



SUMMER EDITION
DECEMBER 2022



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 Office closure over the Christmas and New Year period
- 4 Coping this Christmas: tips for looking after your mental health
- 6 Free financial counselling service

Dear readers of the Bugle,

Welcome to the December 2022 edition!

BHC has just celebrated 20 years of operations! What an incredible journey and what better way to celebrate this milestone than with you, our BHC residents, in our December 2022 edition of the Bugle.

I know we've had a tough couple of years with cost-of-living pressures, a complex and ever-changing global pandemic, Brisbane floods and as a result continued pressures surrounding housing and homelessness. However, despite the year's challenges, let's just take a moment to celebrate some wins. This year we have seen the Queensland Government's Housing Investment Fund commit to supporting up to 1,200 new social and affordable homes over the next few years in Queensland. For BHC this means we can build more much needed social and affordable homes.

This year the Resident Community Development (RCD) team have continued to work hard, alongside BHC staff from across the organisation, on a number of projects, such as reviewing and gaining resident input on existing processes, procedures and feedback mechanisms, identifying and collaborating on community issues, contributing ideas and articles to the Bugle and so much more!

Our BHC Operations Team have also rolled-out multiple projects aimed at supporting resident safety, emotional

wellbeing, health, social inclusion and economic participation. A number of these projects have been made possible by support from BHC's **Impact Fund** which aims to respond to emerging themes impacting BHC individuals and communities. So, I would like to thank you for taking this journey with us, and for the continued feedback and support you provide. It will be exciting to see what 2023 has in store- together we are well placed to face any opportunities and challenges that come our way.

In this edition you can find information about BHC office closures (p3) and events taking place in the local community during the holiday season (p7). We also know that this time of year can be challenging and many people may be experiencing loneliness, social isolation, stress and anxiety, depression or even grief and loss. This edition explores ideas for seeking mental health support in your community (p4) as well as support resources for end of year financial pressures (p6). We hope this information may be helpful.

That's it from me this edition.

Until next time, please keep well and for those that celebrate this season, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Looking forward to what we can achieve together over the next 20 years!

With kind regards,

Rebecca Oelkers, CEO



IN THIS EDITION

Office closure and other important information 3

Coping this Christmas: Tips for looking after your mental health 4

Free financial counselling service 6

Achieve your 2023 goals with our RPEC 6

What's on this festive season 7

2022 annual Resident End of Year Celebration! 8

BHC Bright Futures Responsive Fund is now open!

BHC's **Bright Futures** is designed to assist younger residents (under 18s) to enhance their educational outcomes, opportunities for social inclusion and general well-being.

Bright Futures has \$10,000 in grant funding to allocate to support young residents' educational and extracurricular needs. Grant funding can assist with the costs for uniform or school fees, extracurricular courses, hobbies or sporting fees, as well as health and medical supports.

Visit bhcl.com.au/impact for further information and eligibility criteria. For questions regarding the application process, please contact BHC's Community Development Team at impact@bhcl.com.au, telephone 3307 3000 or speak with your Housing Manager.

Apply now - applications will close once all funds have been allocated.

Office Closure Over the Christmas and New Year Period

The BHC office will be closed from **12:00pm Friday 23rd December 2022** and will reopen at **8:30am on Tuesday 3rd January 2023**. We wish all residents a safe and happy holiday period.

If you have a **maintenance emergency** during the office closure, **please call the main office on 3307 3000** to be redirected to the after-hours emergency line. Please be aware that during the shutdown period tenants will generally need to be at home to give access to trades if they need to attend for emergency maintenance as keys won't be as readily available from BHC.

Examples of Emergency Maintenance

- Burst pipes or significant water leaks / flooding
- Significant damage to the property (including storm damage, fire damage or vandalism)
- Blocked or broken toilets
- Loss of essential amenities (e.g. water, cooking / heating, extended loss of electricity)
- Dangerous electrical faults
- Damage which poses a threat to people's safety and wellbeing
- Lift not working, or any damage / incident which blocks access to or from the property

If you need to contact BHC about something which is not an emergency, please contact us when the office reopens on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

Visitors This Festive Season

For many the festive season can mean visitors. Whether it's friends, family, colleagues or supports, please remember that you are responsible for your guests when they are visiting your home. We hope you enjoy the festive season!

Your Rent

Even though the BHC office will be closed from midday 23rd December 2022 until 3rd January 2023, rent payments will still be processed as normal. Not paying your rent during this period could put your tenancy at risk. If you have a concern about your rent, please speak with your Housing Manager ASAP.

Policelink

If there is a crime, noise complaint, anti-social behaviour, or you feel that your personal safety is at risk, please **contact the police**.



Tenant Satisfaction Survey

The 2022 Tenant Satisfaction Survey has been delivered and residents who have received the survey are reminded to return this to BHC as soon as possible. This year you can complete your survey by hand using the survey posted to you, online (follow the link on the survey) or over the phone with help from BHC staff.

