



**Tenant Artist,
Stephanie**

FEEL THE MOMENT OF THE ARTS

**Winter
2022**

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From the General Manager



Kaya, Wanju (hello and welcome in Noongar) to the Winter edition of Home Stories and what a bumper edition it feels like!

We are so pleased to bring you the story of our Tenant Art Showcase in May which was absolutely a highlight of the year so far with more than 40 amazing tenant artists sharing their work with more than 90 guests. A huge congratulations to everyone involved.

The Noongar welcome in this edition is to bring awareness to important dates on the calendar for indigenous and non-indigenous people - National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and NAIDOC week. Our team participated in activities during NRW in May to support the theme of *'Be brave, make change and tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation'*.

We took part in a virtual breakfast hosted by Reconciliation WA, went on the walk for Reconciliation

through Kings Park and the Reconciliation Working Group attended the Boola Bardip Museum for a story journey. NAIDOC week is from July 3-10 this year and we encourage you to get out in your community and attend a NAIDOC week event.

Also in May, we had a visit from our national Housing Choices Board, who took time to share lunch with staff and members of the Advisory Committee of Tenants. This was really the first opportunity we have had to all be in the same room since the fateful month of March 2020 and it was a wonderful opportunity to share stories and experiences.

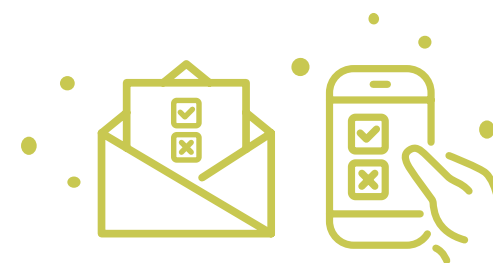
In a difficult time in the housing sector, we are excited to announce that Housing Choices WA has been awarded an \$8.14 million grant from the State Government's Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP). This funding will help us build 49 new homes in Greenfields, Falcon and Viveash and will assist with social and affordable housing shortages in these areas. With the building sector still

experiencing shortages and delays across trades and supplies, this is going to be a challenge, but we are up for it!

Lastly, we are excited to hear your views again in our 2022 Tenant Survey. We really do take pride in our work, and your views and suggestions on what we do well and what we can do better really are important to us, so if you could please take the time to do the survey, either online or on paper, that would be really appreciated.

Stay safe and well,

Natalie Sangalli
General Manager WA



Have your say about Housing Choices WA - Tenant Survey coming soon!

Tell us what you think about our services by completing the 2022 Tenant Survey and you will go in the running to win one of two, \$200 gift vouchers or 1 of 10, \$50 gift vouchers.

All tenants will receive a survey in the post in the coming weeks with a reply-paid envelope included. Tenants can also complete the survey online.

All you need to do is complete the survey and contact details form and send it to CHIA NSW in the reply-paid envelope and you will go in the prize draw.

The survey **closes on Friday 2 September** so please complete your online or paper survey before this date.

The information we collect from the survey will be used to improve how we deliver services. To make sure you feel comfortable sharing your views, you can choose to complete the survey anonymously.

As a reminder, please do not use the survey to raise urgent tenancy issues as we do not receive results immediately. If you raised an urgent issue in your last survey response, or have one now, please contact your Tenancy Officer directly to resolve the matter.

Please call to let us know if you need another copy of the survey or more information on how to complete it.



New Housing Choices WA Facebook page

We are excited to announce the launch of our Housing Choices WA Facebook page.

We understand the importance of giving you real-time updates about our services and we know that tenants are looking for ways to connect online.

Go to **facebook.com/HChoicesWA** on your web browser or search for Housing Choices Western Australia on your Facebook app to find us.

Like and follow our page for information about events and activities for tenants, local resources, tenant stories, tenancy tips and more.

We are also keen to get your ideas on what you would like to see on our Facebook page.

Get in touch with **Amy** our **Tenant Consultation and Communications Officer** on **0429 858 127** or via **amy.kidner@hcau.org.au** to give us your feedback. You can also send us a message via our Facebook page.





Housing Choices WA General Manager Natalie Sangalli (centre) congratulated artists, George Newman and Hodette Gazzzone on their joint second place prize.



Ursula Baylis (centre) awarded the Dean Baylis Memorial Prize to Ian Goodhew (left) and Allan Tinley.

Our 2022 Tenant Art Showcase



There was plenty of love in the room for our tenant artists who shared their artwork and stories at the annual Tenant Art Showcase at the Gary Holland Community Centre in Rockingham in May.

