

WNEWS

Wentworth Community Housing
Tenant Newsletter

Issue 39 March 2019



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Autumn edition of WNews! And what a hot summer we've just had! I hope you were able to stay cool and still enjoy yourself. Also hope you found useful the information we brought to you about how to keep healthy in the extreme heat.

We now bring some exciting news on activities we are developing to nurture local communities across Western Sydney.

You probably remember we mentioned Neighbourhood Jobs in our previous newsletter, which is an employment training program for young people aged 15-24 years. In this issue, we've included more details about services and costs. We are doing our best to offer competitive rates, so tenants who need extra help to maintain their property can benefit from this initiative too.

At the beginning of March, we held a couple of events to celebrate our tenants. The Journey to Social Housing exhibition showcased the stories from people living in social housing across Penrith, Hawkesbury and the Blue Mountains. Seed Her Future told the stories of women who are Wentworth clients and tenants. It was delightful to see many of you present on both occasions.

In April, we will offer free energy training for our tenants. I'm sure this will be a great chance for you to avoid rising energy costs. Places are limited so make sure you get in quickly. You'll find more information in this newsletter.

In February, it was our delight to be a major sponsor of the Zest Awards – which recognises the outstanding achievements in the not-for-profit sector across Western Sydney. We are also very proud of our Divisional Manager, Community Services, Jenny Ranft, who received the Outstanding Not-for-Profit Community Leader Award.

Last but not least, a very special thank you to all the tenants who contributed to our second Tenant Communications Survey, which was only sent online.

The results are in and we have learned a lot, please read on to find out more. If you want to update your email address, you can call our contact centre on (02) 4777 8000 or email admin@wentworth.org.au with your full name and address.

Happy reading



Stephen McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer

RENT STATEMENTS

Your rent statement included with this newsletter was printed as 28 February 2019. If you have made payments after this date they will appear on your next rent statement.



Second Tenant Communications Survey to improve the ways we communicate with you

Thank you to all tenants who took part in our second Tenant Communications Survey. We had 85 participants – equivalent to 25% of tenants who have received the survey via email.

The survey was only sent online and aimed to find out how we can improve the way we communicate with you.

We took the opportunity to ask questions that will inform the redevelopment of our website. We now also understand how you use social media and how you like this newsletter. Thank you for giving ideas and suggesting changes.

Here are the findings:

- › **62%** of respondents use the Internet mostly to pay bills
- › **75%** of respondents use mobile devices to access the internet
- › **31%** of respondents use visit Wentworth's website for news
- › **61%** of respondents would use Wentworth's website in the future to lodge maintenance requests
- › **73%** of respondents use social media to stay in touch with friends and family
- › **53%** respondents like to see community stories in the WNEWS newsletters

Wentworth Penrith Office Closure

Due to a major system roll out, our Penrith office will be closed all day on Wednesday 27th March and Wednesday 3rd April. We apologise for any inconvenience caused. Our contact centre will be operating as normal on both of those days.

Zest Award for Outstanding Not-For-Profit Community Leader



For improving the lives of people experiencing homelessness across Western Sydney, Wentworth Community Housing's Divisional Manager, Jenny Ranft, was honoured with the Outstanding Not-For-Profit Community Leader Award at the ZEST Awards on Friday 15 February.

Jenny has devoted over 30 years working in non-government and government organisations in the region, to support disadvantaged

people and improve local communities. Jenny has shown extraordinary leadership with her conviction that homelessness is unacceptable and ending homelessness is within the means of local communities to achieve.

Unable to attend the ceremony to receive the award in person from NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Jenny said she felt surprised and grateful for having received the Award.

"Western Sydney is a strong and vibrant region of diverse communities. But we also face wicked problems like homelessness. It takes people from every section of the community to become part of the solution to homelessness and this award belongs to them", said Jenny.

Training to promote energy efficiency among our tenants

Responding to rises in energy prices, Wentworth will host an energy training session from **9.30am to 3.30pm Tuesday 9 April at Borec House, Suite 1002, Level 1, 29-57 Station Street, Penrith.**

The session will provide participants with a better understanding of the energy sector by covering topics such as how to choose an energy contract, making sense of fees and discounts, looking at affordability issues, and the support available for customers struggling to pay energy bills, and more.

We believe this is a great opportunity for tenants to become energy champions for Wentworth and pass on knowledge to other tenants.

Training is free and open to all. It has been developed in partnership with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON), the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), and the Community Housing Industry Association NSW.

Places are limited. If you want to get energy savvy tips, including more information on how to save on electricity bills, you must RSVP to our Sustainable Community Officer, Vanessa Tomas on **(02) 4777 8078, 0438 796 378** or email vanessa.tomas@wentworth.org.au

Journey To Social Housing



Well over 100 people braved the rain (and hail!) to celebrate our Journey To Social Housing exhibition on 14 March.

The Journey To Social Housing project brought together a group of older tenants to celebrate their experiences and perspectives on housing.

We know that sometimes it only takes one little thing for us to feel that life is getting out of control and that's why access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing is so important.

A big shout out to the tenants who contributed to the project and to those who attended the event. We were thrilled to see so many faces there.

