

The

# ARGYLER

Tenant Newsletter, Autumn 2020



Created  
by tenants,  
for tenants.





## Connect with us

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The Argyle is a newsletter created by tenants, for tenants. We welcome and encourage contributions and feedback from all – to get in touch simply email [editor@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:editor@argylehousing.com.au)

## The Argyle Tenant Editorial Team

We need your ideas and stories to keep The Argyle relevant to you.

- Do you want to contribute to The Argyle?
- Do you have a great news story that you would like to share?
- Would you like your ideas published to our community?

If so, we would like to hear from you.

For more information, contact the editor at [editor@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:editor@argylehousing.com.au)

# Welcome from the CEO

## Welcome to the Autumn edition of The Argyle.

With kids back at school and some well needed rain, life is back in full swing for everyone. This Argyle has many interesting and varied stories from tenants about tenants that I hope you enjoy reading.

Some of the feedback I have received about The Argyle has been quite harsh and negative. I think this is a little unfair to the tenants who are contributing their stories and are proud of their successes. If we want to make this better you need to put your hand up to be involved. We try to provide as much information to you about what's happening around our communities. From raising awareness of domestic violence to the Walk and Talk through Koorringal, these stories are really varied and show how our tenants contribute to their local communities. Instead of complaining about communities that are not represented, why not tell us your story.

At the end of this edition there is information on the changes that have been recently introduced to the Residential Tenancy Laws. Please take the time to read these and if they raise concerns or you want them explained, please discuss these with your Tenancy Officer.

The staff and I appreciate your efforts to keep your property maintained and cared for and paying your rent. THANK YOU.

Take care over the changes in the seasons and read the tips to avoiding the Flu

Regards,



**Wendy Middleton**

CEO - Argyle Housing

“  
If we want to make this better you need to put your hand up to be involved.  
”

# Editorial

**A**rgyle Housing values the opinions of our tenants and residents and we recognise that everyone has a differing opinion. This is one of the core reasons that we give you, our tenants, a voice in the form of The Argyle. It is important for tenants to read about what other tenants are doing throughout the regions that Argyle Housing manages. Everyone's story is different and it's intriguing to read about each other's experiences so that we can learn and grow.

Earlier this year, we asked a group of tenants to help us review the Argyle Housing brand and how we communicate to tenants. We had some very frank and forthright discussions about what Argyle Housing means to our tenants and what we can do to give tenants the best customer experience possible.

These discussions were also supported by a questionnaire that asked questions that related to their experience with Argyle Housing.

Here are some of their responses...

**“I have had no problems with Argyle Housing, they have been up front with everything I have asked them. Some people have problems and a bad attitude with you, but that's their problem.”**

**“Continue to be informative about people's concern, be on the ball.”**

**“When you see the Argyle Housing brand, it does not make me think of a housing service.”**

**“When I mention Argyle Housing to people, they have never heard of the name.”**

**“To improve on The Argyle, have more stories about tenants. Also, when people pass have a vale.”**

**“The Argyle brand is bright, so it makes me feel good.”**

**“I received a Christmas card and it really made me feel that Argyle Housing cares about me.”**

I hope you enjoy reading this Autumn issue of The Argyle.

Scott Dunstan

Editor

# Wagga Wagga DV Awareness

## Mt Austin Public School 2019

**A**rgyle Housing collaborated with the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers and Mt Austin Public School to create awareness in the Community for Family Violence.

The day consisted of a DV Awareness Service, which had a Welcome to Country from Aunty Gail and welcome speech by Belinda Crain from the Multicultural Council Wagga Wagga.

There was a Multicultural lunch provided by the School, parents and friends from the School provided dishes from all around the world.

There was a selected number of students who released 50 white balloons for each woman who has lost her life due to family violence in 2019.

The students were all given a bag of goodies, and Argyle Housing supplied drink bottles, whilst the police also added gifts to the bag.

The students then finished off the afternoon with a Colour Fun Run to raise money for some shade sails in the playground.



“ 50 white balloons were released with each one representing a woman who lost their life due to family violence in 2019. ”

# Controlling Money

**You're the Boss Workshop** was all about giving tenants the skills they needed to budget and take control of their money.

The workshop shared some great money tips, and helped sort out tenant's bills.

