



Pacific Link
HOUSING

PACIFIC LINK POST

Your tenant newsletter



*Garden Workshops are
starting again soon at
North Gosford!*

Autumn 2021

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From the CEO's desk

There has been a lot in the media lately about the current housing crisis and lack of affordable rental properties across our footprint. It is a big problem and has been putting a lot of pressure on community housing providers and support services.

With the Job Seeker supplement winding back, unfortunately things are likely to get worse for people struggling to sustain their tenancies. It is important to keep your rent payments up to date during this time and to let us know if you are having difficulty paying your bills so we can assist.

I have been prioritising advocacy over the past few months and was recently invited to be a panel member at the Creating Collaborative Housing Solutions Forum. Over 80 people



attended the forum and it was a great opportunity to share the work we do with the wider community.

Improving this housing crisis is going to take a whole-of-community approach and hopefully we can work together to ensure everyone has a safe and affordable place to call home.

Ian Lynch - CEO

Rebecca's 10 Year Milestone

PLH was excited to present Rebecca with an award for reaching her ten year milestone with us! After leaving school and working in the Real Estate industry for a couple of years, Rebecca started at PLH as a Housing Manager. She now works part-time as a Project Officer, after having two little ones and becoming a mother.

We asked her a few questions about her time with us over the years...

What is your favourite thing about working at PLH? Being able to help provide people within our community a safe and secure place to call home.

How have things changed at PLH in the past 10 years? We have grown! More properties, more tenants and more staff which is fantastic and results in being able to help reduce homelessness.



What is your proudest accomplishment? I really enjoyed working with support services to help find homes for young people. To be able to watch these young male and females finish high school or find a job because they had secure and stable accommodation felt good.

Mark has gone from strength to strength with Together Home

In July 2020, PLH received funding from the NSW Government for a statewide program called 'Together Home'. This program provides homes and intensive wraparound support to individuals who are homeless and sleeping on the streets during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our team have made amazing progress and have already provided safe homes to 26 tenants! The NSW Government have now extended the Together Home Program and provided PLH with funds in the second round.



We have had some great outcomes so far including Mark, who was living on the streets for 18 months after a string of bad luck. Life on the street was hard, but Mark has had a second chance to turn his life around thanks to the Together Home program.

After dealing with his own health issues, a couple of deaths in the family and being unemployed due to COVID, Mark found himself enduring the stark reality of homelessness. Together Home has changed all that. Mark now has a roof over his head, is receiving a whole range of supports, is volunteering his time with a local organisation and is looking for work.

"I never thought I would survive, but I have. Whatever I need, the Together Home team are there. Whether it is a lift to an appointment or linking me to health supports, they are there 24/7. I am getting the chance to reinvent the wheel at 55 and I am so grateful," Mark said.

Mark has gone from strength to strength since being supported by Together Home. He now completes a 5km walk every day to improve his health and started volunteering at a group home where he does gardening and maintenance. Mark was also linked to training support to ensure his resume was up to date with his mining drilling and truck driving experience and is now actively looking for work. Well done Mark...we can't wait to hear what you achieve next!

Our Student Placement Gabby

We were excited to welcome a very special student placement who just happened to be a PLH tenant! Gabby has been a tenant since she was one. Now aged 23, Gabby is completing her final year at university to establish a career in the social welfare sector. As one of three children to a single mother, Gabby felt extremely fortunate that her family had housing security during her childhood and early adulthood.

"I truly believe it was living in one place and having a secure home environment that was the foundation for me to go to university – the first in my family to do so. My mum left school in year nine and was on the disability pension for most of my life which meant she was unable to work."

"Unfortunately, my mum passed away from cancer in August 2020, but she was able to spend some of her last days in her home where she felt the most comfortable. While my mum had cancer, I was her carer while also attending full time university. After mum passed, PLH was extremely understanding with me and found me to a new place to live closer to the university."

