

The ARGYLER

Tenant Newsletter | Winter 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

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 Scott Dunstan at editor@argylehousing.com.au

Welcome from the CEO

Welcome to the Winter edition of The Argyle

The last couple of months living with COVID-19 have made us to be mindful of hygiene and our social distancing. How much have we had to change and adjust our work and home life? The hardest thing for me was not seeing my grandkids and learning how to use Facetime and Zoom to celebrate birthdays and milestones.

Our staff were able to continue to work mostly from the offices and I hope they made contact with you to see if you were alright. Thank you for your patience and resilience throughout this time and I am sure you are pleased that we have recommenced our property inspections so that our Tenancy Officers are getting out of the office and catching up with you

This edition of The Argyle gives a little insight into the impact of COVID-19 through a tenant's perspective and an initiative of the state government for our tenants to look after their mental health and wellbeing.

It's that time of year for me to invite you to come in for a cuppa and tell me how things are going being an Argyle Housing tenant. I will be sending out an invite in early July, so please come in for a chat or let me know if you can't make it but would like me to give you a call. I am keen to listen to why things are not good for you and how they can be improved. Given the rules around social distancing the group meetings will be no more than 10 people. If needed, I will provide a range of times so that we can safely catch up.

Lastly the Tenancy Action Worker program will not be continuing from the beginning of July 2020. I want to thank Megan Mason (Campbelltown), Kerryn Bishop (Young), Alarna Thompson (Wagga) for their efforts while at Argyle Housing. Simone Phillips will be coordinating tenant participation throughout NSW and Pema Seddon will remain in the resident liaison position for the ACT. This program ran for over five years and has provided a solid foundation for the community connections we have.

Please keep warm and stay safe, and thank you for supporting Argyle Housing.

Wendy



Wendy Middleton

CEO - Argyle Housing

“It's that time of year for me to invite you to come in for a cuppa and tell me how things are going being an Argyle Housing tenant.”

”

Editorial

Dear Tenants and Residents,

I hope that you are all safe and well and have come through the last couple of months with a fresh outlook on life and a new approach to what you hold of value.

There is no doubt that we are certainly living through a period of time that has placed a huge range of restrictions on all of your lives. It has also created a level of anxiety and stress that many of us have never really had to deal with. The lack of toilet paper will certainly be one of those everyday items that I never thought I would be looking for every time I went to the supermarket.

Throughout this time, we have also had to ensure that all of you had the most up to date information regarding the pandemic and the responsibilities of Argyle Housing. With this changing almost everyday, it felt that we were bombarding you with letters or messages.

And you let us know.

We value your feedback and to the right is a selection of comments from you after we sent out a SMS message reminding you, among other things, that if you are having financial difficulties, to contact your Tenancy Officer.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of The Argyle.

Scott Dunstan

Editor and Marketing, Communications Officer

A better Future for Our

Communities



For those older tenants like myself, we don't work or can't work and have grown used to surviving and budgeting to pay our rent on very little. Nothing has changed for us but I speak for those who have lost jobs. I felt a personal obligation to draw this to your attention as you are no doubt not facing the worry of where your next pay cheque is coming from. I would suggest with respect, that we all be kind to one another during this crippling pandemic where we have so many restrictions placed on our lives and are simply trying to do the best we can to follow the law and guidelines that our national leadership has placed on us.

I'm sorry Wendy but my rent is ahead, somehow and you have my Centrelink authority and my rent is paid on my pension day by Centrelink. Please keep yourself workmates and family safe thru this pandemic as well. Thanks for your concern.

Dear Argyle, this is a reminder that not all your tenants have amnesia...

Dear Argyle Housing.. have I ever not paid my rent???? It has always been my intention to do so. Best health wishes to you!

Is it possible to email out the update letters that we are getting. Waste paper less and person to person contact is best.

