



Mia Mia

Renter Newsletter Edition III, September 2025

We are thrilled to be sharing our third edition of Mia Mia for 2025 to our AHV Renter Community.

Thank you for joining us at NAIDOC Family Day!



Our annual NAIDOC Family Day was held on Thursday 10 July at the Aborigines Advancement League. This was the first time in the event's 24-year history the event was not held on the Wednesday at Collingwood Children's Farm. Despite this and forecast wet weather, around 1200 guests joined us on the day.

We were supported in the event by grants from the NIAA and City of Darebin and volunteers from KraftHeinz, NAB, Collarts and donations from dozens of organisations.

Traditional Owner Thane Garvey performed a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, followed by song and dance performances from Djirri Djirri, Indigenous Outreach Projects, and speeches from the AHV CEO, Darren Smith and City of Darebin Mayor, Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM. The entertainment was closed out with an incredible interactive show by Mitch Tambo. The arts and crafts and storytime were packed all day, and we had great engagement with the five on-ground activities – boomerang throwing, football, netball, softball and soccer.

The feedback from the event and particularly the new venue has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are likely to return to the League next year.





2025 Community Consultation Report

We recently completed another round of eight consultations as a part of our ongoing efforts to improve how we listen, connect and respond to renters, community members and local organisations. This time, we held sessions in: Broadmeadows, Echuca, Frankston, Geelong, Morwell, Ringwood, Shepparton and Warrnambool. At the consultation sessions, we let renters and community members know about:

- how AHV has worked to improve maintenance processes since the 2024 consultations;
- new community engagement opportunities like the renter portal; and
- our work through AHV's leadership and secretariat roles within *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort*, Victoria's Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Policy to increase the supply of housing for community

Renters and community members were also surprised to learn that AHV does not receive any ongoing government funding for its housing tenancy management and maintenance services, as AHV's ongoing funding is solely from the rents received. The key issues raised by renters and community members were:

- The urgent need for more housing, both long and short term, and housing in a range of sizes.
- Improving maintenance, with much of the feedback related to the delays, rather than works not being done.

For further information, including plans for upcoming consultations, please go to ahvic.org.au

Our community said...

More homes are needed, both short term and long-term, and in a range of bedroom sizes.



Workers report that having no housing impacts the access and success of health and support services, e.g. detox services, family violence services; and people being in hospitals and prisons longer than necessary.



Workers report that there is a rental shortage in regional and coastal areas, especially for areas that are holiday destinations.



Surprise that AHV does not receive any ongoing government funding, and that housing support services are not funded.



There have been improvements in maintenance getting done. Further improvements are for the works to be done more quickly, and for better communication from contractors.



Some contractors lacked cultural safety and awareness.



More engagement with AHV through face-to-face consultations and closer relationships with ACCOs.



The Renter Portal is great to be able to log maintenance and check information. However, some community members prefer to ring and speak to someone and receive information in the post.



In response AHV will...

Continue to advocate to State and Federal governments for more housing.

Continue to advocate for:

- more short and long term housing
- the two Aboriginal homelessness entry pilots to be made ongoing, and for housing to be part of the programs.

Work with local services to develop regional housing plans.

Continue to advocate for more funding for housing and Aboriginal support services. Share renter and community stories as a part of this advocacy.

Continue improving maintenance systems, e.g. providing renters with a job order number so they can track their works, and making sure that AHV contractors text renters to make and confirm maintenance appointments.

Ensure Aboriginal cultural safety standards as outlined in AHV's Code of Conduct are upheld by contractors. Encourage renters to notify AHV if contractors are culturally unsafe.

Continue to hold regional community consultations, collaborate more with ACCOs, including Housing Officers being at ACCOs and community events.

Continue to improve the Renter Portal and use texts and other digital communication. Make sure our written communications are in plain language and that we use multiple communication methods e.g. direct calls, letters, emails and texts.

AHV Notice Board

Wominjeka Kieran!



Kieran, a proud Barkindji man from the Mildura/Wentworth region, has recently joined us as the new Property Compliance Officer for the Northern Region.

