

SPRING 2017

ARGYLER

TENANT NEWSLETTER



TENANT SURVEY RESULTS INSIDE



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LETTER FROM THE CEO

WELCOME TO THE **SPRING** ARGYLER!



Thank you to the 1400 tenants who completed the tenant survey in March. It was an amazing response and one that we need to take seriously. We are currently following up on those tenants who said to make contact with them and with this information and the outcomes of the survey we are working on

local ways to improve. In late September and early October I will be inviting you to catch up with me to discuss what we are putting in place (and get your suggestions) so that we can improve in the areas that you need us to.

We are committed to getting it right and that you have a positive tenant experience with Argyle.

At the Board meeting in June the Chairperson, Dr Terry Spencer stepped down after three years in the role and ten years with Argyle. The current Chairperson is Terry Downing who has been with the organisation for six years. Terry has been the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee and Vice Chair of the Board. He resides in Bowral.

It is with sadness that I inform you of the passing of Sharon Goff-Jones, who died last week from motor neurone disease. Sharon was the tenancy officer for six and a half years in the Bowral Office and was caring and considerate with her tenants. She retired due to ill health in 2015 to give her time to her teenage son and husband. We send our condolences to the family.

The Argyler is your newsletter compiled by tenants for tenants. Again, in this edition there are interesting articles

from around Argyle areas from tenants. We need your help!

If you want to write a poem, story, news piece, show some art/photography or help with the layout please make contact with Christine Woods, (christine.woods@argylehousing.com.au) and we will put you in touch with the current group. If you would like to see additional information in the next edition please let Christine know.

The affordable housing units at Macarthur gardens are near complete and we hope to have the first tenants come in early September. If you know of people who would be looking for and eligible for affordable housing, please refer them to www.realestate.com.au. In total there will be 56 units (1, 2, 3 bedrooms) become available. The criteria is on our web page.

Over the next couple of months, we will be working with tenants to bring rent arrears down. It is part of your lease obligations to pay your rent on time. Please keep your tenancy officer informed, do not let it get out of control as the consequences for are not good. Community Housing relies on you being responsible.

I look forward to meeting you at the next round of tenant forums and hearing your suggestions to improve our service. Please drop me a line if you would like a topic discussed at these forums (wendy.middleton@argylehousing.com.au)

ENJOY THE SPRING AND THE WARM WEATHER!

Regards

Wendy Middleton
Argyle CEO



ARGYLE TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

2017 Results

Firstly, thank you to the 1400 tenants who took the time to complete the recent Argyle Tenant Survey. The return rate was a whopping 60% which is a record for the Community Housing Sector.

However, Argyle's tenants have sent a strong message that we need to improve how we do things. This particularly includes improvements to our repairs and maintenance services, our complaint handling processes and our communication with

tenants in general and specifically, listening to tenants and acting on their views.

Results varied by location and Wendy (CEO) will be asking tenants at the upcoming Tenant Forums to tell us how we can improve services at the local level.

"They are very very helpful and listening to me as a tenant and helping me." WAGGA TENANT

This feedback will be used by Management and Team Leaders to develop an action plan for each location.

RESULTS FOR THE KEY INDICATORS WERE GOOD

Snapshots of results for all locations are shown throughout this newsletter

86%

Overall satisfaction with services

83%

Satisfied with their home

75%

Satisfied with repairs and maintenance

SAVE THE DATE CEO Tenant Forums are on again!

Argyle's CEO, Wendy Middleton, will be once again hitting the road to meet and talk with tenants in all locations. Forums will be held between 27 Sept and 13 Oct. All tenants will be sent a personal invitation to their local forum with date, times and venue.

Wendy will be discussing the tenant survey results for your area and is looking forward to hearing from you about how Argyle can improve its services.

DATE	REGION
Wednesday Sep 27	Tahmoor
Thursday Sep 28	Bowral
Thursday Sep 28	Campbelltown
Thursday Sep 28	Bowral
Saturday Sep 30	Campbelltown
Saturday Sep 30	Bowral
Thursday Oct 5	Common Ground

DATE	REGION
Saturday Oct 9	Conder
Saturday Oct 9	Queanbeyan
Tuesday Oct 10	Goulburn
Wednesday Oct 11	Crookwell
Wednesday Oct 11	Yass
Thursday Oct 12	Griffith
Thursday Oct 12	Wagga Wagga
Friday Oct 13	Young

Repairs at Home

Need to get something repaired at your home? The first step is to get in touch with your local Argyle office and let us know exactly how we can help you.

SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES!

For your safety, Argyle checks all smoke alarms at properties once a year. Our current contractor for doing this work is Smoke Alarms Australia.

When you receive notice of a smoke alarm inspection it is vital that you allow access to the tradesman. If you are not going to be home contact Smoke Alarms Australia on 1300 125 276 (office hours).

Beeping Alarm Hotline: 1300 652 213 (all hours)

WHAT ARE URGENT REPAIRS?

- Burst water service or flooding
- Blocked or broken toilet system
- Serious roof or gas leak
- Serious storm or fire damage
- Dangerous electrical fault
- Failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the property
- Failure of any essential service for hot water, cooking, heating or laundry
- Any fault or damage that causes the property to be unsafe or not secure

REPORTING A REPAIR?

Mon to Fri - 9am to 5pm (except public holidays)

Please call or visit your local office and speak to your Tenancy Officer or receptionist. Let them know exactly what needs to be repaired and how the tradesperson can contact you to arrange a convenient time to come to your property.

REPAIR TIME FRAMES?

Generally we organise for repairs and or maintenance within the following time frames:

- Urgent/Emergency repairs – 24 hours
- Regular repairs – 7 working days
- Non urgent repairs – 28 working days

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY (except leasehold properties)

If there is an emergency repair required out of normal office hours please call 1300 850 451

LEASEHOLD PROPERTIES

A leasehold property is one that Argyle leases on your behalf from an Agent or private owner. If you live in a leasehold property and require an urgent repair out of normal office hours refer to the bottom of your lease for emergency contact details.

FEEDBACK Not happy with Argyle?

I'm happy

I'm not happy

We are not perfect at Argyle and sometimes we make mistakes and misunderstandings occur. However, we are committed to providing you with the best service we can and encourage you to let us know if you are not happy with something we do/or don't do.

You can lodge feedback:

- At any of our offices to an Argyle staff member
- Via our website at www.argylehousing.com.au
- By email to complaints@argylehousing.com.au
- By post
- Over the phone

Our commitment to you:

- We will acknowledge your complaint within 48 working hours
- We will endeavour to resolve your complaint and respond to you in writing within 28 days
- If your complaint is urgent we will respond immediately. This may require a staff member contacting you for more information
- We will let you know if there is any delay in resolving your complaint and tell you why it is delayed

You can help us by:

- Providing as much detail as possible in your complaint
- Being prepared to discuss the issue face to face in the first instance to try to resolve the matter simply and quickly
- Providing extra information if requested
- Being patient while we confirm details and events

WATER USAGE CHARGES

WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR WATER?

By law we must transfer the costs of any water used at your property, onto your tenancy account within 80 days of receiving a water bill. As your community housing provider, we need to follow the rules set for us.

HOW MUCH DO I PAY IF I SHARE A METER?

Many of our tenant's homes share a water meter with their neighbours. When a bill comes into Argyle for shared meters, we split it up and ask every home on site, in writing, to pay his or her fair share.

HOW ARE SHARED CHARGES SPLIT UP?

We use the guidelines set for us as your community housing provider. Shared water costs are deducted first (Argyle pays for this), then the remaining amount is divided by the number of people sharing

the meter. This amount is multiplied by the number of people living in your home.

CALCULATE YOUR WATER CHARGES

- WATER USAGE COSTS FOR WHOLE SITE
- MINUS 10% FOR COMMON AREA/SHARED USAGE
- MULTIPLIED BY PEOPLE SHARING THE METER
- MULTIPLIED BY PEOPLE IN YOUR HOME

= YOUR WATER CHARGE

CAMPBELLTOWN TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

85%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve contractor performance
- Improve the quality of repair work
- Improve how Argyle handles complaints

"Maintenance and repairs need attention." CAMPBELLTOWN TENANT

Lloyd's Little Library

by Lyndal Breen

Lloyd has been living in his Moss Vale home since 1993, and about twelve years ago decided to develop a rose garden in the yard. He has 78 roses, of many different styles and types and when I met him, he had just finished the rather painful job of pruning.

But it wasn't the roses that took me to visit him today, but his latest project: a Street Library. Inspired by an item broadcast on ABCTV in February, Lloyd soon found some useful pieces of reclaimable materials and put together a beautiful and weatherproof cupboard. He started small with an upper cabinet for books and magazines and two boxes below for DVDs. Painted in bright colours and featuring a frog design at the top and an impressive alien on one door, the Street Library is as much a work of art as a practical part of the 'sharing economy'. He was pleased to register his Street Library and to affix the official plate of the movement. There has been so much interest in using this free resource, he has already had to extend it.

