

Winter Wrap

Dear Tenants,

Welcome to our winter newsletter – I think we are all waiting for that warmer weather!

This month, we are proud to share some photos from Welsby Street where volunteers from ADCO completed an amazing makeover in just one day! A huge thank you to ADCO and sponsors, Bunnings and Dulux.



We know that rises in the cost of living are really biting for people now. If you are having trouble making ends meet, including paying your rent, please talk to us as soon as possible. Our team have lots of contacts who can help with food, community support, accessing Centrelink, budgeting and more. We've included some helpful tips on page 4!

Bric is also installing solar smart technology in some of our properties thanks to a Queensland Government Climate Action Grant. Solshare will help lower the electricity costs for residents through solar power and the new technology even ensures each tenant receives an equal benefit!

We hope you find our newsletters useful – we try to provide a mix of news and helpful tips. We'd love to hear from you if you have ideas about what else to include!

Jane West
Chief Executive Officer

Are you due for your flu shot or COVID Booster?

This year we are already seeing a very high number of influenza (flu) cases in the community. The best defence against flu is an annual vaccination, so don't forget to check in with your local doctor or pharmacy about getting the jab. These are now available free to everyone.

It is also a timely reminder that while we don't hear too much about COVID-19 anymore, cases in Queensland continue to emerge. Talk to your doctor or a pharmacist about a booster.

For further information, please visit the Queensland Health website.



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Progress at Portwood Street

The Portwood Street development at Redcliffe is progressing well. The complex remains on track to be completed by October/November 2023. There will be 18 high quality, accessible one bedroom units, with secure building entry and private balconies – in a great location close to local community and health services.

Our builder – Paynters – is providing work experience for school leavers to help them get a qualification and an entry into the construction industry.



Bric welcomes the Premier



We were delighted to host the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and Meaghan Scanlon, Housing Minister, at our new retirement village housing complex at Clayfield recently.

Providing 37 much needed social housing units for seniors, we are proud to be working with Communitify Qld to provide not just homes, but a welcoming community for our tenants – with access to a range of supports.

We thank and acknowledge the Queensland Government Department of Housing for purchasing and upgrading the property.



Tenants Shona and Stephen meeting the Premier and Meaghan Scanlon, Housing Minister

Welsby Street Garden Makeover



ADCO Construction recently helped with a makeover of the common areas at one of our New Farm unit complexes.

Around 25 volunteers from ADCO descended on the site from early morning to complete a 'backyard blitz' style makeover to the common garden areas.

The actual work completed on the day included:

- Removal of old picnic table and replacement with communal bench seating.
- Installation of raised vegetable garden beds either side of the bench seating.
- Creation of a garden bed along the fence and planting of screening hedges.

- Paving of the garden area and a small section under the stairs.
- General painting of the communal garden areas.

It was wonderful to see some of our tenants enjoy a sausage sizzle, salads, and refreshments when the ADCO crew took a well-deserved break for lunch. Take a look at the before and after photos to see just what a difference they made!

Bric Housing would like to thank ADCO for their valued contribution and also acknowledge our sponsors, Dulux paints and Bunnings Warehouse.

Before



After



Help and Support for Bric Tenants



Council Cabs

Did you know that Brisbane City Council has a shared taxi service? It runs at scheduled times for residents who find it difficult to get to their local shops. The service will pick you up from your home and take you to your local shopping centre.



This service operates weekly in most Brisbane suburbs and twice weekly in some areas. You may be eligible to use Council Cabs if you are:

- Over 60 years old, or
- Mobility impaired, or
- A Pensioner Concession Card or Centrelink Seniors Card holder.

Each one-way trip costs between \$1.00 and \$2.50 – payable on the day to the driver. For further information on this service, please call (07) 3403 8888 or see: www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/traffic-and-transport/public-transport/council-cabs

Free dental care



Did you know the Queensland Government provides free public dental services to eligible people? You must be a Queensland resident and receive benefits from any of the following concession cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card issued by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Pensioner Concession Card issued by Centrelink
- Health Care Card
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
- Queensland Seniors Card

More details can be found at: www.qld.gov.au/health/services/oral-eye-ear/dental-services

New rebate when you buy an energy efficient appliance

The Queensland Government has announced a new rebate when purchasing energy efficient appliances.

Rebates of up to \$1000 are available on washing machines, fridges, dryers, dishwashers, air-conditioners and hot water systems.

Households that meet the Low Income Tax Offset threshold as defined by the ATO will be able to claim the highest rebate.