Thanks Wendy, how considerate and caring of you in this time of a global pandemic. Tenant

WIN
a \$25.00
EFTPOS card



TENANT TECHNOLOGY AUDIT

Do you have a computer at home?

Are you connected to the NBN?

Do you have an email address?

The answer to these questions is why Argyle Housing is asking tenants to participate in an online survey.

There are nine questions and you can remain anonymous if you choose.

We are conducting the survey to find out how you are connected to the digital world in order for Argyle Housing to find better ways of communicating with you.

If you complete the survey and fill in your details, your name will in be placed in a draw for the chance to **WIN a \$25.00 EFTPOS card**. Ends 31 July 2020.

To find out more go to the online survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/SMCF85K



Welcome to Argyle Housing

Over two days, recently employed staff members went through our orientation program with newly appointed Human Resources Manager, Paula and assistant Adrienne.

Please join us in welcoming the follow staff to Argyle Housing:

- Megan** - Tenancy Officer, Bowral
- Shane** - Sen. Maintenance Officer, Bowral
- Lily** - Tenancy Officer, Bowral
- Stuart** - Accountant, Bowral
- Charles** - Tenancy Officer, Ainslie Village ACT
- Robin** - Tenancy Officer, Ainslie Village ACT
- Jessica** - Team Leader, ACT
- Sarah** - Admin. Support, Ainslie Village ACT
- Kate** - Tenancy Officer, Griffith
- Olly** - Tenancy Officer, Gungahlin ACT
- Laura** - Tenancy Officer, Yass
- Georgie** - Admin. Support, Yass

Giving Back

I have been with Community Links Wellbeing for 16 Years, and it's been a real pleasure to help and give back to the broader community that we serve. The organisation has had a couple of name changes since I first started as a Member but the core business has remained the same.

In around 2006, a friend who was on the Committee, asked me if I would like to join the Board as a committee member. Since joining, I've seen many changes throughout the years, from good to great.

Community Links Wellbeing provides information and referrals to a diverse range of community members; builds the capacity of community members through groups, activities and skills development and provides projects and events that connect members to their local communities.

Our core objective is to help our community which includes all of our groups and families. I have enjoyed being on the Board and seeing what our fantastic staff do to help the community. Some examples of the types of group activities that we offer are: Play Group, boys and girls afternoons, assistance with power bills and food, Care Free Singers, youth services, parent work shops and crisis support. If you would like to find out more about how we can help or to join the organisation, please follow us on Facebook or call **4683 2776**.

Tony, Board Member,
Community Links Wellbeing,
Tahmoor NSW

Tony is an Argyle Housing Tenant



Winter Lodge

A place to stay and keep warm

Winter Lodge opened on the 11 May 2020 and is located at Ainslie Village in the ACT.

Winter Lodge is short term housing by the ACT Government and Argyle Housing who are delivering accommodation for men sleeping rough during the winter months.

Located at 23 Quick Street Campbell, men can be referred to Winter Lodge up to 5:00pm each day with no entry after 8:00pm.

Key Winter Lodge service points:

- Referral and applications can be emailed through to: winterlodge@argylehousing.com.au
- There are limited beds and the service is available on a first come, first served basis.
- This is an overnight service although there is the potential to stay up to a maximum of 7 days. Argyle Housing staff will assist them in finding appropriate long-term housing if required.
- All men entering Winter Lodge will adhere to and sign an agreement to stay under the existing Ainslie Village Social Code of conduct.

Winter Lodge has 18 rooms available each night and the rooms are cleaned after each use with fresh linen on the beds and access to the Ainslie Village laundry facilities.

Argyle Housing staff, Robin and Pema will be on hand to give advice and assistance to those coming through Winter Lodge to get them into more permanent accommodation or to show them how to access support services that may assist them.

winterlodge@argylehousing.com.au



Koorringal Clean Up

Koorringal Clean Up Day

Argyle Housing collaborated with Department of Community Justice (DCJ) and Mission Australia to host a clean-up day in a targeted area of the community of Koorringal. Argyle Housing has a lot of units in this target area.