If you want to listen to the stories, visit www.wentworth.org.au/journey

You can also view the films and audio podcasts at Penrith Regional Gallery's The Ideal Home Exhibition until 24 March 2019 at 86 River Rd, Emu Plains.

Get involved with Wentworth in 2019

There are different ways you can get involved with Wentworth Community Housing to have your say as a Wentworth tenant.

Our Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) is a group of volunteer tenants who review Wentworth's policies and procedures, advocate for tenants, work on projects and organise community events.

TAG is open to all tenants of Wentworth and you can join the team at anytime throughout the year. We value each other and welcome diversity.

If you want to understand more about housing, how to get what you need and volunteering to support others, you can join our Tenant Advocacy Training.

Tenant Advocacy Training is free and open to all tenants, whether you are a member of TAG or not.

Go to www.wentworth.org.au/tenant-engagement-advisory-members.html for more information on next meetings and training sessions or contact Vanessa Tomas on **(02) 4777 8078** or email vanessa.tomas@wentworth.org.au

A little and affordable help to make your house feel like home

Sometimes we all need a little help to make our houses feel like home. At Neighbourhood Jobs, we employ and train local young people who need that first job to get going. They are 15–24 years who have experienced barriers to employment in Western Sydney.

Our services include:

- › Lawn mowing
- › Basic pruning
- › Green waste removal
- › Some exterior cleaning
- › Single story gutter cleaning

Costs depend on the size of your yard and the type of job you need taken care of. Generally, our prices for Wentworth tenants are between \$55 and \$75.

Every time you rely on our business, you create an opportunity for a local young person to thrive!

To book a service, call **4777 8000** or email admin@neighbourhood.org.au

Know a young person who wants a job with us? Tell them to call the number above. We would love to hear from you.

Seed Her Future



It was delightful to see so many of our female tenants and clients at Seed Her Future.

Thank you for sharing your stories through art making and storytelling. The result was beautiful and moving.

We also want to thank our guest speaker, 2016 Woman of the Year, Jen Armstrong, our talented musician, Mady Disbray, as well as the health and wellbeing services who were there.

Connect with Wentworth on Social Media

Interested in what's happening in your community, Wentworth and the housing sector? Connecting with us has never been easier.

If you are interested in finding out the latest news, job ads or up to date information from Wentworth, please like the Facebook Page today

www.facebook.com/WentworthCommunityHousing

Or connect on

 **Twitter**
[@Wentworth_CH](https://twitter.com/Wentworth_CH)

 **Instagram**
Wentworth Community Housing

 **LinkedIn**
Wentworth Community Housing

HEAD OFFICE

Penrith

Address: Borec House, Suite 1002, Level 1
29–57 Station Street, Penrith 2750
PO Box 4303, Penrith Westfield 2750

Phone: (02) 4777 8000
Fax: (02) 4777 8099
Email: admin@wentworth.org.au

Opening hours:

8:30am–4:30pm Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri
1:00pm–4:30pm Wed

BRANCHES

Hawkesbury

Address: 409A George Street
South Windsor
Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm Mon, Tue,
Thu, Fri (closed Wed)

Blue Mountains

Address: Level 2, 98 Bathurst Road
Katoomba
Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm Mon, Tue,
Thu, Fri (closed Wed)

Next WNEWS

Our next edition of WNEWS will be out in June 2019 and will be mailed and displayed on Wentworth's Website www.wentworth.org.au/resources-newsletters

If you would like to see an article on a specific topic please email admin@wentworth.org.au

Getting to know Wentworth People

Sarah Howles, Youth Worker, Neighbourhood Jobs



How long have you been with Wentworth?

I started mid-January, so around two months.

What does a Youth Worker, Neighbourhood Jobs, do?

Being the Youth Worker, means that I focus on the wellbeing of the young people who are Neighbourhood Jobs employees.

I spend some time preparing fun activities and education sessions around different topics to support our young people to get a job and keep that job – because some people have a lot happening in their lives. The aim is to encourage the young people to stay in the program and keep them coming back until they have completed the program and secured their next job. We don't want things that could be out of their control, such as housing and family issues, to stop them from fulfilling their potential.

What is your main focus right now?

Everything all at once! I want to build up relationships in the community with the young people. I also want to establish the relationships with other organisations that could help young people with specific issues that could be holding them back from employment.


Finally, I want to develop a core structure for the program and look into alternative forms of learning and development to teach young people various techniques to assist them to cope better with employment and everyday life.

What do you like most about your job?

Working with the young people. Also, that there are lots of learning opportunities and working with my team to build a business is a learning curve too.

Is there anything you would like to say to young people who are interested in joining Neighbourhood Jobs?

If you are 18–24 years and interested, just ask! Don't feel intimidated or discouraged. Our whole purpose is to help because we want as many young people to thrive as we can. We like questions, just call up **(02) 4777 8000** or email admin@neighbourhoodjob.org.au

 **Stay connected
with free WiFi
when visiting
our offices**

We're always looking for ways to improve your experience when you visit Wentworth and are very excited to announce that from 5 April 2019 free WiFi access will be available in the reception area of our offices.

Instructions on how to connect will be available at Penrith, Windsor and Katoomba reception. We'll also be providing mobile phone charge points if your phone's running a little low on battery.