People are using the Library and Lloyd has many great stories to tell. One person swapped a guitar

which was snapped up within 15 minutes by a music teacher for one of his students. A spanner found ownership with the passing user of a mobility scooter. But the main item being swapped are books, and I saw that there is a great range of titles, both fiction and non-fiction. The Street Library has also been used as a Geo-Cache site.

Lloyd, as the custodian of this wonderful community resource, is very happy with the range of users, from children getting off the school bus to some of the residents of the nearby Aged Care facility. He likes people to make a comment in the 'Visitor's Book', which lets him know how the Library is being useful to people.



A RESPONSE TO THE GRENFELL FIRE TRAGEDY

Open Letter to Tenants

Dear Argyle tenant,

I am writing to all Argyle households reminding you of the need to do all that you can to protect yourselves, your loved ones and your home from the risk of fire.

At Argyle we take fire safety very seriously. In order to ensure that your home is as safe as it can be, Argyle Housing regularly conducts client service visits and general property and smoke alarm inspections in each property. It is important that when Argyle requests access to your property, you allow this to occur.

It is also timely to remind everyone of safe practices within your home such as:

- not leaving cooking on your stove and in your oven unattended
- not using gas cylinders or stove tops inside your property or on your balcony
- not overloading power points

- ensuring heaters are correctly installed and serviced
- keeping materials a safe distance from heaters
- ensuring clothes dryers are lint free and have adequate air flow
- ensuring candles and cigarettes are appropriately extinguished when leaving a room
- ensuring electric blankets are switched off when not in use

Fire Safety Factsheets will be available on the Argyle website at www.argylehousing.com.au or from any Argyle office.

It is important that everyone is safety conscious because a fire can impact everyone in the building. If you have any concerns about your building or any safety issues, I encourage you to contact your Tenancy Officer.

Thank you

Wendy Middleton
Chief Executive Officer

SAFETY FIRST



GRIFFITH TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

83%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve repair and maintenance services
- Improve how Argyle handles complaints
- Improve contractor performance

"Argyle is very efficient and staff are polite and very helpful." GRIFFITH TENANT

VOLUNTEERING FOR ARGYLE

BY LYNDAL BREEN

Have you wondered what you might be asked to do, if you put yourself forward as a volunteer for Argyle Community Housing? Here are some things:

- Tenant Participation Committees – plan and organise activities, speakers and outings for Argyle Tenants
- The Argyle Editorial group: helps make the Argyle a true tenant-driven resource. You might write an article, take a photo, submit recipes, handy hints, jokes and poems, or just put forward ideas.
- Help with office tasks – when Argyle Housing needs to send out a newsletter to everyone, there are a lot of pages to fold and envelopes to stuff. Many hands make light work!
- Weird and wonderful things crop up sometimes. Helping other tenants with the Housing Survey was an example of how tenant volunteers might be called upon to get a special job done.



Benefits can include developing your skills and friendship networks, and helping to increase your own confidence. Any expenses you might incur are met.

For more information about opportunities to be involved contact your local Argyle office.

QUEANBEYAN TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

83%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve how Argyle handles complaints
- Improve how Argyle communicates with tenants
- Listen to tenants views and act on them

“The team at Queanbeyan are always helpful.” QUEANBEYAN TENANT

WINGECARRIBEE TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

84%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve repairs and maintenance services and contractor performance
- Improve how Argyle handles complaints

“More commitment in following up repairs.” WINGECARRIBEE TENANT

INTRODUCING SUE

TENANT PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE MEMBER, CAMPBELLTOWN



Sue has been a tenant of Argyle's for many years and a keen member of the TP Committee in Campbelltown.

and tenants could certainly be involved in promoting a positive image for Argyle in the community.

“Being a part of the committee gives you the chance to input your ideas and suggestions into what Argyle are doing and gives you the opportunity to voice your opinion on what needs to be done”

For more information on how you can be involved with Argyle please contact your local office.

Sue would like to see Argyle 'more out and about at local events and meetings'



SUE





The Bowral Office has moved... downstairs!

If you are in Bowral please call in and visit our beautiful new office.

Downstairs at:

32-36 Wingecarribee Street, Bowral 2576

Photos courtesy of Tony J



New Opening Hours Yass Office

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9am to 4pm.

Sam (Maintenance), Sammi (TAW), Virginia (TO) look forward to meeting you.

02 6226 2060 to 0448 173 830.

