

THE
ARGYLER
TENANT NEWSLETTER

HELLO
Autumn
2018

By Tenants, For Tenants

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Keeping Up with Rent

Argyle believes that being able to continue to live in your home is one of the most important things to ensure we all live happy and fulfilling lives. If you don't pay rent and other charges then your tenancy could be in danger of ending. We recognise that things can come up which makes paying rent difficult so if this happens, please contact your Tenancy Officer as soon as your circumstances change. There is almost always a way that this can be sorted out.

Local Argyle Office Contact Numbers

BOWRAL - 02 4861 2753

COMMON GROUND - 02 6241 0352

GRIFFITH - 02 6962 6830

TAHMOOR - 02 4681 0594

YASS - 0448 173 830

AINSLIE VILLAGE - 02 6162 6800

CAMPBELLTOWN - 02 4627 0002

GOULBURN - 02 6297 5929

QUEANBEYAN - 02 6297 5929

WAGGA WAGGA - 02 6921 6479

YOUNG - 02 6382 7818



WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN ARGYLER

The days have already moved quickly into 2018 with a hot and dry summer behind us and now into what looks to be the coldest winter on record for much of Australia. Over the summer we communicated with you throughout the hotter periods by SMS, and we plan to do the same through the colder winter periods. Your safety and wellbeing is something that myself and the team at Argyle are concerned about, and if we are able to provide support even through a simple SMS, it is something we will build on.

The Argyle is your newsletter, compiled by tenants and staff for tenants. This edition is filled with some interesting articles from tenants and also important information from various organisation departments that are provided to benefit you.

If you want to be a part of the Argyle by writing a poem, story, news piece or show some art/photography, please make contact with us at editor@argylehousing.com.au and we will put you in contact with the current group. If you would like to see more information in the next edition, please let us know.

Over the next couple of months, we will be working with tenants to bring rent arrears

down. Rent arrears is an unfortunate reality for some tenants, and while we do sympathise with the situation some tenants are in, it is a part of the lease obligations to pay rent on time. Please do not hesitate to contact your Tenancy Officer if you are falling behind in your rent as the consequences of it getting out of control are not good.

I look forward to speaking with some of you for the next round of tenant forums. For 2018 we are going to tackle the forums in a different format, with a little more one-on-one interaction where I can speak directly to you as a tenant...watch this space!!

With Easter and ANZAC day public holidays not too far away, it is a timely reminder to stay safe and enjoy the time with loved ones where you can.

Regards,



Wendy Middleton
Argyle CEO

Going Digital?

Would you like to receive your quarterly copy of The Argyle via email?

If you are working towards making your home a paper free environment then don't hesitate to contact Argyle Housing and ask for your future editions of the The Argyle to be sent to you via email.

Simply contact editor@argylehousing.com.au to let them know or call your local office to give them your email address.



EASTER & ANZAC DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

EASTER PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2018

Friday 30th March - GOOD FRIDAY

Monday 2nd April - EASTER MONDAY

ANZAC DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY 2018

Wednesday 25th April

All Argyle Offices will be closed for Easter from 5pm on Thursday 29th March until 9am Tuesday 3rd April and then for ANZAC Day from 5pm on Tuesday 24th April until 9am on Thursday 26th April.

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE



For repairs and maintenance issues please follow the correct procedure below:

Office Hours (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm) excluding public holidays

Please call your Local Argyle Office

If you have an **emergency** and need to report repairs and maintenance out of office hours please call the after hours **emergency maintenance number** that is on your tenancy lease. The after hours number is for emergencies **ONLY**. If your repair is **NOT** urgent then please wait until the next working day and report via the office hours procedure.

Examples of urgent repairs include - Broken or blocked toilets, broken hot water system, gas leaks, flooding etc.

A TIP FROM FINANCE - MAKING RENT AND NON - RENT PAYMENTS

When you are making your payments for rent or non-rent, it is important that you mention your Tenancy ID as the reference for the payment.

Our Finance Department often finds it very difficult to allocate some payments from tenants into their respective accounts due to lack of information and it is sitting in the suspense accounts for longer periods.

SCHOLARSHIP SUCCESS

Ruby Mikolaitis is a true example of success comes to those who work. Since winning an educational scholarship through Argyle Housing's Scholarship Program Ruby has excelled at her studies of Bachelor of Arts with majors in Film and Screen Production, English Literature and Theatre Studies with the aim of working in the creative arts industry!!

How are you enjoying the study?

It's going really well, although the study units are getting a bit harder. I travel around two hours each way to get to Notre Dame in Chippendale, which makes for a long day but I love the aspect of learning every day in an environment like the university.