Clarissa Hewitt from DCJ congratulated everyone who participated in the Koorringal Clean Up day, the letter box drops and all the spruiking leading up to the event. Everyone worked tirelessly and she believed it was a fantastic day, even though the conditions weren't ideal.

From the Argyle Housing office in Wagga Wagga, Tenancy Action Worker Alarna Thomson and Tenancy Officer Donna Turner attended and helped tenants and other community members clean up the area and remove the waste to the skip bins.

It was great to see so much of the Koorringal community involved. They not only cleaned up their own properties, but many of them then went on and helped others with theirs.

Some stats we received from the Skip Bin company after the clean up:



16 Tonne
General
Waste



1.6 Tonne
Scrap
Metal



40
Mattresses



21
Tyres



COVID-19 and me...



“What is this going to do to our Economy? Livelihoods? Who knows. But, hey, if, like me and my family, you've told COVID-19 to just 'walk on by', then congratulations.”

I have been an Argyle Housing tenant for the past 18 months. Keeping mostly to myself in my complex, and happy not to go out very often as I am a writer and work from home. I have to say that I, here in Queanbeyan, haven't really been affected that much (as have others in Australia and the rest of the world) by COVID-19.

Sure, in those first few weeks, when none of us knew just what was happening - and what was that all about, with toilet rolls disappearing like a chunk of meat down a lion's mouth, from the shelves of our supermarkets?

I and my daughter (also an Argyle Housing tenant) would hear on the grapevine that a certain shop or supermarket had just got toilet rolls in, and we would hot-foot it at 100kms an hour to get four tiny rolls for a couple of dollars or, if we were lucky, a pack of eight or even 12 for a bit more. Scoring yet more was like winning GOLD at the Olympics.

Then the sugar, the rice, and the pasta,

amongst other essentials, started to disappear, and we thought, yes, this is Armageddon - surely the world won't be able to beat this. And we panicked.

This was now real!

As it spread around the world, we panicked some more. "Oh my God. What is happening?" We just couldn't comprehend or understand, as could anybody, just exactly what was going to happen.

Now, I have never in my life been a 'Political' person, but by heavens, what a wonderful job our government has done to make Australia one of the most successful countries in the world to fight the pandemic.

So who is to blame? Will we ever really know?

There will be inquiries, investigations, accusations, but do I think for one second that China will hold its hands up and throw gazillions of monies at the rest of the world? No, of course it won't.



I try not to think of the repercussions that this will have, not only on World Peace, as well as our own economy in this country, as China takes away their trade relations with us, but for the rest of the world, some countries who are still trying to flatten the 'curve', and economies decimated by what has happened.

So how has COVID-19 affected me? A dash for the much sought toilet rolls, sugar etc, not being able to sit in a cafe and have coffee (my daughter and I felt like we'd just won a million dollars when Maccas opened up 10 chairs and a few tables, as we sat, like Queens, drinking our coffee in the allotted 15 minute time limit).

No sports, no bingo, oh dear! How sad. But how pitiful if these parts of our daily life, plus an initial dash for those all elusive toilet rolls, was the worst that the pandemic did to us.

We now all, eight weeks later as I write, take social distancing for granted. All the essentials have finally made their way back onto the shelves, cafes are opening, albeit with restrictions, and we are told that soon, interstate travel will once again become available.

But all this at what cost? How many millions of dollars have the government had to spend to keep us all going? What is this going to do to our Economy? Livelihoods? Overseas travel? Tourism, both our own industry and the rest of the world?

Who knows. But, hey, if, like me and my family, you've told COVID-19 to just 'walk on by', then congratulations. But to those people who have suffered or been affected by this rotten disease, I'm sure I can speak for us all, Argyle Housing tenants or not, and say "Our thoughts and prayers are with you".

