



COMMUNITY HOUSING  
LIMITED

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Moonee Ponds Vic 3039  
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# COMMUNITY HOUSING LTD

## Newsletter

Issue 1 August 2004

## Donations:

Community Housing Ltd is entered in the public register maintained by the Australian Business Register as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) therefore donations for more than \$2 could be tax deductible.

## Staffing Changes

There have been some staffing changes over the past three months in addition to the appointment of Marjorie in Bairnsdale and Marie in East Timor. Continued growth has resulted in a restructure creating CHL West in Moonee Ponds and CHL East at head office in Box Hill. Paul Ryan has been appointed as CHL East manager bringing many years of experience in provision of homelessness services to CHL. Louise Daniel has been appointed CHL East long term housing worker. Tonya Wild joins CHL's Finance & Administration team as Assistant Accountant.

Linda McKay who has been with CHL since 1997 has been successful in securing the position of Manager at Wesley Homelessness Services. The resulting vacancy in the Housing Information & Referral team has been filled by Angel Lamprecht who has also been with CHL since 1997. Her position as receptionist/administrator has been filled by Hayley Brash.

## > How do I qualify for Rent Assistance

**You qualify for Rent Assistance if you:**

- > receive a pension;
- > receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit if you have dependent children;
- > receive an allowance or benefit if you don't have dependent children; and you
- > are over 25, or
- > are partnered, or
- > are under 25 (under 21 if you receive Disability Pension and living permanently or indefinitely apart from parents or guardians; and
- > meet residence requirements.

**PLEASE NOTE: You cannot get Rent Assistance if you get Austudy Payments.**

**You must also be paying more than a certain amount for:**

- > rent (other than for public housing); or
- > service and maintenance fees in a retirement village; or
- > lodging (if you pay for board and lodging and cannot work out the amount you pay for lodging, two thirds of the amount you pay will be accepted as being for lodging); or
- > fees paid to use a site for a caravan or other accommodation which you occupy as your principal home; or
- > fees paid to moor a vessel you occupy as your principal home.

**What Residence Requirements does Rent Assistance have?**

The residence requirements are the same as your main payment, allowance or benefit.

**Rent Assistance is not paid if you:**

- > pay rent to a government housing authority, although in some situations sub-tenants may qualify for Rent Assistance;
- > reside in a Commonwealth funded nursing home or hostel;
- > are a single disability support pensioner under 21, without dependants, living with parents;
- > are under 25, single and live with your parents; or
- > get Austudy Payment and have no dependant children.

To find out if you are eligible for Rent Assistance contact Centrelink on ☎ 13 10 21 to make an appointment.

I would like to welcome you in reading this, the first newsletter for Community Housing Ltd (CHL). We will be preparing a newsletter for your information on company activities every quarter to keep you up to date on new developments. There have been some exciting new initiatives during 2004:

## CHL West Moonee Ponds

CHL's goal has always been to deliver good quality affordable and sustainable housing across Victoria. We are one of only a few organisations that operate statewide and can develop non-for profit housing in any region. At this point of time CHL manages and/or is developing 646 dwellings and over 1000 tenancies across the state.

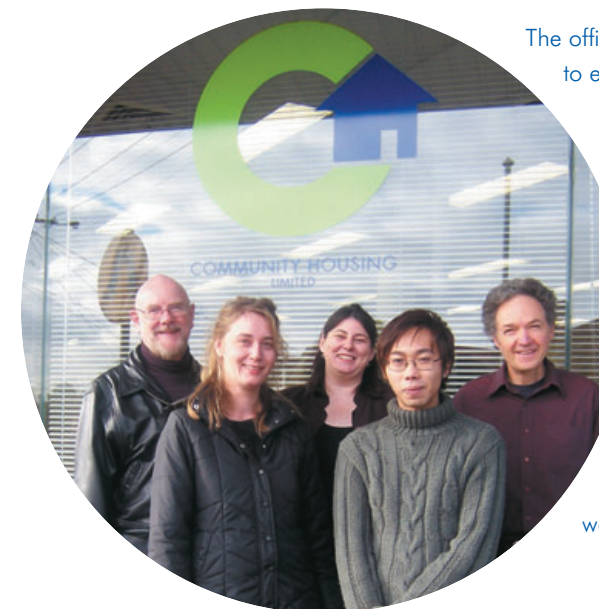
CHL's continued growth in the Northern/Western region has led to the development of three new projects in Moreland, Brimbank and Melton, incorporating 23 dwellings. These involve the provision of independent living for the aged and disabled without onsite support. CHL is not only committed to developing quality affordable housing but wants to ensure that its tenants receive a localised service that is responsive and in tune with their needs and local issues. CHL has established an office in the West to be more accessible to its tenants in these regions. This office will complement CHL's three offices in Box Hill, Morwell and Bairnsdale servicing the east of the state.

