

Dear Customers

Welcome to the Autumn edition of your Customer Service Newsletter. I hope everyone is keeping safe and well in this current environment. Please keep an eye out for the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey which will be out in April and I encourage you to provide us with your valuable feedback so that we can understand how we can service you better.

Liz Stamatelos

Head of Customer Service

Winbourne Street Mudgee

The next 12-months will see Housing Plus transform a neighbourhood with much needed new social housing for the people of Mudgee. The redevelopment of the site that had four occupied dwellings as well as 13 unoccupied and ageing bed sits is underway with designs progressing for the eight, energy efficient, new two-bedroom homes that will then be built on the site this year. Housing Plus developed a proposal for the redevelopment of the NSW Government owned properties on the corner of Winbourne and Mulgoa Way and an agreement was reached with Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) on the development in late 2021. Housing Plus manage the occupied properties and it was in one of these occupied dwellings where our customers Andrew and Lynette lived in their respective one-bedroom units. With the development of Winbourne Street now a reality, our Housing Officers and Support Coordinators worked closely with Andrew and his sister Sharon, who is his legal guardian, to develop a plan to move Andrew into a suitable home. Key to a successful transition from Winbourne Street to their new units was engaging in strong collaboration between internal Housing Plus teams, external services including, Mudgee Disability Support and Amos Occupational Therapy as well as Andrew and Lynette and their families. During this time Housing Plus was also building four brand new duplex homes in Mudgee, as part of our large affordable house building program, and it was two of these homes that we have recently moved Andrew and his neighbour Lynette into. The suitability of these properties for both their needs, along with the strong and supportive relationship of Andrew and Lynette, has allowed them to remain as neighbours.



"I like my new unit so much that I want to buy it. I will never leave here. Thank you Housing Plus for the new unit and assisting me to move, it is very quiet in this street and the unit is huge and very modern and I can make it my own place with a fenced in small yard at the back." ANDREW

"I love my new unit, it is extraordinary and I will never leave it. The move to the new unit was a very positive experience for me, it has helped with my anxiety and reduced my stress levels and I feel safe. Housing Plus have been very helpful through this process and have answered all of my questions. The staff have been wonderful. The new unit is larger than my old one which is great when friends and family come to visit me. Thank you Housing Plus for this opportunity you have made a difference in my life."

LYNETTE



Phone numbers

Bathurst	6331 7059
Mudgee	6372 7816
Orange and Dubbo	1800 603 300
Report A Repair	1300 435 144
Domestic Violence Services	1300 384 357
Domestic Violence Services - Dubbo, Mudgee & Central	
North West NSW	1800 940 406
Homelessness Services	1800 674 474
Homelessness After Hours Service	
Link2Home	1800 152 152
Opportunity Pathways	1800 940 409
Initial Transition Service	1800 603 300
Men's Behaviour Change	1800 603 300
Together Home	1800 603 300



Email

Report a Repair
repairs@housingplus.com.au

Tenancy Enquiries
tenancy@housingplus.com.au

General Enquiries
info@housingplus.com.au

Domestic Violence
DV@housingplus.com.au

Homelessness Service
hsm@housingplus.com.au

Opportunity Pathways
op@housingplus.com.au

Initial Transition Services
its@housingplus.com.au



Office Hours

Orange 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri
Bathurst 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri
Dubbo 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri
Mudgee 10am - 2pm Tues and Thurs

To ensure we can provide the level of service you require please check our website for opening hours as they may change. We ask that you please book an appointment to ensure your Housing Officer can meet with you. Your Housing Officer is available on their mobile during business hours.

Profile: Our Support Coordinators

Our Support Coordination Team of Bec, Corey, Hannah and Heather were announced as the runners up in the 2021 PowerHousing Academy Scholarships and National Awards in the category of Tenant Engagement and Social Inclusion and Scholarship Award in November 2021. This award recognises outstanding programs contributing to tenant enrichment, encompassing social inclusion within the local community and resulting in community development.

The nomination of our Support Coordination Team highlighted the collaboration between the support coordination team, internal teams and external services working together with tenants

to address issues and deliver outcomes that are not easily or effectively achieved by working alone. A collaborative practice is now central to the way we work with a focus on sustaining tenancies, enabling independence and building positive relationships with our customers.

The 2021 PowerHousing Academy Scholarships and National Awards provides an opportunity for members to showcase their staff and their achievements. The awards acknowledge our sector and the community at large, as well as highlighting the difference that PowerHousing members make to the lives of tenants, local communities and our nation.



