

# MYPLACE

NEWSLETTER FOR TENANTS AND RESIDENTS OF HOME IN PLACE  
ISSUE FOUR

# Home *in* Place



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# A Message from Lyndall

**LYNDALL ROBERTSHAW**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AUSTRALIA**  
**HOME IN PLACE**



**Hello, I am pleased to be writing the last message of 2022 to you from Home in Place. Christmas is here again, and it has come around again in the blink of an eye.**

The year for Home in Place has been very busy and as like previous years has been filled with continued growth which has enabled us to provide more homes for people in need. The housing shortage continues, and we are doing all we can to provide additional safe, secure and affordable housing.

This year saw the completion of the delivery of 493 social and affordable housing properties across 19 developments, we also had a substantial increase in disability properties managed under our Specialist Disability Accommodation portfolio and I am pleased to say we are now the largest provider of Specialist Disability Accommodation in Australia operating in NSW, QLD and Victoria.

We pride ourselves on doing more than just providing homes so it has been wonderful for Home in Place to be able to undertake social engagement activities with our tenants again after the Covid shutdown and we are planning on doing much more in this space next year.

We have also raised additional funds for our Grow A Star program, and I would like to thank the tenant volunteers who assisted in our Bunnings BBQ fundraisers. These funds will provide much needed financial support in assisting disadvantaged youth in pursuing their dreams in sport, the arts or academically, we will have another round of scholarships opening up in the new year so please encourage youth that may benefit from this program to apply.

I am pleased to write that we have had many Tenant Incentive Scheme (TIS) award winners this year, I want to thank these recipients and our other tenants for being good tenants and good neighbours. Great communities are formed through respectful behaviours and relationships, and we have seen many of our tenants taking it upon themselves to do things to support their neighbours and community. We have also been lucky enough to have many new volunteers taking part in our Tenant Reference Groups and Our Voice Panel, these groups provide great feedback and a voice from our tenants which is important input to the services we provide. If you would like to volunteer for your local reference group please contact your local office for details.

Our local tenant Christmas picnics have been a huge success and the staff have enjoyed being able to celebrate the end of another successful year with our tenants that could attend. It has also been wonderful to see the stories of the lucky recipients of the 12 days of Christmas.

From all of us at Home in Place, we wish you a very safe and happy festive season and may 2023 bring all that you hope for and more!



## TENANT STORY

# Atarla, Sherrina and Jasmaine

Three sisters and their children now have places to call their own in Taree with support from community housing provider Home in Place and the Aboriginal Housing Office.

Atarla, Sherrina and Jasmaine were homeless after having to leave their older sister's overcrowded three-bedroom home in Taree. With nowhere to go, the sisters contacted Link2Home, who organised a motel for three nights.

With a need for stable accommodation, the sisters walked into the Taree Home in Place branch and spoke with Housing Access Officer, Kacee. Kacee worked with the family to provide them a month's temporary accommodation and support, while they searched for permanent accommodation.

"Being homeless with children, you're in a very vulnerable situation, it plays on your mental health" Kacee said. "Women and children shouldn't be living on the streets or in motels," she said.

The sisters are very thankful for Kacee's support and guidance. They say she is deadly.

She encouraged the women to keep applying for vacant homes to rent at local real estate agents and filling in their rental diaries. She also helped them to change their social housing application for one home to be three bedrooms, rather than four, to help them gain a social housing vacancy sooner.

"We were waiting for real estate agents to call us to come and view properties, but Kacee said we need to keep going in and asking about properties," Jasmaine said.

"We took our babies with us and went every day, it was tiring and draining," she said.

"You've got to help yourself for them to help you."

The sisters had made nearly 30 unsuccessful applications when Kacee was able to secure a Home in Place managed home for two of the sisters Atarla and Sherrina. She worked with the Aboriginal Housing Office to gain a home it manages in the same street for Jasmaine and her children.

"We wouldn't be where we are without Kacee."

"I had the biggest smile, couldn't stop smiling, I couldn't stop thanking Kacee. I was smiling so much my mouth started to hurt."

Home in Place has had an office in Taree since 2019 after it took over the management of more than 1,000 social housing homes on the mid North Coast from the NSW Government.

## PHOTO GALLERY

# Christmas and Family Fun Events

Check out some of the photos taken at the various tenant events throughout December. The smiles say it all!





# Congratulations Luke



Congratulations to Home in Place Housing Access Officer Luke Bozic on taking out a Cessnock Business Chamber Customer Service Award.

Luke was a winner of the Community Services Award in the Community, Education & Wellbeing category. He received a number of nominations from community members.

A local resident, Luke has worked at Home in Place for three and a half years.