The Campbelltown tenants involved in the workshop gained a greater understanding of what money means to them, practiced budgeting, and learnt new tricks in dealing with people who are trying to get them to spend money.



“ Argyle Housing is the best community Housing program in our lovely burrow of Campbelltown. ”

# IKEA Donations

**S**ince the opening of Common Ground Gungahlin, IKEA have been working alongside Northside and Argyle Housing to provide the tenants with food and furniture donations for their apartments. As well as doing the catering for the special events throughout the year and for the tenant's Christmas Party.

As well as food donations, IKEA has also helped Argyle Housing and tenants by donating 100 blankets which are given to new tenants in a comfortable bundle. It is these bundles that provide a sense of care and dignity to those, for whatever reason are unable to purchase linen for their bed, a towel for their shower and a blanket to keep warm.

Thank you to IKEA for donating blankets to Argyle Housing. We would also like to thank Streetsmart and Sheridan who supplied the towels and linen within the care bundles.



## Griffith Housing

**A**rgyle Housing Team Leader for Griffith and Wagga Wagga, Jenny, stands on the land that will soon become affordable housing for low income, transitional and key workers. The block is on the corner of Wakaden and Crossing Streets Griffith and is a short 10 minute walk to the main street.

Griffith Council gifted land to Argyle Housing to ease the housing availability crisis within the Riverina. The housing will be targeted to be rented by workers at no more than 75% of the market rent.

Argyle Housing CEO, Wendy Middleton, said she is pleased with the outcome. We are very happy to be partnering with Griffith Council to provide Affordable Housing and Argyle Housing will partner with local builders to deliver the project.

"I'd like to congratulate Griffith City Council on their commitment to the Housing Strategy and in particular to low income accommodation," she said.

General Manager Brett Stonestreet said he was glad that council has taken this constructive if 'modest' step, as part of the Griffith Housing Strategy adopted in 2019. The land is zoned for General Residential and is therefore appropriately zoned for the purpose of residential dwellings.



## Tenant Participation Committee

**T**he success of Argyle Housing depends on the involvement of our tenants and residents with the staff to help volunteer their time and to give feedback on how we are going.

To facilitate this interaction, in each of our offices, Tenant Participation Committees have been set up so that we have a formal way in which you - our tenants, can be involved.

The Committee's role is to assist Argyle Housing staff with organising community engagements such as morning teas, fundraising events, the Annual Meeting and Argyle Days. The committee also looks into important information that governs the business in the form of reviewing some of the policies and procedures of Argyle Housing that directly affect our tenants.

Tenant Participation Committees will also be asked to help out with office functionality such as collating, folding and placing the Tenant Newsletter into

envelopes for mailing, checking on our most vulnerable in the community by ringing them to see how they are going and asking what help may be needed.

Most recently we asked our Bowral Tenant Participation Committee to come in for a morning tea to talk about the Argyle Housing branding look and feel. The discussion was very lively and we received some valuable feedback on how we are going.

The added bonus for you is that you get to socialise with other like minded Argyle Housing tenants, enjoy some morning tea hosted by Argyle Housing and enjoy the satisfaction that you are making a difference in your community.

Get involved today by contacting your local Argyle Housing office and talking to a Tenancy Action Worker on **1300 274 953**.

Photo: Michael, Julia, Bob, Noeline, Grace and Sandy helping to fold boxes for the Annual Meeting.



# Cancer Support Group



**O**n Australia Day, the Wollondilly Shire Council held its official celebration at the Picton Botanical Gardens.

The event featured a number of free activities and performances for local residents to enjoy.

Argyle Housing Tahmoor resident and long term Board member of the CommunityLinks wellbeing committee, Tony was there to help out and answer any questions local residents had regarding the Wollondilly Cancer Support Group.

As part of the day, raffle tickets and lucky dips were available to purchase, with much needed funds going to cancer research.

Well done for your time and commitment to the cause Tony.

# Walk & Talk Kooringal

**W**agga Wagga Argyle Housing staff members, Alarna and Donna were invited by the Riverina Police district to join in on their Walk & Talk around the suburb of Kooringal. The Police, FACS and Argyle Housing attended multiple homes around the Kooringal estate, getting feedback from residents and answering any questions they had. The main reason for the Walk & Talk was to get a general consensus on how people are feeling in the area and if they had any concerns they could raise them.

