

The

ARGYLER

Tenant Newsletter, Spring 2019




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Contents

Welcome from the CEO	04
Tenant Survey Winners	05
Tenant Survey Results	06
Latest News	09
Vale Sue Shaw	10
Vale Rod Abbey	11
New Staff	12
Tenant Poem	13
NAIDOC Week	14
Study Notes	16
Care Free Singers	17
Assisting Carolyn	18
Why we work?	19
Tenant Success	20
How to Budget	21
Scholarship Recipient	22
Improving Living Conditions	24
Spring Vegetables	25
Rent Review	26
Complaints and Appeals	28
From the Maintenance Team	29
White Ribbon	30

The Argyle is a newsletter pulled together by tenants, for tenants. We welcome and encourage contributions and feedback from all – to get in touch simply email 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

Welcome from the CEO

Hello and welcome to the Spring edition of The Argylar.

A huge thank you to everyone that completed the tenant survey. With over a 70% return you have told us clearly what we are doing right and where we need to improve. As you can see in the following pages, there are different issues for the different locations that we look after.

From the survey results, we are currently putting together local actions that we need to act on. Your local office will keep you informed of these and ask you for your advice as to how we can improve our services to you. Please help them by becoming involved.

I also would like to see the local tenant participation groups up and running again. There has been an overwhelming request from tenants to be able to get together for a cuppa, a chat and to help out Argyle Housing.

I would like to pay my respect and condolences to the families and friends of two stalwarts of Argyle Housing, Sue Shaw and Rod Abbey, who passed away in the recent months. Both have been long term tenants and supporters of Argyle Housing and will be truly missed. They both, in their own ways, left a legacy to Argyle Housing. Read about Sue and Rod in this edition.

Spring is here and it's a good time to think about decluttering. On the weekend I decided to go through all my adult children's stuff that they have left with me for over 20 years. The cupboards are bulging and I sent them a text and said it's packed up and they have until the end of September to collect it or I will be giving it away. What a reaction I got! It's started to be on its way to their homes!

It's amazing what we collect over the years, but it's time for all of us to look at what is important to keep, and what can go to a new home. During spring, take the time to revisit what you are collecting and do something positive about it.

Enjoy the warmer weather and look after yourself.

Wendy



Wendy Middleton

CEO - Argyle Housing

“ There has been an overwhelming request from tenants to be able to get together over a cuppa and have a chat... ”

Tenant Survey Winners

Congratulations to our Winners

Thank you to all of our tenants who participated in the survey. Your feedback will contribute to helping Argyle Housing provide better services.



First Prize winner

Congratulations to our First Prize winner, Haifa'a from the ACT.

Haifa'a won a Harvey Norman voucher which she was extremely happy to receive from our CEO, Wendy. She says that the voucher will go a long way to purchasing some much needed appliances that will help her around the house. In particular, she has her eyes on some new appliances for the kitchen, that will help in her love for cooking traditional food from her home country.



Second Prize winner

Pictured here at Harvey Norman with our Argyle Housing CEO, Wendy presented Karen and David with their voucher and thanked them for their participation in the survey.

Karen and David are Southern Highlands locals and initially thought that their voucher would go towards a heating appliance. However, in the days before receiving the voucher, their washing machine broke down. So it was very timely and they now own a brand new washer.

Tenant Survey Results

Every two years, Argyle Housing asks its tenants to complete a confidential survey. This provides our tenants with the opportunity to give us feedback on where we are performing above expectations, as well as on areas we could improve on. The Argyle Housing Tenant Satisfaction Survey results for 2019 have been finalised and we achieved an outstanding overall return rate of 70% (1788 surveys returned). This return rate

compares to 60% in Argyle Housing's 2017 survey and is the highest return for any Tier 1 Community Housing Provider in Australia.

The outstanding return rate means that when analysing the result, we are very confident that the responses reflect the views of all Argyle Housing's tenants.

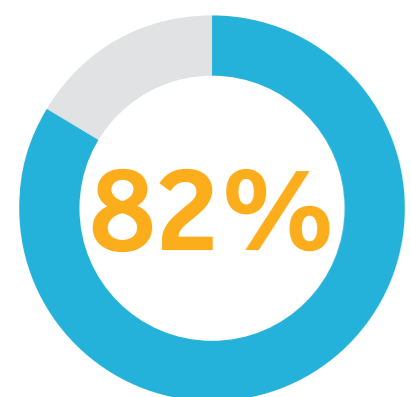
Overall the results show that Argyle Housing is perceived positively by its tenants. The top three scoring indicators related to the behaviour of the

repairs team while six of the top ten indicators relate to the repairs service in general. This is backed up by good results in terms of how we communicate and provide information to tenants.

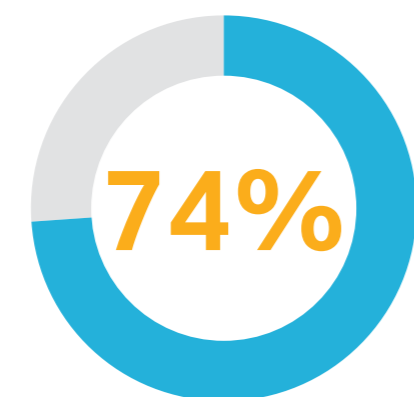
There are areas that our tenants have told us we need to improve upon. So for the future, we will be focusing on improving the conditions of the properties we manage and ensuring we provide better services so that we can be the best possible landlord for our tenants.

