

CO-OPERATIVELY SPEAKING

2019 ISSUE 04



BETTER HOUSING SOLUTIONS

NEW ENVIRONMENTALLY - SUSTAINABLE CO-OP HOUSING IN BRUNSWICK

CEHL was successful in a bid for a \$4.29+M grant from the Victorian Governments' Victorian Property Fund to assist building a multi-story apartment development in Brunswick.

Subject to council planning approval, it is anticipated that this multi-story development will comprise sixteen apartments, featuring a rooftop garden, greenhouse, shared laundry facilities and space for a commercial business on the ground floor.

The building is designed for enhanced thermal performance and lower running costs for households. The project is scheduled to complete in 2021.

***Contributing to a revitalised,
innovative and affordable
housing system***

We love to hear your stories email newsletter@cehl.com.au

News from the Chair



Welcome to the Summer edition of Co-operatively Speaking. This issue has many great contributions from co-op members and CEHL staff, and I hope provides you with some enjoyable co-operative inspiration!

Annual General Meeting

Our recent Annual General Meeting was a fantastic success, which I measure by the outstanding questions from members about the finance reports and company activities. I am so proud of, and humbled by, the contributions that our members continue to deliver 34 years into our co-operative journey. It was fabulous to see some new faces in the room, both new members and some members returning after 'a few years off'. Thank you all!

Acknowledgements

We have several long-term contributors moving on from advisory groups, our Board and board committees. I thank the following people for their commitment and support of our co-operative housing program:

David Williams – Board Director (2003 – 2019)

Karren Walker – Board Director (2005 – 2019) and,
Chair of the Board (2009 – 2018)

Joel Chibert – Board Director (2012 – 2019)

Ed David – Independent Advisor to the Property
Committee (2012 – 2019)

Welcome

Our members have elected three new Directors for a two-year term at the recent AGM:

Robyn Evans – Merri CERC
Fiona Herman – Endeavor CERC
Heidi Lee – Merri CERC

We have also appointed two external experts:

Samantha Winter – Finance expert
Keith Bayliss – Asset management expert

We will be making further introductions to the new and ongoing directors early next year.

Looking ahead

In 2020, CEHL will continue to improve member services and engagement, as well as develop key initiatives designed to support these.

I am looking forward to hearing the outcomes from the *Company Rent and Affordability Benchmark Advisory Group*, and seeing these linked to our long-term financial forecast so that we can better predict our future property and finance options.

Opportunities to contribute

During 2020 we will be recruiting to fill independent advisor roles in 'Property', 'Finance' and 'People, Culture and Governance' committees. These are skills-based appointments and I would like to invite all members with property, governance or change management skills to register your interest in joining a board committee as an independent expert advisor.

Thank you again for a very special 2019, and I look forward to continuing our co-operative journey in 2020.

Heidi Lee
CEHL Chairperson

Managing Director's Report



The CEHL Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 30 November, is a major highlight of the year. It is such a privilege to be involved in something as special as the CEHL Co-operative Housing Program, which remains a radical and successful approach to providing housing.

Victoria has a current and worsening housing and health crisis associated with isolation and loneliness. Housing provision is a big part of the answer, but how that housing is provided will determine the range of potential outcomes.

Governments and communities will realise that co-operative housing solutions involving people working together, contributing their skills, being part of something that builds community and supports each other – achieves outcomes way beyond traditional housing models.

We will be pursuing ways to provide evidence that supports the claims we make about how amazing this Program is, and how much it needs support to grow.

The AGM always brings rich and interesting conversations and contributions from co-op members. I am encouraged each year, that people right across Victoria, make the effort to be part of this important event.

This year we experimented by following the AGM with a consultation session with co-ops and there seemed to be a lot of enthusiasm for doing something similar again. This time we consulted co-ops on a proposal to set up a new 'Co-op Program Advisory Committee' of the CEHL Board. We will be sharing on the portal feedback about this proposal and all questions asked at the AGM.

Wherever this ends up, a vehicle will be created for CEHL and co-ops to work together on very important issues, such as Program Direction (What do you want the Program to look like over the next 35 years?) and ways to give co-ops more choice about the types of tasks they wish to undertake.

The CEHL Board are committed to achieving a more co-op led Program, putting co-ops at the centre of everything we do, and for co-ops to have an important role in setting Program direction.

CEHL staff are excited to continue improving the way we resource co-ops.

As we come to the end of the year, and the end of a decade, I acknowledge co-op member contributions to the ongoing delivery and development of the co-op housing program.

So much has been achieved in the past decade. There is a lot of interesting and important work for us to do together in 2020, and we are looking forward to it.

Through co-operative effort, the Program will continue to provide secure co-operative housing.

On behalf of all the teams at CEHL, we wish you an enjoyable summer break, and look forward to working with you in 2020.

Stephen Nash
CEHL Managing Director

[Watch the video message and song](#) from the CEHL Board and Co-op Development and Strategy Team.



CLIMATE CHANGE RISK ASSESSMENT PROJECT

CEHL has identified the need to consider the potential risks and our ability to respond to climate variance and governance responsibilities in relation to management of properties.

CEHL have engaged a consultant to help us understand what our risks are and what a best-practice approach would be, to determine the responses we should take, and the time frames for planning purposes.

Following this initial phase of the project, in 2020 we will identify ways we can work with co-ops to incorporate consideration of climate risk into planning for the future.

Look out for further updates down the track!

Melissa Fitzgerald, CEHL Strategic Projects Manager (Assets)

SUMMER SWIMMING POOLS & SPAS

Now that summer has arrived, it is a timely reminder for us all to be aware of the rules & regulations around swimming pools & spas.