Gabby was a recipient of Pacific Link Housing's Education Scholarship which assisted with her schooling and university studies over the years. She completed her student placement working with the Together Home Program and said she learnt so much about the homelessness and domestic violence sectors. She is a



true inspiration and we wish her the very best with her future career!

We have submitted Gabby's success story to CHIA (Community Housing Institute of Australia) NSW and hope that it will be included in one of their upcoming reports about the positive impact of community housing.

Repairs and Maintenance

We do everything we can to respond to requests for maintenance and repairs quickly and efficiently. Service times are best when we own the property you are in, but can be a little longer when we lease the property as requests must be reported to real estate agents or others. PLH is committed to attend to:

- **Urgent repairs** within 24 hours e.g. a burst water pipe, gas leak, a serious roof leak or breakdown in any essential services.
- **Non-urgent repairs** are generally attended to within 14 - 28 days.

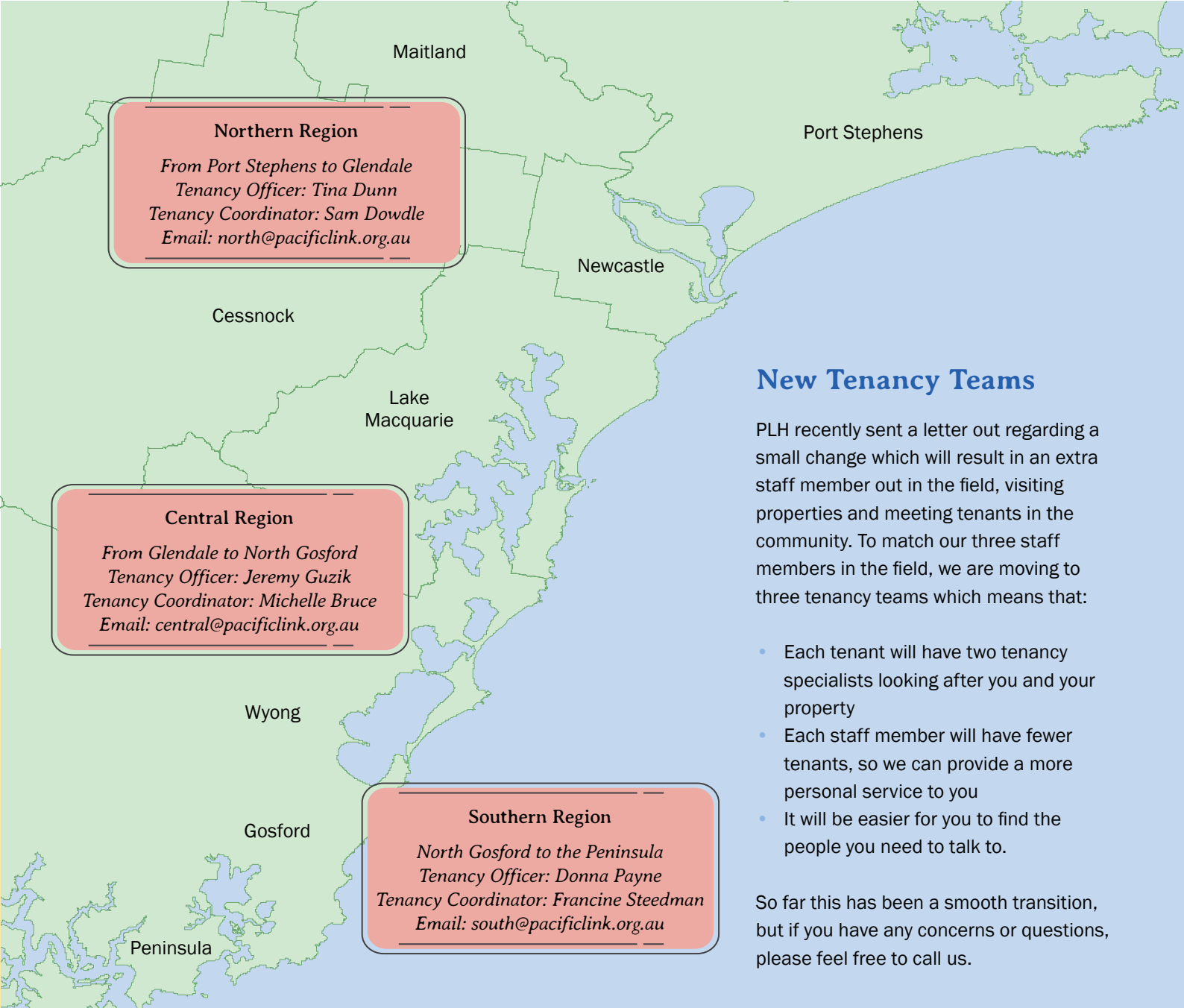
A quick reminder to please make sure you're at home for pre-arranged appointments with contractors.



