



Quarterly Newsletter



December 2018

From the CEO's desk...



It is still only November and Scarlett is asking for my contribution towards the December newsletter!!!! The festive season is just around the corner though and our busy lives get even busier as we look forward to catching up with family and friends. We all have our own traditions for the festive season and for our family it is a traditional hot roast with all the trimmings. I love it and I love how inventive we are getting in not making the house too hot from all that cooking – the men are now in charge and out they go to their BBQ's and roast the meat and vegetables whilst us women stay inside house and hope the food isn't being burnt. Not politically correct but it works for us. Like most families, our members have spread far and wide and some Christmases are a lot quieter than others – we still haven't learnt to scale back the food quantity though – and we always take time to reflect on those who are not so lucky to have extended family to participate. If anyone is planning on spending the day by themselves then reach out to some of the community luncheons and maybe volunteer to help or just enjoy a great meal with great company.

Christmas time is followed soon after by the start of a new year. I no longer make New Year resolutions because they were usually forgotten about within the first week. I do though like to think about what I might achieve and where I will be at the same time the following year. At no stage during the new year celebrations for 2018 did I envisage working at Coast to Country Housing and moving to Townsville. Opportunities sometimes present themselves at unexpected times and it is important that we never stop looking for new opportunities.



The recent tenant survey was well supported by our tenants and a big thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey. Your thoughts and comments will guide us in how we can continue to improve our service to you. We welcome feedback at any time though, so please give us a call, speak to your housing specialist or drop into the Housing Connections Centre during opening hours.

Coast to Country recently signed an agreement with Cootharinga NQ to property and tenancy manage the residential and commercial properties they own in Townsville, Cairns and Mackay. We are excited by this partnership and being able to share our housing management skills with another community-based organisation. We also welcome Cootharinga clients as our tenants. This partnership is also giving Coast to Country the opportunity to work closely with housing organisations in both Cairns and Mackay and we hope that this work will even further strengthen sector networks.

I would like to personally thank the team (Staff and Board) at Coast to Country for being so welcoming to me and I look forward to working with you to face the challenges that 2019 will bring.

To everyone have a wonderful festive season!

– stay safe, stay cool and stay in touch.

Elvene



WELCOME ANNE

This month we welcomed Anne to the team, she will be taking over Daniels' old role as a Housing Specialist. So, if you see her out at your property don't be afraid to say hello 😊



How would you describe yourself?

- I'd describe myself as mature and friendly

What work were you doing before C2C?

- Before working at C2C I was working as a Housing Specialist for another company

Country you would most like to visit and why?

- I'd love to visit the Greek Islands because they look beautiful

What is your favourite colour?

- My favourite colour is Blue

What are your pet hates?

- My pet hate is when people don't use their manners

Who would you most like to meet and why?

- Anyone that is interesting

If a genie gave you a wish, what would you wish for?

- No more wars or hatred



WELCOME TAYLA

This month we also welcome Tayla to the team. Tayla has been with C2C for a few months doing a traineeship, but she is now Coast to Country's new Client Service Officer. So, if you ever are in the office make sure you say hello 😊



How would you describe yourself?

- I'd describe myself as friendly and outgoing, I'd like to think I'm welcoming to tenants.

What work were you doing before C2C?

- Before working at C2C I was working fulltime at Optus in Willows Shopping Centre.

Country you would most like to visit and why?

- I'd love to visit England again because I have family there and I would love to be able to go and see them again.

What is your favourite colour?

- My favourite colour is purple

What are your pet hates?

- My pet hate is when people crack their necks

Who would you most like to meet and why?

- My future self so they can tell me all the winning lotto numbers

If a genie gave you a wish, what would you wish for?

- An infinity amount of wishes





FOCUS ON...

COMMON TENANCY ISSUES TO
HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Damages, Debts & Routine Inspections with **Coast to Country Housing Company**

If any damages happen whilst living in your property, you must get the damage fixed to a professional standard. A breach can be issued for damages by your Housing Specialist.

You will need to fix any damage prior to the breach inspection. If the breach is not remedied, which means damage has not been repaired or more damage has occurred a Notice to Leave can be issued.

These damages will only be fixed immediately if it is considered an OH & S issue. Also, we can organise a quote and you can pay into your non-rent account until there are sufficient funds to cover the quote.

If you vacate one of our properties with a debt, Coast to Country Housing Company are now proceeding with court action if payment plans are not entered or adhered too.

You will notice now on the back of your routine letters that we have a checklist, telling you what we are looking at when we come to inspect your home.

Coast to Country are here to help you sustain your tenancy and by following this checklist you will meet our property inspection expectations.

It is always best to contact your Housing Specialist and discuss these matters, so they can be dealt with accordingly.