Wagga Police commented that they had a great day today meeting members of

the Kooringal community on their Walk & Talk with NSW Housing, FACS and Argyle Housing staff. It was a good opportunity to hear a little about the Kooringal community and how all of our agencies can play a more active role.

Thanks for welcoming us Kooringal.



# Scholarships Apply Now

## Argyle Housing Tertiary Scholarships

Up to **\$1,500** available to individuals

Are you a new or continuing student, mature age student, at University, TAFE or with a registered training organisation?

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, then you are able to apply for the Argyle Housing Tertiary Scholarship.

Argyle Housing Scholarships are part of an annual education program for tenants, providing up to \$1,500 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, computers or anything which helps you to complete your education.

Applying for an Argyle Housing Tertiary Scholarship is easy: simply fill in a short application form, which takes around five minutes. More than one member of your family can apply. Scholarships are open to any household member enrolled in full-time or part-time tertiary education during 2020.

[argylehousing.com.au/social/scholarships](http://argylehousing.com.au/social/scholarships)

An initiative of the Argyle Housing Board of Directors

Sponsored by



# Giving Tree Success

## A small gesture goes a long way...

**T**hroughout all of the Argyle Housing offices, we have an online staff suggestion box. These suggestions go to the leadership committee for review and implementation.

Last year, our finance team member Belinda, suggested that instead of giving presents to each other for Christmas, we create a giving tree and buy presents for under privileged children and their families.

The suggestion was immediately approved and Christmas Trees with tags indicating a boy or girl with an age range were installed in each office.

Our Tenancy Action Workers then linked in with their local service providers to ensure that the Christmas presents were going to go to those in need.

We had an overwhelming response from all of our staff members and the responses from the community have been amazing.

The Christmas Spirit is alive and well at Argyle Housing with the knowledge that the gifts were putting a smile on a child's face as well as providing some form of relief to their parents.



Dear Simone,

I just wanted to say thank you to you and your team for the wonderful donations for our families. We appreciate the time and effort that went into organising this very kind donation.

We hope you and your team have a wonderful break.

Regards

Carmel, Sam, Melinda and Erin.

Barnardos, Moss Vale



# Ainslie Village Volunteer Awards

**T**o recognise the wonderful passion and enthusiasm of our volunteers, who tirelessly give their time and energy to assist the Argyle Housing team and residents in Ainslie Village, we recognised them on International Volunteer day with a morning tea and a certificate recognising their dedication and commitment.

- Brent Ralston
- Matthew Graham
- Verity Wauchope
- John Wilcher
- Dane Martinovic
- David Bryce
- Antonio D'Angiolillo
- Andrew Matunu
- Martin Perryman
- Ron Nooyen
- Ash Ryan
- Blaeghd Bell
- Marcus Barlow
- Matthew Rapley
- Bede Anderson



## Tenant Says 'Thank you'

Dear Megan,

I am forwarding to you my feedback on your contractor Brad's recent work on the property I rent from Argyle Housing.

Last year, Brad and his son began and completed (8:30am - 1pm) replacing the front railing at my property.

After my initial safety concerns about replacing the old railing with a new one to council standards, I have to give praise to Brad as to how he handled the matter.

I am grateful for the time, craftsmanship and attention to detail he and his son has put into replacing the railing and fixing up two steps on the stairs to the front entry verandah. Especially on a hot day.

I have to commend your office for having in your employment, an understanding and hardworking employee.

Attached with this email are some photos of Brad and his son hard at work and full of pride at the result of their craftsmanship.

Thank you

Mary



“ I have to give praise to Brad as to how he handled the matter. ”



If you have an emergency and it is out of office hours, please call the emergency maintenance number **1300 850 451**. If you are in a leasehold property please refer to the emergency contact number numbers listed with your lease.

## Cold and Flu Season

**A**s the end of summer draws near, you should turn to thinking about your winter health. In particular, making sure that you are aware of the latest flu vaccine and where you can get one.

### What should I know about the flu vaccine?

The best time to get the flu shot is early autumn to allow time for your immunity to be strengthened before the flu season (June to September) starts. Doctors and Practitioners say that it is important to have the vaccine each year to continue to be protected because your immunity decreases over time and the flu strains change over time as well.

