



Tenant Forum feedback

We have taken on board your feedback from last year's Tenant Forums and have brought this year's forums closer to you! This year we will be having three Tenant Forums – Blue Mountains, Sydney South West and Greater Western Sydney.

Everyone is welcome, so come along and join in!

Keep your eyes on your mailboxes, as we will be sending invites with more information and details on how to RSVP!

WHAT	DATE	WHERE	WHEN
Blue Mountains Tenant Forum 2020	Thursday March 19, 2020	Blue Mountains Cultural Centre	POSTPONED
South West Tenant Forum 2020	Thursday April 30, 2020	MAH Community Centre	TO BE ADVISED
Greater Western Sydney Tenant Forum 2020	Tuesday June 30, 2020	Mount Druitt Hub	TO BE ADVISED

We had planned three forums to take place on the dates above, however we are reassessing the running of the events as a preventative measure in response to the NSW Department of Health Coronavirus advice. We will let you know as decisions are made and when they will be held.

In your community

In late January, we had the pleasure of hosting some Mission Australia Housing staff members, including our Executive Chris Bratchford, at the Bransgrove Road community centre for a meet and greet with some of our tenants. We had an incredible BBQ organised for everyone and the turnout was amazing! During the day, tenants had an opportunity to talk

to staff about some of their concerns and give them feedback. We cannot wait to continue these conversations at the upcoming Tenant Forums so we can continue to create a welcoming and safe space for all!

The event also highlighted the enormous amount of work that

has been happening at the community centre. Working Bee groups have been busy making the garden beautiful and usable to all. Come and check out their awesome work!

We are also organising more events and activities at the community centre. Watch this space for more information!

CONTACT US

 Mission Australia Housing hotline: **1800 269 672**
 Level 2, 81 Flushcombe Road, Blacktown NSW 2148
 missionaustralia.com.au/housing

Cleaning up Albert Street!



Last year we had a skip bin available for two days at the Albert Street complex. **We filled out two large industrial skip bins with rubbish including old furniture, vehicle parts, and trash.** We will continue the 'Skip Bin Collection Initiative' throughout 2020 in Western Sydney.

If you would like to request a skip bin collection at your complex, please talk to your Housing Officer. **Please continue to use your local council pickups as well. As residents, you are entitled to a two or three council pickups a year.**



From our Executive



Welcome to the first Housing News for 2020!

We are relieved that the devastating start to the fire season in late 2019 did not result in any injury or death to Mission Australia Housing (MAH) residents or the loss of any MAH managed dwellings.

Around 3,000 homes were destroyed and many more structures were damaged as blazes intensified in the days leading up to New Year with thousands of people forced to evacuate or seek shelter on beaches in NSW and Victoria.

The smoke became another disaster. With the worst pollution we have ever seen, our air quality index reached 23 times higher than what's considered 'hazardous'. The smoke travelled as far as New Zealand and was so thick that a NASA satellite snapped pictures of it from space.

Fortunately, the February and March 2020 rains have helped extinguish all fires in NSW. However, the extent of the rains has resulted in flooding and other damage. Australia is certainly a land of extremes!

It is timely to note that Mission Australia Housing takes fire safety very seriously and we have **zero tolerance** for deliberately lit fires due to the risks of injury, death and property damage. **Please report any suspicious or dangerous behaviour you may see immediately to Crime Stoppers.**

In the coming year and beyond we will also be placing an increased focus on how we might help residents mitigate some of the negative impacts of climate change.

In February 2020, I had the great pleasure of visiting **Bransgrove Road residential apartment building in Revesby**, spending time with tenants and staff in the community room adjoining the children's play area.

As we move in to the Easter period we now face the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) around the world. Please see important information in this newsletter and the letter attached to help stop the spread of this virus.

Chris Bratchford
Executive, Mission Australia Housing

Let's work together



It is very important to inform the Crime Stoppers Hotline when incidences or suspicious behaviour takes place within your complex. Let us work together to make your community safe for all.

