

# COMMUNITYLINK

SPRING EDITION

September 2019



## Hello from Andrew

Welcome to the Spring edition of Community Link.

We have had a busy few months with lots of wonderful community events and activities.

In particular, our 'No Place Like Home' art exhibition has evolved to now take place in five locations around Northern Sydney. This year, we have had over 70 artists contribute artworks with around half of the participants from our resident community. I thank you all for your support of this valuable art exhibition that helps us to raise awareness about the importance of safe and affordable housing for all. Take a look at pictures from the opening nights on our Facebook page. The final art exhibition this year is the Northern Beaches event, Thursday 26 September, 6pm - 9pm.



I am also excited to announce the opening of a new housing project, Beecroft House. In partnership with Women's Community Shelters and other partners, Link Housing has leased an underused facility in the Hornsby area to use it as accommodation for up to 20 women over 55 years old for a two-year period. It is an innovative housing solution that helps us to house more people in need. All women residing in the house will be supported to find safe, secure and affordable housing to go onto at the end of the two-year period.

In November, we will celebrate Link Housing's 35 Year Anniversary with a fun event that incorporates our End of Year Tenant Party and Education Scholarship Awards night. Read more on page 4 and take a look at our other events coming up too. We look forward to sharing the day with you, your family and friends.

Finally, we'd like to recognise the huge success of NAIDOC week: 'Voice. Treaty. Truth' celebrations across our communities, held in July. Our staff celebrated through various cultural activities, such as an art workshop with respected Aboriginal artist Bibi Barba, whom we collaborated with on an artwork; and viewing documentaries about inspirational Indigenous Australians. Recently, Link Housing began establishing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to provide a framework for our organisation to support the national reconciliation movement. Have a look at our journey at:

<https://www.linkhousing.org.au/link-housing-celebrates-naidoc-week-2019/>

I look forward to saying hello again soon.

**Andrew McAnulty** - CEO, Link Housing

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# MEET LINK

In each issue of *Community Link*, we introduce one of our team members to help you get to know us a bit better. In this issue we profile Kerri-Ann, our Responsive Maintenance Officer.



Kerri-Ann is from our Assets and Maintenance team. Before joining Link Housing in 2018, Kerri-Ann worked in commercial and residential real estate for over six years.

### What does your role as a Responsive Maintenance Officer involve?

My role involves receiving tenants calls, collecting information about issues that arise and hearing tenants' expectations, and then making sure we meet them as closely as possible. For example, with plumbing or electrical faults, I'll source and send tradesman to fix the problem.

### What do you like most about your role?

I like the problem-solving aspect most. By asking the right questions it helps to identify the problem quickly and find the right solution. In some cases, I can guide the tenant to fix something like losing power, and they find that empowering and learn something.

### When are you happiest?

I'm happiest when I'm with animals. I have two dogs and three chickens - so I'm really happy.

### What's your favourite program at Link Housing, and why?

Our Community Greening program is wonderful for so many reasons. Tenants who enjoy gardening get outside in the fresh air, connect with each other and create gardens. This is important given that many live in apartments, it helps make them feel safe and makes the properties look great.

The program is going from strength to strength. We also run an annual gardening competition that all tenants are invited to enter. It is free and there are several different categories, even a 'Best kids' garden. You can apply to enter on our website or complete and return the form enclosed.

### What's your life motto?

Slow down and don't panic.



## TAG CORNER

For those of you who don't know, TAG stands for Tenant Advisory Group. We are a group of Link

Housing residents who volunteer our time to give Link Housing feedback on its services, programs and policies. We aim to represent the tenant community.

This issue of Community Link, we wanted to invite you all to support the *R U OK?* campaign. The campaign encourages people to start an *R U OK?* conversation that could help save someone's life. Suicide rates are on the rise and the more we can do to listen and support one another the better. Visit the website for more information: [www.ruok.org.au](http://www.ruok.org.au). You can also access support from Lifeline ([www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)) and Beyond Blue (1300 224 636).

