



Turning experiences in action

SHARING OUR TENANTS' VOICES

The powerful stories of AHV tenants who have experienced homelessness have gained the attention of partner organisations and the wider community. These stories provide particular insight and inspiration to AHV as we lead the development of the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (VAHHF).

Sharyn is a Gunditjmara woman who became a tenant of AHV shortly after having her first child 27 years ago. She is now a proud mother to four children and three grandchildren.

A member of the Stolen Generation, she was raised in several foster homes around Victoria. Sharyn later experienced homelessness in her teenage years and as a young woman.

Settling into her home with AHV meant more than having a roof over her head. Sharyn says that her home is somewhere that has helped her to find a sense of stability. This is something she wasn't previously used to while living in foster care and on the streets.

A home is somewhere I can put my feet up and can call my own. Having a stable home has helped me to improve other areas of my life.

— Sharyn.

Sharyn has been a participant in AHV's More Than A Landlord (MTAL) life coaching and well-being program, which supports tenants to achieve personal goals, and is also a passionate artist, health worker and advocate for the Aboriginal community.

Sharyn believes Aboriginal people seeking housing need to be supported with better information, connections and the tools required to get into housing. This includes support with paperwork and fulfilling the requirements for getting housing.

Sharyn says it's vital for the community to "have a greater understanding of our stories and the increased challenges we face, including a lack of a sense of identity for many".

Her wisdom, enthusiasm and compassion are invaluable as we work together to improve outcomes for our community.

RAISING AWARENESS OF HOUSING INEQUALITY

The Council for Homeless Persons (CHP) recently shared our tenants' stories during National NAIDOC Week 2019. Our tenants' stories reached over 2,000 workers in the sector. CHP also raised awareness about the work led by AHV to create an Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Policy Framework for Victoria. AHV is also continuing development of the VAHHF. Stay up-to-date by following the links on our website.

20th Annual NAIDOC Family Day at the Farm

This year was the 20th AHV NAIDOC Family Day at the Farm and it was another massive day with almost 2,200 visitors!

A Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony by Uncle Dave Wandin was followed by performances from Indigenous Hip Hop Projects, Dave Arden, and the Djirri Djirri Dance Group. The young and young-at-heart enjoyed an array of activities including face painting, boomerang painting, footy clinic, a weaving workshop, bead crafts, a sensory tent and a spinning wheel with healthy giveaways.

We want to acknowledge all our local community sponsors, whose support made the event happen. Thank you to tenants and community members who joined our NAIDOC celebrations. A special thank you for the Collingwood Children's Farm, who have partnered with us for 20 years!

We hope to see you there next year!



20th Annual NAIDOC Family Day at the Farm



Gippsland community shows its creative flair

WEAVING WORKSHOP

The Moogji Aboriginal Council in Orbost has held a weaving workshop with AHV. Tenants and community members in the region are joining groups across Victoria to create an artwork that will be displayed at the renovated AHV head office, to create a welcoming feeling for visitors in our workplace. Thank you to all who have participated!

Are you interested in contributing to our artwork?
Contact Nicky for more information [0488 003 375](tel:0488003375) | nicky.m@ahvic.org.au



AHV speaks out about mental health

ROYAL COMMISSION

AHV has made a submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The submission highlighted the fact that many Aboriginal people are more likely than the remaining population to be managing mental health issues, and we called for more to be done to address the relationship between mental illness and homelessness.

We took the opportunity to ensure that we gave voice to our tenants and their experiences with mental health, and shed light on the impact racism can have on our mental health and the importance of secure housing as a means to provide stability to Aboriginal people.



Have your say on treaty

VICTORIAN TREATY ADVANCEMENT COMMISSION

Last month you would have received a letter from AHV on behalf of the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission (VTAC), inviting you to be part of the treaty process. AHV tenants are encouraged to make their voice heard in the upcoming election to form The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.

If you have questions about the process and how to be involved, call **1800 TREATY (1800 87 32 89)**.

Results are in on feedback process

TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

AHV would like to thank the almost 270 tenants who took the time to complete the Tenant Satisfaction Survey during the latter part of 2018-19. Your feedback is valuable as we continue to improve our services into the future.

Almost 90% of respondents stated that it was important to them that their housing service is delivered by an Aboriginal organisation. This result has been consistent over the last few surveys and this response gives a very strong and positive message that as an Aboriginal landlord, AHV remains the landlord of choice for the vast majority of our tenants. However, other survey results indicated that we need to continue to work to improve our services. While overall, tenant satisfaction in repairs and maintenance have increased since the last survey, there is still room for further improvement.

