



## An open home

Lesley and Brian Hivon's home is at the heart of their family – and that's the way they like it.

"We'd been renting for fourteen years and rents were going up. When the opportunity to buy came up, we jumped at it," explains Lesley.

While they've always put effort into making rental houses feel like home, finally being able to buy meant they could create a place for their children and grandchildren to thrive in.

"Having our own home is security for us. And if anything happens to Brian and I, it gives our children a bit of money," she says.

With four daughters, five grandsons, two step-grandsons and a granddaughter, they're happy to have a home with open space nearby.

"We love the area we're in, it's a special area," says Lesley.

"It's near the parklands with lots of playgrounds, tracks for bikes, a little creek...it's terrific for the grandchildren."

Lesley has invested plenty of effort into transforming their garden from bare earth to a feature of their home.

"I started by sectioning the garden, I dug a fishpond, we bought aviaries and my daughter started a veggie patch," she says.

"I wheel-barrowed dirt from out the back to up the front, then my sister helped me pave part of the backyard so we could have barbeques with the family. We also put in grass so the kids could play on it."

As Brian and Lesley dealt with the ups and downs of life, including major illness and family upheaval, they've been able to work with HomeStart to find solutions to help them keep on track. Lesley says they've always been given a fair go.

"HomeStart has always been just so flexible, and go out of their way to help," she says.

As the winners of our 'SA Shorts' competition, Lesley and Brian are planning to take their youngest grandson Alexander on a holiday to Liebelt House in Littlehampton, so he can get a taste of the country life.

"It will be so good to get away and relax. It's something positive to look forward to," says Lesley.

Sharing good times with their family is typical of the Hivons, and Lesley says one of the best things about having their own home is that their children and grandchildren know they always have a place to stay.

Brian adds that, quite simply, the best part of being a home owner is that 'one day it's going to be ours!'

## Win with HomeStart!

Win an iPad 2 or Big Night Out.

In this edition of News from Home, we're offering you the chance to enter not one, but two competitions!

To celebrate the launch of our Facebook and YouTube pages, we're **giving away an iPad 2** - just share your tip on saving for a deposit and you'll go into the draw.

For those of you who prefer 'snail mail', you could **win one of two \$250 Ticketek vouchers** so you can have a Big Night Out on the town.

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# Time to check your insurance policy

With all the natural disasters currently rocking the world, it's never been more important to make sure your home and contents insurance policy offers you the right level of cover.

From floods and cyclones in Queensland to the devastating earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan, you could be forgiven for being more than a little nervous about what could happen next.

While South Australia has mostly been spared the large scale disasters faced in other parts of the world, taking care of your property by making sure your home and contents are properly insured is always a good idea.

As a home owner, it is your responsibility to check your insurance policies carefully to make sure you're covered for weather related damage and make changes if necessary. Here's a few tips to help you get started.

- It is vitally important to read the fine print of your home and contents insurance to be absolutely sure you have sufficient insurance coverage at all times. Pay particular attention to which weather events you are covered for.



- Call your insurer and ask them to explain what your policy covers. If you're worried about a particular aspect, such as bushfires, make sure to mention it so you can find out what would happen if you were affected.
- Do your research online. For tips on reviewing your cover, Choice provides a home and contents insurance fact sheet on their website – visit [www.choice.com.au](http://www.choice.com.au) and search for 'insurance.'
- You can also find online calculators for many insurers, such as the RAA and Cominsure, which estimate the value of your home and contents, so you make sure you've got the right level of cover.

## Refer a friend and be rewarded

At HomeStart, we want to help people get their 'One day' started today.

As a home owner you know the benefits and financial security that home ownership brings; you can help your friends and family experience these benefits too by referring them to us. Whether they are looking to buy, build or refinance, HomeStart can help them get started.

Simply log onto [homestart.com.au/referral](http://homestart.com.au/referral), complete a form with your referral's details and HomeStart will do the rest.

Following the settlement of your friend or family member's loan, HomeStart will give you a \$50 Coles/Myer voucher to thank you for your referral.



# Smart steps to managing debt



In this edition of News from Home, CEO John Oliver offers some thoughts on taking on extra debt once you have a home loan.

In this age of credit cards and retail store interest free offers, it's easy to 'buy now, pay later' without a second thought. But many people aren't aware of just how much you might 'pay later' if you don't manage debt carefully – particularly if you want to be a successful home owner.

A recent survey by Mortgage Choice found that within two years of getting a mortgage, almost 30% of new home owners took on significant extra debt. Buying a new car or sprucing up your new home might seem like a natural step after buying a property, but it's worth keeping in mind how manageable that extra debt will be in the future.