Key Indicator results

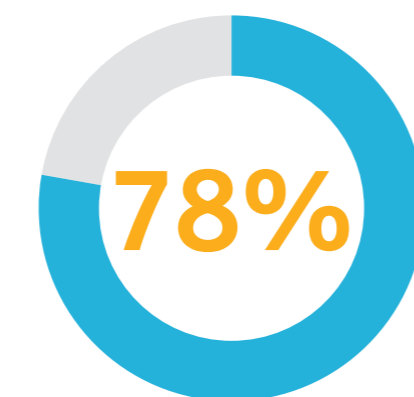
Overall, the results of the survey were very good and we thank all of our tenants who participated. The key indicator results for Argyle Housing are below, with the individual offices on the right hand side page. Throughout The ARGYLER, look for the speech bubbles that highlight our tenant's voices and feedback from the survey.



Overall satisfaction with Argyle Housing



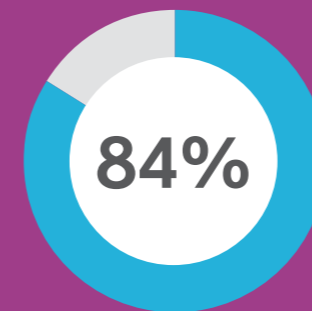
Condition of home



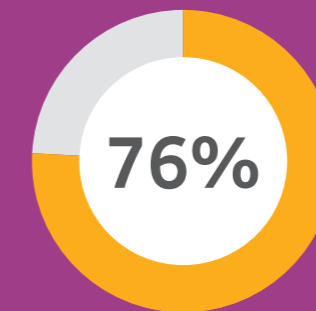
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance

Tenant's survey comments
 "The staff at Argyle Housing go beyond the call of duty. They always have time for a chat or to direct you in the right way in regards to other support networks."

