

WNEWS

Wentworth Community Housing
Tenant Newsletter

Issue 40 July 2019



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Winter edition of WNews! I hope you are managing to keep safe and warm. Let our maintenance team know if you need any repairs done at your property.

It is with great satisfaction that we were able to offer the Energy Efficiency Training in April. This is important for us because people living in energy inefficient homes are unnecessarily impacted by rising energy costs. In this issue, you will learn how you can benefit from the knowledge that has been passed on to our staff as well as on to our volunteer tenants.

With the end of the financial year, I believe it's timely to let you know that you can learn how to navigate the tax system thanks to an initiative by the Western Sydney University. Read on to find out how to benefit from their free services.

Continuing our commitment to supporting communities, it was a delight to sponsor the Blue Mountains Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders Olympic Team as they participated in the Mid Coast Annual Aboriginal Elders Olympics in April.

Also in April, we launched the Home in Western Sydney – Housing Affordability and Homelessness Insights report, at Western Sydney University. The report documents findings on the lack of social and affordable housing as well as information about the rate of homelessness across Western Sydney. We hope we can keep creating partnerships to address these issues in our region.

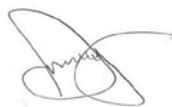
Still on how we can support communities, do you know how to drive and have a full licence? Uniting is looking for mentors to supervise learners who face challenges completing their 120 practice hours to get their P-plates. I think this is a fantastic way to make a difference. I hope you agree, feel inspired, and find the information brought to you useful.

If you want to get into a fun and joyful activity, our community choir is going very well and there is time to join them. I'm sure you would be very welcome in the group.

Recently I attended a lunchtime BBQ in Penrith organised by TAG members. It was great to catch up with a number of our tenants whilst we enjoyed a fabulous lunch.

Finally, our efforts to improve the services we provide to you saw us change our in-house systems. This means the look of your rent statement is a bit different now. In this newsletter, you'll find instructions on how to read the new statement and if you have any questions, you know you can always contact us.

Enjoy your reading.



Stephen McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer

How to interpret your new rent statement

Wentworth is always looking for ways to serve you better. Amongst other things, this means your rent statement has been redesigned.

From now on, you'll receive two statements. One for your non-rent statement account – water, bond, and repairs – and another for your rent statement of account. When statements were issued under the old system, it all used to be on the same page.

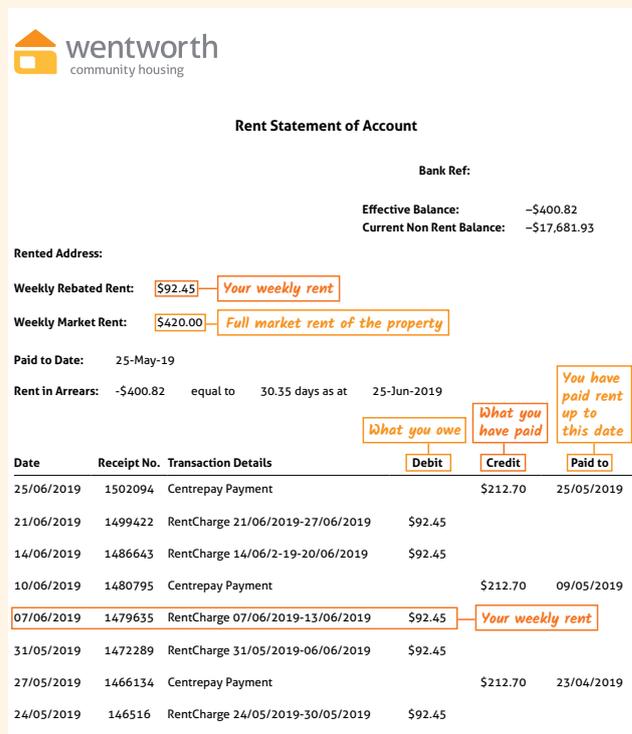
Here are the most significant changes you will notice:

- › On the new statement you will be able to see your weekly rent charge, as well as debit (what you owe) and credit (what you have paid).
- › You'll notice a new 'paid to' column. It lets you know that you have paid rent up to that date.

Because we wanted to reduce the amount of paper we are sending to you, we will include your non-rent statement in the next bill.

Your rent statement included with this newsletter is for the period 1 March 2019 to 27 June 2019. You'll see the old statements are from 1 March to 5 April and the new ones from 6 April to 27 June.

