



CUSTOMER NEWSLETTER

Housing Plus acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their enduring connection to the lands, waters, and culture. We honour their stories, resilience, and wisdom, which continue to enrich and guide us in a shared journey towards a respectful and inclusive future



Dear Customers

BROOKE FOLEY, ASSETS AND PROCUREMENT MANAGER

Welcome to our first Customer Newsletter for 2026. It's already shaping up to be a full and productive year across Housing Plus, and I'm pleased to share some updates, tips, and community stories with you as we head into the cooler months.

Autumn is a busy time in our homes and gardens, and in this edition, you'll find practical advice on managing seasonal pests, keeping outdoor areas tidy, and knowing what to do if you notice maintenance issues around your property. We've also included helpful reminders about Centrepay changes, local bulky waste options, and our Coffee & Chat sessions happening throughout the year.

One highlight of this issue is our Gardener's Corner, filled with tenant questions and clever tips. We're also proud to celebrate the achievements of Leanne Kennewell, whose dedication throughout her cadetship embodies the values we uphold as a community housing provider.

Finally, as always, we encourage you to have your say through our Tenant Satisfaction Survey. Your feedback guides how we improve our services and continue building safe, comfortable, and supportive communities.

Thank you for being part of Housing Plus. I hope you enjoy this edition and find the information useful as we settle into autumn.



Removing Waste in Your Area

Unsure how to have bulky waste removed from your property? We've collected options from around our areas below, click on your local area to find out more.

Orange City Council runs an annual bulky waste pickup - for more information click [here](#).

Bathurst Regional Council does not run a bulky waste collection, however tenants can collect a tip voucher (which allows 1 free waste drop off to the tip) from our Bathurst office.

Dubbo Regional Council allows 1 free bulky waste pickup per year, this service needs to be booked on their website - click [here](#).

Mid-Western Regional Council does not have a bulky waste service, however it is free to dispose of bulky goods at the tip.

Lithgow City Council runs free bulky waste collection days, however you must register for a pickup. More information on their website - click [here](#).

Blayney Shire Council offers a free bulky waste collection each year, dates are on their website - click [here](#).

Forbes Shire Council has a bulky waste pickup each year, dates are on their website - click [here](#).

Cabonne Shire Council does not have a bulky waste service.

Parkes Shire Council does not have a bulky waste service.



Be On The Lookout For Elder Abuse

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 598,000 people in Australia experienced elder abuse in the past year.

That's roughly 1 in 6!

- **50% of Elder Abuse** is perpetrated by a family member.
- Abuse can be psychological, physical, financial, social, neglect or sexual.
- **1 in 4 Older** Australians have experienced technology based abuse.
- **2 out of 3** older Australians did not seek help themselves.

Elder abuse can have serious impacts on a person's health, safety, dignity and wellbeing.

If you are experiencing elder abuse or are concerned about someone else, contact your Support Coordinator for assistance on guidance and access to the right supports.

Together, lets make our communities safer for all.



If you suspect that an older person in your community is being abused, help is available.

If you suspect a person is in immediate risk of harm, call 000

You can call the Aging Disability Commission NSW on 1800 628 221

email them helpline@adc.nsw.gov.au

or go to their website to find more information or make an online report

<https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/>

MEET THE TEAM: OUR HOUSING OFFICERS



ANDREA

Location: Orange
02 5340 5290
0466 587 499



TAYLOR

Location: Orange
02 5340 5205
0432 966 236



LEANNE

Location: Orange
02 5340 5826
0431 155 703



KATE

Location: Orange
02 5340 5209
0435 636 771



ALISON

Location: Bathurst
02 5340 5296
0402 852 540



MADISON

Location: Bathurst
02 5340 5809
0431 569 967



SHANAYA

Location: Mudgee
02 5340 5252
0403 277 227



BRONTE

Location: Mudgee
02 5340 5814
0489 029 363



DEBBIE

Location: Mudgee
02 5340 5127
0427 914 367



TAHNEE

Location: Dubbo
02 5340 5214
0439 608 002



LISA

Location: Dubbo
02 5340 5836
0435 444 543

Centrepay Reminder

Due to Centrelink Reforms, Housing Plus can no longer automatically update your Centrepay deductions, even if you've given consent in the past.

What does this mean?

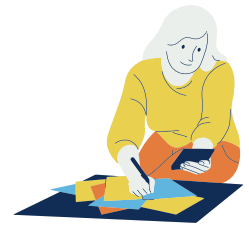
We can't change your Centrepay payment for you if your payment changes, or if you have a payment plan you need to adhere to for something such as arrears, water debt or repairs.

