter, the air in your house will start to get stale and musty; ventilation is the best way to bring in fresh air and let the 'bad' air out. On warmer days, open doors and windows in your home to allow some air-flow. Not only will this eliminate the bad air, it will also assist in the prevention of moisture build up and potential mould.

#### KEEP YOUR HOME WARM AND AFFORDABLE

When trying to maintain warmth in your home in the cooler weather, consider closing off areas to not only stop drafts but also minimise the space you need to heat. Use a door snake to keep the heat from escaping out underneath doors.

#### CLEAN TO ELIMINATE WINTER GERMS

Remember that we are all more prone to coughs and colds in winter. To help prevent the spread of unwanted germs, regular cleaning is recommended. Hard surfaces such as kitchens and bathrooms should be wiped down with disinfectants like Pine O Clean or Spray n Wipe. Not only will your home smell fresh and clean, there's also less chance of spreading unwanted colds throughout the family



Some other general maintenance issues that are the responsibility of the client:

- Arranging for your gutters to be cleaned if the guttering is on a single level property and is not shared with another property
- Pest treatments for all general pests (other than termites)
- Grounds maintenance, including trimming of small trees and shrubs, weeding gardens, mowing lawns
- Changing light bulbs (where the light is not in a dangerous location and your ceiling is a standard height)
- Changing the alkaline batteries in your smoke detectors if the smoke detector begins beeping to indicate that the battery is running low. If you are unsure about your responsibilities please feel free to contact us on 1300 757 885- we are here to help. It is important that all tenants have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities

### REPORTING A REPAIR

If you need something repaired in your home, there are a few different ways to get in touch with your local Southern Cross Housing office. Please refer below to see what these are.

**Call** the SCH maintenance line on **1300 757 885**

**Visit** your local SCH office

**Write** to SCH at **PO Box 2351 Bomaderry NSW 2541**

**Online** by completing the [Maintenance Request form](#)

#### REPAIR TIMEFRAMES

##### Southern Cross Housing Tenants

Emergency 4 Hour

Urgent 24 Hour

Priority 14 Days

Priority 28 Days

##### Housing Transfer Tenants

Emergency 4 Hours

Urgent 8 Hours

#### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY

For emergency repairs required outside of normal business hours, please call the relevant hotline:

Southern Cross Housing Tenants – 1300 757 885

Housing Transfer Tenants – 1800 422 322

# TENANT OPPORTUNITIES

## SCHTAG

### WHAT IS THE TENANT ADVISORY GROUP?

Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) is a forum for tenants to discuss issues, exchange ideas and give feedback to Southern Cross Housing.

**TAG's are being held in the following areas:** Cooma, Batemans Bay, Ulladulla, Nowra and Bomaderry

Meetings are tenant led and will focus on a particular theme, issue or concern for tenants. The meetings are held every three months. The more tenants are involved in TAG meetings, the more Southern Cross Housing can ensure it delivers the best possible services to meet tenants' needs.

### WHY JOIN TANANT ADVISORY GROUP?

Joining the Tenant Advisory Group can help you to:

- Meet other like-minded people and get involved in your community
- Have your ideas heard and discussed
- Develop new skills and confidence
- Have a real say in the way housing services are delivered
- Develop a sense of ownership and responsibility

If you wish to become part of this group Please contact **Sharee** or **Peter** on **02 4421 5145**.

## REGIONAL YOUTH TASKFORCE

**Have you ever been interested in having a real say in the things that matter to young people in regional NSW?**

For the first time ever, the NSW Government is offering an opportunity for regional young people to share their voice on getting a job, mental health and wellbeing, getting around and having things to do.

Are you aged 12-24 and living outside of Sydney, Newcastle or Wollongong?

The Regional Youth Taskforce will allow you to have your say on ways Government can improve on regional youth issues.

It's a voluntary position, but flights and accommodation will be covered. The Taskforce will meet about four times a year, either face-to-face or online. Meetings are scheduled to take place on weekends or in school holidays.

To find out more and apply, go to:  
[www.nsw.gov.au/RegionalYouthTaskforce](http://www.nsw.gov.au/RegionalYouthTaskforce)

Applications close 11:59pm on 5 August 2019.



## OPPORTUNITY PATHWAYS

Opportunity Pathways is an all-inclusive program from Wesley Mission that offers one-on-one support to people in social housing to help them gain new skills, grow in confidence and achieve their employment goals.

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Assist participants to gain, increase or retain employment, by accessing supports and practical assistance, participating in activities, training and work opportunities.
- Encourage and support participants to positively exit social housing or rent choice subsidies to housing independence, to reduce their reliance on government assistance.

### ELIGIBILITY

- 17 or older
- Motivated and willingness to participate
- Living in public, community or aboriginal housing; or
- Receiving FACS rent choice subsidy; or
- Approved social housing applicant.

### SERVICES AVAILABLE TO PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- Training
- Workshops
- One on one support
- Case management
- Wrap around support
- Coaching and mentoring
- Work experience placement
- Job placement
- Brokerage support (conditions apply)
- Work retention support

For more information please call 1800 931 108 or visit [www.wesleytraining.org.au](http://www.wesleytraining.org.au)

The Opportunity Pathways program is funded by the NSW Government.

## TENANT OPPORTUNITIES

### HOMELESSNESS MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Homelessness Mental Health Program (HMHP) Project assists people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a mental health condition.

Referrals to the HMHP can be for:

- Complex Co-Case Management
- Brokerage

HMHP Coordinators work collaboratively with the assigned case manager/s to improve outcomes for clients with regards to their accommodation status and management of their mental health condition, and/or to provide items from brokerage funds available to assist people establish or maintain their tenancy.

