

## Upcoming events

**21 September 2014**

**Trading day** at Jeni Lewington's (BLCE1381) abode  
5/3 Bruce Rd, Woodridge  
1-4 pm (NOTE CHANGE OF TIME)  
BYO: plate of food and goods to trade

**12 October 2014**

**BOGI (Brisbane Organic Growers Inc.) Fair**

Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor  
9 am – 3 pm  
BrisLETS will once again have a stall at this fun day.  
Needed: volunteers; goods; services

**16 November 2014**

**Working bee to construct retaining wall**

Russell Preston's (BLCE0025) house  
17 Colton St, Highgate Hill  
9 am until afternoon  
BYO: snacks, gloves. Lunch provided and 20 units per hour for each worker

**23 November 2014**

**Trading day** at Danielle El-Hayek's (BLCE1377) house

174 Newmarket Road, Wilston  
2-5 pm  
BYO: plate of food and goods to trade

**14 December 2014**

**Christmas extravaganza and trading day**

at Storm Furness's (BLCE0955) house  
1 Woolley St, Taringa  
2-5 pm  
BYO: plate of food and goods to trade



**Spring has sprung and we have some exciting events planned in the coming months!**

Following the trading day on 21 September, our next major event is the **BOGI FAIR** on the 12 October. This is always a fun day and is our major fundraising day of the year, but we need assistance to make it happen. In particular, we need:

- Volunteers (to help set up/pack down, staff the stall on a two hour roster system)
- Donations of goods to sell
- Offers from people willing to provide their services to the public (eg seated massage, Reiki, henna painting) with 10% of earnings (U or \$) going to BrisLETS

**If you can assist, please contact Liz or Adrian (see p. 8) by 8 October 2014.**

On 16 November, Russell Preston has organised a working bee to help make a retaining wall plus other small jobs. He is offering 20 units per hour plus lunch to those fit for the job. Russell writes:

*The blocks weigh 13.8 kg or 31 lbs, so everyone lifting them needs to be confident of their strength and stamina, and use proper lifting techniques by bending their knees rather than their back. A greater number of helpers will probably be needed to shovel and compact the road base and the fill material as the wall rises. Of course other tasks may be available on the day, but I envisage starting around 9 am, having a break for morning tea, a longer time for lunch, then maybe some more work in afternoon.*

On 23 November we are heading north to Wilston for a trading day with Danielle El-Hayek before returning to Storm's for our Christmas extravaganza (stay tuned).

## Recent events

Our June trading day was held at Amanda Kelley's house (bottom right photo). It was a lovely afternoon.

In July, of course, it was the AGM. See Alison Bird's fantastic presentation on pages 5 to 7.

In August we had a great turn-out to Storm and Andras Furness's house (top right photo).

On Monday 8 September, yours truly drove up to Toowoomba to attend a public forum on complementary currencies hosted by HOPE (Householders Options to Protect the Environment).

A small, but enthusiastic, group (see photo below) discussed the benefits of LETS and shared success stories. There were representatives from Stanthorpe LETS, Condamine Catchment CES and BrisLETS present.



## Lets.org.au

Following the survey in the first half of 2014 and some improvements to the site, the BrisLETS committee decided to renew lets.org.au for another two years. We recognise that this site may be useful for non-LETS members to find out about LETS. Two important issues are to ensure it is kept up-to-date and to seek contributions (U or \$) from other LETS groups to maintain it since this is an Australia-wide site. The BrisLETS committee will be exploring these matters in the coming months.

On behalf of the committee and all members, I'd like to wish long-time member, **Carl Johansen** (BLCE1189), a speedy recovery from pneumonia. Carl is now out of hospital and I'm sure he would welcome a phone call or visit from his BrisLETS friends.



