

AUTUMN 2016

# ARGYLER

**Tenant Newsletter**



**BY TENANTS FOR TENANTS**

 **argyle**





## Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Argyle.

I have just received the response rate for the tenant survey. Thanks to you all we have received over 60% back (46% last survey). A fantastic effort!

Thanks, firstly to the tenant volunteers who supported other tenants to complete their survey, and the staff in local offices who had prizes for their local tenants and who made contact with a huge number of tenants to encourage them to return the survey. In a couple of the Murrumbidgee offices there was over 90% returned. And lastly, thank you to all of you who took the time to fill in the survey. We won't know the outcomes until mid-May and I hope that we can learn from what you tell us and improve how we support you.

The winners of the prizes are published later in the Argyle.

As you know Argyle has had its fair share of staff turnover in the last couple of months. There were many individual reasons why people left and we have recently completed recruitment of new staff who will commence in the next month or so. I know it is difficult and sometimes distressing for you to get to know your tenancy or maintenance officer, however I am pleased to say that we have had a good response to advertising and I hope you will be pleased with the result.

Earlier this month we received notification that Argyle was given full registration for the year by the National Regulator of Community Housing. We submitted all our evidence against the Housing Performance Outcomes in early December. This means that we can continue to operate across NSW and the ACT.

Late last year I travelled across all Argyle sites and met with tenants to receive their feedback, and suggestions for improvement. One of the discussions was to do with Anti-social behaviour in our communities and particularly if it is carried out by residents. The Argyle Board endorsed the Anti-social behaviour policy for Argyle tenants. I urge you to read this policy as it is now part of our policies and we will enforce it. You can find the policy on our website: <https://argylehousing.complispace.com.au/Assets/2438/AntiSocialBehaviourPolicy.pdf>

It is quickly coming into winter. I urge you to make sure that if your heater is not working to let us know and that you keep warm and well.

Again I appreciate you returning the tenant survey and giving Argyle the opportunity to continue to support your tenancy.

Regards

Wendy Middleton  
Argyle CEO

## MEET THE TENANT EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

- Lyndal
- Magdalena
- Eva
- Peter
- Tony
- Ruby
- Tiffany
- John



If you would like to join us or submit ideas and content for the next edition please get in touch – we would love to hear from you.

Email [editor@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:editor@argylehousing.com.au) or speak to your local office.

## RECEIVING THE ARGYLER VIA EMAIL

By Tony Jagicic

Hi Tenants,

Would you like to receive the Argyle by email instead of the post? If you have a email address then email us and we will add you to the list.

You can also get your water bill, rent review etc by email.

The benefits of receiving the Argyle by email is that you get it straight away and it saves on paper and postage. If you would like to use email, but need help setting up an account, you can call your local office and ask your Tenancy Action Worker for their help.



# REWARD

Plants and shrubs reward us with beauty and pleasure!

Try a few of these ideas

From little things – big things will grow

Water saved gives life and lustre

We can't just rely on nature for rain

So we need to save water for the garden

So ... share your shower with a bucket – for the cold water

That proceeds the warm water

Save the rinse water from the washing machine

The plants love a slightly perfumed drink

And yes even the cup-glass-bowl to soak

Dentures in (no additives) can be a cuppa for

Indoor plants

Always have a bowl of water handy to

Wash garden hands, instead of running water from the tap

Happy saving – ha ha

By an Argyle Tenant (anonymous)

## HOW TO

# Make a complaint and what to expect

I recently spoke with Christine Woods who is part of the Projects and Training sector about the complaint system and what to expect and it's actually easier than what most tenants would expect it to be.

### First of all, what is a complaint.

Well, the tenant handbook explains a complaint as 'if you are not happy with our service, standards, practices or policies, you have the right to complain.' Anyone that's basically a stakeholder and connects with Argyle Housing including a tenant, neighbour etc has the right to complain. A complaint can be a continuous matter or a one off as well. For example if the toilet isn't working and an Argyle worker states that it'll be fixed in two days and yet no one has resolved the issue, you have the right to complain. Any customer or someone that interacts with Argyle, including any government agencies can make a complaint about any customer service or staff standards.

### Secondly, what is the best way to make a complaint.

You can make a complaint a number of ways including by using the Argyle website or completing a complaint form. However it's preferable to speak in person to your tenancy officer first and then put the complaint in writing if you are still not happy. There's also email as well as other forms of communications. In the tenant handbook there are details on how to complain and what a complaint is. The complaint policy is also on the website. If you cannot represent yourself then you're able to have someone advocate on your behalf through a representative or support agency.