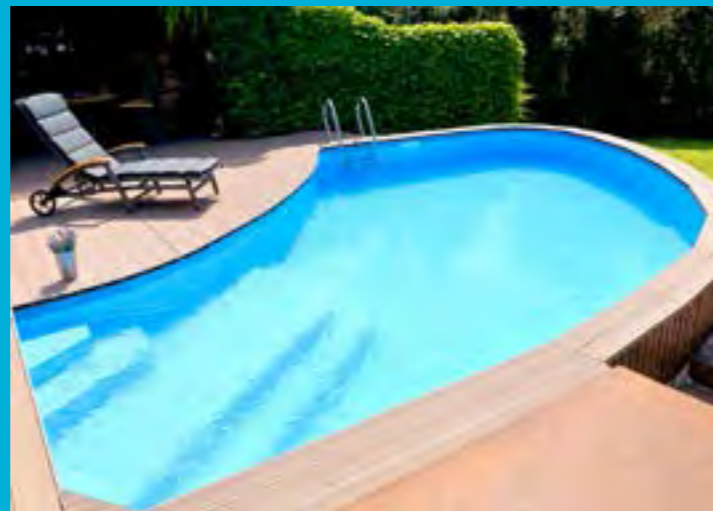
In the last year, increasingly rigorous regulations have been put in place. From 1 December 2019 all pools and spas:

- must be registered with your local council
- have regular inspections
- additional maintenance and compliance requirements need to be followed

For more details about the regulations go to the [Victorian Building Association](#) website.

Due to significant safety and compliance obligations, CEHL will not ordinarily approve installation of a pool or spa. If however, a tenant member would like to install a pool or spa, they must :

1. Complete a [Request for Addition, Alteration or Modification Form](#) and forward it to their co-op for approval
2. If approved by the co-op, they will then pass it onto CEHL for consideration



If a pool or spa has been installed without going through this process, and, safety measures and compliance has not been met, it must be emptied immediately! The local council will be contacted to inspect the pool and to provide input into its compliance.

Councils are using *Google Earth* to monitor properties with new pools and to check if permits have been given. If they have not, large fines for non-permitted or non-compliant pools are also being issued.

If you need help to make sure your pool or spa comply with the regulations please contact your Property Officer.

Leonnice Hyde, CEHL Asset Team Leader



NEW CO-OP MEMBER RUN FACEBOOK GROUPS

At the last Regional Forums in September, members created Facebook groups to help people connect, share information, events & stories, swap things and help each other solve problems.

The groups are member, not program, run and are all closed groups – which means no one outside the group can see what is posted and no one in the group can see your private page.

Join Now!

You can find your Regional group by searching the name using the Facebook search at the top of the page or click links below:



[Metro West Region Housing Co-operatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/1415868858565185/

[Peninsula Region Housing Cooperatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/893740171019522/

[Geelong Region Housing Co-operatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/geelongcoop/

[Bendigo Region Housing Co-operatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/497947247662271/

[SE Metro Housing Co-operatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/492970681488353/

[Gippsland Region Housing Co-operatives](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/895545234159563/

[Northern Region CERCS](#)
www.facebook.com/groups/shepcoop/

Ballarat has a Facebook page rather than group, you need to like the page rather than join
www.facebook.com/eurekaforum/

Jeanette Pope, Engagement Review consultant



unHOWsed

By LIZA DEZFOULI, LIBERTY CERC

Things have their own way of working out. The unHOWsed theatre project about homeless older women had its beginnings four years ago when a group of four women writer friends decided to put on a night of short plays. We had each written a short piece about a woman living on the fringes of society; different characters who were marginalised in different ways. Homelessness was a unifying theme in their lives.

With no budget whatsoever, we needed a free venue. Originally, we thought of putting on a night of independent theatre at my co-op house in Westgarth, but that presented problems, like the need for public liability insurance over and above what we had in place. And my two sons weren't keen on that idea. So, a venue, and therefore funding, was required.

Early support came from the City of Darebin in the form of a development grant. Then after applying for eight grants, plus an expansion of the original idea, the City of Port Phillip provided funding to include workshops with women from the Port Phillip community who had themselves experienced homelessness. unHOWsed (the HOW stands for 'homeless older women') started to take shape, with the involvement of a composer, a sound and light guy, and our director, Deborah Leiser-Moore.

Deborah has her own way of making theatre, which in this case meant throwing our original plays out the window and starting from scratch and building a show with actual stories from the women's lives. Six of the eight women on stage had experienced homelessness, seven if you count my three years of living in squats during my twenties. To Deborah, all is text – music, sound, movement, light, image, and voice. Oh, and she didn't want those of us on stage to act; we had to be ourselves ...

You've got no idea how exhausting that is, being your own concentrated self for an hour, being present and 'there' for every second. After our closing performance I was useless for two days and could only lie around drinking cups of tea. No exaggeration.

*These are our experiences,
I'm here. Look at me. See me.*

Deborah Leiser-Moore, unHOWsed Director

Reverend Turi Hollis of the Christ Church in St Kilda allowed us to rehearse in the church, which was a treat. We were lucky to get plenty of good media coverage, including a mention on ABC news, and finally we opened at Theatreworks in St Kilda for a season of ten performances.

The result was a beautiful and moving theatrical experience. We had lots of lovely feedback and responses from those who came along, including some CEHL staff and members of Liberty CERC. I'm grateful to CEHL for publicising the show, including promoting us last year in our Pick My Project campaign. We weren't successful with that, but unHOWsed eventually made its way to the stage, anyhow.

I'm proud to have been part of unHOWsed. It was an intense experience. The women from Voices of the South-side were incredible. Strong, funny, and so resolutely, simply themselves. We all kind of all fell in love with each other during the project; I felt weird and empty not seeing the others every day once it was over.

So, what next? We're all keen to put unHOWsed on again. We're hoping to take it to some regional centres in Victoria, at least. It all depends on funding, of course, and



CEHL is now actively using the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) database to contact people interested in co-op housing and invite them to co-op information sessions.

Applicants from the VHR database are asked some basic questions before being invited to a *CEHL Co-operative Housing Information session*, to identify people ready to commit to participating in a co-op.

