



Pacific Link
HOUSING

Pacific Link Post

Your tenant newsletter



Summer 2024 Issue

- Tenant Garden Competition
- Learner Driver Program
- Bushfire Readiness and Fire Safety
- Health and Wellbeing Program
- Education Support Program
- Tenant Survey Results
- Festive Season Support
- PLH's Green Team
- Property Purchases
- Share Your Part of the PLH Story
- David's Lasting Legacy
- Tech Connect Loan Program

Message from our CEO

As we farewell 2023 and head into our milestone 40th year, I'm grateful for the vibrant community we have at Pacific Link Housing. This occasion reflects the dedication and resilience of our tenants, staff, partners and directors over the years, whose collective stories form our rich history. Your experiences and memories are also integral to our story and I encourage you to share them with us. More details are in this newsletter.

The results from our Annual Tenant Survey, conducted by CHIA NSW, were truly encouraging. The increase in overall satisfaction and tenant involvement highlights our team's commitment to serving you better. Your feedback is invaluable, guiding us to continually improve and adapt!

If you or your children are studying in 2024, I encourage you to apply to our Education Support Program, designed to assist you with the cost of studies. Please apply before the 12th Jan 2024.

On behalf of the PLH team, I wish you a safe and happy holiday season. We've included a small gift of a magnet and notepad with this newsletter. Additionally, thanks to generous support from Westfield Tuggerah and our community partners, we're delighted to provide books to families with young children aged 10 and under.

We look forward to celebrating our 40th anniversary with you in 2024!

Ian Lynch - CEO

Tenant Garden Comp

Once again, our Annual Tenant Garden Competition showcased the gardening talents within the PLH community! We were thrilled to see a variety of stunning gardens, reflecting the dedication and creativity of our tenants. It's also inspiring to learn about the personal significance these beautiful spaces hold for each gardener.

"As a renter, it feels great to take ownership of a space. The garden is my happy place. Taking care of it is the next best thing to meditation; negative thoughts disappear when you have your hands in the dirt!"

"My garden means a lot to me. A lot of hard work and having a relaxing time in the garden, which is nice."

"My garden is my peaceful place."

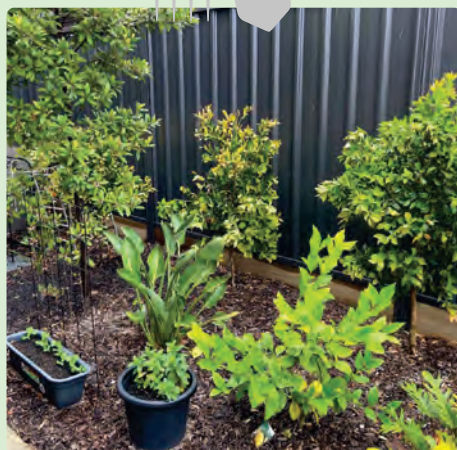
"My garden gives me such joy as I take cuttings from herbs and succulents and see them grow. I've planted seeds for vegetables, and they have now sprouted, so soon I'll be eating my homegrown snow peas, strawberries, tomatoes, and shallots. I love sitting outside looking at my flowers. My lemon tree will give me fruit next year."

"My garden means a lot to me as it's my first garden to potter in."



These garden competition winners received a Bunnings gift card to reward their efforts. Great work!

- » Glen - Umina Beach
- » Dianne - Woy Woy
- » Verna - East Gosford
- » Mary - Woy Woy
- » Gail - Gosford
- » Jason - Toronto
- » Lynette - East Gosford
- » Lisa - Watanobbi



PLH's Learner Driver Program

Our Learner Driver Program helps tenants on their journey to becoming a skilled and confident driver. It's open to tenants of all ages with a valid learner driver's licence who meet the eligibility criteria. If you qualify, you can receive a package of free lessons from a professional driving instructor, focusing on essential road safety skills.

Gain confidence behind the wheel and unlock exciting opportunities for the future!

For more information, visit www.pacificlink.org.au/learner-driver or call us at 4324 7617 if you need help applying.



Stay Safe: Bushfire Readiness and Fire Safety Tips

As the bushfire season draws near, we must remain alert and well-prepared. Protecting our homes and families from fire hazards requires proactive steps and an awareness of potential risks. Here are some tips to improve bushfire readiness and ensure fire safety at home.

