

# HOME STORIES

**Spring 2023**

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# Foreword

## Lana Johnson

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**Spring is here and we couldn't be happier to see the sun and flowers out after another long, wet winter.**

In this edition of *Home Stories*, you'll read about some incredibly talented women across music and the arts. From Rebecca bringing a unique Hip-Hop event to life, to Fleur releasing her own EP and Anna performing at an Adelaide Symphony Orchestra concert, it's wonderful to see so many of our residents engaged with creative pursuits.

Housing Choices was proud to again be part of the group of Community Housing Providers (CHPs) who helped the Community Housing Arts Awards (CHARTS) come to life. A huge congratulations to our four shortlisted residents who shared their

talents with their community as well as the People's Choice winner Devi.

I was also delighted to see that one of our residents Richard, had discovered the Light Square Common Ground Dental Clinic, through this very newsletter many months ago!

What I most enjoyed reading was how welcome Richard felt at this service. The focus (aside from excellent care) at the Light Square Common Ground Dental Clinic is about encouraging access to healthcare. By creating a welcoming, judgement free space for residents, we are achieving just that.

We share some tips and tricks for managing the rising cost-of-living crisis. From government concessions to cheap and cheerful recipes, every cent

counts and sharing this kind of information will become more of a focus in future editions too.

Finally, on behalf of Housing Choices I would like to acknowledge our First Nations people affected by the outcome of the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum. We will continue our work to benefit from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's deep cultural knowledge. We remain committed to hearing, listening and working in partnership to achieve sustained and high quality housing outcomes.

Enjoy the warmer weather, be kind and stay safe,

**Lana Johnson**  
Acting General  
Manager, South  
Australia

**Cover:** Rebecca pictured in front of Mellor St's colourful graffiti art.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Housing Choices South Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land where this publication is produced, the Kaurna people, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We celebrate the stories, culture and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the Housing Choices community.







**Above left:** The team from the Australian Electoral Commission making early voting a breeze.

**Above right:** Adam grabbing a 'democracy roll', pictured with Mark from our Inclusive Communities team.



## Meet your Customer Service Team!

**Our Customer Service team work across reception and answer all general and maintenance enquiries via phone.**

We've had a few new members join the team lately, and you might find yourself having a chat with them. Check out the picture below to put a face to a name!



## Early Voting for The Voice

**We were pleased to arrange an early voting booth ahead of The Voice referendum last month.** It was an opportunity to ensure our local Adelaide residents could 'have their say' plus a chance for a chat and breakfast roll.

**Below:** The Customer Service Team (L-R) Alex, Isaac, Abbey, Ryan, Eliza and Alyssa.





**Above:** Fleur pictured with one of her many musical instruments.

## Fleur

**Songwriter Fleur released her first solo EP titled 'Fallen Leaves' this past August. The song 'Caught', her first single, captures Fleur's lived experience with mental health challenges and housing security over the years.**

"My song 'Caught' aims to raise awareness, and paint with dignity, the people experiencing the daily realities of being without a home," said Fleur.

"Housing is a human right, and releasing this song was a response to the more visible presence of homelessness in the city, and hearing about it more on the news."

Fleur was living in highly distressing circumstances prior to moving to Common Ground. Living at Common Ground for eight years gave her time to pause and start a recovery journey while also having access to support, safety, and security.

The wrap-around services as well as stable affordable housing were invaluable to Fleur.

"The social workers do a good job to work with people who are marginalised by society...they are very strong in friendliness, empathy, community building and sense of humour."

Fleur moved on from Common Ground when her growing instrument collection – including a piano – and holding music rehearsals became just a little too noisy for a high-density apartment block.

Very thankful to find a new home in an artist cooperative, Fleur now has space to store and explore music, and became part of another supportive (and creative) community.

This new environment has give Fleur the space she needs to make music.

As well as releasing her EP this year, Fleur also wrote and performed her original Rock Opera at The Adelaide Cabaret Festival called 'The Desert Plea', about mental health and the climate crisis.

"David Chapple was a wonderful writing collaborator for the show. We actually met when he ran a poetry workshop at Common Ground!"

