

Thrive

Community Newsletter

December 2018



Featured Resident:
Elvis Martin

Welcome to the December Community Newsletter

**This edition includes
inspiring tenant stories,
tips to beat the heat
this summer and we
meet Unison's new CEO
Ed Holmes.**

Enjoy!

Unison tenant, off to visit the Queen!

Elvis Martin is one of Victoria's passionate young leaders advocating for social justice and is currently an Ambassador for the National Youth Commission Australia and RUOK? Day. Elvis recently returned to Australia after meeting the Queen of the Netherlands at the One Young World Summit in The Hague where he discussed global issues with other young leaders from around the world.

After a traumatic period that included disconnection from family, homelessness and rehabilitation through youth health services, Elvis made the decision to use his personal experiences to support and mentor young people going through tough times.

Elvis' areas of advocacy and interest include community wellbeing and health, homelessness, human rights, domestic violence, refugee rights and LGBTQIA+ issues. He volunteers with various organisations and is on a number of advisory groups and committees including the cohealth Youth Action Group. He also recently spoke at the National Homelessness Conference.

"I feel very proud of what I do", said Elvis. "It is very rewarding to be able to use my personal experience to help others."

Introducing Ed Holmes, Unison's CEO

Unison welcomed Ed Holmes as CEO in September. Ed has been with Unison for two and a half years as the Director of Corporate Services and has acted in the role of CEO a number of times. Unison's previous CEO Jack Panton resigned in September.

Ed has extensive experience in the community services sector having worked in senior roles across disability, aged care and justice before joining Unison. Prior to entering the community sector Ed was in senior management roles in the corporate sector, in mining and manufacturing.

On his CEO appointment, Ed said "I have been with Unison for more than 2 years and have visited our communities and met with tenants.

I am very much looking forward to leading Unison as we build more affordable homes for those people who need it most and work with our tenants to create good communities where people are connected and feel supported."



Tenant Advisory Group update

In 2019 TAG will be recruiting new members. If you are interested in joining TAG and would like more information, please contact your Place Manager or visit the Unison website at www.unison.org.au/tenant-resources/tenant-advisory-group

The Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) is an important voice for tenants, providing valuable advice to Unison on ways to improve services, tenant engagement and meet the needs of tenants.

TAG members are selected by an expression of interest for a two year period on the group. The current TAG members are Frank Otis, Tuan Ibrahim, Senol Celiker, Erika Lodge, Ros Sultan, Sonny Resos, Jennifer Hodgson, Cameron Powell, Annette Hutchison and Colleen Howell.

This year TAG members have:

- Advised Unison on increasing positive tenant engagement including holding regular tenant meetings.
- Assisted with improved maintenance processes and communication, including input into the Tenant Newsletter maintenance feature.

- Advised regarding anti-social behaviour, including management approaches and early intervention. The issue is very complex and there is more work to be done.
- Provided feedback on Unison policies, research papers and other communications.



Summer's here!

Top tips to beat the heat

Extreme heat can affect your health, particularly older people, children and those with a medical condition. On hot days make sure you:

- Keep your home cool by closing windows and blinds during the heat of the day. Open windows in the evening to let cool air in.
- If you have air conditioning, make sure the temperature is switched to cool.

- Make sure you drink more water than usual to stay hydrated.
- Contact your local council for cool places you can get out of the heat, like libraries and swimming pools.



Tips to control pests in the warmer months

Warm weather can increase the number of household pests. To make your home unattractive to pests, follow these top tips:

- Keep bench tops clean.
- Keep food sealed in containers.
- Keep bins sealed tightly.
- Don't leave pet food out.
- Vacuum regularly.

Don't leave cardboard boxes lying around as cockroaches like to hide in boxes.

Wash clothing and bedding on a hot cycle to help to get rid of bed bugs and don't leave clothing and bedding on the floor.

Annual Report

The 2018 Unison Annual Report is now available. You can find the Report online at **www.unison.org.au/publications**. Hard copies are available at Unison offices.



Privacy update

Unison has recently updated its Privacy Policy. The policy covers: what information we collect, how it can be used, and the steps we take to ensure that information is kept securely.

We have also updated our easy to read Information Privacy Brochure.

You can find a copy of Unison's updated privacy policy, and the Information Privacy Brochure at **www.unison.org.au/tenant-resources** or by contacting your Place Manager.

Congratulations Mei

Kensington resident Xiao Mei Zhou, was recently awarded the Victorian Multicultural Award for Excellence. Mei has worked tirelessly for many years supporting and advocating for the local elderly Chinese community on funding for programs around healthy ageing and community connection.

Working with Unison and local organisations such as the Kensington Neighbourhood

House, Mei has organised English classes, community meals, weekly social get togethers, information sessions, computer classes and the Chinese choir.

According to Mei, the aim is for the elderly Chinese community to become involved in local events so they are less lonely and can adapt to their life here on Australia. Love your work Mei!



L-R. Deb Wilson Unison Community Engagement Manager, Xiao Mei Zhou and her husband Shu Shen Dong

Assistance if you need it

Life can be full of ups and downs and everyone needs support and assistance at some stage. There are a range of services across the community that can help with issues like parenting support, drug and alcohol issues, mental health

support, counselling, and material aid.

Your Place Manager is well connected and can help you to find services in your local area. You can also call Lifeline's 24 hour support line on **13 11 14 at any time.**

Season's Greetings from all of us at Unison and we wish you all the best in 2019

Our offices will remain open throughout the Christmas/New Year period.

We will be closed on the public holidays:

- Tuesday 25 December 2018
- Wednesday 26 December 2018
- Tuesday 1 January 2019

Feedback

If you have things you'd like to see in future newsletters, or any feedback on the current edition please call Pam on 03 9371 2000 or email info@unison.org.au

If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by email please let your Place Manager know.