More than 90 tenants, stakeholders and staff came together to celebrate the artist's creativity and talents. For the first time, the tenant artists had the opportunity to sell their artwork on the day. More than \$2000 worth of art was sold which will make a big difference to the lives of our tenants and encourage their creative passions.

This year the art showcase almost doubled, with 43 tenant artists and 130 pieces of artwork on show.

As well as being inspired by the art, all attendees had the opportunity to vote on their favourite artwork for the People's Choice Award. Joint first prize went to *Embracing Chaos* by Susan Gresham and *Egyptian God* by Jay Downey.

Joint second prize went to *Chairs and Table* by George Newman and *Cat Cathedral* by Hodette Gazzzone. Attendees also selected Edward Wake as their favourite artist of the show.

This year also marked the first Dean Baylis Memorial Prize. The special prize honours the life and work of one of our tenant artists who sadly passed away shortly after last year's art event. Dean was a joyful tenant artist who was passionate about giving

back to the community. Dean's mum Ursula raised funds from the sale of Dean's art to donate to Housing Choices for the award. Ursula, who attended the art show, selected winners based on which artist she thought had captured Dean's spirit. The joint winners of the first Dean Baylis Memorial Prize were Allan Tinley and Ian Goodhew.

The Housing Choices WA Community Engagement Team thanks all the artists, families and staff who assisted in planning the event. It took a lot of courage for the artists to share their art and their personal stories, and we were honoured to celebrate their talent and creativity.

We look forward to next year's event and encourage all our artistic and creative tenants to get involved in the future.



1. Noongar woman Kerry-Ann Winmar performing a Welcome to Country.

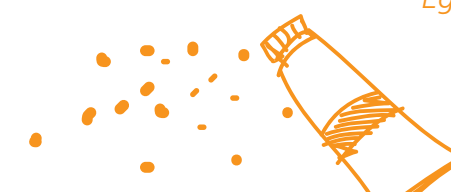
2. Crochet tenant artist Jenny (centre) with Tenant Engagement Team members Alex Kepes (left) and Amy Kidner (right).

3. Tenant artist Doug with his drawing of a Ford.

4. Tenant artist Janet with her colourful paintings.

5. Tenant artist Jillian with her floral paintings.

6. Joint first place winner of the People's Choice Award was *Egyptian God* by Jay Downey.



Avoiding mould in the home



As we head into winter it is important to proactively prevent mould growing in your home.

Typically, the cold weather creates the perfect environment for mould growth. Hot showers, use of tumble dryers, cooking comfort foods like soups and stews, all while the doors and windows remain closed create the perfect environment for mould to grow.

Mould, also known as mildew, can develop on, within or underneath walls, ceilings, and other surfaces in homes. If left untreated, mould can cause structural damage to the property and can damage your belongings. Mould can also have a serious impact on people's health.

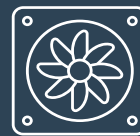
Housing Choices WA is responsible for addressing mould caused by structural issues such as a leak in the roof, a faulty pipe, malfunctioning gutters or poorly working ventilation fixtures like exhaust fans or windows.

Tenants are responsible for mould caused by poor ventilation in the home, so it is important to know how to avoid the build-up of mould during your day-to-day activities.



How to prevent mould in your home:

- turn on your exhaust fan and open windows when showering or cooking.
- make sure there is air flow in the room when drying clothes inside.
- wipe up condensation on surfaces, walls or windows.
- avoid storing water-absorbent materials such as books, cardboard boxes and soft furnishings in a damp space.



We ask tenants to keep an eye out for water penetration into ceilings, walls or floors because of a leak or poor drainage. Signs of this kind of issue include peeling paint, rotting wood or a damp smell.

If you have this type of damp or mould in your home, or you have a mould problem you can't fix yourself, please contact the **Maintenance Hotline** on **1800 203 383**.

Your Winter maintenance reminders



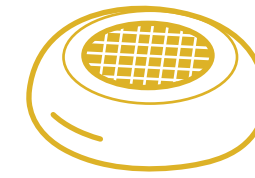
Gutters

Have you checked your gutters?

Gutters that are clogged by debris and leaf matter may cause water to leak into your property. As the rain and winter weather hits, it's important to check your roof and gutters for leaf matter.

We recommend standing as far back as possible to get a good vantage point of your gutters to see if there is any debris or build up. This is a lot safer than getting on a ladder.

If your gutters need cleaning due to leaves and natural debris, please call the **Maintenance Hotline** on **1800 203 383** so we can have them cleaned.



Gully

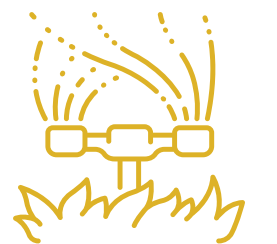
Have you checked your gully?