### Thirdly, what is an appeal.

You may not always agree with a decision Argyle makes. Try discussing the decision

with your tenancy officer first. However, if you still do not agree, it important that you ask for a review of the decision. It is also your right as a tenant to appeal decisions.

Some of the decisions you may want Argyle to reconsider are;

- The level of your rent rebate
- Being refused rehousing or transfer
- Being refused a rent rebate
- Being refused permission to make modifications to your property

The first step is to complete an appeals form which is available from your Area Office, from the Argyle website or you can ask for one to be sent to you. You can also just write a letter or send an email to your local Argyle office. Its fine for someone to help you with this or to speak to Argyle on your behalf.

All the details concerning your appeal will be reviewed by someone at Argyle who was not involved in making the original decision.

Both complaint and appeals forms/letters can be sent to The Complaints & Appeals Officer, P.O. Box 1026, Bowral 2576.

Thank you for reading, next issue this article will be continued with what happens when you make a complaint or an appeal and what to do when you're not happy with the decision made.





# FIRST AID COURSE

By Lyndal Breen

On 13th March a number of Argyle tenants gathered at Moss Vale TAFE to spend their day getting or updating their First Aid Certification. The course consisted of a workbook, filled out in advance of the day, and practical work. The workbook questions were well supported by the textbook and quite easy to answer, though a little time consuming. Clearly, they are designed to make sure you have gone through the various chapters properly.

The practical was a fun day, with lots of laughs, amongst the serious scenarios. People

were encouraged to talk about their own experiences of handling common problems such as asthma, and this was helpful in showing how real events might play out.

The presenter was a down-to-earth fellow, who was patient and understanding of mistakes. Everyone helped each other with bandaging and the CPR, and we all passed.

Watch out for those text messages and notifications from Argyle about free courses for tenants, and take the opportunities. You won't be sorry.

YASS



QUEANBEYAN

# NEW OFFICES IN GOULBURN, YASS AND QUEANBEYAN

By Tony Jagicic

Argyle have moved 3 offices to new and better locations. They have larger spaces for meeting with tenants.

And the Addresses are:

### GOULBURN

56 Clinton Street Goulburn NSW 2580  
Ph: 02 6297 5929

### YASS

135 Comer Street Yass NSW 2582  
Ph: 02 6297 5929

### QUEANBEYAN

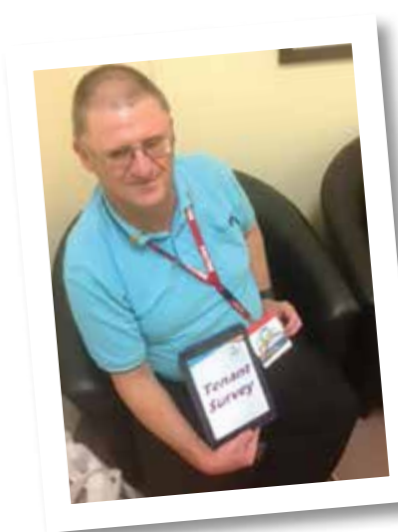
114 Crawford Street Queanbeyan NSW 2620  
Po Box 502 Queanbeyan  
Ph: 02 6297 5929

The Yass and Queanbeyan Offices are on Street level and the Goulburn office is on the first floor with a lift access.

### WATCH THIS SPACE

As Argyle is getting bigger and better the Bowral office is taking over the shop space on street level, below the current office location. This will make access easier for tenants when visiting Bowral for Interviews etc.

And throughout the month of March we had the tenant's survey at different locations. One was at our outreach office which is at Wollondilly Community Links in Tahmoor, Here's a photo of our tenant Volunteer Tony ....









AUSTRALIA



# CHEAPER POSTAGE STAMPS

By Lyndal Breen

Recently the price of ordinary postage stamps rose to \$1 each. However the Federal Government has decided that people who hold a Concession card will pay less than this when they mail a letter. They have introduced MyPost Concession Accounts. The benefits include the first stamp booklet for free, and then people will be able to get up to 50 postage stamps per year at the lower price of 60 cents each. There is also a discounted price on Mail Hold and Mail Redirection services and a free "Digital Mailbox". To get these services, you will have to get a special card, which will be sent to you when you make your application.

To obtain your MyPost Concession Account, you can go to your local Post Office for the application form or you can print one off from <http://auspost.com.au/media/documents/MyPost-Concession-Account-application-form.pdf>

The information required are your name, postal address, date of birth, mobile phone

number (if you have one) and email address (if you have one). Because the form also serves people who have lost an existing card, or changed their details, it can seem a little confusing when you first look at it. There is also a long privacy statement which may seem intimidating, but the Marketing opt-in box which you mark if you want to receive catalogues and offers is the only thing you need to look at here.