135 Comur Street, Yass 2582



Goulburn office hours have changed

Just a reminder to Goulburn tenants that our new office is at:

56 Clinton Street, Goulburn 2580

Office hours:

Thursday and Friday - 9am to 5pm (12.30-1.30 closed for lunch)

Phone 0458 046 359



WAGGA WAGGA TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

94%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve how Argyle handles complaints
- Improve contractor performance
- Listen to tenants views and act on them

"They are very helpful and listen to me as a tenant." WAGGA TENANT



'SHARE THE JOURNEY' by Magdalena Whipper

I am currently studying the Mental Health Peer Work Cert IV at Wollongong TAFE. A part of my coursework involves a collaborative class effort in organising, promoting and running the Walk of Pride for Mental Health Month October. If you have the time please come and Walk Towards Wellness with me!

DID YOU KNOW? In Australia:

1 in 5 people experience a mental illness in any one year

1 in 2 people experience a mental illness in their lifetime

Suicide is the leading cause of death in 15-44 year olds

6 Australians die by suicide EVERY DAY - 5 out of 6 are male

50% of young people who experience mental illness don't seek help

WHAT: In order to increase mental health recovery in Australia, Mental Health Month 2017 is promoting the theme 'Share the Journey'. Each year we aim to support individuals, communities, families and carers who are affected by mental health conditions. By sharing care and concern we hope to end ongoing stigmas.

WHEN: On Thursday 12th October 2017 ARAFMI and other local service providers in the Illawarra are holding Wollongong's 5th annual Walk of Pride & Mental Health Information Expo.

WHERE: Starting 9:30am outside IPAC Theatre Civic Plaza, Burelli St Wollongong, the parade will lead into Wollongong Crown St Mall where a Mental Health Information Expo will be occurring.

WHY: To help create awareness, acceptance and understanding around mental illness.

24 HOUR SUPPORT SERVICES

- **MENTAL HEALTH LINE:** 1800 011 511
- **LIFELINE:** 13 11 14
- **BEYONDBLUE:** 1300 22 4636
- **MENSLINE AUSTRALIA:** 1300 789 978
- **KIDS HELP LINE:** 1800 551 800
- **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LINE:** 1800 656 463
- **NSW RAPE CRISIS CENTRE:** 1800 424 017
- **SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE:** 1300 659 467 (6 free sessions of telephone counselling)



QUEANBEYAN NEWS NEW CLOTHES FROM GIVIT by Queanbeyan Team

Argyle's Queanbeyan office has just taken delivery of some new hoodies, track pants, beanies and blankets from GIVIT, the nationwide charity that links those who have with those in need.

They have just begun operations in our region and Argyle is a partner that can call for donations on behalf of our tenants. Anyone can log on to www.givit.org.au to donate goods that they no longer need, or request items they need.

As one of Floriade's Charity Partners this Spring, GIVIT will be working hard over September and October to launch into Canberra and surrounds with the support of the ACT government. During Floriade, GIVIT will host **#DonateRejuvenate** House where visitors and businesses will have the opportunity to pledge items, which will be donated directly to Canberra's most vulnerable residents.

If you are visiting Floriade this year keep an eye open for the video that we shot with GIVIT. We were able to link one tenant with a generous donor who gave a computer which is now helping in the completion of a Certificate III in Business Studies.



Wagga Wagga Successful Cooking Class

Argyle partnered with the Salvation Army in August to hold the "cooking meals and snacks on a budget" class. The class was well attended and very successful.

The group made delicious meals including: zucchini slice, chocolate brownies, Thai pumpkin soup, easy muesli bars, banana cake, biscuits, pikelets, corn fritters and savoury mince. Argyle will include some of the fantastic recipes in the next few newsletters for you to try at home.

Thank you to everyone who attended the class and made it a great success.



Judy (Salvation Army) with Argyle tenant Jenny

CORN FRITTERS:

Ingredients: 300g corn cob kernels drained, 1 egg, 1/2 tsp salt and pepper, 1/2 cup milk, 1 tbs oil

Method:

1. Mix corn, salt, pepper and egg
2. Add flour alternating with the milk until consistency of thick cream
3. Drop spoonfuls of mixture into frying pan of oil and brown both sides

Cauliflower Soup

8 PORTIONS OF DELICIOUSNESS
by John Woodford - Tenant Editor

Ingredients:

- 1/2 of a Medium Cauliflower
- 2 medium Potatoes ; no need to peel
- 2 medium onions (optional - add 3 cloves of garlic and one small leek)
- 2.5L Chicken Stock, ham bones or vegetable (substitutes - water)
- 300ml Milk and Cream combination (substitutes - coconut cream or plain yoghurt)
- 1 heaped teaspoon of ground nutmeg
- 30g butter
- 30ml oil

Optional:

Add a bit of curry influence: 1 tablespoon of cumin; 1 tablespoon fenugreek; 1 tablespoon tyme and or sage leaves - added with the nutmeg in recipe.