By Trish, an Argyle Housing Tenant

Making times easier

With the COVID-19 restrictions keeping most of our senior tenants indoors, having some activities to do that keeps their minds active were very welcome.

Seniors in the suburb of Claymore NSW were offered an opportunity to receive a free Mental Health and Wellbeing activity pack supplied by Land and Housing Corporation and C+ Community Renewal Team during the month of April. Nine people responded to the text message sent out by Argyle Housing alerting them to the generous offer.

Delivered directly to their home, each wellbeing pack included items linked to mindfulness activities such as a stress ball, puzzles and cross workbooks, deck of cards, colouring books and pencils, a box of chocolate, self-help information and an updated service directory for the area.

The items in each pack were selected with mental health in mind and the intention to keep minds busy whilst facing the 'stay at home' COVID-19 restrictions.

Each participant was later contacted to conduct a small phone survey which included questions around the COVID-19 restrictions, support networks and access to technology.

The results of the survey indicated that seniors in Claymore are very independent, resilient and have good support networks in place. Information from conversations indicate that the seniors in Claymore have a lot of life experience, wisdom and community pride.

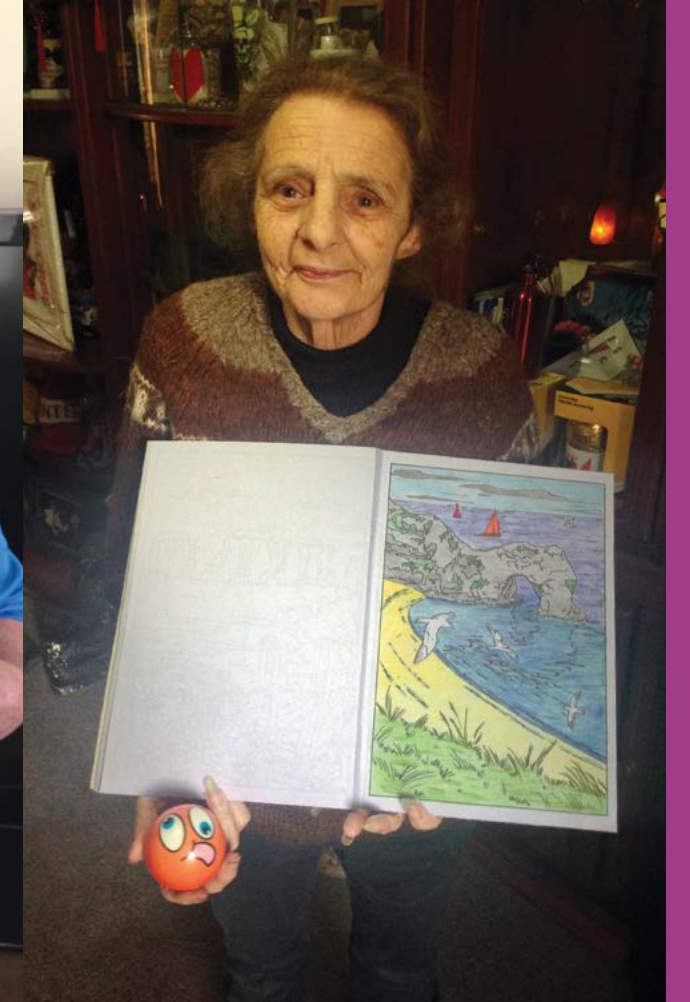
Overall, the 150 seniors in the area who received the well-being activity packs

appreciated that their mental health and wellbeing was considered during the stay at home COVID-19 restrictions.

Thank you to Land and Housing Corporation for extending the invitation to Argyle Housing Tenants to be a part of this welfare project and the opportunity to receive the wellbeing pack.

Some of the grateful recipients are featured on the right page, clockwise from top left: Denise, Sister Julia, Gail and Helan.