Her latest album, which she wrote lyrics and music to and performed all vocals and instruments on – is now available to purchase via the bandcamp link on her website [fleurgreen.com](https://fleurgreen.com)



# Music Makers



**Above:** Fleur Album cover.





**Above:** Rebecca on the decks



## Rebecca

**With its graffiti art-covered walls, Adelaide's west end is a colourful place. But to those who live there, it's a lot more colourful thanks to proud Tolai woman Rebecca.**

Always dressed in a Hip-Hop themed t-shirt to match her mood (today it's Biggie Smalls), Rebecca has lived a very colourful life - and continues to do so.

While often clad in bright clothes to match her brightly painted street, it's Rebecca's broad smile, sincere warmth and infectious personality that makes her stand out. Everyone seems to have a kind word to share about her, and she seems to know almost everyone - even the Lord Mayor.

Rebecca runs **SA Hip-Hop** Instagram account **@Thelementadl**, performs Acknowledgments to Country at local Hip Hop events, is learning to DJ - with a few gigs under her belt - and this year hosted a multilingual Hip-Hop event called 'Say What?'. The event was a

celebration of Hip-Hop in native tongues, where talented artists, each performing in their own language, gave a glimpse into their unique cultures. Supported by the City of Adelaide, it was a huge success.

"Hip-Hop is incredible - everyone is in a crowd united for one thing. Plus, it's a way to express myself - especially using lyrical metaphors."

Rebecca has only recently been able to pursue her passion for Hip-Hop music. It was on hold for a long time, while she focused on her son and embarked on a long healing process due to a traumatic childhood and life challenges.

"I have done a lot of big courageous healing work to get where I am today."

Outside of Hip-Hop, Rebecca has also used her lived experience to help others - she was integral in establishing the Create Foundation in SA - a national body representing the voices of children and young people with an out-of-home care experience.

"I am where I'm meant to be planted and I don't actually ever want to leave this community. I had a vision where I wanted to live here, but I had to do the work to get here."

When there's a community event organised by the SA Inclusive Communities team, you are likely to find Rebecca participating or helping.

"I love that the Inclusive Communities team are real people with real lives. And I see their role as just helping me get out to any event they can, keeping me engaged."

Rebecca was instrumental in helping the ground floor of the Mellor St apartment building, now known as Wauwi Inparrila, become a community space. Rebecca contributed in many ways, from painting walls to performing a beautiful rendition of the song 'Creep' at the launch.

"I'm in my element at the moment - I get strength from my Hip-Hop community and my Community Housing community."



## 'A matter of perspective' by Anna

Anna's poems reflect past experiences, memories, sadness, or any emotions Anna may be feeling at the time.

"My music and my writing helps me express myself in times that I struggle with it all. Writing for me is enjoyable and relaxes me so I can focus and get these thoughts out of my head and onto paper."

As well as writing poetry, Anna is also an accomplished pianist, recently playing the opening and closing piano numbers at an Adelaide Symphony Orchestra special event. Anna finds both art forms help her get through her darkest days.

"I find that I can sometimes express myself better with my music and my poetry on paper."

Am I passionate or obsessive?  
Well, that's a matter of perspective.

You can make a quick decision.

But, your optimism is subjective.

Am I eccentric or insane?

Demented or deranged?

I won't argue with the claim,

That I'm particularly strange.

You see, that what we perceive,

It shapes the way that we believe;

Things really aren't always what they see.

Sometimes, I'm like a raging river,

Going full pelt ahead without stopping,

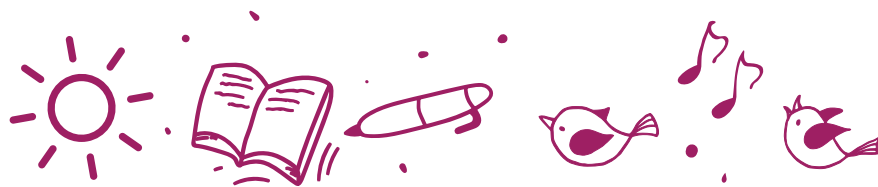
But in other times, I'm like a quiet stream,

Is what we see in the world really reality,

Or is it just a vibrant dream we dare not  
wake from.