On the back of the form is the place where you mark which concession card applies to you, and its number. Then sign the form, date it and print your name in the boxes beneath.

I'm sure the counter staff at the local post office will be able to help you, should you have any questions. Remember, you are entitled to this help; don't be embarrassed to ask.

Your MyPost concession card and a book of 5 free postage stamps will be posted to you within a couple of weeks of lodging the application.



## WHY GET INVOLVED

## IN YOUR COMMUNITY

# Because it feels good

By Lyndal Breen

A community becomes your place in the world that allows you and your family members to have a sense of belonging. You have the opportunity to make great friends and shape the direction your community is headed. There are many great reasons to get involved - in this edition, we focus on volunteering.

Everyone has talents and skills. Being involved allows you to use your skills to make a positive difference and to further develop the skills you have. You may also find that you develop self-confidence while promoting worthwhile activities and you may find that you are needed and valued in your community.

Why volunteer? Let us stress the benefits that volunteering can bring to you such as

- Meeting new people and making new friends
- Learning new skills or practicing old ones
- Building up experience for job seeking
- Help to get a good reference
- Simply having something worthwhile to do which is good for your own mental health and wellbeing.
- Volunteering also gives you the opportunity to be influential within areas where you volunteer

Do you like animals? Animal shelters often need people to walk dogs and to keep the cats socialised.

Other places that look for volunteers are charity shops, meals on wheels and Landcare and Bushcare groups, churches, youth centres, sporting groups and schools – or help an organisation that helps you!

While some groups need a regular contribution of your time, there are many that need help occasionally with events. Others are looking for specialised know how such as accounting or computer help.

When volunteering in an organisation, keep in mind that you should not do anything that a paid worker should be doing. The group should provide you with all necessary gear, and make sure that you are shown around, introduced to the other people, and given proper training. Volunteers need to refuse tasks that they feel are too difficult or in any way beyond their capacity. Volunteering Australia's code of ethics is a useful guideline for any situations where you feel uncomfortable.

So what are you waiting for? Get involved in your community. It may be a whole new adventure!

### DECIDING ON WHAT TO VOLUNTEER TO DO.

Think of things you like doing. Many forms of volunteering are recreational as much as anything else. You may find a craft group such as Wrapped with Love where people gather together to knit items for a number of needy causes. If you enjoy driving get involved with community transport and help people get to the shops, hospitals and doctors.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to Carolyn, Rod, Tony and Lyndal for volunteering to help tenants complete the 2017 tenant survey this year.





# CONFUSED ABOUT THE NEW REBATED RENT FORMS?

## Then read this

By Magdalena Whipper

Every 6 months Argyle Housing issues tenants with a 'rebated rent' review form to ensure that people continue to be eligible to receive rebated rent. Recently, Argyle issued these letters in a new format which may have left some tenants, like myself, confused about what information they must now supply. The new look 'Application for Rebated Rent' form asks current tenants to complete 3 steps (as outlined on the back of the document, as well as in the accompanying letter addressed to individual tenants), with step number 2 asking for a range of evidence examples, and leaving me confused as to what information I need to supply.

In my confusion, I rang my local Argyle office in Bowral and spoke with Dawn from the Rent Review Team to ascertain what is required from those of us who receive these letters. Most importantly I found that if you're already receiving the rebated rent then you only need to continue supplying Argyle with the same information that you always have, for example;

- Any person on a pension – Centrelink income statements (or permission for Argyle to access your Centrelink income statements).
- Any person on a pension with employment – can supply Centrelink income statements if they have been regularly reporting earnings to Centrelink OR, you can also submit a letter of earnings or your last 6 payslips. However, it should be noted that a fairer average of earnings is gained for those who do supply a letter of earnings or their current payslips.
- The supply of tax returns is required

**APPLICATION FOR REBATED RENT**

Argyle is required as your community housing provider to cross check eligibility for your rebated rent every 6 months and provide you with **60 days' notice of a rent change** for your home.

If we do not receive a rebated rent application along with full supporting documentation within 30 days your rebated rent amount will be cancelled and your rent will increase to the market value.

