



Newsletter

www.housingplus.com.au

SPRING 2023

Dear Customers

Welcome to Spring! The chilly weather is slowly subsiding and we're all looking forward to enjoying more sunny Spring days and milder temperatures in the evening. We have some new faces in the Team who have recently joined us and you can learn more about them in this edition. Work on our website redesign has commenced and we are in the process of reviewing functionality, menus and content to make our site more user friendly and easier to navigate. It's a slow process but the end result will be worth the wait.

Regards,

Liz Stamatelos

Head of Customer Service



Welcoming our new CEO

Please give a warm welcome to our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - Justin Cantelo.

Justin has been with Housing Plus since April 2015, when he joined the team as a Business Development and Innovation Manager.

Justin now transitions from his role as Director of Development, where he was responsible for creating and leading development opportunities to create more housing in our areas.

Justin has been a driver in creating more suitable accommodation, so we can further support our tenants.

Congratulations Justin.



Our Customer Satisfaction Survey results are in!

Housing Plus conducted our annual Customer Satisfaction Survey with responses received throughout April, May and June this year from over 400 customers, a 6% increase on last year. The survey is conducted anonymously and is an opportunity for you to let us know what you think we do well and where you think we can do better.

We have now received the initial results and I can advise that in the 3 key areas; overall customer satisfaction, repairs and maintenance and condition of home, we have exceeded the benchmark set by the community housing registrar. While this is a pleasing overall result, we will always strive for better and now the real work begins to further analyse your responses so we can understand what is important to our customers and plan, learn and adapt accordingly.

Of the 400+ responses, 240 customers provided additional comments and advised that they would be willing to be contacted to give more insight. We will be contacting those customers over the coming weeks to learn more to keep on improving.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to provide your valuable feedback.



Phone numbers

Report A Repair	1800 603 300
Housing Services	1800 603 300
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
Men's Behaviour Change	1800 959 825
Together Home	6360 3300
Corporate Services	6360 3300



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	9am - 5pm Mon - Fri

Our Housing Officers are often out of the office conducting property viewings, inspections and engaging with the community. To ensure that your Housing Officer is available to provide you with a personalised service, please book an appointment. Your Housing Officer can be contacted on their mobile or on their direct number during business hours.



Easing the Cost of Living for Families

The NSW Government is helping people find a way to cut costs and access financial or other support with the newly created Cost of Living hub. The Cost of Living hub provides resources and tools to help ease cost-of-living pressures, combining information from more than 80 government and non-government websites in one central place, along with guides and advice on how to save money and where to find various rebates and vouchers.

The Cost of Living hub focuses on seven key areas covering everyday essentials including:

- **Food and groceries** - ways to save on your weekly food bill and reduce food wastage.
- **Housing** - NSW Government home-buyer incentives, managing rent increases and mortgage help.
- **Energy and utilities** - checking eligibility for Energy Bill Relief and gas rebates, reducing power usage to decrease your bills, requesting a payment plan and seeking emergency assistance.
- **Managing money** - accessing support and advice if you're experiencing financial hardship, avoiding scams and using a tool to more effectively manage your budget.
- **Health** - reviewing your private health cover to find a policy that's right for you and understanding safety nets to access cheaper medicine.
- **Families and care** - eligibility for the childcare subsidy, finding children's education and care services to support working parents and affordable help around the home for seniors and older Australians.
- **Transport, driving and fuel** - tips for finding cheaper fuel, cost-saving driving techniques, transport alternatives and tips for choosing insurance.

To access the Cost of Living Hub, visit:
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/money-and-taxes/cost-of-living-hub>

Housing Plus Education Grant Successful Applicants June 2023

We are pleased to announce that we had eight successful applicants for Round 2 of the Housing Plus Education Grant Program.



The Housing Plus Education Grants are open to all Housing Plus tenants providing financial assistance for Housing Plus tenants or household members who are enrolling, or continuing, in education. The Educational Grants are non-cash, instead successful applicants are reimbursed for education or study related expenses, or a supplier can be paid directly.

We have been able to assist these families to purchase uniforms, school supplies, send their children on excursions and purchase devices to assist with learning.