The office is located in the centre of Moonee Ponds opposite the train station and adjacent to easy to access public housing at:

**Suite 2, 38 Margaret Street, Moonee Ponds 3039**  
**Telephone: 9377 7800 Facsimile: 9377 7801**

In May this year CHL's Project and Design team and part of the Long Term housing team moved to this location. These two programs began by assisting community agencies to develop housing projects for the specific needs of their clients. This approach is a strong focus of our work along with partnering local government in the provision of equity and/or sites to develop affordable housing.

CHL looks forward to further developing existing relationships with the Office of Housing, local councils and support agencies and to contributing to the valuable work being done by local services.



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



## Housing Association Growth Strategy

The State Government announced a Housing Association Strategy as part of the policy commitments of the Bracks Government on re-election in November 2002. This involves identifying a minimum of four preferred organizations, including disability & aged specific plus two regional housing associations, which would be assisted to grow into major affordable housing providers through a combination of donated funds or land, public and private finance. Approved Housing Associations will be subsequently regulated through the introduction of legislation requiring that registered organisations operate with a high degree of public accountability.

## East Timor

The 1999 referendum where the East Timorese rejected Indonesian rule and sought independence was accompanied by a backlash from pro Jakarta militias. This resulted, amongst other damage, in the destruction of between 90% in the furthest west to 10% in the east of the housing in the country. At the same time much of the population was displaced, all property records destroyed, leading to uncertainty in the rights of people to their property. Whilst things have improved in the past 5 years, 40% of the population live below the subsistence poverty line of US\$16 per month. The initial substantial effort by the international community to assist with security and aid to rebuild the country is now being scaled down. At the same time, the growth of oil revenues are delayed due to technical problems developing the main new fields in the Timor Sea and lack of movement in negotiations between East Timor and Australia on maritime boundaries.

CHL has been investigating the possibility of becoming a housing provider in East Timor. Initial investigation suggests that this is not at all easy as neither the people we wish to assist nor the Government have any money to contribute to providing housing. At the same time investigations lead us to realise that good housing would be of great

The Government earmarked \$70 million for the program during its 2002/06 term of office. A registration of intent process was issued at the end of April requiring interested organizations to make submissions to become housing associations. CHL submitted to operate as a statewide housing association providing services to all client groups in need of long-term affordable housing. The Victorian Government has committed \$50 million next year to kick off the program.

It is expected that the announcement of preferred providers will be in August this year.

assistance to most people. Currently an average family of five people will live in a 35 sq. meter home with a dirt floor, without running water, toilet or kitchen facilities. The resulting lack of hygiene, sanitation, clean water and the use of open fires all contribute to the average mortality age of 50 years old.

CHL has employed a project officer, Marie Contini, who presently lives in East Timor and formerly spent 3 years employed by the United Nations establishing and delivering housing programs in Kosovo. CHL's initial tasks over the next 6 months will be to establish and promote CHL, consult with local communities on their housing needs, examine legal arrangements and explore any funding opportunities, develop partnerships with government and local organisations, and develop housing design and program models which can be introduced. If CHL can find a means of developing a sustainable way to deliver housing that is affordable, offering a good minimum standard of accommodation and supported by the east Timorese people we will proceed to the next stage of developing housing projects.