## Welcome to our new members and their offerings

**Adrian Hanks** (BLCE0974), Sunnybank Hills  
Mind-set coaching for personal and business; Full body  
massage  
3272 0877 / 0400 424 417

**Jani Burdett** (BLCE0975), Keperra  
Qualified remedial massage; Yoga, laugh arts workshops;  
Yoga classes  
3157 2441 / 0451 055 562

**Ishka McNulty** (BLCE0976), South Brisbane  
ESL/literacy/numeracy tutor; Knitting/crochet tuition;  
Computer mentoring - learn how to use an iPad; Driver for  
outings/appts  
3844 0350 / 0402 770 158

**Monica Brigid** (BLCE0977), Capalaba  
Astrology; Tarot; Business management  
0419 151 511

**Timothy Russell** (BLCE0978), Taringa  
Website development and graphic design; Ubuntu Linux  
desktop installation and training  
0466 640 977

**Kathryn-Victoria Smith** (BLCE0979), Eagleby  
Secretarial services; Household help (ironing/shopping);  
Driving  
0421 648 795

## Wants

**Kathryn-Victoria Smith** (BLCE0979), Eagleby  
Gardening; Pet sitter  
0421 648 795

**Liz Stanhope** (BLCE0138), 3391 4331  
Four matching sturdy, comfortable dining chairs

**Russell Preston** (BLCE0025), 3844 5040  
I have one aluminium tressle, but it needs a mate. It is  
7 rungs, 4400 mm high, 600 mm spacings and 1200  
base. So if you have a similar one, I will buy or we can  
borrow each other's when we need a set.

**Jo-Anne Nelson** (BLCE0954), 0431 912 096  
Game of Yahtzee

## Trading Figures

### June 2014 – 45 trades

Totalling 2116 units  
Av trade: 47.02 units  
Admin levy: 153.28 units

### July 2014 – 41 trades

Totalling 1434.50 units  
Av trade: 34.99 units  
Admin levy: 109.84 units

### August 2014 – 24 trades

Totalling 1533 units  
Av trade: 63.88 units  
Admin levy: 122.64 units

Points to remember:

- It's important to enter trades in the month they are generated
- To be an active user, you must have at least one current offering
- Ensure your offerings and wants are current and up-to-date
- You can choose to display your offerings and wants for up to 12 months
- Offerings and wants are emailed out in the first week of the month
- Please check the qualifications, skills, references etc of the seller before entering into a trade that could cost you money or have serious consequences if the person has overstated their abilities
- You don't have to earn units to spend units
- If you need help with any aspect of BrisLETS, please contact us (see p. 8).

So ... what are you waiting for?  
Start trading today! 😊

## Committee News

Following the AGM, we now have a three person committee (see p. 8), but are calling out to any member who would have the skills and desire to be our **Development and Promotions Coordinator**. You would be reimbursed in units. This would be a great opportunity for a marketing student/professional to add to your CV.

These are the range of duties, in cooperation with other committee and general members, of course:

- Attends committee meetings and arranges and coordinates monthly trading days
- Organises, attends, coordinates and delegates promotional activities (eg BOGI Fair – organising volunteer roster, set up, pack down)
- Investigates opportunities to present to relevant community organisations
- Networks and welcomes new members; assists new members to start trading
- Develops knowledge of the skills and interests of members to harness connections when opportunities arise.

### Performance Indicators:

- Calendar of events and information stalls is created and delegated amongst members
- 3-4 newspaper articles in the free local press a year
- Information brochures distributed where appropriate (eg libraries, suitable community centres, community notice boards)
- Greater awareness in the community about BrisLETS.

Please contact Liz Stanhope if you can help us.

The committee has also recently made some important decisions about the financial operation of BrisLETS.

Firstly, we are suspending the 50 units we previously paid for the hosting of trading days simply because we are not currently trading at a sufficiently high rate to be able to afford it.

Secondly, we are making alterations to the unit levy. Committee members are paid units for the work they do for BrisLETS. We also pay units for the maintenance of lets.org.au and as well as paying the Australian CES system 1% of units collected by the 4% levy.

For the last few years committee members have been paid at the approximate rate of two units an hour for their time. I know of no member of LETS who would sell their time so cheaply. Although it is a little like parliamentarians voting themselves salary increases, we have decided to increase the unit allocation to the committee to the more equitable level of approximately 20 units an hour, not including time spent at meetings.

By being particularly frugal with our money we do not need to revert to charging an annual money fee, but by charging an annual unit fee we hope to be able to promote LETS to encourage more members and thus to provide more goods and services to all members.

The current levy of 4% on trades does not provide the administration account with sufficient units to pay this so, as well as the levy on trades, we have agreed to do as some other LETS groups do and charge an annual levy of 20 units per active member per financial year. Those few members whose accounts have been frozen because they have exceeded the 500 unit debit limit will not be charged.