Full Name: Samuel Smith Home Phone: 02 6754 1200  
 Address: 5 Station Street Mobile: 0411 221 345  
 Bowral 2576 NSW Email: SamSmith@gmail.com

FULL NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	RELATIONSHIP TO YOU	JUSTICE EVIDENCE ATTACHED
Samuel Smith	6.12.78	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Elizabeth Anne Smith	9.05.79	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female	Wife	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

EMERGENCY CONTACT  
 Person's name: Rebecca Stilton Phone number: 0431 205 305  
 Address: 37 Brown Street, Bowral 2576 NSW

**DECLARATION**  
 I understand that in order to have my rent rebated I must provide current income details for all household members. I understand that if I have been dishonest in any of the income information provided, Argyle can cancel the rental rebate and charge market rent.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO ARGYLE**

Att: Rent Review Team  
 Level 1, 32 - 36 Wingcarribee St  
 PO Box 1026, Bowral NSW 2576

P: 02 4861 2753  
 E: rentreview@argylehousing.com.au  
 www.argylehousing.com.au

from self-employed or sole traders in the household claiming rebated rent.

- Couples and dwellings with more than one tenant must supply the appropriate information regarding work and wages received, for each individual that is earning wages.

In short, nothing has actually changed regarding the type/s of information Argyle is asking you to supply. If you have had a change in your circumstances and have only recently started earning wages, or if you are still unsure about the type of info Argyle wants you to supply just contact your tenancy officer at your local office to confirm what is required, they will be only too happy to help.



By Eva Pang

I am just a budding writer who enjoys writing and blog reviews on fashion, food and movies. And I would like to share with you about gender inequality because this is a big issue. You may know Emma Watson who played Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter film series. She was chosen as a UN Goodwill Ambassador for women. And if you check out the video [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0Dg226G2Z8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0Dg226G2Z8), her speech is mind-blowing because it's very personal, not just for women but also men.

I feel I could relate to what she's talking about. Having thick skin in school was imperative because girls were vicious. This was rather odd because I believed that girls were supposed to be gentle and boys were the mean and tough gender. I wasn't 'raised by wolves' but I was left to defend for myself

and never shown a 'road map'. Females were expected to just sit, smile, shut up and submit. Even showing emotion was not permitted. Perhaps growing up with mostly male figures is a reason. I think it's ironic with the switch of gender roles.

Emma's campaign is not just about women's rights but about men and women coming together to support each other. Even feminism becomes misinterpreted because gender inequality also affects men. The vulnerability in men is rare but beautiful. It's not a sign of weakness, emasculating or gay. The key ingredient to 'equality' is understanding. Fear tends to hold us back. Even though we have different views, we should adapt to understanding and supporting each other.



# Omelette

## with Ricotta

By John Woodford

Recipe can vary to your tastes. The Ricotta gives an extra richness to your omelettes, even better had cold the next day.

**MAKES 4 PORTIONS**

- 8 eggs,
- 100 grams Ricotta
- 100 ml cream, 100 ml milk
- 2 heaped tablespoon chopped parsley
- Salt & pepper

1. Keep to 2 eggs separate and beat them well with ricotta, add a touch of the milk will help this too.
2. Mix the other 6 eggs with parsley cream and milk;
3. Heat a large Frying pan with a dab of butter and oil to a med heat, not hot as it will scold before it cooks.
4. Pour egg/cream mix in and slowly stir a little until it starts to set, pushing away from the side of your pan -about a minute so, then spoon in the ricotta a various spots around omelette, no need to mix it though as you want to creates pools ricotta when it cooks; let cook for another minute or two, and pop it under a hot grill for another 2 minutes.