WHEN & HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

When a neighbour or someone else in a unit complex is acting or doing something in a way that is disturbing the peace, comfort, and privacy of others, or is clearly breaking the rules set out in a tenancy agreement, Coast to Country should be notified. Even if you're not sure if something you've seen is a breach of the rules, it doesn't hurt to call us and check!

Complaints can be made to Coast to Country either by:

- **Phoning us on 4772 5530, Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm**
- **Emailing us at enquiries@c2chousing.org.au**
- **Submitting a letter, or coming to see us, at 296 Ross River Rd, Aitkenvale**
- **Sending a letter to PO Box 1252, Aitkenvale QLD 4814**
- **Clicking the 'Contact' button in the top-right corner of our website, and filling in the 'Drop Us A Line, Email C2C' section**

All complaints will be acknowledged by Coast to Country staff, so you can be assured we have received them.

Please ensure you supply as much detail as possible, so we can investigate the issue thoroughly. Details we like are:

- **Who was involved?**
- **What happened?**
- **When did it happen? What time, and what date?**
- **Where did it happen?**
- **Why did it happen? Did anything happen beforehand that caused the issue?**
- **Did the Police attend?**

All complaints are kept confidential, so don't worry about getting targeted yourself. Even though we record, investigate, and act on every complaint, we can't let you know the outcome – this is due to the privacy rights of all people involved.

REMEMBER

IF WE DON'T KNOW SOMETHING IS WRONG, THEN NOTHING WILL CHANGE!

SMOKE ALARM MAINTENANCE



Domestic Smoke Alarms

Legislation is now in effect requiring that all domestic Smoke Alarms in rental properties be upgraded to photo electric, interconnected devices prior to 1 January 2022.

There are also new rules governing where smoke alarms must be installed. In conjunction with the Department of Housing and Public Works and others, C2C has commenced a program of works to ensure that the requirements of the new legislation are met. In most cases this will mean the replacement of existing smoke alarms and the installation of some extras, particularly in bedrooms.

Under the new legislation, existing smoke alarms manufactured more than 10 years ago, as well as any smoke alarms that do not operate when tested, must be replaced with photoelectric smoke alarms that comply with Australian Standard 3786–2014. All smoke alarms should be interconnected within the dwelling. Where necessary, the new or upgraded smoke alarms will be installed by qualified electricians.

Testing and cleaning smoke alarms

During a tenancy in a domestic dwelling, the tenant must test and clean each domestic smoke alarm in the dwelling, at least once every 12 months.

To test a smoke alarm, press the 'test' button. Cleaning should be done according to the manufacturer's instructions, which is usually vacuuming. If the alarm does not sound when tested, report this to your C2C Housing Specialist without delay. You do not need to be qualified or licenced to clean or test a domestic smoke alarm.

Fire Alarm Systems

Some C2C properties are equipped with Smoke Detectors or Alarms that are integrated with a Fire Alarm Indicator Panel. The alarms and detectors at these properties are checked and tested regularly by licensed Fire Protection System technicians. This means you are not required to test your Smoke Alarm if you are unsure if you live in a property where all the alarms of the complex are linked you can **give us a call on 07 4772 5530**

Also, If you are uncertain about any of the above information and how it applies to you, please contact your Housing Specialist and they will be happy to help. For further information on Smoke Alarms refer to <https://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms/documents/QFES-InfoSheet-SAlnstall.pdf>



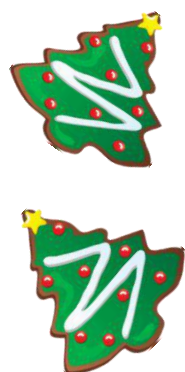
COAST TO COUNTRY HOUSING COMPANY CHRISTMAS CLOSURE TIMES

Coast to Country will be closed from 5pm Friday the 21st of December 2018 and reopen in the New Year on Wednesday the 2nd of January 2019 at 9am.

If you are unsure about your Emergency Maintenance contact numbers, please call the office on 07 4772 5530 ASAP.



CHRISTMAS TREE BROWNIES



Ingredients

- ❖ 1 box of Brownie Mix
- ❖ 1 tub of white vanilla icing
- ❖ Green Food colouring
- ❖ Small round sprinkles
- ❖ Small star sprinkles
- ❖ Candy canes

Instructions

1. Line all 4 sides of baking pan with aluminium foil and spray with cooking spray.
2. Prepare the brownie mix according to the package directions and bake as directed.
3. Allow brownies to completely cool, approximately 1.5 hours.
4. Remove the brownies from the pan and cut into triangles.
5. Unwrap the candy canes and use a sharp knife to gently cut/break the candy canes into 1.5" long pieces.
6. Press the sharper end of the candy cane into the bottom of the brownie triangles.
7. Spoon out approximately ½ of the tub of icing into a bowl.
8. Add green food colouring until you're happy with the colour.
9. Spoon the green icing into a zip lock bag.
10. Seal the bag and cut off a small corner of the bag with sharp scissors.
11. Starting at the top of the brownie triangles, gently squeeze out the icing in a curvy zigzag as you go down the tree.
12. Add your favourite sprinkles and a small star sprinkle at the top.
13. Enjoy!