Australian Capital Territory



Survey returns

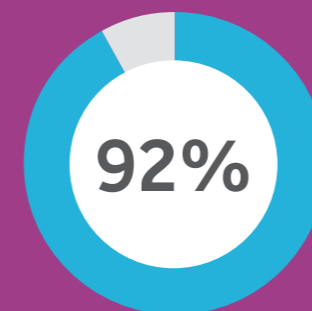


Overall satisfaction

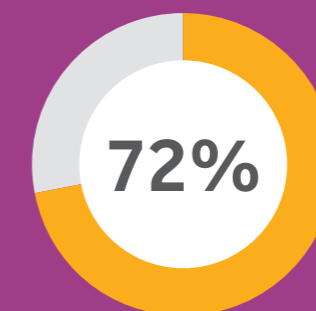
Key messages for improvement

- Repairs and maintenance
- Condition of homes
- Influence decision making

Ainslie Village



Survey returns

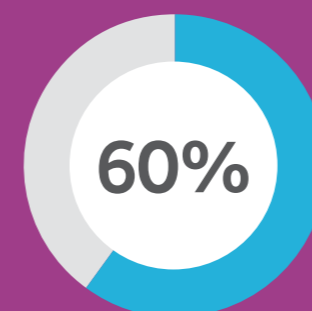


Overall satisfaction

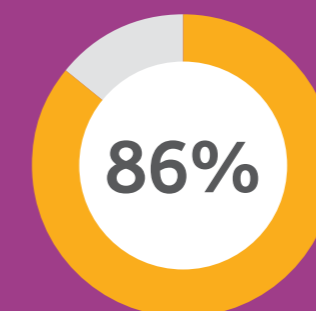
Key messages for improvement

- Life at Argyle Housing
- Neighbourhood
- Quality of repairs

Bowral



Survey returns

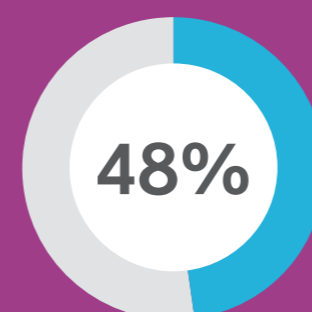


Overall satisfaction

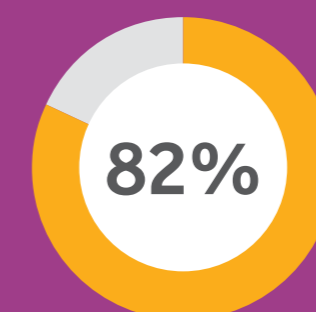
Key messages for improvement

- Condition of homes
- Influence decision making
- Appeal knowledge

Campbelltown



Survey returns

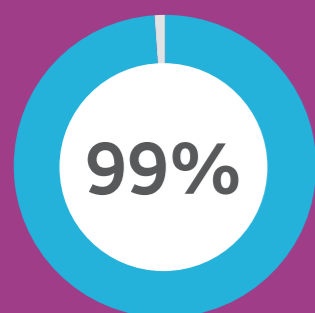


Overall satisfaction

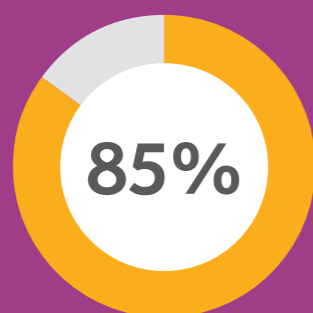
Key messages for improvement

- Appeal knowledge
- Condition of homes
- Complaints knowledge

Griffith



Survey returns

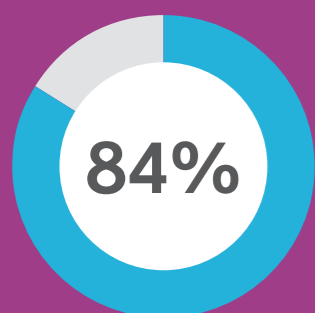


Overall satisfaction

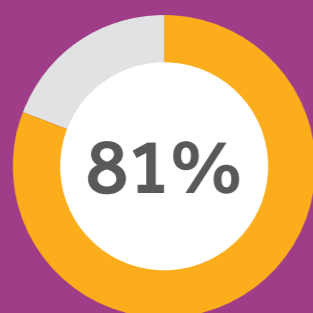
Key messages for improvement

- Repairs and maintenance
- Complaints satisfaction
- Appeals knowledge

Queanbeyan/Goulburn



Survey returns

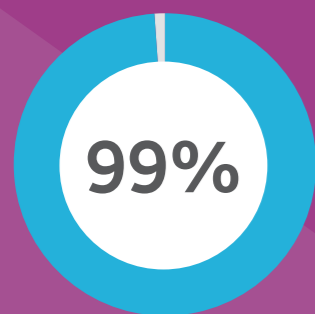


Overall satisfaction

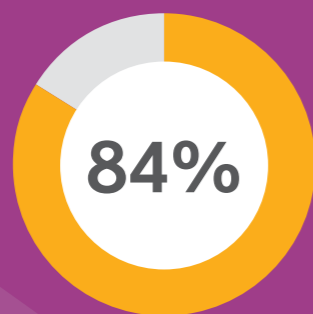
Key messages for improvement

- Repairs and maintenance
- Value for money
- Tenant involvement

Wagga Wagga/Albury



Survey returns



Overall satisfaction

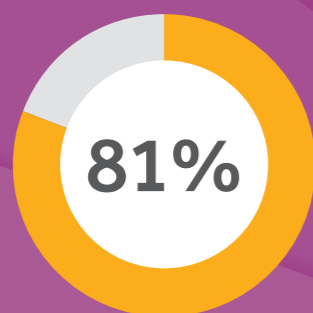
Key messages for improvement

- Neighbourhood
- Communication
- Appeal knowledge

Young/Yass



Survey returns



Overall satisfaction

Key messages for improvement

- Tenant involvement
- Influence decision making
- Listen to views and act

Latest News

Thank you Common Ground

A big heartfelt thank you to the tenants of Common Ground

Argyle Housing employee Raija, wanted to thank our lovely tenants for the wonderful farewell that they put on for her before she retired from Argyle Housing. They served up a feast of delicious food and Nicholas, and one of our very talented tenants volunteered to be our personal barista for the afternoon.

Raija was presented with a variety of beautiful gifts which she will treasure forever, and one of our very gifted musical artists even made up a song in Raija's honour. The lyrics and guitar accompaniment ensured that everyone joined in for the sing-a-long. The thought that had gone into the whole afternoon made Raija cry tears of gratitude to have known such a wonderful group of people.

Raija commented that "It has been my absolute pleasure to have worked at Common Ground with the beautiful tenants that live there. They have made my days coming into work most enjoyable. We have shared many good times and have been there for each other during the highs and lows that life throws our way.

Thank you all once again. My life has been enriched by knowing you. I will miss you all."

From Argyle Housing, we wish Raija all the very best for all of her future endeavours.



Big Morning Tea

\$810.00 for Cancer research

With the help of these local businesses in Bowral, we were able to contribute towards cancer research.

- Empire Cinema
- Bakers Delight
- Oxley Butcher
- Blooms of Bowral
- Kookabar Café
- Gumnut Patisserie
- Sweets and Treats
- Freedom Hair
- Glam Beauty
- Big W
- Welby Garden Centre
- Bunnings Warehouse

Thanks again for your generosity.

Vale Sue Smith

A champion of her community

Those who knew Sue Smith best describe her as “a forthright person who was not afraid to speak out and say what she felt”. Sue was a champion of the Claymore community near Campbelltown and a long term tenant and advocate for Argyle Housing.

As a member of the Claymore Residents' Group, the Claymore Information Group and the Claymore Seniors' Group, Sue also became involved in the beautification of Claymore actively organising and participating in street clean ups and advocating to Council for more services for the residents.

Sue and fellow Resident Group members fought hard to uphold the rights of the people in Claymore during the early stages of the Claymore redevelopment from 2011. The Group actively canvassed Government to help ensure that agreements and undertakings were upheld and that residents were kept informed of what was happening.

A tenant of Argyle Housing's from 2001, Sue worked actively with the Argyle Housing Campbelltown team to try to improve safety and the quality of life for other tenants, and the wider community in Claymore. She assisted with many projects and was always ready to support Argyle Housing initiatives in Claymore.

Sadly, Sue passed away in June this year after a long illness. She will be remembered as a strong, feisty lady – a champion of her community and a person who always kept Argyle Housing to account in a positive, constructive way. Vale Sue Shaw – Argyle Housing and the Claymore community will miss you.



“ Sue worked actively with the Argyle Housing Campbelltown staff to try to improve safety... ”

Vale Rod Abbey

A man of great compassion

Rod was a larger than life character who liked nothing better than to spend time in his garden (which had over 500 tulips), with his dogs and birds, collecting stamps and gathering together all types of electronic equipment and tools. He was a man of compassion and great neighbour who fitted easily into the fabric of Argyle Housing as a tenant advocate and supporter.

Formally a truck owner and driver, Rod was forced into retirement after a suffering a significant injury. Sandy, Rod's wife, recalls that Rod and his dog Dustin travelled the miles together over many years and this had been a very happy part of his life.

Rod and Sandy first became Argyle Housing tenants in 2001 and were members of the Bowral Tenant Committee from 2003. Rod was chair of the committee for some years and was the 'go to' person for Argyle Housing staff. He especially loved giving a helping hand with the Tenant Survey, folding letters, organising bus trips and Christmas in July celebrations.

Rod was particularly proud of his garden and he and Sandy won a Bowral Tenant Garden Award on more than one occasion. There was also formal recognition for both Rod and Sandy at the 2014 Argyle Housing AGM, where they were acknowledged for their contribution to Argyle Housing and its tenants.

Rod will be remembered with a plaque at the Tuncurry Truck Driver's memorial and by his family with an epitaph “Truckin' the highways of heaven with Dustin”.



“ Rod was chair of the committee for some years and was the 'go to' person for Argyle Housing staff. ”

Introducing New Staff Member

Crystal Bell

Current position with Argyle Housing.