People who have previously registered on CEHL's *Expression of Interest* list have been advised how to register on the VHR database to show their interest in co-op housing.

Applying for co-op housing

Applications for all types of housing are now made through Housing Vic website or your MyGov account, managed by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and stored on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR).

If you know of anyone interested in co-op housing, go to the [CEHL How do I Apply](#) page and follow the links.

It will connect to the www.housing.vic.gov.au/apply-social-housing site, make sure the "Co-op Housing" box from the list of housing options on the final page of the application is be ticked.

Transfer request process still to be finalised

The process for registering a transfer request is being finalised by DHHS, with the aim to keep it as simple as possible. Initial information has been sent to co-ops, and members who are currently registered for transfers can expect an update very soon. In the meantime, CEHL is managing the compliance requirements.

Our goal to fully integrate VHR into our referral system is on track to be completed by the end of 2019.

Want to know more? Ask a question on the "[Getting Ready for VHR](#)" Have Your Say Discussion page on the CEHL Website.

Darina Seal
CEHL Manager Co-op Development & Strategy

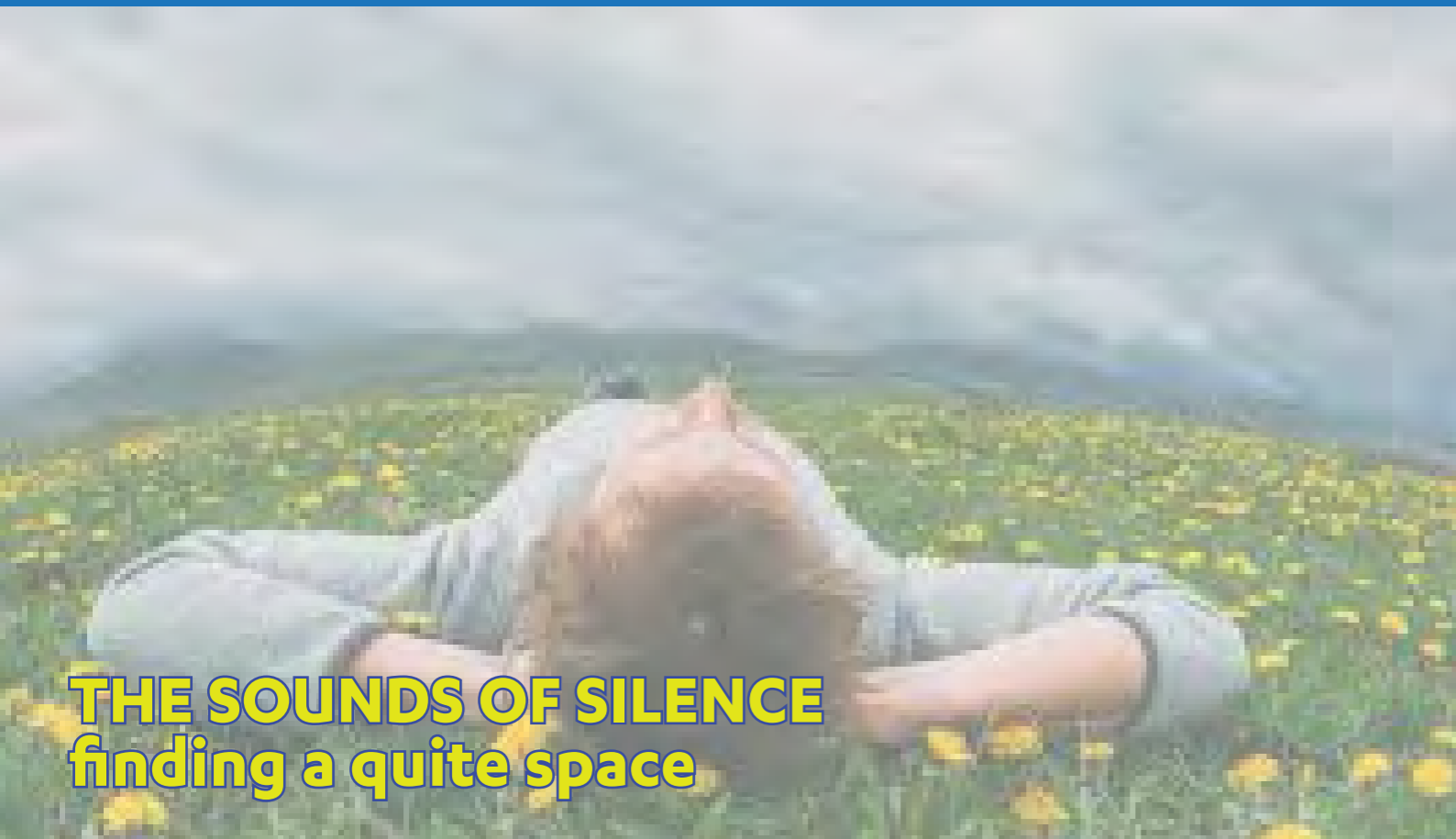


Referral Process Improvements

A list of ideas to improve CEHL's member referral processes was gathered from co-op members during the August Member Referral Training. These have now been published on the "[Referral Improvement Ideas](#)" Have Your Say page of the CEHL website.

Many of the ideas have already generated future plans, but the more ideas we get the more refined we can make the referral process as we integrate it with the VHR requirements.

www.cehl.com.au/HaveYourSay/ImproveReferral



THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE finding a quite space

Have you ever thought about how sounds we hear everyday affects us?

Sound is an important and valuable part of everyday life. When some sounds become noise, it can negatively affect our mental and physical health. Modern life means that noises in our world are not going to suddenly fall silent and we need to recognise and find sustainable ways to manage and reduce it.

Exposure to prolonged or excessive noise over time, has been shown to cause a range of health problems from stress, poor concentration, fatigue and lack of sleep to more serious issues such as cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, tinnitus and hearing loss.