### The flu vaccine is free for the following people:

- anyone aged 65 years and over;
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and over;
- Pregnant women; and
- Anyone over 6 months of age with medical conditions such as severe asthma, lung disease or heart disease, low immunity or diabetes that can lead to complications from influenza.

Learn more about the flu vaccine on this FAQs page:

[www.healthdirect.gov.au/flu-vaccine-faqs](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/flu-vaccine-faqs)

### Ten tips to fight the flu



#### Get the flu shot

It is important to get the influenza vaccination each year to continue to be protected, since it wears off after 3 to 4 months.



#### Keep surfaces clean

Clean surfaces such as your keyboard, telephone and door handles regularly to get rid of germs.



#### Wash your hands

Good hygiene is one of the best ways to help prevent a cold or flu from spreading. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water.



#### Self-care at home

In most cases you can treat mild cold or flu symptoms at home.



#### Cover coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Preferably with your elbow, not your hand.



#### Don't rely on antibiotics

Antibiotics won't cure a cold or flu. Antibiotics only work for bacterial infections.



#### Bin your tissues

Throw disposable tissues in the bin immediately after using them.



#### Know the symptoms of a cold

A cold is not life-threatening and although uncomfortable does not require visit to a GP.



#### Avoid sharing

Try not to share cups, plates, cutlery and towels with other people, as this could spread germs.



#### Check your symptoms first

Use the healthdirect Symptom Checker via the app or website.





**Gardening Passion**

**W**hen Lloyd first came to his (then) NSW Housing Commission home in Moss Vale in 1993, he found very hard clay soil full of rock rubble. Not what you expect to make a great garden in. But Lloyd illustrates that, with persistence and lots of work, even the most unproductive soil can bloom.

“ Lloyd most values his scented roses and has a ‘Mr Lincoln’ growing near his front door so that its scent wafts into the house. ”

Lloyd’s garden is a work of art with 64 rose bushes, 20 eriostemons (for the bees), trees such as a magnolia, winding pathways, and interesting artworks and statues. Why has he done this, I asked him, and his reply is that it makes his house a home. He has found that investing his labour into a beautiful garden also lifts the whole area around, making it better too. He has now been here 27 years, gardening from day one, and it shows.

To create his garden, Lloyd first needed to create places to plant. With a mattock, he dug out the large holes, about 50cm deep, where his roses would go and filled them with horse manure obtained free from a neighbouring farm. These deep, enriched spots were perfect for his first rose plants. Lloyd does not use any chemical fertilisers or pesticides, preferring to rely on nature. He notes that when aphids come in to partake of succulent new growth on the roses, it is not long before the ladybirds turn up to eat the aphids as nature intends.

If you want to grow roses, Lloyd says that they are generally a hardy plant, that thrives on neglect. Except for the winter, they will bloom, with flowers in many colours including white, yellow, apricot and wonderful shades of palest pink to brilliant crimson. Buy them at your local garden centre (but not supermarkets). Speak to the nursery worker who will be able to recommend the most suitable plants for

your situation, and, more to the point, they know what won’t do well in your location. Roses are frost hardy and cope with winter by going dormant and looking like sticks. Pruning them back to the older wood keeps them from becoming straggly. The current drought conditions have been tough however, and Lloyd has lost a few from a high of 78. The reason for this is that the soil becomes too hot on the extremely warm days we have had, which causes the roots to bake. In such a prolonged period of heat, only the hardiest survive.

Lloyd most values his scented roses and has a ‘Mr Lincoln’ growing near his front door so that its scent wafts into the house. He is not choosy about breeds but buys what he likes on the grounds that a rose is a rose. In fact, he so loves roses that he has been known to rescue a rose growing in a public place by giving it a good prune!

As well as the roses, Lloyd’s garden features a beautiful

weeping acacia which has a tale behind it. Apparently Lloyd decided to develop a frog pond and built a sandstone structure to fill with water. Alas, it was not a great triumph as a water feature, so Lloyd filled it with good soil and planted a tiny sprig of wattle. This flexible approach has paid off to the extent that he now has an amazing green waterfall effect in the middle of the garden.

