

# QUEENSLAND DISABILITY HOUSING COALITION

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## NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2006 -JANUARY 2007

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of QDHC Inc

*Christmas.....are we there yet??*

*(Editorial by Mike Duffan)*

As you know we held our AGM at the end of October. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the outgoing (no pun intended!) Committee for doing a fine job. I would also like to welcome the incoming Committee which I'm sure will continue the often somewhat daunting task of improving the prospects of people with disabilities acquiring affordable and accessible housing which satisfies their individual needs. Apart from the official business, the highlight of the night was a performance of the "Playback Theatre Group". The main theme of their routine was to 'act out' people's reflections on 'what home is'.

In our period of history, there seems to be an increasing difficulty for people trying to find a home. These days housing is increasingly seen as a commodity – a 'must' for existence, rather than a *necessity* for *truly living* – A *HOME*. A place where the soul is calmed and nourished. For those who have disabilities, this stark fact is often intensified umpteen-fold, especially when those with the power seem to be hell-bent on herding us to live together *with our own kind* in congregated and segregated settings. Utterly soul destroying!! This is why we at QDHC must keep up the fight!!

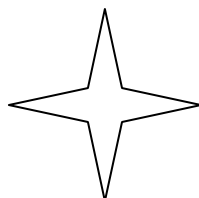
Christmas is just around the corner. This is the time of year when Christians particularly remember Christ, who was an *outsider / social outcast and homeless*. Similarly at this time of year, our minds need to focus more acutely on those people who find themselves in much the same situation. In Christ's day, he encountered an Inn Keeper who was able to exhibit love, understanding and much compassion to someone in need. In our day are these same virtues being demonstrated by, firstly, ourselves, and then by fellow citizens, our politicians and our bureaucrats who in turn have the opportunity to make these values the cornerstone of all public policy?

For many, Christ is also a *bringer of hope*. For our lives to be worthwhile, they must have meaning. Such meaning is nothing, unless it is fuelled by, and has its grounding in, *hope*. Who is your *bringer of hope* today?? It may be a Supreme Being; it may be a well-known person; but often it's our friends, our close friends. Friendships have to be cultivated and nurtured – the most amiable place for this to occur is in the comfort of one's *own HOME*.

May I wish one and all a very Joyous festive season, one filled with Peace, meaning and happiness.

PEACE!!

*Mike Duffan*  
Chairperson



## Maia's Moment

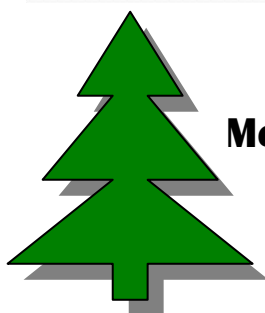
Hi everyone!

Well as the nightly exploits of the Christmas beetles are telling us, the end of the year is not far away... Reflecting on this year personally, I can honestly say that coming to work at QDHC has been one of this year's real positives for me. As well as enjoying the great working environment here, I really appreciate having the opportunity to participate in an organisation which is working towards a more inclusive and just community.

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership over the past few months. If you haven't renewed yours yet, we would love you to do so on the form at the back of this newsletter.

I'd like to wish everyone a very happy festive season.

*Maia*



### **Merry Christmas from the Newsletter sub-committee!**

*Hope this newsletter finds you well and not too hot! (unlike us who are doing this with the aircon in the office out of action!)*

*Don't forget we need extra helpers for next year's newsletters .....so give us a call.*

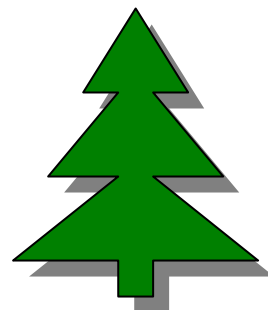
*From Catherine, Karin and Mary*

### **Please Remember!**

↔ **A large font version of this newsletter is available on request.**

↔ **Christmas/New Year Closure**

**The office will be unattended from Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2006 to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2007, and will reopen on Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> January. Full staffing will not resume till the 29<sup>th</sup> of January.**



## **OH WHAT A NIGHT... 2006 AGM**

Our AGM for 2006 was held at the Spinal Injuries Association on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October. It was a wonderful night for members and allies of QDHC to come together and reflect on the year's work. The night was capped off brilliantly by a performance from Brisbane Playback Theatre Company. The performance centred around home and what home means to people. This was a very memorable night that was enjoyed by all.