This month, *Home Stories* is celebrating some of our wordsmithing residents! We hope you enjoy Anna and L.J.'s special way with words. If you would like to contribute to an upcoming *Home Stories*, please contact [communications@hcau.org.au](mailto:communications@hcau.org.au)

## 'Sunshine' by L. J. LaBarthe



**The day was unseasonably warm—a cloudless, blue sky, sun shining benevolently of being extraordinarily cold, with the biting wind or icy rain that had been the hallmark of this winter.**

The sound of birds chirping to each other and bees buzzing happily filled the air. The scent of roses and lavender, the peach and lemon trees were heavy in an otherwise dreary season.

Indeed, the residents of this small block of flats had come together in a community of women of various ages, cultures, and backgrounds. They sat on plastic chairs, a wooden bench, and coloured walkers beneath the dappled shade of the widely spreading limbs of the welcoming peach tree.

There was a small table that one of the women—Veronica—had set up and was holding coffee mugs and soda cans. A half-eaten packet of Tim Tams was also on the table, and conversation ebbed and flowed like water in a bubbling brook.

Regina and Veronica worked on crochet together, one worked on a lap blanket while the other made a teddy

bear. Lailah worked on a loom knit scarf in variegated shades of pink and purple while Rose threw a ball for her dog, a small, fluffy white terrier. Josie and Jade sat on their respective walkers, their hands holding their cups of coffee.

They all talked about little things and big things, everything, and nothing. Lailah noticed her mother, Jade, was having some trouble putting down her coffee mug, her hands trembling slightly, so she leaned over and took it from Jade and set it down on the table.

"You okay, mum?" Lailah asked. Everyone looked at Jade with concern—they all knew without discussing it that her health had been deteriorating.

"Yes, yes, I'm fine." Jade smiled. "Why don't you put some music on?"

Lailah gave her a long look and then she shrugged. "Sure, okay. Back in a moment." She got up and went into their flat and pulled up her various playlists, looking at them thoughtfully.

"Hm, probably not punk rock or metal," Lailah mused to herself, chortling with

the thought of how that choice of music might go down with the older ladies outside. She settled instead on classic rock, and hit play, and made her way outside again as the first strains of Immigrant Song by Led Zeppelin began.

"Good choice," Rose said, nodding.

"I thought the classics might be a better option than some of the other playlists I have," Lailah said.

Jade chuckled. "I bet."

Veronica shot Jade a warm smile. "I have no doubt that you both have a large collection of music to choose from."

"And the birds are singing along, too," Regina said.

Laughter filled the air at that. It did seem very much as though all the sounds in the courtyard complemented each other to make its own music.

Tomorrow would be cold and wet again, but for today, it was warm, and sunny and the promise of spring was gentle yet unbroken.



# Health Headlines



## Teeth-riffic service at the Light Square Common Ground Dental Clinic

### Did you know Housing Choices SA offers a dental service?

The Light Square Common Ground Dental Clinic was originally opened to service Common Ground residents; however, is now available to all Housing Choices SA residents. It's a welcoming, understanding clinic with a team of dentists who want to help and make a difference. Final year students from the University of Adelaide Dentistry, Oral Health and Hygiene program perform the services under the supervision of experienced dentists.

Resident Richard made an appointment after reading an article in one of last year's editions of *Home Stories*. Richard was frustrated with the way he was treated at private dental clinics, as well as the long wait times for other free services. He decided to give the team at Light Square a call.

"I was unwell and I just did not have the energy to be ringing up dentists.



Above: Richard pictured with Amanda in the Dental Clinic.

But the receptionist here at Common Ground Dental Clinic was lovely and everyone just has that compassion, that empathy."

"They understand and don't judge harshly – or at all!"

Richard has now had a couple of appointments and appreciates having the same supervisor each time, the time that's taken to explain each treatment and the friendly, welcoming environment.

"It's uncomfortable enough coming to a new place like a dentist. You don't need to be made to feel worse about anything."

While he might not be flossing every day, Richard is feeling a lot better about his teeth and has found the whole process easy to manage.

"Even though my dental hygiene isn't perfect, it's a lot better than it was!"

### How to get an appointment



If you're a Common Ground resident, you can call **8330 4200** to speak to **Amanda Drewer**. Amanda has been working at the clinic for almost 10 years and loves working with residents and dental staff to get great outcomes.

You can also ask your housing officer or support worker to refer you on to Amanda by email. **The clinic is open Monday to Friday and is closed on every second Wednesday.**

### What kinds of treatments can I expect?

The dental clinic provides examinations, cleaning, dental health education, fillings, extractions and on a case-by-case basis can provide root canal treatment.