Outdoor Preparations for Bushfire Season

- △ **Yard Upkeep:** Regular maintenance of gardens, lawns and outdoor spaces is key. Trim overhanging branches that are under 2 meters high and dispose of garden waste to minimise fire fuel. For higher branches, PLH is able to assist.
- △ **Stay Updated:** The NSW Rural Fire Service offers helpful resources like the 'Hazards Near Me NSW' and 'Fires Near Me Australia' smartphone apps. For the latest alerts and warnings, visit their website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or call the Bush Fire Information Line - 1800 679 737.
- △ **Gutter Maintenance:** It's essential to clean your gutters of leaves and debris regularly. For tenants in single-storey homes, this is your responsibility. PLH can arrange this service for a fee if you are unable to attend to it. Tenants in multi-storey buildings should contact PLH to arrange cleaning.



Fire Safety in the Home

- △ **Watch the Flame:** Never leave candles, incense or open flames unattended. Make sure to extinguish them before leaving a room or going to bed.
- △ **Kitchen Safety:** Unattended cooking can be hazardous, especially when using oil. Always supervise your cooking area and keep ovens and stovetops clean to prevent grease build-up.
- △ **Escape Routes:** In the case of an emergency, ensure your exit pathways are clear. A clutter-free home looks great and ensures a safer, quicker exit if needed.
- △ **Smoke Alarms:** We regularly check your smoke alarms, but if you notice any issues, please inform us immediately. Please remember that removing your smoke alarm is not permitted.



Need Assistance? Contact Our Assets Team

If you notice any maintenance issues in or around your home that could pose a fire risk, don't hesitate to let our Assets Team know. Your safety is our priority!

Phone: (02) 4324 7617 #4
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Email: maintenance@pacificlink.org.au
Emergency After Hours: 0409 341 457

PLH's Health and Wellbeing Program

Are you interested in trying a new hobby or sport in 2024? As a valued tenant, you might qualify for up to \$250 to assist with registration fees, equipment or other expenses associated with your chosen activity. Our program is open to tenants of all ages and encourages participation in a variety of sports, creative activities or social clubs. Whether your interest lies in pilates, basketball, community groups, dancing or other pursuits, we're here to support your involvement and foster community connections!

Visit www.pacificlink.org.au/health-and-wellbeing for more information on the program. You can also reach us at 4324 7617.



Unlock Your Potential: PLH's Education Support Program Now Open!

Our Education Support Program is open again, offering a wide range of resources to help our tenants achieve their educational goals. Whether you're a student or have children who are studying, this program is here to support you. Applications are open until the 12th January 2024!

What you can apply for:

- Technology needs: Home computers, laptops, software, printers
- Educational fees: Course fees, private tutoring
- Study materials: Textbooks, workbooks, study guides, stationery
- Specialised equipment: Items for medical, art, music, or photography courses
- Other educational expenses: Various costs upon consideration

Sean's story is a testament to the power of support and hard work!

A recipient of our Education Support Program, he received a laptop in February 2023. This year, he achieved a significant milestone by completing his Certificate IV in Community Services and securing a full-time position as a youth worker.

Looking ahead, Sean is eager to start his Diploma in 2024. Sean expresses his gratitude: "It has been a massive and very successful year for me. Thank you, Pacific Link, for your support."

Congratulations Sean! We can't wait to hear about your progress with your studies in 2024.



How to apply:

Visit www.pacificlink.org.au/education-support or call us at 4324 7617 if you have any questions or need help applying online.



Tenant Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2023 Tenant Survey! Your feedback led to a notable 3% increase in overall satisfaction with our services. This improvement is incredibly encouraging for our team! We're also thrilled about the 4% rise in satisfaction regarding tenant involvement, highlighting the impact of our engagement activities and events. It's great to see tenants feeling more connected to the PLH community!

Congratulations to the tenants who won a \$50 gift card for participating! Your prizes have been mailed out.

Remember, your feedback is always welcome, not just during the Annual Tenant Survey. Feel free to reach out anytime via phone, email, post, or online at www.pacificlink.org.au/feedback with your suggestions and thoughts.



The Community Housing Industry Association NSW provided us with the following anonymous results of surveyed tenants:



Thanks to Pacific Link Housing, I am in a house that caters for my physical disability. I am thankful and grateful to them for understanding my needs.

I was unable to manage private rentals on my own and ended up in several women's refuges. When I was offered the current home I am in, I couldn't believe how perfect it was for me.

Pacific Link Housing gave me the greatest care and support in a time of dire consequences that occurred. If it wasn't for their compassion and care, we would have ended up homeless.

Pacific Link has helped by giving me a secure property to live in. I have been able to become more self-sufficient and focus on taking care of my health.