Acting Team Leader - Queanbeyan and Goulburn
Tenancy Officer - Young Office, TWO days a week

Work background.

I have an extensive history working for child protection. I undertook many different roles whilst I was employed by FACS over a 10 year period. I have a strong background in law and have worked for a small law firm and a Wagga Wagga based boutique law firm. I am currently studying a Bachelor of Law and Bachelor of Social Studies through Southern Cross University.

What made you want to work at Argyle Housing?

I have a passion for assisting people in need and Argyle Housing was able to tick all my own visions and values.

First impressions.

My experience has been exceptional. I have been fortunate to meet and speak with Wendy (CEO) directly and have found her to be approachable and welcoming. I discovered quite quickly that Argyle Housing is lucky to have amazing people with remarkable skills. Argyle Housing have developed a momentum of stability and solid service delivery and this was recognised by me immediately.

What does a day in the life of a Team Leader look like?

Delivery of quality tenancy management and providing support to complex matters. I provide excellent coaching and support to my team who are all valuable human assets and show a high calibre of commitment and dedication. Together



we can achieve the best results for our tenants.

Biggest challenges.

Getting to know my new area and tenants.

Favourite part of your job.

Working along side amazing staff and working to improve people's living arrangements for a better life. I am also fortunate to work alongside some quality managers who are able to mentor and support my team to build performance outcomes for the staff.

Spring

Mediocre leaves scattered along the granite,
gravelly road.

My sneakers 'thwack, thwack, thwack', head bent
down, earphones shoved in my ears to quiet the
windy, every-flowing wind.

A bright spark in my peripheral, a glimmer of
yellow along the dreary road to the station at
6:45 in the morning.

I yawn, make a slight of groan and then turn my
head to the side.

A geranium bursts out of the bush, all pink and
bright against the harsh, drab and the grey.

I sigh to myself, give a little.

By Ruby Mikolaitis, Argyle Housing tenant



Tenant's survey comments

"As a tenant I am very grateful for the home I
now live in and thank Argyle Housing for this.
This is the first time I have felt secure in my
tenancy in my whole life. Thanks to Argyle."

NAIDOC Week



Leggett Park Mural

As part of NAIDOC Week celebrations, Argyle Housing team members were invited by Goulburn Place Plan to the official opening of the Aboriginal Mural at Leggett Park.

The mural was designed and painted by local Aboriginal Artist, Aryssa McAlister. Young people from the Goulburn area assisted the artist with the support of Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Renetta Miller, Tenancy Officer, Goulburn

Queanbeyan Celebrations

Our Queanbeyan team participated in the Reconciliation Walk which occurred in May 2019. The event attracted over 2,000 walkers, who walked from the Queens Bridge to Reconciliation Garden. This is a highly regarded, local event that attracts Australians from all backgrounds. The walk is a public expression of support for meaningful reconciliation between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The participants from our office were Judy Boyd, Sally Phillips, and Joan Radford.

Sarah Weist, Team Leader, Queanbeyan

NAIDOC in Leeton

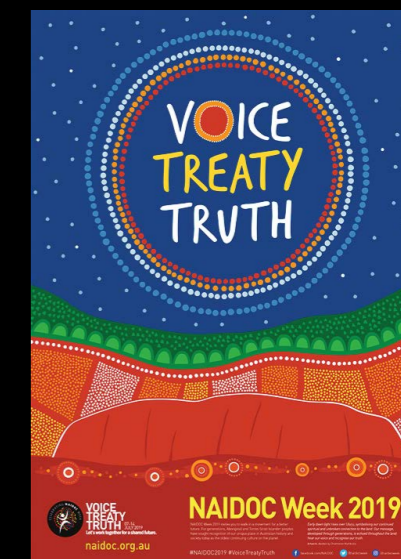
Flag Raising Ceremony

Griffith Tenancy Action Workers attended the Flag raising ceremony of Leeton Shire Council in July 2019.

The Welcome to Country was given by an Elder of the Wiradjuri Country in local language.

The local schools produced artworks to celebrate NAIDOC Week and the 2019 theme of Voice, Treaty, Truth - Let's work together for a shared future. These artworks were on display for the remainder of NAIDOC Week in the Leeton Visitor Information Centre and the Council Chambers.

Leeton and District Local Aboriginal Land Council also held a Family Fun Day in July 2019 where our Griffith Tenancy Action Workers held an information stall of Argyle Housing services in the Leeton area.



Tenant's survey comments

"In the past four years that I have been with Argyle Housing, I have been looked after wonderfully. The staff in the office are so easy to talk to and nothing is too much trouble. Thank you."

Study Notes for Students

Spring is here and the flowers are blooming and the weather is warming. If you are a student, exams are getting closer. Soon you may have a Stu Vac and you may feel that you should be studying, but how?

Your eyes glaze over trying to read back through thick wads of notes and you read the same paragraphs without understanding a word. Here are some ways to make study time work better.

- Improve your grasp of the language of the subject. Check for a glossary in the back of your textbook and find all the definitions of commonly used terms. Many subjects have their own special jargon, so your trusty English dictionary may not be helpful in the context of specific word usage.
 - Use those words when you speak or write. Make sure you spell them correctly. Spelling matters a lot, and it looks as though you haven't been paying much attention to the subject if you can't use and spell essential words.
 - Make study interesting by devising some quizzes for yourself or making a crossword. Particularly with formulae or symbols, ensure you know what they mean and how to apply them.
 - Draw pictures, cartoons, diagrams. You can make them up yourself or copy from your notes. As you label items, think about the word in relation to the item you are drawing.
 - Practise handwriting. Exams are still mainly handwritten so try to increase speed while keeping clarity in your letter formation. Remember that you won't get a marker with a huge amount of time to study cryptic scribbles, no matter how profound your point may be.
- Talk about the subject. Teach someone else, chat with your Mum, show the dog. The value for you is that forming and using the words, and hearing them as you speak, are reinforcing your knowledge and creating fluency in your recall.
 - Read around the subject. Find books, films etc. that deal with the subject in an entertaining and enlightening manner. Junior books have strong facts and good pictures and diagrams, and may help with any foundation knowledge you have missed.
 - Mull. Relax comfortably, or take a walk, or do a fairly mindless chore such as lawn mowing or washing up, and let your mind wander around the things you have been learning. This is a great time to get insights and make connections.
 - Have a look at previous exam papers. There should be some available at your school library or through your teacher. HSC papers and study guide are at: educationstandards.nsw.edu.au
 - Take some time out. Relax, have some fun, get some exercise.

