

Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results and Your Say Day



Held at the Redfern Community Centre, this year's Your Say Day welcomed almost 40 women. Catered by Two Good Co., the day was a wonderful opportunity to connect after a long break from face-to-face gatherings.

The day focused on the most recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey results. Tenants were invited to provide additional feedback on areas for improvement in our service delivery. View our Action Plan on page 5.



Remember, we welcome Women's Housing Tenants to contribute to the Tenant Advisory Group. We meet every two months in locations across Sydney. The meetings are a platform to share information and experiences about WHC services. It's also a great way of upskilling and gaining confidence.



Time	Date	Location
10 – 12pm	Thursday 15 December	Surry Hills
10 – 12pm	Wednesday 15 February	Bankstown
10 – 12pm	Tuesday 18 April	Woolloomooloo

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 29 November, 11.30am – 2.30pm. Rydges Sydney Central, 28 Albion St, Surry Hills (Near Central Station). RSVP by 23 November by scanning the QR code, calling us on 9281 1764 or email contact@womenshousingcompany.org.



CEO Message

The best solution to women's homelessness is more housing. Despite all the challenges over the last few years, I'm very excited to share that the Women's Housing Company (WHC) has been able to deliver new housing in recent months, with plans for more early in the new year.



Most of the new housing is jointly funded by the NSW Government and the WHC – thanks to a series of successful tenders. The highlights include:

- Bankstown – a new block providing a home for 7 women. This was officially launched by Minister Maclaren-Jones and Minister Ward
- Peakhurst – a new block built by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation and managed by the WHC, providing a home for 9 older women. This was officially launched by Minister Roberts.

- Wiley Park and Lakemba – purchase of 3 blocks that will be significantly refurbished and be available early next year, comprising 24 units in total.

In addition, the WHC was successful in achieving Accreditation through the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) for our Homelessness Support Services – meeting a set of national standards assessed by an independent assessor.

And finally, on 29 November, we will hold our Annual General Meeting and we look forward to seeing

many old and new faces again in person. This will be an opportunity to report on our work, reflect on our achievements, hear from our inspirational guest speaker, and celebrate our 40 years of service.

Best regards,
Debbie Georgopoulos
CEO WHC

Reconciliation Action Plan

The Women's Housing Company will develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) setting out how our organisation works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in a way

that builds respect, responsibility and drives opportunity. We will begin our journey with a Reflect RAP, focusing on our relationships with stakeholders and raising awareness of reconciliation

and cultural safety within our organisation. If you would like to be involved, please email contact@womenshousingcompany.org and we will follow up with you.

Bankstown

In September the WHC celebrated the latest in a series of acquisitions made possible by NSW Government grants. The purchase of the Bankstown block of seven one-bedroom units is thanks to the assistance of the Community Housing Innovation Fund grant. The opening was attended by Minister for Families and Communities Natasha Maclaren-Jones, Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, Natalie Ward, Muslim Women Australia Chief Executive Officer Maha Abdo, the local member of the area Wendy Lindsay, representatives from the Department



of Communities and Justice, and local and national news networks.

The block is now fully tenanted, and the WHC will be working in consultation with residents to deliver community-building activities and events in the

block's common area to support community connection. The WHC is working closely with the Muslim Women Australia to provide these events at the block and upcoming acquisitions in the area.

Peakhurst

The Women's Housing Company (WHC) in partnership with the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) was excited to launch the new block in Peakhurst which will provide housing for 9 single older women. This new housing is well designed, with several accessible units. The Minister for Planning and Minister for Homes, Anthony Roberts officially launched the housing at an event with WHC representatives, covered exclusively by Channel 9.

The NSW Government has invested \$35m in a new strategy to address women's homelessness across Greater Sydney. The block in Peakhurst is part of this program. By 2025, there will be 106 new units built for women who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness – to be managed by the WHC.



Inquiry in Homelessness Among Older People

In August, several WHC tenants stood before state Members of Parliament and shared their stories as part of the NSW Upper House inquiry into homelessness among older people. Christina Hough, our Head of Community Housing Operations, also gave evidence. As part of the Ageing on the Edge Forum, there were calls for the NSW Government to:



A visit by NSW parliamentary members to one of our blocks.

- fund a specialist older person's housing information and support service
- lower the current priority age for social housing eligibility from 80 years
- build 5,000 social and affordable homes per year for ten years, twenty percent to target older people.

Empowerment through Employment

Sometimes if you've been unemployed for a while, it can be hard to develop the motivation to start job searching again. For some women, the opportunity to work has never been possible, while others have lost self-confidence. The Women's Housing Company wants to help change this.

We launched our Empowerment through Employment initiative at the Redfern Community Centre last month. Joined by a long list of agencies specialising in one-on-one support and guidance, the day gave those interested an opportunity to ask questions and build connections for their employment journey.

The program provides pathways to job providers or training tailored to your needs. It also offers opportunities to connect and 'Hear from Her' sessions, with women sharing their ups and downs of getting back into work.



We have several workshops on building self-confidence, career planning and even styling tips for job interviews. Join us at upcoming events, including a lunch at the end of each session.



• Thursday 17 November

Career Planning with Metro Assist looking at educational and career opportunities.

Whether you have been considering seeking employment or are simply keen to learn new skills and build connections, everyone within the Women's Housing Company community is encouraged to participate.