If you have any questions or need more information about your rent statements, you can call us on (02) 4777 8000 or email admin@wentworth.org.au and we'll be happy to assist.



wentworth
community housing

Rent Statement of Account

Bank Ref:
Effective Balance: -\$400.82
Current Non Rent Balance: -\$17,681.93

Rented Address:

Weekly Rebated Rent: **\$92.45** — Your weekly rent

Weekly Market Rent: **\$420.00** — Full market rent of the property

Paid to Date: 25-May-19

Rent in Arrears: -\$400.82 equal to 30.35 days as at 25-Jun-2019

What you owe | What you have paid | You have paid rent up to this date

Date	Receipt No.	Transaction Details	Debit	Credit	Paid to
25/06/2019	1502094	Centrepay Payment		\$212.70	25/05/2019
21/06/2019	1499422	RentCharge 21/06/2019-27/06/2019	\$92.45		
14/06/2019	1486643	RentCharge 14/06/2-19-20/06/2019	\$92.45		
10/06/2019	1480795	Centrepay Payment		\$212.70	09/05/2019
07/06/2019	1479635	RentCharge 07/06/2019-13/06/2019	\$92.45		Your weekly rent
31/05/2019	1472289	RentCharge 31/05/2019-06/06/2019	\$92.45		
27/05/2019	1466134	Centrepay Payment		\$212.70	23/04/2019
24/05/2019	146516	RentCharge 24/05/2019-30/05/2019	\$92.45		

Launch of the Home in Western Sydney Report

We launched the Home in Western Sydney - Housing Affordability and Homelessness Insights report, in collaboration with Western Sydney Community Forum at the Western Sydney University on 23 April.

Nearly 33% of low-income renting households spend more than 30% of their income on rent across Western Sydney. Homelessness has increased significantly since 2011, also, and almost 6,5000 additional social and affordable housing properties are needed per year to meet the estimated demand in 2036.

Stephen McIntyre, CEO of Wentworth Community Housing, highlighted that addressing the issue in the region was more than just providing homes to people.

"We know from our work in Western Sydney that secure, appropriate and affordable housing can turn lives around. Governments and communities need to work together to reinvigorate our social housing system in NSW. We have a moral responsibility to ensure that everyone has a home," said Mr McIntyre.

Chancellor of Western Sydney University, Professor Peter Shergold, and Wentworth's Chairperson, Ken Gilbert, signed a Strategic Alliance between Western Sydney University and Wentworth at the event, committed to working on research and advocacy around housing and homelessness.



Budget-friendly lawn care by a team of awesome young people

Neighbourhood Jobs is a local garden maintenance company with a social purpose – we employ and train young people who need support to land their first job. This means that every time you allow us to help with your green space, you create an opportunity for a local young person to thrive!



Wentworth Community Housing tenants have 20% off all of Neighbourhood Jobs services, which include:

- › lawn mowing and edging
- › garden tidying (hedging, weeding, planting and more)
- › exterior & gutter cleaning (single story)
- › green waste removal.

We've been in full swing as we've been helping hundreds of people and businesses across Western Sydney. We're happy we've been able to provide very high-quality service to customers, and their feedback is amazing:

"An incredible team. I was very happy" Tracey (WHC tenant)

"A fabulous job" Jill

"A ridiculously good job" Luke

Give us a call on 4777 8000 or 0429 912 472 to find out how we can help! Alternatively, you can email on admin@neighbourhoodjobs.org.au

Check us on Facebook for news, updates, competitions, bookings and more: facebook.com/neighbourhoodjobs

We are always looking for young people to be part of our team. So if you are or know someone aged 14-24 from Western Sydney, who is looking for some experience and support towards employment, please get in touch.

Get free advice on the tax system and support to do your tax return

The Western Sydney University has set up a student-run clinic, under the supervision of experienced tax practitioners, able to help when you:

- › Need free advice, guidance and assistance on tax matters, including lodgement, debt, review and appeal rights as well as general tax law
- › Need to deal with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
- › Are affected by systematic issues in your dealings with the ATO, Government or other institutions.

To be eligible for the services of the Tax Clinic, you must be:

1. currently unrepresented (do not have a tax agent)
2. an Australian citizen or permanent resident
3. an individual or small business entity

Tax Clinic location:

Western Sydney University, Level 5, 169 Macquarie St, Parramatta

Opening hours:

Tuesday 9am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
and Wednesdays 12 – 4pm

Contact email:

thetaxclinic@westernsydney.edu.au

For the fastest service call (02) 4777 8000

Have you thought of becoming a volunteer driving mentor?

Uniting is looking for volunteer mentors to supervise learner drivers who face challenges completing their 120 practice hours to get their P-plates.

If you have a full licence and a couple of hours a week, you can make a life-changing difference, giving young people independence and access to more opportunities.