What do you need to do?

When you receive a rent review notice, check if your payment has changed. If it has, you'll need to update your payment with Centrelink. Please ensure that you include any payments for arrears, water, bond or other debts. You can call Housing Plus to check on the amount you need to pay.

To change your Centrepay amount, you can:

- Sign in to your Centrelink account through [myGov](#)
- Use the Express Plus Centrelink app
- Call Centrelink on your usual payment line
- Visit a Services Australia service centre
- Complete a Centrepay Deduction Authority form and give it to your local Housing Plus office.



You'll also need to do this if you have fallen behind on rent, water, or have a repair debt, or if you have a Specific Performance Order from NCAT stating you need to make a regular repayment.

This change only affects customers who make payments through Centrepay. If you make your regular payments by bank deposit or another method, you don't need to do anything.

Our Tenant Satisfaction Survey

"I have done the survey many times, it was like I won the lottery when I won the voucher" - Chris

Our Tenant Satisfaction Survey is on its way to you – and we want to hear from you! The survey opens on Monday 30th March, and closes on Friday 22nd May.

Complete the survey to go in the draw to win 1 of 10 \$150 Essential Shopping Vouchers (redeemable at Woolworths, Big W or Ampol). There are two winners randomly drawn in each region – Orange, Dubbo, Mudgee and Bathurst and from surrounding towns. Winners will be drawn after the survey closes.

Need help or haven't received your survey?

Please come along to your local Coffee & a Chat session – we're happy to help you fill it out there.

You can also contact your Housing Officer or Support Coordinator for support. Have your say – and don't miss your chance to win!

"I found the survey great to fill out. The voucher I won came in really handy to cover some living expenses at the time." - Margaret



PEST MANAGEMENT TIPS

As the weather cools and pests begin looking for warm places to nest, autumn is an important time to take a few simple steps to help keep your home pest free. Housing Plus ensures all properties are free from pest infestations at the start of each tenancy, but ongoing prevention is often tenant responsibility and small actions can make a big difference.

Here are some practical ways to reduce the chance of pests settling in:

Keep lawns trimmed and gardens tidy

Overgrown grass and garden beds provide hiding spots for ants, spiders, mice, and other pests. Keeping outdoor areas maintained helps prevent them from moving closer to your home.



Reduce clutter inside and outside the property

Stacks of newspapers, boxes, clothing piles, and outdoor clutter (like unused furniture or garden items) create ideal nesting places. A tidy environment makes it harder for pests to hide and easier to spot problems early.



Empty bins regularly and store them properly

Food scraps and full bins attract cockroaches, rodents, and ants. Make sure bin lids close properly and take rubbish out frequently, especially as cooler weather can bring pests indoors.



Keep kitchens and food areas clean

Wipe down benches, sweep crumbs, and store food in sealed containers. Even small food scraps can attract pests quickly.

Check for entry points

If you notice gaps around doors, damaged fly screens, or holes where birds or rodents might enter, please report these to Housing Plus so repairs can be arranged - repairs@housingplus.com.au or call us on 1800 603 300

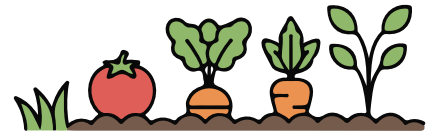
If You Notice Pests

Many common pests such as ants, mice, cockroaches, fleas, spiders, and bed bugs are the tenant's responsibility to manage once your tenancy is underway. Treating issues early often prevents them from becoming more serious.



If you would like more information, please refer to our Repairs and Maintenance Policy on our website [here](#).

Gardeners Gathering



Hello Fellow Gardeners,

Welcome to the second edition of Gardener's Gathering where we share tips and tricks, and a tenant led Q&A section on all things gardening.

In the last newsletter, Cathy asked the question:

How do I keep fruit flies away from my tomatoes?

One of our tenants wrote in with the following:

"Put some apple cider vinegar in a mug or cup. Add a drop or two of liquid dish detergent. Cover tightly with cling wrap and poke a very small hole in the cling wrap. Put it with the tomatoes and catch fruit flies. Good Luck"

Thanks for the tip!

This month, our tenants would like to know:

How do I discourage snails from eating my plants?