The loudness of noise is measured in decibels. Experts believe that damage to hearing occurs when noise levels are higher than 85 decibels, which is about the loudness of heavy traffic. The length of exposure to loud noise can affect your hearing and your wellbeing.

Five tips to help manage noise levels in your home:

- Create a quite space at home
- Soft furnishings like carpet, rugs, curtains etc help absorb sounds
- Be a good neighbour. Be aware of your loud music and having parties, barking dogs or early morning lawn mowers
- Plant trees – Trees are effective in reducing noise levels within urban settings, around major highways and at home

How loud are everyday sounds?
from [dangerous decibels.org](#)

Decibels	Sound
10	Normal breathing
50	Refrigerator
60	Conversation
75	Washing machine
85	Busy traffic
115	Leaf blower

The sound of silence is precious to us all, so find some ways to surround yourself with a quiet, peaceful space, where your ears can regenerate and find some inner peace.

Having trouble hearing?
Get your hearing tested - diagnostic hearing test are covered under Medicare. There is also an [Australian Government Hearing Services Program](#) call 1800 500 726 to find out if you are eligible.

Want to find out more? ...

- [How loud is too loud?](#)
- [Superblocks – Barcelona’s Car Free Zones](#)
- [Growing Evidence that noise is bad for your health](#)
- [Cities are louder than ever](#)



WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR E-WASTE?

Over the years, as CEHL has upgraded our desktop computers, monitors, laptops, phones etc and as a result we have accumulated a multitude of e-waste.

All of this discarded electrical equipment would have been destined for the tip, but we have been investigating ways in which to make the most out of this in a sustainable way, by finding a company that can refurbish, reuse, resell and salvage e-waste materials.

We have chosen an Australian, not-for-profit organisation called [Enable Australia](#). They run a program that provides training and employment to help break unemployment cycles. Their [Employability Program](#) aims to improve job prospects for people in

our community experiencing or who are at risk of severe hardship, often due to significant employment barriers.

All of the proceeds received by Enable Australia for the on-sale of e-waste items go to their employability programs.

If you have any e-waste lying around maybe you could consider organising a collection and pick up from within your co-op using the same not-for-profit organisation, Enable Australia.

We are pleased to be thinking about sustainability, our environment and future!

www.enableaustralia.org.au



CEHL + CO-OP TREASURERS WORKING TOGETHER ... TO GET THE JOB DONE!



The CEHL Finance Audit Team have been all systems go completing the 2019 pre-audit service for 95 co-ops.

Once the co-op books have gone through the pre-audit stage, auditor Michael Adasko of JP Hardwick & Associates comes into CEHL offices to complete each co-ops audit.

We thank Co-op Treasurers for their diligent work in preparing all their co-ops financial records and sending them in on time.

TOP AUDIT TIPS FOR CO-OPS

- 1. Get the refunds your co-op is due**
Ensure you lodge your Business Activity Statement (BAS) on time and that your co-op is receiving expected refunds. If refunds are not being received after lodgement of the BAS, call the Australian Taxation Office to find out why.
- 2. Make sure the Rent Card closing and opening balance sare the same**
Check the *Circuit Rent Report* balance for June is the same as the July opening balance in the new financial year.
- 3. The Directors Register sent in with the audit is ONLY for audit purpose.**
Whenever there is any change to directors, office bearers or the co-op office address, co-op’s need to send a *Change of Details form* to info@cehl.com.au to update the CEHL system.

2019 Audit Process DONE! Over and out!

Helen Bassett, CEHL Finance Team



We salute you Don

Don Carpenter of Carinya Co-op has been a long time Newsletter Advisory Group member.

Always ready with ideas of how to improve the newsletter, Don contributed articles about lighthouses, fishing tips, fun and interesting facts about the weather and things of the sea. He was also a keen model railway enthusiast.

We will miss Don's navy stories, his humour, positive outlook and perspective of how the Program has evolved over the years.

Don has stepped down from the role as he moves into retirement living.

The Newsletter Advisory Group - NAG!

NEWSLETTER ADVISORY GROUP (NAG)

Do you have an interst in co-op news? Want to improve the stories and information you read in Co-operatively Speaking?

NAG is looking for new members to join us!

Committment - work collaboratively, four meet-ings per year, have an interest or skill in putting together a newsletter.Monthly stipend + travel reimbursement or attend meetings online.

Contact us on 9208 0800 or newsletter@cehl.com.au

Co-operatively Speaking 2020 deadlines

- 18 February for March edition
- 21 April for May edition
- 14 July for August edition
- 24 November for December edition

Sylwia Greda-Bogusz, OAM Receiving the Order of Australia, my story

My name is Sylwia Greda-Bogusz.

I am a member of Castle CERC and was elected to the CEHL Board in 2016.

This year, I was honoured to receive a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) –for service to the Polish and other communities. I arrived in Australia at the beginning of May 1982 as a humanitarian refugee after spending almost a year in the largest refugee camp in Austria.

Since being in Australia I have managed to accomplish a few things for our country, by working for various communities and community organisations.

In the early 2000’s I became passionate with charity and community work. I’ve assisted with settlements and integration of various communities, from youths at risk, to young mothers getting back to school, immigrants, women dealing with trauma as well as adult education and engagement of aboriginal people in skills education.



I am tertiary educated in the field of Science, Education, Educational Psychology, Sociology and Management, and was also fortunate to work on projects which took me around the world as part of my job.

Unforeseen events in my personal life left me with no possibility of purchasing my own home. I sought

housing with a co-operative through Common Equity. I am familiar with the co-operative concepts from Poland, as some 21 million Polish people participate in co-operative of some sort. I was on the Common Equity Housing list’ for more than three years when an opportunity of housing with Castle Common Equity Rental Housing Co-operative became a reality. I have been with my fantastic Castle Co-op for 6 years now.

Have your say . . .

[Have your say](#) on a number of important projects and policies that influence the CEHL Co-operative Housing Program.