Have you found the second year harder?

Most definitely! Because I am doing three majors I have had to take on more units which adds a little bit of extra pressure. In addition each major has assessments that need to be completed. For example we have to create a short scripted recording for Film, then in Theatre we have to perform in a five minute play...which is normally not an issue, however, with all of the extra pressures of study it can get a little complicated. Finally, English Literature includes reading six books and writing a 1500 word essay.

What was the biggest influence to make you want to study in the creative arts course?

I went to a performing arts school from a young age so I have been on stage from the age of 12, which has really helped guide me to want to study more in the creative arts. For my HSC I did do drama and have been doing drama at school since I was 14. Then at 15 I started to get involved in Community Theatre where I was able to get more involved with backstage organisation of plays and music gigs in the local community.



Ruby and her Tenancy Action Worker Megan Mason, who helped Ruby with the scholarship application

Would you like to know more about Argyle Scholarships?

Argyle Scholarships are part of an annual education program for tenants, providing funding for college, university or TAFE students. The scholarship money can be used to pay for any educational costs, such as course fees, text books, specific clothing or computers.

If you are interested and would like to know more then don't hesitate to contact your Tenancy Action Worker at your local Argyle office.

PLANTING BULBS FOR SPRING

Autumn is the time to start planting these miniature marvels for flowering in spring. Here's the nitty gritty on what you could be planting now.

1. FREESIAS

South African Freesias have almost become a weed in some places, but the sweet fragrance of their flowers means most of us are happy to forgive their prolificacy. Plant them where they will have plenty of space to spread to their heart's content, preferably in a sunny position.

2. CROCUS

Spring-flowering Crocus do best in cooler regions. In warmer areas, plant in semi-shaded spots, under trees, for instance. Crocus need good drainage.

3. RANUNCULUS

For glorious, rich colour in spring, you can't beat a sumptuous drift of Ranunculus. These grow from claw-shaped corms, similar to but not technically bulbs. Ranunculus prefer full sun and soil that is fertile, well drained and friable.

4. TULIPS

Who can resist the stunning bell-shaped flowers and myriad colours of the tulip (*Tulipa*)? Definitely very few gardeners as this bulb remains one of the most popular on the planet and has been highly sought after for centuries.

5. BLUEBELLS

You might have heard of the common English bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), but in fact the Spanish bluebell (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) is even better for our climates as it's more tolerant of heat. Both types are great for mass planting under deciduous trees as they do well in a semi-shaded position.

6. DAFFODILS

Daffodils (*Narcissus*) are synonymous with springtime and can be planted anytime from February through to June, but late March to early April is perfect. They do well in a half sun to full sun aspect with good drainage and look best when planted in clumps and masses.

7. JONQUILS

Part of the same family, jonquils (*Narcissus jonquilla*) are wonderfully fragrant and have a wide climatic tolerance that makes them easy to grow in most regions of Australia, except the tropics.

HOW TO PLANT YOUR BULBS

Choose firm, heavy bulbs. Avoid those that seem light, bruised, or marked in any way. They prefer a free-draining sandy loam soil, so if yours is heavy clay, add coarse sand and plenty of organic matter to break it down. Just before planting, you need to add either an all-purpose or bulb fertiliser. Mix it into soil well so it doesn't come into contact with your bulbs. Generally, bulbs should be planted at a depth that's twice their width.



RENT REVIEW - IMPORTANT TIPS

For those who currently have a job of any description, it's important that the right information is obtained.

- Firstly, you must receive a payslip from your employer as it's a legal requirement.
- Secondly, when it comes time for a rent review, the most current and correct information is required.

The most up-to-date information ensures that the Rent Review Team can accurately assess what your future rent amount will be. If we have old information then you may end up paying more rent than you should.

If your wages fluctuate or you are employed on a casual basis, then we will need a minimum of 6 payslips (fortnightly) or 12 payslips (weekly) that are the most recent and consecutive. The Rent Review Team can only make an accurate assessment for the rent you will pay if accurate documents are provided. Pay slips ensure that employees receive the correct pay and entitlements and allow employers to keep accurate and complete records.

Please REMEMBER

- to return the Rebated Form even if you have given Centrelink consent.
- if your child has now turned 18, they also must sign the consent form and return.

WHEN ARE PAY SLIPS GIVEN?

Pay slips have to be given to an employee within 1 working day of pay day, even if an employee is on leave.

HOW ARE PAY SLIPS GIVEN?

Pay slips have to be in either electronic form or hard copy. Electronic pay slips must have the same information as paper pay slips.