If you have any questions regarding your Tenant Satisfaction Survey, please contact our Community Development Team or your Housing Manager on 3307 3000.

Annual Income Review

Just a reminder that the annual income reviews has been sent out and it is **COMPULSORY** for all residents to complete this and return it to BHC. Please speak to your Housing Manager if you have any issues completing your income review and provide your documents as soon as possible.

Coping this Christmas

Tips for looking after your mental health during the festive season

The holiday season is meant to be a time of joy, but for many people it can be a time of stress and anxiety, disappointment, or loneliness. This time of the year comes with high expectations of perfect, happy families enjoying luxurious celebrations and gifts, but not all of us are able to live up to these ideals.

For those who have recently lost a loved one, or are not close with their family, the holiday season can intensify feelings of grief and sadness. Some people experience feelings of isolation, financial pressures or increased family conflict that can make this a very stressful time of year.

However, there are some steps you can take to help manage stress and anxiety during the festive period. If you're finding it difficult to manage your stress or anxiety, try healthdirect's symptom checker to get advice on when to seek professional help.

Taking care of money worries

Is the festive season a burden on your wallet? Here are some tips for managing your Holiday finances and reducing your financial stress during the silly season:

- Identify what's causing you financial stress. Buying gifts and attending social get togethers can be expensive. Plan ways to reduce spending. For example, you could suggest to your family and friends that you only buy gifts for the kids or organise a 'Secret Santa' among the adults. Set a budget and stick to it.
- Find low cost ways to have fun. Don't let money cut you off from your family and friends. If you can't afford expensive restaurant meals or cocktail catchups, organise a BBQ in the park or a party at home where everyone brings a plate of food.

Dealing with family tension

Just because you're related doesn't mean your family members will all get along. Split families and unresolved conflicts may contribute to holiday season anxiety. Family and relationship problems can be a trigger for anxiety.

Here are some ideas for getting through:

- Set realistic expectations. The holiday season might not be the fabulous family reunion you hoped for. Plan how you will manage any feelings of anxiety or depression that may arise.
- Put the kids first. If you have children, consider putting aside ongoing adult conflicts in their interest. Think about Christmas as a day for the kids and focus on enabling their happiness.
- Drink in moderation. It may be tempting to drink too much during the festive period, but alcohol can contribute to stress, anxiety, and depression. Alcohol may be a problem if you're drinking to cope.
- Avoid known triggers. If your family has a history of arguing over a certain topic, don't bring it up.

Managing loneliness

There are ways to overcome loneliness if you find yourself isolated or grieving a loved one over the festive period.

- Connect with friends and family. Even if you're separated by distance, you can stay in touch with loved ones online or by phone.
- Volunteer. Why not lend a hand to a local shelter over the holiday? There are lots of charities who need help. You'll connect with people and feel good about making a positive contribution.



- Attend community events. Find out what's on locally and get involved. Whether it's holiday carols or local markets, getting out and about can help relieve loneliness.
- Make plans for Christmas Day. Develop a plan in advance to avoid feeling depressed or stressed on the day. Perhaps make yourself a special breakfast, buy yourself a gift in advance so that you can enjoy on the day, attend a local church service, or take a stroll through the local park to give yourself a treat.
- Stay healthy to avoid festive season anxiety
- Recognising and changing behaviours that contribute to your stress will help you get through the festive season period. Remember to stay healthy, eating well, exercising, and getting enough sleep can help you cope with Christmas stress.

There are many free services available that offer mental health support. If your symptoms of stress, anxiety or depression are severe or long lasting, see a doctor who can make a diagnosis and arrange treatment.

If holiday season stress is getting too much for you and you need support, call Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636, or Lifeline on 13 11 14, to talk things through.

If you or someone you know is at risk of hurting themselves or someone else, call triple zero (000).

Additional services that might be helpful during the holiday season include:

Lifeline | Call 13 11 14

Short-term support for people who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping or staying safe
Confidential one-to-one support with a trained Lifeline telephone crisis supporter

Suicide Call Back Service | Call 1300 659 467

Suicide Call Back Service is a nationwide service providing 24/7 telephone and online counselling to people affected by suicide.

DV Connect/1800 Respect | 1800 811 811

Domestic and Family Violence 24/7 hotline

Mensline Australia | Call 1300 78 99 78

MensLine Australia is a telephone and online counselling service offering support for Australian men anywhere, anytime.

Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline | Call 1800 010 120

Gamblers Helpline | Call 1800 858 858

Free and confidential counselling and crisis support (24 hours, 7 days)

National Debt Helpline | 1800 007 007

For FREE advice on how to manage your debts, contact a financial counsellor Mon-Fri 9:30am – 4:30pm

FREE Financial Counselling Service

Offered by Tenants Queensland



This free service includes assistance with any matter in relation to debt such as:

- Rent arrears (overdue or outstanding rent) - current or previous properties
- Utility debt in current or previous properties - electricity, gas, phone, water
- Credit - such as loans, credit cards and consumer leases
- Fines - at any stage
- Complaints about your utility or credit

They can also assist with:

- Analysing your current financial situation
- Budgeting
- Managing your debt
- Advice and information on credit and bankruptcy
- Referring you to other services that may be able to help you

If you would like to know more, contact Tenants Queensland on:

Ph: 1300 744 263, 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday with extended hours to 7pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Visit: www.tenantsqld.org.au

Achieve your 2023 goals

With BHC's Resident Participation Employment Coordinator



Have you ever thought about volunteering in the community and don't know what to do or where to start?



Have you ever thought about studying a course (long or short) but don't know what to do or where to start?



Have you ever thought about returning to the workforce or applying for a second job and don't know what to do or where to start?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, our Resident Participation and Employment Coordinator, Anthony, may be able to help you!

Email anthony.campbell@bhcl.com.au or SMS **0417 361 506** to find out how we can assist with your training, volunteering or work goals.



WHAT'S ON THIS FESTIVE SEASON



Brisbane City Hall Lights : 9 - 24 December - every 15 minutes from 7:30pm to midnight. Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane City

Be amazed by the magic of Christmas at The Lott by Golden Casket City Hall Lights as Brisbane's iconic City Hall is immersed in a vibrant visual and audio display that can't be missed.

Cost: FREE



The South Bank Christmas Show: 17 - 21 December, 5:30pm and 7:00pm. South Bank Piazza, South Bank Parklands

A much-loved Christmas tradition returns this year with a colourful Christmas pantomime taking to the stage at South Bank Piazza. ELFIES! is an all-singing, all-dancing, all-ages spectacle that gives audiences a side-splitting glimpse into what really happens at the North Pole.

Cost: \$6. Bookings essential through Ticketek



Christmas Cinema: 17 - 22 December, 6:00pm & 8:00pm. River Quay Green, South Bank

Roll out the picnic rug in River Quay's spectacular open-air cinema for a free double-feature screening of some Christmas classics. Scan the QR code for list of movies.



Cost: FREE



Santa's Stopover: 17 - 22 December, Flowstate, South Bank

Take a selfie with the man of the moment at Santa's Stopover, a free photo station at South Bank's Flowstate Pavilion. To reserve your spot, visit the entrance booth an hour before your preferred session time. Photo sessions run from 4:00 - 9:30pm.

Cost: FREE



COMMUNITY LUNCHES & HAMPERS

Community and Suncorp Christmas Day Lunch - Sunday 25 December

This is an inclusive celebration for those who are experiencing homelessness, hardship or would be spending the day alone. Enjoy a 3 course lunch, live entertainment, gift bags and more! *Bookings essential, contact Community on 3510 2700 before 16th December 2022 to secure your spot.

New Farm Neighbourhood Centre Lunch - Tuesday 20 December, 11:00am-1:00pm. 967 Brunswick Street, New Farm

Wesley Mission Wesley Mission Christmas Lunch - Sunday 25 December
316 St Pauls Terrace, Fortitude Valley. Dine in and takeaway lunch from 12:00pm.
Ph: 07 3216 1579, no bookings required

Wesley Mission Red Bags - 12 - 23 December (Mon-Fri)
316 St Pauls Terrace, Fortitude Valley Ph: 07 3216 1579
Please bring ID to collect; no bookings required

thank you to all residents who joined us for the **2022 annual Resident End of Year Celebration!**

It was a fantastic event, with more than 70 BHC residents attending from over 10 different properties. The day included live music from Jacob Laube, delicious food from social enterprise caterers The Cookery Nook and The Baking Bunch, human bingo, and lots of lucky door prizes! We also took the opportunity to celebrate our 20th birthday, with residents sharing memories on a memory board, showcasing photos from previous events over the years. Finally, we also want to thank The Lord Mayors Charitable Trust who contributed to this event, helping to make it extra special!

Here are just a few of the photos from the day.



CONTACT US

Level 17, 333 Ann Street, Brisbane City
Monday - Friday - 8:30am - 5:00pm
Phone: 3307 3000
Email: reception@bhcl.com.au
Website: www.bhcl.com.au
Facebook: BHC Creating Liveable Communities
Instagram: BHC_Communities

HAVE YOU HAD A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE WITH BHC?

Would you like to tell someone? If you would like to leave us some positive feedback, you can write to us at feedback@bhcl.com.au or write us a review on our Google page.

YOUR FEEDBACK

To leave BHC feedback, lodge complaints and suggestions, please email: feedback@bhcl.com.au or write to: BHC Feedback, GPO Box 544, Brisbane Queensland 4001