Find out more at queenslandsavers.qld.gov.au/

Mobile Support Team

Do you need some support with your housing situation? The Salvation Army's Mobile Support Team provides support to people in the Brisbane and Moreton Bay areas who may need help maintaining their tenancies. The team provide:

- Housing support and advocacy
- Community engagement and participation
- Tenancy and living skill guidance
- Budgeting and goal setting support
- Direct support in accessing legal, health, financial and other services

Please contact your Tenant Services Officer or contact the Mobile Support Team direct on (07) 3832 1491 or via e-mail at mobilesupportteam@salvationarmy.org.au

Managing your energy bills

If you are worried about your energy bills visit Energy Consumer Australia (ECA) Consumer Advice Hub.

New resources have recently been added for households struggling with energy bills, including:

- Save on your energy bill if you are a senior
- Lower energy bill as a renter
- Reduce energy use on a budget

Just click on the link for "What support can I access if I'm struggling to pay my energy bills?" at www.energyconsumersaustralia.com.au/consumer-advice

Solshare

What is it and how does it work?

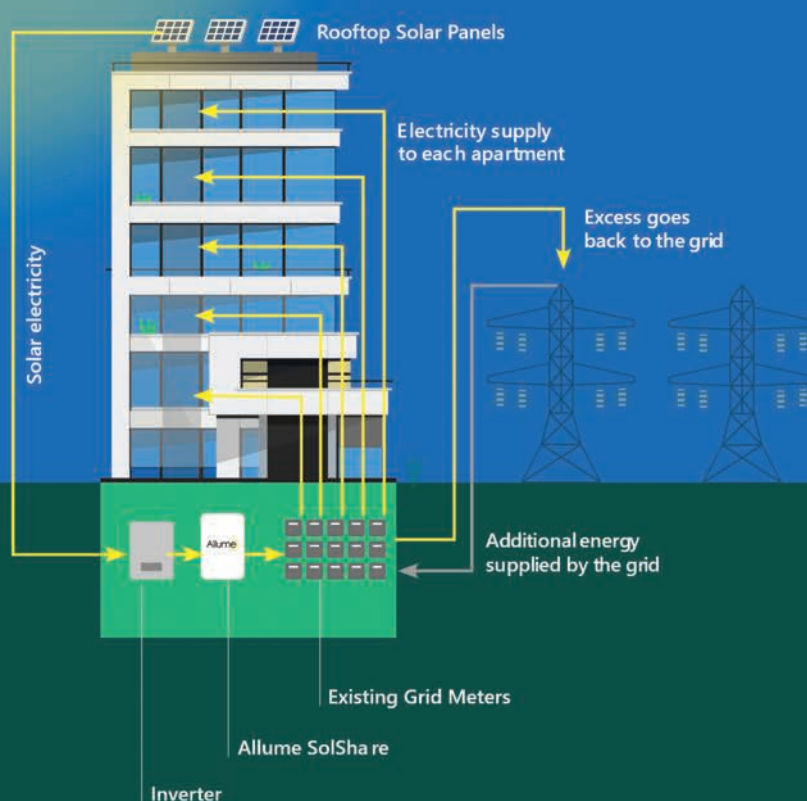
We are all aware that the cost of living is rising. In a first for social housing in Queensland, Bric Housing is installing solar panels and Solshare smart technology units in our Portwood Street development, as well as at Bric properties in New Farm and Enoggera.

Solshare works by sending all the output generated by the rooftop solar panels to an inverter. The inverter is connected to the Solshare central meter panel (switchboard), which can then direct power according to demand in each apartment via the individual apartment electricity meters.

The Solshare unit measures the quantity of solar delivered to each apartment and ensures that each apartment receives the same amount over the course of a month. **This means that each tenant receives an equal benefit.** The external electricity grid is still connected for those times when demand exceeds supply within the building, and any excess solar electricity can be fed back into the external grid.

Installation is expected to be complete by October. This innovation has been made possible by the Queensland Government Climate Action Grant program – and better yet, the technology is Australian designed and made. It is hoped that Solshare will lower the electricity costs for residents in these buildings.

www.allumeenergy.com/au/how-it-works/







Lithium Batteries



Rechargeable batteries like lithium-ion or Li-ion batteries are commonly used in consumer electronics like smartphones, laptops, and e-scooters.

There is risk associated with using these batteries if they are not handled correctly, such as overheating, fire, and explosion. If you notice any signs of overheating, such as heat, smoke, or sparks, **immediately unplug your device and take it to a cool place away from people and objects.** Do not douse it with water, as water is ineffective against electrical fires and this will also destroy the device.

Please follow these safety rules to keep you, your family, and those around you protected:

-  Only use charging cables that have been approved by the manufacturer.
-  Do not charge your device if it is damaged, swollen, cracked, or leaking – and do not use damaged charging cables.
-  Only charge your device while you are awake and present.
-  Do not cover your device with anything while it is charging – and do not charge your device on or near flammable materials such as curtains, carpets, or paper, or near heat sources, such as ovens, radiators, or in direct sunlight (and especially not on windowsills or in parked cars).

