Hi there HIPsters (Home in Place folk),

Thankfully, the worst of the COVID 19 Pandemic seems to be behind us, but it has a nasty tail, and is still circulating in our communities.

Due to obligations under workplace safety legislation, considerable and disruptive adjustments to our management systems were necessary to continue to provide essential services to our residents, and to concentrate on welfare support for those most vulnerable to COVID complications. These systems are now being wound up in part to provide a more local and personal service, as well as delivering unrestricted services in the post pandemic environment.

I am very pleased that no staff died from being infected, and infections in the pre-vaccination roll-out years, were at a minimum for residents and staff. Unfortunately, two of our residents passed away, having pre-existing medical conditions to contend with as well.

For those that are anxious about the vaccination status of Home in Place and MyPlace Property Maintenance staff, please be advised that all are fully vaccinated.

There appears some good political will to address the cost-of-living pressures on low-income households. We have been advocating for that for some time, with various other organisations, while continuing to advocate strongly for appropriate political responses to the housing system and the lack of social and affordable housing supply in all our operating jurisdictions. Hopefully, some relief on both those fronts will come soon.

There is no doubt that costs are steadily increasing, while incomes have been relatively static. This phenomenon affects our organisation as well. Costs for all things maintenance, utilities, insurance and the like are escalating significantly. Balancing expenditure necessities and priorities is getting increasingly complex. Last financial year, HIP (Compass) spent 25% of rental income on maintenance, and that has continued this financial year; 21% on utilities, 33% on all wages, office, vehicle, and compliance costs; 7.2% on insurance; 3.3% on servicing loans provided for new dwellings; around 8% on other costs like IT and other equipment, and made a 2.5% surplus. Income from other sources, e.g. fee-for-service charges for managing properties for other organisations, boosted real profit by another 2%. So, HIP is sustainable, but is not flushed.

We want to invest more into planned maintenance and will do when able. Presently, around $20 million will be spent on maintenance this financial year. However, what we are finding difficult is having to use the planned maintenance budget to pay for vacant maintenance costs, and damage caused by fire – many deliberately lit.

It is not uncommon for some residents to abandon their properties, and leave a $50,000 fix and clean up cost, the highest this year is just over $70,000, and there are over 500 vacancies per annum. Thankfully, not all are that costly. In addition, some have been deliberately setting HIP properties on fire, some by accident, but all have to be repaired and replaced.

Insurance recovery can be gained once HIP has spent the first $2.5 million as excess. I write this so that the vast majority of responsible residents can understand the devastating impact that is being caused by a small number of irresponsible, some – criminal, residents, and to ask for the assistance of more of our responsible residents to identify and report where destruction is occurring for the benefit of this charity and its residents.

On a brighter note, Home in Place is very focussed on increasing the digital-online experience of our residents with Home in Place but also with the digital world in general.

We have a brand new website HOMEINPLACE.ORG. You will notice that, on the top right hand side, there is an icon and the wording My Place Hub Coming Soon.

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My Place Hub Coming Soon

Tenants and residents, this will be your portal for viewing your tenancy details, rent and utilities balances and maintenance requests. If you have an email address, you will be able to set up an account in the coming months... stay tuned!

Please continue to stay as safe as you can, and I look forward to meeting many more of you as we return to holding more functions, forums and the like.
We need your voice!

A couple of months ago, we called for submissions for the new Home in Place song.

**NOW WE NEED SOME VOICES TO MAKE IT COME ALIVE!**

It's been a long-held dream to establish a tenant choir that represents our diversity and all of the areas in which we operate.

The sky is the limit, but initially we hope to record the choir singing the Home in Place song for use across various platforms including YouTube. We would also like the choir to perform the song at major Home in Place and tenant events.

Is this something you might be interested in joining? If so, please contact your local Community Participation Officer by calling 1300 333 733. Alternatively you can email us at contactus@homeinplace.org.

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Rob and Helen

Home in Place tenants, Rob and Helen, pride themselves in their charity work. The couple organise and run a variety of community events, including their annual Feed the Homeless Christmas lunch, for Cessnock locals in need.

Helen recalls her time working for the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association in the 1970s, where she worked alongside her now husband, Rob, raising funds for those affected by physical disabilities. Since then, the couple have involved themselves in an endless list of social issues.

Following their retirement, the couple travelled in their caravan for a few years before the pandemic began. With the country in lockdown, Helen and Rob needed accommodation, and reached out to Home in Place.

Rob recalls the online tour of their new home "I thought, oh wow, it looks absolutely brand new!".

Since moving into their Home in Place home, Rob and Helen have continued to give back to their community, hosting fundraisers and events in their effort to helping those in need.

We wish the couple the very best in their work.
Energy Advice

We are deep into winter, and for many that signals higher energy use and larger than usual energy bills. There are rebates and resources available to you.

