

# Housing Trust News

Issue 12, March 2019 Newsletter

## We're on the MOVE!

2019 is shaping up to be a dynamic and eventful year. It's only March, but so much has happened already at Housing Trust.

I'm delighted to advise Housing Trust will have a new office to call home. Over the June long weekend we will be relocating to 5 Bridge Road, Coniston. Our new location is just 200 metres from Coniston train station, making it easy for visitors wanting to use public transport. Two hour parking is available on Old Springhill Road and untimed street parking on the surrounding streets. More information regarding the relocation will be provided via a letter and social media over the coming months.

We recently received notice from the NSW Registrar of Community Housing that Housing Trust is now compliant with the requirements of the National Community Housing Code. The Registrar praised us for the continuous improvement which has been implemented across the whole organisation. I am also happy to report that over the last 12 months, Housing Trust have experienced the highest staff retention rate in over six years. We understand how important this stability is to our tenants, and everyone from the board to senior management and frontline staff, are working to provide the best quality support possible.

After nearly six years of service, the Housing Trust Board are saying farewell to Hon. David Campbell. David's passion for our mission and his commitment to our tenants is second to none. I have no doubt he will continue to be a vocal advocate for our work and role in the community.

We are also saying goodbye to Angus Dawson. Increasing business demands have made it difficult for Angus to uphold his ongoing commitment to the Housing Trust Board.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank David and Angus for their support and professional contribution. We wish them both the very best with their future endeavors.

In David and Angus' departure, we would like to welcome Sara Haslinger to the Board. Sara is a partner at Shaw Reynolds Lawyers and brings a wealth of experience in legal, advisory, and project management in the engineering, building and construction sectors.

Sara's expertise is a welcomed addition to Housing Trust and we look forward to her professional input to our aim to double our supply delivery of safe, affordable homes across the Illawarra.

Housing Trust is one step closer to expanding our vision of a 'decent home for everyone', with the construction of five homes at Eager Street, Corrimal on target for completion in August. The internal fit-out has commenced and the site is buzzing with activity. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in this project for their hard work and dedication.

Over the next few days we are expecting to receive confirmation of the commencement of a seven home project at Willinga Road, Flinders. On-site work is planned to commence in April. This \$2.4m development will contain two three-bedroom villas, five two-bedroom villas, with one two-bedroom villa fitted for disabled access.

All work at Housing Trust is guided by the values of Respect, Integrity, Support and Collaboration. We look forward to working with you throughout the year to continue to provide safe, affordable accommodation for all.

Michele Adair, CEO



Eager Street, Corrimal

# Tylah West

## Education Scholarship

Last month, 13 Housing Trust tenants were awarded Tylah West Education scholarships in honour of Tylah West, a young Indigenous trainee at the Housing Trust, who passed away in 2015. Tylah's family joined us to award the scholarships to our worthy recipients. The scholarships will be used to assist our tenants with education, training and entry into the workforce. Our Chairman Michael Szafraniec, CEO Michele Adair, and Wollongong Labour MP Paul Scully were also present to assist with the presentations.

The Tylah West Education Scholarships are sponsored by Housing Trust and Bank Australia, who have generously contributed a combined total of \$30,000. One of Housing Trust Strategic Plan goals is to support and enable tenant's life choices and thus far, the 2019 scholarships have assisted four tenants enter or continue with university studies and five tenants with TAFE studies. Two tenants will use their scholarships to continue their studies at high school and one will put the scholarship towards their own business.

Recipient Andrew Browne said "Housing Trust made me feel worthwhile and this has helped me achieve amazing results in my university IT degree. Enabling my education means I will be able to provide for my family, and in the long term own my own home. The support has reinforced my faith when it comes to community".

## Community Support

For many Australians Christmas can be a challenging time. The extra financial burden often means the little things that make Christmas so special are out of reach for many families and individuals, who are struggling to make ends meet.

Last Christmas the Thirroul Bowling, Leagues & Recreation Club, Thirroul Thunder Football Club and Gibson Park Rangers Football club rallied together to provide some much needed Christmas cheer for the children at our crisis accommodation, Paddy's Place, by generously donating toys and a Christmas ham.

CEO Michele Adair was overjoyed with the kind-heartedness shown by the clubs and said "the donations would be greatly appreciated by the residents in our crisis service".

Housing Trust would like to say thankyou to everyone involved for their generosity and support.





# Did you know?

Did you know that the NSW Government has made changes to the Residential Tenancies Act to support victims of domestic and family violence?

For more information please refer to the Identifying and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence policy 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

Affordable Housing  
Housing Transfer  
Disability Modification  
Identifying & Responding to  
Domestic & Family Violence



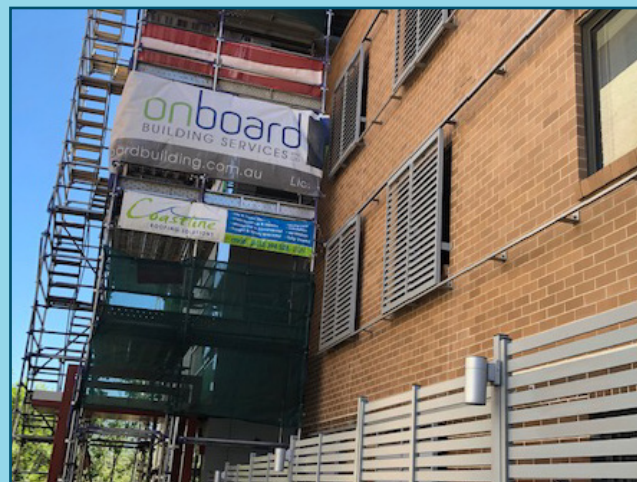
## Maintenance Update

Our maintenance team have been busy overseeing the replacement of external wall panels used on the façade of our New Dapto Road property after the cladding known as Alucobest, was found to be non-compliant with current Australian building standards.