Cadetship Program

PLH have put up our hand up to take part in the NSW Government's Cadetship Program. This exciting initiative provides an opportunity for cadets to receive 12 months paid employment and training with a Community Housing Provider.

At the end of the program, they will achieve a Certificate IV in Social Housing, combined with on-the-job training in property management and asset development. It was open to NSW residents who are unemployed aged 15-24 or social housing tenants aged 25 and over. Hopefully we will have more to share in our next newsletter!



Northern Region

*From Port Stephens to Glendale
Tenancy Officer: Tina Dunn
Tenancy Coordinator: Sam Dowdle
Email: north@pacificlink.org.au*

Central Region

*From Glendale to North Gosford
Tenancy Officer: Jeremy Guzik
Tenancy Coordinator: Michelle Bruce
Email: central@pacificlink.org.au*

Southern Region

*North Gosford to the Peninsula
Tenancy Officer: Donna Payne
Tenancy Coordinator: Francine Steedman
Email: south@pacificlink.org.au*

New Tenancy Teams

PLH recently sent a letter out regarding a small change which will result in an extra staff member out in the field, visiting properties and meeting tenants in the community. To match our three staff members in the field, we are moving to three tenancy teams which means that:

- Each tenant will have two tenancy specialists looking after you and your property
- Each staff member will have fewer tenants, so we can provide a more personal service to you
- It will be easier for you to find the people you need to talk to.

So far this has been a smooth transition, but if you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to call us.

Meet Donna - PLH's new Tenancy Officer for the Southern Region

My name is Donna. I started working for PLH in February 2021 as a Tenancy Officer focusing on properties in the south region of PLH's portfolio. I moved to the Central Coast in January 2019 with my teenage daughter from the Blue Mountains region where I lived for 14 years. I wanted to be closer to the ocean and in an area that offered greater opportunities for both myself and my daughter without the hustle and bustle of a major city.

I have spent most of my working life in property related roles including residential property management,

retail/commercial leasing administration, project administration for large residential developments and the public housing sector with FACS Mt Druitt.

As a Tenancy Officer I will spend time a good deal of time out of the office doing routine inspections as well as ingoing and outgoing inspections. The majority of the time in the office will be the administration related to these inspections. It has been great getting to know all of you so far, and I look forward to continuing working as part of the PLH team.



COVID-19 Update for Tenants

PLH monitors and responds to NSW Government restrictions and recommendations regarding COVID-19. There are still some temporary measures in place to minimise the risk of infection for tenants, staff and the community. We are cautiously resuming some small tenant activities around North Gosford but look forward to organising some bigger events across other areas within our footprint soon!



We will continue to update you by post, SMS messages, email and in our newsletters. Latest information for tenants can be found at www.pacificlink.org.au/coronavirus

Three Week Barista Course

Do you want to learn essential food safety and barista skills? Join this fast-tracked course to get started in the hospitality industry! This course is offered by the Central Coast Community College and is free for eligible PLH tenants. Visit our website www.pacificlink.org.au/courses for details on how to register.

