

# Housing Trust News

Issue 11, December 2018 Newsletter

## Hello and Welcome !

### Housing Trust Holiday/New Year Closure

Reminder: Housing Trust will be closed from 5pm Christmas Eve 24/12/18 and reopen Monday 31/12/18. Housing Trust will be closed New Years Day 1/01/19. We will see you on the 2/01/19.

For help with any emergencies while the office is closed, please call (02) 4254 1166. If you are homeless and require urgent temporary accommodation, please contact Link2Home on 1800 152 152.



As another year draws to a close we have been busy attending to lots of administrative aspects of Housing Trust business.

The 2017-18 Financial Statements have been audited and I'm delighted to advise Housing Trust has once again received an unqualified report. We have a very strong cash position which is vital as we undertake an extensive maintenance program and prepare for growth. The financial statements are summarised in our Annual Report, which is published on our website. Please don't hesitate to contact the office if you'd like a full copy which we'd be happy to email or post to you.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 26 November. The Board officially welcomed two new directors, Nada Nasser and Roy Rogers. Nada and Roy filled casual vacancies earlier in the year and they were officially elected at the Meeting. Nada has a wealth of housing and support service experience in Government and community organisations. Roy is the long-term CEO of The Flagstaff Group and from that role brings great local knowledge of the Illawarra and the needs of people living with disabilities.

After nearly six years, the Board farewelled Jennifer Macquarie. Jennifer's commitment to Housing Trust and affordable housing, her generosity and professional experience have been immensely valuable. She will be missed in the boardroom but remains a close friend of Housing Trust.

As part of the Board's ongoing review and succession Hon. David Campbell announced earlier this year he would be stepping down as Chair but remaining on the Board.

Michael Szafraniec has since been elected unopposed to the role. In thanking David for his leadership over the past five years Michael highlighted that Housing Trust was one of the first Community Housing Providers to achieve and maintain Tier 1 registration, we added 96 homes to our portfolio, and achieved White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation and we continue to make multi-million dollar investments in local building projects and jobs.

This month we started work on a new \$1.6m building project in Corrimal. It will provide four two-bedroom units and a one-bedroom villa. It is a small but much-needed property and we expect to be handing tenants the keys late in 2019.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and everyone you love all the joy of Christmas, and a safe and happy New Year.

Michele Adair, CEO



Turning soil at Corrimal

# 2018 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results - Thank you

Housing Trust is committed to delivering quality service and support to our tenants and their families. Part of this commitment is ensuring that we listen to your views and feedback.

Housing Trust conducts a tenant survey each year. We use the findings to help us get to know our tenants, improve our services and make sure we are working with the right local partners to deliver the services and support that our tenants need. The survey was conducted independently by Community Housing Industry Association NSW (CHIA NSW). This year, almost 45% of Housing Trust tenants responded to the survey, providing us with valuable information and feedback.

Overall, the survey results show that Housing Trust tenants are satisfied with their homes and neighbourhoods, and the ability of our team to provide helpful and attentive service. We were touched to hear that 93% of respondents would recommend us to friends or family.

## Key results:

- **87%** of tenants are satisfied overall with Housing Trust services
- **89%** of tenants are satisfied with the condition of their property
- **85%** of tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service provided

## Areas for ongoing focus:

- Repairs and maintenance: Despite achieving some good results in this area, repairs and maintenance remains the stand-out key priority for respondents
- Tenant involvement: Satisfaction with tenant involvement and the ability to influence decision making has decreased when compared with prior year results
- Complaints Handling: Satisfaction with complaints handling has declined slightly when compared with prior year results

## Next steps:

Following each survey, Housing Trust uses the results to review and inform our team plans. Results analysis is undertaken with staff and tenants to help us identify opportunities to continue with work that is proving to be successful and also to address areas of concern.

If you would like to get involved or provide further feedback in relation to the survey or any other aspect of Housing Trust service please call our Community Engagement Officer, Joanne Reed on 42541166 or email [info@housingtrust.org.au](mailto:info@housingtrust.org.au) to register your interest.

## And the lucky winner is...

Housing Trust tenant Talal received a \$100 voucher for his participation in the Housing Trust Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2018.

Talal says "Housing Trust staff are always very helpful".

Talal is one of ten prize draw winners who were selected at random by CHIA from valid returned Survey entries.

Thankyou to all of our tenants who took the time to participate in the 2018 Survey, your feedback helps us help you.





# Tenant Engagement Strategy & Customer Service Standards

Housing Trust recently reached out to tenants for feedback on our Tenant Engagement Strategy and Customer Service Standards. Thank you to everyone for your feedback and support. Both documents are now available on our [website](#).



## Policy Update

Housing Trust reviews its policies on a regular basis, and we value the input of our Tenant Advisory Group as part of this process. All policies are available by visiting our [website](#).

**Revised Policies**

**Child Protection & Wellbeing  
Rental Subsidy Fraud  
Transfer Policy**

**New Policies**

**Parking**

## Paddy's Place

In partnership with Housing NSW, Paddy's Place provides crisis accommodation for clients eligible for temporary accommodation under the Temporary Assistance Program.

Paddy's Place has recently undergone a "refresh" with internal walls being painted lighter, bright colours added to residents doors and the addition of new artworks to create a more welcoming environment for residents.

Paddy's Place was fortunate to receive a Community Wellbeing Grant to establish a community garden for residents. The garden is now being enjoyed by residents who are reaping the rewards of fresh, seasonal produce.



## Appealing a decision

If an applicant, tenant, or stakeholder is dissatisfied with a decision made by Housing Trust then an appeal may be made. An appeal can be submitted by completing the Housing Trust Appeal Form which is available at our office or by visiting our website [www.housingtrust.org.au](http://www.housingtrust.org.au)



# Trainee Updates

We are proud to have three Aboriginal identified trainees currently employed with us at Housing Trust.