Check out the latest consultations on 'Have your Say

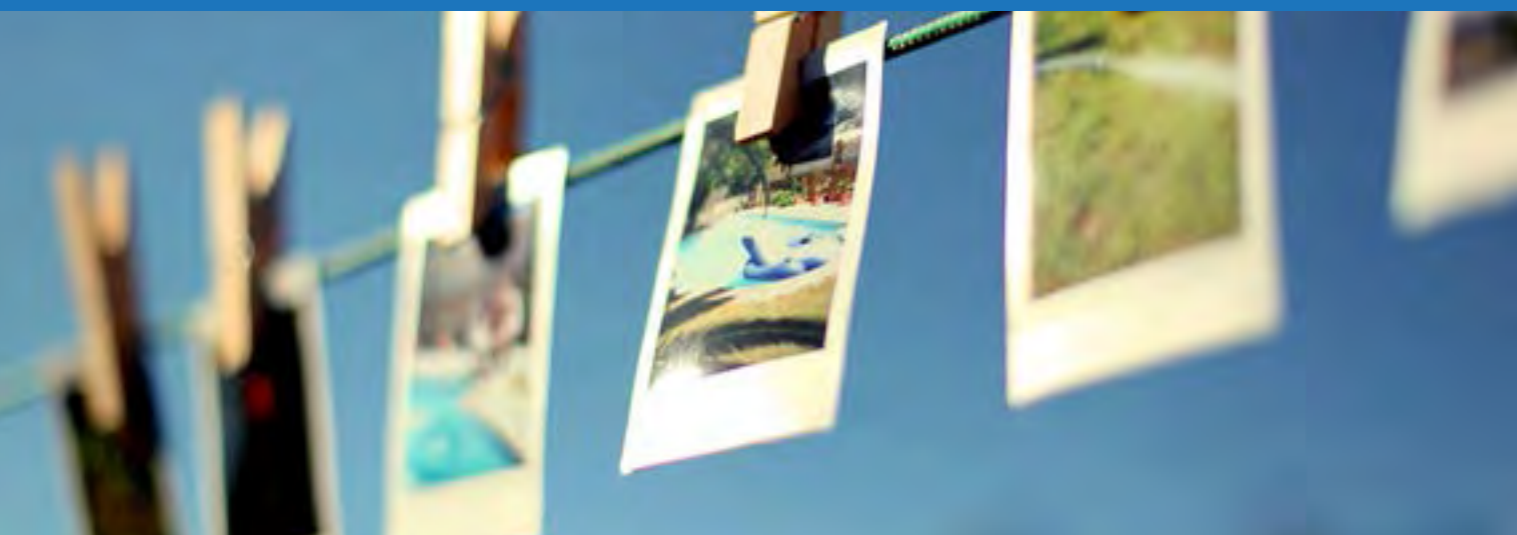
[Board Proposal to Establish a Co-op Program Advisory Structures](#)

To increase and improve opportunities for a Co-op Led Program, the CEHL Board has proposed to establish a Co-op Program Advisory Committee for co-op members with the

time, skills and commitment to actively contribute their expertise regarding:

- Program membership rights and responsibilities
- Program direction, the scope and long-term priorities
- Program engagement, regarding tools to enable member influence, communication and information

These important Program aspects require expert advice to the CEHL Board informed by well-planned and co-ordinated consultation with co-ops.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

by Sarah Andrew, Liberty CERC

Selecting a new member is a hard job, that has to be done. Our selection committee meet regularly at my house, we eat soup and try to perfect our questioning criteria. We try to maintain a business mind, even though people's hearts are involved this. We try to be fair and objective when reading the applicants written statements, yet in the interview next Saturday, I know my hands will begin to twitch. I will feel unsettled, but I will listen carefully, patiently, and with good intent.

I have been wondering which member will get chosen from our list. We are looking for a single mother with children, to fill the bedrooms. New members are usually overwhelmed with gratefulness at first. I imagine her setting up the kid's rooms, tenderly lining up figurines

on a bookshelf, putting colourful pictures on the wall, maybe she will plant up her garden, and maybe she will be good at dealing with the conflict that, sometimes, arises in meetings. She will have housing security.

Like Christmas, the interviews will be over in a flash, a recommendation will be made at our General Meeting and, if accepted, furniture trucks will pull up in the little street. Our new member will be full of good intention to work for our co-op.

The selecting group will be as thorough as we can with our interviews, even though at times, as interviewers, we share an unpleasant anxiety. Finally, when a member is chosen, we will wish her the best, we will most likely know her for a long time.



[Annual Report 2018-2019](#)

[Read online](#)



GETTING MEMBER SELECTION RIGHT - Co-op members thoughts ...

The training sessions held on "Getting Member Selection Right" were a great success, 71 members attended from 37 co-ops and with over half gave written feedback. Some of the comments were really encouraging:

"I found it very helpful as a new member"

"It was wonderful working as a team"

"It wasn't long enough"

"It was good, but more members need to come"

We found that 98% of the responses said the training was helpful, and provided some great suggestions:

- provide sessions to individual co-ops
- provide training via videos
- have training during the day

Members also offered some great ideas for future training and the Training Advisory Committee (TAC) will use this information to make recommendations to CEHL for sessions in 2020.

Thanks to all those who came along and we hope to see many more at the next sessions.

TAC TEAM

TAC MEMBER SELECTION TIPS

Here are some great tips we have put together from the co-op members training day on "Getting Member Selection Right".

Make sure your member selection process does not breach privacy, equal opportunity legislation or CEHL Program policy.