5. Under the grill is better as it browns a bit and it's easier then flipping it.

6. If you don't like it browned you can do it just enough to set the mix.

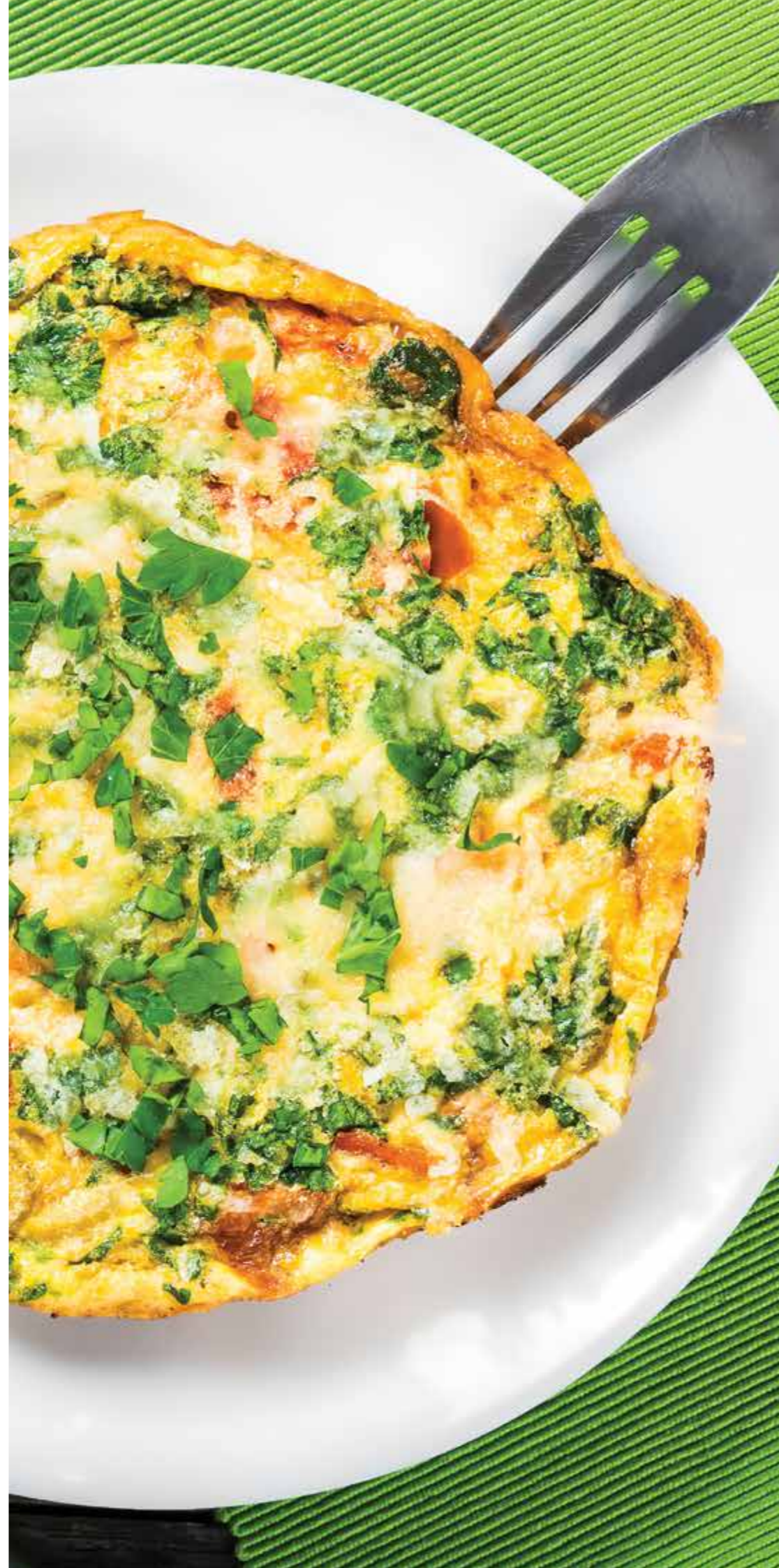
7. Let it cool slightly before taking it out of the pan, you can leave it to cool and keep it to have with a salad next day.

8. If your frying pan sticks a little - put a cover on it and let it stand for 3-4 minutes this seems to helps from sticking.

#### Optional extra:

Steamed chopped Spinach/ mushroom- well drain of water; Bacon; any herbs- like dill even a touch of sage, spices like nutmeg can all be added to your taste.

Turmeric is great with the eggs too, as it enriches and colours the omelette - works a bit like the more expensive saffron.



# STOP PRESS

## THE 2017 TENANT SURVEY WINNERS ANNOUNCED!

Thank you to all tenant households who participated in the 2017 Tenant Survey.

The survey was independently conducted by the NSW Federation of Housing Associations and everyone who completed a survey went into the draw for a chance to win some great prizes.

Prize draw was completed by the NSW Federation of Housing Associations – and the winners are:

**1st Prize a 55inch Smart TV**  
Marjorie – Picton

**2nd Prize a year's subscription to Foxtel including equipment and install**  
Rosemary – Griffith

**3rd Prize 5 x winners an iPad mini**

Odele – Campbelltown  
Naish – Griffith  
George & Anne – Thirlmere  
Ivana – St Andrews  
Rebecca – Young

Congratulations to all our winners!





*A better future for  
our communities.*

CLAYMORE  
CAMPBELLTOWN  
TAHMOOR  
BOWRAL  
GRIFFITH  
YOUNG  
YASS  
WAGGA WAGGA  
GOULBURN  
GUNGAHLIN  
CAMPBELL  
QUEANBEYAN



Level 1, 32 – 36 Wingecarribee St  
PO Box 1026  
Bowral NSW 2576

**P:** 02 4861 2753

**E:** [info@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:info@argylehousing.com.au)

**W:** [www.argylehousing.com.au](http://www.argylehousing.com.au)