There are also an eclectic collection of garden ornaments placed around the garden to delight the eye. Everything from children’s toys and a number of weathered Buddhas to a lovely angel statue can be found. Lloyd is given these spontaneously by people who want to add something to his garden. Though this may sound twee, I think these things add a spirit to the garden that lifts it beyond a manicured display towards the mystical.

I asked if anyone helps with his garden but Lloyd says not with the physical work. However he gets given lots of advice, which he always listens to because you can always learn something new. He is also fond of gardening programs such as Gardening Australia on ABCTV, which is a great source of ideas. He brought in the eriostemons after watching David Attenborough’s program, “Life of Bees”, and he is delighted by the way the bees congregate when the flowers are ready.

**Lyndal Breen,**  
**Argyle Housing tenant**

# Argyle Day Campbelltown

## Ten Pin Bowling

**D**uring the month of January, Argyle Housing Campbelltown invited all tenants to celebrate the start of the New Year 2020 with a fun day of ten pin bowling.

With over 60 people attending the event, there was never a dull moment and the day was deemed a success. Staff and tenants alike enjoyed the chance to bond in a less formal setting and got to know each other a little better. Positive feedback was received from tenants stating how much they enjoyed the event and how they would love to be involved in more fun activities offered by Argyle Housing in the future.

The Campbelltown team would like to thank all the tenants who came along and made it such a great day!



### How to look like you ace at bowling, when you actually suck at bowling.

#### Step One:

Gracefully and with absolute conviction in yourself, put on your bowling shoes. Even if you don't tie the laces up properly, if you look confident, no one will notice.

#### Step Two:

Look around for the bowling ball, even if you have no idea what type of ball you should get, always try and go for the lowest weight. If you pick up a ball that's too heavy, don't worry about it. Put a smile on your face and do not ever show weakness.

#### Step Three:

Now here's your main goal, don't end up throwing the ball in the gutter. Take some time to pause and pretend like you're completing a strategy in your mind, try a few different poses as to how to throw the ball.

#### Step Four:

Throw the ball! If you miss or do end up throwing it in the gutter, just shrug your shoulders and act like you deliberately failed on purpose.

#### Step Five:

Repeat until end of game.

**Ruby Mikolaitis, Argyle Housing tenant**



# I Love My Home

**W**hen we welcome new tenants into Argyle Housing, we visit them at the six week mark into their tenancy to see how they are fitting into their new home and if we can help them in any way.

Alicia is one of our new residents and was visited by our Tenancy Officer and Tenancy Action Worker who found that her story and achievements were so inspirational that we asked Alicia if we could share her story in The Argyle.

My time with Argyle Housing so far has been incredible! I love my home, I love having a garden and I especially love the freedom of being out of the private rental market.

I absolutely love my new neighbourhood! I've moved into an area full of families, children and loads of parks from a heavily built up area. My neighbours are so friendly and kind, and I feel incredibly safe. I can safely go for walks alone or with my son because the sense of community in my new neighbourhood is so strong, everyone looks after everyone.

Through moving to Argyle Housing, it has given me financial stability, which is so much more than I ever thought a housing agency could provide. I've been able to pursue career and personal development opportunities that I previously didn't have the funds for. I bought my son a bike and presents for Christmas this year, before moving into my new home I didn't know if there'd be any presents under the tree at all.

Knowing that my rent is paid and I can 100% pay for food and necessities without needing help from my parents has been a blessing. I've been able to spend more time with my son and more time on my career.

I'm currently studying my Cert. III in Individual Support, specialising in Disabilities. This will

“ My time with Argyle Housing so far has been incredible! I love my home, I love having a garden and I especially love the freedom of being out of the private rental market. ”

allow me to work as an AIN in a 1-on-1 setting, with people with disabilities.

I've always wanted to be a positive light in people's lives, I love to help others, educate them and help them achieve their goals. This course allows me to do that on a professional level for people who often can't speak up for themselves or demand their human rights be protected.

I have found the biggest challenge for me has been balancing my course with my personal life. I struggled finding a location, time and delivery method that I could match with how many days of daycare I could afford. I chose to study through my Parents Next provider, Welsey Mission, as they offered tailored courses for parents trying to access study.

My five year goal is to be financially secure, with savings and an income that allows me to send my son to a Steiner School. As long as my son and I are happy, safe and comfortable, I will be content.



