



**Link  
Wentworth**  
Providing homes, building futures.

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**EDITION 5** June 2022

# CommunityConnect



*Link Wentworth wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we live and work and pay our respect to the Elders both past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*

## Mary's Story

My goal as a teenager was to own my own home. I have not fulfilled my goal. But I am grateful for the roof over my head.

I do not live in the street. I live in my house.



**On 21 April Link Wentworth hosted the Big Housing Debate in partnership with Western Sydney Community Forum. Mary, one of our residents, delivered a brave and passionate speech about the challenges she encountered as a single mother facing homelessness. Mary is a strong supporter of Link Wentworth and a member of our Tenant Advisory Group and Resilience Committee. She has also participated in our advocacy projects such as the Western Sydney Heat and Social Housing Project. In June, she won a Zest Award for her tireless work to help us advocate for more social and affordable housing funding so that we can do more for our residents and those who need a place to call home.**

### **A section of her speech has been included below.**

After my youngest son was born, I found myself as a single mother with two boys—eight and a half, and 12 weeks old. It happened without any warning. I was living in Newcastle. The journey for me and my two boys was not easy. I moved to the Hawkesbury due to a short reconciliation with my ex-husband, but it fell apart and I found myself and my two boys needing a roof over our heads. I then applied for housing, feeling afraid and enormously concerned. I felt like a failure as a mum and a person. It was not easy when I applied for housing. I wanted to live closer to my family in Bankstown but I was told it was a nine-year wait. Hawkesbury was a shorter

wait so I chose the Hawkesbury as we needed a roof over our heads. I waited 12 months for a house, paying private rent which was 60% of my income. Being able to pay my rent [in social housing] meant I had stability and having stability allowed me to volunteer with the Women's Cottage in Richmond, and also volunteer at my son's school. This gave me purpose. I was soon in a position where I could take on paid work, so I got a part-time job as a seamstress at the local drycleaners. It hasn't always been easy but I count myself as one of the lucky ones. I try to remain positive about my situation. As I reflect back, I now understand that the decisions I made were based on the information I had at the time. It would be good to see more housing available for people who are on benefits or low income.

It would also be good to see more variety of housing in all different parts of Sydney—it was disappointing to have to live so far from my parents, where they couldn't easily help with caring for my kids. Without support, it made it difficult to get work. The Private Rental Market was and is too high. My goal as a teenager was to own my own home. I have not fulfilled my goal. But I am grateful for the roof over my head. I do not live in the street. I live in my house. ▲

**You can watch Mary's full speech at**  
[www.linkwentworth.org.au/event-the-big-housing-debate](http://www.linkwentworth.org.au/event-the-big-housing-debate)

# Hello from Andrew



Welcome to the June 2022 edition of Community Connect.

I'd like to begin by sending a message to our residents who observed Ramadan in April. I hope it was a blessed and peaceful month for you and those who are close to you.

How inspiring was Mary's Big Housing Debate speech on the front of this newsletter? I thank Mary for her bravery in delivering her speech to a large audience. I would also like to thank our Tenant Advisor Group (TAG) members and residents who supported The Big Housing Debate and attended either in person or online via the event livestream. Michael, one of our TAG members asked a great question at the event and many residents posted insightful comments on the livestream. We also appreciate residents Sue and Raj whose video stories were shared as part of the event.

The Big Housing Debate discussed the challenge of meeting the social and affordable housing needs of Western Sydney (as well as the nation) and pushed forward solutions for government, the private sector and community housing providers like us to work together and deliver more safe and secure homes. I encourage you to watch the highlights video and read the post-event report at [www.linkwentworth.org.au/event-the-big-housing-debate](http://www.linkwentworth.org.au/event-the-big-housing-debate). Resident stories like Mary's, help us educate the community and advocate for change. If you would like to share your story with us, please talk to your Tenancy Manager or email [communications@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communications@linkwentworth.org.au).

As I write this, it has been only a few weeks since Anthony Albanese has been sworn in as the 31st Prime Minister of Australia. In his victory speech, Mr Albanese spoke about being brought up by a single mother in public housing and that in Australia the doors of opportunity are open to us all. We support the new Government's commitment to affordable housing and look forward to seeing some of their policies come to life, especially the Housing Australia Future Fund.