Housing Trust are committed to the safety and wellbeing of our tenants. We have initiated the removal the cladding product from our property to reduce the risk of fire spreading in the event of an emergency.

According to Wollongong City Council, there are currently 30 buildings in the area that are under review for use of the same cladding product.

Mr. Greg O'Donnell, Senior Development Project Officer at Wollongong City Council, has praised the work and the initiative Housing Trust have shown towards this matter. Mr. O'Donnell said we are the first organisation in Wollongong to carry out the modifications.



## Rent Review Notice

Housing Trust is currently conducting the Affordable Housing income assessment and rent subsidy review for our Central Gardens complex at Shellharbour. Thank you to those tenants who have returned their requested information. Housing Trust will be in contact with you after 1 April 2019 to discuss the outcome of your assessment.

We are required to conduct two social housing rent reviews per year. This coincides with the Centrelink CPI increase which occurs on 20 March and 20 September each year. Our Social Housing rent review for June 2019 will commence in April. Letters will be sent to our social housing tenants advising of the details.

# Trainee Updates

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

Kenneth "Junior" Knight, our Horticulture Trainee, is enjoying more landscaping tasks now that the summer peak of lawn mowing is slowing down. Junior is learning about crown lifting and is becoming more confident on where to cut a tree to lift it up and minimise any stress to the tree. Junior is also making excellent progress on his Certificate in Horticulture through TAFE.

As part of the traineeship program to provide a broad experience on the job, in addition to studying Certificate III in Business, our business trainees Tjanaya and Kala have moved into the Property Services, and Customer Service and Support Teams respectively.

Tjanaya has enjoyed learning the different responsibilities of Property Services including all types of maintenance needs for our homes.

Kala has enjoyed the very varied role at Reception, particularly the many different types of documents and forms including Rent Subsidy Applications.



## Congratulations

A number of Housing Trust staff have also been busy undertaking some additional studies. Sue Toohey and Bianca Baldwin have completed a Certificate IV in Social Housing, while Adam Lewington has completed a Certificate IV in Project Management Practice.

We congratulate Sue, Bianca and Adam on their achievements and applaud their dedication and determination to complete their extra studies, while continuing their full-time positions.

With all the hard work behind them, we're sure they're looking forward to enjoying some much deserved extra time with their family and friends.





# It's Good to Hear From You

We want to hear your!

**Compliments**

**Suggestions**

**Complaints**

**Appeal**

ANY FEEDBACK, INCLUDING COMPLAINTS,  
IS VALUABLE FEEDBACK THE HOUSING TRUST CAN USE TO:

- Give YOU, our customers, a voice that WE listen to
- Enable US to deliver effective & efficient services for YOU, our customer
- Make improvements in how WE deliver services to YOU
- Assist us to provide solutions to problems that YOU may be experiencing
- Improve YOUR confidence in US which also increases OUR confidence in the services we are providing to YOU
- Promote OUR reputation in the community



Phoning our office & speaking to one of our experienced staff on 02 4254 1166

Visiting our office & speaking to our staff or speaking to our staff when you see them at home visits &/or block consultations

Attending our Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) Meetings. If you would like to be involved, please contact Joanne on 4254 1166 or [Joanne.Reed@housingtrust.org](mailto:Joanne.Reed@housingtrust.org).

Attending Block Meetings that are held for tenants living in complexes

Visiting our website <https://housingtrust.org.au/contact-us/feedbackcomplaints/> & completing our Feedback & Complaints Form.

On receipt of the this form we will get back to you within three (3) working days

Completing our Complaint Form or Appeals Form which are available on our website [www.housingtrust.org.au](http://www.housingtrust.org.au) or by phoning our office

## Housing Trust Socials



Jump on board and follow us to keep informed of free activities, events and training opportunities

# Opportunities and Events



**KidFest Shellharbour** is on Thursday 23rd May 2019 10am-12:00pm.

Communities for Children Picnic at Blackbutt Reserve. Come along and visit us.



**ADRA Foodbank** is located at Unanderra Community Centre (main Hall), approximately 500 metres from Unanderra Train Station, on the corner of Factory Rd and Princes Hwy. The foodbank is open 12pm to 1.30pm every Wednesday. The cost is \$15 for a Woolies size reusable bag of pantry items. Fruit, veg, cold items and bread are free. Please bring a reusable Woolies bag to place items in.



**COTA New South Wales and Legal Aid NSW** have teamed up to provide the Legal Pathways Program for people on an aged pension or hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card. Relevant documents can be drawn up by a qualified solicitor for \$50 per document. For more information please contact Ruth at COTA on 8268-9616.



**Australian Unity** is a health, wealth and living organisation, working to create a brighter future by delivering services that help more than a million Australians thrive. Australian Unity would like to share with you the services they can offer and discuss the process for registering for My Aged Care.

## Recent Events



Central Gardens BBQ



FACS Premier's Gala Concert



International Women's Day

## 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 June 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!

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)