If you are interested in applying for support through the Education Grant Program, keep your eye out for the announcement of Applications opening for round three later this year.

Introducing Therese Short Housing Operations Manager - Bathurst



Therese has recently joined the Housing Plus team as Housing Operations Manager in Bathurst. With 10 years industry experience and 30 years leadership experience, Therese leads a team of 15 and her role is centred around ensuring our customers receive the support required when life's challenges get in the way.

Therese's team supports clients to maintain their tenancy, with their roles and responsibilities ranging from office and phone reception management, support coordination, rent reviews, arrears, allocations of properties and transitions.

When asked what her favourite things are about her role, Therese shared that "our jobs open doors". Therese also loves the variety of the work, the people she works with, and improving the way Housing Plus do business to ensure our customers are satisfied and maintain their tenancy.

A tip from Therese: We are currently reviewing rents, so please know when your housing compliment or income changes, this may result in reduced rent for you. It is important that you notify us of any changes or return the Household Information Survey.

Introducing Taylor Jones Housing Officer - Orange



Taylor has recently joined the Housing Plus team as a Housing Officer in Orange. Taylor has a property management background, and comes to us from Belle Property, where she held the role of Inspecting Agent. During her time at Belle, Taylor already worked closely with Housing Plus on some of our leasehold properties!

Taylor's role includes routine inspections, showing clients through to their new potential home and a lot more behind the scenes.

When asked what her favourite things are about her role, Taylor says she loves the amount of support she gets from her team, alongside the opportunity to meet new people.

You may meet Taylor at your next routine inspection or over the phone – make sure you say hello!

■ Meet Jayme – From Customer to Cadet!



Jayme was first referred to Housing Plus in 2021. At this time, he had been homeless for 10 years and on the public housing waitlist for a significant amount of time. Upon initially meeting with Housing Plus, Jayme worked with our Homelessness team to apply for a flat, and to his surprise, was given his very own place to call home.

After moving into his home, Jayme was inspired to commence a Certificate III in Community Services. The Housing Plus team also informed Jayme of a cadetship opportunity with CHIA (Community Housing Industry Association), in which he could gain industry experience while using his skills and

working with the Housing Plus team.

Throughout his cadetship, Jayme has been working as a Customer Service Assistant with Housing Plus and has never looked back. His role is split between assisting the maintenance, tenancy and reception teams, so it is very likely you may have even spoken to Jayme over the phone or via email before!

We asked Jayme what his best advice is for anyone looking to follow in his footsteps, and potentially go into a cadetship. He said: "Prepare yourself! It's not as easy as it looks and can get pretty hectic at times. But it is also very rewarding – just don't get behind in your assignments... that can get stressful!"

We love having Jayme on our team and are so proud of the awesome work he is doing.

If you are interested in learning what kind of opportunities are out there for you, contact our team on 1800 603 300.

Cadet registrations for Bathurst and Orange are now open. Please contact us for further information and/or to receive an Expression of Interest Form.

■ Learn how to make delicious, cheap and healthy meals with FoodCare

FoodCare Orange and Mission Australia are working together to offer FREE cooking classes in September, October and November.

Two amazing local chefs - Ruben Lopez & Alison Karbowskiak will be sharing their skills and ideas using ingredients from the FoodCare Supermarket.

Classes will focus on: building your cooking skills & confidence; using everyday ingredients, sharing time saving and money saving tips and reducing food waste.

WHEN: Workshops will take place on:
• Tuesday October 10
• Tuesday November 7

WHERE: Marang Gunya, 8 Oxley Place, Orange

TIME: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

RSVP: Email sfclarkey@gmail.com or text 0400 717 171 to book your spot.



Get Involved

There are many ways you can get involved and support your community. Currently 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@housingplus.com.au or call 1800 603 300 to speak to Rochelle.**

Tenants Advisory Group

Do you want to:

- Be a voice for Housing Plus customers
- Work alongside Housing Plus, providing a customer perspective of services, policies, and decisions
- Provide feedback on tenant related documentation?

The Tenant Advisory Group enables tenants to assist and provide advice to Housing Plus in relation to improving service delivery. The Tenant Advisory Group will represent all tenants on key service delivery issues and proposed changes which could affect them. If this is something you might be interested in, but you haven't done anything like this before, call us and have a chat, we provide training and support for all members of the Group.