If you are one of the many active members with no offerings who haven't traded for some time you might like to consider having your account made inactive to avoid seeing your current unit balance slowly diminish. If, at some time in the future, you decide to become more active and recommence trading an email or phone call is all it will take to reactivate your account.

The 2014/2015 deduction will be made in mid-November.

Please direct any questions or feedback to Adrian Vos, President.



## Increasing LETS participation

Alison Bird, 20 July 2014

I have been in Tableland LETS since it started in 1991 and I'm very keen. In the last five years I've spent quite a bit of time Brisbane for medical treatment. It has been really great to meet BrisLETS members and have an opportunity to join in. Thanks to everyone for making me feel so welcome!

I was asked to talk about increasing participation in LETS, and I've approached this by describing some of the things that work well for us in Tableland LETS, which possibly are suitable to adopt or adapt for BrisLETS.

Tableland LETS is currently in a 'boom' time with 590 active members (or more by the time this is published). For examples of our amazing trading activity, in 2013 there were 136 951 B traded in 5079 transactions. So far this year already 108 400 B have been traded in 3182 transactions. 'B' stands for bartles, our LETS units, named after Mt Bartle Frere, the highest mountain in Queensland (which is located in FNQ).

### Coordinator

A vital factor in the growth and recent success of Tableland LETS has been the leadership of Bel Moore, the coordinator. Her vision, cleverness and business acumen have stimulated many improvements to the way the system works. She is quite an extraordinary person, managing LETS as well as other commitments including homeschooling, a farm, a home-based business and more. Bel initiated Tableland LETS' transition to the internet and connection with CES. She is good at delegating tasks, and administration work is broken down so the more time-consuming duties are shared. Workers are paid in bartles for admin work done.

### Community Chest

Tableland LETS has a charity account where anyone can donate bartles and from time to time the committee decides an amount from the community chest to be given to a needy recipient or a good cause.

### Trading events

Having trading days in each 'hub' means that our calendar of events is very full with meetings happening somewhere in the region on every weekend and some weeknights. The range of venues and times gives increased options for trading, and keen members travel to multiple events. Trading events are varied, some outdoors, at the back of a shop, in a hall, on a member's verandah, combined with a social activity, etc.

A couple of years' ago a 'Village Fete' was held in a huge hall and paper bartles were printed and sold at the door to members (debited from their LETS accounts) and to non-members (for federal dollars). Members set up stalls with their offerings, including activities for children and demonstrations of services. It was an extremely successful day and served to promote LETS and increase membership as well as encourage much trading. The use of paper units was just a one-off, but a very interesting experiment.

### Sponsorship month

For a special promotional deal the month of December is declared to be a time when existing members can recruit new members by paying their joining fee in units (20u in lieu of \$20). Thus new members can join for free if an existing member is willing to pay 20 units to sponsor them. Members are encouraged to think of people they can invite to join up. It might be someone who has goods or services they want to buy, or perhaps a customer who can't really afford to buy their goods or services, and would benefit from access to it through LETS. This has been very successful as both a membership drive and also a bartle fundraiser.



**Pick-up/Drop-off points** (see photo p. 7)

When LETS members negotiate a trade in response to a listing on CES, they may make a plan for the items to be left at a central pick-up place. In many of the hubs is a designated space, for example on or under someone's home verandah, where others can leave goods for collection. Items are labelled with the buyer's name and left on the shelves. In Atherton, Irene's verandah pick-up space is also like a fruit shop because not only do LETS members leave their excess produce there to trade, but Irene also talks to local residents when she sees fallen fruit rotting in neighbouring gardens. They are generally keen to reduce wastage by donating their fruit to the verandah shop.

**Debit and credit limits**

In Tableland LETS upper and lower limits are set at + or -1000 bartles and everyone is encouraged to aim for a balance of zero. Anyone who goes over the limit may be asked if they need help to find ways to earn or spend, and if there is no willingness to reduce their balance, their account may be locked although this seems to happen only rarely. Often there is a good reason for going over the limit, such as a big outlay for a working bee or the sale of an expensive item. If the member has a history of effective trading (BOTH earning and spending) then usually the limit can be temporarily lifted to allow continued trading while the member endeavours to bring their balance back towards zero.