#### REFERRAL CRITERIA:

- Over 18 years of age
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Diagnosed with a mental health condition

#### MORE INFORMATION:

For further information please contact HMHP Coordinators Tegan Brazier or Roslyn Poole on (02) 4253 4500.



Health

### ULLADULLA TENANT FORUM

It's that time of year where we put on an informative Forum event for tenants of our local Ulladulla community.

Southern Cross will be looking to organise some great speakers on topics important to tenants and give tenants a chance to engage with SCH staff over a bite to eat.

We want as many tenants to attend as possible so please contact our Customer & Communities Team to register your interest.

If you are a tenant that lives in Ulladulla and would like to hear or learn more about something then please let us know, we would love to see your ideas come to life.

#### EVENT DETAILS:

**Location:** Ulladulla Information Centre

**Date:** Tuesday 13th August 2019

**Time:** 10am until lunchtime

To give us some ideas or to register to attend please contact Peter or Sharee on **02 4413 1122**.



#### FREE RUBBISH REMOVAL & YARD CLEAN UP SERVICE (Shoalhaven)

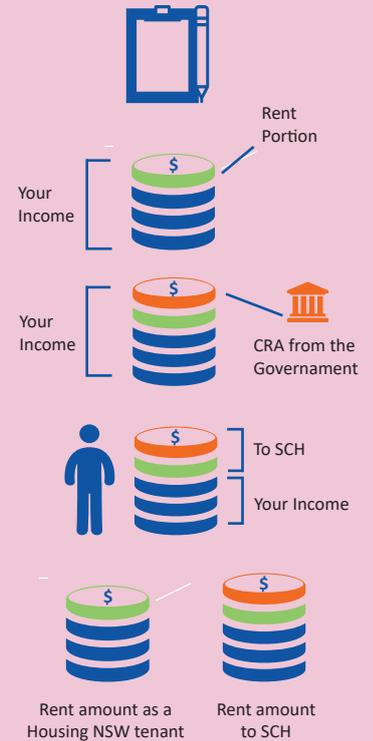
To assist our tenants to maintain a clean, well-presented home we will be offering a free clean-up service. With your permission, our "Clean Up Crew" will be able to come into your yard and remove all your unwanted items.

To check eligibility and book for this service please contact your housing officer.



## COMMONWEALTH RENT ASSISTANCE (CRA)

- 1 You complete the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) & Centrepay forms provided by Southern Cross Housing
- 2 Your rent is calculated as a percentage of your income
- 3 If you are eligible for CRA it is paid to you on top of your normal Centrelink payments
- 4 You pay your rent contribution and CRA payments to Southern Cross Housing
- 5 The amount you pay from your income remains the same as public housing but the total amount going to Southern Cross Housing is higher because the CRA paid by the Government is included in the rent calculation



## LOOKING FOR HELP TO GET BACK INTO WORK?

- Are you ready to find a long-term job?
- Do you have a disability, injury, illness or mental health condition?
- Do you want your needs & career goals to be heard?

We can help you overcome any challenges you may be facing, identify your goals & help you into ongoing & successful employment.

**Campbell Page** has partnered with **Souther Cross Housing** to ensure you have the right support in place and assist you to find work- in a job that you want to do. We help you to understand your eligibility, gather required medical evidence if needed, secure assessments with Centrelink and we can even attend your appointments with you.

Reach out for more information or to book an appointment.  
**Take your first steps!**

**CAMPBELL  
PAGE**

**Contact:** Sarah Berry  
**P:** 0490119877  
**E:** Sarah.Berry@campbellpage.org.au

## SOUTHERN CROSS HOUSING LOCATIONS

**Nowra** - 69 Kinghorne St  
**Ulladulla** - East Side Mall 118-120 Princes Hwy  
**Bomaderry** - 1/54 Bolong Rd

## DATES

Tuesday 6th August Nowra  
 Tuesday 27th August Nowra  
 Tuesday 17th September Nowra  
 Tuesday 8th October Nowra  
 Tuesday 29th October Nowra  
 Tuesday 13th August Ulladulla  
 Tuesday 3rd September Ulladulla  
 Tuesday 15th October Ulladulla  
 Tuesday 24th September Ulladulla  
 Tuesday 20th August Bomaderry  
 Tuesday 10th September Bomaderry  
 Tuesday 1st October Bomaderry  
 Tuesday 22nd October Bomaderry

**TIMES: 10AM – 1PM**

RECENT EVENTS

NAIDOC EVENTS

SCH have been thrilled to participate in special NAIDOC week events in The Shoalhaven at the Nowra Showgrounds and the Ulladulla Civic Centre. These events have been a collaborative effort, working with lots of different organisations that saw a great family fun day put together. They days were filled with fun activities for kids, lots of information stalls, plenty of delicious grub, jumping castles for the kids and lots of entertainment that kept families engaged for hours. SCH had the pleasure of serving up tasty Veggie burgers which went down a treat, had a lolly guessing competition and spoke to lots of community members and tenants on the day. Southern Cross Housing recognises the tradition owners of the land as the Yuin Nation and we pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.



MISSION AUSTRALIA BBQ

Mission Australia held a BBQ at Allowrie Park to find out what the residents would like to see in the park in Allowrie Street. A few residents turned up with some good ideas.



PAINT THE TOWN READ BBQ

May 2019 SCH was thrilled to be invited to participate in a Paint the town READ BBQ at Cullunghutti to promote the benefits of reading to your children from a young age. Aggie was there to assist the effort as well.



EAST NOWRA BBQ

SCH hosted a BBQ's at unit complex in East Nowra. This was a chance for the tenants to come together, meet their neighbours and to get to know SCH staff as well.