As flood recovery efforts continue across Greater Sydney, our thoughts are with those who have been affected in any way. Our staff members have been reaching out to residents who live in badly affected areas via wellbeing calls and other communications. On page 3 of this newsletter you will find flood recovery resources and tips to manage mould. If you need to report a repair or request extra support, please talk to your Tenancy Manager, email [enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au) or call your local office (9412 5111 or 4777 8000).

We are currently finalising our 3-year strategy and have updated our mission statement, which you can read below. Our strategy will outline our continued commitment to you as one of our valued residents, as well as our commitment to the wider communities that we serve.

If you would like to have a say on the work we do as a Community Housing Provider, I recommend that you join our next TAG meeting in August which can be attended by all residents – more details on page 6.

Please enjoy this edition of Community Connect and I hope to see you soon at one of our events. Until then, please take care and contact us if you need any help.

Yours sincerely

**Andrew McNulty**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Mission Statement

Providing more homes and delivering quality services to enable a brighter future for people facing housing stress and homelessness.

# Flood recovery support

During March and April, flooding impacted many parts of Greater Sydney. If you have been impacted by floods or storms, you can contact us to ask questions, request repairs, or get additional support.

*Please note, the below information was current at the time this newsletter was produced.*

Call your local office (9412 5111 or 4777 8000) or email [enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au)

## Recovery payments

Until 29 September via Services Australia 2022, you can access lump sum disaster payments of \$1,000 per adult and \$400 for each child younger than 16 if you were seriously injured, you're the immediate family member of an Australian citizen or resident who died or is missing, or the flood caused major damage to your home, vehicle, caravan, or water tank.

The eligible LGAs in Greater Sydney are currently Bayside, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury Bankstown, Central Coast, Fairfield, Georges River, Hawkesbury, Hornsby, Inner West, Ku-ring-gai, Liverpool, Northern Beaches, Parramatta, Penrith, Ryde, Sutherland and The Hills. Call 180 22 66 or visit the Services Australia website: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/natural-disaster](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/natural-disaster).

## Local food and essentials

The below organisations serve parts of Sydney that were impacted by floods and storms and can be accessed by anyone.

### Salvation Army Chatswood

Shop 1, Spring Street, Chatswood  
(02) 9412 4520

### One Meal Northern Beaches

Free meal services weekly on a Sunday, 5 – 6:00 pm at Gilbert Park, West Promenade, Manly  
Weekly on Thursdays 3:30 – 5:30 pm at Beverley Job Park, 65 McIntosh Rd, Narrabeena  
0409 302 717 / [info@onemeal.org.au](mailto:info@onemeal.org.au)

### Hawkesbury Helping Hands

Unit E 28 Walker Street, South Windsor  
Free meal service 6 – 7:30 pm  
(02) 4577 7077 / [hello@hawkesburyshelpinghands.org.au](mailto:hello@hawkesburyshelpinghands.org.au)

### Mama Lana's Community

Foundation, 56 Woodriff St, Penrith

Take away meals  
Mon – Sat, 7 – 8:30 pm  
0407 909 447 /  
[lana@mamalanas.org.au](mailto: lana@mamalanas.org.au)

### Dom's Place, 9 Leonard Street, Hornsby

Inclusive space to get a meal, access activities such as cooking classes, connect with volunteer and employment pathways, or just drop in for a chat.  
Open 9.00 am – 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday.  
9481 2600

## Tips and help to manage mould

After heavy rain or flooding you may find mould in your home. Mould can make you sick, particularly if you have asthma or other breathing conditions.

Below are some helpful tips to prevent and treat mould. Please be reminded that your Residential Tenancy Agreement notes that you need to report any damage to us. Our aim is to provide homes which are fit to live in. We also encourage you to contact us if you need help treating mould, especially if the mould has become severe due to the recent weather or you are unable to clean the mould.

### Preventing mould

- 1 **Ventilate your home** – open windows when safe to do so and use exhaust fans when showering, cooking, or doing laundry.
- 2 **Reduce humidity** – avoid drying clothes in front of a heater. This increases air moisture and is also a fire hazard. If using a clothes dryer, ensure the house is well ventilated.
- 3 **Control moisture or dampness** – regularly wipe surfaces that get damp.

If you see mould in your home, please try to remove it as soon as it appears, we appreciate that it may take some effort. Use either a mild detergent, vinegar diluted in water (4-parts vinegar to a 1-part water) or 1 teaspoon of tea tree oil per cup of water. If the mould is hard to remove, use a diluted bleach solution (250mls of bleach in 4 litres of water). Always refer to the user instructions, ventilate the area and protect your skin, eyes, and clothes.