Add some crunch: Crisped up diced bacon; fried croutons.

CHEFS TIP:

Will keep over a week in the fridge or will freeze for much longer. You will need to stir it as you heat it, as initially it will look grainy.

Method:

1. Cut all ingredients into small pieces.
2. Put all ingredients (except stock) in large pot on low to medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring every few minutes; add nutmeg after 5 minutes.
3. Add the stock and bring to the boil and then simmer for another 15 minutes or until very tender.
4. Strain liquid and put aside for later. Mash and then blend cauliflower pulp to a smooth consistency; using a little of the liquid to help with the blending process if needed.
5. Combine, the now blended pulp with the liquid that was put aside in step 4. Add the cream and milk with the Cauliflower mixture, salt and pepper; cook for another 5 minutes stirring a little.
6. Enjoy! A healthy, hearty soup that is sure to warm the soul!



ACT

TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

86%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve repairs and maintenance services
- Listen to tenant views
- Involve tenants more in decision making

"A real relief to land here. The facilities are very supportive." ACT TENANT

Congratulations Cleo!

ARGYLE TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIPS



The Argyle Tertiary Scholarship is back with funding secured for the 2017/18 Financial Year! This is your opportunity to fulfil your dreams.....

Scholarship statistics for the last 2 years include:

\$17,490.00 awarded to 16 tenants

Qualifications range from a Bachelor Degree, through Diploma and Certificate level and trade/retail qualifications

Qualifications included Science and Sports Science degrees, Hospitality, Business, IT, Photography and Design, Community and Health and Dance/Drama

Cleo from Claymore, has just completed a Certificate iii in Warehousing and is looking forward to getting back in the workforce - 'Now I want to get some work experience and try to find a job in a warehouse. I want to show my family you can always learn and that work can be fun!'

If you would like more information about the Argyle Scholarship please contact the Tenancy Action Worker or your Tenancy Officer at your local office or at <http://argylehousing.com.au/social/scholarships/>

YOUNG TENANT SURVEY RESULTS

89%

Overall satisfaction with services

KEY MESSAGES

- Improve how Argyle handles complaints
- Involve tenants more in decision making at Argyle Community Housing

"Very grateful for all they've assisted with for my son and myself." YOUNG TENANT

JENNIFER'S STORY

Jennifer felt isolated because she could not read or write and was angry because she believed that no one cared about her or listened to her. Jennifer's life changed in November 2016...



Jennifer first approached the Bowral Tenancy Action Worker (TAW), Megan, for assistance in November 2016. Despite being linked into various community services, she was feeling lonely and isolated with no local family, friends or other social connections.

Another major frustration for Jennifer was her inability to read and write. She had been trying to teach herself to read and write for many years without success and found it very stressful when she received letters, especially correspondence from Argyle as she could not read them and did not know if they were important.

The first step was for Jennifer to register with My Aged Care and with Megan's assistance this was quickly done and a full assessment completed. As a result of this assessment, Megan was then able to refer Jennifer to the Red Cross Community Visit Scheme, a service provided to make regular visits to people who live at home and who are socially isolated.

Most exciting of all, the Red Cross found a literacy course for Jennifer that could be completed by correspondence. With the assistance of a volunteer

from the Red Cross Jennifer was enrolled into the course and her study commenced in April 2017.

At an interview conducted on 1st August, Jennifer told Megan that when the first course material arrived in the post, she had to pinch herself – 'I couldn't believe it was finally happening'. Jennifer continues to enjoy her course and with weekly assistance from the Red Cross has now progressed from reading children's books to adult literature.

Jennifer is very proud of her achievements and her study progress and explained that she hopes to eventually complete her higher school certificate and achieve a long term dream of going to university. Jennifer now feels she has friends and people in her life she can depend on. Her self esteem has improved and her feelings of loneliness, depression and isolation have decreased.

Jennifer wanted to share her story and let others know that help is available if you ask, and it is never too late to fulfil your dreams. 'If it wasn't for the help of the TAW, I wouldn't be doing what I am doing now and gotten this far'.



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