

WNEWS

Wentworth Community Housing
Tenant Newsletter

Issue 18 October 2013



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to this edition of *WNews*.

September saw a number of Wentworth tenants affected by bushfires in the Hawkesbury and Blue Mountain areas. Wentworth contacted tenants in these areas to ensure they were aware of the situation and were ready to evacuate if necessary. Thankfully our tenants were safe and we suffered no property damage. In this edition of *WNews* you will find a number of tips to ensure you and your family are ready for what we are expecting to be a bad bush fire season.

Also during September I celebrated my 15 years with Wentworth. Throughout these 15 years I have seen a lot of change and growth at Wentworth and am proud of what we have achieved in my time here and excited to see what is to come.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *WNews*!

Nick Sabel | Chief Executive Officer

Tenant Incentive Program (TIP) – Rent Management

Wentworth is launching their Rental Management Initiative Program which provides the opportunity for all tenants to be selected for a chance to win \$1,000 in one of four Local Government Areas. This means 4 tenants will be selected to receive a cheque for a \$1,000 each as a gift which will not be assessed in your subsidy.

To be eligible you must be compliant from the 21 October 2013 to the 24 January 2014 in one of the three following categories:

1. In credit with your rent
2. Pay your rent on time –with no arrears or
3. Pay your rent and your arrears repayment plan as agreed

Shortly, you will be notified by letter which will outline the initiative, and staff will be available to answer your inquiries. An independent committee will be engaged to draw the lucky winners. Publication of the winners (with consent) will be listed in the 1st edition of the 2014 *WNews*.

Do you want to get involved?

Wentworth's Tenant Engagement Advisory Committee more commonly known as the T.E.A.M are always looking for new members who are interested in bettering the lives of others. The T.E.A.M have already started work within the community by encouraging craft and social groups, morning teas and are currently developing a welcome pack for new tenants.

If you are interested in joining please send an email to admin@wentworth.org.au or contact your CSO.



NAIDOC Week

Wentworth's Community Services Aboriginal Team participated in the National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week throughout July. The team attended NAIDOC celebrations in Riverstone, Richmond, the Blue Mountains and a major event at Penrith where Wentworth distributed show bags and information about our services. The events showcased Aboriginal culture, food and activities while focusing on the 2013 theme "We value the vision: Yirrkala Bark Petitions 1963."

Maintenance Queries

Remember for all Maintenance Queries please ring 02 4777 8000 (select option 1).



Wentworth Integration Service Delivery Program

Wentworth is trialling a new approach in selected areas to deliver better, faster customer service to you. Wentworth Integration Service Delivery (WISD) Program will allow client service visits to be conducted with your CSO and an Asset Officer both present. This visit will provide you the opportunity to:

- › meet and greet Wentworth Senior Management and staff

- › discuss any concerns regarding your tenancy and the community
- › work with Wentworth staff to address any property or maintenance issues

A letter will be sent seven days prior to the visit being conducted within your area.

We look forward to working with you to improve our customer service



Appeals and complaints

Complaint – If you are unhappy or dissatisfied with the service that you receive or any response in relation to tenant charges, water charges and/or maintenance you receive from Wentworth as a tenant you can lodge a complaint.

Appeal – If you are unhappy with a decision made by Wentworth Staff, you have the option to Appeal the decision, however, this excludes tenant charges, water charges and maintenance.

How to Lodge a Complaint

1. Contact your CSO to discuss the issue
2. If you are uncomfortable discussing the issue or are unhappy with the response please send us a letter or complete our complaint form available online or at reception

Wentworth aims to provide a written response to all complaints placed in writing within 28 days

If you are still unhappy with the outcome you have the right to approach the Office of the Registrar of Community Housing on **1800 330 940**

How to Lodge an Appeal

1. Write a letter of appeal attention to the CEO or complete the appeals form available on our website or at reception.

Wentworth aims to provide a written response to all appeals placed in writing within 28 days

2. If you remain dissatisfied with the Wentworth internal appeal you can contact the NSW Housing Appeals Committee (HAC), an independent appeals agency on **1800 629 794**

Important News

The Property Transfer Program (PTP) – Non Access

Over the next few weeks Wentworth will be in contact with tenants whose properties we are having difficulty in arranging access to in order to complete the upgrading work. Wentworth would encourage those tenants to contact their Client Service Officer on **4777 8000** (select 9) to immediately arrange an urgent inspection time so that work can commence.