Finding Support This Festive Season

The holiday season is a time of joy and celebration, but it can also bring financial stress and other challenges. If you or your family need a helping hand this Christmas, support is available. Various community services offer assistance, including food hampers, gifts and meals, to ensure everyone can enjoy this special time of the year.

We have put together a list of support agencies that can assist you at www.pacificlink.org.au/support. Remember, seeking assistance is a sign of strength and our community is here to help if you need a hand!

- Vinnies - 13 18 12
- Salvos - 13 72 58
- Lifeline - 13 11 14



Christmas Hours

Our office will close at 2pm on Friday 22nd December 2023 and reopen on Tuesday 2nd January 2024. Contact details:

- Emergency repairs 0409 341 457
- Storm / flood damage: SES 13 25 00
- Power Failure: AusGrid 13 13 88



Join our Green Team: Switch to PLH's Digital Newsletter

Pacific Link Housing is passionate about conserving our planet's natural resources. We have been progressively implementing paperless processes in our day-to-day operations, significantly reducing paper waste in our office. We've also formed the 'PLH Green Team,' comprising dedicated staff actively exploring ways to reduce our organisation's environmental footprint further.



Our tenant newsletters are printed on environmentally friendly FSC paper which is sourced from responsibly managed forests, ensuring reduced carbon emissions. Additionally, our newsletters are printed by an SGP Certified Printer, ensuring sustainability in production. To align with our green initiatives, we offer tenants the option to receive our newsletter via email, reducing paper use.



PLH Team Members: Amanda, Llewellyn, Rebecca and Maria

Update your newsletter preferences at www.pacificlink.org.au/newsletter and join us in our commitment to the environment!



Property Purchases Bring Relief to Tenants

We are extremely excited to share news that Pacific Link Housing recently received funding from the NSW Government towards the purchase 37 units at East Gosford and Telarah. This was made possible

through NSW's share of the \$2 billion Commonwealth Government Social Housing Accelerator Fund (SHAF).

To celebrate the news, we were honoured to receive a visit from

the NSW Minister for Housing and Homelessness, Rose Jackson. During her visit, she was able to talk to East Gosford tenants and hear about how the property purchase will offer them much-needed housing certainty.



Minister Rose Jackson's visit to East Gosford

The shortage of affordable rental housing continues to be a challenge across NSW. We are extremely fortunate to receive support from the Government that either allows us to develop new housing or purchase existing properties such as these. We are so pleased that we can continue providing housing stability to our tenants for as long as they need it.

Share Your Part of the PLH Story

2024 marks a milestone year for Pacific Link Housing as we celebrate our 40th anniversary. We are planning a special event to mark the occasion, with more details coming in our next newsletter! As we commemorate this journey, we also want to honour the stories that have shaped us, especially those of our tenants.

Your experiences and memories of your time with PLH are invaluable. We invite you to share your story and be a part of this special celebration. Let us know:

- What does it mean to be a PLH tenant?
- Do you have a special memory about PLH?
- How has PLH helped you and your family?
- What have you achieved with our help?



We would love to hear from you and how your story has helped to shape our organisation!

If you would like to share your memories of your experience with PLH, please contact Adelle and Heidi at events@pacificlink.org.au or 4324 7617.



David's Lasting Legacy

David Lennox, a valued tenant since 2004, has played a significant part of Pacific Link Housing's story. He fondly remembers meeting Sheila Astolfi, PLH's founder and CEO of 25 years. Sheila was well known for her commitment to social housing equity, leaving a lasting impact in the sector until her passing in 2010. For David, being a PLH tenant is more than just a house, it provides security and stability, something that was vital during his wife's cancer battle.

David stepped up as a board member in 2006, navigating PLH through some challenging times and also served as our Chairman. Among his cherished memories is having a playground in North Gosford named after him, a tribute that allowed him to meet NSW Premier Michael Baird at the time. Lennox Park now stands as a testament to David's meaningful contribution to Pacific Link Housing's history and the wider community.

PLH's Tech Connect Loan Program

Our Tech Connect Program offers tenants a chance to upgrade their tech devices with a simple, affordable solution. Eligible tenants can apply for brand new devices like laptops, tablets or smartphones, valued up to \$1,000.

Purchases are handled by PLH and interest-free repayments are conveniently deducted from your Centrelink account until the loan is fully repaid. Additionally, we apply a \$250 subsidy to reduce your total loan amount, helping you pay off the loan sooner!

To find out more and check eligibility, visit www.pacificlink.org.au/tech-connect or call our office on 4324 7617.