Bec

Corey



Hannah

Heather



In reflection as the Support Coordination Team for Housing Plus we feel privileged and grateful to work with our clients to achieve goals and positive outcomes. We assist when challenges arise and show the clients how to find practical solutions and options to ensure the client has choice and control of decision making."

Have your say on your Community and the Services it needs

Do you have views on the cost and quality of homes in your region? Are you, a friend or family member struggling to find the support services you require? Are you interested in promoting the wellbeing of your community? Researchers from the University of South Australia, working in partnership with Housing Plus and KPPM Strategy, are examining the service needs of communities in this region and are holding feedback sessions and we invite you to attend a 1 hour discussion.

Bathurst: Thursday 28 April 1pm
Mudgee: Friday 29 April 1pm
Dubbo: Monday 2 May 1pm
Orange: Tuesday 3 May 1pm

For more information visit:
<https://www.housingplus.com.au/futures-2030>

**Futures
2030**

Emmaville Orange:

The next stage of new Affordable Housing



Following on from the success of our Riverside development in Bathurst, the Housing Plus team have been busy finalising Emmaville in Orange, the next stage of our affordable housing development. Emmaville consists of 18 brand new one- and two-bedroom homes. Overlooking the lush grounds of Waratah Sports Club, Emmaville has been built to meet the needs of those over the age of 55, with accessibility and a level, step free design a key feature for customers to age in place. Proximity to recreation opportunities is another key feature, with residents able to take pleasant walks around the areas wetlands and nature strips, or for those who prefer organised sport, touch football, soccer, rugby, cricket and AFL

competitions all take place on the Waratah Sports Fields. Emmaville has been built to a seven-star NatHERS rating, and benefits from energy efficient appliances, the installation of solar panels, as well as being well insulated to keep the temperature within the homes consistent and energy bills down. Each home has an enclosed backyard, modern interior and private parking spot, and is only a short 200m walk to the North Orange Shopping Centre, where residents can access Woolworths, a pharmacy, butcher, bakery, newsagent, and numerous takeaway food options. We look forward to welcoming the new tenants, who are drawn from the existing NSW Housing Register, into these homes in May.

Our Customer Satisfaction Survey is coming earlier this year

Each year in conjunction with the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) NSW, the industry peak body for community housing providers in NSW and NRSCH, the National Regulatory System for Community Housing we carry out a Customer Satisfaction Survey.

The survey is an opportunity for you to let us know what we do well and where we can improve. It provides us with a better understanding of what is important to you so we can plan and adapt our organisation to better service and support you.

You can expect your survey to arrive in the post in April and it you can either complete that hard-copy survey or use the username and password on the front page to complete the survey online.

We value your feedback and encourage you to complete the survey before the closing date in late May. We are continually looking for ways to improve

our service to our customers and look forward to reviewing the feedback that comes from the survey.

In response to last year's survey, we have filtered your feedback into several key projects that we are rolling out this year including our review of our complaints and feedback process as well as our repairs and maintenance review. With complaints and feedback, the survey identified that you want to know how to navigate making a complaint or providing feedback and what the process will be once it has been submitted. Our review of our Complaints and Feedback process has already identified that we need to make the process simpler and clearly communicate the process as well as better communicating how your complaint or feedback will be handled by us. Our repairs and maintenance review has also commenced.



Get Involved

There are many ways you can get involved and support your community. Housing Plus has some great opportunities for volunteers and fundraising in Orange, Bathurst and Dubbo. So, if you're interested, please visit our website or email Rochelle at rochelle@housingplus.com.au or call on **1800 603 300**.

Case study: cadetship



In mid-2021 we launched our Cadetship Program with thanks to funding from the NSW Government and Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) NSW. This exciting program provides an opportunity for one of our tenants or a social housing tenant to commence as a cadet by undertaking paid employment with Housing Plus for 12-months in our tenancy team and study a Certificate IV in Housing. So we thought we would hear from our 2021 cadet Keir Shereb about her experience in the program so far.

What prompted you to apply for the Housing Plus Cadetship Program? I have always been passionate about community services and I had previously studied for a certificate III in Community Service. This cadetship offered the opportunity to further my studies whilst working gaining real life, relevant experience.

What has been the best part of the cadetship program? Being part of a team all working towards the same goals and the relationships that I have developed with my co-workers. Housing Plus is a great team and as a cadet you can't fail with the support that this program has offered.

What had been your greatest learning? The exposure to all different areas of community housing and how they support each other to support customers.

What has been your greatest challenge? 2021 was a tough year for so many with the impacts of COVID but working from

home whilst also trying to gain hands-on experience as part of my training has been challenging. Thankfully CHIA (who deliver the training portion of the cadetship) worked through ways to support cadets in the training process and overall, the support both from CHIA and Housing Plus has ensured that I succeed in this program.

