

# Alliance News

October 2019/Issue #7

Alliance Housing (WA) Newsletter



**Alliance Housing (WA)**

*Supporting Affordable Housing  
in the South West*

## Tenant Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who returned their Tenant Survey. 130 surveys were sent out and 44 were completed and returned to us. Results were very positive, with 90% of tenants being satisfied with Alliance Housing's overall service. 98% of tenants believed that housing inspections were dealt with in a good or very good manner. Last year 26% of tenants advised they did not know or were unsure of how to make a complaint, this year it has reduced to 12%. (The Complaint procedure is on our website or please contact us). All results will be included in our Annual Report. Alliance Housing has 130 properties in which 228 people are housed. Tenant surveys help us to know the areas where we need to improve. There were some issues noted on the survey forms but unfortunately they were submitted anonymously and therefore staff are unable to assist, please contact us if you would like to discuss any issues.

## WINNER OF BUNNINGS VOUCHER

**Congratulations to Crystal.** Crystal's name was drawn for this year's 'Tenant survey winner of a \$50 Bunnings voucher.



## Welcome

Alliance Housing welcomes new members to our Board of Management.



Murali Mahendran



John Benson

Please also welcome our new part-time Tenancy Officers



Kathy Crossman



Rebecca McLean

Alliance Housing AGM 16th October 2019

### YOUR INVITATION

Join us at 11.30am prior to the AGM to hear from

Michelle MacKenzie, CEO SHELTER WA



Michelle Mackenzie, Shelter WA CEO understands that championing more affordable housing choice in this State, will lead to better outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and those seeking housing security. Prior to working at Shelter WA, Michelle was an Executive Director at the Department of Regional Development, led the regional community relations team at Rio Tinto, and was an Executive Manager at the WA Local Government Association (WALGA). Originally from Melbourne, Michelle has worked on remote Kimberley Aboriginal communities and in the Pilbara, where she managed the Town of Port Hedland's community services and development functions. Michelle attends numerous committees where Members of Parliament are in attendance and will be able to inform attendees of the current trends in housing and homelessness issues that are affecting the Community Housing Sector.



**BUNBURY WATERFRONT—UNDER CANVAS**  
**TUES 25 FEBRUARY 2020 11am—7pm**

Some things we have thought that might be of interest to you...

- ◆ Ideas for making Gifts from things around the house
- ◆ Arranging a birthday party or celebration on a budget
- ◆ Tips and tricks to save money and make your dollars go further
- ◆ Budget buying and budget meals
- ◆ DIY Fix-it around the house & mend toys, clothes etc
- ◆ How do I do that myself? eg set TV, use mobile features, set timers etc

The Smart 2 Ask organisers are seeking ideas of what you would like to see, hear or learn at the expo or any money saving ideas, you may know. If you have any ideas please complete the form and return for your chance to win a prize.

Community  
Awareness  
Expo



**At Graham Bricknell Music Shell, Bunbury**

**Showcasing Bunbury community service organisations.**

**Friday October 25,  
10am - 2pm**

**Come and have a look at what they have to offer!**

## CONGRATULATIONS

The Board members and staff of Alliance Housing would like to congratulate one of our ex-tenants and their family, who was housed by Alliance Housing for the past nineteen years. The family has now purchased a new unit through Keystart.

To become a Home Owner has long been the dream of the family and to overcome adversity and attain the home is a wonderful result. Community Housing is always seen as a pathway to home ownership, if that is the aspiration of our clients.

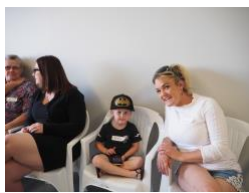
We wish the family well for the future.



## Tenant BBQ

Alliance Housing recently held their third Tenant BBQ. Another group of our tenants were able to meet staff, Board members and other tenants.

We look forward to the next one in 2020.



## Friendly reminder



We have a suggestion box on our front reception desk, please feel free to make a suggestion on how we can improve or even advise us if there is something we do well. THANK YOU!!

## Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS)

As an initiative Alliance Housing has started to hold small group Tenant Forums to discuss if any of our tenants are experiencing hardship, in what areas and how Alliance Housing may be able to assist. One of the areas identified recently was the increased cost of utilities. From that meeting, staff have found some information concerning HUGS.

HUGS assists Western Australian utilities customers who are in financial hardship and are unable to pay their utility bills. The purpose of HUGS is to assist customers in financial hardship with their connection to essential services. A key principle of HUGS is that customers and utility providers share responsibility for managing situations of initial payment difficulty and financial hardship. They must work together to develop manageable payment arrangements, which will provide the greatest assistance to customers, with the expressed purpose of avoiding disconnection and preventing debt escalation. Customers may be eligible for financial assistance through HUGS where payment arrangements and other hardship strategies have been exhausted. Utility providers will phase in on the following dates:

1 July 2019 - Water Corporation

29 July 2019 - All gas retailers

12 August 2019 - Aqwest, Busselton Water, Horizon Power

26 August 2019 - Synergy

Please contact your relevant utility provider to discuss your options to stay connected. If you require further assistance please contact the Financial Counsellors Association of WA Helpline on 1800 007 007.

You may be **eligible** for HUGS if your utility provider assesses you as being in the following situation: - You contact your utility provider to discuss your outstanding debt and you are assessed by your utility provider as being in financial hardship and not in payment difficulty;

- you have exhausted all your options with the utility provider and enter into a payment arrangement for at least 180 days to address the outstanding debt; and  
- after completion of the payment arrangement, if your outstanding bill is still more than \$300. Then you may be eligible for up to \$580 per financial year but the grant must not exceed 85% of the amount outstanding on your utility account.

Not all residential customers are eligible for HUGS, you may **not be eligible** if:

- You do not reside at the supply address
- You have used all your grant limit for the financial year
- You are assessed as not being in financial hardship
- You are a customer with bottled gas
- For Water Corporation, Busselton Water & Aqwest customers, HUGS is only available for the owner occupiers of residential properties or
- You live in an Aboriginal community and have your water managed by the Water Corporation.

## Useful Community Resources

### Anglicare WA

95 Hudson Road, Withers WA 6230 Phone: (08) 9720 9200

AnglicareWA is a not for profit community service organisation.

They support people, families and their communities to cope with the challenges of life by building their resilience and capacity.

### Assistance Program For Bunbury Financial Counselling

Phone: 9792 1900 Address: 15 Molloy Street, Bunbury WA 6230

### Bunbury Community Legal Centre

Lotteries House 1st Floor, 101 Victoria Street Phone: 9791 3206

Monday - Friday 08:30am-4:30pm

The service aims to principally support disadvantaged, marginalised or low income people. It is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation providing legal advice, information and mediation to people across the whole South West.



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U2/93 Albert Rd, Bunbury WA  
PO Box 1505, Bunbury 6231  
Phone: 9791 5438  
admin@alliancehousing.com.au