For those of you who were unable to attend the AGM, here is a copy of the President's Report, for your information. A full copy of the Annual Report for 2005 – 2006 is available through the office (by phoning 3391 3433, or emailing: [qdhc@qdhc.org.au](mailto:qdhc@qdhc.org.au)). Our Annual Report can also be downloaded from our website [www.qdhc.org.au](http://www.qdhc.org.au).

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 2005-2006**

Once again it is with much pleasure and immense honour that I present this, my fifth and the Organisation's seventeenth, President's Report of Queensland Disability Housing Coalition!

**"A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul."**

Phillip Moffitt

### **THE ORGANISATION:**

The underpinning belief system of QDHC is enshrined in the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and empowerment. These principles, if respected, are not mere words, but can make a real and lasting difference for people with a disability and their families by – in this case, improving their (/ our) lives through the provision of appropriate, adequate and affordable housing.

### **A "TWO PRONGED" DIRECTION:**

It is important that QDHC adopts a two-pronged approach to our work in order to obtain optimum outcomes.

- Firstly, ongoing outreach and consultation with our membership through formal and informal processes, as well as networking and establishing strong working relationships with other community organisations; and
- Secondly, by fostering positive working relationships with staff of the Department of Housing, both on regional and state-wide issues. We have a strong and ongoing commitment to strive to provide a vehicle for people with disabilities and their families to articulate their concerns around issues of housing and to participate in the development of solutions and alternatives which are life-enhancing.

There continues to be a need to improve and develop our ability to consult with and receive information from people with a disability, their families, advocates and other stakeholders as well as to increase our focus on areas outside of Brisbane. With QDHC approaching the end of the current three year funding agreement we will need to seek early assurance from the department regarding ongoing funding to assist ongoing long term planning for this work.

## **CURRENT POLICY DIRECTIONS:**

The Department of Housing has decided on a new policy direction. All social housing (public housing including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rental housing, and funded community and local-government managed housing services) will be provided through one social housing system. Under the one social housing system, housing assistance will be targeted to people most in need of assistance, under time-limited tenancies.

The one social housing system will mean a number of policy and procedural changes for the department and community housing organisations. Given these changes, it would seem that current Queensland Housing Policy will need to be reviewed.

The Housing Act 2003 aims to improve the access of Queenslanders to safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing. The community sector, including QDHC, fought hard to have a number of principles included in the original drafting of the Bill. These principles as included are:

- a) The availability of safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing in a community –
  - (i) enhances the quality of life of people living in the community; and
  - (ii) contributes to the wellbeing of the community by enabling people to participate in its social and economic life;
- b) the need for safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing can be met by entities from government, industry and the community, acting separately and in partnership.
- c) a community is sustainable if –
  - (i) it is socially and economically diverse, cohesive, resilient and adaptable; and
  - (ii) it has access to appropriate services and amenities;
- d) housing services should be provided in a way that responds to the diverse and changing needs of individuals, families and other households;
- e) the State's provision of housing services should –
  - (i) provide leadership and promote best practice in housing provision and residential development; and
  - (ii) be integrated, as far as is reasonably practicable, with the provision of other government social services;
- f) individuals being provided with housing under this Act should have access, as far as is reasonably practicable, to an appropriate choice of housing types and tenures;
- g) housing services should be provided in a way that has appropriate regard to –
  - (i) local and regional differences; and
  - (ii) cultural diversity; and
  - (iii) Aboriginal tradition and Island custom;
- h) the needs, views and interests of consumers of housing services, indigenous community members and representatives, non-government entities, industry bodies and local governments should be taken into account in developing government housing policy.  
(Housing Act, 2003).

It will be imperative that the proposed policy and legislative changes contain high level principles that continue to ensure and safeguard access to affordable, appropriate housing for Queensland's most vulnerable populations.