What is next for you after your cadetship program comes to an end in June? I hope to gain full-time employment in community services. I really enjoyed the training the course provided in domestic and family violence services, so that is an area I would like to move into.

Do you have anything you would like to say to future cadets? I didn't expect to be studying and come June I will be qualified with Certificate IV in Housing so whilst working and studying can seem overwhelming, the cadetship offers great support and everyone wants to help and see you succeed, so give it a go!



Repairs and Maintenance

Smoke Detector and Electrical Testing in your Home

Your smoke alarm should be the first thing to go off at the first sign of fire.

What is it that we do?

We test your smoke alarms and carry out electrical testing at least once every 12 months. Smoke detector annual compliance servicing is mandatory, and you will find the details of this in your lease sign up pack where it outlines your obligations as well as our obligations to ensure the delivery of this service. At this testing we test both your smoke alarm and the Residual-Current Device (RCD).

Why is it important?

Smoke alarms are critical, life-saving devices that provide an early warning of the presence of smoke and fire. Therefore, they're compulsory in all residential properties, including rental premises. An RCD is or a Residual-Current Device a sensitive safety device that switches off electricity automatically if there is a fault. It is designed to protect against the risks of electrocution and fire caused by earth faults.

We need your help!

To conduct the fire alarm and electrical testing, we need the following things from you section. Please change the text to: In your lease packs,

you will see in the NSW Residential tenancy ACT 2010, you have an obligation as a tenant to follow advice from your real estate or landlord where it advises mandatory fire alarm and electrical testing. We will contact you to book in an appointment for this testing.

If for any reason we are unable to attend on the allocated day, please ensure you notify Housing Plus ASAP so we can arrange and schedule a new time for this important testing to be carried out.

At the test appointment we must gain entry to your premises. The testing generally takes around 30 minutes where we inspect the electrical and fire alarms in your property. This is conducted by approved contractors that follow Fire Safety Legislations. This will be completed and won't need retesting **unless** of an emergency or **fault, for a further 12 months.**

Please do not alter or change any electrical services or fire alarms without permission from Housing Plus who follow the advice of certified electricians and fire safety wardens (the except to this is light bulbs, you may change your own light bulbs).

Our emergency repairs and maintenance line is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

YOUR HOUSING OFFICER'S CONTACT DETAILS

ORANGE

Kirsty Marcantelli 0411 865 604

Harmony Meath 0423 404 533

Chris Maybin 0435 798 571

Melissa Evans 0411 913 368

BATHURST

Bree-Anne Tremain 0401 416 750

MUDGEES

Sherry Fleming 0401 456 850

Debbie Hughes 0427 914 367

Helen Franks 0435 182 644

DUBBO

Sonya Mooring 0402 054 840

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

We are committed to delivering our services to the satisfaction of our customers. Your opinions are important to us because we use them to improve our services to the community and investigate and respond to any issues of concern. You can contact us with your feedback or complaint by telephoning our Customer Service Team on 1800 603 300, emailing us at tenancy@housingplus.com.au or sending us a letter to Housing Plus PO Box 968 Orange NSW 2800.

HOUSINGPLUS.COM.AU

1800 603 300

@HousingPlusAU

housingplusau

@HousingPlusAU



Did you know Housing Plus has an Education Grant?

The Housing Plus Education Grant Program provides financial assistance for Housing Plus tenants or household members who are enrolling, or continuing, in education.

Grants are valued up to \$1,500 for the academic year and are available to primary and high school children, adults engaging in vocational education and training (VET); and adults attending university.

The grants for school students can be used on a home or laptop computer, Microsoft Office software package and associated equipment. The grant may also be used to purchase private tuition or coaching; textbooks, workbooks, study guides and stationery; specialist equipment (e.g., art, music or photographic-related); course costs, excursions, study camps, sport, or special education.

Housing Plus Educational Grants are non-cash, instead recipients are reimbursed for education

or study related expenses, or a supplier can be paid directly.

Who Can Apply for Grant?

Applicants must be:

- Living in a Housing Plus property or living in crisis accommodation
- An Australian citizen or permanent resident
- Not earning an income higher than the NSW social housing eligibility limits (if earning an income).
- Currently studying, or enrolled to study, in formal education or training.
- Able to demonstrate a commitment to achieving your goal.

If you are interested in finding out more about our Education Grants and to find out when our next grant round will open please keep an eye out on our website <https://www.housingplus.com.au/housing-services/educationgrant/>