Energy Rebates NSW

ENERGY.GOV.AU/REBATES

The NSW Energy and Water Ombudsman website has information on saving water and electricity around the home, to help if you are having difficulty paying your bills and a list of the rebates and concessions available to you.

Through the Low Income Household Rebate or the Medical Energy Rebate, you could have $285 a year, credited quarterly to your bill. The $164 annual Essential Medical Equipment Payment is given to eligible residents for medically required heating or cooling, and for each piece of essential medical equipment.

Energy Rebates QLD

QLD.GOV.AU/COMMUNITY/COST-OF-LIVING-SUPPORT/CONCESSIONS

According to the Queensland Government website, Queensland pensioners and seniors may be eligible for the Electricity Rebate of $372.20 per year.

Electricity rebates are available to people who have any of the below:
- Queensland Seniors Card
- Services Australia or Department of Veterans’ Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans’ Affairs Gold Card
- ImmiCard

Shop around!

ENERGYMADEEASY.GOV.AU

Something you might also consider doing is shopping around for the best energy rates. The Australian Government has a website ENERGYMADEEASY.GOV.AU that allows you to compare all of the energy retailers. It’s a simple process. You just type in your suburb, the number of people in your household and some information on your current usage and you will get a list of plans that might be cheaper than the one you are currently on.

Washing Machine Replacement Trial

WASHINGMACHINES.WATER.DPE.NSW.GOV.AU

The NSW Government’s Washing Machine Replacement Trial helps eligible social housing tenants to replace their inefficient top-loading washing machine with a new, front-loading washing machine at a heavily discounted price. If you are eligible, this could save you around $245 a year off your water, energy and detergent bills. To be eligible for the trial you must:
- Be a resident of NSW and more than 18 years old
- Reside in social housing owned or managed by the Department of Communities and Justice, Aboriginal Housing Office, a Community Housing Provider
- Hold a valid Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card or Low-income Health Care Card from Centrelink
- Have an existing top load washing machine to replace
Tenant Incentive Scheme

The Tenant Incentive Scheme recognises tenants who are excelling in five categories. Winners are announced on a quarterly basis and are presented with a certificate and $50 voucher.

Nominations for this award can come from Home in Place staff or from within the tenant group.

Category One | Star Tenant Status
Awarded to tenants who look after their properties to a very high standard, and in some cases, look after the common areas at their complexes. Additionally these tenants are up-to-date or in advance on their rent.

Category Two | Most Improved Tenant
Awarded to tenants who have demonstrated significant improvement in property care, reduction of ASB or reduction of rent, utility arrears.

Category Three | Sustainable Tenant Award
Awarded to tenants who have created or contributed significant improvement to the local environment, recycling, gardening and/or common area amenity.

Category Four | Community Contribution
Awarded to tenants who have demonstrated a clear volunteering role either with Home in Place or in the wider community.

Category Five | Employment and Training Award
Awarded to tenants who have successfully completed a learning program or training course.

Welcome Lucy

In addition to delivering and managing Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) in New South Wales and Queensland, Home in Place recently expanded into Victoria.

Sarah and Hannah from the SDA team, recently visited our first unit complex in Victoria and met our newest residents, including Lucy.

Guardian Living are the Supported Independent Living provider for these units. The Guardian Living team helped our residents through the transition process by ensuring that their homes, and the Assistive Technology, were customised to meet their individual needs. Guardian Living will also provide ongoing support to our residents to help them live as independently as possible.

Lucy lived in an institution from a very young age. She is now one of Home in Place’s newest residents and is extremely proud of her new home. When Sarah and Hannah went to visit, Lucy was delighted to give them a tour. She told them that she loves the shopping complex next door and is very excited to be going to see Ed Sheeran and Pink in concert next year.
Lunch for the Stars

On the 10th of June, sponsors and supporters along with Home in Place tenants and staff, came together to fundraise for our youth scholarship program Grow a Star and to celebrate some of our current stars.

Guest speaker at the 2022 fundraising Lunch for the Stars was the inspiring Steven Bradbury.

You might have heard the phrase – doing a Bradbury. It is part of Australian folklore and culture now. The phrase is used to capture a come-from-behind win, the underdog never giving up.

We all know that Steven Bradbury won Australia’s first Winter Olympic gold medal in the men’s short track 1000 metres event at the 2002 Salt Lake City 2002 Games.

What you might not know is that he is a four-time Olympian and that he worked harder than anyone to be in the position where he could take the gold. He arrived at the 2002 Olympics as the oldest competitor in the event, still recovering from horrific injuries including a broken neck and a leg cut that required 111 stitches. Only two years prior, doctors had told him that her would never skate again.

He never gave up and his message resonated with the young stars in the audience at the lunch.

“I’d like it if people are able to show their kids that race and say ‘little Johnny, Bradbury was incredibly lucky this night, the whole world fell over in front of him, but he trained his guts out for 14 years to put himself in that position and if you’re prepared to do that for something that might happen for you too.”