On another note, Link Housing is currently going through a process of making sure we have up to date and signed Consent Forms from all residents. The Consent Form allows Link Housing to access your income details directly

from Centrelink and calculate your rent without you having to send documents at the time of your income review each year. Centrelink recently updated the form which is why even if you have signed the form previously, you may be asked to sign the form again.

By signing the form, social housing tenants who receive Centrelink payments won't need to send Link Housing documentation during the six-monthly income reviews. Instead, Link Housing will get the information from Centrelink and send a letter confirming your rent based on this income information. All tenants will have the opportunity to let Link Housing know if they don't think the rent is correct and should be reviewed. If you would like more information or a form, please contact our Client Services Team, your Housing Manager, or email [enquiries@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkhousing.org.au).

We are delighted to have a mix of residents from all areas and backgrounds on our TAG. We welcome new tenants or transferring residents to join also. Get in touch by calling Natasha on 9412 5111 or email us at: [TAG@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:TAG@linkhousing.org.au).

## TENANT STORY

# WINNIE'S WINNING FORMULA

We recently featured resident, Winnie, in our website blog. For those who may have missed it, we share her story with you here too.

Winnie is a long-time Link Housing tenant that has made thousands of her famous lemon butters and decadent jams to sell for charity over the years. If you've not tried her homemade lemon butter, then you haven't eaten lemon butter.

Almost 82 years old, Winnie with a group of seven friends have been raising money for the Australian Heart/Lung Transplants Association (AHLTA) for about 30 years, after hearing one young man's journey of survival as a transplant recipient.

The group sell their homemade wares at markets from Manly to St Ives, and even Gosford. Winnie makes up to 90 jars of jam and lemon butter to sell at a time which have won multiple awards. Winnie also crochets hand towels for their charity stall. The group donated \$17,000 from last year's fundraising efforts.

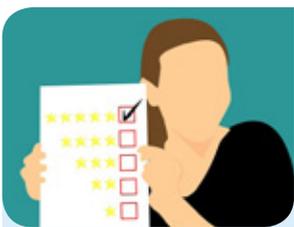
A rainbow of fruit finds its way into her jams, from strawberries, cherries and passionfruit, to pineapple, mandarin and mango. Winnie recommends lemon butter on toast, fresh bread, in tarts and even on ice-cream. She said: "The lemon butter is the most popular. At the last St Ives market, I sold 14 jars!".



“ You name it, I will have a go at making it. ”

Winnie has been living independently since the 1980s. She's battled her own health problems: born with dislocated hips in the 1930's with scant medical knowledge of her condition and raised a young family during many years of her now late husband's serious health concerns. So, Winnie understands the importance of being able to stand on your own two feet: "It's about helping them get started back in life; for example, this year, the rehabilitation house needs two special chairs - they cost \$4000 each - so, we are raising money for those," Winnie said.

So, whether she is helping heart and lung transplant recipients climb bridges to better health or overcoming the obstacles which life throws at her, we can all find inspiration in Winnie's zest for life. If you're interested in purchasing Winnie's award-winning jams, then visit her stall at: The Corso, Manly NSW (Outside Humphreys Newsagency) on Friday 4 October 2019, from 8.30am - 2.30pm and Friday 29 November 2019, from 8.30am - 2.30pm.



## SERVICE UPDATES

### Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Thank you to all residents who completed our annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This year's Survey was an important one given the amount of change and growth for our organisation and resident community. We were an organisation responsible for housing around 3000 people to now housing close to 6000. We are humbled by the positive feedback you shared with us through the survey, and motivated by the areas that you told us we need to improve in. We will share more about our improvement initiatives in following issues of CommunityLink. In the meantime, if you have any questions about your tenancy or would like to give more feedback - please contact us on 9412 5111 or visit our website ([www.linkhousing.org.au](http://www.linkhousing.org.au)). Our website has our Policies, Fact Sheets, Tenant Handbook and forms for you to use to anonymously give feedback, make a complaint or appeal a decision.