**“People need housing. A home provides a sense of place and belonging, and is an important requirement for people to live full and satisfying lives While the private housing market continues to meet the requirements of the majority of Queenslanders, governments have an important role to**

**ensure that those people who cannot access private rental or home ownership can enjoy good housing”** (These words are part of Minister Schwarten’s message in the Department of Housing Strategic Plan 2002-2007)

**The Queensland Government will seek to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing in diverse, cohesive and sustainable communities.** (The Queensland Government Housing Policy – Improving People’s Lives Through Housing)

For the new housing directions to work for people with disabilities, the barriers of affordability, design and discrimination need to be comprehensively addressed in the private housing market.

Similarly, the community housing sector will require the training and resources to be able to operate as a full partner in the provision of housing to people with a disability.

Having a disability can make people feel alienated from other people and the world in general. This is why the place of “Home” is so important in the lives of us who have disabilities. It not only serves as an anchor, it also gives us a feeling of being in charge of our lives (or more precisely, a particular, albeit a very important, part of our lives). A sense of ownership and a sense of being in control lead to greater self-esteem and self-worth. In some regard we have a feeling we are on a par with our fellow Sisters and Brothers.

Subsequently the following set of principles *must* underpin all policy development and direction:

- equal rights;
- consideration of individual circumstances;
- emphasis on independence and community inclusion and participation;
- separate but co-ordinated responsibilities for housing assistance and support services;

The challenge for organisations is to revisit and authenticate their principles and objectives and stand firm in testing policy and program development against these principles and objectives. There is an increasing need for strong lobbying voices to ensure that ground gained is not lost.

### **In closing:**

I would like to thank the staff who have worked so untiringly over the past twelve months.

Over eighteen months ago, we welcomed Karin Swift to our Coordinator’s role. As did her predecessor Ann Tierney, Karin finds herself constantly being torn between how on one hand, to best respond to the “call” of the Department, and, on the other, how we can support people at a grassroots level. To achieve such an accomplishment necessitates Karin keeping her finger on the strategic pulse, and constantly undertaking a very delicate balancing act. Karin, - “Thank you”!!

I believe we are very fortunate to have Ann Tierney still on the staff team. Ann works for us five hours a week, mainly on policy work, as well as acting as a ‘sounding board’! Many thanks, Ann, for everything!

At the end of February this year, we farewelled Kaja Holzheimer who worked in the role of Office Administrator. Kaja left us to attend the Conservatorium of Music to more intensely pursue a career in Opera. We wish you all the best, Kaja! To replace Kaja, we welcomed Maia Stegman. Thank you, Maia for ‘fitting in’ so well. You and Karin complement each other well and make a dynamic team.

Over this last twelve months Katrina Beutel has been our bookkeeper. We sincerely thank you, Katrina.

Thanks also goes to Mary Kenny (RTA Project) and Jan Dyke (A Home of my own: Rights, Rhetoric and Reality kit/ Professional Supervision) for your consultancy services throughout the year.

I wish to thank my Colleagues on the Committee for your time, support and drive. Earlier in the year, our secretary Joanne Merrigan stepped down from the committee to focus on her studies. We are delighted to have her return tonight to perform the duties of Returning Officer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joanne for the many years service she gave to the organisation, both on the committee and as a volunteer with our library.

I'd like to acknowledge the support of my Vice-President Judith Hemingway, for her support and assistance throughout the year. Judith also sits on a reference group which manages a joint project with QDN called "Hot Topics in Housing" (funded from a grant from the RTA). Thanks also goes to our diligent treasurer, Mary Ross, who works hard with Katrina to manage the finances of QDHC. Catherine Smith has been a welcome addition to the committee this year. Thankyou Catherine, for your insight and your 'informal' role of catering manager and for keeping the committee economically well-feed. Mary and Catherine also volunteer on the Newsletter Editorial sub-committee and offer Karin much support in getting the quarterly newsletter published. Thanks also goes to Angi Cappelli for your commitment, support and guidance. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Willie Prince to the committee who joined us mid-season to fill a vacancy. Willie, you bring a much needed, grounded perspective to our work.

Thank you, one and all! I will finish with a quote:

**"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"**

Martin Luther King

Many thanks to you all!!

