



WNews

Wentworth Community Housing Tenant Newsletter
Issue 44 | June–July 2020

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Winter edition of WNews. I hope you have been managing to stay well and healthy, especially now that we enter the coldest season.

As the weather gets cooler, make sure your house is ready for winter and give us a call if you have any urgent maintenance requests. As you read this newsletter, you'll find some updates on Neighbourhood Jobs and the services they can offer to help you stay on top of property care.

Usually bills tend to increase this time of the year. Even though COVID-19 restrictions have been easing, we have been using more electricity and water since we have been spending more time at home. We know many have been facing significant hardship as this crisis takes its toll across the globe. We hope you find the tips on how to save on bills in this newsletter useful.

During the lockdown, we were still able to complete our Windsor office renovations. We are very excited about our improved facilities and, once all

restrictions are lifted, we hope you have a good experience the moment you step through the door. Until then, we continue to provide our services remotely and you can still contact us during business hours via email or phone for anything you need.

In the last quarter, important dates were marked by digital activities and we take this opportunity to bring you some of the history behind Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week.

On the last day of Reconciliation Week, George Floyd, a 46 year-old black man, was murdered in Minneapolis while in police custody. The impact of what happened in the United States has made the whole world stand up to fight more against racism. Here in Australia, it has made us reflect on the injustices that regularly happen on our own soil, which always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Still talking about reconciliation, back in February, we were honoured to attend the launch of the Kinchela Education Bus, the first travelling Stolen Generations education centre. Read on to learn more about our involvement with the initiative.

As we were finishing this edition of the newsletter, the new dates for NAIDOC Week 2020 were announced. Read on to learn more about the celebrations and how the activities will take place in our 'new normal' as everything still looks much different than we are used to.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen McIntyre".

Stephen McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer

Kinchela Education Bus tells stories of the stolen generations

On 13 February, Leonnie & Cheryl attended the launch of the Kinchela Education Bus which is the first travelling Stolen Generations education centre.



The bus will travel across NSW to educate people and make sure that the injustices of the past are recognised and not forgotten. It will also contribute to the important healing process as we remain conscious of the intergenerational trauma and disadvantage that affect the descendants of the Kinchela Boys Home.

The infamous Kinchela Boys Home was run by the government and housed more than 500 Aboriginal boys between 1924 and 1970. The children were stolen from their families, where many suffered serious physical and psychological abuse.

Uncle Widdy, a tenant of the Glenmore Park Kinchela property, which houses the Kinchela Uncles, will take part and share his story during their travels.

Uncle Widdy was forcibly taken away from his family at the age of 8 along with his 7 siblings. The children were separated, including the separation of 6-month-old twins, and Uncle Widdy was taken to the Kinchela Boys Home at Kempsey NSW.

On arriving at Kinchela, all the boys were given a number from that day on and they were only to use that number instead of their names. One of Uncle Widdys brothers was 60 years old before he talked about

what had happened. He had no memory of his family, campfires or culture.

Uncle Widdy said he has watched the other boys “connecting but never connecting” with their culture over the years. Uncle Widdy did not know his father until he was 17. He was then introduced as ‘Withou’ – the name given by the Aboriginal People meaning white fella. When reunited, Uncle Widdy was given the name Widdy which he proudly uses to this day.

Uncle Widdy continues to work with the other survivors to educate, support and heal.

Winter is here! Get in touch with Neighbourhood Jobs for quality and affordable property care services

It has been a busy quarter at Neighbourhood Jobs, which is Wentworth's employment training program and social enterprise.



With lots of new customers, including Wentworth tenants, some of the highlights include:

- ▶ delivering over 1000 services to date across the Blue Mountains, Blacktown, Penrith, Hawkesbury, Cumberland, The Hills Shire & Hornsby LGAs!
- ▶ two new supervisors as our dear Jonathan has stepped into a Team Leader role.
- ▶ a new website! Check out www.neighbourhoodjobs.org.au and read more about the work we do, the mission and purpose of the organisation. While you are at it, you can also request a property care or landscaping service. Prices are low and the quality superb as always.
- ▶ many Facebook followers and you can follow our page too at www.facebook.com/neighbourhoodjobs to join in competitions to win free services, gift vouchers and more. Make sure to like the page and leave a review if you have tried our services. We would love to hear your feedback.

