



Tenant Newsletter Issue 62 | Spring 2024

From our CEO—Craig Brennan

Dear Tenant,

We're now into Spring and I hope this message finds you and your loved ones in good health. The change of season brings with it a sense of optimism and energy, and I'm pleased to share some exciting developments and important updates from Northern Rivers Housing.



Exciting New Lismore Office

We are thrilled to announce the opening of our brand-new office in Lismore. This space has been thoughtfully designed to better serve our tenants, offering a more accessible and welcoming environment for all your housing-related needs. Whether you require assistance or just want to drop by, we look forward to welcoming you at our new location. We are committed to enhancing our services and this new office is a significant step towards ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our community.

Upcoming Development in Casino

Our ongoing commitment to providing quality and innovative housing solutions is reflected in our upcoming development in Casino. With construction about to commence, this project represents the future of housing in our Region. Designed with sustainability, comfort, and a strong sense of community at its core, this development will offer modern and eco-friendly living spaces that cater to the needs of current and future generations. We are eager to see this vision come to life and will keep you informed as we progress.

Acknowledging the Cost of Living Crisis

We recognise that many of you are facing significant challenges due to the rising cost of living. This is a difficult time for many, and we want you to know that support is available. Local community organisations are offering a range of services, from food assistance and financial counselling to various forms of emergency relief. If you're experiencing financial difficulties, please don't hesitate to seek out these resources.

Additionally, maintaining your rental payments is crucial to ensuring stability in your housing situation. If you're struggling to meet your rent or have concerns about your financial situation, I strongly encourage you to reach out to your Tenancy Manager. Our team is here to help, and we are committed to working with you to find the best possible solution.

As always, we are immensely grateful for your continued support and engagement with Northern Rivers Housing. Your feedback and participation are invaluable as we strive to create a stronger, more connected community. Please feel free to contact our team with any questions, concerns, or if you need any assistance.

Craig Brennan | Chief Executive Officer

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NRH acknowledges the Bundjalung, Arakwal, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land that comprises the Northern Rivers.



Lismore







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Community Villages & Engagement







Community Engagement Recap

The Community Engagement Team was excited to introduce new activities into the flood recovery villages over the past three months. With health, well-being, capacity building, and community always at the forefront of our planning, we design our initiatives, programs and workshops around these key themes.

Our activities have been spread across the seven villages:
Kingscliff, Pottsville, Mullumbimby, Ballina, Wollongbar, Lismore, and
Evans Head. Each village has its unique preferences, with
Wollongbar village enjoying the new dog training sessions,
Kingscliff village holding high attendance with their weaving
program and Ballina village with it's nature play workshop for kids
- to name a few. Additional activities have included disaster
readiness workshops, QiGong, fun fit circus, casual BBQs, NAIDOC
Week celebrations, gardening, healthy cooking, financial
counselling, and befriending the nervous system. Our team
continues to facilitate diverse activities for the village communities,
in addition to keep residents informed with regular newsletters.

Looking forward, the Community Engagement Team aims to focus predominately on housing themes, providing residents with easy and digestible information about housing options, ideas, and resources while supporting them with their housing journey.

Highlights

- NAIDOC Week Celebrations
- Dog Training Programs
- Health and Wellbeing Workshops
- Collaboration with External Stakeholders

What's to Come

- Focusing predominately on Housing Pathways
- Regular newsletters with an informative housing theme
- Engagement with Local Real Estates
- Navigating support for Older Residents

www.nrh.org.au











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Assets and Developments Update

As mentioned in the CEO's Update, we're excited to announce that work on our new-generation housing development project in Casino has commenced and will provide much-needed housing in the Casino area.

The units will be constructed off-site and will be transported once complete. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in early 2025 with tenants able to move in soon thereafter.

We look forward to sharing further updates with you in future issues of the newsletter.





Do you need to report a maintenance issue? Give the Property Repairs Hotline a call!



Tenants can call our Property Repairs Hotline **anytime**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report maintenance issues.

The staff in the Call Centre will then decide if a contractor has to attend as an emergency response or not, and then organise for the work to be attended to within the correct timeframe.