Call 1800 603 300



Repairs and Maintenance

Filter Maintenance

YOUR HOUSING OFFICER'S CONTACT DETAILS

ORANGE

Angela	02 5340 5258	0411 865 604
Kate	02 5340 5209	0466 433 896
Taylor	02 5340 5205	0432 966 233

BATHURST

Harmony	02 5354 5150	0423 404 533
Taylor	02 5340 5205	0432 966 233

MUDGEY

Stacey	02 5340 5287	0413 904 424
Debbie	02 5340 5127	0427 914 367
Shanaya	02 5340 5252	0403 277 227

DUBBO

Housing/ Leasehold Officer 1800 603 300



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, compliment or complaint by telephoning our Customer Service Team on 1800 603 300, emailing us at tenancy@housingplus.com.au, sending a letter to Housing Plus, PO Box 968, Orange, NSW 2800 or visiting one of our local offices.



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1800 603 300



housingplusau



@HousingPlusAU

Spring has arrived and is a great time to clean. Spring is also the perfect time to ventilate your property, open all windows and doors, wipe down window sills that may have had condensation on them.

Below we have a few cleaning suggestions that can be done to ensure your appliances are working efficiently, keep energy costs down and help keep your property safe. Always remember to ensure that the power to the appliance is switched off when undertaking any of these tasks.

Split System Air Conditioner

Air filters help circulate clean air through your heating and cooling system by trapping dirt, dust, allergens and other pollutants such as pollen and bacteria. As a general rule of thumb, you should clean your air filters at the beginning of each season.

To clean:

- **Step One:** Make sure the power has been turned off.
- **Step Two:** Lift the cover on the front of the unit and carefully pull out the filter.
- **Step Three:** Fill a sink or tub up with warm water and submerge the filter. Move it around to dislodge any dust and debris caught in the mesh.
- **Step Four:** Take out the filter and drain the dirty water. Refill the sink or tub back up with warm water and this time add a splash of washing detergent or vinegar.
- **Step Five:** Submerge the filter and allow it to soak for 5 minutes.
- **Step Six:** After 5 minutes, remove the filter and allow it to dry naturally before placing it back into the AC unit.

Rangehood filters

Rangehood filters remove smoke, grease and other particles when cooking. If there is a build-up it can't perform effectively and can become a fire hazard.

To clean:

- **Step One:** Remove the filters from your range hood.
- **Step Two:** Fill your sink about halfway with warm or hot water and soap.
- **Step Three:** Let the filters soak for 15 to 20 minutes.

- **Step Four:** Rotate the filter if it wasn't fully submerged.
- **Step Five:** Soak again for 15 to 20 minutes.
- **Step Six:** Scrub the filter lightly with a sponge or scrub brush.
- **Step Seven:** Rinse the filter with warm water.
- **Step Eight:** Dry with a dish towel or microfibre cloth.

Gas heater filters

Filters in gas heaters prevent dust and hair entering the system. If not cleaned the heater may display an error code.

To clean:

- **Step One:** The first thing you need to do is to switch off the gas heater
- **Step Two:** Remove filter from the rear of the unit
- **Step Three:** Simply vacuum over the clogged filter to remove all the dust or debris.
- **Step Four:** Reinstall filter

Exhaust fan filter

Exhaust fans in bathrooms will rid the bathroom air of excess moisture, humidity, odours and other pollutants. It also helps to remove water vapor that has accumulated on mirrors and walls.

To clean:

- **Step One:** Ensure power is off
- **Step Two:** Remove the grate or fan cover. Standing on a sturdy stepladder, remove the cover from the fan.
- **Step Three:** Clean the cover.
- **Step Four:** Clean the fan assembly.
- **Step Five:** Replace the cover and restore power.

As always you can call our maintenance team if you have any further questions or need to report any issues found when cleaning your appliances on 1800 603 300. This number can also be called 24 hours a day if there is an emergency issue at your property. If there is no power at your property, on occasion there are planned or unexpected outages, information on outages can be found here <https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/outages-and-faults/power-outages>.