## Do your sums

If you're considering taking out a car loan or other finance that requires regular repayments, make sure you know exactly how much you'll be up for each pay cycle. You'll need to have enough to cover all your loan repayments, including interest, for as long as the loan lasts. That includes during possible life changes which could reduce your income, such as illness or starting a family.

If you make a purchase which has an 'interest free' period, use that time to pay it off in full. It takes discipline but will save you stress and money in the long term.

## What will repayments do?

When working out your budget, it can be useful to factor in repayment increases. Most HomeStart loan repayments change once a year in line with inflation – knowing you could manage increased repayments is an important way to prepare for the future.

## Reconsider renovations

Now you've got the house, it's tempting to go all out turning it into the home of your dreams straight away. Renovating can be a great investment, however it pays to make sure it's worthwhile. All new furniture and a brand new kitchen might be tempting, but if it's going to cost more than you can really afford, consider taking smaller steps. A coat of paint and some new cushions can freshen up a room without breaking the budget.

If you're disciplined and patient in your approach, your home ownership journey will be a rewarding and successful one.



## Top loan tips

### Voluntary Repayments

At HomeStart, we encourage you to make voluntary repayments on your home loan whenever you can. Not only will it help to pay off your loan faster, you may be able to access these funds via our redraw facility when you need extra cash, e.g. for Christmas presents or school fees.

### Change of circumstances

If your circumstances change and you're worried about meeting loan repayments, your first step is to contact your Loan Manager as soon as possible. That way, they can work with you to find the best way forward.

### Changing your payment cycle

Did you know you can change the frequency of your payment cycle from monthly to weekly or fortnightly? You can switch the frequency of your repayments to suit your pay schedule, which will help you pay off your loan faster and save on interest payments. Contact your Loan Manager or log onto eHomeStart to get started.

### Register your email

Register your email address with HomeStart and save time! Providing us with your email address will help us to stay in touch with you, and action any requests faster. You can register your email address by contacting your Loan Manager, or through eHomeStart.

# HomeStart goes live on Facebook and YouTube

HomeStart now has two new ways to keep you posted – a company page on Facebook and a dedicated YouTube channel.

Our Facebook page will keep you updated with the latest news, tips, exclusive promotions and more. You can also watch our award winning TV commercials and customers talking about their home ownership experiences on YouTube, with more new videos to come soon.

Why not tell us on YouTube what you think of the stars of our ads, Barney the mouse and Sue the fish, or share your tips for budgeting and saving on Facebook?

We hope you 'like' what you see...

[www.facebook.com/HomeStartFinance](http://www.facebook.com/HomeStartFinance)

[www.youtube.com/user/153homestart](http://www.youtube.com/user/153homestart)



## WIN an iPad 2!

Visit our Facebook page between 8 –18 April 2011, post your tip on saving for a deposit in 25 words or less, and you'll be in the running to win an iPad 2.

Visit [www.homestart.com.au](http://www.homestart.com.au) to see full terms and conditions.

## And the award goes to...the fish and the mouse!

HomeStart's TV commercials featuring Barney the mouse and Sue the fish each received awards for 'Best TV' at the annual Adelaide Advertising and Design Club Awards.

The awards were judged by advertising industry specialists from all over Australia, with thousands of entries submitted from South Australian businesses including advertising and design agencies, film and music production houses, photographers, printers and more.

To be recognised as South Australia's best TV commercial of 2010, for not only one but two ads, is a great achievement, and one which HomeStart and our advertising agency JAM are very proud of.

Barney and Sue are reported to be delighted that their fine work has been recognised, and thank their agents and trainers for helping them to become stars.

## Win a Big Night Out on us!

Dust off your dancing shoes, your favourite shirt or frock, and enjoy a night out on the town – on us! To enter our 'Big Night Out competition' for your chance to win one of two \$250 Ticketek vouchers, complete and return this entry form to:

**HomeStart's Big Night Out competition, 153 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000 by 27 May 2011.**

You must be an existing HomeStart customer to enter, and you will need to include your current loan number (which you can find on your HomeStart loan statement) to be eligible.

Name	<input type="text"/>	Loan number	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>	Daytime phone	<input type="text"/>



Conditions of entry: The competition commences on Friday 8 April 2011 and ends on Friday 27 May 2011. Two prizes of \$250 Ticketek vouchers are on offer. Total prize value is \$500. The draw will be conducted by HomeStart Finance, 153 Flinders Street, Adelaide on Tuesday 31 May at 12 noon. There will be two winners and they will be notified by phone.