“ Thank you to Land and Housing Corporation for extending the invitation to Argyle Housing Tenants to be a part of this welfare project and the opportunity to receive the wellbeing pack. ”



Feeling Safe in Your Home

Argyle Housing recognises that domestic and family violence can happen to anyone, regardless of social background, disability, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity. We also recognise that domestic and family violence affects both male and female victims. We are committed to supporting victims of domestic and family violence regardless of gender or sexuality.

Argyle Housing takes domestic and family violence seriously and is committed to providing a sensitive and confidential response to anyone approaching Argyle Housing for assistance in cases of domestic and family violence. All information will be kept confidential.

If you need urgent assistance or you feel threatened or at risk call the police on **000**.

For additional advice and information call the Domestic Violence HELP line on **1800 656 463** for specialist assistance.

If you find yourself unable to return home, for safety reasons and have nowhere to go, call Link2Home on **1800 152 152**

Also, approach your Tenancy Officer for ways we can assist by making you feel safer and providing additional support service information. We will give you the opportunity to opt for an employee of the same gender or your choice, to deal with your case where ever practicable. We will also endeavour to meet with you in confidence at Argyle Housing offices.

Argyle Housing will also agree to the method of contact that the victim wishes to be used to stay in contact with them either via phone, text or email.

A better Future for Our
Communities

One Small

Adventure

One small adventure
Can lead to a million new adventures

One small adventure
A coffee from a new cafe
Can lead to a smile from a man with kindness in his eyes

One small adventure
A walk along a new path
A small, fluffy cat with bright green eyes and chocolate brown stripes brushes their tail along the seam of your familiar, comforting, old pair of jeans.

One small adventure
A new tv show to binge
A tear shed, a stifled laugh
A moment of sadness, a moment of happiness is shared between you, the screen and the characters, a private moment and a moment held then gone.

One small adventure
More significant than a big or wild one
After all, a million small adventures
Is better than a life without adventure at all

By Ruby, an Argyle Housing Tenant

FREE TAFE Short Courses



Apply for an Argyle Housing Scholarship to help with the purchase of equipment for these courses

TAFE NSW, in conjunction with the NSW Government, is offering a number of fee-free* short courses that can be completed in just days or weeks, offering practical skills and experiences across a range of industries.

If you're considering a new direction in your career or you have extra time on your hands, you could explore some of the fee-free* short courses that are on offer. There are also a range of courses ranging from Mature Age Scholarships, Destination Australia Scholarships and Women in Business program and more.

Whether or not you've studied at TAFE NSW before, you are encouraged to explore some of the courses available. The course list is updated often and here are a few examples of the courses that you may be interested in:

- Develop Administration Skills
- Enhance Your Digital Impact
- Grow Health and Medical Knowledge
- Improve Leadership Performance
- Practical Business Skills

www.tafensw.edu.au/fee-free-short-courses

Don't have a computer?
Go to your local Library to access TAFE online

Argyle Housing Tertiary Scholarships

Up to \$1,500 for 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

Sponsored by



Government Stimulus

Stimulus Funding Received from the NSW Government

Argyle Housing has been very fortunate to receive stimulus funding from NSW Land & Housing Corporation to undertake repairs and maintenance works on properties managed from the Bowral, Young and Yass offices.

Work is well underway on 182 properties with a total of 338 components from range hoods to roofs being replaced. The works need to be completed by June this year and we estimate that over 6,200 hours of work (3.5 full time jobs for 1 year) has been created as part of this project.

One of the properties that has had substantial modifications is in Harden. This property has new cladding, kitchen, carpet, vinyl, a new hot water system and air conditioning. To finish off, the home has been painted inside and out. This gives a family in a Harden a fresh start with a freshly renovated home to move into.

Thanks to everyone involved in the project. A massive amount of work has been undertaken with very tight time frames to have this project approved and underway.

Justin Nyholm, Property & Assets Services Manager



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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