

Housing Trust News

Issue 08, December 2017 Newsletter

Hello and Welcome!

It has been a busy few months since the last newsletter, with lots of developments at the Housing Trust.

We are very proud to be the first business recognised as a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace in the Illawarra. Gaining White Ribbon accreditation takes a whole of organisation commitment to stop violence. Everyone has embraced the strategies and training we put in place during the past year. A new policy gives staff experiencing domestic violence an additional 10 days special leave to help leave violent relationships.

Next year we will start building seven new homes in Flinders and five in Corrimal. Our development in Dapto will provide another 31 homes to the community – we hope to have plans approved by

late 2018, and to commence building in 2019. We are also expecting to buy 25 more properties in Bulli.

There have been some unsettling stories in the media recently and I'd again like to reassure you that we have plans in place to renew and revitalise HT. Please refer to our website for details - www.housingtrust.org.au/organisational-renewal-and-compliance/

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Christmas Party and wish you, your families and friends all the joy of Christmas and a safe, happy New Year

Michele Adair, CEO

White Ribbon Accredited Workplace

The Housing Trust is very proud to be the first business in the Illawarra awarded White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation, making us a leader in domestic violence prevention and response.

The Accreditation demonstrates that we are a safe, respectful and supportive workplace which has benefits for our residents and the broader community as well as our staff.



 White
Ribbon
Workplace

 Housing
Trust

 In support of
White Ribbon

Illawarra Business Awards finalist

The Housing Trust was a finalist in the Illawarra Business Awards in the 'Excellence in Customer Service' and 'Excellence in Social Enterprise' categories. Housing Trust staff and Chairperson attended the presentation evening recently, and we were honoured to be among so many wonderful local businesses recognised for their work in the Illawarra.



Housing Trust staff and board members at the Illawarra Business Awards



Congratulations to our Tylah West Scholarship Winners!

Congratulations to the winners of our Tylah West Scholarship - Anurandha, Razan, Kristy, Tam, Holly, Luke, Emily, Fleur, Faye, Holly and Lakia.

The Scholarships will be presented in December. The increased funding, supported by Bank Australia, means that the Housing Trust can help more residents to pursue their goals in education, training and employment.

Tylah West
Scholarship



Bank Australia
RESPONSIBLE BANKING

Online rent subsidy review - thank you!

Thank you to all residents who completed their rent subsidy review online for the first time. Many people came into our office to get help with the new online form, and found the process simple.

We are required to undertake a Subsidy Review twice a year, to ensure that assistance continues to go to those households who are most in need.

Well done to Ricky, John, Vesna, Allan and Anne for winning the gift vouchers, as part of our random draw!



New tenant handbooks & Golden Ticket winners

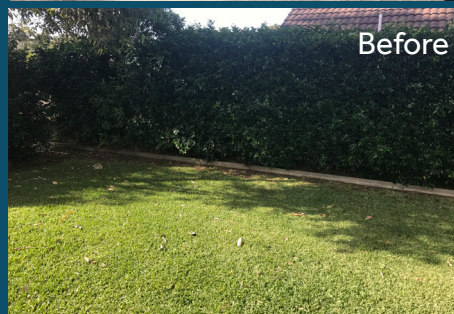
Make sure to read your new Tenant Handbook for information on your tenancy as well as repairs and maintenance. The handbook lists the questions you will be asked when you call up with a maintenance issue, as well as other helpful advice.

Two lucky winners received golden tickets inside their new Tenant Handbooks - congratulations to Sandra and Mary on winning a \$50 voucher each!



Garden makeovers

Thanks to funding from the NSW Government's Social Housing Community Improvement Fund (SHCIF), we have continued to create or upgrade community gardens. Residents are enjoying these new, communal spaces and the fresh produce that they supply.



Complaints and Appeals

We welcome appeals and complaints as they provide an opportunity for us to learn from your experiences and improve the way we deliver our services to you and other tenants. The distinction between appeals and complaints is important because they are handled in different ways.

Appeals

An appeal can be made if you feel we have not followed our own policies, however, only certain decisions are appealable. For example if you are not satisfied with our decisions on issues like applications for transfers or rental rebates, you can ask us to review our decision first. This is called a 'First Tier Appeal' and the original decision will be reviewed by a senior member of staff. If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome following our internal review process you can appeal to the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). HAC can be contacted on 1800 629 794 or (02) 8741 2555.

Complaints

If we have followed policies correctly but you are not happy with how our service has been provided, this is a complaint. You can make a complaint in writing. We will respond to all formal complaints within 28 days.

If you want help putting a complaint into writing we are happy to assist. If you are not happy with our response to your complaint you have a range of options. You may ask for your complaint to be escalated for consideration by our Executive Management, or you can refer your complaint to the Registrar of Community Housing.

Recent Events



Mental Health Expo and Walk of Pride



White Ribbon lunch



Resident morning tea with Catholic Care

Next Issue:

Our next issue is out in March 2018. To stay up-to-date, please check our website or Facebook page. If you would like to see any items in our Housing Trust News, please contact us. We would love to hear from you!



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