PEACE!!

*Mike Duggan*

CHAIRPERSON

24<sup>th</sup> October 2006

## COMMITTEE PROFILE

INTRODUCING...

### Judith Hemmingway

*What is your role on committee?*

At the moment I am the vice president. Although that sounds fancy, it means I provide support to the president if it is needed. For example, Mike wrote a great president's report for the QDHC Annual Report, and at our Annual General Meeting, I read out his report.

*Why are you on the committee?*

We have a long way to go before the rights of people with a disability are recognised, upheld and guaranteed. You need lots of people who work in different ways (sometimes for a long, long time!) to bring about change, so helping on committee is a way of supporting positive social change.

*Do you work?*

At the moment I am working for a short time with the Department of Communities in the City. For several years before this I worked between a Tenant Advice & Advocacy Service at the New Farm Neighbourhood Centre, and the Tenants' Union of Queensland.

*What do you do in your spare time?*

Do things with my 13 year old son; swim, go to the library, housework (not very often), watch DVDs- the usual things!

### Kedron Room Rental

Available until 30.06.07; bedroom in my air-conditioned, fully furnished, wheelchair accessible home. Modified bathroom and entrances for easy access.

Suit neat, non-smoking independent or near-independent person (perhaps awaiting more permanent accommodation). Easy access to both Gympie & Stafford Roads (and therefore frequent low-floor buses).

The room is for rent at \$140 per week. Centrelink Rent Allowance applies at \$68.80 per fortnight.

Contact Debra via email: [debraneale@hotmail.com](mailto:debraneale@hotmail.com)

My ground floor unit will also be available for rent (fully furnished) from the 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2007 until February 2008



## Karin's Kapers... just what has QDHC's Coordinator been up to?

As usual, I've been really busy at QDHC since our last newsletter. I've had the benefit of collaborating with QDHC committee members and staff as well as people from other housing peaks, disability advocacy organisations and networks. Here is a thumbnail sketch of what we've been involved in.

### **Formal policy responses:**

- Public Benefit Testing (DSQ/Synergies) (Phone Interview Only)
- QDHC Financial Reporting
- Guardianship Review Consultation (Qld Law Reform Commission)
- Residential Services Act Policy Review Paper Submission (RTA)

### **Advice at regular meetings/forums/consultations/workshops:**

- Senior Officers and Director-General Peaks meeting (DoH)
- Meeting with Mamre project worker
- Meetings with QPTA and Jenny Clark (DoH) regarding Housing with Shared Support
- QCOSS Peaks meeting
- Community Safeguards Coalition meeting
- Housing Peaks Meeting
- Responding to Homelessness Reference Group
- BCC CityShape Reference Group
- Residential Services Stakeholders Advisory Committee
- DSQ Reference Group
- RTA Hot Topics Project Reference Group
- Homeless Persons Information Queensland Reference Group (selection panel for staff)

### **Attended/spoke at workshops/conferences:**

- QPTA Social Impact Assessment re 'One Social Housing System'
- Shared Visions Conference (DSQ)
- UQ Lecture, Social Work Students (Kathy Ellem)
- Disability Action Plan Workshop (Qld Government)
- Qld Shelter's AGM
- Playback Theatre Workshop
- BHAG Workshop and Future Directions
- Brisbane Housing Company, Presentation
- National Forum on Universal Design

If you would like further information on any of these areas of work, please call me at the office on **(07) 3391 3433**

*I'd like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and hope that you will enjoy a break and some Christmas cheer as I plan to! - Karin*

## Holiday Accommodation

The Holiday Season is upon us and we thought this would be a good opportunity to look at the various options that exist for a good accessible holiday. Please note that we haven't stayed at these places ourselves, so can only report on how the accommodation is promoted. We realise some of these options may be a bit late for this year, but we hope this gives people some food for thought when planning breaks in the future. We encourage readers to get in touch with us regarding places you know of and tips for a good holiday. Perhaps you've even stayed at some of the places we have listed below and you would like to give us a review. Please get in touch by phoning 33913433 or emailing: [gdhc@gdhc.org.au](mailto:gdhc@gdhc.org.au)