Outside of my study, I am currently gathering donations to give to fire-ravaged communities on NSW South Coast. I grew up on the South Coast, and over the course of the Christmas/ New Year's period I was watching more and more of my childhood burn to the ground. I was obsessively watching the news and checking social media to make sure my friends and family were still alive. I felt incredibly powerless but knew I had to do something to help the communities that gave me such a beautiful childhood. I started contacting everyone I could get onto, I emailed the MP for the South Coast and called countless evacuation centres, and started collecting donations for babies and

children. I've been organising these into family-specific packs, using social media I've been able to directly contact victims who have lost everything and take care of what their children need. My main goal is to help parents make things as normal as possible for their little ones in this dark time. I've so far delivered five packs, supplying 17 children with clothing and toys, along with some toiletries and sanitary items that have been kindly passed on to me by Argyle Housing. Everyone needs a bit of help sometimes and the bushfire crisis has really shown how willing Australians are to pitch in and help out their neighbours.

**Alicia, Argyle Housing tenant.**

# Leeton Back to School Day

In February, Argyle Housing Griffith were invited to attend a Back to School event at Gossamer Park in Wattle Hill Leeton which was organised by local service providers and FACS Housing.

The aim was for kids in low socio-economic areas to have everything they need to return to school in 2020.

The Walkabout Barber was there, and provided all kids with free haircuts for when school started. Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service

had backpacks for every child, as well as hats. Argyle Housing provided 2020 Calendars and metal drink bottles with interchangeable lids which can be used for both hot and cold drinks (these were very popular and were all gone within an hour!)

Linking Communities Network provided the free BBQ lunch which was delicious!

Jeanie, who is an Argyle Housing tenant, is with her son George and the founder of the Walkabout Barber, Brian Dowd.



# Property Inspections Explained

All Argyle Housing tenants have a range of inspections undertaken from time to time and it can become confusing what each of these Inspections are for, in summary, the general Inspections we undertake are outlined below.



## Tenancy Inspections

Your Tenancy Officer undertakes these inspections at least twice a year. They are to ensure the property is being cared for and provide you with an opportunity to discuss any maintenance issues you may have that you have not already raised.



## Asset Condition Inspections

These Inspections are carried out by Argyle Housing's Maintenance Officers once every three years and they are to determine what works are expected on the property in the long-term. This helps us plan and budget for replacing items such as floor-coverings, re-painting, windows, roofs, bathrooms and laundries. These inspections are not an opportunity to raise maintenance issues. These need to be raised directly with your Tenancy Officer.



## PAS Inspections

If your property is owned by the NSW Government, but managed by Argyle Housing, a Property Assessment Survey (PAS) Inspection may also be carried out. These inspections are conducted, on a random basis, by a Contractor engaged by NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC). PAS Inspections provide information to NSW LAHC about how we are managing their assets.

Argyle Housing will notify you when your property is due for a PAS. Property inspections generally take about an hour to complete. All PAS inspectors must carry identification, which they should provide before entering your property. These inspections are not an opportunity to raise maintenance issues. These need to be raised directly with Argyle Housing.



## Tips for Controlling Water Use:



**Stop leaks:** Any dripping tap or other leak should be reported to Argyle Housing immediately. A bucket under a leaky tap will conserve some of the water you are paying for. A leaking toilet can lose up to 400 litres a day - turn it off at the cistern between uses while awaiting the repair.



**Small things matter:** avoid over-filling the bath, sink, basin or buckets – you can always add a little more if necessary; capture the cold water that runs from the hot tap in a container for later use.



**Put the Plug in:** wash fruit and vegetables in a bowl rather than under a running tap. Soak rather than rinse dishes under a running tap, whether preparing them for the dishwasher, or just for washing up in the sink. Recycling items can be rinsed at the end of a wash-up – they don't have to be squeaky clean.



**In the bathroom:** take shorter showers, 3 minutes is considered adequate - use a timer to help keep track of time. No need for more than one a day normally. Educate your children to understand that they cannot luxuriate in the warm shower or have a deep bath every day. Get the family to shower one straight after the other so that the water remains hot. Don't let the tap run while cleaning your teeth or washing hands.