PROPERTY REPAIRS HOTLINE

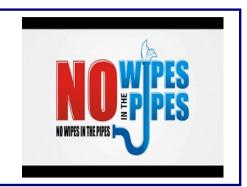




A reminder NOT to flush wet wipes down the toilet

Baby wipes and sanitising wipes should be thrown away in the trash, *not* in the toilet. They don't breakdown like toilet paper and can cause unwanted back ups. They can even cause permanent and expensive damage.

Please note that if wipes are found to be the cause of the problem, it will be a Tenant Responsible charge which means that you will need to pay for the repair. Save the pipes - don't flush the wet wipes!













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NRH Scholarships Update

Round 1 of our Scholarships Program for this year closed in May and we are pleased to announce that we had five successful applications submitted for this Round. Applicants were successful in the Secondary Sport, Primary Education, Primary Sport and Adult Education categories.

Our CEO Craig Brennan had the pleasure of meeting the successful applicants and presenting them with their commemorative certificates in our Lismore office and in our Tweed office with Tenancy Manager, Janel.









Applications for Round Two of our Scholarships Program are now open and close on 13 October 2024.

For more information about or Scholarships Program, please visit our website at: https://www.nrh.org.au/ news/nrh-scholarships-program/ or call (02) 6627 5300.





A Reminder about Respectful Behaviour

We would like to remind our tenants that we are here to provide a service to you in a courteous manner.

Staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times without the risk of threatening behaviour or violence.

This behaviour will not be tolerated towards our staff.









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Housing Services Update



House Locks and Keys

Your obligations as a tenant

Under the terms of the standard residential tenancy agreement, you agree:

• not to alter, remove or add any lock or other security device without reasonable excuse (see below) or unless

the landlord agrees

• to give the landlord a copy of the key (or other opening device or information) for any changed lock or security device within 7 days of the change

Landlord's obligations

The landlord agrees:

- to provide and maintain locks or other security devices necessary to keep the premises 'reasonably' secure
- to give each tenant named on the tenancy agreement a copy of the key (or other opening device/information) to open any lock or security device for:
 - the premises
 - any common property that you are entitled to access
- not to charge you for copies of keys or other opening devices except to recover the cost of replacement or additional copies
- not to alter, remove or add any lock or other security device without reasonable excuse or unless you agree
- to give you a copy of any key (or other opening device/information) that they change within 7 days of the change

Changing locks: reasonable excuses

Reasonable excuses for altering, removing or adding a lock/ security device include:

- there was an emergency
- you (or the landlord) had to comply with an order of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)
- the tenancy of a co-tenant was terminated
- a tenant or other occupant was excluded from the premises by an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) A copy of a changed key or other opening device need not be given to the other party if:
- they agree not to be given a copy, or
- the Tribunal authorises a copy not to be given, or
- they are excluded from the premises by an AVO

Changing locks without agreement or excuse

It is an offence for you or the landlord/agent to alter, remove or add a lock or security device:

- without agreement of the other party, or
- without a reasonable excuse.

If the landlord/agent changes locks, you can complain to NSW Fair Trading (see Complaining to NSW Fair Trading (tenants.org.au/resource/complaints-fair-trading) and you can get advice from your local Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service about applying to the Tribunal (https://www.tenants.org.au/factsheet-11-nsw-civil-and-administrative-tribunal).





Are you considering getting a pet?

Please read our **Pets factsheet** (last page of the newsletter) to answer any questions you may have about keeping a pet in one of our properties. It is also available on our website at https://www.nrh.org.au/tenants/commencing-your-tenancy/.





TENANTS

SERVICES

Phone Tenants' Advice

and Advocacy Service on **1800 251 101** for

more information











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NRH ART

Exciting Competition for Our Young Artists!

We are thrilled to announce an exciting competition! We invite children aged 5 to 12 to **COMPETITION** get creative and design the front cover of our 2023/2024 Annual Report. This year's theme is "What My Home Means to Me".

"What My Home Means to Me"

This is a wonderful opportunity for your child to showcase their artistic talents and share their unique perspective on what home means to them. The winning design will be chosen by our team at NRH, and the lucky artist will receive a \$300 prize and have their artwork featured on the front cover of our annual report!