What happens if pay slips aren't given, or don't have the right information on them?

Fair Work Inspectors can give employers a fine, called an infringement notice, if they

- don't include the right information on a pay slip.
- don't issue pay slips at all or within 1 working day of paying employees.

It is unlawful for employers to give pay slips that they know are false or misleading. Employers can also be penalised if we choose to take a matter to court. In some cases employers who have not given pay slips may have to prove to a court that they didn't underpay an employee.

For more information please read the National Employment Standards (www.fairwork.gov.au)



BECOME A VOLUNTEER

ARE YOU AN O.W.L (OLDER WOMAN LOST IN HOUSING)?

Many older women find themselves suddenly facing an insecure future due to illness or relationship breakdown and for many this can result in worries about keeping a roof over their heads. This group of people are often referred to as 'the hidden face of homelessness' and may end up couchsurfing with friends or family, or even sleeping in their vehicles. Due to the lack of understanding within the wider community about the number of women who do find themselves in this situation, a Queanbeyan-based Argyle tenant set up O.W.L's to raise awareness and lobby for housing options and funding for older women.

O.W.L's has received a significant amount of national interest and has been reported upon by several media outlets, including the ABC and Channel 9. There have been several successful events, including a solutions workshop in November 2017, that has resulted in an increase in the number of inquiries to the O.W.L's founder, Penny Leemhuis. Penny is the only person who works on the O.W.L's effort and she is seeking some assistance from one or more equally motivated O.W.L's, to help maintain the momentum and move the ideas into action. This is a volunteer position, as O.W.L's receives no funding to pay staff at this point.

The purpose of O.W.L's is to raise awareness of the consequences and impact of the systemic and gender inequities in the housing sector for older women and promote social inclusion and women's equality. O.W.L's aim is to achieve sustainable housing solutions through a collaborative network of social service and housing organisations, researchers, policymakers, the private sector and community financial institutions, philanthropic and women's organisations. Collaboration will also identify key areas for preventative programs and information sharing sources.

What Penny has achieved under her own steam, with support from several community agencies including Argyle, is phenomenal. With the additional support, ideas and energy, even more could happen.

If you, or someone you know, has the time, commitment and passion to bring to this important issue, please contact Callie Barrett at the Queanbeyan Argyle office for more information 02 6297 5929.



O.W.L's
Older Women Lost in housing



VISION BOARDS

Why you should create one - By Ruby Mikolaitis

It's the first of January, you've written a list of New Year's Resolutions such as to budget more or to go the gym four days a week. You feel inspired, motivated, you feel new but then you hit February and you've gone to the gym once, spend \$200 on a pair of shoes and you've ordered Dominoes for the third time that week (Or that could just be me.) Why do we crash so easily? I've found a solution for you, that of the vision board.

I'm about to show you my vision board, it's not the best nor the most creative but it sums up perfectly my goals and dream for the year.

So, this is my vision board. It took me 43 minutes to be exact but it has all my intentions such as weight loss, budgeting, travelling and studying.



VISION BOARDS

You should create a vision board because:

- 1.** It's environmental and cheap. This cardboard cost me \$4 at my local newsagency but you spend \$0 money and find cardboard or a backdrop, some pics are cut out from magazines and some are printed from the Internet. You're recycling products which is good for the environment but also it's very cheap and feasible.
- 2.** It inspires you to be creative, before you create your vision board; you should create a list of what goals or inspirations you want this year and then create a template of what images you should use. The process of creating the vision board is also a very relaxing method.
- 3.** It works! Look, I'm not saying there is a 100% guarantee that vision boards work but by creating a vision board and placing it somewhere in a place you constantly look at. It's up to you to make whatever you want to happen, happen.

Now you have all the information, tips of making a vision board.

Set realistic goals or if you have high standard goals, have small steps into making you succeed that goal. A vision board isn't for you to stare and gawk at, it's a platform for you to manifest your goals into fruition.