Bric takes the safety of our tenants and neighbours seriously. If people or property are at risk, immediately call 000 – and then call the Bric Maintenance phone line on 07 3230 5542.



If you have an e-scooter, e-bike, or mobility scooter – please charge these devices in the open air. Be aware that devices should not be left in hallways that are also emergency fire exits, as this is potentially dangerous and also an offence.

Please restrain your dog when meter readers are coming



Do you own a dog, and is your meter behind a front fence? Meter readers generally will not enter your property unless you are home to confirm your dog is restrained or the meter reader can see that your dog is restrained.

You can register your dog with your utility provider so that they are aware you have a pet. You can also check your last bill which will give you an estimated date when your next meter read is due.

Following these simple tips will ensure the meter readers can enter your property safely and conduct the reading. This will also minimise the instances of your provider having to complete an 'estimated' meter read.

Do you live in a unit complex where the meter cupboard is locked? Would you like to get access to read your meter so you can let your utility provider know? Please contact your Tenant Services Officer, they will make arrangements to give you access.

Meet the Team

Tim | Asset Services Officer

How long have you worked for Bric?

I just started with Bric this year!

What is your favourite part of your job?

Meeting tenants from all walks of life via phone and in person if I am out of the office.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up on the southside of Auckland, New Zealand in a suburban town called Manurewa.

How do you like to relax?

To relax, I like to watch sport or chill out with the pets.

Tell us about your pets!

I have 2 cats (Yoda & Simba) and two dogs (Xena & Zeus) I'm a bit of an animal lover lol.

Do you have any secret talents or unusual hobbies?

I play a few musical instruments, I used to play in the church band back in NZ!

If you won lotto, what's the first thing you'd buy?

I'd purchase a home somewhere beautiful here in Queensland.

What was the best holiday you ever went on?

To date.. it would have to be Bali when I went for my birthday last year.



Staying Safe Online

Protection of tenant information is a very high priority for Bric Housing. Here are some things you can do to guard your own information whenever you are online:

1. Only use trusted wi-fi networks when accessing email or sensitive websites like internet banking or My-Gov. Brisbane City Council and Telstra cannot guarantee that the free public wi-fi is secure and they do not recommend accessing this wi-fi for sensitive websites.
2. Be cautious with links and attachments – if you are the slightest bit unsure, do not open it!
3. Avoid giving out personal information or log-in credentials to unsolicited calls, texts, or emails. Hang up or delete the message, then call the company back on their main line to check if the reason you are being contacted is legitimate.
4. Keep your software up to date, use spam filters, and regularly review your privacy settings in all your accounts.
5. Use strong, unique passwords and enable two-factor authentication (where you are sent a text message to confirm your identity) for added security. You can use a password app to save all those passwords!



Microwave Chocolate Mug Cake – a quick and yummy treat!

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup (50g) self-raising flour (or gluten free flour)
- 2 tbs brown sugar
- 1 tbs cocoa powder
- 1/4 cup (60ml) milk (or milk replacement, e.g. oat or almond)
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste or vanilla essence
- 1 egg (or another 1 tbs olive oil, if you have an egg allergy)
- 20g of your favourite chocolate (or chopped nuts, smashed Oreo biscuits, etc)

How to do it:

1. Combine all the dry ingredients in a large mug.
2. Add the wet ingredients (whisk the egg a little first) and stir to combine all ingredients until you have a smooth batter.



3. Drop the chocolate into the middle of the batter if you want to have an oozy centre; otherwise you can mix the chocolate, nuts, or smashed biscuits into the batter.
4. Cook in the microwave on high for 1 minute and 15 seconds.
5. Remove from the microwave and let cool for 5 minutes before digging in or add ice cream, cream, or custard.

(Note: tsp = teaspoon (5g), tbs = tablespoon (15g/ml))

Free Library Services and fun activities



How long has it been since you visited your local library? They have come a long way since the days of having your library book card stamped for taking out and returning your books!

Libraries still lend books to people, but they are also a place to learn, connect with others, and relax. Libraries now run free events, including training courses, learning workshops, performances and exhibitions. For further information on locating your local library and the activities that you could take advantage of, please visit:

www.qld.gov.au/families/government/libraries

Free activities in your area

Did you know that Brisbane City Council and Moreton Bay Council regularly runs a variety of free and affordable activities for residents? How does a session of Yoga or Tai Chi sound? For the more adventurous, what about kayaking? If you are looking for some extra fitness, why not try tennis or boxing classes.

All ages, fitness levels and abilities are welcome. For more information on these and other fun and health activities, please visit:

www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/things-to-see-and-do/outdoor-activities/active-and-healthy-events

www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Services/Sport-Recreation/Healthy-Active