How to Enter:

- 1. Theme: Create a design based on "What My Home Means to Me".
- 2. Age Group: Open to children aged 5 to 12.
- 3. Submission: Please submit your child's artwork by 18 October 2024 by:
- → Email to info@nrh.org.au
- → By post to: PO Box 145, Lismore NSW 2480
- → In person at any of our three offices

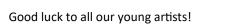




Judging and Prizes:

- 1. The winner will be selected by a panel of judges from Northern Rivers Housing.
- 2. The winning artist will receive \$300 in prize money.
- 3. The winning artwork will be proudly displayed on the front cover of our 2023/2024 Annual Report.

We can't wait to see the incredible creativity and talent from our young community members. Encourage your children to grab their art supplies and start designing!









https://www.facebook.com/northernrivershousing



Instagram—@nrhousing

Are your contact details up to date?

You can easily update your details by:

- calling one of our offices listed above
- emailing us at info@nrh.org.au
- visiting our website (nrh.org.au) and clicking on the "Contact Us" page and completing the online form.





Lismore











Community Noticeboard



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quick, high returns on an investment.

Investment Scams: Offers of

Prize Scams: Notifications that you've won a contest you never entered, asking for a fee to claim the prize.

→ Courier Scams: Claims that a delivery cannot be completed without payment. official website or secure apps. If you're not sure, say no, hang up or delete.



<u>ACT QUICKLY</u> — Act quickly to protect yourself if something feels wrong.

Contact your bank if you notice some unusual activity or if a scammer gets your money or information.

Protecting yourself against scams

Staying alert about internet and phone scammers is key to protecting yourself from becoming a victim.

Once you know what to watch for, identifying a scam is much easier.

Scamwatch—run by the National AntiOScam Centre—is a great tool to learn how to recognise, avoid and report fraudulent activities. It can help you become 'scam—aware' and know what to do if you've fallen victim to a scheme.

Common scams to watch out for are:

- → Relationship Scams: Scammers create fake profiles to form relationships online, eventually asking for money.
- → Tax Scams: Calls or emails falsely claiming you owe money to the tax office.

Essentials to avoid being scammed:



STOP—Don't give money or personal information to anyone if unsure.

Scammers will offer to help you or ask you to verify who you are. They will pretend to be from organisations you know and trust, like Services Australia, police, a bank or a fraud service.



THINK—Ask yourself could the message or call be fake?

Never click on a link in a message! Only contact businesses or government using contact details from their Report scams and help to prevent fraud

You can report any suspicious activities or contacts to Scamwatch.
Your reports help the National
Anti-Scam Centre make Australia a tougher target for scammers and safeguard others from falling victim.
For more info and stay to informed, visit: www.scamwatch.gov.au

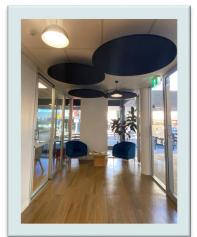


Welcome to our new Lismore Office!

We have officially moved into our new Lismore Office premises in the heart of the Lismore CBD. We are located at **Suite 1, Level 1, 29 Molesworth Street, Lismore** (for those who are familiar with Lismore, it's the Westlawn Building on the corner of Molesworth and Woodlark Streets).

Our phone number is still the same ... (02) 6627 5300.

It's great being able to provide face-to-face service to our clients in Lismore once again and to have our Lismore office based staff together again.











Community Noticeboard



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Be prepared with these four Get Ready NSW apps

Everyone in the wider community is encouraged to increase their preparedness for the next disaster by downloading four key apps which provide crucial information before, during and after events. These include:



<u>Hazards Near Me</u> gives users visibility of what flood/storm/bushfire may be near them. Multiple watch zones with notifications can be set for your house, farm, work, family or other location that has significance. Notifications will automatically let you know if there is a threat by fire, flood, tsunami or severe weather. *Note*: It links with the NSW SES and NSW Rural Fire Service to provide a live stream of what is happening.



BOM Weather gives users visibility of approaching weather conditions in real time. *Tip:* It also has a "Warnings" page with all the latest information on weather events and their risk factors.



<u>Live Traffic NSW</u> shows what roads may be impacted by a natural disaster. This app has become a very handy tool to understand road situations with the ability to view cameras that are updated every 60 seconds, follow incidents in real time and you can save trips taken often to check on road conditions easily.



<u>Emergency Plus</u> is an easy way to call emergency services including the ability to share exact location. *Note*: the what3words listed at the bottom of the My Location page are a simple way to communicate your precise location when speaking to first responders.