With a diverse background in personal training, labour and community support in roles with NSW Police and NDIS, Kieran brings a wealth of experience and heart to his work. He's passionate about giving back to mob and promoting inclusion, even co-running a social media page, @the_brotherboys, with his brother-in-law to spread positivity and awareness. Kieran is excited to roll up his sleeves and help get homes into top shape with AHV.



Rent Review

The Annual Rent Review (ARR) has been finalised, and all renters have been provided details of their new rent payable. The new rent will take effect on Monday, 15 September 2025. Please ensure to update your rent payments to reflect the new rent.

AHV Garden Competiton

Do you have a patch in your garden you're particularly proud of? Then send us a photo and you'll go in the running for a prize!

We have several Bunnings vouchers up for grabs.

First place wins a \$100 Bunnings voucher, and second and third places both receive a \$50 Bunnings voucher.

Email your entries by **November 15** to community@ahvic.org.au to enter. Winners will be featured in the next Mia Mia!



Some exciting news in the Wellbeing Team space!

AHV are grateful to have received a further 12 months funding from Homes Victoria to be able to deliver our life skills program to all our eligible people living in our homes.

Now for the first time we can offer this opportunity statewide to ensure as many Community members as possible can participate.

The Wellbeing Team has been established to understand and support the goals and aspirations of our AHV Community members to thrive in their tenancies and lives! These goals can be big or small and may include health & wellbeing, housing, finances, employment & education. The coaches can also assist with referrals to more specialist support.

The program continues to be open to you if you are:

- over the age of 16
- living in AHV property

If you would like to work with one of our coaches, please contact the Wellbeing Team by:

Phone: 0436 475 932 or 1800 248 842

Email: wellbeing@ahvic.org.au

Alternatively, you can ask your housing officer to refer you, and a Life Coach will reach out. Our coaches look forward to meeting you to help you reach your goals!



Meet Ashlee R.!

Ashlee recently joined the team as a **housing officer in the West division** and is based in Ballarat. She is a Yorta Yorta woman from the Morgan bloodline. Raised in

Horsham, Ashlee holds strong connections to the Wotjobaluk community whilst living and working on Wadawurrung Country with her busy little family.

Although Ashlee has a strong Koori Justice background, she is excited to be taking on a new challenge in the Aboriginal Housing space.



Winter Bill Support

Victorian households will get a helping hand with energy costs this winter. The Energy Bill Relief Fund has been extended, with most people automatically receiving two \$75 rebates.

On top of that, the Power Saving Bonus is back. Eligible concession card holders can apply for a one-off \$100 payment. All you need is a recent electricity bill and one of the following cards: Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, or a Veterans' Affairs card. Only one payment is available per household, and you can **apply through the Victorian Energy Compare website**.

Slam Dunk Success: AHV Renter brings home the Gold!



We're excited to share an incredible update on AHV renter Alicia B, who recently competed at the Virtus World Basketball Championships in Kazakhstan.

Previously featured in the last issue of Mia Mia for her selection to represent Australia, Alicia has now returned home with **two gold medals!** A remarkable achievement for the youngest player on the national team at just 16 years old.

Team Australia dominated the tournament, winning every match in both the 3-on-3 and 5-on-5 formats. Alicia's team triumphed in an all-Aussie grand final, and her performance was even featured on Kazakhstan's national news, a proud moment for her family, community, and everyone cheering her on from home.

AHV was proud to support Alicia's journey with a contribution toward her travel expenses. Her dedication, talent, and spirit are truly inspiring, and we can't wait to see what she achieves next.

Go Alicia!



Community News and Events

Bendigo, Shepparton and North West Regions

Thriving Together: Supporting First Nations People

📅 9 September and 16 September, 9:30am - 12:30 pm

📍 Laurimar Community Centre

A series of workshops focused on well-being, cultural connection and personal growth.

MDAS NDIS Information Sessions

📅 Multiple Days and Times available

📍 MDAS Swan Hill and MDAS Mildura

In partnership with Intereach, info sessions on NDIS plans, applications, or eligibility.

☎ Visit MDAS' Facebook page for all session times.