As well as individual homes, Neighbourhood Jobs are now providing lawns and grounds maintenance for Wentworth housing complexes. To date, we're doing this in and around South Windsor, hoping to expand, as our expertise now also includes commercial cleaning.

Here are some gardening tips for you to keep your green thumb growing this winter:

1. Pruning! As most leaves would have come off by now, this is the best season for you to control and shape your plants and trees by trimming and pruning them to the height you would like them to grow. Roses might be the most obvious ones but make sure to look after your hydrangeas, wisterias, gardenias, grapes etc.
2. Now is a great time to start sowing vegetables like carrots, spring onions, leeks, broad beans, radishes, English spinach and peas. Go for it!

3. Who doesn't love herbs? Get some from your local grocer or maybe even some cuttings or bunches from your neighbours and friends. Thyme, rosemary, parsley, basil, mint and winter savory are some that grow well during this season.

Want to book Neighbourhood Jobs services?

If you need any help with maintaining your garden, yard or just want to have your gutters cleaned and some rubbish taken out, give Neighbourhood Jobs a call on 1300 627 527. You can get a quote over the phone or we can come out to have a look if it's a bigger job.

Neighbourhood Jobs offer a friendly discount to all Wentworth Community Housing tenants. The cost of the service helps give young people across Western Sydney their first real-life and paid work experience before they move into permanent employment.

Are you ready to become a Good Neighbour?

“Good relationships can transform communities and knowing our neighbours is important. It makes our neighbourhood safer and also makes us feel better because social connections help prevent loneliness, isolation and depression.”



With social distancing and restrictions on public movements and gatherings, it can be even harder to maintain relationships with those around you.

The Blue Mountains and Penrith City Councils have launched Good Neighbour as a way to help you maintain or build new connections with

your neighbours, and even make a few friendships along the way.

It's easy to get started

Learning each other's names and saying a quick hello across the fence, at a safe distance, is all it takes to start building a relationship.

During COVID-19, you can also lend a helping hand to those around you.

If you have a neighbour who is self-isolating, especially those in the vulnerable and at-risk categories, fill out the Good Neighbour calling card to let them know you're around if they need anything to help get them through.

What help you can offer is up to you – download a copy of the calling card, have a look, and be inspired:

- ▶ Blue Mountains City Council calling card, visit <https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/goodneighbour>
- ▶ Penrith City Council calling card, visit <https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/community-library/community/good-neighbour-program>

New NAIDOC Week date announced

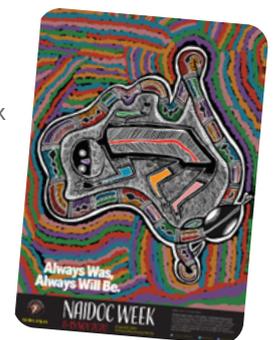
After some uncertainty, we can finally look forward to confirmed dates for NAIDOC Week! Celebrations will be held from 8 to 15 November across Australia in an attempt to protect Aboriginal elders and those with chronic health issues from possible impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic as cooler weather approaches.

This year's theme - Always Was, Always Will Be – is all about recognising that First Nations people have been living and caring for this continent for over 65,000 years, being Australia's first explorers, first

navigators, first engineers, first farmers, first botanists, first scientists, first diplomats, first astronomers and first artists. It acknowledges that hundreds of Nations and our cultures covered this continent. All were managing the land - the biggest estate on earth - to sustainably provide for their future.

NAIDOC originally stood for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. The week was born from a day of protests during the early 1900s demanding First Nations people have access to basic human rights.