For more information, visit: https://www.nsw.gov.au/emergency/get-ready









Community Noticeboard continued



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Recycling hints

Ballina Shire Council has an easy to read, colour-coded A-Z guide to recycling which lists every day household items and indicates which colour bin items can be placed, as well as items that should be taken to the Ballina Resource Recovery Centre, Community Recycling Stations or what should be sold or donated.



#RecycleRight

Visit the Ballina Shire Council's website for the A-Z Guide:

https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/recycle-right



Find the help you need, now and nearby.

Search over 450,000 support services.

Ask Izzy is an online website that connects people in need with housing, family violence support, a meal, money help, health and wellbeing services, counselling and much more. Visit www.askizzy.com.au

Service NSW opens in new Lismore location

To make it easier to access essential NSW Government services in your area, the newly relocated <u>Lismore Service NSW Centre</u> is now open.

They can help with a range of services including:

- Driver licence and Photo Card applications and transactions
- Working with Children Check applications
- Applying for birth, death and marriage certificates
- 1-hour appointments with a Savings Specialist to access 70+ NSW Government rebates and savings.

<u>Please note</u>: The existing Service Centre will continue to operate on the ground floor of the Lismore Workers Golf Club at 1 Barham St, East Lismore as a **Driver Testing Centre**, for driving and knowledge tests **by appointment only**. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm.



Service A reminder that many Service NSW services are also accessible online and by calling 13 77 88.

Lismore Service

NSW is now

open at our

new location









Community Noticeboard continued



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Local Food Pantries providing assistance during the cost of living crisis

Provider & Location	Days & Times	Other Information
Five Loaves (Ballina) Location: Cnr Kerr & Tamar Streets, outside the ADRA store	Thursdays 5—6pm	Meals
Liberation Larder Inc (Byron) Location: Fletcher Street, behind the Byron Community Centre Kitchen, 69 Jonson Street, Byron Bay	Thursday 28 March: morning snacks and fruit from 8-9:30am; lunch from 12-1:30pm	Ph: 0435 879 778 Website: www.liberationlarder.org
Casino Community Kitchen Location: 67 Richmond Street, Casino	Usual Fridays 4:30—5:45pm Freshly cooked 3 course meals (dine in or takeaway).	Bread, fresh produce & limited groceries are also offered. Anyone facing serious food stress/crisis can make contact via Facebook https://www.facebook.com/ CasinoCommunityKitchen or text 0400 155 392.
The Community Pantry [Mid-Richmond Neighbourhood Centre] Location: Shop 5, Oaks Arcade, 6 Oaks Street, Evans Head	Monday: 11.00 – 2.00pm Wednesday: 11.00 – 2.00pm Friday: 11.00 – 2.00pm	Ph: (02) 6682 4334 The Community Pantry is a low cost grocery market run by volunteers and open to all community members.
Goonellabah Community Hub Service Location: 10 Centenary Drive, Goonellabah.	Every second Tuesday 10am-1pm	For an appointment, phone: 6621 7397 or email https://nrcg.org.au/ . Website: https://nrcg.org.au/
Hope Food Pantry (Goonellabah) Location: 30 Cambridge Drive, Goonellabah	Thursdays 9:30—11:30am	
The Grafton Pantry Location: 135b Fitzroy Street, Grafton	Mon to Thurs 10am—2pm Closed on public holidays	Website: https://www.anglicare.org.au/community/food-assistance/
Tweed Coast Community Food Pantry (Kingscliff) Location: Kingscliff Uniting Church, 24 Kingscliff Street, Kingscliff (down the lane)	Tues to Fri 9—11am	
Kyogle Lions Community Food Pantry Location: 33-35 Bloore Street, Kyogle	Thursdays 8:30am—3pm	
The Fair Share Kitchen/Emergency Relief program Location: Kyogle Together Inc—Laneway Community Space, 161 Summerland Way, Kyogle	Wed, Thurs, Fri 9am—3pm <u>Closed on public holidays</u>	Various items available such as hygiene items, frozen meals, nappies, toiletries, electricity bill assistance, access to community worker, morning teas, hot food, free bread, fruit & veges (depending on availability)







Community Noticeboard continued



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Local Food Pantries continued ...