What to do if you are going away!

Everyone needs to go away from time to time. If you are going away for more than a few days, it really helps if you tell us. Otherwise, we might think that you've abandoned your home. Leaving your house or unit empty for a while is fine but certain things should be done to ensure you have peace of mind that you will return to a home that is safe, clean and welcoming.

Some of the reasons that you might go away include:

- family holidays
- you or someone in your family is sick, in hospital or in respite
- you must travel because of a family emergency
- you are studying somewhere away from your home

Contacting Coast to Country Housing prior to leaving your property to discuss your situation is the best way to ensuring your tenancy rights and responsibilities are in place.

Some practical things you can do include:

- Provide contact details in case there is a need to contact you - email, phone or the place that you are going to.
- Make sure your rent is paid and any reporting requirements are sorted prior to going. This will help to avoid rent falling behind and other issues occurring.
- Plan for someone to collect your mail: A build-up of mail can be an indicator that no one has been home for awhile
- If you are expecting bills to arrive during your absence have a plan in place. For example, check when your electricity is due to be paid and pay in advance if needed so that you aren't cut off on your return.
- Move items of value - including sentimental value, out of sight if they're visible from a window. Curtains may be closed but this can draw attention, consider leaving curtains and blinds as you would when you are home since noticeable changes could hint that you're not around.
- Unplug your television, toaster oven, and other appliances to protect them from power surges. This will help you save power as well; many appliances draw energy even when they're turned off.
- Bring in any outdoor items that may be stolen or be a damage in the event of strong wind/cyclone.
- Take the rubbish out and if you are going away for more than a week, clean out the fridge so items that might go off aren't there when you return, items like milk, fruit.
- Please tell us who you have asked to keep an eye on the home if you do ask someone.

MONEY SAVING TIPS!

Maximize Your Budget,
Watch Your Money Grow!



How to Save -

- Learn to cook with cheaper cuts of meat.
- Buy seasonal fruit & vegetables or try frozen for out of season.
- Prepare your own food for kid's school lunches, rather than buying commercial snacks etc. For example: Popping your own popcorn is cheaper than buying already popped or in those pre-prepared microwave bags and are very handy for school lunches.
- Cooking in bulk and freezing always ensures you have meals on hand for those moments when you're tempted to buy takeout.
- Utilise your left overs
- Online grocery shop and pick up. This may reduce the chance you will overspend and suffer from check-out shock when you go to pay.
- Write out your meals & what is needed instead of just going to the shops
- Buy in bulk for those pantry items you go through a lot of, such as rice and small packets for things that go off quickly.
- Track specials on supermarket apps or through the catalogues
- Save electricity by switching off and unplugging items
- Find a bank with no transaction fees on everyday accounts
- Pay a small amount of your bill weekly, instead of waiting for them to come. This will reduce the amount you will have to pay when you get the bill.
- Shop around for bigger items such as fridges, tv's etc

If you have children attending school, you may be able to utilise the Saver Plus program to help with the cost of education. More info here: <https://www.bsl.org.au/services/money-matters/saver-plus/>

Other tips:

- Track your spending, there are heaps of apps available these days to assist you to track spending, and lots of them are free, try some out to see what works for you.
- There are also plenty of websites with loads of tips to save money, try:

<https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/managing-your-money/budgeting/simple-ways-to-save-money>



10 Activities for you and the kids

We try to have fun together as a family, often for free or without spending much money. I thought it would be useful to list some ways to have fun with your kids without spending a lot of money:

- Have a reading marathon.
- Write stories together.
- Play soccer.
- Paint or draw together.
- Create a fort in your living room out of blankets or cardboard boxes.
- Go on a hike.
- Have a sunset picnic at a park or beach.
- Play board games.
- Play kickball.
- Get up early, pack breakfast, and have a sunrise breakfast.

LET'S HAVE FUN!!!



CUTEST PET WINNERS!

As part of our yearly tenant participation, Coast to Country Housing Company hosted the first Pet Competition. Thank you to all the entrants. It was a very hard choice selecting each of the category winners. This year's entrants reside across Townsville, living in Pimlico, Hyde Park, South Townsville, North Ward and Aitkenvale.