# Apply for a scholarship this year

written by Mark Shalovsky



**I have had the good fortune of being a Link Wentworth tenant at St Leonards for almost five years now. I am an affordable housing tenant under North Sydney Council's affordable housing program for key workers. During this time, I have also become increasingly interested in the work of Link Wentworth. I am an active member of its Tenant Advisory Group which any Link Wentworth tenant can join.**

As the organisation has developed since 2010, it has been able to increase the range of services that it can offer to its tenants. This includes its annual Scholarship Program which has been running for 10 years. The 2021 round awarded \$100,000 and helped about 100 tenants.

It is a great initiative and I strongly urge other tenants to take advantage of it. While the amounts that are awarded

may not cover the full cost of what you want to do, these scholarships are tremendously useful.

In my case, I want to learn much more about community housing and I am studying for the Diploma of Community Services (Community Housing) course that is offered by the Community Housing Industry Association. My scholarship will help with the fees. I am hoping that this course, combined with my previous experience practising law, will equip me to make a real contribution to community housing.

Other tenants who attended one of the recent scholarship ceremonies, applied for scholarships for all sorts of worthwhile projects. These ranged from school fees and creative and sporting courses for their children, to driving lessons and vocational courses to prepare them for a return to the workforce, to university degrees in accountancy, engineering and graphic design.

Start planning for your future with an application for a scholarship. ▲

**Our Scholarship Program is open to all residents from 1 July this year! Please see the Information Sheet and 2022 Application Form that came with this newsletter, and in Mark's words, don't hesitate to apply.**



## Flood resilience with the Resilience Committee

Written by residents Susan and Mary

**We sincerely hope you and the people close to you are all well.**

One of the events that do occur when it rains a lot and floods, is that insects, snakes and rats are unhoused, and so they go looking for dryer places to live. Wear suitable, protective footwear when outside your home and gloves when moving things or gardening. Also look out for animals inside your home. The following reptile handlers can be contacted if you find a snake at your home.

**Hawkesbury**  
Brett Pasfield 0409 199 456

**Blue Mountains**  
Alexander Borg Caruana 0421 281 439

**Sydney Metro**  
Benjamin Harvey 0414 200 273

We also need to be careful of mould that grows on wet surfaces. Mould can affect your breathing and has a nasty habit of destroying our stuff. See the previous page of this newsletter for tips to manage mould.

Following the recent flood events, we need to remember the importance of being prepared for floods and other disasters. Do you know where your closest safe haven is and how to get there? Do you know your council's contact details?

Link Wentworth's Hawkesbury Office has SES information packs about preparing for floods. You can collect an information pack from the office or request for one to be mailed to you by calling 4777 8000.

# Important Information

## Reconciliation Action Plan

Link Wentworth has started working on a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as part of our commitment to take meaningful action to advance reconciliation for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community and beyond. If you would like to find out more, please email [communications@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communications@linkwentworth.org.au)

With NAIDOC Week coming up (3-10 July), we also invite you to 'like' Link Wentworth's Facebook page for resources and events to attend. We are proud to be sponsoring three NAIDOC events this year. We will have a stall at each event with Link Wentworth staff members. Read more about these events on page 8 of this newsletter. We hope you can come along and say hello.

You may also like to colour in the official NAIDOC Week 2022 poster included with this newsletter. This year's theme is Get Up, Stand Up, Show Up.

## Give feedback or make a complaint

- Email [feedback@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:feedback@linkwentworth.org.au)
- Call your local office (9412 5111 or 4777 8000)
- Come into our office and fill out a form
- Fill out the form on our website [www.linkwentworth.org.au](http://www.linkwentworth.org.au)



## Language update – 1 July 2022

To unite the language that we use in our communications, your CSO or Housing Manager will be referred to as your "Tenancy Manager" from 1 July 2022. There is no change to what your Tenancy Manager does, and they are still your first point of contact if you have any questions or concerns.



## Have we got your details right?

Speak to your Tenancy Manager or call your local office (9412 5111 or 4777 8000) to update your address, email or phone number.



You can also let us know if you would like to receive your copy of this newsletter by email only or if you would like to opt out of promotional communications like this newsletter. To update your communication preferences, please email [communications@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communications@linkwentworth.org.au) or call your local office and ask to speak to the Communications Team.