### **Accessible Holiday Accommodation Project**

During 2005, I completed a project on accessible holiday accommodation with the Disability Services Team at Kyabra Community Association Inc. in Runcorn. The information was gathered from the reports of the accommodation providers. It covers a variety of types of accommodation, in geographical areas from the North Coast of NSW to Bundaberg, and west to Tamworth and Roma. There are three categories of accessibility: accommodation which meets the Disability Standards, accommodation that is accessible for most people with disabilities, and accommodation that would be accessible for some people with disabilities. Because the accessibility of accommodation is constantly changing, before making a booking, it would be a good idea to check that the information is still current.  
Joanne Merrigan

### **Curramore Country Cabins**

Includes 2 purpose built 4 1/2 star luxury accessible cabins, each with views of the Mary Valley and Connondale Ranges. (There is also one two-storey cabin which is not accessible). The cabins were built in consultation with John Mayo from the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of Qld. All cabins include their own spa, fireplace, dvd, tv, surround sound, full cooking facilities and electric bbq on the balcony. A 1.2m wide track goes between the cabins and also leads to the lookout and picnic area. There is a local restaurant which will deliver to the door. One of the cabins is two bedroom with remote control beds if required.

Website: <http://www.malenycabins.com.au> Ph: 075 435 8300

### **Coungeau House, Bribie Island.**

Holiday Home owned by a service organisation called ToCH. It is affordable and accessible. The house sleeps twelve upstairs. There is downstairs 'dormitory' style accommodation for groups who need extra space and meeting areas. There is an accessible bathroom for those who require it. The old Queenslander house is situated in a pleasant and quiet locality close to shops, churches and the beach at 36 Banya Street, BONGAREE, BRIBIE ISLAND, QLD 4507.

Website: [http://www.toch.org.au/coungeau\\_house.htm](http://www.toch.org.au/coungeau_house.htm)

**The Accommodation below has all been advertised in Imprint – the official publication of the Spinal Injuries Association, October-November 2006**

**Koah B&B, Atherton Tablelands, Far NQ**

Comfortable wheelchair accessible designed country home on 10 acres, 2 bedrooms with own bathroom

<http://www.kurandahomestay.com> ph: 07 4093 7074

**Palm Cove Qld Serviced Apartments, NQ**

5 Star Holiday and Short-term Accommodation. Wheelchair accessible courtyard apartments available. 5% of booking value donated to Spinal Injuries Association

<http://www.palmcoveservicedapartments.com> Reservation Hotline 0401 331 491

**Noosa River – Sandy Shores**

4 1/2 star luxury 1 bdrm apartments, accessible facilities, village atmosphere close to Noosville's restaurants

<http://www.noosariversandyshores.com> ph: 075 474 1122

**Urangan Holiday Accommodation – 6 Pilot St, Urangan**

Near new 3 bedroom home, designed for wheelchair access. One street from beach, pier and shops.

Raine and Horne, Hervey Bay Ph: 07 4128 2188

**Coomera Houseboat Holidays – Broadwater and Coomera River, Gold Coast**

45' Houseboat for holiday hire, designed for wheelchair access

Includes instruction on operating the houseboat, no boat licence required.

10 berth, all linen supplied

BBQ, fridge, LCD 18" flat screen

<http://www.houseboat.net.au> ph: 07 5502 6200

*Outdoor Play in the Redcliffe-Scarborough Area (Brisbane North)*

**The Liberty Swing - Pelican Park (Bells Beach, Hornibrook Esplanade, Clontarf)**

Described on the government website as 'a revolutionary concept in playground equipment for people in electric or standard type wheelchairs.'

**Railway Place – Scarborough Beach Park (Landsborough Ave, Scarborough)**

'An interactive playground specially designed for children both with or without a disability' (website).

The Redcliffe area also includes the Settlement Cove Lagoon – a children's water playground, and Suttons Beach, a patrolled swimming beach, both of which have wheelchair accessible paths.

<http://www.redcliffe.qld.gov.au/tourism/parks.html>

## **BHAG WORKSHOP – 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2006**

The Boarding House Action Group (BHAG) held a workshop on the 25<sup>th</sup> October to

- catch up with the implementation and monitoring of the Residential Services Reform Package
- identify any gaps and emerging issues for residents
- clarify the purpose and role of BHAG.