Persistence is a valuable virtue. Perhaps this year is not going to be the best for you, but you can build on your learning now and move to the next level with a positive attitude.

Lyndal Breen, Argyle Housing tenant

Care Free Singers

Tony Jagicic

Care Free Singers (Community Singing Group)

Tony is an Argyle Housing tenant who leads the way in a range of community events and groups. Outside of attending meetings or cooking up a storm on the BBQ at his local Lions Club, Tony is singing in a local community group - Care Free Singers.

Tony has been singing with the group for eight years and he joined as an outlet to meet new people. What he later found was his love for music and the joy in singing with other like minded people.

"It's fun sing together and making friends. After the performance we have something to eat, a drink and have a chat. When I started, I had to be part of a carers program but now it's open to all the community. Now I help with the music and we take the show on the road to various locations around the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee council areas" says Tony.

The program is open to the whole community. However, they strongly encourage those members who are supporting someone who is frail, aged, has Mental Illness, a Disability or Dementia.

Care Free Singers is free to Wingecarribee, Wollondilly and Camden residents and friends including the person you care for. Every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at Tahmoor Community Centre. For inquires phone Tegan 4683 2776.

Tony Jagicic, Argyle Housing tenant



Tenant's survey comments

"I have found the Queanbeyan staff are very friendly and helpful and they do care for there tenants, I also think the courses they run are very helpful and enjoyable. It brings people together and gets people who are lonely out meeting people and doing different things. I'm very happy to be a tenant with Argyle Housing."

Assisting Carolyn Walton



Helping hand to breath easy

Carolyn has been a tenant of Argyle Housing for a number of years. When she became ill, she called me to discuss her condition and to see if there was anything that I could do to assist her. Carolyn needed a CPAP machine to assist in her rehabilitation and breathing for a better night's sleep. However, she was unable to afford one as they can cost up to \$2,500.00 each, with

a second hand machine still costing anywhere between \$600.00 to \$1,500.00.

Carolyn is a member of the Lions Club and unfortunately, due to her health, she has been unable to follow her passion of being active in the community and assisting others. She is a kind and caring person who needs this machine to live her best life.

I got in touch with a number of different agencies and

support services to help Carolyn source a machine. Through this ground work, I was able to show her that if you have the confidence to ask the right people, then you will get the desired outcome. Carolyn found a machine and was grateful for all of the encouragement.

Simone Phillips,
Tenancy Action Worker, Bowral

Ainslie Village

This is why we come to work

On Tuesday last week, Tenancy Officer Lauren Stewart and myself commenced our morning rounds of Ainslie Village to visit residents and site services. We came across a man sleeping under our bbq shelter on a make shift mattress made from foam. It was three degrees and had snowed overnight in nearby towns.

When the gentleman saw us approaching he quickly began to pack up his belongings and made a comment to me "Please don't get angry at me, I am leaving now". I spoke to the gentleman and explained we would not get angry and would like to help him out. The gentleman introduced himself as Dave, and disclosed his story of alcohol misuse and living in his car for the last six months. Recently however, his car was stolen and since then, has been sleeping rough.

Lauren and myself took Dave to the Blue Door for a warm breakfast and coffee, and then walked with him to reception to complete an application for a vacant room at Ainslie Village. We assisted in obtaining all of the Centrelink documentation required and had him in a warm heated room that same day. Dave is now eager to link in with on-site services such as the Directions nurse and GP, AOD counsellor Nurgul, Doorways caseworkers and the mobile dental van.

Dave had all his belongings stolen on the street, so Argyle Housing were able to donate a bed frame, mattress, doona, sheets, pillows, mattress protector, clothing, soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste and pyjamas (new with tags donated from Big W) to set Dave up comfortably. He was very grateful and kept repeating to us that he didn't realise our

staff would be like 'angels' and he wanted to buy a lottery ticket, as today his luck changed and his life could turn around.

Dave immediately began asking us if he could volunteer on-site and help us out to pay us back for our work. We told him, helping others is why we are here and now he could settle in and then see us in a few weeks, if he still wanted to volunteer. Dave said he would recommend Argyle Housing to all of his acquaintances who were struggling with homelessness and he stated that the reputation of Ainslie Village is not what he has experienced or seen before today.

He was one very grateful man. This is why we come to work.

Cherie Tizzoni, Team Leader ACT



Tenant Success

Congratulations to all the Argyle Housing tenants who completed the computer course and received a Certificate I in Information, Digital Media and Technology – Introduction to Computers.

This course ran for 10 weeks at the Argyle Housing Campbelltown branch during February through to April. Tenants expressed how much they enjoyed the course and most will be continuing with the next round of modules offered at Argyle Housing.



ARGYLE HOUSING 2019 AGM

Tuesday 26th November 2019
11 – 1pm Alexandra Room, Mittagong RSL Club



How to Budget

Earlier this year, a three day workshop on budgeting was open to Campbelltown tenants within Argyle Housing and was advertised in the tenant newsletter. Two tenants attended, each receiving tips on how to create and manage a budget.