## Change of circumstances for social housing tenants

If there are changes to your household, you will be asked to provide the following documents outlined below, along with an 'Income Review' or 'Application for a Rent Subsidy' form, and updated income details for all existing household members within 28 days of the change. Please discuss any change with your Tenancy Manager as soon as possible.

Email [enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:enquiries@linkwentworth.org.au) or call your local office (9412 5111 or 4777 8000). The forms can be completed on our website [www.linkwentworth.org.au](http://www.linkwentworth.org.au) or posted to you.

### Changes in circumstances

### Information to provide to Link Wentworth

**You or a household member stops working**

A separation certificate or a letter from ex-employer and confirmation of new income e.g., Centrelink Income Statement

**You or a household member begins work or starts a new job**

Four (4) weeks of wage slips.  
If paid monthly one (1) wage slip

**There is a new household member (this includes a new baby)**

Proof of their income, such as payslips, an income statement from Centrelink and/or Multiple Consent Form or a Birth Certificate

**A household member leaves**

Documentation of alternative housing e.g., lease agreement, or a current bill or bank statement with the new address

**You or a household member's work hours or pay rate changes**

Two (2) weeks of wage slips confirming new hours or rate

**You or a household member's Centrelink benefit changes for any reason**

An up-to-date Income Statement, including any back payments received

**A child turns 18**

Proof of their income, such as wage slips or an Income Statement from Centrelink

# Michael's Mardi Gras Journey



Michael is a valued member of our Customer Service Team. Outside Link Wentworth, Michael is a proud participant of the Mardi Gras Parade which he has attended for 10 years. He is a member of Sydney Gaymers and he now designs and plans their float. Read our Q&A with Michael to learn more about his passion for Mardi Gras.

## How long have you been involved in the Mardi Gras?

I have been involved since 2014 when I marched with the Sydney Gaymers. It was my gateway to explore the queer community and find my place with those who share the same interests as me. 2022 is my first year as an Administrator, jumping full force into designing and planning the Sydney Gaymers Float.

My first ever Mardi Gras parade was the most validating moment for me, as I walked down the middle of Oxford Street with the Sydney Gaymers. The support from the crowd as they cheered us on was a memory I will never forget and will treasure for the rest of my life.

## How can we support and participate?

As well as being part of the festival, you can join or support queer organisations such as ACON, SWOP and Twenty10. Create dialogue that raises awareness of queer culture, especially with children and young people.

# Upcoming programs

Any resident living in a Link Wentworth-managed property is welcome to attend the below programs. Email [communities@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communities@linkwentworth.org.au) or call 9412 5111 to let our Communities Team know you would like to attend.

## English Classes

We invite you to join our 2022 English Classes that can help you with everyday conversations. The classes will be informal and fun. If you attended last year, you are welcome to join us again.

**Location:** Common Room at 12 Higginbotham Road, Gladesville

**Time:** 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

**Dates:** Tuesday each week between the below dates

19 July to 20 September / 11 October to 20 December

## Drop-in Sessions

Our Drop-in Sessions held in May were great. Residents spoke to staff members from different Link Wentworth teams and shared food and a nice afternoon with other residents.

Our next sessions will be held during the week of 8 – 12 August at Pennant Hills, Kirribilli, Ryde, Penrith, Richmond, Riverstone, Lawson and Lithgow.



## Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)

Our next TAG meeting will be Tuesday 30 August 10:30 am – 1:00 pm.

TAG Meetings communicate service updates from Link Wentworth teams. The meetings will be run online via Zoom, but residents can also request to attend from an office.

**Zoom link:** [bit.ly/3rxbzCF](https://bit.ly/3rxbzCF)

**Meeting ID:** 427 258 0886

**Passcode:** 1LdC3M



## Domenico's art



Wonder Woman

Send us your creative work or writing and we will feature it in future newsletters. Email [communications@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communications@linkwentworth.org.au) or give it to your Tenancy Manager. We also welcome suggestions for this newsletter.

## What a surprise!

Florentina, one of Link Wentworth's Tenancy Managers was touched when she received a lovely plate of homemade treats from one of her residents last month.



## Winter gardening tips

### Greetings from Royal Botanic Garden's Community Greening Team!

As the weather cools, it's a busy time in the garden! Try your hand at collecting and storing dry seed for next year, and then clear dead or dying plants from the garden. After all of the rain we have had, we can feed the soil with compost, worm castings, or diluted worm juice. Cool weather crops like greens, broccoli, cauliflower, peas, and root veggies like radishes, beetroot, and carrots are all good to go in now!