Representatives of the Office of Fair Trading Accreditation Branch and the Residential Tenancies Authority provided updates on the ongoing implementation and evaluation of both the Accommodation Act and the Accreditation Act and the Tenant's Union highlighted issues as identified by residents of boarding houses and hostels.

The workshop identified a number of ongoing issues. They included

- Affordability (boarding house room-only can cost \$120 per week while the inclusion of food can cost around \$235/\$250 per week)
- The vulnerability of residents
- Access to premises by advocates without adding further risk to residents
- Limited security of tenure
- Guardianship issues
- Attitude of caretakers
- Fear of complaining due to threat of being thrown out.

The workshop also provided an opportunity to hear where the current review of the Residential Services (Accommodation) Act 2002 was at. Following the review of submissions received earlier this year the RTA has now completed a Policy Review Paper. The paper outlines the issues identified through the review process, the amendments proposed and the reasons behind the proposed amendments.

The Accreditation Act is also due for review and we will keep you informed on opportunities that might develop for individuals and organisations to participate in this very important review also.

The workshop highlighted that the struggle to establish a safer, more secure housing option for people on low incomes continues.

QDHC believes that while the ongoing debate about the balance of residents' rights versus industry viability continues to drive what is possible to reform this sector, the question of affordability is one which must be examined. The benchmark for affordability in the general housing sector is set at 30% of income. Residents of the boarding house/hostel sector are paying much more.

The workshop was useful in highlighting ongoing issues, identifying ongoing processes for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the reform process and specifically in providing a forum for all those involved across the reforms to share information and ideas.

BHAG will continue to be a forum for people to come together to do this work and in doing so keep the residents of this housing sector in the forefront and share some of the load carried by individual workers and organisations working with residents to improve their access to more affordable, appropriate housing.

## Papers and Information across Karin's Desk...

*Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative -Report 1: Summary*, Social Policy Research Centre, NSW Department of Health; June 2006

### **Council Cab service**

For residents who find it difficult to get to the local shops, the service organises shared taxis at scheduled times, for between \$1 and \$3 per journey. It is offered weekly in most Brisbane suburbs, in some suburbs twice a week. You can travel from your home to your local shopping centre, bank or medical centre, and return home later that day. You can use the service if you are:

- over 60 years old, or,
- mobility impaired, or
- a Pensioner Concession Card or Centrelink Seniors Card holder, or
- a child under the care of an eligible person, or
- a carer accompanying someone who is eligible

For more information see the website at

[http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:STANDARD:705578820:pc=PC\\_1229](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:STANDARD:705578820:pc=PC_1229)

### **MYTH BUSTING AND MOMENTUM BUILDING: A community conference about truth in the lives of people with a disability**

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Biannual Conference presented by Community Resource Unit (CRU)**

**Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre**

[www.cru.org.au](http://www.cru.org.au) Ph 07 3870 1033

Phone: 3391 3433 Email: [qdhc@qdhc.org.au](mailto:qdhc@qdhc.org.au)

## ***Personal Stories and Reflections***

*From time-to-time members of QDHC and readers of our newsletter are generous enough to share with us their personal stories, anecdotes and reflections on things that happen in their everyday lives. We welcome and value these stories for the insight they bring.*

*Recently we received a piece from someone who had gone through the sometimes messy ordeal of a support worker leaving. Entitled 'The Do's and Don'ts of Leaving with Cred', the piece highlights some useful things for support workers to consider when leaving a person they are supporting.*

*We are including this piece because we feel that anyone who has had paid support workers in their lives, or indeed has been a paid support worker can relate to it.*

*QDHC knows that support, whether it be formal or informal, plays an important role in the lives of people with disability and their families. Some people may be unable to sustain their tenancies without good support. We also know that good support that is there when needed, yet unobtrusive to the person and their family is hard to find.*

*Although this is not ideal, for many people with disability support workers form their main (and sometimes only) social contact and link to the community. Sometimes people with disability have no other people in their lives. They can become very isolated, lonely and vulnerable.*