### Changes to Domestic Violence Legislation

Did you know that there has been a change to the *Domestic Violence Provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010*? The change is positive for those experiencing domestic violence as it makes it possible for victims to exit a residential tenancy agreement without having to pay compensation and losing rent. Link Housing is a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace and committed to supporting residents affected by domestic violence. If you would like to know more, please email [enquiries@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkhousing.org.au).

# COMMUNITY MATTERS



## Education Scholarships

Have you been wanting to learn a new skill but aren't sure how to make it happen? Link Housing's Scholarship Program can help you by covering the cost of your education, sports activities or special interests. Scholarships are open to school children, TAFE or university students and people of all ages who: live in a Link Housing home, have up-to-date rent and water repayments, or have a payment plan if they do owe money to Link Housing.

There's still time to apply this year. We've received 75 applications so far, applications close on **30 September 2019**. Check out the *Application form* attached and the *Scholarship Program fact sheet* and *Education Program guidelines* on our website at: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/do-something-you-love-with-an-education-scholarship/>

## Granny Smith Festival

Link Housing is proud to be an official sponsor of this year's City of Ryde's Granny Smith Festival, as we've done for several years. The annual Granny Smith Festival began in 1985. It celebrates the life and legacy of one of Ryde districts most famous citizens, Maria Ann Smith - aka Granny Smith. In 1868, she 'accidentally' grew the first batch of little green apples that bear her name and are now are grown all over the world. This event is one of Sydney's largest street festivals, attracting over 90,000 people and one not to miss!

Come along on the day and join the Link Housing team as we walk in the famous Granny Smith parade. There are hundreds of activities and stands to visit also.

Date: **Saturday 19 October 2019** from 9am - 8.30pm.  
For full details, see the Granny Smith Festival page at: <https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Events/Granny-Smith-Festival>

## Get your dream job

Link Housing knows how important it is to have the right support when you're looking for your dream job. We invite you to attend a free one-on-one session with Olympus Solutions. Please see the dates below:

- Wednesday 25 September, 10am to 12pm
- Wednesday 23 October, 10am to 12pm
- Wednesday 20 November, 10am to 12pm

All sessions are at our Link Housing Chatswood office at Level 10, 67 Albert Avenue, Chatswood. To see if you are eligible and to book in, please contact Suzanne on 9412 5111 or email: [enquiries@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkhousing.org.au)

## End of Year Tenant Party

Our annual End of Year Tenant Party will be even bigger and better this year as we celebrate our 35 year anniversary as well. We are looking to have an outdoor event in November that will be free for all residents to attend. Look out for more information about the Party and your invite in the mail soon.

## What's on



Take a look at the other events coming up:

- **Friday 20 September 2019 - Home Sweet**

Link Housing's second annual charity sleepover, *Home Sweet 2019*, is on again at Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club. Housing staff, management and directors, will join local business and community "leaders and influencers" to sleep over to raise awareness and funds to help end homelessness. Find out more at: <https://linkhousing-home-sweet-2019.raisely.com/>

- **Thursday 26 September 2019 - Art Exhibition**

If you haven't made it to our 'No Place Like Home' art exhibition yet, there is one more opportunity to experience this unique event. Come along to the opening night on Thursday 26 September 2019, 6pm - 9pm at the Creative Space Curl Curl, or visit during the exhibition opening hours from Wednesday 25 to Saturday 28 September, 11am - 4pm. Call Natasha at Link Housing on 9412 5111 or email [enquiries@linkhousing.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkhousing.org.au). RSVP on our Facebook event at: <https://facebook.com/events/656686498116396/>

- **Thursday 21 November 2019 - Link Housing AGM**

Link Housing's Annual General Meeting will be held in Chatswood again this year. If you are interested in attending or becoming a Link Housing member, call 9412 5111 or go to our website to find out more: <https://www.linkhousing.org.au/about/governance/memberships/>