BDAC Medical & Wellbeing Building opening

📅 5 September, 10:00am - 12:30pm

📍 119 Prouses Road, North Bendigo, 3450

Join BDAC for the official opening of their new medical & wellbeing building.

☎ events@bdac.com.au or call 5442 4947

MVAC Coolamon Kids

📅 Every Wednesday, 10:00am - 11:00am

📍 MVAC Hall

A fun play session for children aged 0 - 5 and their family and carers. Light lunch is provided and transport is available.

☎ More info: Vicki -0427469133 or Maggie/0447723194

VALS Wondonga Community Lunch and Legal Wills Information session

📅 11 September, 11:00am

📍 Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation

Come down to have a yarn with VALS on legal wills. Lunch provided.

VACSAL Jr. Football & Netball Carnival

📅 24 -25 September

📍 Rumbalara Football Netball Club

Individual and team registration closes on Sunday 14th September at 11pm

☎ Register on the VACSAL Website

Geelong, Barwon & Western Regions

Sisters Day Out - Ballarat

📅 21 October, 9:30am - 3:00pm

Hosted by Djirra - A space for Aboriginal women to support each other, learn about legal rights, and access support services.

☎ To register, call 1800 105 303 (press 3).

Stepping Stones to Deadliness

📅 25 October, 11:00am - 3:00pm

📍 Steampacket Gardens, Geelong

Join Wathaurong's Social & Emotional Wellbeing Team for Stepping Stones to Deadliness, a free, family-friendly celebration of culture and community on the Geelong Waterfront.

BADAC Twilight Street Market

📅 23 October 2025

📍 Ballarat, Location TBD

Wathaurong Community Meeting

📅 8 October, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

📍 Booln Booln Cultural Centre, Grovedale

☎ If you would like further information or to book transport, please contact (03) 5277 0044.

Gippsland

GEGAC On Country

📅 September-December

Fishing days, walks and cultural excursions led by GEGAC Quararook Engagement Officer Scott King.

☎ To book or for more info, call/text Scott on 0499 834 694.

GEGAC Yoga Sessions

📅 Mondays, 11:00am & 1:00pm (not on during school holidays.)

📍 Dala Yooro Building at GEGAC.

☎ RSVP via the GEGAC website

Metro Melbourne & Surrounds

Speaking Truth to Power– the Yoorrook Justice Commission and Truth-Telling

📅 8 September, 6-8pm

📍 Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

Adjunct Professor Sue-Anne Hunter, former Deputy Chair and Commissioner of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, will deliver the first public lecture on Yoorrook and Truth-Telling since the Commission delivered its final reports to government.

📞 Register at eventbrite

Connie Hart: One Stitch at a Time

📅 Until 23 November 2025

📍 Koorie Heritage Trust, Fed Square

The first major solo retrospective exhibition dedicated to the fibre-works of the late esteemed Gunditjmara Elder and master weaver, Aunty Connie Hart (1917-1993).

Bay Mob Health & Wellness Expo

📅 18 September, 10:30am - 3:30pm

📍 Nairn Marr Djambana, Frankston

Bay Mob's annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellness Expo, celebrating culture, community, and wellbeing.

Mini Aboriginal Cultural Day

📅 16 October, 9:30am - 11:30am

📍 Goodstart Rowville - Liberty Avenue, 89-91 Liberty Avenue, Rowville VIC 3178

This unique cultural experience is designed especially for children aged 3 to 5 years.

📞 Register via eventbrite.

Tuning into Kids

📅 19 September - 31 October, 10:00am - 12:30pm (except on public holidays)

📍 Central Ringwood Community Centre
Join Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation and Anglicare for 'Tuning into Kids 2025'. This program is a free gentle parenting group to support relationships between Aboriginal parents and children.

📞 Register via Ngwala Willumbong.

Stolen Generations Statewide Gathering

📅 24-25 September

📍 Bunjil Place, 2 Patrick NE Drive, Narre Warren
Join VACCA, Link-Up, Connecting Home and The Healing Foundation from 24 to 25 September for a two day Stolen Generations Statewide Gathering.