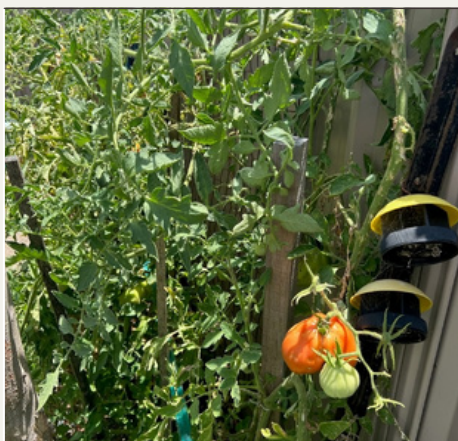
and

I am new to gardening and only have a small space, what plants would be best to grow?

If you have an answer to these questions, or another question you'd like to ask the Housing Plus Gardening Community, please email in: info@housingplus.com.au



What could you be planting now?



Thankyou to Tomas for sharing his tomato plants with us!

Heading into autumn, is a great time to start planting the following:

Fruit and Veg: peas, broad beans, thyme, rosemary, sage, sweet peas

Flowers: Marigolds, Nasturtiums, calendula and spring bulbs

We would love to know - what are you planting? Write in to Gardener's Gathering: info@housingplus.com.au

TIP:

Plan your garden layout so the plants you use most are closest to the house, like herbs, veggies and fruit. This makes it easier and quicker to grab what you need, and also see what is ripe for the picking!

Don't forget if you wish to put in a new garden bed, talk to your Housing Officer about a modification request.



Cadetship Success

Leanne Kennewell has proudly completed her cadetship with Housing Plus, supported by CHIA NSW, earning a Certificate IV in Housing through her dedication and hard work.

Leanne was drawn to the cadetship by Housing Plus' strong community values and the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to her local area. Having previously received support from community service organisations, she saw the role as a chance to give back and begin building a long-term career within the community housing sector.



Kirsty Marcantelli (mentor) and Leanne Kennewell

Starting her cadetship a few months behind the rest of her cohort came with challenges, particularly catching up on missed coursework. But Leanne embraced the opportunity, demonstrating her commitment by not only catching up but also completing an additional module. Her determination and resilience shone throughout the program.

Reflecting on her experience, Leanne shared:

"This training has had a profound impact on both my professional and personal growth. It has strengthened my confidence, reinforced my commitment to community service, and supported my family's stability while allowing me to pursue work I am passionate about. Most importantly, it has inspired me to continue building a career in community housing and to help people achieve safe, stable housing and improved wellbeing."

As her cadetship neared completion, Leanne applied for a Housing Officer position within the Customer Service team—an opportunity she eagerly embraced. Having worked closely with the team, she appreciated their strong sense of fun, teamwork, and mutual support. Her experience as a renter also deepened her understanding of tenant challenges, further strengthening her passion for the role.

Leanne's mentor, Kirsty, described supporting cadets as one of the most rewarding parts of her role. After two years in the mentoring position, she is now passing the responsibility to another Housing Plus team member. "It's bittersweet, but I'm glad someone else gets the opportunity to experience this," she said.

Leanne's advice for future cadets:

"Ask for help when you need it. Your mentors and trainers are there to help and want you to succeed."

Congratulations, Leanne, on your achievements and the inspiring path you're forging in community housing!



JOIN US FOR A COFFEE & A CHAT IN 2026!

Feeling disconnected? Want to get out and about? Get to know Housing Plus and each other with our monthly **Coffee & a Chat** meet ups at your local Housing Plus office in 2026.

BATHURST

10am, every 1st Tuesday of the month:

3 March
7 April
19 May*
2 June
7 July
4 August
1 September
6 October
3 November
1 December

DUBBO

10am, every 2nd Tuesday of the month:

10 March
14 April
12 May
9 June
14 July
11 August
8 September
13 October
10 November
8 December

MUDGEES

10am, every 4th Tuesday of the month:

24 March
28 April
26 May
23 June
28 July
25 August
22 September
27 October
24 November
22 December

ORANGE

10am, every 4th Tuesday of the month:

24 March
28 April
26 May
23 June
28 July
25 August
22 September
27 October
24 November
22 December

*Please note date change due to availability of speakers.

To RSVP, call 1800 603 300 or speak to your Housing Officer or Support Coordinator.



COFFEE & A CHAT MONTHLY TOPICS

Our Support Coordination Team have put together an excellent line up of topics for the year, we look forward to seeing you at our next Coffee and a Chat session at your local office.

March

General Chat



April

Easter & Survey Assistance



May

NSW Trustee & Guardian



June

My Aged Care



July

Support Coordination



August

General Chat



September

Inspections & Property Care



October

Your local council services



November

General Chat



December

Christmas



To RSVP, call 1800 603 300 or speak to your Housing Officer or Support Coordinator.