Tips on preparing for the interview process

- Have 2-3 members on the panel
- Look at what the co-op needs
- Prepare questions and determine who on the panel will ask each question
- Predetermine the criteria and scoring method
- Keep an open mind and let go of any preconceived ideas
- Prepare translation or cultural sensitivity resources
- Contact all applicants on the referral list
- Ask applicant to bring along ID, bank statements and reference
- Check if they are eligible for the number of bedrooms
- Consider the property and if it is a good match for the household
- Ask if members if they have any conflict of interest to declare
- Consider safety – interview in a public place or with backup
- If the property is vacant, arrange the interview at the property

Tips on interviewing:

- Provide water and a comfortable setting
- Wear name tags for the benefit of the applicant
- Don't overwhelm the applicant, use your people skills
- Rank responses/scoring for the panel discussion afterwards
- Be clear that the interview is not an offer of housing
- Tell the applicant a bit about the co-op and expectations of the members
- Collect information for eligibility and reference checks
- Ask the applicant for permission to contact referees (landlord and last membership)

Tips for after the interview:

- Discuss the answers and rankings given with the panel
- Consider body language of the applicants, verbal and non-verbal cues
- Think of who would be best fit for your co-op
- Arrange a second interview to get to know the applicant better
- Check references
- Send letter to unsuccessful applicants and return collected information to them

TAC Team



Member Portal Update

The CEHL member portal, launched in January 2019, has enabled greater access to information and resources for all people in the Co-op Housing Program.

55% of households that CEHL has email contact details for, are already using the portal! Those people have been using the portal to:

- update their contact details
- update household member and income details
- register for events
- share feedback and ideas on policies and projects designed to improve the Program
- access Co-op Resources

The next phase of the portal development involves co-ops designing features that:

- Help with co-ops perform their activities and functions
- Enable co-op to co-op information sharing

A key to the ongoing success roll-out of the portal has been engaging 'Co-op Champions', representatives in co-ops with training and support to help their fellow co-op members use the portal. Co-op Champions were also instrumental in trouble-shooting issues and testing the portal before it was made live.

Co-ops are encouraged to appoint a 'champion' for ongoing support and advice, and to be involved in the next phase of the portal development.

Our vision is to create a site that is **useful** and **used** by co-ops and their members.

Need help using the portal ?

Call or email portal@cehl.com.au so we can get you started & connected on the portal.

We can run a portal training session for your co-op - just ask, we are here to help!



"For those of us who live in housing co-operatives, we can take a moment to appreciate the foundations laid by Iain and those early founders, without whom, we would not have the fantastic opportunities we have in our co-operatives today."

Heidi Lee, CEHL Chair

Vale Ian Walker

Iain Walker, who sadly passed away in September 2019, contributed greatly to the foundation of the co-operative housing program and made a huge impact on many people living in housing co-operatives.

Iain will be greatly missed by those who knew him, and remembered fondly for his energy and enthusiasm toward the co-operative movement. Indeed, as one of the early advocates who helped bring this program to life in the 1980's, you might say his contribution to the earliest group set the foundation that all current co-op housing members benefit from, and many more will into the future.

Iain saw the co-operative housing program as a means to an end; to help take care of housing, so people can get on with their lives. He loved seeing people join a co-op, find housing security, learn new skills and then go on to create better lives for themselves and their families. He was incredibly humble, but in recent years was recognised on the CEHL Honour Board in 2014 and in the comm_unity awards on Australia Day in 2019.

Iain received a Jagajaga Community Hero Award from Hon Jenny Macklin MP (pictured left) at Banyule City Council as part of their Australia Day celebrations.

Plan to study in 2020?

CEHL Scholarship - APPLY NOW!

Apply now for a [CEHL Scholarship](#) and you could receive a \$2,000 scholarship towards your apprenticeship, TAFE or university course.

A total of nine scholarships will be awarded in the following categories

Two scholarships are awarded in each of the following:

- Certificate Level (including apprenticeships and traineeships);
- Diploma and Advanced Diploma;
- Undergraduate;
- Postgraduate;
- Helen Tyndall scholarship for applicants studying Business Administration, Information Technology or commerce at any level.

Helen Tyndall, was well known and highly respected CEHL Administration Team Coordinator for many years.

Applications are welcome from all current or potential students living in a housing co-operative in the CEHL Program, particularly those who are single parents, Indigenous, mature age, living with a disability or in a remote geographical location, or from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The aim of the CEHL Scholarship is to encourage people living in the Co-operative Housing Program to access educational opportunities and develop their skills. CEHL has helped many people with their educational aspirations over the years, from apprenticeships to undergraduate degrees and on to postgraduate studies.

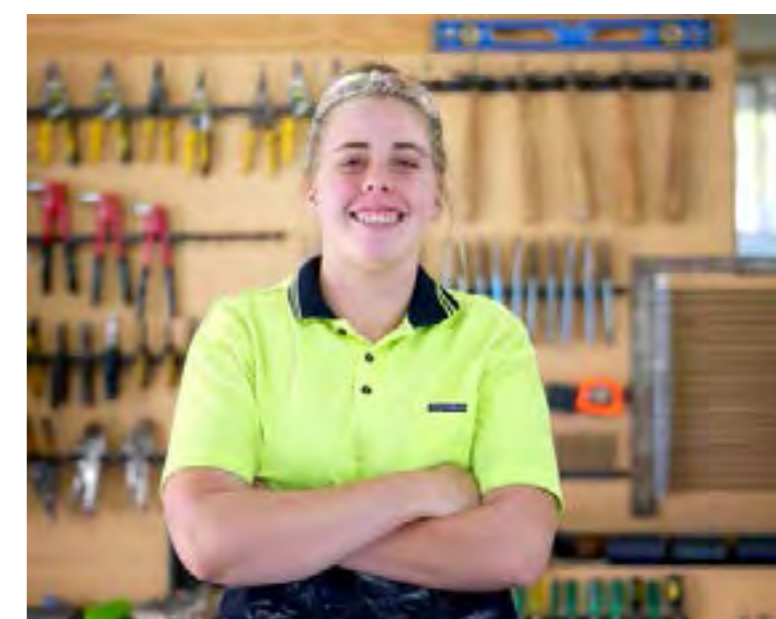
Apply NOW! Applications close 31 January 2020.