*This is why the issue of leaving is one that needs to be handled sensitively and with care. When this does not happen, people can be left feeling rejected, abandoned, isolated and even to blame. At a systemic level this contributes to further marginalising and devaluing vulnerable people.*

*So we are including this piece in the hope that it offers some insight and understanding of the lived experience of those with paid support in their lives...*

*The following contains some tips for support workers when leaving a client. For those of you who continually strive to do the right thing by clients, I apologise if this comes across as 'carer-bashing'*

The 'Do's and Don'ts' of Leaving with 'Cred'

**Do** try to give as much notice as possible. I know it's just a casual position and that you are not required to give notice, but please try to let common courtesy prevail and understand from the client's perspective how disruptive staff changes can be.

**Don't** leave it to the last two days, last day, 1 hour before, 20 minutes after your shift is meant to start to tell us you are leaving. I know that change happens fast and some things are out of your control, but doing this is just plain rude and disrespectful.

**Do** tell us yourselves that you are leaving and allow an opportunity for the appropriate goodbyes. This may be hard, but we will respect you more for your honesty and integrity.

**Don't** pass the buck to the lifestyle workers or the coordinator who are already probably stressed out by having to fill shifts in your wake.

**Definitely don't** leave it to the client to have to ring the after-hours on-call service to find out where you are.

**Do** say something about what your time with us has meant to you, how much you've appreciated getting to know us, what you've gained (besides a paycheck) from being in our lives. Starting this conversation may result in some well-deserved positive feedback coming your way.

**Don't** assume you owe us nothing. Chances are we've spent countless hours voluntarily listening to all of your woes and being your informal counsellor.

**Do** realize that if there has been a special connection made, a client may go out of their way to make your last shift special ie. by buying you a small parting gift etc.

**Don't** throw this in the client's face by not even turning up.

**Do** realize that our, at times, 'challenging behaviour' or 'distant behaviour' can often be a direct result/reaction to how we are treated by you. If we are treated like children we will behave like children. If we are treated disrespectfully, we will act disrespectfully towards you. If you show us the 'professional wall of distance', we will be distant toward you.

**Don't** give out behaviour you are not willing to receive back.

**Do** remember that we are human beings with all the range of common human emotions. If you demonstrate this to us, we will more than likely show you the same respect.

**Don't** assume that your behaviour will have little or no effect on us.

**By an Often Disappointed Client**

## Public Housing

In previous newsletters, QDHC has discussed and given some feedback on the upcoming changes to social housing under the 'One Social Housing System'. One of the things that QDHC predicts as the social housing system becomes more targeted to people in highest need, is that there may be an increase of people with disability and people with so-called high support needs living in public housing.

Because of this potential trend, it is really important for people to become involved in processes of tenant participation as one means for people with disability to collectively have a voice in articulating their housing needs and issues. Currently, one way of doing this is to become involved in the work of Queensland Public Tenant's Association (QPTA). Here we have asked QPTA to talk a little about their statewide branch structure and how people can become engaged in speaking up about tenant issues.

***We strongly encourage members who are public housing tenants to get involved in QPTA's local tenant groups so that QPTA is able to get to know your issues and potentially carry them forward***

### Introducing the Queensland Public Tenants Association Inc

The Queensland Public Tenants Association Inc. (QPTA) is an association funded to assist public tenants to have a voice in relation to issues that concern them with the Australian Housing System.

QPTA comprises up to 17 delegates, selected by Regional Tenant Groups throughout Queensland. These delegates provide input to the development of the workplan for QPTA and also provide the link between the organisation and regional and local tenant groups.

QPTA also has associate members who are individuals or groups who wish to support the activities of the organisation.

#### ***What does QPTA do?***

QPTA was incorporated in 1996 and has been government funded since the end of 1999. The functions of QPTA include to:

- Provide opportunities for tenants through Regional Tenant Groups to assist in the development of broad housing policy statements;
- Provide input to the Department of Housing about specific projects and programs;
- Distribute information of interest to members;
- Produce a regular newsletter for tenants..

#### ***How do I connect with QPTA?***

The best way to become involved with QPTA is by joining your nearest Regional Tenant Group, or by becoming an Associate Member of QPTA.