Unfortunately if no mutual agreement can be reached between Wentworth and the tenant to inspect and complete the required work, Wentworth will be required to proceed to CTTT to gain an access order to ensure the upgrading of the property is completed, an action that Wentworth would like to avoid.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR FIRE SEASON?

With bushfire season on its way it is important for you to be prepared. To help reduce the risk to your home you can follow these easy steps:

- › remove and store any flammable items away from the house
- › ensure you have a hose which is long enough to reach every part of your home
- › keep garden mulch away from the house
- › keep grass short. If you live in a complex and are concerned about the length of the grass please contact our maintenance line
- › store wood piles well away from the house and keep covered
- › clean leaves from the roof, gutters and downpipes. (Single storey properties are the responsibility of the tenant, two plus storey properties are the responsibility of Wentworth.)

For further information on protecting yourself, your family and your property in a fire please visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or pick up your *Bush Fire Survival Plan* at one of our offices

RENT STATEMENTS



Your rent statement included with this newsletter was printed as at 28th September 2013. If you have made payments after this date they will appear on your next rent statement.

Rent Review

Tenants in the Penrith and Blue Mountains LGA will shortly receive their next rent review. These rent reviews are due back by the 13th December 2013 to ensure you are in the running to win one of four \$50 vouchers

Wentworth History Project

Your T.E.A.M are currently in the process of developing Wentworth's history and would love to hear your memories of the September 1996 merger.

If you are interested in participating please send an email to admin@wentworth.org.au



Community pride

Taking care of your property and the local space is important

- › It can improve the look and feel of your community
- › Increase safety and pride in the area.

Everyone can make a difference by following these simple steps:

1. join or create a community pride group that works to make your area clean and tidy. You can do this by raising ideas with your T.E.A.M representative or your CSO
2. book a kerbside clean-up with your local Council who will take away items of up to a cubic metre
3. maintain your kerbside and your front/rear lawns ensuring they are clean, well kept and mowed frequently which will decrease the chance of snakes which are out earlier this year due to the hot weather
4. report graffiti to your Client Service Officer

HEAD OFFICE

Penrith

Address: Borec House, Suite 1002, Level 1
29-57 Station Street, Penrith 2750
PO Box 4303, Penrith 2750

Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Fax: (02) 4777 8099

Email: admin@wentworth.org.au

Opening hours:

8:30am–4:30pm Monday, Tuesday,

Thursday, Friday

1:00pm–4:30pm Wednesday

BRANCHES

Hawkesbury

Address: 409A George Street, South Windsor

Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm Monday,
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (closed Wednesday)

Blue Mountains

Address: Shop 2, 23-27 Cascade Street, Katoomba

Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm Monday,
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (closed Wednesday)

**OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY
MAINTENANCE LINE
1300 761 315**

KNOWING YOUR WENTWORTH STAFF MEMBERS

There have been a lot of changes in Wentworth over the past 12 months with some shifts in portfolios and staff movements. We have heard from the T.E.A.M how this sometimes frustrates you and Wentworth has committed to improving its communication in relation to changes.

Wentworth prides itself in providing staff with opportunities, so change is inevitable and most times unavoidable. To the right provides you a better understanding of which Manager looks after your area.

Letters will be sent to you in November advising who the staff are that can assist you with your tenancy matters.

Kathryn Williams

Manager, Housing Services

As Manager Housing Services, Kathryn sets strategic and operational direction for staff and the community. Kathryn has a passion for social justice and inclusion. Her Diploma's in Management and Natural Therapies helps her achieve her passions and vision. Kathryn, has extensive experience in the Social Housing sector working in her former role in Housing NSW for the past 23yrs.

She was recently awarded the Public Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday honours list for her outstanding public service in providing improved housing outcomes for disadvantaged communities, particularly in the outer suburbs of Sydney.

Jodie McCarthy-Mills

Client Service Manager – Hawkesbury

Jodie has over 10 years experience in the Social Housing sector in the UK and Australia. With a diploma in social housing and a specialist background in dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour, estate management and community cohesion, Jodie is passionate about providing homes and communities that people want to live in.

Alison Lewis

Client Service Manager – Penrith and Katoomba

Alison joins Wentworth Community Housing after 7 years in the Community non-profit sector, in the employment field. Alison holds an Advanced Diploma in Management and Cert IV In Disability Services and is passionate about Social Inclusion and building successful local communities. Alison is focussed on building strong relationships within the community housing sector.



Next WNEWS

Our next edition of WNEWS is planned for December 2013. Let us know if you would like it emailed to you or if you would like to see an article on a specific topic.