Today, NAIDOC Week is dedicated to celebrating the history, achievements and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It's a great opportunity for everyone to participate in a range of activities and to support their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Support for energy customers impacted by COVID-19

If you are struggling to keep on top of your energy bill due to COVID-19, your retailer can offer you extra support.

All energy retailers already have affordability programs, sometimes also known as hardship programs, which include payment extensions, payment plans and help accessing grants and concessions.

These programs have now been enhanced to help support people during these very tough times.

The new measures follow the release of the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) Statement of Expectations in March 2020. The Statement defines 10 expectations that energy retailers must meet during this time including:

- ▶ offering affordability assistance to all customers in financial stress

- ▶ deferring disconnection of any residential or small business customers in financial stress until at least 31 July 2020
- ▶ deferring referrals to debt collection agencies, or credit default listing until at least 31 July 2020
- ▶ waiving disconnection, reconnection and/or contract break fees and daily supply charges for small businesses that have ceased operation, during any period of disconnection until at least 31 July 2020.

If you're having payment difficulties or are at risk of disconnection, contact your retailer first. They can help. If you're not happy with their response, contact the EWON. They offer a free, fair and independent dispute resolution

service and can also provide advice on how to save energy and get the best energy deal. Visit <https://www.ewon.com.au/page/media-center/news/updates/covid-19-customer-support>



Here are some other tips on how to manage your energy bills

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has created a guide with FREE and EASY actions households can take to control energy use and reduce energy bill stress. Have a look:

STAYING AT HOME: Ways to manage your energy bills

Now that you need to stay at home, the amount of energy you use could go up and cost you more.

Keep using your power – but make these changes to keep bills low and stay comfortable and healthy



Have shorter showers.



Use less hot water.



Wash clothes on a cold water setting.

Switch off appliances at the wall.



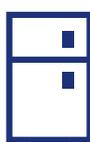
Switch off lights when you leave a room.



Use lids on pots to speed up cooking.



Don't let the heat escape – close doors, windows and curtains, and block any gaps.



Use one fridge or freezer if you can. Turn off any others to stop throwing your money away!

Call your energy provider to ask about your bill



Step 1: Find the phone number on your energy bill

Step 2: Tell them

- You need to stay at home, and have been thinking about your energy bills.

Step 3: Important questions you should ask

- Will you make sure I'm on the best plan for my current situation?
- Am I getting the right rebates on my bill? Possible rebates you could be getting include:
 - Low Income Household Rebate
 - Family Energy Rebate
 - Medical Energy Rebate
- Will you waive any late fees?
- Should I be on a payment plan?
- Can you confirm that I will not be disconnected from my energy supply during this time?



For more energy saving tips visit: energysaver.nsw.gov.au/free-ways-save-energy-and-money

For further help if you are facing energy bill stress, visit: energysaver.nsw.gov.au/help-for-households-facing-energy-bill-stress



Getting to know Wentworth people

Introducing Emma Storm Supervisor Neighbourhood Jobs

How long have you been with Wentworth?

Since March 2020. I joined the team just before the Coronavirus lockdown.

What do you do as a NJ supervisor?

I work with a team of young people, teaching them landscaping/gardening skills and how to interact with clients.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, my team has been restricted to one young person per job, but we can have up to four or five people on the ground.

This is a new role for you, how does it compare to your previous jobs?

I've had many different jobs and learned skills that I can employ in the work I do at Neighbourhood Jobs. I worked as a carer for quite a while, supporting old people and people with disabilities, and that has made me understanding and sensitive to people's needs. I know that sensitivity makes a big difference in customer service, training, and keeps us honest to the purpose of being a business with heart.

What do you like most about your job with Neighbourhood Jobs?

I like working with young people and see them change and get more confident, ready to land a full-time job.

What are you most looking forward to in your new role?

I look forward to getting more training to help young people. I want to have a whole team of young people, who will be having their first go at working in landscaping and property care. I have started off with working with the more experienced young people and only just started working with some inexperienced young people. I'm looking forward to training more of them.

Landscaping and maintenance are male dominated industries, so what is your advice to the young women interested in joining Neighbourhood Jobs?