In response to the survey findings, AHV is implementing a range of actions to continue to improve our overall services, with a strong emphasis on repairs and maintenance, and complaints processes. The survey also identified opportunities to increase uptake of email communication. In light of this we encourage tenants to provide up-to-date email addresses if they wish to receive information this way.



The survey will be undertaken every two years, however we always welcome feedback to help us improve our services.

Call **(03) 9403 2100**

or email clientservices@ahvic.org.au

Little ones have a ball at AHV stall

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN'S DAY

On Monday 5 August AHV participated in the 'Little Kids Day In' at Scienceworks with SNAICC, with a fun activities stall. The event celebrated knowledge, stories and culture.



Kids etched their favourite designs onto scratchboard boomerangs at the AHV stall

Nominations open for community awards



UPCOMING AWARDS

DHHS runs awards for all public housing or community housing tenants. AHV tenants are eligible to enter.

SOCIAL HOUSING VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Do you know a public housing or community housing tenant, who makes a positive difference in their community? Nominations close Monday 30th September 2019.

Call: [9096 9938](tel:90969938)

Email: housing.practicesupport@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Online: <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-volunteer-awards>

VICTORIA IN BLOOM AWARDS

A gardening competition for Victorians living in public or community housing. Nominations open Monday 2nd September and close Friday 29th November 2019.

Call: [9096 9938](tel:90969938)

Email: vicbloom@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Online: www.housing.vic.gov.au/vicinbloom

Service policy made available

MAINTENANCE & CODE OF CONDUCT

AHV has recently added its Maintenance Services Policy to the list of policies available on the AHV website. The policy sets out AHV's approach to the provision of maintenance and repairs in our properties, and outlines the respective responsibilities of AHV and tenants in ensuring that properties are kept in good repair.

A Code of Conduct for Contractors is now also available on the website. The Code of Conduct outlines the standard of behaviour that is expected of contractors when they are conducting work on behalf of AHV, including the requirement to treat AHV tenants and residents with courtesy and respect at all times.

Both documents can be accessed at: www.ahvic.org.au/tenants/property-maintenance

We know that not all of our tenants have ready access to the internet, so if you would like a copy of one or both of the documents, please call our general enquiries number on [\(03\) 9403 2100](tel:0394032100), and we will arrange for copies to be mailed.

Interested in home ownership?

HOMESVIC FOR ABORIGINAL VICTORIANS

HomesVic for Aboriginal Victorians is a joint AHV and Government initiative that can assist you in buying your first home. **Visit our website to learn more.**

www.ahvic.org.au/communications-and-resources/homesvic-for-aboriginal-victorians

Have a yarn with the AHV team

TENANT EVENTS

Meet and greet AHV at our tenant events over the September School Holidays.

Have a chat with the AHV team over a BBQ community gathering. There will be staff to help your tenant enquiries, with lunch provided and activities for the kids. Tenants in each region will receive invites soon.

- ⦿ **Bendigo**, Wednesday 25 September, 11am – 1pm, Lake Weeroona Park
- ⦿ **Mildura**, Wednesday 2 October, 11am – 1pm, Ornamental Lakes Park
- ⦿ **Robinvale**, Thursday 3 October, 11am – 1pm, Bill McGinty Park

RSVP with your name, phone number and number of people attending to communications@ahvic.org.au or [0438 134 804](tel:0438134804).



The series of community gatherings kick-started with an event in Ballarat.

Want to fast-track an event in your area?
Contact us to request we visit your area next.

NEW RENT CALCULATIONS TO TAKE EFFECT

Our annual Rent Review for 2019 is now complete. New rent charges will start from Monday 2nd September 2019. Rent charges are calculated based on the income documents that tenants have recently provided. Tenants who do not supply the required income documents will be charged market rent.

If you have not already supplied your documents, please do so as soon as possible. You can contact the Rent Review team on [\(03\) 9403 2100](tel:0394032100) and rentreview@ahvic.org.au.

AHV has temporarily moved

HEAD OFFICE RENOVATIONS

We have temporarily moved 100m down the road to **Level 1, 252-254 St Georges Road, Fitzroy North VIC 3068**. During this time our phone number remains the same: [\(03\) 9403 2100](tel:0394032100). Please contact us for any queries.

Do you have maintenance enquiries or requests?
Contact [\(03\) 9403 2100](tel:0394032100) / maintenance@ahvic.org.au

Do you have any feedback on our newsletter?
Contact [0438 134 804](tel:0438134804) / communications@ahvic.org.au



AHV acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we go to work and live and pay our respects to Elders past and present

PROUDLY ACCREDITED WHITE RIBBON WORKPLACE