Complete an application form describing how you will benefit from the scholarship, including documentation to verify eligibility and commitment to study. Successful applicants will receive scholarship funds prior to the commencement of studies in 2020.

Application forms can be completed or downloaded here www.cehl.com.au/CEHLServices/CEHLScholarship or call 1800 353 669 for further information.

Applications must be received by 5pm, Friday 31 January 2020

www.cehl.com.au/CEHLServices/CEHLScholarship



Is your co-op profile on the CEHL website?

The [co-op profile](#) helps applicants and other co-ops gain a better understanding about housing co-ops as well as the unique culture the co-ops in the Program.

Send your co-op profile to portal@cehl.com.au



POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) UDPATE

VACANCIES FACT SHEET AND BEST PRACTICE GUIDE APPROVAL

In September, PAC recommended the “Improving Vacancy Management Factsheet” and the “Managing Vacancies Best Practice Guide” which have now been approved by the CEHL Board.

Program Policy provides co-ops with a Board-endorsed framework that guides their decision-making, reflects feedback received from co-ops, the Program Principles, and any other regulatory requirements. Each co-op is able to determine how they will implement Program Policy, as long as this sits within the bounds set by the Policy.

CEHL will develop procedures and best practice advice, endorsed by PAC, which co-ops may wish to use or adapt. Where a procedure is required and co-ops have not developed their own, the PAC endorsed procedure will be considered the default.

The CEHL Board has approved the *Vacancy Management Fact Sheet* and the *Managing Vacancies Best Practice Guide*

The *Improving Vacancy Management Fact Sheet* provides information about what Performance Standards and Targets the Program must meet with regards to vacancies and about how we are working towards improving the management of these vacancies.

The *Managing Vacancies Best Practice Guide* can be used to provide guidance and information when your co-op is required to manage a vacancy.

These documents can now be found under the Policy Directory on the website, under Best Practice Guides and Fact Sheets.

The next policy consultation cycle runs from January – February 2020. Have your say by reviewing the draft policies and completing the survey on the Policy Consultation page of the CEHL website.

www.cehl.com.au/PoliciesAndProcedures

PROGRAM DIRECTIVES - NOW RETIRED

In consultation with co-ops and members, the Program has developed a suite of Program Policies within the last three years. These Policies have now replaced the 2012 Program Directives, and the Directives have now been retired.

The Directives outlined the roles, relationships and responsibilities of being part of the Program. All co-ops within the CEHL Program were required to abide by them. But over time, the Directives have become out of date and less able to respond to the changing needs of member co-ops and external requirements, as laws and regulations have changed.

A Directives Guide has been developed to provide co-ops with information about the changes. *The Retirement of Directives & Guide to their Replacement* can be found under a news item on the website, with a message from [Fiona Herman, the Chair of PAC](#) on what this means for co-ops.



Program Feedback

Co-ops can provide feedback on Program policy, procedures, and best practice advice as they use them, rather than waiting for a more formal review cycle.

A page on *Have your Say* has been set up called [Program Feedback– Open!](#)

Feedback received will help set review priorities and will be incorporated into the next review.

Go to *Have Your Say* and click on [Program Feedback – Open!](#)

ARE YOU BUSHFIRE READY?

We strongly recommend that all households create and practice a fire evacuation plan in line with the guidelines set by the CFA or MFB.

Information can be found at:

www.cfa.vic.gov.au/about/plan-and-prepare
www.mfb.vic.gov.au/Community.html

It is equally important to ensure your property is prepared for bushfires. You can prepare by undertaking a visual inspection of your property using the check list below to identify any works that need to be completed.

CEHL will communicate directly with any co-ops and members with homes identified on the Victorian Fire Risk Register as being at an extreme or very high risk of bushfire.

Asset Management Team

BUSHFIRE PREPARED CHECKLIST

- ☐ Are there fuels or chemicals to be moved to a safer location?
- ☐ Is there a wood pile that needs to be moved to a safer location?
- ☐ Are there plants near windows or glass that need to be trimmed?
- ☐ Do any trees on the property need to be trimmed?
- ☐ Do any trees on the property need to be removed?
- ☐ Do any trees on neighbouring properties need to be trimmed?
- ☐ Do any shrubs need to be trimmed to below 1 meter?
- ☐ Do any shrubs need to be removed?
- ☐ Does the guttering need cleaning?
- ☐ Do the downpipes need to be checked for blockages?
- ☐ During the declared fire danger period, ensure grass is maintained and kept below a height of 10 cm and all leaves and vegetation debris are removed at regular intervals.



Bourke Street, My View from Here

Conversations with Tony Brooks by Jen Hutchison

He’s in the same spot on Bourke Street every day, down the hill from Parliament House. He arrives in the early morning gloom and stays until dusk.

He settles his wiry frame on an upturned milk crate or sits on folded cardboard on the footpath. He leans back on the wall where an unoccupied warehouse meets a bookshop. Bourke Street’s elegant plane trees shadow him from the morning sun and drip on his umbrella when it rains.

Hundreds greet him. He shares a positive word and a smile with everyone. No one knows much about him. His name is Tony Brooks.

Everyone has a story. This is Tony’s, and it’s not what you might think.

