



A DECENT  
HOME FOR  
EVERYONE

# Housing Trust News

October 2023



## Meet Usha

Usha's career journey began at the age of 19 when she ventured into the realm of computer literacy classes and eventually established her own business in Gujarat, India. In 2006, Usha took a courageous step and relocated to Australia in pursuit of a brighter future for herself and her children.

As they adjusted to their new life in Australia, Usha and her young children encountered a multitude of challenges, prompting them to seek assistance from a local women's support service. This support served as a vital lifeline, aiding Usha in rebuilding her self-confidence and self-esteem. Their fortunes took a significant upswing when they settled into a Housing Trust property, granting them the stability necessary to pursue their aspirations.

"Moving into our Housing Trust property in Corrimal marked a significant turning point for me and my children. Financially strapped and battling feelings of loneliness coupled with a loss of identity, the path seemed unclear. Today, however, my son holds a commendable job and embodies admirable values. My daughter, on the brink of completing school, immerses herself in dance and various other social activities, growing each day into a confident and joyful young woman."

Usha's journey in Australia involved a mix of roles in retail, banking, and the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS). The big turning point was in 2018 when she was awarded a Tylah West Education Scholarship, allowing her to complete a Bachelor's Degree in Psychological Science. Today, she's running a thriving business, which specialises in mental health and holistic well-being services.

Usha's impact doesn't stop at her professional accomplishments. She's been a dedicated Lifeline volunteer for five years now. "The depth of my gratitude knows no bounds," she reflects, "every day I cherish the opportunities to give back to a community that has given me so much."



See inside  
for your  
invitation to HT  
Christmas Fun  
Day 2023!

# CEO Update

Hello and welcome to another edition of HT Customer Newsletter!

We've seen some huge announcements and lots in the media about housing and HT is proud to have so many customers who've helped us in our advocacy efforts to drive real change. Thanks once again to all of you for your time, lived expertise and willingness to help others find a safe, secure and affordable home.

The big announcement from Government this year is for the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) which will see millions of dollars flow into building social and affordable housing across the country. We as always remain optimistic for even more action on housing and will continue to open doors, advocate and educate wherever we can.

Its been a busy time in our property team with new construction projects in Dapto and Wollongong about to get underway. The Northsea project in Wollongong is on track and our builders got in the spirit for the Matildas campaign with a "GO MATILDAS" sign on the roof of the project. We also recently purchased two apartment blocks in Barrack Heights which will be renovated for existing and new tenants.

Our HT 40th Anniversary exhibition hits the road again in November and will be on display at the National PowerHousing Conference in Canberra. The images are such a powerful way to celebrate your incredible stories of resilience and hope.

We'll wrap up our 40th anniversary year with a fun celebration at Jamberoo Action park. I can't wait to see as many of you as possible.

Yours sincerely,  
Michele



## Scholarships

### Tylah West Education Scholarship

Get a boost for your education, training or costs to help you get into work!

Starting October 4, you can apply for the Tylah West Education Scholarships (TWES) 2024. It's all about helping HT residents with education and job-related expenses. Find out more on our website.

### UOW Scholarship

Applications are currently open for the Housing Trust University of Wollongong (UOW) Opportunity Scholarship.

The scholarship provides \$5,000 annually for three years of undergraduate study. Eligibility criteria includes residing in social or affordable housing within the Illawarra or Shoalhaven regions and plans to enrol full-time at UOW in 2024.

For all of the details please scan the QR code below.



## TAG

Our Tenant Advisory Group met up in August at Shellharbour Civic Centre Library. We dug into key topics like our Reconciliation Action Plan, affordable housing research and better internet for students.

Curious? You can join us! To find out more or suggest something to talk about, give Jo a call.



## CHIA Cadetship

Exciting news! The 2024 Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) NSW Cadetships are now open for applications.

We're delighted to be involved for the fourth year in this fantastic program where you can learn and earn at the same time.

To see if you're eligible and get all the application details, head to the CHIA NSW Website at [communityhousing.org.au/cadetship/](https://communityhousing.org.au/cadetship/). Don't miss out!



## Policy Update

We've updated our Affordable Housing Policy, now requiring tenants to report income changes within 21 days. Stay informed about HT policies on our website. Thank you for your cooperation.



## HT Christmas Fun Day

Come celebrate with us!

As part of our 40th Anniversary festivities, we're hosting a HT Christmas Fun Day at Jamberoo Action Park on 20 December 2023.

Your ticket, lunch, and refreshments are all covered.

This special event is exclusively for HT residents. Don't wait—tickets are limited. Register online now.

RSVP by 8/11  
[housingtrust.org.au/christmas-fun-day/](https://housingtrust.org.au/christmas-fun-day/)



## LAHC Upgrades

HT has secured \$488,000 in funding from the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Supplementary Capital Maintenance Program for upgrades in LAHC-owned homes managed by HT.

This funding has been directed towards upgrading 20 homes, including new bathrooms, kitchens, flooring, painting, and structural enhancements like new gutters, roofs, and fascias.

Our team takes immense pride in the successful outcomes, with after photos showcasing the transformations.

As of June 30, 2023, 97% of our homes now exceed standards. We're committed to reaching 100% above the benchmark for all our properties by 2024.



# Community Information

## Dying to Know

Dying to Know helps you easily talk about end-of-life choices and plan your goodbyes. Free guides and tools are just a click away at [dyingtoknowday.com](http://dyingtoknowday.com)



## Compare Energy Plans

Looking to save on your energy bills?

Energy Made Easy helps you compare electricity and gas plans for free. Just head to [energymadeeasy.gov.au](http://energymadeeasy.gov.au), have your latest bill or meter data ready, and find the best deal. Then, call your chosen retailer to make the switch. Simple as that!



## Rent Reviews

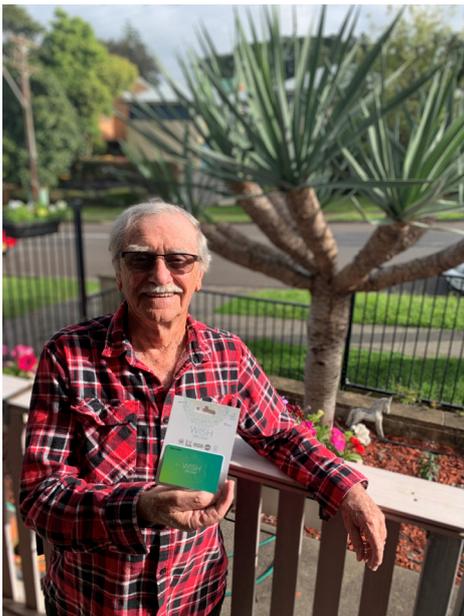
Its that time of year where we review social housing rent payments. If you currently receive a rental subsidy this will be reviewed in accordance with HT's rent policy. As part of this process we review your current circumstances to make sure your rent is being charged at a rate that is affordable for your household. When you get our letter please make sure you reply with the information requested. This is important to ensure your rent is charged at the right rate.



We complete this process a couple of times a year. Keep your eye out for our letter which has been mailed to you.

## 2023 Tenant Satisfaction Survey is now closed.

Big thanks to everyone who took our 2023 Tenant Survey! Your thoughts help us serve you better. Plus, you could win a \$100 gift voucher! Winners announced soon. Stay tuned for survey results in November.



## Winners are Grinners

Our 2022 gift card winners were all smiles as they happily received their \$100 gift cards!



**We love your feedback! Please reach out to us should you have any concerns.**

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