## Healesville Rooming House

CHL tendered and was successful in taking over management of a 22-bed rooming house in Healesville. CHL will be providing affordable housing to single adults between 25 to 50 years of age who are in housing need. Part of CHL's services to this property will be to offer a good quality, low cost evening meal for six nights a week to residents.



## Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative (GEGAC)

CHL has formed a partnership with GEGAC whereby CHL takes over management and upgrade of the 38 residential properties let to GEGAC members. CHL is presently upgrading 25 of the properties, which are in a poor state of repair and will subsequently in cooperation with the tenants be able to maintain the properties in good condition. This is the second partnership CHL has been privileged to develop with an indigenous

community (the first being provision of transitional housing in Healesville). One of the early pleasing results has been the introduction of an indigenous traineeship in reception/tenancy administration at CHL's Bairnsdale office, we welcome Marjorie Mobourne to this position, and the creation of three indigenous apprenticeships as part of CHL's construction program in East Gippsland.

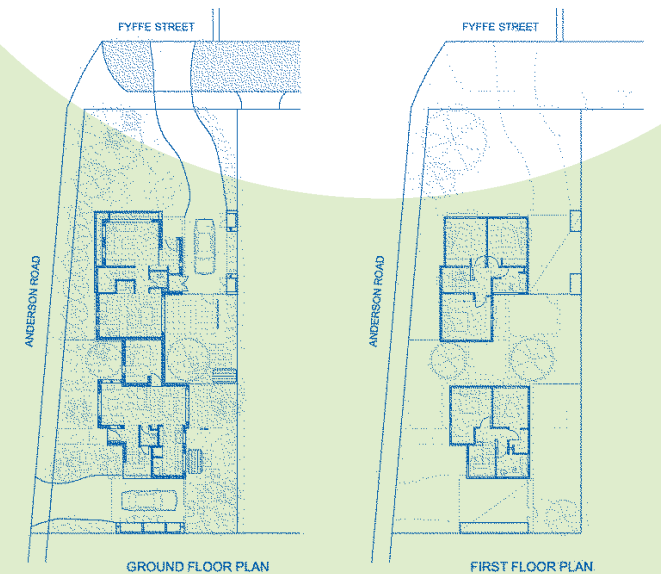
## Fyffe Street Project

Through the State Government's Social Housing Innovations Project, Community Housing Ltd. (CHL) in partnership with Darebin City Council recently completed four units on two sites in Thornbury. These units have been specifically designed for recently arrived migrant families from the Horn of Africa, which is a priority group in Darebin.

Council provided the sites and CHL designed, built and manage the four units. The program called for the design of the units to be as flexible as possible to permit larger or smaller families according to the need. Each pair of units can either be two three-bedroom units, or with minimal alteration, one two-bedroom and one four bedroom unit.

The Mayor of Darebin and the Member of Jika Jika attended the opening for Fyffe Street in March 2004.

CHL has been managing properties on behalf of Darebin City Council since 1996 and appreciate Council's support and dedication to affordable housing. We look forward to continuing this relationship with further projects.



# Support contact numbers:

Domestic Violence ☎ 1800 015 188 *Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria*  
Crisis support, information, referral to safe accommodation (refuge) for women experiencing abuse in their relationships.  
24 hrs. ☎ 9373-0123, or Country toll free: ☎ 1800 015 188.

The Salvation Army > Melbourne Central ☎ 9653 3213 Eastern Victoria ☎ 98872 6400  
Northern Victoria ☎ 95443 4288 Western Victoria ☎ 95331 3088

Outreach Nursing Service/Royal District Nursing Service Homeless Persons Program ☎ 8327 0100  
The Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) is the largest and oldest provider of home nursing and healthcare services in Australia. Grounded in the principles of care and compassion, RDNS is a not-for-profit organisation, delivering 24 hour a day nursing care to people in their homes, schools and workplaces. This service is provided 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.