The workshop also provided tenants with the skills they needed to manage their finances, pay rent, have extra for a rainy day and prevent debt.

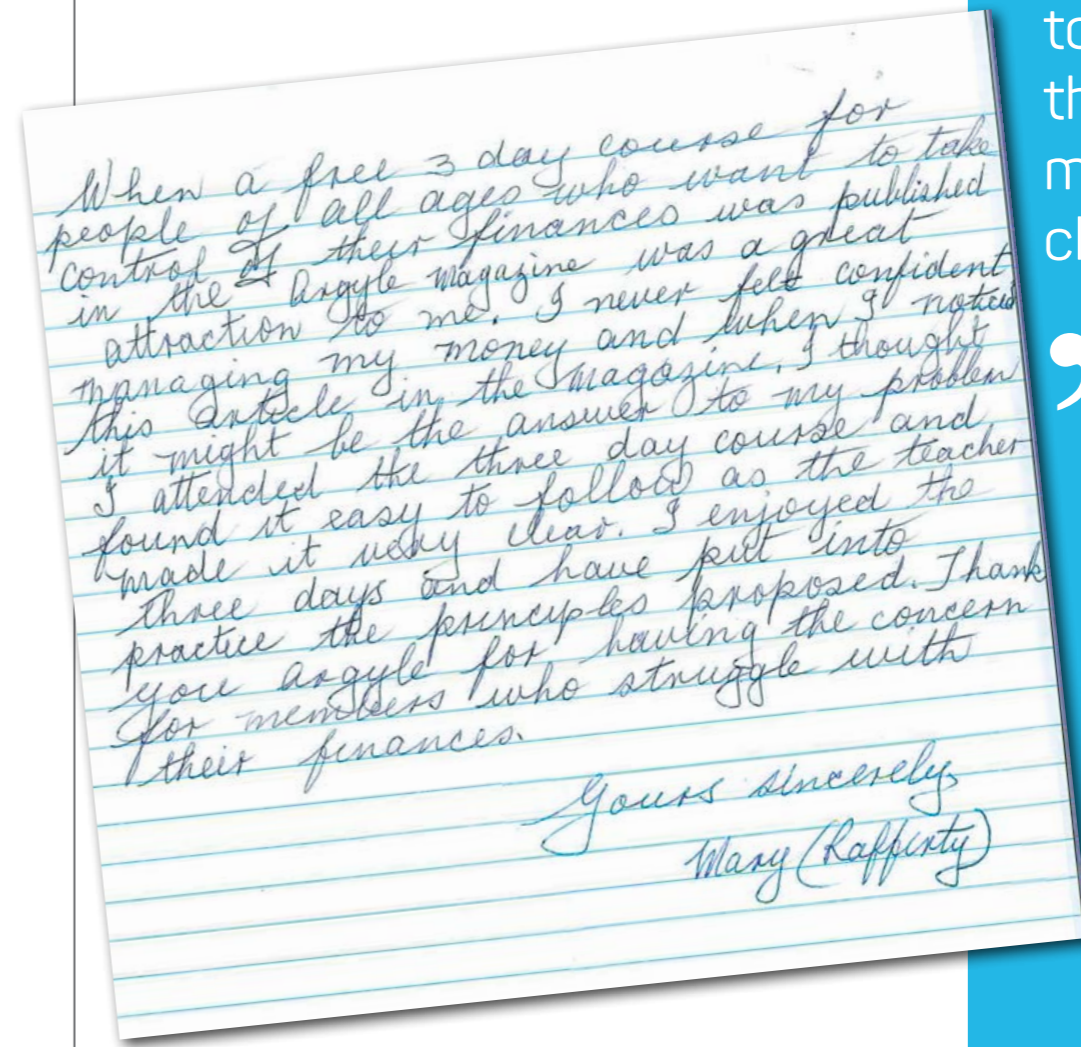
Mary, one of the attendees, thought the course was particularly important to her, giving her the confidence to manage her money in the best possible way. She also commented on the high quality and knowledge of the teacher who provided the budgeting information.



“

I enjoyed the three day course and found it easy to follow as the teacher made it very clear.

”



Scholarship Recipient

Ruby Mikolaitis

Argyle Housing 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.

Ruby is a recipient of the Argyle Housing scholarship program and we asked her a few questions on how she is going.

When did you know you wanted to go to university / tertiary education?

Since I was in Year 10, there was discussion of attending university and tertiary education. If I was going to have a successful, long-standing career and constantly expand my knowledge, I knew a university education was what I needed.

Tell us why you chose the course you are undertaking.

Bachelor of Communications and Media/ Bachelor of Arts. This has allowed me to explore different options, as at the time of choosing degrees, I wasn't entirely sure of what I wanted to do. This degree allows me to do a triple major (Film, Theatre, English Literature) and I have minored in Journalism and Marketing, which has opened to me a multitude of career options.

What was the biggest challenge you faced going to university?

The biggest challenge I faced were finances and the commute. I knew it was going to be difficult as the majority of university students have a difficult time financially. This is because of the expenses that university comes with; such as textbooks, travel fare and FEE-HELP loans. It's difficult to maintain a job because your timetable changes so much. I work two jobs and have a seasonal job around Christmas time as well as working from home as an owner of an



Etsy business and a tele-marketer. Secondly, the commute, which is two hours from home to the University of Notre Dame located in Chippendale. It's exhausting to finish uni at 4:00 and sometimes not be home until 7:00.

How has this opportunity changed you?

University has taught me resilience and persistence. I've had to mentally keep going even when I didn't want to because I know the outcome will be worth it. My speaking skills have increased, I'm able to communicate far more effectively with people now. I feel that university has changed and matured me completely over the last three years. I have now experienced and learnt of cultures in the world and I feel more experienced and worldly than when I was in high school.

Is there a particular moment or memory during your study journey that stands out for you?