Provider & Location	Days & Times	Other Information
The FairShare Kitchen/Emergency Relief program Location: Kyogle Together Inc—Laneway Community Space, 161 Summerland Way, Kyogle	Wed, Thurs, Fri 9am—3pm <u>Closed on public holidays</u>	Various items available such as hygiene items, frozen meals, nappies, toiletries, electricity bill assistance, access to community worker, morning teas, hot food, free bread, fruit & veges (depending on availability)
Five Loaves Mobile Soup Kitchen (Lismore) Location: Lismore Transit Centre	Mon to Thurs 6—7pm	Provides hot meals, baked goods and fresh fruit and vegetables to the public Ph: 0447 575 686
The Good Pantry (Lismore) Location: 51 Wyrallah Road, East Lismore	Mon to Fri 10am—2pm <u>Closed on public holidays</u>	
Maclean Food Pantry Location: Maclean Seventh-day Adventist Church, 39 Church Street, Maclean	Friday mornings 9am—12pm	Ph: 0414 909 630
Murwillumbah Food Hub/Pantry Location: Brisbane Street, Murwillumbah (opposite Sunnyside mall on Knox Park)	Wed & Thurs 10am—3pm	Cash only and BYO carry bags Ph: (02) 6672 3003
Northern Rivers Community Gateway (Lismore)	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 9am—4pm	Various services and programs available
Location: 76 Carrington Street, Lismore	Wed: 9am—1:30pm	Ph: (02) 6621 7397 Website: <u>www.nrcg.org.au</u>
Vibe Care Pantry (Tweed Heads) Location: Vibe Church, 3 Beryl Street, Tweed Heads	Tues to Fri 9—11am (NSW time) Closed on public holidays	Ph: (07) 5536 7575 Services also offered in Palm Beach and Burleigh Heads
Mobile Food Pantry (Wooli) Location: St Margaret's Anglican Church, 135 Main Street, Wooli	4 th Wednesday of the month, 11am-12.30pm (except December)	Website: https://anglicarenorthcoast.org.au/services/#food-pantry
The Winsome Café (Lismore) Location: Winsome Hotel, 11 Bridge Street, North Lismore	Open daily 9am-1pm and lunch at 11:30am	
Red Dove Café (Lismore)	Mon to Fri	Ph: (02) 6621 8893
Location: 80 Keen Street, Lismore	8am—2:30pm	Email: lismoreuc@gmail.com
Wardell CORE (Wardell) Location: The "Old Bank", 3 Sinclair Street, Wardell	Tues, Wed, Thurs & Sat 9am—4pm	Reduced cost groceries and pantry staples available daily. Fresh produce also available as well as 'heat & eat' meals. Website: https://www.wardellcore.community/ Email: wardellCORE@gmail.com Ph: 0431 716 457





Northern Rivers Housing

Pets

Pets

- Tenants are not allowed to keep any pets at the property unless NRH have provided you with written permission.
- Tenants are not allowed to keep animals that are prohibited under local Council or other legislation.
- You must complete a Pet Application to have your pet considered for approval to have at the property.
- If your pet is approved, you will be required to conduct a pest spray at the end of your tenancy.
- If NRH receives complaints about an approved pet, it will be investigated and, in some cases, the approval may be withdrawn, and the pet may need to be removed.

NRH will take into account the following when considering a pet request from a tenant:

- if the property is suitable for having a pet
- will the pet interfere with the peace and comfort of neighbours?
- if the requested pet complies with NRH and local government area rules
- you are meeting your obligations as a tenant.

For leasehold properties, NRH would need to refer the pet request to the owner of the property, and they will make the decision if the pet is approved and will provide written consent.

FACT: Most lease agreements for leasehold properties have clauses added by the property owners and real estates that prevent tenants from keeping cats, dogs or other larger pets at the premises, other than assistive animals.

Assistance Animals

Assistance animals are animals that are specially trained, and usually certified by a training organisation to provide assistance to people with special needs. These can include people with sight or hearing impairment and those susceptible to seizures. You must provide evidence, if requested, demonstrating that the animal is an assistance animal, as defined in the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Examples of evidence could include:

- Accreditation from a recognised assistance animal training body, or
- A signed statement that the animal has been trained to assist a person with a disability and meets hygiene and behaviour standards for an animal in a public place.
- NRH may also request a letter for evidence such as a letter from a medical practitioner, psychologist, or support worker.