📞 Submit your EOI at vacca.org

Sisters Day Out - Preston

📅 23 September, 9:30am - 3:00pm

Hosted by Djirra - A space for Aboriginal women to support each other, learn about legal rights, and access support services.

📞 To register, call 1800 105 303 (press 3).

VACCA Western Women's Group

📅 Thursdays, 10am-12pm

📍 Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Community Centre
Connect with community and share culture. Open to all Aboriginal women living in the west.

📞 RSVP: vaccawestculturalevents@vacca.org

The Torch Future Dreaming Exhibition

📅 24 October - 22 November 2025

📍 The Torch Gallery, 146 Elgin St, Carlton

The Torch proudly presents Future Dreaming, an exhibition featuring works by First Nations artists incarcerated in 2025.

VAHS Moondani Murrup Grief & Loss Group

📅 First Friday of every Month, till 5 Dec

📍 VAHS Preston

VAHS invites community to yarn in a culturally space at their grief and loss support group

VACSAL Sr. Football & Netball Carnival

📅 4-5 October

📍 Livingston Rec Reserve

📞 Visit vacsal.org.au for the latest information and how to register.

All events listed are free.



Kids Corner

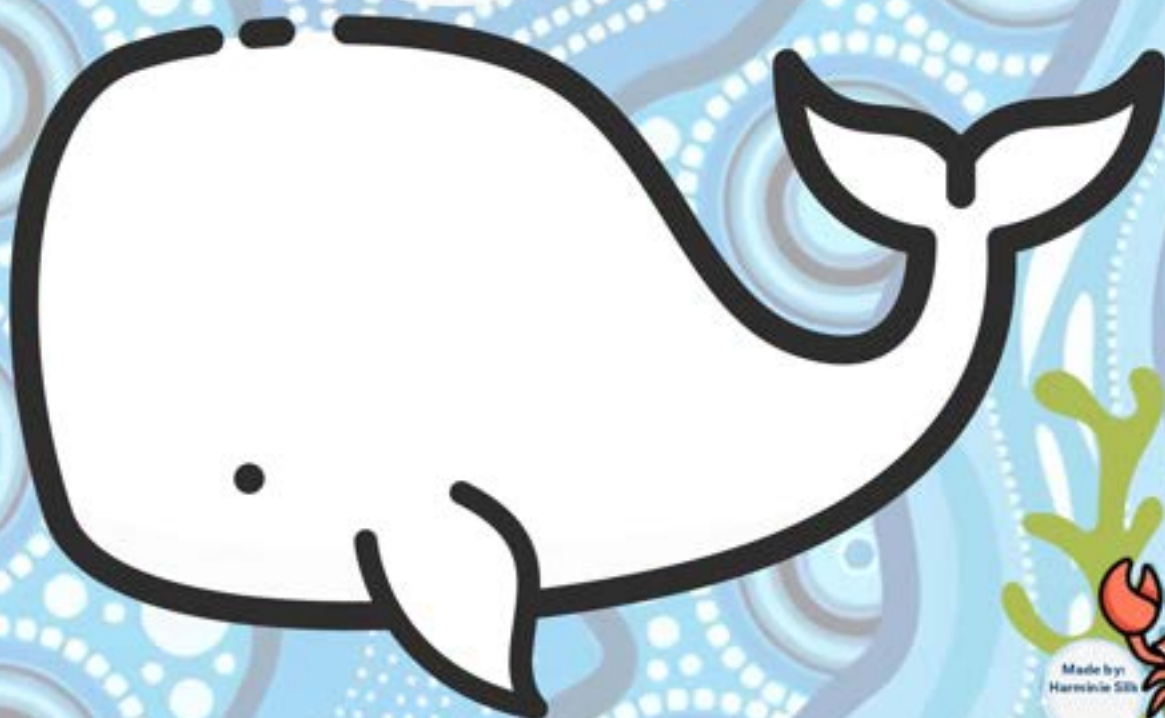


Can you connect the dots??



Go all out!

Design and colour your own whale!



Made by:
Hannah Sills