Call us on 1800 333 000. All complaints made through the hotline will remain anonymous.

**SEEN
SOMETHING
SUSS?
STAY ANONYMOUS.**

**CRIME
STOPPERS
1800 333 000
com.au**

Volunteer with us



Do you want to make a positive change in your community? This may be your chance! We are currently in the process of recruiting individuals to volunteer with us on the growing Project Working Groups. We would love to have representatives from every complex work together with us and be leaders in their communities. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to work across a number of different projects and activities. **Do you have a green thumb?** You can help us design and build local gardens. **Are you the next Picasso?** Show case your amazing work by making our space more beautiful. Your imagination and creativity is the limit! Let us work together to make our homes feel more safe and welcoming while strengthening our communities!

If you have any ideas or are interested in volunteering, please contact our GWS Community Development Officer Kudzi on 1800 269 672 or Sydney's Community Development Officer Kyle on 02 9509 7202.



HOT TIPS: ...from our Tenant Action Group – did you know?

Reducing your energy bills can be as simple as using appliances with high star ratings. The NSW Government has a partnership with the Good Guys where you can replace your appliances. The appliance replacement offer makes it easier for you to upgrade your old fridge or television to a new, more efficient model!

What's on offer?

You can get discounts on new selected energy efficient fridges and televisions. When you replace your old, inefficient model, you can receive:

- **40% off the cost of a fridge**
- **50% off the cost of a television**

Who's eligible?

If you want to replace your fridge, your current fridge must be at least ten years old. To replace your television, you must own a plasma or cathode ray tube (CRT) television. **In order to**

receive this offer you must be a NSW resident and hold one of the following:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Health Care Card or Low Income Health Care Card from Centrelink
- Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

A Commonwealth Seniors Health Card is not sufficient eligibility for this offer.

Apply now!

An application can be made by accessing 'Appliance Replacement Offer' online or by ringing 1300 601 795.

*The offer applies to selected fridge and television models.

Property inspections

At Mission Australia Housing, we are required to do at least two inspections of your property each year. We want to thank you ahead of time for your help agreeing to inspection times and opening your homes so that we can make sure all is running smoothly.

You may notice that we take photos when we do inspections. The wide-angle pictures we take of the rooms in your house and the yard are to record how your property is being looked after. We make a commitment not to take photos that capture any photos or personal information in your home.

Further your education with TAFE

TAFE is offering 'Educational Pathways' to those who would like to further their studies or complete unfinished courses. There is a variety of courses to choose from including trades, hairdressing, beauty, horticulture, etc. Thanks to our partnership with TAFE, many of the courses are free or at a discounted rate.

We will also take close up photos of any possible tenant damage to the property. Whether you or a visitor damaged the property, we will work with you to make sure that the damage is repaired.

We know maintaining your home can sometimes take time and work. This year we want to reward tenants who have continually maintained their properties to a high standard.

We will be sending you all more information about property inspections shortly.

If you are interested please contact GWS's Community Development Officer Kudzi on 1800 269 672 OR Sydney's Community Development Officer Kyle on 02 9509 7202. We can organise face-to-face meetings, as well as tours of the TAFE facilities.

Help stop the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia. Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly. There is evidence that it spreads from person to person.

Good hygiene can prevent infection:

- **washing your hands often with soap and water**
- **using a tissue and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze**
- **avoiding close contact with others, such as touching**

If you become unwell and think you may have symptoms of coronavirus, see your doctor or go to your nearest hospital. If you

have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 000 for urgent medical help.

Visit the Department of Health website for accurate up to date information on this issue:

www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov

Other support services that may be helpful during this time-

Support services	Phone
Lifeline	131114
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
MensLine	1300 789 978
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
headspace	1800 650 890



Clean your home on a budget

(Warning: germaphobes!)

De-gross your sponge

Damp sponges full of little crevices are breeding grounds for germs. At the end of each day, put a damp sponge in the microwave for two minutes. **This will kill 99% of lurking germs.** Leave it in the microwave until it cools down a bit before taking out.