Time: 10am – 2pm
Dates: Wednesday 14th, 21st and 28th April 2021
Location: Kendall Community Centre,
11 Dunbar Way, North Gosford



Upcoming Garden Workshops

We are excited to let tenants know that the Dunbar Way Garden Workshops are starting again! Brenden from the Sydney Botanic Gardens will be hosting workshops on:

- 15th April at 3pm - Caring for your garden
- 20th May at 3pm - Grow your own succulents
- 17th June at 3pm - Native flower arrangements

Further details will be sent via email - make sure we have your correct email address on file so that you receive the latest tenant program updates!



What is the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)?

No Interest Loans (NILS) provide individuals and families on low incomes with access to safe, fair and affordable credit. Loans are available for essential goods and services up to \$1,500. Repayments are set at an affordable amount over 12-18 months.

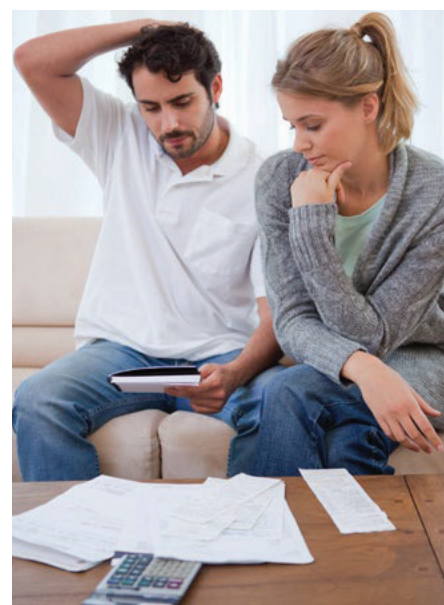
NILS is offered by 170 local community organisations in over 600 locations across Australia. Chances are there'll be a NILS provider near you or one who can help over the phone!

Visit nils.com.au to find out if you are eligible or contact 13 NILS (13 64 57).

NILS can be used for:

- Household items like fridges, washing machines, TVs, and furniture
- Medical procedures and dental services
- Education essentials such as computers and textbooks
- Car repairs or registration
- Some other items as requested

It cannot be used for food, rent, bills, cash or debts.



Meet Linda - PLH's new Executive Manager, People & Culture

Hi, my name's Linda and I have joined PLH as the Executive Manager, People & Culture. I've worked in Human Resources for over 14 years now across multiple industries including local government, but mostly in manufacturing and consumer goods working with brands you probably know and love like Mars, MasterFoods, M&M's, Skittles, Extra, McCain and Sara Lee.

Whilst this is a big change of industry for me, I'm really excited to be bringing my skills across a variety of areas in

HR to such a purpose driven business. Although most of my work will be done behind the scenes here at PLH managing our employee policies and processes, I do hope I get the opportunity to meet a few of you and hear your stories as time goes on.

I live here on the Central Coast with my husband Chris and our two dogs – Buddy (Blue Cattle) and Tilly (Staffy x Foxy). In my spare time, I enjoy going to the local beaches, playing netball (terribly) with my friends and tending to my countless indoor plants!



Sheila Astolfi Education Scholarships

Once again, we had a great response to the education scholarship for the 1st round of 2021. It was a privilege to meet so many talented young people who are passionate about their future. Whether it was in the arts, mechanics, cooking/baking, plumbing and sports enthusiasts, they were all very

inspiring! We also had a few tertiary applicants who are studying nursing, criminology and real estate – worlds apart, but all great professions. We can't wait to see how things turn out for each of them and wish them every success in reaching their goals.

Want to apply for PLH's Sheila Astolfi Education Scholarship?

Mark your calendar for the Second Round closing on 30th June 2021. Visit the website to learn more www.pacificlink.org.au/programs/