The clinic also has a volunteer oral surgeon and special needs dentist.





## Women's health matters

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### Women's Health Week was celebrated this year with lunch and learning.

A group of residents and some great guest presenters came together in Wauwi Inparrila – the new community space on Mellor St.

This year's Women's Health Week theme was to 'grow your knowledge' with residents treated to presentations on dental health, the importance of breast screening, hepatitis testing and much more.

There were many great questions asked and answered, and lots of great food too.

A huge thank you to Hepatitis SA, the Women's Information Service and BreastScreen SA - as well as the Dental Clinic at Common Ground for their time - it's always great to see women supporting women!

Be sure to check out <https://www.jeanhailes.org.au/womens-health-week> for some great articles covering all aspects of women's health.

## Top Five tips from the My Money Matters Course

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### 1. Recognise if purchases are needs or wants.

There doesn't need to be any judgement about the spending being good or bad but identifying if you need it or just want it can help to explore saving opportunities.



### 2. Don't be afraid to ask for a better deal.

Sometimes costs such as utilities can be reduced by researching competitor's deals and then contacting your provider to request a price match.



**3. Recognise spending leaks.** These are items that don't cost very much but purchased regularly add up to substantial amounts. For example, a daily cup of coffee purchased at a café can cost over \$30 a week.



**4. Do a budget.** This is just a list of your income and itemised spending and using a bank statement can help. Knowing exactly how much you earn and how you spend this money is the best way to start a savings plan.



**5. Set a SMART savings goal.** This is a goal that is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time measurable. For example – "I want to save \$1000 over the next 12 months by reducing spending on takeaway food and opening a savings account." In this goal I have identified the amount I want to save, how I will save and when I want to save it by. I can then break this down to expect to save \$85 per month and track my progress each month to make sure it is achievable.

We will continue to facilitate My Money Matters Courses for Housing Choices SA residents. Please contact the **Inclusive Communities Team** if you would like to learn more about taking control of your finances.

# Celebrating our resident artists!



**Over the last 18 months, the Community Development teams from 12 Community Housing Providers (supported by CHIA SA) have been working together on the Community Housing Arts Awards (CHARTS).**

Housing Choices SA had four shortlisted residents:

- Devi Jay O'Donnell (established artist - painting)
- Drew Sinton (emerging artist - photography)
- Sven Knutsen (emerging artist - painting)
- Lilli Giles (Youth - written text)

**Congratulations to Lilli, Devi, Drew and Sven for making us proud with their artistic submissions, and a special mention to Devi, for winning the 'People's Choice Award' for her oil painting 'Dance Me to the End of Love'.**

**Pictured above: 1. Sven Knutsen 'Iphone and Ipad', 2. The Mill Set UP, 3. Lilli Giles 'The Selkie's Suffering', 4. Drew Sinton 'The Magician of South Terrace', 5. Devi Jay O'Donnell 'Dance Me to the End of Love'.**



## Changes to our activities

**The Inclusive Communities Team have some exciting changes to announce!**

- After conducting a Youth Focus Group, we learned that having a regular group specifically for our younger residents is needed. We will soon be establishing a fortnightly youth group (under 26 years of age) for residents which will include activities, outings, information and will be a great opportunity to meet with others in a safe space.
- Recently we conducted some successful 'meet and greet events'. We will now be beginning regular drop-in meetings for all residents in this relaxed format. This is a great opportunity meet face-to-face with Housing Choices staff, at a location close to you where you can discuss ideas or concerns you may have related to your property and local community.



## Save the Date



Save the Date for our **2023 End of Year Resident Christmas Events** to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December at Klemzig Community Hall and the 14<sup>th</sup> December at Light Square, Adelaide. More details will be posted to all residents in the coming weeks.





## Creamy French Mustard Tray Bake

### 10 Ingredients

- 4 chicken thigh cutlets, skin on, trimmed
- 4 French shallots, peeled, halved lengthways
- 1 bunch baby carrots, peeled, trimmed (halved lengthways if large)
- 300ml carton cooking cream
- 2 tsp French mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tsp Chicken Stock Powder
- 125g green beans, trimmed
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme sprigs
- Rice or bread, to serve (optional)

### Steps

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Grease a large deep baking tray with oil.
2. Arrange the chicken, skin-side up, on prepared tray. Add the shallot and carrot. Spray with oil. Season then roast for 30 minutes.
3. Whisk together the cream, mustard, garlic and stock powder in a jug. Add the beans to the tray then drizzle the cream mixture around the chicken, avoiding the skin. Return to the oven for a further 15 minutes or until the chicken skin is golden and vegetables are tender.
4. Sprinkle with thyme, season and serve with baguette, if using, to mop up the sauce.