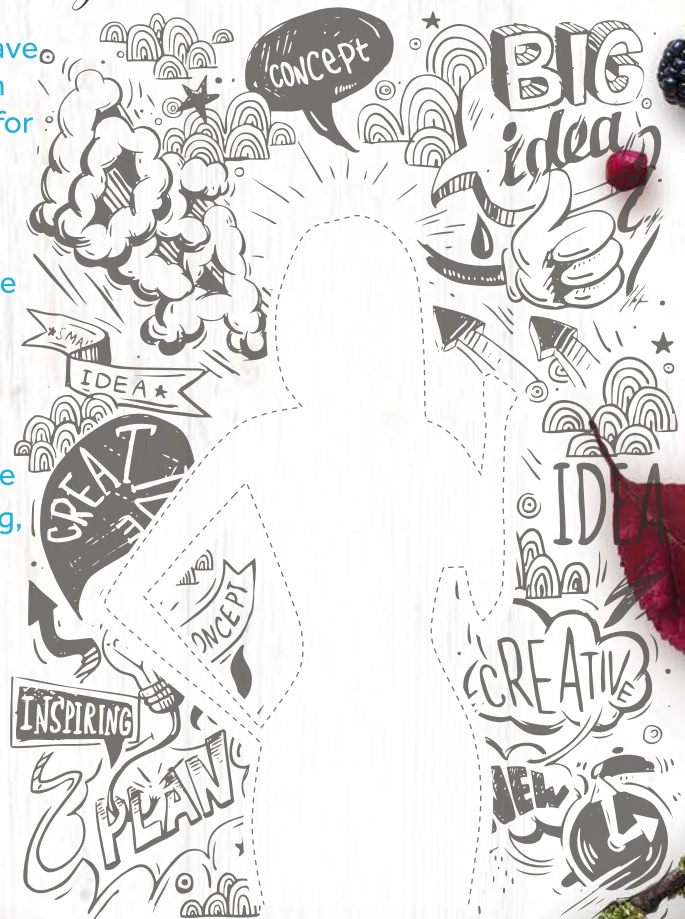
Put it in a place that you will constantly see the vision board, my vision board is placed across my bed because then I know it will be in my constant view. I have also taken a screen shot of my vision board and its the wall paper on my phone so I'm looking at it every day.

Go as minimal or as creative, if you need inspiration, the Internet is the best way to go. There's no right or wrong, it's completely up to you.

So go make your vision boards!

Hopefully this article made your day and brought some happiness.

Duby xxx



RETURN AND EARN

CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME: By Lyndal Breen

The NSW State Government is applying a deposit scheme on most drink containers, and alongside it, a system of facilities for return of containers and retrieval of the 10 cent deposit. Most 150ml to three litre drink containers will be eligible for a 10 cent refund including:



- Glass – beer bottles
- Plastic – soft drink, water
- Aluminium – beer and soft drink cans
- Steel – drink cans
- Liquid paperboard (juice cartons)



Containers must be empty, uncrushed, unbroken and have the original label attached. Wine, spirits, cordial and plain milk containers are not eligible.

Most Woolworths supermarkets have Return & Earn facilities and Coles supermarkets will soon be participating as well. Vinnies at Campbelltown, Picton, Mittagong, and Moss Vale will accept eligible items over the counter and issue your cash refund of 10 cents per item, or receive it as a donation to their cause. Near Camden is an over-the-counter service at Nepean Distributors: 3/9 Bellingham St, Harrington Park. More are being installed all the time.

Reverse Vending Machines issue vouchers that can be redeemed for cash at a participating retailer, or you can choose to have a direct payment to your PayPal account, or send a donation to a participating charity. Many Woolworths stores have a Reverse Vending Machine in the carpark and include Campbelltown: 271 Queen St; Woolworths at Camden and Spring Farm; Big W carpark Cnr Roscoe St and Old Hume Highway, Mittagong; and Woolworths stores at Goulburn, Yass, Wagga Wagga and Wagga Wagga North. As yet, the nearest for Griffith is at Woolworths, Leeton.

It is expected that some local fund-raising groups will become collection points, and therefore your local footy club or scouts may soon be collecting your disposable bottles for their purposes. See returnandearn.org.au for up-to-date information on the type and site of your nearest drop-off point. You will still be able to recycle in your household rubbish, but to collect the 10 cents per item you have to use Return & Earn machines or drop-off points.

PLASTIC BAG BANS:

The retailers, Woolworths, Coles and Harris Farm will soon be voluntarily implementing bans on the free provision of the common single-use supermarket bags. Woolworths and Coles will be phasing out free bags from June 30th 2018, but you will be able to buy heavier quality plastic bags at the checkout (much like with Aldi). Harris Farms will cease to provide plastic bags at all, but will provide small single-use paper bags and sell reusable paper bags at cost price. Single use bags are banned in most other Australian States. <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/nsw-government-silent-on-statewide-plastic-bag-ban-20170715-gxbuzp.html>
It sounds like some nice shopping bags will be really good presents this year!

COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

If you are not happy with our service, standards, practices or policies, you have the right to complain. For example, you might think we have done something unreasonable, unfair or have treated you badly.



What is a complaint?