You'll be required to undergo relevant record checks, including drivers, criminal and working with children checks. The checks are fully paid by Uniting.

You will also have free access to more training if needed for the volunteer role. There's also opportunity for training such as first aid courses. Uniting will provide the car so you don't need to own a vehicle. In case you do and if you need to drive to their office, there will be parking available for mentors.

The relationship the volunteers develop with the learners is very important. It would be wonderful if you could stay for a minimum of six months.

The volunteer hours are Centrelink recognised and Uniting has offices in Penrith and Mount Druitt. If you are interested, call 1800 864 846 and ask to speak to Paul Steward or email ask@uniting.org

What inspires you to sing?

In February we launched a new community choir, called Inspire Choir, in partnership with the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre.

The Inspire Choir is all about having fun and the weekly sessions involve a lot of laughter. Some of the 35 members have sung in choirs before and others have never sung to anyone but themselves.

Participants are working on a range of simple songs usually in two or three parts. Nothing too complicated.

Inspire Choir meets from 6.30pm to 8.30pm every Tuesday night, during school terms only, at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre on High Street, Penrith.

It is free. We hope to see you there!



Mid Coast Annual Aboriginal Elders Olympics to bring communities together



As Western Sydney is home to one of the largest Aboriginal populations in Australia, we were very proud to sponsor the Blue Mountains Elders Olympic Team in April.

They participated in the Mid North Coast Elders Olympics 2019, held at Stuarts Park in Port Macquarie. Hosted by the Werrin Elders, over 519 competitors and support workers participated in the event.

The 36 teams were from all across New South Wales. The Elders Olympics are about improving the health standards of the Aboriginal community, particularly the Elders.



Getting to know Wentworth people

Jo Zappia, Community Resilience Project Officer

Can you tell a little bit about work you are doing in partnership with Wentworth?

Sure! I work for Inner Sydney Voice, an organisation that provides advocacy, support and community development for public and social housing communities.

For the next six months, I will be based at Wentworth's Penrith office, coordinating a lot of community engagement activities. This is because Wentworth owns most of the social housing in the Hawkesbury and Nepean Valley, and my role looks at how emergency services and community housing providers can minimise the impact of natural disasters on tenants.

When I say natural disasters, I mean flood, heatwaves, and bushfires for example. So community engagement with tenants is a vital aspect of the project I coordinate.

What does a Community Resilience Project Officer with Inner Sydney Voice do?

A Community Resilience Officer supports tenants to build awareness of the risks that surround them, understand their role in a disaster, and what services are available for support. They also develop and strengthen partnerships between key stakeholders in the social housing sector to promote flood awareness and disaster risk reduction as a shared responsibility.

I will be establishing a committee for social housing tenants, emergency services, government agencies and non-government to share information on how to prepare, understand and recover in case a natural disaster occurs in the region.

As a community-wide group, we need to identify everybody's roles and responsibilities in case of a crisis. Once we do this, we can have a plan to ensure tenants stay healthy and safe in case of crisis or emergencies. For example, we need to know how to be safe with food, how to evacuate the building where they live or what to do when the power goes out – people with special needs maybe require an uninterrupted supply of power for example.

What is your main focus right now?

I want to meet as many tenants as I can! My main focus right now is speaking with tenants about the project and getting an understanding of their level of awareness of floods, heatwaves and bushfires risks. This way, I'll be able to gather feedback and understand the challenges as well as their strengths and capacities in responding to and recovering from disasters.

What do you like most about your job?

I love that my job combines my passion for the environment and community development. What I really like about this project specifically, is its whole-of-system approach to building disaster preparedness. And I like that I get to be out in the community with tenants at their events like BBQs.

How could tenants get in touch with you if they want to be part of this project?

They can call me on 02 9698 7690 or 0411 747 194. Alternatively, they can send an email to resilience@innersydneyvoice.org.au

Energy Efficiency Training

Our staff as well as tenants attended an energy training session on 9 April to help reduce energy costs and promote energy efficiency.

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

Training was hosted by Wentworth, being organised and facilitated by Community Housing Industry Association NSW (CHIA NSW).

Keep an eye out for future training sessions. In the meantime, if you want to get energy savvy tips, including more information on how to save on electricity bills, you can contact our Sustainable Communities Officer, Vanessa Tomas on (02) 4777 8078, 0428 796 378 or email vanessa.tomas@wentworth.org.au.

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: Shop 2, 23–27 Cascade Street
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 September 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



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



Instagram / Wentworth Community Housing



LinkedIn / Wentworth Community Housing

Maintenance Queries



Remember for all Maintenance Queries please ring **02 4777 8000** (select option 1).