### Smart Swaps

- Use a more affordable brown onion instead of French shallots.
- Grab a bag of misshapen/imperfect carrots (found in most supermarkets) or find loose carrots on special in the market.
- Use frozen green beans - which are often cheaper and are just (if not more) nutritious than fresh beans.
- Serve with rice, or bread to make it go further and fill a few more tummies!



## Super Savers

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**The cost-of-living crisis has hit hard this year, and we want to help. This edition, we've pulled together some tips on how to save money this Summer, as well as one of our popular – and affordable - Cooking Group recipes!**



## Cost-cutting concessions

**Did you know the government may be able to assist with medical heating and cooling costs?**

Medical Heating and Cooling Concession (MHCC) is there to assist South Australians on a fixed or low income who have a clinically verified medical condition and require the frequent use of heating or cooling in the home to prevent the severe worsening of their condition.

This concession is paid in addition to the energy concession for eligible applicants.

You can apply via the website below, or call the Medical Heating and Cooling line - **1300 735 350**

**<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/care-and-support/concessions/health-concessions/medical-heating-and-cooling-concession>**



## Seeing savings

**Glasses SA helps South Australians obtain low-cost glasses or, for those with serious eye conditions, no cost contact lenses.**

If you think this might help you, call **Glasses SA** on **1300 762 577** or check your eligibility at **[www.sa.gov.au/concessions/GlassesSA](http://www.sa.gov.au/concessions/GlassesSA)**

# Home Stories Spring puzzle

## Win a \$50 Bunnings voucher!

Find all the words in the word search except for one, which is not actually in the grid. Words may be forward, backward, up, down or diagonal.

Q	B	F	T	T	S	N	P	N	K	N	E	J	P	K
P	O	L	L	E	N	E	V	O	A	C	E	B	I	T
I	R	O	O	L	G	E	S	O	R	A	E	E	N	W
A	W	W	O	O	R	P	S	P	S	E	C	X	C	S
A	U	E	B	E	M	I	S	T	A	P	R	T	F	T
S	P	R	I	N	G	I	U	J	R	N	W	S	R	J
F	S	S	R	T	S	E	N	H	N	U	P	T	E	M
S	A	L	D	I	S	A	S	G	X	B	O	W	P	R
S	P	V	S	E	M	O	H	D	N	R	A	T	E	T
E	G	F	P	O	E	C	I	N	C	I	P	E	N	N
O	E	D	K	G	N	I	N	E	D	R	A	G	E	H
Q	P	T	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y	E	F	C
I	M	T	E	M	S	S	K	B	M	Z	C	S	S	S

### FIND THESE WORDS

Spring  
Gardening  
Sunshine

Flowers  
Blooming  
Nest

Butterfly  
Picnic  
Community

Pollen  
Home  
Birds

Please tell us the remaining word before  
**Friday 1 December** by emailing  
**communitydevelopmentsa@hcau.org.au**

Only one entry is allowed per household. The winner will score themselves a \$50 Bunnings voucher and will be drawn from the correct entries. Good luck!

## Had some maintenance done recently?

**You might get an email/text message from us, asking how things went!**

Our Customer Service team have been trialling a new way of getting post maintenance feedback. We are now sending surveys via email and SMS messages, instead of our usual random phone calls.

The survey has a few short questions, should take about 5 minutes max and it also has space for any comments you'd like to make. We value your feedback so if you have time, please let us know how your maintenance visit went.

**HOUSING CHOICES**  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**192 Waymouth Street  
Adelaide SA 5000**

### Contact us:

Please get in touch at any time if you have any questions or suggestions. For maintenance requests please call **1300 153 850** or report via our website: **www.housingchoices.org.au/contact/report-a-repair**


 **infos@hcau.org.au**

 **housingchoices.org.au**

**General Enquiries**

 **1300 312 447**

**Maintenance**

 **1300 153 850**

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