



ABORIGINAL HOUSING VICTORIA

# MIA MIA Renter Newsletter

Edition 2 - 2021

## HOME UPGRADE PROGRAM ROLLING OUT ACROSS THE STATE

**Property condition inspections are underway as part of the Aboriginal Rapid Housing Response Program (ARHRP), which will see upgrades occur to a large number of AHV's properties.**

If your property inspection is yet to be completed, SPM Assets will contact you to provide the exact time and date of when it will occur.

When completed the upgrades will:

- ✓ Improve the overall reliability of the assets installed in the homes eligible for an upgrade.
- ✓ Reduce any future interruptions to the homes earmarked for maintenance works required for aging infrastructure.
- ✓ Improve renters' experience.
- ✓ Where possible, reduce the carbon footprint, energy and water costs.

Note: properties will only be eligible for upgrade works if they have had a property condition inspection. For any questions call 1800 248 842. More information is at [www.ahvic.org.au](http://www.ahvic.org.au)



## NAIDOC WEEK 2021

NAIDOC Week 2021 is around the corner, with this year's theme *Heal Country!* a chance to reflect on what Country means to all of us.



**HEAL  
COUNTRY!**  
4-11 JULY 2021

This year AHV is partnering with Yarra Libraries to host a series of online performances, workshops and stories from talented First Nations artists and storytellers.

Stay tuned via our website and social media for details of our celebrations.

We also have a special NAIDOC Week competition for AHV renters. Turn to page 3 for more details!

## OUR WELLBEING PROGRAM IS GROWING



Life coaches Cameron, Sam, Amy and Sara.

Our Wellbeing team is delighted to be relaunching our More Than a Landlord (MTAL) program, which improves the wellbeing of renters through life coaching. A life coach meets regularly with a renter to support them in identifying and working towards their aspirations and goals. A renter may, for example, want to save money for a car, get a qualification at TAFE, connect with family or community or even work towards securing gainful employment.

An initial pilot of the program in Whittlesea in 2017 was successful in assisting renters in achieving some of their goals and aspirations. AHV is now working with the University of Melbourne to evaluate the impact of the life coaching program on the wellbeing of renters and their families. As part of the evaluation we have employed peer researchers to collect survey information about community wellbeing.



Peer researchers Rhys, Jackie, Kanisha, Alisha, Liam and James.

Peer researchers are now starting to collect survey data from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander renters over the age of 16 in North-West metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat and Geelong. Everyone who undertakes the survey will receive a \$40 Coles voucher.

MTAL is currently available to AHV renters in the North-West metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat and Geelong areas. For more information about life coaching or the survey please contact the wellbeing team via free call 1800 248 842 or email [wellbeing@ahvic.org.au](mailto:wellbeing@ahvic.org.au)

## ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY HOME CONNECT

Earlier this year we launched Aboriginal Community Home Connect, a free telephone support service for Aboriginal renters living in Victorian social housing. Since then we have provided support to over 200 clients, with information and regular follow-ups for physical and mental health, financial difficulties, housing and child welfare services. We can also help with support for children and youth at school, as well as the latest information on COVID-19 and how to stay safe during the pandemic.

Give us a call on 1800 313 030 or visit [www.aboriginalhomeconnect.org.au](http://www.aboriginalhomeconnect.org.au) to have a yarn or learn more. Home Connect is available only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander renters living in social housing in Victoria.

## CELEBRATE NAIDOC WEEK WITH US FOR A CHANCE TO WIN!

With NAIDOC Week 2021 drawing near we have two special NAIDOC Week competitions for AHV renters and households members. The winners in each competition will win themselves a Clothing the Gaps voucher!

### Deadly Photo Competition

Show us your NAIDOC pride with a photo you and/or your mob! It could be at home or outdoors. At work or on Country. At the footy or during your favourite pastime. Anything goes – just send us a photo of what you makes you happy and proud of our cultures.

### Writing Competition

Tell us what *Heal Country!* means to you. It could be a short story, poem, song lyrics or other form of written expression. Maximum two pages. There will be a separate prize for ages 0-8, 13-18 and 18+.

Entries close Sunday 11 July. Head to [www.ahvic.org.au](http://www.ahvic.org.au) for more details and to enter!



Alicia, Norma, Kanisha, Wingara, Ricky and Norma Jr. show their pride with deadly colours.

## RENTER SHARES TIPS FOR SUPERB SUNFLOWERS

Few things liven up a garden like some beautiful flowers, and we're delighted to share these deadly pictures from Tracie, a renter of AHV who lives in the western region. Tracie grows a variety plants including pansies, jasmines and native flowers – much to delight of both her neighbours and the local bee population.



Tracie enjoys the relaxation that gardening brings and seeing the progress of her work.



And, so, what's the secret to superb sunflowers? "Plenty of sunshine, mulch on the soil, and watering before dawn and after dusk," says Tracie.

## TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

We would like to thank everyone who completed the Tenant Satisfaction Survey earlier this year. The results are in, with a majority of respondents noting an increased satisfaction in key areas such as repairs.

Unfortunately significant numbers of family violence and mental health problems were also reported. Please reach out if you need support.

## ACCESS POWER SAVING BONUS

Victorian Energy Compare is offering a once-off \$250 power saving bonus to eligible households during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The payment is designed to support vulnerable households experiencing bill stress, with applications open until 21 January 2022.

To see if you are eligible, visit [www.compare.energy.vic.gov.au](http://www.compare.energy.vic.gov.au)

## RENTER THE NEW WORD FOR TENANT

New rental laws have come into effect in Victoria. As part of these changes the term 'renter' has replaced 'tenant', and 'rental provider' has replaced 'landlord'. You will notice this more often in our communications as we transition to these terms. Other changes to the rental laws apply to areas such as starting a tenancy as well as repairs, modifications and property conditions. To learn more visit [www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)

## SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR OUR MOB

- Aboriginal Home Connect: 1800 313 030
- Djirra Aboriginal women's well-being helpline: 1800 105 303
- Dardi Munwurro Aboriginal men's well-being helpline: 1800 435 799
- Safe Steps family violence support: 1800 015 188
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36 | Lifeline: 131 114
- For emergencies call 000

## RESEARCH INTO PRIVATE RENTAL DISCRIMINATION

Have you or someone you know experienced discrimination in the private rental market?

We want to hear from you. We've partnered with Swinburne University to further understand problems faced by Aboriginal renters in the private rental market.

Contact Wendy on 03 9214 8967 or via [wmstone@swin.edu.au](mailto:wmstone@swin.edu.au) to learn more and book an interview.

## VAHMF IWG RELEASES HOUSING REPORT CARD

The *Mana-na woorrn-tyeen maar-takoort* Implementation Working Group has released a Report Card on housing outcomes experienced by Aboriginal Victorians.

The report brings together 20 key measures of housing security, and compares outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians with outcomes for the mainstream population and First Nations people across Australia.

View the Report Card at [www.vahmf.org.au](http://www.vahmf.org.au)