#### ***Associate Membership***

Associate Members receive:

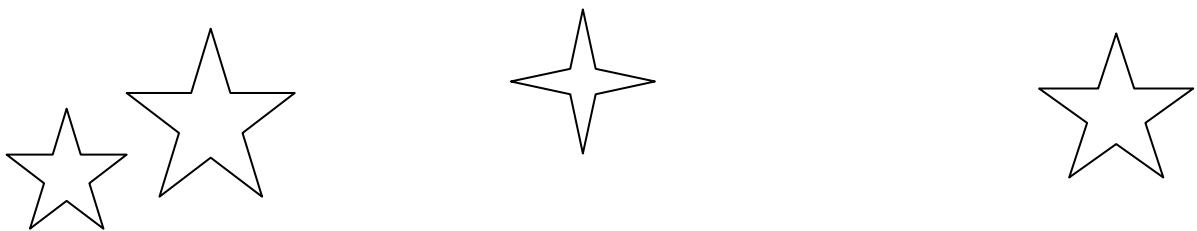
- Quarterly newsletters;
- Invitations to the QPTA AGM and other housing related forums;
- Opportunity to contribute articles or information to QPTA's newsletter and website;
- Information provided via electronic mail-out (e-mail address required);

- Satisfaction from supporting public tenants, and their organisation!

### ***Regional Tenant Group Membership***

Each Regional Tenant Groups operates slightly differently, but as a general rule membership is open to people living in public housing or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rental Housing, as well as other people interested in social and public housing.

For further information about Associate Membership or contact details for your nearest Regional Tenant Group, please contact the QPTA office on (07) 3393 2455, e-mail: [qpta@dovenetq.net.au](mailto:qpta@dovenetq.net.au), or visit our website at [www.qpta.com.au](http://www.qpta.com.au)

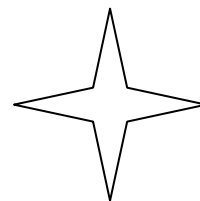
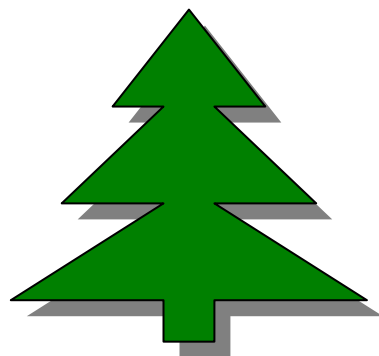
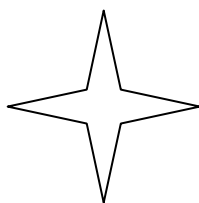


The staff and management committee of  
QDHC

Would like to wish you a very  
MERRY CHRISTMAS

and

HAPPY NEW YEAR



**QLD DISABILITY HOUSING COALITION**  
**ABN: 26 280 884 781**  
**Membership Application/Renewal Form**  
**Tax Invoice**

**NAME:**.....

**ADDRESS:**.....

.....**POST CODE**.....

**TELEPHONE:**.....**EMAIL ADDRESS:** .....

**PREFERRED FORM OF COMMUNICATION**

(Email, Post, TTY, Fax, Phone, Other) .....

1. I would like to obtain/renew membership of the Qld Disability Housing Coalition Incorporated and agree to abide by its Constitution and Rules. I understand the annual membership fees are:

**MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION**

<b>ORGANISATIONS</b>	<b>\$22 (GST included)</b>
<b>INDIVIDUAL</b>	<b>\$16.50 (GST included)</b>
<b>INDIVIDUAL (Concession)</b>	<b>\$ 5.50 (GST included)</b>

**OR**

2. I would like to make a donation to the Queensland Disability Housing Coalition Incorporated.

\$ .....

I enclose a Cheque/Money order made payable to the Qld Disability Housing Coalition Incorporated for the amount of:

\$ .....

I am joining/subscribing to the Coalition because:

.....

**SIGNED:**.....**DATE**.....

*Please return to:*  
**QLD DISABILITY HOUSING COALITION INC**  
**PO BOX 440**  
**STONES CORNER QLD 4120**