STEVEN BRADBURY

Grow a Star is an innovative, youth mentoring and scholarship program that helps young people from disadvantaged backgrounds overcome the financial or generational obstacles that are preventing them from following their academic, sporting or artistic dreams.

The program was created by Home in Place and is the first of its kind to be designed and operated by a community housing provider.

By enabling young people to pursue their passions, the program aims to build the self-confidence in young people to achieve their highest ambitions and foster habits and behaviours that can set them up for life.

Grow a Star Events

Every year we host various fundraising events to support Grow a Star. We mentioned the annual Lunch for the Stars, but there are a couple more events you, or someone you know, may be interested in joining.

Ride for the Stars
14-16 OCTOBER 2022

Join us on a three day road trip throughout NSW on the Ride for the Stars Motorbike Adventure! Travelling over three days across our scenic countryside, you’ll be riding alongside like-minded people making a difference to the lives of young people in our community.

We will start from Newcastle NSW on Friday 14th October and travel to beautiful North Haven on the NSW Mid North Coast where we will stay overnight. On Saturday 15th of October we will head inland to the picturesque town of Uralla. On our final day, Sunday 16th October, we will make our way back to Newcastle via Walcha, Gloucester and Stroud.

To register, or for more information, go to RIDE-FOR-THE-STARS-2021.RAISELY.COM

Trek for the Stars
TASMANIA 8-12 NOVEMBER 2022

On this adventure, you’ll spend five days trekking a variety of trails around the Cradle Mountain Village area. From easy shorter exploration walks to day-long hikes and steep climbs up to beautiful lookouts, everyday you’ll face a different challenge. You’ll discover the Tasmanian wilderness up close on this unforgettable adventure.

The $3000 you raise on this adventure will assist in making dreams a reality for children that will improve their lives or provide a stepping stone to a positive future.

To register, or for more information, go to EVENTS.INSPIREDADVENTURES.COM. AU/EVENTS/GROWASTAR-TASMANIA-2022

Do you have a young star in your family? Someone with big dreams and the talent and drive to reach them with a bit of help? Learn more about the Grow a Star program, the application process or how you can support the program at GROWASTAR.ORG
THANK YOU
GOLD SPONSOR BEYOND BANK
LUNCH SPONSOR HIC SERVICES
BEVERAGE SPONSOR BROADLEY SIGNS
IN-KIND SPONSOR NOAH’S ON THE BEACH

RAFFLE PRIZE DONORS
VEGEPOD
WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE
SARETTA ART & DESIGN
HELPING HAND GROUP

AUCTION PRIZE DONORS
MERCER WINES
SKINGYM AUSTRALIA
SVITZER AUSTRALIA

Lunch for the Stars
10 June 2022

THANK YOU
GOLD SPONSOR BEYOND BANK
LUNCH SPONSOR HIC SERVICES
BEVERAGE SPONSOR BROADLEY SIGNS
IN-KIND SPONSOR NOAH’S ON THE BEACH

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Services Australia Consent Forms

Over the coming months, Home in Place will be working with some of you to update your Services Australia (Centrelink) Multiple Consent and Authority Forms.

Keeping this information up to date will ensure that you continue to pay the correct rent and receive the right amount of rent assistance following the six monthly rent reviews.

If your consent forms are due for renewal, there’s no need for concern, we will contact you directly.

SDA Update

Our Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) team now have 1500 placements under management. In the past six months alone we have:

- completed 67 modifications to assist residents individual needs,
- assisted 77 SDA participants transition into their new forever homes,
- received 308 brand new SDA enquiries from participants, supports and SIL,
- earmarked 73 residents to move into their new SDA forever home in the coming months, and
- delivered 37 new developments with partners across New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

Congratulations Joanne

Most tenants in the Central Coast area will know Joanne, better known as Jo.

Jo is a long-serving Tenancy Relations Officer based at our Tuggerah office and on the 20th of June, she celebrated 10 years with Home in Place!

We congratulate Jo on this special milestone and thank her for her dedication to her work and to our tenants.

Social Media Champions

Many of you have connected with Home in Place via our social media pages – links below. We try to post content that is engaging and useful to our tenants and the wider community but we need feedback and input from you.

We are calling for expressions of interest from our tenant group to join a special reference group for social media. Members of this group will provide feedback on current messaging and will become brand and content champions, providing content and encouraging their fellow tenants to do likewise.

If you are interested in joining this group, please email JACOBU@HOMEINPLACE.ORG

Stay in Touch

HOME IN PLACE CUSTOMER CALL CENTRE 1300 333 733
Business hours for all general tenancy enquiries or 24/7 for emergency tenancy and maintenance issues.

WEBSITE HOMEINPLACE.ORG
EMAIL CONTACTUS@HOMEINPLACE.ORG

@homeinplace  @homeinplace  @homeinplace  youtube.com/c/HomeinPlace  @home_in_place