Luke's Executive Manager Lauren McCoy joined Executive Manager Social and Environmental Sustainability Jandy McCandless and Executive Manager Operations Hunter Jessica Cowan, to celebrate Luke's award at a gala dinner at Cessnock Leagues Club on the 3rd of December.

Lauren congratulated him on the well-deserved accolade. She said Luke was recognised for always going above and beyond for clients. One example read out on the night was where Luke helped a couple in their mid-sixties who were living out of their car with their two rescue dogs.

Luke was able to place the couple in housing immediately and source donations of whitegoods and furniture for them.

"Sometimes the system can take time to get through, Luke's quick action landed the clients back on their feet," Lauren said. "Luke uses his local knowledge and connections and works closely with the Tenancy Team to assist clients at our Cessnock office."

Being able to successfully house a homeless client is what Luke enjoys most about his role.

He was very overwhelmed by winning this award, but very appreciative that his efforts to help people in his local community have been recognised, particularly during one of the worst housing crises our area has seen in a very long time.

The annual awards recognise, showcase and reward exceptional customer service within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

**NOW AVAILABLE**

## Home in Place Annual Report

The 2021-22 Home in Place Annual Report is available for download from our website.

The 2021-22 financial year saw a lot of changes and some impressive achievements including:

- We rebranded as Home in Place after close to 20 years operating under the name Compass Housing Services
- Adding another 237 dwellings to our portfolio bringing the total number of properties under management to 7846.
- Adding 124 properties to our Specialist Disability Accommodation portfolio, a 40% increase in just 12 months.
- Supporting 65 young people to follow their dreams through our youth mentoring and scholarship program Grow a Star.

You can download the report at [www.homeinplace.org/annual-reports](http://www.homeinplace.org/annual-reports)



## Christmas Trading

Please note that Home in Place offices will be shut from midday on the 23rd of December and will reopen at 9am on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

If you need to contact us over the break, please call our dedicated customer service number on 1300 333 733.

## PHOTO GALLERY

# 12 Days of Christmas Campaign

From the 1st to the 16th of December, participating Home in Place branches celebrated 12 Days of Christmas instead of just one, with giveaways every weekday.

The best part was that every eligible tenant was automatically in the draw unless they opted out. The winning tenants were announced on Facebook each day during the competition period, check out some of the lucky winners below.

We look forward to bringing you the 12 Days of Giveaways again in 2023!





# Back-to-school and holiday vouchers

Parents and guardians, did you know that the NSW Government has a range of vouchers available to help you through the holidays and back-to-school?

## PREMIER'S BACK TO SCHOOL NSW VOUCHERS

The Premier's Back to School NSW Vouchers program provides **3 x \$50** vouchers, totalling \$150 for each eligible student. The vouchers can be used towards the cost of school uniforms, shoes, bags, textbooks and stationery at registered businesses.

## FIRST LAP LEARN TO SWIM VOUCHER

Parents, guardians and carers of children aged 3 to 6 years who are not enrolled in school, can apply for a **\$100** voucher towards the cost of swimming lessons.

You can use the voucher for a program of at least 5 structured and supervised swimming lessons at any participating business that is an approved First Lap provider.

## BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE VOUCHERS

Families with children aged 4 to 13 years that attend a primary school in NSW can receive a **\$500** voucher per child to reduce the out-of-pocket costs of before and after school care *AND VACATION CARE!*

Apply for, and redeem your voucher before 31 January 2023 at a participating after school, before school or vacation care provider. You have until 30 June 2023 to use any remaining credit for vouchers redeemed with a provider.

## CREATIVE KIDS VOUCHERS

Parents, guardians and carers can apply for a voucher with a value of up to **\$100** per calendar year for each student aged 4.5 to 18 years old enrolled in school.

The voucher may be used with a registered activity provider for registration, participation and tuition costs for a range of creative activities.

## ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHERS

The Active Kids program provides **two x \$100** vouchers for parents, guardians and carers of school-enrolled children to use towards sport and active recreation costs each year.

Voucher 1 is valid January to December and Voucher 2 is valid July to December.

For more information or to apply for a voucher go to [www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/savings-finder#children](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/savings-finder#children)



## QLD FAIRPLAY VOUCHERS

Queensland parents, carers or guardians can apply for a voucher valued up to \$150 for their child, which can be used towards sport and active recreation membership, registration or participation fees with registered activity providers. There is a limit of 1 voucher per child per calendar year. For more information go to [www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/fairplay/apply](http://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/fairplay/apply)

## 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.

W [WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG](http://WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG) E [CONTACTUS@HOMEINPLACE.ORG](mailto:CONTACTUS@HOMEINPLACE.ORG)



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