If you want to start your employment journey, jump on our website, and register for our program. Our Community Engagement Manager will contact you. Scan the QR code to sign up.

Our recent workshop included a visit to Habitat Women for a chance to learn about the program and meet the cohort.

Employment Participation Incentive (EPI)

If you are a WHC tenant and start working, you can apply for the WHC Employment Participation Incentive. If approved, your rent won't increase for up to 26 weeks.

Eligibility:

- commencing work for first time
- moving from casual or part-time to full time employment
- starting paid employment for the first time;
- starting paid employment after a break or at least three (3) months
- advise us of your change in income within 21 calendar days

Homelessness – a personal story

The WHC Homelessness Support Service assists many women each year and recently achieved national accreditation through the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). While data is key to reporting on outcomes, behind the data is a person. This is one person's story.

Aarash arrived in Australia from Afghanistan as a refugee in 2021. Twenty-three years old and homeless, Aarash slept in the lounge room of an overcrowded rental property.

After several challenges accessing appropriate accommodation, Aarash moved into the WHC's refuge. The team quickly connected her with specialised trauma and refugee counselling. Securing support and safe space in the crisis refuge allowed her to begin

receiving much-needed physical and mental health support and other assistance in a safe environment.

Aarash received her Permanent Residency in April 2022. Motivated to make a life for herself in Australia, she returned to school to complete Year 11 and hopes to attend university to study Journalism.

Aarash has made connections with other women who fled Afghanistan and has gained a profile within her community as an advocate for the

human rights of other refugees and women escaping violence and oppression. In March, she was invited to the National Press Club to attend the 'Human Rights, Democracy and Global Citizenry - Recovering Australia's Humanity and Place in the World' by Human Rights Activist, Craig Foster. The support Aarash has received from the service has allowed her the time and space to start her recovery from trauma and plan for the future.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey: Action Plan

Over the next 12 months, the Women's Housing Company will...



01 COMMUNICATIONS

- ensure emails and phone calls are acknowledged within 2 business days
- review our Customer Service Charter and undertake refresher training



02 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

- increase tenant awareness of repair timeframes and communicate specific repair waiting times for each job
- distribute educational material about recycling information



03 TENANT INVOLVEMENT

- explore the implementation of an online tenant reference group to provide feedback on policy and procedural changes
- expand annual Your Say Day



04 TENANT RIGHTS UPHELD

- review Service Complaints and Appeals Policy
- develop Neighbour Complaints policy
- contact tenants to discuss complaints and appeals by phone and discuss outcomes by phone prior to letter being sent out



Community Noticeboard

WHC would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience during this seemingly endless wet weather. We have really appreciated your patience and hopefully, most leaks have now been fixed or soon will be.

Repair response times

The WHC Responsive Repairs are categorised into four priority levels:

Type of repair	Response time	Examples include
Emergency	within 4 hours	Live exposed wires, gas, water or sewage incidents when tenant can not turn off
Priority	within 24 hours	Sewage overflow or blockage, power that's cant be fixed by replacing globe or at power board
Routine 1	within 5 days	Repairing critical property elements or functional failures, such as oven, hot water system
Routine 2	within 21 days	Easing of door and windows, tiling repairs

For more information on Responsive Repair timeframes, please refer to the Repairs and Maintenance Factsheet. Our team will do their best to attend to your request as soon as possible.

In life threatening situations, first call 000. Weekdays 9am – 4:30pm call 9281 1764. If outside Sydney, call 1300 942 111. For After-hour Emergencies call 1300 556 057. If the repair is not urgent, email us at Repairs@womenshousingcompany.org or visit <https://www.womenshousingcompany.org.au/tenants/maintenance>

Join our Women's Housing Company Tenants only Facebook Page

Join us to learn about local events, tips and tricks and WHC updates. Every



application must be verified by address or by tenancy number. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/clubwhc>

Thread Together



Have you heard about Thread Together? The organisation provides brand new clothes from a long list of

Australian and International fashion designers. From Calvin Klein to Simone Perele and Camilla and Marc, Thread Together has a fantastic collection. Women's Housing Company has partnered with the organisation to further support our community.

We have just received a large donation of beautiful brand-new bras. If you are interested please contact us.

Community Gardens



Would you like to eat fresh food and add colour to your block? A Women's Housing Company community garden

requires a minimum of two residents willing to oversee the garden on behalf of the block. If you are interested in starting a community garden. If you are interested please contact us.



Translation assistance

Don't speak English? Download Google Translate. Type 'Google Translate' into Google and download when prompted.

We want to hear from you!

Do you enjoy writing, have a great recipe to share or have ideas about what you would like to read more of in our newsletter? If you are interested please contact us.

Business Hours: 9.00am – 4.30pm Monday – Friday

Customer Service: Phone: 02 9281 1764

Email: contact@womenshousingcompany.org

Repairs and Maintenance: Phone: 02 8202 9313

Email: repairs@womenshousingcompany.org

Website Form: <http://www.womenshousingcompany.org.au/tenants/maintenance>

After Hours Emergency Repairs: 1300 556 057

Translations and Interpreter: 131 450

The Surry Hills office will close from Monday 26 December 2022 to Friday 6 January 2023. For emergency repairs, please contact 1300 556 057 during this time.