Give it a shot! Our program is a good place for you to figure out if you like this sort of property care work or not. We do the same things as guys and our clients are always happy with the quality of our work. This will be an experience to add to your resume and enter the job market. If you like it, we can help you keep working in the field.

Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week marked a little different this year

Although unable to physically get together due to Coronavirus restrictions, communities across Australia took to social media to acknowledge the pain and injustice experienced by the stolen generations.

Opportunities to get involved and show respect were aplenty. Sorry Day, is held on 26 May each year, is an annual day of remembrance. National Reconciliation Week starts the following day from 27 May to 3 June.

The Theme for the 2020 Reconciliation Week was 'In This Together' and resonated

in ways unforeseeable when announced last year. It's been inspiring to watch people from different parts of the world and backgrounds to stand together in solidarity with black and Aboriginal people, who are the most incarcerated.



Learn more about the history and have a look at the major events that happened around the country at <https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au>

COVID-19 has changed the world we live in – while restrictions are easing, we are still a long way from beating this virus

We want to make sure that our clients and staff remain safe. Wentworth offices will continue to be closed, but our staff can help you during business hours via phone or email.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is not over yet. As you know, we are now seeing a second wave starting to occur in many countries. Closer to home in Australia, Melbourne has seen community transmitted cases of COVID-19 increase greatly, which shows we still have some way to go to beat this virus.

Even though our offices are closed, please know that we are still working, and you can phone us on 4777 8000 between 8:30am and 4:30pm or email us at admin@wentworth.org.au

As we continue to deliver our services remotely, we thank you for your patience during

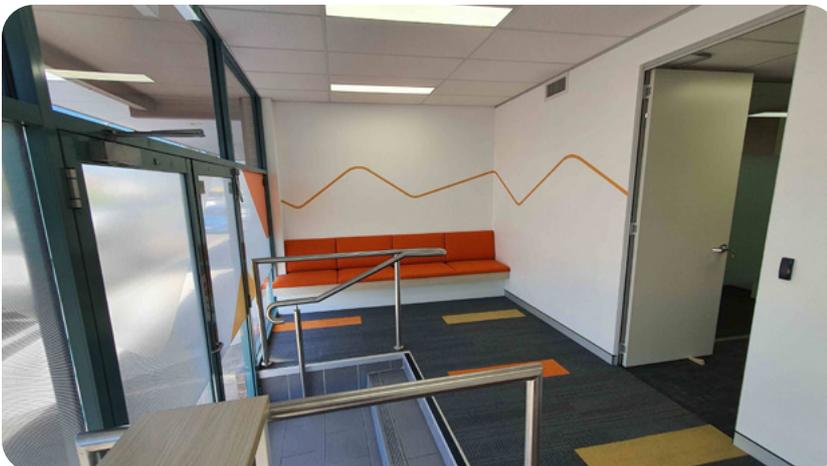
these challenging times. If there is anything you need, we are here to help.

Keep looking after yourself and your loved ones as we all remain committed to being COVID-safe. We will be in contact with you with as soon as there are any changes to our services.

The refurbished Windsor Office

In this quarter of the year, we renovated our Windsor office so that we can improve our services to you.

We hope you can come and visit once COVID restrictions are lifted and let us know what you think of the experience when you see us.



New Wentworth Website coming soon!

We are currently working on a new website for Wentworth.

We have already talked to a group of our tenants and got some feedback about how we can make the site better for all our tenants.

We hope to go live in August and will keep you posted.



**OUT OF HOURS
EMERGENCY
MAINTENANCE LINE
02 4777 8000
(choose option 1)**

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)

Lithgow

Address: 42 Main St
Lithgow

Phone: (02) 6353 1184

Opening Hours: 11:00am-3:00pm
Tues, Wed, Fri (closed Mon, Thurs)

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** | wentworthcommunityhousing

 **LinkedIn** | Wentworth Community Housing



Next WNEWS

Our next edition of WNEWS will be out in September 2020 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