Clogged taps

If your shower head or sink taps are covered in lime scale, fill a sandwich bag with white vinegar, rubber band it over the head or tap and leave it overnight. Once removed, the shower head water will flow more freely.

Shower tiles

Do you have grotty mildew on your shower tiles? Mix lemon juice and baking soda into a paste. Apply to the tiles and grout, then scrub with a bristled tooth brush. This might take some elbow grease but it's cheap and you won't be inhaling noxious fumes in the confined space of your bathroom.

Vacuum carpet deodorizer

If you want to deodorize your carpets or rugs, sprinkle them with baking soda. Let sit for one hour and vacuum. Another good vacuum tip if you have pets that venture outdoors, put a flea collar into the vacuum bag. It will kill any fleas that you have vacuumed up.

Toilet scouring scrub

Plain baking soda can be used as an abrasive to clean sinks, toilets and bath tubs. Just sprinkle the soda and scrub with a damp sponge.



Changing climate, changing times

With the recent extreme weather and fires across Sydney, we can all say that it affected us all in some way. Climate Change is a real topic of discussion for your Community Development Team. Over the coming months we will be developing plans with communities to address Climate Change and the impact it has on us. And we need your help!

If you would like to join a working group to make a difference in your complex and community, please call Kudzi 0491 148 052 or Kyle on 0436 802 610.



Out & about in GWS



GWS Riverstone Festival –

Rides, community stalls, services and fun. **16 May 2020**, 10am-3pm, cnr Park and Pitt Streets.

Blue Mountains Story Telling

Group – Social stories for relaxation. Mondays 1pm, \$10. RSVP on 0468 346 834. 33 Hope Street Blaxland (Belong Blue Mountains Centre).

South West Sydney –

Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre. Activities for everyone including **mosaics, kids and youth programs for after school and holidays, support services, family support**. All welcome, parking available. 11 Ryan Road, Padstow.

Bransgrove Community

Centre – Mission Australia Housing have partnered with the Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre to provide

outreach programs to you! These will include **information forums, meetings, gatherings, gardening and movie nights**. All are welcome to join. Stay tuned for details.



Out & about with Common Ground

Common Ground tenants and volunteer Dave visited our friends at Academy Xi for an afternoon of fun testing **new virtual reality games**. Academy Xi are a skill specific company in design thinking, emerging tech and much, much more. It was a brilliant day and we all loved the experience.

Academy Xi

Where would you like to go for the next outing? Let Kyle know by

texting or calling 0436 802 610.

Staples Bag delivery

Have you ever wanted to go to the Staples Bag at Common Ground but it was too far? We might have a solution to your problem! We want to know if you would be interested to have food from the Staples Bag delivered to your area.



Delivered right to your door

If this is something that interests you, call Kyle on 02 9509 7202 to have a chat and get more information.



Staff changes



There are many changes happening at our GWS office right now! The GWS Housing Operations Team have seen a number of new staff start at the end of 2019, including our Regional Leader. We will be sending out letters to everyone in the next coming weeks advising of any relevant changes to their Housing Officer and the best contact number for any housing related enquiries.

Staff profile – Jo Wirihana

Jo Wirihana has worked with Mission Australia Housing for a year. Here are a few fun facts about Jo.

Favourite colour:

Blue (any shade)

Favourite holiday ever:

Wales. It looks just like my home, New Zealand.

Favourite food:

Pork chop. Marinated and grilled.

Favourite sports teams:

NZ Warriors, All Blacks and Silver Ferns

Favourite thing about working with Mission Australia Housing:

The team and the tenants. I care a lot.

Two words people use to describe you:

Genuine and safe.

Favourite celebrities:

Patrick Swayze and Celine Dion.

If you weren't in this industry, what would you be doing?

A teacher. I used to teach in NZ about the Maori language and culture.

Favourite pastime:

My grandkids mean the world to me.



Ask Jo about Maori culture!