Kenneth joined the team in October as our Lawns & Gardens (Horticulture) Trainee with the Housing Trust Internal Maintenance Program.

Kala and Tjanaya started business administration traineeships with Housing Trust in May 2018. They will work in our Customer Service & Support and Asset Teams.



## Tenant Co-Design Committee Update

Housing Trust is committed to involving tenants in the decision-making processes that affect their tenancies. The newly formed Tenant Co-Design Committee (TCDC) recently worked with us to plan refurbishment works at Farrell Gardens.

The TCDC gave advice on access, safety, floor coverings, new roof design, paint colours and window furnishings. As you can see by the photos, they did an amazing job.



The next agenda item for our TCDC will be designing the signage for Central Gardens, enabling emergency services to find the complex which is tucked away off the main road quickly and easily.

If you are interested in joining the TCDC, call Joanne on 02 4254 1166.

## Holiday Stress

Help is always just a phone call away! Housing Trust understands that the holiday season can be a stressful time. If you require support over the festive season please refer to LifeLine on 13 11 14 or Mensline on 1300 78 99 78.

The holiday season can also cause financial stress for some families. Please remember that your rent account must remain two weeks in advance all year round. If you think you may struggle paying your rent over Christmas please contact us to discuss your payments and we can work with you to keep your rent account up to date. If you have any concerns and would like to speak to a Financial Counsellor, you can refer to Mission Australia on 1800 110 578 or Salvation Army on 13 72 58.

# Have your say!

Tenants are at the heart of our business and we are committed to delivering quality service and support in line with our newly formed Tenant Engagement Strategy and Customer Service Standards. Housing Trust will continue to provide genuine opportunities for tenants to have a say in the way that we deliver service and support. Ways of getting involved include:

**Tenant Advisory Group (TAG):** The TAG advises the Housing Trust on policies and procedures, and has genuine input into decision making. The next TAG will be held in February 2019.

**Tenant Co-Design Committee (TCDC):** The TCDC are involved in design choices for refurbishments or new builds.

**Neighbourhood Projects:** Housing Trust has helped tenants to establish many beautiful community gardens, and we are always happy to discuss other projects that could help your neighbourhood!

**Block Meetings:** Housing Trust holds regular meetings at our larger complexes to discuss issues with Housing Trust and their neighbours simultaneously.

Register your interest with our Community Engagement Officer, Joanne on 4254 1166.

**Feedback & Complaints:** If you wish to provide feedback in relation to our service you can complete a feedback form online at [housingtrust.org.au](http://housingtrust.org.au), alternatively you can email us at [info@housingtrust.org.au](mailto:info@housingtrust.org.au) or call us on 02 4254 1166.

## We have made updating your change of circumstances easier

- Has your partner moved in?
- Has your pension changed?
- Has your employment changed?

If your circumstances have changed, please let us know within 21 days by completing a rent subsidy review form.

A rent subsidy review form is available online and may also be requested by calling or emailing us anytime. **This information helps us, help you!**

## Good news story!

**Luke**, a 2018 Tylah West Education Scholarship recipient:

**Tylah West**   
Education Scholarship

"I owe so much to the Tylah West Education Scholarship. Before I used to worry about the week-to-week expenses and had to sacrifice things because I was raised in a different household to most other University students. I don't have to miss lectures and tutorials anymore because I can't afford to get there or skip meals to save that bit extra for a textbook. This has been by far my most successful year at uni because of the financial stresses the scholarship has alleviated."

"I am so grateful for the help I've received and the effect it's had on me to succeed and achieve. I highly recommend other tenants apply, you'll be amazed at how far you can go given the chance" - Luke





# Opportunities and Events



**Tenant Christmas Party**  
20/12/18 @Fraternity Club, Fairy Meadow.  
Call 4254 1166 or email [reception@housingtrust.org.au](mailto:reception@housingtrust.org.au). Bookings essential.



## Did you Know?

Did you know Good Shepherd Microfinance offer No Interest Loans (NILS) of up to \$1,500 for people on low to very low incomes. All you need is a pension or healthcare card, a fixed address, and a willingness and capacity to repay the loan. You may purchase whitegoods, pay medical or dental bills, or purchase items like computers. For more information call 13 64 57 or go to [nils.com.au](http://nils.com.au)



## Service NSW

The NSW Government is helping ease the cost of living with more than 40 rebates and savings. Just click through six simple questions to receive a personalised list of potential rebates. <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/cost-living>

## Recent Events



HT Amazing Race Round II



Illawarra Committee Against Domestic Violence Bunnings BBQ



White Ribbon Day Walk

## NBN Rollout

We want you to stay connected! You can do this by checking NBN cut off dates for your local area. You can check cut off dates by visiting <https://www.nbnco.com.au/residential/learn/rollout-map>

## Maintenance & Repairs

Contact Housing Trust Maintenance Team as soon as a maintenance or repair issue arise at your home. You can do this by calling our friendly maintenance team direct on 02 4254 1115 or email [maintenance@housingtrust.org.au](mailto:maintenance@housingtrust.org.au).

## Next Issue:

Look out for our next issue in early 2019! To stay up-to-date, 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!



Like us on Facebook to keep informed of free activities, events and training opportunities: [www.facebook.com/TheHousingTrust/](https://www.facebook.com/TheHousingTrust/)

Housing Trust | 120 Smith Street, Wollongong NSW 2500  
P: 02 4254 1166 | F: 02 4254 1122 | E: [info@housingtrust.org.au](mailto:info@housingtrust.org.au) | ABN: 18 739 426 566  
[housingtrust.org.au](http://housingtrust.org.au)