

WNEWS

Wentworth Community Housing
Tenant Newsletter

Issue 37 November 2018



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Spring edition of WNews!

The last quarter was filled with many exciting events. Most recently, we celebrated the fabulous women who graduated from the Western Sydney Women in Social Housing (WISH) Foundations course. It's wonderful to see they are now ready to be matched with a mentor who will support them to achieve their goals over 12 months.

In August, we launched our Heading Home Evaluation Report. This independent study of our activities

has shown how important it is for people to have permanent housing. Read on to find out more.

July saw a group of engaged tenants complete Wentworth's first Tenant Advocacy Training. We trust the sessions have provided a good insight into how Wentworth works and what it means to be a tenant volunteer with us. To all those involved, thank you for helping.

Also in July, NAIDOC Week provided our communities with a great opportunity to celebrate the history, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We were very happy to be there as we always do our utmost to improve inclusion and awareness of Aboriginal culture in the work place and amongst our clients.

Talking about achievements, a big shout out to the Butucarbin Aboriginal Corp Warriors under 12s and 15s as they won the Koori Knockout Rugby League competition on 1 October. We are a very proud sponsor.

In this edition we also bring some information I think you could find very useful, which is about a couple of loan schemes based on trust and respect for people on low incomes.

Enjoy your reading,



Stephen McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer

Tenancy Advocacy Training

In July we celebrated the tenants who have recently completed our inaugural Tenant Advocacy Training, with CHIA NSW and the Sustainable Communities team here at Wentworth. "Tenant participation is so important and we're really grateful to all the volunteers who took part", said Wentworth's Sustainable Communities Officer, Vanessa Tomas.

If you want to be more involved as a Wentworth Community Housing tenant, visit www.wentworth.org.au/tenant-engagement-advisory-members to know dates and times for the next TAG meetings.

Stay tuned for more information about our training sessions in 2019.



Low interest loans for people on low income

Did you know there's a suite of affordable financial programs for people on low incomes at different financial stages of their lives?

Community Microfinance Manager, Sharon Hooker, from GoodShepherd Microfinance, was our TAG meeting guest speaker this October and she explained about loans provided on a not-for-profit basis to help people improve their quality of life.

She talked about their flagship loan programs, including the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) and the StepUP low interest loan.

NILS loans are provided to enable people living on low incomes the opportunity to purchase significant or essential household items or a service, such as household appliances, furniture, repairs, outdoor equipment, health items, education and technology.

StepUP is a low interest loan for people on low incomes who have difficulty accessing credit from a bank. You can borrow from \$800-\$3,000 with up to three years to pay it back. There are no fees.

If you want more information about the loans, you can contact Vanessa Tomas on (02) 4777 8078, 0438 796 378 or email vanessa.tomas@wentworth.org.au

Rent Statements

Your rent statement included with this newsletter is for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 September 2018. If you require information about this statement, your rent account generally, or a rent account statement for any other period, please call us on **4777 8000**.



Maintenance Queries

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



NAIDOC Week

We loved being part of the Penrith NAIDOC Week celebrations on 13 July at Jamison Park, especially seeing families enjoying themselves with activities at our Wentworth stand.

It was a fantastic event hosted by Penrith City Council and we were very proud to be there supporting it.



For the fastest service call (02) 4777 8000

Graduation success for Wentworth's tenants

Ten weeks of hard work and dedication were rewarded as the first class of women who completed the foundations course of the Western Sydney Women in Social Housing (WISH) project were celebrated at a special graduation ceremony on Thursday 11 October at Penrith Panthers.

Brainchild of Wentworth Community Housing, WISH is a training and mentoring program for women over 18 who are Wentworth's tenants. The voluntary program aims to support women to achieve their goals for education, employment and, ultimately, financial and housing independence.

The foundations course, which ran from July to September, included workshops related to overcoming barriers to employment and setting goals for the future.

Family, mentors and Wentworth staff celebrated with the students as the WISH graduation was held.

"We've been so pleased to observe and provide support as the women set and work toward their goals. It is rewarding to hear many of them report an increase in their confidence," said Wentworth's Sustainable Communities Officer, Sally Weymouth.

If you are a woman over 18 years old and keen to get some support with finding work or going back to study, contact our WISH team at wish@wentworth.org.au or 0448 039 704.



Getting to know Wentworth people

Sue Burrell, Administration Officer, Housing Services

How long have you been with Wentworth?

I've been working here for 10 months.

What does the Administration Officer, Housing Services, do at Wentworth?

I monitor all emails we receive, being responsible for passing the enquiries on to different teams. As I work at the front counter, I'm the first point of contact for everyone who walks into our Penrith office, often providing support to those applying for housing or submitting complaints in writing. I'm always my friendliest because I know how valuable my smile can be to the people walking through our doors.

What do you like the most about your job?

Collaborating with different partners to try and find solutions to life issues. My role provides me with plenty of room to create and I've been dedicating my time to develop skills in big picture planning.

Are there any programs that you are working on now or volunteering?

I volunteer in a couple of programs, working with young women. If I can make a woman feel good about herself then I'm there. Today I'm in a position where I thought I would never be, which is having a full-time job. I spent years looking after my kids and working a few hours here and there. I've needed help to be where I am and now I can be of help to others.

As a member of Wentworth staff, I'm part of the Employee Assistance Program. Work colleagues usually come and talk to me about many different things, so I want to know what to say and how to help in case I feel I need to.



Housing and support help turn lives around

During this year's Homelessness Week, our multi-awarded Heading Home project, led by Wentworth, launched an independent evaluation of the impact its activities have had on the lives of people rehoused during Registry Week, which was held in November 2016.

As a result of Registry Week, 26 individuals and nine families were rehoused in Penrith, the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury.

At follow up after six months, the study found 24 individuals and eight families remained housed and over 90% reported improved wellbeing. These are only a few of the report findings and analysis conducted by author Carolyn Quinn for Wentworth.

"The people who participated in the study said that having a safe place to live has been most helpful for them to get their life sorted," Wentworth Chief Executive Officer, Stephen McIntyre, said.

The main focus of the Heading Home project group now is to find low-cost housing solutions especially for people looking for a smaller place to live that they can afford.





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

HEAD OFFICE

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Phone: (02) 4777 8000
Fax: (02) 4777 8099
Email: admin@wentworth.org.au

Opening hours:

8:30am-4:30pm Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri
1:00pm-4:30pm Wed

BRANCHES

Hawkesbury

Address: 409A George Street
South Windsor
Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm Mon, Tue,
Thu, Fri (closed Wed)

Blue Mountains

Address: Level 2, 98 Bathurst Road,
Katoomba
Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm Mon, Tue,
Thu, Fri (closed Wed)

Next WNEWS

Our next edition of WNEWS will be out in December 2018 and will be mailed and displayed on Wentworth's Website www.wentworth.org.au/resources-newsletters

If you would like to see an article on a specific topic please email admin@wentworth.org.au

Bushfire season has started

It's time for you to have a plan in place in case of bushfire emergency. The Rural Fire Service website is a very useful resource to keep up to date with general fire information and to learn how to plan and prepare.

See www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/

Also, if you need to light a fire in the region, you must get a free permit from the local Fire Control Centre at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/BFDP



Connect with Wentworth on Social Media

Interested in what's happening in your community, Wentworth and the housing sector? Connecting with us has never been easier.

If you are interested in finding out the latest news, job ads or up to date information from Wentworth, please like the Facebook Page today

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