The overflow **gully** on your property is connected to the wastewater system.

You will usually find it outside near your bathroom, kitchen or laundry and it's designed to release any wastewater away from your home in the event of a sewer blockage.

Please help protect your home and take a moment to check your gully to ensure it is not covered by pot plants, landscaping, or other objects and is free of leaf matter.

If you are not sure where your gully is located, ask a Tenancy Officer during your next inspection.



Have you turned your sprinklers off?

The Winter Sprinkler Ban **came into effect on Wednesday 1 June** and will **end on Wednesday 31 August**.

The Water Corporation can issue warnings and fines for ignoring the Winter Sprinkler Ban, so make sure you turn your sprinklers off to help save water and avoid fines.

Most reticulation controllers are very simple to turn off and will either have:

- a dial that you move to the off position; or
- a tap timer that can be turned off at the tap.

Complexes will have their common area reticulation turned off automatically.

Calling all food lovers and home cooks!

Share your favourite recipe with us for your chance to win a \$100 Coles/Myer voucher.

Housing Choices WA is holding our first Cooking Competition for tenants. We want to celebrate the hobbies and passions of our tenants and we know that many of you love to cook and create.

We know that food is important and has different meanings to all of us. Food often brings people together and tells stories of people's diversity and backgrounds.

All recipes can be entered, be it a favourite sauce, salad, main meal or dessert.

Winners will receive a \$100 Coles Myer voucher.

How to enter

- Send us the recipe for your favourite dish.
- Take a photo of your dish ready to eat.
- Tell us a little bit about yourself and why you like this recipe.

To enter or find out more about the competition, please contact our **Tenant Engagement and Capacity Building Officer Alex Kepes** on **0437 887 675** or via **alex.kepes@hcau.org.au**.

Entries close on Friday 12 August.

Maintenance response times impacted by COVID-19

We want to let you know that our maintenance team is still experiencing delays in our usual response timeframes due to the impacts of COVID-19. There is currently a shortage in tradespeople and delays in accessing materials to complete repairs.

Our maintenance team is doing all they can to ensure emergency and urgent repairs are completed without delay.

We apologise for any disruptions in addressing your maintenance issues and we ask for your patience and understanding about this matter.

Housing Choices Australia Board meets the ACT

Left: (L-R) ACT Chairperson Sue Newman and Assets Projects Team Leader Julie Thomson.

Advisory Committee of Tenants (ACT) members were stars of the show when over 60 people gathered at the Housing Choices WA Rivervale office to greet our national Housing Choices Australia Board members and executive staff for lunch.

Members of the ACT had the opportunity to talk to Managing Director Michael Lennon, Board members and executive staff about what the committee has been working on and what changes they would like to see at Housing Choices.

ACT chairperson Suzanne addressed the group saying, "I am so proud of our Advisory Committee of Tenants and how well it has functioned in the last three years with the feedback and support of our Housing Choices staff.

"Through our Tenancy Officers, workshops, ACT meetings, art shows and end of year celebrations we have worked together to build greater communication on all levels and have many times addressed difficult and sensitive points with a successful and respectful outcome.

"The difficulty between landlords and tenants is an age old one – investment vs people often with horrific stories on both sides. Many of our Housing Choices tenants come with difficult histories and they have a very real fear of losing the safety and sanctuary of their home.

"Most won't speak up, ask for help or even have

an opinion for fear of victimization or reprisals like they have previously experienced or witnessed – the get a job, suck it up attitudes from past landlords.

"So, telling them now that they have a voice and actually knowing that they are heard, and their opinions are valued is quite a slow supportive process which I know that here in WA that Housing Choices and our ACT committee are very committed to.

"I can actually say that I like my landlords."

Below: (L-R) Tenant Account Officer Sian Greenlees and ACT Deputy Chairperson Trish Tamms.



Updates to NRAS processes

Some of our tenants live in properties under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). This Federal Government affordable housing initiative provides funding to Housing Choices WA and allows us to provide more affordable homes for people on low incomes.

Tenants in NRAS properties are required to provide additional income information on the anniversary of their lease start date and when there is a household change as part of the scheme (known as the NRAS Assessment).

We are happy to share that following feedback from our Advisory Committee of Tenants and a review of our processes across all states, we now ask for less information from tenants to do NRAS Assessments, making this process easier for tenants.

Changes to NRAS assessment process

We now ask for fewer payslips

For tenants who work, we used to require 12 months of payslips as proof of income. We now only ask for three payslips for each employer, and we advise tenants what dates these payslips need to be from.