DOGS

First Place – NARLA

Narla is a Chihuahua x Wire Haired Terrier. Narla's owner said, "the reason she has a beard is the wire-haired terrier coming out and that is what makes her so cute".



Runner Up – RUSTY

Rusty is a French Bulldog and loves going for walks but also doesn't mind a cuddle or two.



CATS

First Place – SEAL

Seal is a domestic shorthaired cat and she likes to lounge around and relax while keeping her owner company.



Runner Up – Z

Z is a domestic shorthaired cat is active and her owner spent quite a bit of time trying to get her to pose for her photo



BIRDS

First Place – STEAMY

Steamy is a rainbow lorikeet and enjoys being out of his cage and sitting on his owner's shoulder.



Runner Up – MAX & SAVAGE

Max & Savage are Cockatiels and they have their owner's balcony as their open-air cage where they are free to fly around and look out over the balcony to keep up with what's going on outside.



SNAKES

First Place – ROCKY

Rocky is a jungle python and likes to be held. Rocky likes to explore the outdoors as well as exploring his cage.



Runner Up – GODZILLA

Godzilla is a coastal carpet python and he likes to slither around and curl up around the leg of a table or on your lap.



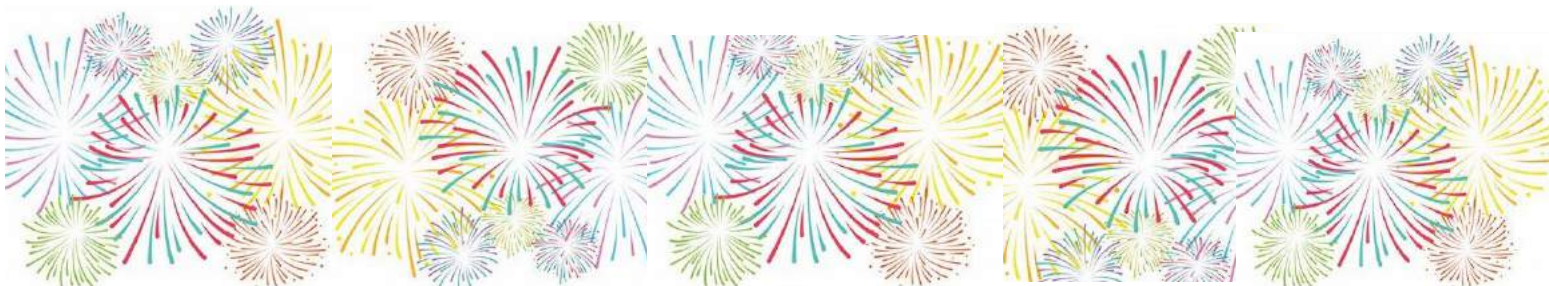
Thank you to everybody who entered! We hope your pets love their prizes 😊



SURVEY WINNERS

C2C would like to extend a huge THANK YOU! to all of you who returned your 2018 Annual Tenant Surveys. We received lots of great feedback that will help us to continue to provide a pathway home for current and future clients. The information collected has been collated and reported in our 2018 Annual Report, which is available on our website if you're interested in reading it!

Tenant Survey Winners have been notified already 🥳



"What's On?"

IN THE AREA

STABLE ON THE STRAND:

Townsville's Christmas Festival, Stable on the Strand, celebrates its 17th birthday in 2018 at Townsville's premier event location, Strand Park. Stable on the Strand is one of Australia's most spectacular Christmas events

When: 18th Of December 2018

Where: The Strand
The Strand, North Ward
4810 QLD

Cost: FREE



NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATIONS:

Welcome in the New Year in a relaxed, North Queensland style with Townsville City Council's New Year's Eve celebrations! Join them at any one of the locations for a fun family night out involving a movie on the big screen, food vendors, amusements and exciting fireworks display.

When: 31st Of December 2018

Where: The Strand
The Strand, North Ward
4810 QLD

Cost: FREE





Christmas Crossword



ACROSS

1. Pumpkin or mincemeat
3. Santa's ride
6. Celebration
8. Newborn
9. Northpole crew
13. Word of praise
14. Words on a Christmas card
17. It's opened on Christmas

DOWN

1. Alternative word to 17 across
2. Christmas drink
4. Christmas dinner centerpiece
5. Dec. holiday
7. Christmas warmer
8. "Jingle ____"
10. Christmas tree
11. O. Henry's "The Gift of the ____"
12. What carolers do
15. French Christmas.
16. Snow glider





*We would like to wish all our clients, partners,
supporting organisations, and the Townsville
community a very Merry Christmas, and a bright
and Happy New Year.*



This newsletter is compiled by Coast to Country Housing Company.
Some material is sourced from external sources