WIN! Bourke Street, My View from Here

Send the answer of 4 down in the Crossword on Page 19 to newsletter@cehl.com.au to go into the draw to win a copy of *Bourke Street, My View from Here*

You can buy *Bourke Street, My View from Here* from Paperback Bookshop, 70 Bourke Street, Melbourne or online journeystowordspublishing.com/bourke-street-my-view-from-here/

“Every day in our cities we walk past numberless stories without knowing it. With time, patience and sympathy, Jen Hutchison has listened to one such story, and it’s well worth your whole attention”

– Gideon Haigh

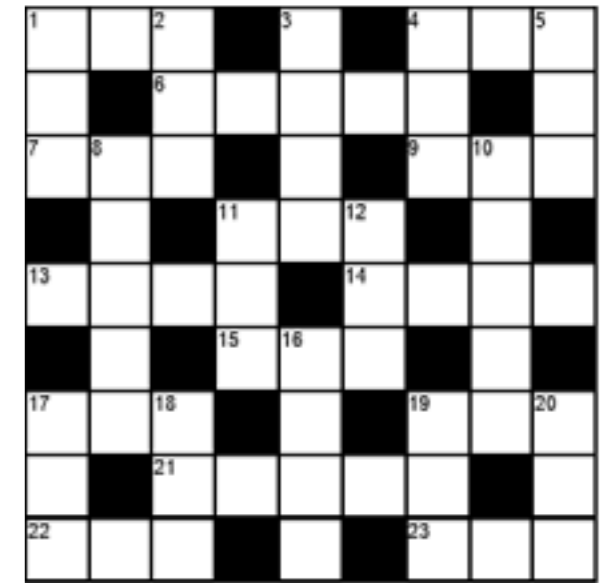
WIN - Bourke Street, My View from Here

WIN! Bourke Street, My View from Here

Send the answer of Clue: 4 Down to newsletter@cehl.com.au to go into the draw to win a copy of *Bourke Street, My View from Here*. Winner will be announced 28 January 2020

Crossword answers will be published in Co-operatively Speaking March 2020 edition

- Across**
1. Said to scare
4. Help
6. Resulting in death
7. Groove
9. Tell a mistruth
11. Amount (abbr.)
13. Revise
14. Feels crummy
15. Talent for music
17. Weep
19. Sight organ
21. Run away to marry
22. Cookie container
23. Carry with effort
- Down**
1. Soap shape
2. Many a time
3. Molecule component
4. The whole group
5. Female deer
8. Holstein part
10. Mosaic work
11. Dined
12. Black sticky substance
16. Delinquent G.I.
17. House pet
18. Craving
19. Snake-like fish
20. Scrambled or poached food



Co-op Housing stories from WA

Co-operation Housing launched a [brand new video series](#) about the co-op housing sector in Western Australia.

Talented young film makers Georgi Ivers and Jake Bamford, supported by award winning visual artist (and co-op resident) Sohan Hayes produced the documentary style short videos.

www.co-operationhousing.org.au

WHO TO CONTACT for support and to resolve issues

We aim to acknowledge every contact within 2 working days.
CEHL team members are often out of the office, working with co-ops or may not be able to answer or return a call immediately.
Please leave a phone message or email with your details, a description of the query and when best to contact you.

		1st Who to contact ...	2nd Concerned about a response, raise with ...	3rd Issue still not resolved? contact ...
ALL Co-ops	CO-OP DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	CEHL Co-op Development Co-ordinator	CEHL Co-op Development Team Leaders Karen 9208 0856 karen@cehl.com.au or Melissa P 9208 0850 melissa@cehl.com.au	CEHL Manager, Co-op Development & Strategy Darina 9208 0805 darina@cehl.com.au
	ACCOUNTS Audit, Book keeping, Compliance, Eligibility, Rent Review, Rebates	CEHL Finance Officer	CEHL Finance Team Leader Tracy 9208 0821 tracy@cehl.com.au	CEHL Manager, Finance Timothy 9208 0855 timothy@cehl.com.au
	ACCOUNTS Rent & bills paid to CEHL	9208 0817 accounts@cehl.com.au		
CERC	TENANCY	Your Co-op Rents Officer or Treasurer or Secretary	Your Co-op Board	Who to contact will depend on the issue. Your Co-op Development Co-ordinator will provide information about landlord and co-op responsibilities and the best way to manage your specific issue.
	URGENT REPAIRS + MAINTENANCE			
	PROPERTY Property inspections, maintenance planning, delivery, 3rd Schedule work	Your Co-op Maintenance Director		
CMC	TENANCY	CEHL Tenancy Co-ordinator	CEHL Housing Services Team Leader Margaret 9208 0863 margaret@cehl.com.au	CEHL Manager, Housing Services Ruth 9208 0849 ruth@cehl.com.au
	URGENT REPAIRS + MAINTENANCE	CEHL Business Hours 9208 0800 After Hours 0417 102 414	CEHL Maintenance Team Leader Charmaine 9208 0867 charmaine@cehl.com.au	CEHL Manager, Asset Management Meg 9208 0864 meg.g@cehl.com.au
	PROPERTY Property inspections, maintenance planning & delivery, 3rd Schedule work	CEHL Property Officer	CEHL Asset Services Team Leader Leonnie 9208 0824 leonnie@cehl.com.au	

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For up to date event and venue details go to
www.cehl.com.au/WhatsOn

12 Dec	Training Advisory Committee
1-24 Dec	Co-op Christmas Catch Ups
23 Dec - 3 Jan	CEHL Office Closure
25 Dec	Christmas Day
26 Dec	Boxing Day
1 Jan 2020	New Years Day
26 Jan	Australia Day
Feb-April	CEHL Annual Rent Review

CEHL Office 1800 353 669

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE 23 DEC - 3 JAN 2020
OUT OF OFFICE URGENT MAINTENANCE
Valley Maintenance on 0417 102 414

CEHL Program Principles

1. Affordability and Financial Sustainability
2. Changing Needs
3. 3. Member Support and Development
4. 4. Membership and Growth
5. 5. Participation
6. 6. Quality of Housing
7. Security
8. Working Together

[Read CEHL Program Principles](#)



A step-by-step guide to crafts using recycled paper

CEHL uses 'Who gives a crap' for tissue & toilet paper supplies.

Who Gives A Crap is a not-for-profit organisation that donates funds to water and sanitation projects around the world.

They have some cool tips on how to get crafty with left over wrapping paper.

<https://blog.whogive-sacrap.org/home/good-crafts/1>