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Government announces world's largest 'Virtual Power Plant' to lower energy bills

As published in 'News releases - Jay Weatherill'
- to read in full click [here](#)

The CHCSA recently announced on Twitter (follow us [@chcofsa](#)) that registrations of interest are open for those who wish to participate in the Virtual Power Plant program. The 250MW plant is expected to lower energy bills for participating households by 30 per cent.

The State Government has unveiled a plan to roll out a network of at least 50,000 home solar and battery systems across South Australia, working together to form the world's largest Virtual Power Plant.

Community housing providers should register their interest in the solar panels and batteries delivered through the Virtual Power Plan via [this link](#).

Energy Concessions

Separate to this plan, eligible South Australians on low or fixed incomes can apply for help with the cost of energy bills. The concession amount is indexed each financial year. For 2017-18, you may be eligible to receive up to \$217.90 to cover both electricity and gas payments (including LPG bottled gas). Refer to the [SA.gov.au](#) site for more information.

It is also strongly recommended that households contact their retailer when facing difficulty paying electricity bills. Retailers will work with customers regarding repayment of their bills, and may be able to offer a discounted rate if requested.

The CHCSA recently produced some relevant information packs that are accessible from our [website](#) or by clicking on the following titles: '[Water and Sewerage Concessions – Information for CHPs and Tenants](#)', and '[Water and Sewerage Discounts – Information for CHPs](#)'.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) Housing Forum

CHCSA is excited to announce that we will partner with Disability Services Consulting (DSC) on their forthcoming Adelaide SDA Gets Serious: The Forum. DSC has been running these specialist SDA forums in collaboration with the state community housing peaks for the last three years and are widely regarded as the industry experts in SDA.

To register for Adelaide’s forum to be held Tuesday 10 April, click [here](#).

‘Shaping the Future’ Report

Maximising the Social and Economic Benefit of the Disability Sector

[Rob DiMonte](#), Disability Industry Development and Market Coordinator General, recently attended a NDIS Stakeholder Forum at which he referred to the ‘Shaping the Future’ Report prepared by KPMG for the Government of South Australia and other Shaping SA Foundation Partners.

The report details the key ideas and findings from stakeholder workshops which focussed on maximising the social and economic benefits of the disability sector in South Australia. Participants were asked to characterise their ideal future for the sector.

From recurring themes identified across all workshops, five priority actions were identified, starting with the creation of a sector Collaboration Centre that will take a leading role in driving industry, market and workforce development and growth in South Australia.

To read the report in full, click [here](#).

State election enrolment for people with no fixed address

Information from the Australian Electoral Commission [website](#)

“People in South Australia without a home are able to vote in the upcoming State election. You are eligible to enrol as a person with no fixed address if you are itinerant, with no access to safe and secure housing, or living in crisis or transitional accommodation. It is not compulsory to enrol or vote if you are a person with no fixed address and you will not be fined. However, you can and are encouraged to enrol and vote if you wish to. If you want to enrol now, but haven’t been enrolled or voted in the past, you will not be fined.”

For more information about and to download a form click [here](#).

Homes for Homes: tackling the big issue of housing affordability

Article from *The Fifth Estate* [website](#)

“The extreme need for affordable housing in some cities is yielding some creative solutions, none more so than the Homes for Homes concept developed by social enterprise The Big Issue. The result could be one of the most sustainable and creative solutions for affordable housing that has yet to be found.

The idea centres around a voluntary legal mechanism placed on the title of a property for the vendor to donate 0.1 per cent of the sale price to a pot of funds that will support affordable and social housing.

The thinking is when you’re enjoying your capital gains tax free uplift in property you might want to share a small part of that good fortune to those less fortunate. On a \$500,000 property it amounts to \$500.

Over time, assuming that people will continue to trade their properties every seven years on average, it could add up to an ever-increasing flow of money. A bit like an annuity for social and affordable housing.”

Click [here](#) to read the article in full – it’s a very interesting concept that could have a great long-term positive impact on housing affordability.

The Catalyst Foundation

Catalyst Foundation (formerly Seniors Information Service) is an inclusive, independent and charitable organisation seeking to improve the lives of all South Australians in the areas of Ageing, Disability, Lifestyle, Employment, Business and Learning. They provide support and information around housing and low cost rental accommodation, residential aged care, concessions and benefits, independent living and home support, employment and business, retirement housing.

We encourage our members to remind their tenants of the assistance available through the Catalyst Foundation. They provide great practical help around accommodation, disability support, navigating My Aged Care and myGov, legal services, information seminars, IT training and support, as well as tax.

[Visit their website](#) for more details, or [sign up for their monthly newsletter](#).

CHCSA Calendar of Events

Wednesday 14 th February 2018	Central Forum
Thursday 22 nd February 2018	CHCSA Board of Management
Monday 26 th February 2018	SA CHIA Regional Committee
Wednesday 28 th February 2018	Communities of Practice – Finance
Friday 2 nd March 2018	CHP Forum
Wednesday 14 th March 2018	Central Forum
Thursday 15 th March 2018	Communities of Practice – Tenant Engagement

CHCSA Recommended Links

[Consumer and Business Services \(CBS\)](#)

[South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal \(SACAT\)](#)

[Tenants Information & Advisory Service \(TIAS\)](#)

[Community Centres SA](#)

[Mediation SA](#)

[Legislation](#)

[ATO Benchmark Market Rent Rates](#)

[STARService](#)

[Volunteering SA&NT](#)

[Renewal SA](#)

[Data SA](#)

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The CHCSA welcomes & encourages member contributions to this fortnightly publication at the discretion of management.

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