We no longer need bank statements

We no longer require bank statements unless we need to verify or cross reference income. These will only be asked for at a later stage if we require them.



We can obtain tenants Centrelink information on their behalf

We no longer ask tenants to provide Centrelink Income Information if we have consent to get this information on their behalf.



We now ask for all the information at once

We will send NRAS paperwork and consent forms at the start of the review period, rather than ask for the Tenant Demographic Assessment after the assessment. This means tenants now provide all necessary information in one go rather in two stages.



Centrepay forms that can make life easier

We are approved by Centrelink to use several services to make rent reviews and rental payments easier for our tenants.



Setting up or changing a payment to us



To set up a new payment or increase an existing payment you need to complete and sign a new **Centrepay Written Deduction Authority Form**.

The only time you don't need to sign a new form is if your rent goes down as we can make this change for you.

You can also change or cancel your Centrepay deductions yourself by contacting Centrelink by phone, or by using their website or app.

Giving us permission to get your income statement for you



When you complete your Eligibility and Rent Review form, you need to provide proof of income for all household members. Rather than obtaining a Centrelink Income Statement yourself, you can complete and sign a **Centrelink Income Confirmation Form**.

It allows us to obtain your Centrelink Income Statement for you.

This consent will last for the duration of your tenancy unless you wish to withdraw it. Any person living with you can also use this service if they complete and sign a form.

Adjusting your Rent Assistance (CRA) if your rent goes up or down



If your rent changes, you need to notify Centrelink so your CRA can be adjusted. We can do this for you if you complete and sign an **Electronic Verification of Rent (EVoR) Authorisation Form**. This consent will last for the duration of your tenancy unless you wish to withdraw it.

Please note that we can only update your CRA if the start date of your new rent is 15 days in the future. If your rent start date is less than 15 days or your rent has been backdated, you'll need to contact Centrelink yourself so they can make the necessary adjustments to your CRA.

If you have any questions about these Centrelink Services and how we can make rent reviews easier for you, please contact our **Rent Review Team** on **9534 0400** or via **rentreview-wa@hcau.org.au**





Home Stories Winter Puzzle

Win a \$50 Bunnings Voucher!

Find all of the words in the word search except for one, which is not actually in the grid. Words may be forward, backward, up, down or diagonal.

F	Q	N	W	T	E	Y	S	Y	U	S	H	C
A	R	A	I	N	C	L	U	Z	F	T	G	E
C	V	I	B	G	M	L	R	D	E	O	T	N
E	K	D	R	T	Y	U	V	Z	C	R	B	T
B	Q	O	E	V	E	G	E	X	H	M	L	R
O	V	C	T	N	G	U	Y	O	P	S	K	E
O	Z	B	N	C	R	E	H	T	A	E	W	P
K	T	G	I	J	M	O	U	L	D	K	L	A
I	Y	T	W	E	E	K	B	C	E	B	H	Y
G	U	T	T	E	R	S	V	W	I	N	D	Q
R	E	C	I	P	E	I	T	R	P	A	G	E

FIND THESE WORDS IN THE GRID

FACEBOOK
PAGE
CENTREPAY
SURVEY

COOKING
RECIPE
NAIDOC
WEEK

WINTER
WEATHER
RAIN
WIND

STORMS
GUTTERS
GULLY
MOULD

Tell us the remaining word for the wordsearch by emailing info-wa@hcau.org.au or posting it to us at Home Stories Winter Puzzle, Housing Choices Western Australia, **PO Box 105, Burswood WA 6100**. Competition closes **Friday 26 August 2022**. The winner of a \$50 Bunnings voucher will be drawn from all the correct entries after this date. Only one entry per household. Good luck!

Congratulations to **Sylvia from Bunbury**, last edition's puzzle prize winner.



Winter brain teasers

In response to requests for more puzzles, we have introduced Brain Teasers.

Answers to the below can be found in the content of this newsletter.

1. Who won the Dean Baylis Memorial Prize at our Tenant Art Showcase?
2. Who is the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of Tenants?
3. When does the 2022 Tenant Survey close?

1. Ian Goodeward
2. Suzanne
3. Friday 2 September

**HOUSING
CHOICES**
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Perth Metro Office

Level 7, 25 Rowe Avenue
Rivervale WA 6103
PO Box 105
Burswood WA 6100
P (08) 9430 0900

Peel Office

4 Stevenson Street
PO Box 1200
Mandurah WA 6210
P (08) 9534 0400

South West Office

1st Floor, 25 Victoria Street
PO Box 1539
Bunbury WA 6230
P (08) 9722 7200

info-wa@hcau.org.au housingchoices.org.au

Maintenance Hotline: 1800 203 383