Well, the tenant handbook explains a complaint as 'if you are not happy with our service, standards, practices or policies, you have the right to complain.' Anyone that's basically a stakeholder and connects with Argyle Housing including a tenant, neighbour etc has the right to complain. A complaint can be a continuous matter or a one off as well. For example if the toilet isn't working and an Argyle worker states that it'll be fixed in two days and yet no one has resolved the issue, you have the right to complain.

What is the best way to make a complaint?

You can make a complaint a number of ways including by using the Argyle website or completing a complaint form. However it's preferable to speak in person to your tenancy officer first and then put the complaint in writing if you are still not happy. There's also email as well as other forms of communications. In the tenant handbook there are details on how to complain and what a complaint is. The complaint policy is also on the website.

What is an appeal?

You may not always agree with a decision Argyle makes. Try discussing the decision with your tenancy officer first. However, if you still do not agree, it important that you ask for a review of the decision. It is also your right as a tenant to appeal decisions.

Please document and submit your complaint or review to Argyle Housing in one of the

following ways:

ONLINE: Argyle Complaints and Appeals Online Form found at <http://argylehousing.com.au/contact/complaints-appeals/complaints/>

IN PERSON: Complete & submit at your local Argyle Housing office.

BY POST: Download, print and complete the Argyle Complaints and Appeals Form and return via mail to:

**Complaints & Appeals Officer
Argyle Housing**

PO Box 1026, Bowral, NSW, 2576

EMAIL: Download, print, complete, scan and email as an attachment through to complaints@argylehousing.com.au

When we receive a written record of your complaint we will investigate your problem and hopefully find a solution. We will put our response in writing and this may include;

- An apology
- An explanation of why things happen that way or
- A description of what action we have taken to ensure you do not have that problem in the future

You are also entitled to ask for someone to advocate on your behalf. For example you could ask help from a Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service Worker, a community worker or a friend.

You can also ask for help from an organisation that helps resolve disputes such as the Community Justice Centre. Please ask your Tenancy Officer for information on how to contact these organisations .

ABDEI'S STORY

By Tenancy Action Worker - NICHOLAS BLOW

Sitting at a café, in Queen St Campbelltown, there is a positive energy in the air. It could be the coffee or the Campbelltown street life. I think it's the guy I'm having coffee with.

Abdei has been a tenant with Argyle since 2010. Originally from Ethiopia, Abdei was supported through Macarthur Diversity Services International when he came into Argyle housing.

'My life in Ethiopia was very different. I spoke three languages, but not English.'

'There were many challenges when I came to Australia. I was very lucky to get a place with Argyle in Woodbine where I lived for 7 years.'



Balancing work and study from early on, Abdei always wanted to achieve great things. And it's obvious his passion is as strong as ever.

'I finished my HSC, then started working casual jobs while I studied, now I'm studying an Advanced Diploma in Pathology. Argyle made this possible.'

Having recently moved on to his own private rental, he and his wife now live in Parramatta.

'My wife is a nurse and we also have two children. It can be hard balancing everything but we have a fantastic life!'

'I want to say thank you to Argyle, from my heart. All the people are so nice. Even after we moved, you were ringing me and asking if I am ok. This is so nice.'

I try to get a word in but he continues...

'If I can give back in some way, please ring me.'

After realizing we've been chatting for an hour, I thank him and wish him all the best.

I ask him one last thing, how was the coffee?

'It was very good, but Ethiopian Coffee is the best!'



*A better future for
our communities.*

CAMPBELLTOWN OFFICE
- NEW LOCATION COMING SOON!

Hi,

It's with great anticipation and pleasure to let you know that during the month of April, we are relocating to a more comfortable and spacious area. The new location will be 14 Browne Street, Campbelltown which is just across the road from where we are currently situated. Our phone number remains the same at 02 4627 0002, and our primary email address is also still the same campbelltown@argylehousing.com.au. Our new and better location is conveniently not on a main road, which is a much safer option for you as tenants and will provide you with a more relaxed service experience.

The new open-planned office space at Browne Street will be designed to give you a customer service experience that is engaging and encourages you as the tenant to be a part of what we do. We look forward to welcoming you through the doors and getting your feedback on the new and exciting office space.

Feel free to contact us with any questions you may have concerning the new location or our services. We look forward to serving you at our new address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Wendy Middleton'.

Wendy Middleton
Argyle CEO



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*A better future for
our communities.*

- CLAYMORE
- CAMPBELLTOWN
- TAHMOOR
- BOWRAL
- GOLBURN
- GUNGAHLIN
- QUEANBEYAN
- CAMPBELL
- WAGGA WAGGA
- YASS
- YOUNG
- GRIFFITH

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