**In the kitchen:** Save energy while you save water: only switch on the dishwasher when you have a full load (that also helps cut your gas or electric bills). Don't overfill the kettle; Put excess hot water in a thermos to use later when you need some warm water.



**In the laundry:** fill up the load before using the washing machine; use the water saving feature if you have one. Alternatively, run the laundry water through a hose and water the lawn - move it to different spots to prevent build-up of nutrients in one place.



**In the garden:** The aim is to prevent the roots from drying out, so try to get water close to the base of the plant. Use a watering can rather than a hose or sprinkler – when you carry water you notice how much you use. Water in the cooler time of the day – morning is best. In very hot weather, deep watering a couple of times per week can be better. Thick mulching will also retain water and cool soil in your garden, particularly if your soil has been enriched with compost. Pot plants need monitoring to stop them drying out, but generally require less watering than plants in a garden.



**Choose to grow more water-wise plants:** succulents can be a good choice with many interesting forms and colourful flowers. Many local Australian natives are very hardy and attractive, and also support the local birds and butterflies. Plants like Scaevola, Native Rosemary, or Correa flower well for long periods and don't need much water once established.

## Changes to the Residential Tenancy Laws

Changes to the residential tenancy laws start on 23 March 2020, with amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (the Act) and the new Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019 (the new Regulation).

### What are the changes?

The changes improve tenants' renting experience while ensuring landlords can effectively manage their properties. The changes aim to reduce disputes over repairs and maintenance, increase protection and certainty for tenants, and clarify the rights and obligations of tenants and landlords.<sup>1</sup>

The following information highlights the key changes starting on 23 March 2020.<sup>2</sup>

- Minimum standards to clarify 'fit for habitation'
- New smoke alarm obligations for landlords
- Changes of a 'minor nature'
- Damage and removing modifications
- New mandatory set break fees for fixed term agreements
- Strengthened information disclosure requirements
- New material facts
- New information to be disclosed to prospective strata tenants
- Remedies for tenants for breaches to information disclosure requirements
- Water efficiency measures
- New rectification order process
- New standard form of agreement
- New condition report

For more information on the above topics, please go to the Fair Trading website.

<sup>1,2</sup> [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

# Complaints and Appeals

## Appeal a Decision made by Argyle Housing

The decisions Argyle Housing make are based on a set of policies and procedures that aim to be fair to everyone. These policies and procedures are designed to meet agreed standards of service for community housing and to comply with the law.

### What decisions can be appealed?

Decisions that can be appealed include rent charges, non-rent charges including water usage, transfer decisions, refusal to make changes to your property or to keep a pet.

You may not always agree with a decision we make. If you do not, it is important that you use your right as a tenant to ask us to review our decision in one of the following ways:

#### Online:

Argyle Housing Appeals Form on the Argyle Housing website  
[www.argylehousing.com.au](http://www.argylehousing.com.au)

#### In person:

To any Argyle Housing office

#### Email:

[complaints@argylehousing.com.au](mailto:complaints@argylehousing.com.au)

#### Post:

Complete the Argyle Housing Appeals Form, or write a letter and return via mail to:

**Complaints & Appeals Officer,  
Argyle Housing  
PO Box 1026, Bowral NSW 2576**

### What happens next?

- The appeal will be reviewed by an Argyle Housing Team Leader or Manager who was not involved in the original decision
- After the information has been reviewed we will either:
  - Change our decision; or
  - Reject your appeal
- A written summary will be sent to you to inform you of the decision, including why your appeal was rejected if applicable
- Argyle Housing's policy states that we will make a decision in regard to your appeal within 28 days of the receipt of the appeal. If we can't do this for some reason we will contact you to let you know what is happening
- If Argyle Housing rejects your appeal, you have the right to seek a further review from an independent (external) agency.

### For further information:

**Housing Appeals Committee (NSW):**

**1800 629 794**

**Housing Review Committee (ACT):**

**133 427**

## Acknowledgement of country

Argyle Housing acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

## Environment

Argyle Housing cares about the environment and is committed to a sustainable environment and follows a comprehensive environmental protocol. The Argyle is printed on FSR® certified paper traceable to certified sources. We use a new varnish coating process that is environmentally-friendly. We use soy-based inks with low VOC and recycle all unused ink. We recycle all scrap paper.

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