When I was giving a presentation in "The Novel of English" and the topic I chose was deemed controversial by the students. Some said it was about the power of the male gaze in Victorian novels, such as Great Expectations which was considered anti-feminist and irrelevant. It became a powerful moment for me because

university taught me to stand by my opinions and that it's okay to think differently, even when people won't necessarily agree with you.

Is there an achievement or contribution that you are most proud of? Why?

My greatest achievement is going to university. I was depressed as a teenager, to the point where I couldn't even get out of bed or brush my teeth. My 15-year-old self would never believe that at 21, I would be at university studying a double degree. It can be difficult a lot of the time, but those obstacles are worth the outcome in the end.

What advice would give to someone considering going onto to study?

Just do it, don't falter, don't hesitate. If you have an idea, even an inkling of what interests you and what you're inspired by, go ahead and grab it. Doubt about the idea later but take the leap and chance and just go for it, you will surprise yourself.

What attracted you to applying for the scholarship?

The scholarship can help me out in dire times, it removes all that stress of having to plan and budget around university. I'm able to have that relief knowing that the funds are there for the hard times, which admittedly there are a lot.

Tell us about what financial barriers the Argyle Housing scholarship helps to solve.

The scholarship has resolved financial barriers such as train fare, textbooks (which can sometimes be up to \$80), printing costs, I've managed to buy a new laptop when my old one shut down permanently. Laptops are compulsory when most of your university work is online.

What are the most important lessons you have learned in life so far?

The most important lesson is from my mother who always has said to me, "There is nothing more comforting or important in your life than to know who you are". In a world where we are

constantly changing who we are, it's important for me to remain myself.

Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?

My biggest influence must be my mom, I grew up in a single parent family where my mom was my rock and I wouldn't be where I am without her. She inspires and pushes me every day and I'm grateful for that.

What are you most proud of to date?

I'm proud of being independent and being able to travel on my own. I'm proud I was given the opportunity to go to Melbourne this year, it was my first time ever on a plane and it was such an incredible experience.

What does your ideal future hold?

My future holds many options, I would love to work for SBS or NITV, I would also love to be an editor or a marketing executive for a publishing company and I would also love to work as an art director for theatre or for a museum.

Where do you intend to be in 10 years?

I would love to be living in the Inner West, having gone overseas at least once and working in a career I really love and enjoy. I will be content and happy with being myself, with having friends who genuinely care for me and to have friendly, trustworthy moments. I just want to feel happy and free, like the world is at my feet.

Would you like to know more about Argyle Housing Scholarships?

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

Improving Living Conditions

A new initiative of Argyle Housing is improving the living conditions of its residents by refreshing the spaces in which they live.

Argyle Housing has teamed up with interior designer Candice from community improvement organisation S.C.E.N.E (Skills Community Education Networks and Environment) to revive Ainslie Village tenant accommodation. Candice believes the condition of living and working spaces directly influence a person's state of mind. Many social housing residents have been through or are going through a lot when they come to Ainslie Village. To have a space to come home to or wake up in, that's comforting and welcoming, it's hoped, may promote improved emotional, mental and physical health.

Candice has been creating these refreshed spaces for little or no money, using her design skills and also through the clever use of recycled materials and items. Candice says "There are so many resources that would allow people to have better living conditions for little or no money. Sometimes it just takes some inspiration and a little know how."

Argyle Housing and Candice run a variety of workshops demonstrating what can be done with found items and recently made over a unit in half a day for zero dollars using workshop techniques. These twice weekly workshops are aimed at promoting community inclusion to improve living environments, build skills for employment, promote community belonging, and act as a pathway to education and employment networks, whilst caring about the environment.

Along with this program, Argyle Housing continues to address and has a strong commitment to achieving positive outcomes for Ainslie Village residents and the community. The best outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals come from a sense of belonging and community, which Argyle Housing helps to provide through an



established relationship with the existing community.

In Ainslie Village, Argyle Housing have staff onsite, inclusive of Tenancy Officers, Administration Officers, Tenancy Action Worker, Maintenance Officer, Security Staff, existing relationships with site inducted contractors, cleaners and volunteers, which provides an all-round support service for the residents.

Argyle Housing also have partnerships with local supports, who provide onsite services to residents with high and complex service needs. These supports include but are not limited to; Directions Health Nurse, General Practitioner and Alcohol and Other Drug counselling, Flourish Mental Health, Salvation Army Doorways caseworkers, Orange Sky Laundry, St Vincent De Paul (Blue Door), and the Mobile Dental Van.

Ainslie Village residents are supported, wherever possible, to access private market or affordable housing in the first instance, with access to social housing within Ainslie Village for those with high, long term complex support needs. Argyle Housing has an extensive network of relationships within the community housing and private rental market in the ACT and NSW for other programs, which maximise opportunities for residents to transition into alternative housing options.

Spring Vegetables

Sprouting from old to new.

Can you regrow Bok Choy?

Yes you can and it's easy to do. Regrowing offcuts of vegetables is a good alternative to throwing them away into the compost bin and a fun project for young, "budding", gardeners.

After using the outer leaves of your Bok Choy, save the base with about three inner small leaves. Take a very fine slice off the base, if the base is a bit dry, this will allow water to penetrate into the newly cut surface. Pop in some water, half covering the base section. (Top image on right; there are a couple of broccoli stems experiments in the photo too)

Replace the water every second or third day, at the end of a few days to a week, roots should start to form at the base of your Bok Choy. Then, transfer to a pot keeping it well watered for a week to allow the newly formed roots to take. I picked a sunny winter position propped against a wall. About 5-6 weeks later you'll have plants ready to pick. In the middle image, the Bok Choy were thinned and cut back of a couple of the larger outer leaves; this in the last half of winter and were fully ready early to midway through spring - very sweet eating.