Cool weather can even improve the flavour of crops like kale! You can test the soil moisture by putting your finger in the soil, and only watering when it feels dry to touch. A layer of mulch is always good for suppressing weeds, holding moisture in the soil, and enriching the soil as it decomposes. Happy growing, and we look forward to seeing you in the garden!

Adina



Do you feel like starting a garden at your property ready for summer and our Annual Gardening Competition?

Contact our Communities Team who can start the process for you. Email [communities@linkwentworth.org.au](mailto:communities@linkwentworth.org.au) or call 9412 5111.

## RESIDENT RECIPES 🏠



## Geoff's bad to the bone pumpkin & ginger soup

Pumpkin 750g  
 Sweet potato 750g  
 Leeks 2  
 Garlic bulb 1  
 Onion large 1  
 Chillies large 2 (optional)  
 Ginger 2.5cm thumb  
 Butter 2 tbspn  
 Nutmeg ground ½ tsp  
 Chicken or veggie stock, 5 cups  
 Salt and pepper

### Directions

Fry up the onions, leeks, chilli and garlic. Fry up the ginger. In with the nutmeg. Add pumpkin and sweet potato. Add stock. Cook for 30 minutes. Blend the soup.

Sour cream or Greek yoghurt and coriander to serve.

Link Wentworth staff member Julia and resident Mary were honoured at the recent ZEST Awards—well-deserved recognition of their long-held commitment to the Western Sydney community.



# Community Calendar

Have a look at these free events happening across Greater Sydney. We recommend that you contact the organiser to confirm that their event is still going ahead and visit your local council website for more events.

### Inside the Tide Exhibition – Sydney

Inside the Tide has over 20,000 plants on display and one of the largest living green walls in the Southern Hemisphere.

**Location:** The Royal Botanic Garden, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney

**When:** Every day, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Ends Sunday 31 July.

T: 9231 8111

### Mahjong at Gordon Uniting Community Centre – Gordon

Join a small group of Mahjong players who meet every Friday morning during School term. The group plays western style Mahjong.

**Location:** Gordon-Pymble Uniting Church, 18 Cecil Street, Gordon

**When:** They are meeting next on Friday, 1 July 2022, 10 – 11:30 am

Please call before attending.

T: 0480 223 981

### Nepean River Parkrun – Penrith

Parkrun is a free, weekly 5km timed run for runners and walkers of all ages and abilities. Participants are all invited to catch up after the run for a coffee.

**Location:** Tench Reserve, Tench Avenue, Penrith

**When:** The next run is Saturday 2 July 2022 starting at 8:00 am.

### Willoughby Symphony in the Park – Willoughby East

Experience stunning music from opera and Broadway by Willoughby Symphony Orchestra.

**Location:** Willoughby Park, McClelland Street, Willoughby East

**When:** Sunday, 10 July 2022,

2 – 4:00 pm

T: 9777 1000

### NAIDOC event – Penrith

Celebrate the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and this year's theme, Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!, a call to action for systemic change.

There will a Link Wentworth Stall to learn more about our services, performances, food, activities, stalls, and much more.

**Location:** Jamison Park, South Penrith

**When:** 7 July, 10 am – 4 pm

T: 4732 7777

### Heal Strong NAIDOC event – Penrith

Sydney Region Aboriginal Corporation is excited to host this event that has music, stalls, kids' activities and cultural and arts workshops.

An Elders cafe will be available with complimentary tea, coffee and lunch.

**Location:** Sydney Region Aboriginal Corporation Community Hub,

51-57 Henry Street, Penrith

**When:** 15 July, 10 am – 2 pm

T: 4721 1536

### National Indigenous Art Fair – The Rocks

The Blak Markets will host the National Indigenous Art Fair on Sydney Harbour during NAIDOC Week. There will be artworks, bush tucker cooking demonstrations, weaving and cultural workshops, live music, children's activities and Aboriginal dance performances.

**Location:** Overseas Passenger Terminal, Circular Quay, The Rocks

**When:** Saturday 2 July and Sunday 3 July 2022, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

T: 0499 252 599

### Penrith Show 2022 – Penrith

Entertainment, rides, side show alley, trade stalls, competitions, exhibitions performances and so much more!

**Location:** Penrith Paceway/ Showground, 141-147 Station Street, Penrith

**When:** 27 & 28 August 2022

T: 4721 2375