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Wentworth Community Housing Tenant Newsletter
Issue 46 | December 2020

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

It has been a tough 12 months—at times isolating and confusing—but as we close the chapter on 2020, I'm looking forward to welcoming a new year.

This December will be different to any other in recent memory. For many, COVID-19 is interrupting the usual traditions that come with the festive and holiday period. Due to public health measures, a lot of the community events we look forward to aren't going ahead, and services are running at a reduced capacity.

However, I sincerely hope this doesn't dampen your ability to celebrate. I hope you get to spend time with your family and loved ones in a safe and joyful manner. You certainly deserve it!

In fact, I want to applaud all our tenants and the wider community for the resilience shown throughout this year. While it's been a challenging one, the general sense of kindness and perseverance never faltered.

In this newsletter, you'll find the Tenant Calendar for the first three months of 2021, outlining key dates for TAG and YarnUp events. If you're keen to meet your fellow community members, these catch ups are a great place to say hello. You can also find information about some Christmas lunches in your local community and gift ideas that won't break the bank.

Lastly, I'd like to provide an important update about our work with Northern Sydney-based Link Housing. Since the last tenant newsletter, we have confirmed that the merger with Wentworth will go ahead, with a target date of 31 March 2021 to become a larger merged organisation, under the name Link Wentworth Housing Ltd (Link Wentworth Housing). As a larger organisation, we will be able to provide better, expanded

services to you over the coming years. Read on for important information about what this merger means for you.

On behalf of all the staff at Wentworth, have a happy and peaceful festive season. Keep safe and cool this summer and I look forward to keeping in touch in the new year.

Stephen McIntyre

Chief Executive Officer



Stephen McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer



Meet Peter Gonzalez

Tenant

Peter Gonzalez is an artist and language teacher who teaches at Nepean Community College. A multilinguist and member of the Penrith TAG group, Peter uses his creative talents to give back to the community.

I was born in Argentina in 1932 and by the age of six, I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my life. I wanted to be an artist.

My mother, who was a dressmaker, always supported my dreams, but my father wanted me to follow in his footsteps instead. He was a shopkeeper and wanted me to be a shopkeeper too. But in school, I couldn't stop drawing—in all of my subjects I was drawing—and I got so much enjoyment out of it.

Despite my father's objections, I moved to the capital Buenos Aires when I was 16 and ended up studying at the National School of Arts. There I met my first wife and we had a son. But

by the time he turned 12 it was clear that Argentina was in a bad political state. We applied to move to Australia and after nine months, we got accepted.

We arrived in Sydney on 19 June 1971. I found work in a factory, working 12 hours a day for seven days a week and going to English classes at night. My manager at the factory, Joe, was a Hungarian man and even though we couldn't understand each other, we formed a friendship. He showed me so much kindness in those first few years. He really welcomed me to Australia.

Unfortunately, the authorities in Australia didn't recognise my degree from Argentina. It took four years of TAFE and three years of university to become qualified as a teacher.

Now, I teach languages and art to all kinds of people in the community, including those with physical and intellectual disabilities. I can speak five languages—Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French and English. I also spend my time making art in all different kinds of mediums. Drawing, painting, landscapes, seascapes, flowers, portraits, you name it!

My philosophy on teaching is shaped by the kindness Joe showed me in my first years in Australia—he didn't know anything about me, but he helped me. The least I can do is do the same for others. Why not?



Key dates for tenants

January to March 2021

Friday 22 January
10.30 – 11.30 am
YarnUp Meeting
Blue Mountains

Wednesday 3 February
10.30 – 11.30 am
TAG Meeting
Penrith

Friday 12 February
10.30 – 11.30 am
TAG Meeting
Hawkesbury

Tuesday 23 February
10.30 – 11.30 am
TAG Meeting
Blue Mountains

Wednesday 3 March
10.30 – 11.30 am
TAG Meeting
Lithgow

If you're interested in attending any of the above events, please call **Vanessa** on **0438 796 378**.

Rent statements

Your most up-to-date rent statement will be sent to you by separate mail. If you have any questions or want to know your account balance, you can call us on **02 4777 8000** or email admin@wentworth.org.au and we'll be happy to assist.



Low-Cost Christmas Gift Ideas

While we do agree that Christmas is one of the most wonderful times of the year—it's also the most expensive. But you don't have to spend a lot to give a great prezzie. Some of the best gifts are made by you, given from the heart. A bit of creative thinking and a dash of preparation goes a long way.

We've pulled together some solutions that are festive and frugal.



1 Bake some sweets

What's better than a homemade Christmas cookie or cake? Search Google for some cost-effective treat recipes, cook them up and package them with a bow.

2 Look on Facebook, Freecycle or Gumtree

Secondhand goods are much cheaper than brand new items. You can get lots of trendy and useful items through online sites like Facebook Marketplace or Gumtree. Sites like Freecycle even advertise goods people are giving away for free. Just type in what you'd like—for example, 'bike' or 'candle'—and see what comes up near you!

[facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) (Note: You must have a Facebook account to use the Marketplace feature.)

[gumtree.com](https://www.gumtree.com)

[my.freecycle.org](https://www.freecycle.org)

3 Write your own recipe book

Buy a notebook and fill it with family favourite recipes. Not only is this a thoughtful gift, but it will become a keepsake as the years go by.

4 Frame a photo (or two)

You can print photos at your local Big W or Officeworks for about 10 cents each. Gather your favourite memory and display them in a frame. If you can't pick just one, make a whole album instead!

5 DIY hot chocolate mix

With a bit of milk powder, sugar and cocoa powder, you can create a delicious and inexpensive hot chocolate mix. Here's how:

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups dry milk powder

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

2 teaspoons cornstarch

Method:

Mix all ingredients together and sift into a tightly sealed container. Tie with festive ribbon of your choice.

Recipe found at biggerbolderbaking.com/make-hot-chocolate-mix/



Christmas in your community



If you are in need this Christmas, there are a few local not-for-profits and charities offering hampers and lunches. Find one near you below.

Hawkesbury's Helping Hands

Hawkesbury's Helping Hands have regretfully cancelled their Christmas lunch this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, they will still have Christmas hampers. Please keep an eye on their Facebook page for up-to-date details.

The Living Room Richmond

The Living Room is having a Christmas lunch on Thursday 17 December from 10am til 2pm.

The address is:
15/24 East Market St Richmond.

Mama Lana's Community Foundation

Mama Lana's services in Penrith will run as normal throughout the Christmas and New Year period—Monday to Saturday, 7pm till 8pm. Except for Christmas Day, when they plan to serve a takeaway Christmas lunch. Keep an eye on their Facebook page for up-to-date details.

This year, many of the Christmas events we normally look forward to aren't going ahead. If you're struggling, there's no shame in reaching out for help. **NSW Domestic Violence Line** on 1800 65 64 63 or **Mental Health Line** on 1800 011 511.

Be prepared for bushfire season

Last year's bushfire season was one of the most severe and scary in recent memory. It's important to stay smart this summer by preparing your property.

Protect your home by following these preparation tips.

- ▶ Clean your gutters
- ▶ Keep your lawn trimmed and garden maintained
- ▶ Tidy up fallen leaves and twigs regularly
- ▶ Buy a long hose that wraps around your house

Visit rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare for more information.



Wentworth and Link Housing confirm merger

We are pleased to officially confirm that Wentworth Community Housing will be combining with Link Housing to become **Link Wentworth Housing** (Link Wentworth) on **31 March 2021**.

Link Wentworth we will become one of the largest community housing providers in Australia. We will build more homes and provide more services to better help our tenants and members of our community.

What does this mean for me?

You will become a tenant of Link Wentworth and our offices in Penrith, Katoomba, Windsor and Lithgow will remain open for you.

There will be no changes to the way your rent is calculated and paid but we will need new forms to be completed in the name of **Link Wentworth**. If you pay by direct debit, we will send you the new Link Wentworth bank account details.

We will write to you in the early new year and include forms that you need to update. When you receive the new forms if you need any help in completing them, contact your Client Service Officer. If you would like to speak with Amanda Peachey, Aboriginal Specialist Client Services Officer or Cheryl Wasley, Aboriginal Co-ordinator please call **02 4777 8000**.

To show our appreciation for your help in completing the new forms, you will be added to some gift card prize draws to say thanks – more details to come soon!

If you have questions or concerns or simply want more information please email **communications@wentworth.org.au** or call **02 4777 8000**.



Neighbourhood Jobs wins two awards!

Our social enterprise Neighbourhood Jobs took home two ZEST awards this year. They won the Exceptional Project in a Not-for-Profit and the Partnering for Impact Grant. Go team!

The team at 'NJ', as we affectionately call them, hire unemployed young people in Western Sydney, train them up in garden maintenance and deliver services to private and commercial clients.

We think they're pretty great!

If you need lawn care or garden maintenance, get in touch the NJ team on **1300 627 527** or **info@neighbourhoodjobs.org.au**



Office hours over Christmas and New Years

The Wentworth offices will be closed to the public from **24 December 2020** until **6 January 2021**. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for further updates. If you have any urgent maintenance issues, you can call our maintenance line on **02 4777 8000** (option 1). **We look forward to saying hello in 2021!**



**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

Blue Mountains

Address: Level 2, 98 Bathurst Road
Katoomba

Phone: (02) 4777 8000

Opening Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm
Tue, Thu, Fri

Lithgow

Address: 42 Main St
Lithgow

Phone: (02) 6353 1184

Opening Hours: 11:00am-3:00pm
Tues, Wed, Fri

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 March 2021 and will be mailed and displayed on Wentworth's Website www.wentworth.org.au/tenants/tenant-newsletter

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