This is a great way of regrowing your offcuts of vegetables to produce more. The process works well for other vegetables, like celery. Try with a seasonal range throughout the year and you could be growing vegetables all year round. A word of advice, from an experimental grower; pick them very young before they bolt to seed.

John Woodford, Argyle Housing tenant



Rent Review

As you are aware, rent review is conducted twice a year and Argyle Housing now has a policy that states you must notify us within 21 days of any changes to your household income.

We will then re-assess your eligibility for a rental subsidy. These changes will be assessed as per the date the change occurred. A change in household income includes anyone moving in or out of the property.

When a change occurs you will be required to provide income documents for ALL persons in the household, not just the person moving in. If a person moves out of the property, you need to notify your Tenancy Officer and provide them with a copy of the lease of the property they moved to. If you can't get that, then a bill with their name and new address on it. As a last resort, a Statutory Declaration will be sufficient provided it has all of the necessary information on it.



Notify us within 21 days of any changes to your household income.



Anyone moving into your property needs to be approved by your Tenancy Officer.

How is my Rent Calculated?



For social housing tenancies, your rent is calculated by combining the income sources as per the table below that are applicable to you and your household members.

In most cases the amount of rent you pay will be based on 25% of your gross household income plus 100% of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

Rent charged cannot exceed the market rent set for your property.

Income	Income for the tenant, your spouse or live-in-partner (irrespective of age)	25% of GROSS income
Household members	Income for all other persons living in the household who are 21 years or over	25% of GROSS income
	Income for any other household member (aged between 18-20 years)	15% of GROSS income
Centrelink	Family Tax benefits, child support payments received	15%
CRA	Rental assistance received	100% of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) Entitlement

Rent Calculation

Rent Accounts

You are required to pay your rent in advance in accordance with your residential tenancy agreement. If you pay your rent weekly, you must be paying for the week to come, or if you pay fortnightly, you must pay two weeks in advance. We have many payment options available to help you ensure your rent is paid on time including Centrepay Payments, Direct Bank Deposit and EFTPOS facilities in the office. If your rent is not paid up to the correct amount of time in advance, we will be in contact with you to make arrangements to get this up to date.

If your account is more than 28 days in advance, you will be contacted to discuss refunding this money to you.

Non Rent Accounts

As per the terms of your residential tenancy agreement, you are required to pay for water usage and repairs and maintenance for any damage caused in the property. We charge these items to your Non-Rent Account.

We will be sending out accounts to all tenants that have an outstanding amount in their non-rent accounts. If you are already paying money towards this amount, please keep the accounts with your records to show your progress. If you are not paying extra, or not paying enough to reduce the debt, we will follow this up with you and request that you enter into a payment arrangement to re-pay this debt.



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 rent accounts due to a lack of information which may result in your rent account appearing to be in arrears.

For more information regarding making rent and non-rent payments please call your local Argyle Housing office on: **1300 274 953**

Centrelink Consent Forms

By now, every tenant should have received a new Centrelink Consent Form. If it hasn't yet been returned, could you please fill it out, sign and date it and return it to your local Argyle Housing office.

You must either circle or cross out the Yes or the No, depending on whether you give consent or not. We are regularly audited by Centrelink and need to have this form filled out correctly. If you have

any concerns or you need help, please contact your Tenancy Officer or your local Argyle Housing office for assistance.

If you choose not to give consent for Argyle Housing to access your Centrelink Income Statement, or you do not wish Argyle Housing to advise Centrelink of a change in your rent payment, you will need to provide this information yourself.

Thank you for cooperating.

Complaints and 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 Housing 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 Housing 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 policy is also on the website.

What is an appeal?

You may not always agree with a decision Argyle Housing 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, either online, in person by post or via email.

ONLINE: Argyle Housing Complaints and Appeals Online Form found at argylehousing.com.au

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

BY POST: Download, print and complete the Argyle Housing 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.

From the Maintenance Team

Maintenance Works Surveys

If you have had maintenance work completed recently, you should have been provided with a Postage Pre-Paid Survey Card asking you to provide us with your feedback on how we (including our contractors) performed. You may also have received a phone call asking for your feedback. This is so we can improve the services we provide to you.

If you receive a Survey Card or phone call, please provide us with your honest and balanced feedback. If you don't receive a Survey Card, please call your local Argyle Housing office and ask for one to be sent to you, or ask to provide feedback whilst you are on the phone.

Property Inspections

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:

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 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.

PAS Inspections

If your property is owned by the NSW Government, but managed by Argyle Housing, a 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. These inspections are not an opportunity to raise maintenance issues. These need to be raised directly with Argyle Housing.

Updated and Combined Asset Policies

A new Property Maintenance, Repairs & General Upgrades Policy has been written and adopted by Argyle Housing. This Policy combines and replaces 14 former Policies that relate to the maintenance, repair and general upgrades of Argyle Housing's properties.

The new Policy outlines Tenant's and Argyle Housing's responsibilities in relation to:

- Maintenance, repairs and upgrades
- Reporting, categories and response times
- General property modifications & upgrades

Specifically, the new Policy covers;

- Antennas, phones and internet connections
- Cleaning of gutters, skylights, ceiling and exhaust fans
- Hazardous materials (including asbestos and lead based paint)
- Locks and keys
- Residual Current Devices (RCD's)
- Smoke alarms and light globes
- Window coverings (Blinds & Curtains)
- Window and doors screens (Insect & Security)
- Vegetation (trees, gardens & lawns)
- Pest control
- Swimming pools and spas

The Policy covers all Argyle Housing properties other than private leasehold properties where a private landlord is responsible for these works. The Policy is available on Argyle Housing's website or from your local Argyle Housing office.

Whiteribbon

Argyle Housing staff support Whiteribbon



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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Printed in Australia

ABN 88 002 761 855

ACN 002 761 855

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