Note: each exchange sets their own optional limits and it is interesting to see they vary widely. BrisLETS has a lower limit of -500 and no upper limit, SydLETS has limits of +/- 2000, Maleny LETS +/-3000, and the original recommendation from the global CES was limits of + or - 5000.

Members are advised that LETS is different in that you don't need to have units before you can spend them, and there's nothing wrong with being in debit. Indeed, at any one time approximately half of the members will be in debit to balance the other half who are in credit. The vital thing is the flow of units, the brainstorm at circle time at a trading event

most successful members being those with a high turnover. In Tableland LETS a 'pep talk' to overlimit members involves suggestions for ways to spend / earn, including

- a working bee
- list more offerings / wants
- browse wants / offerings
- also look at other exchange systems for inspiration & possible trades sponsor a suitable customer/buyer (pay their joining fee)

**Hubs**

Tableland LETS is the only exchange anywhere in the far north and at present the group covers a vast geographic area, also including the city of Cairns. In each town is a LETS "hub" with a local area coordinator who organises a regular monthly trading event and liaises with local members. This is a great way to spread the admin workload and also focus the activity of members in each neighbourhood.

**Annual levy**

Tableland LETS has no transaction fee, but an annual levy instead, so as not to discourage trading and entering trades. We actually asked CES HQ to switch off the transaction fee so the 4% is not charged on each trade. Each year every member is charged a levy of 15 units. From this our dues are paid to CES and there is some left over for the admin account.

**Shared meal**

Most of Tableland LETS' trading events involve a potluck meal, where members bring a plate of food to share. This is easy for the host, caters for all diets, becomes an enjoyable social occasion and provides the best feed ever! Over the meal people chat about food and cooking and this inevitably leads to sharing of recipes and gardening information and ends up with more trading.

**Circle time**

Often trading events include sitting in a circle where members take it in turns to briefly announce their offers and wants. It usually leads to useful discussion and brainstorming to solve problems. The process encourages trading of services (not just goods) and wants (not just offerings).



**Resource library**

Tableland LETS has a collection of books and DVDs to lend to members. Also, for a while film nights were held monthly and were very popular and attracted more new members. Films about alternative economics and other issues of interest were shown and afterwards there would be discussion (over a shared meal).

**Facebook page**

This is helpful to promote event information as well as providing a forum for discussion and problem-solving. Word of mouth is how most trading and membership starts, and Facebook is another place where many members are interacting.

**Working bees**

A working bee (see picture at right) is a great way to get a big job done. Ten or 20 people working for a couple of hours can really accomplish something, then sit down for a shared meal, a chat and a bit of trading. It can be a permablitz (make-over of a backyard to a food garden). The working bee may involve a range of tasks (indoors and outdoors) to suit all abilities, and often families attend and even children earn some units. Large sums of units change hands at a working bee. Workers are paid by the hour, it is a good opportunity to earn, and the host may spend hundreds of units in one day.



Alison Bird presenting at the AGM

Are you inspired by these ideas from Tablelands LETS? Which ideas do you think BrisLETS could adopt? We'd love to hear your thoughts. Please send your suggestions or feedback to the secretary.

**Articles for the newsletter**

Please send articles, offers and wants for the summer issue of BrisLETS News to the editor by **Wednesday 26 November 2014.**

Don't forget to join our Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/brislets/>

## Workcover



If you, as a private individual, employ an individual (not a business) to work in or around your home (cleaner, ironer, gardener, labourer etc.) you would be wise to consider Household Worker Insurance. This is \$50 for two years and is issued by WorkCover Queensland. This can be organised over the phone by calling 1300 362 128.

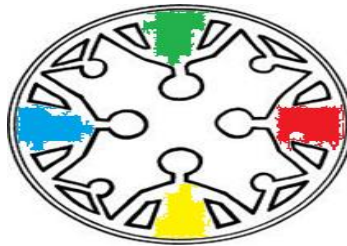
## Current Committee Contacts

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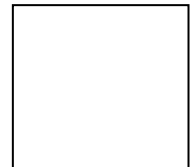
# BrisLETS



# NEWS

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