

STORIES FOR HOME



Summer 2023

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Foreword Lana Johnson

Hello and welcome to the summer edition of *Home Stories*, our first for 2024! I hope you enjoyed a wonderful festive season and found time to recharge and enjoy the warmer weather.

Looking back, 2023 sure was a busy year. Housing Choices South Australia finalised the Nightingale Bowden development, as well as commenced a new development at Felixstow. We opened a new community meeting space called Wauwi Inparrila, and managed to deliver a jam-packed schedule of activities to help keep our community connected and active, amongst the day-to-day operations!

To finish off 2023, we held three Christmas functions

across the state – one in the suburbs, one in Port Augusta and one in the CBD. Thank you to all the staff who assisted at the event, helping our residents come together to celebrate. For photos and a wrap up of the events, please turn to **page 4**.

Speaking of Christmas, thank you to those residents whose beautiful artwork was combined to form the collage on our resident Christmas cards.

I also want to update you on our annual resident satisfaction survey. Overall, we're pleased to see that our services are improving, but we will continue to work on areas that did not score as high, as we are committed to providing great customer service.

I would like to thank our residents that spent the time to give us this feedback. We will be sharing the detailed results with you in our next edition of *Home Stories* along with our action plan based on the feedback you gave us.

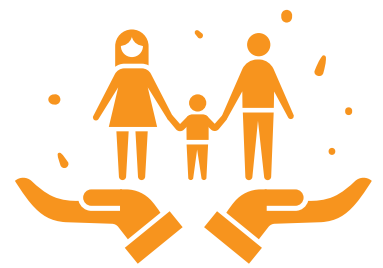
I look forward to another great year with you all,

Kind regards,

Lana Johnson
Acting General Manager,
South Australia

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.



Family by Family - join the family mentoring program

Family by Family is a network of families supporting other families, and a service of Uniting Communities.

Family by Family works with two types of families: families who have been through tough times and have come out the other side (a Sharing Family) and Families who are currently going through a tough time and would benefit from support from another family (Seeking Family).

There is no judgment based on religious, political or government preferences, and families of any shape, size or culture are welcome.

Seeking Families are linked up with Sharing Families for 10, 20 or 30 weeks. Families choose what they want to change, who they link up with, when they meet and where they meet. Families choose what they do and work towards their family's goals.

Family by Family think that no family should have to struggle alone or rely on services that just don't get it. Please call **0455 963 934** if you'd like more information.



Simple savers: back to school



Heading back to school for a new year can be an exciting, scary, and busy time. It's also an expensive time for families! We've put together some ideas to help you save some money this year.

School student broadband initiative



The School Student Broadband Initiative provides eligible families with school aged children free broadband internet for up to a year. To check your eligibility and apply:

 www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet

 **1800 954 610**

School sports vouchers



The Sports Vouchers program provides a discount of up to \$100 on sport, dance or learn to swim fees for children living in South Australia in Reception to Year 9, each calendar year.

The aim is to increase the number of children participating in physical activity by helping to reduce cost as a barrier.

 <https://www.sportsvouchers.sa.gov.au/>

 **1300 714 990**

Youth activities are coming

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Housing Choices SA recently hosted a focus group to investigate how we can better engage with residents between 18 to 30 years of age.

We explored the reasons for wanting to involve more younger people in our programs and participants highlighted the need for activities for younger people that would promote mental health benefits, skills development and help residents feel more safe and stable in their housing. The group also explored many of the barriers to participation and decided activities needed to be supportive, free or low cost, both daytime and evening timeslots and specifically targeting younger people. Lastly, we brainstormed many activities that would encourage young people to participate and generated a long list of exciting program ideas.

We approached the City of Adelaide, who have now generously agreed to help fund an initiative through their Youth Led Grants program.

Beginning in 2024, Housing Choices SA will host a fortnightly group for residents aged 18 to 30 that will be youth led in a space young people find safe, supportive and welcoming. The grant funding will contribute to the cost of fun activities, shared meals, guest speakers and the learning of new skills.

If you would like more information or want to register your interest in getting involved, please contact the Inclusive Communities Team on **1300 312 447**.



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* * * **Out and about** * * *

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 Thanks to all the residents who came along to one of our Christmas parties!



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1. An impromptu bubble fight! **2.** Housing Officer Giles taking a moment to chat with one of our residents. **3.** Christmas Carols and Homemade Soap Gifts for everyone **4.** Housing Choices' Charlotte with Yvonne and the Candy Cane guessing jar. **5.** Housing Choices' Ryan and Fiona vying to win the Hat Competition! **6.** Joy, Gerry and Robert spreading the cheer **7.** Housing Choices' Vero and Karen catching up with resident Adam **8.** Inclusive Communities' Mark officiated both the Light Square and Klemzig events. **9.** It's all hands on deck for the Christmas lunches as Lincoln sets a table at Klemzig. **10.** It's not Christmas without a roast! **11.** Siti, Ahmad and Meznah were joined by Liz, from Housing Choices, for a chat.



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12. Kenneth, Michael and Bill testing the limits of giant bubble making **13.** Matching outfits are always welcome at Christmas! **14.** Maureen and her fabulous hat creation **15.** Members of the music group **16.** Patrick in the classic cracker hat **17.** Residents Isabelle and Alistair **18.** Resident Kym with Coordinator Tenant Support Lincoln **19.** Residents Janet, George and Margaret catching up **20.** Residents Joy and Gerry inspecting the catering spread **21.** Robbyn enjoying a plate from Plenty Catering's great spread **22.** Salads a'plenty at Klemzig's luncheon **23.** Siti and Ahmad enjoyed the Christmas festivities.



Above: Tania, Port Augusta
Common Ground resident.

Hello from Port Augusta!



Did you know our Common Ground program also operates in Port Augusta?

Housing Choices SA currently houses 37 residents, working alongside various local services to provide housing and additional support in this regional hub.

Tania, who has been part of Common Ground in Port Augusta since 2014, loves her life in the regional SA town and is not planning on leaving any time soon.

"It feels like one big family here, as all the residents know each other."

Prior to being a part of Common Ground, Tania was couchsurfing between family and friends. After applying to live at Common Ground, she has continued to make it her home and is now the second longest resident in the program.

Over the past nine years, Tania has slowly sourced her own furniture, instead

of using the furniture supplied, and has added raised garden beds, many plants and even some garden fairies to make it her very own home.

While not originally from the area, Tania loves living her quiet life here surrounded by her support workers, Salvation Army and Housing Choices staff.

"It's my own little home and I have some friends in the other units, as well as others nearby. It's also close to my daughter and granddaughter so I can visit them when possible."

The community in Port Augusta is close knit and something quite special.

"Everyone looks out for each other in the units. I'm glad I was able to come here and live and build up the relationships with the other residents and staff."



A quick guide to repairs and maintenance

Things Housing Choices SA are responsible for:

- ✓ Plumbing concerns such as blocked toilets, water leaks
- ✓ Electrical concerns such as faulty lighting, or wiring
- ✓ Cleaning gutters as required
- ✓ Roof leaks
- ✓ Termite treatments if required

Things **you** are responsible for:

- ✓ Letting us know if something fails
- ✓ Changing lightglobes
- ✓ Calling a locksmith if you lose your keys
- ✓ Spider/cockroach/rodent pest control



How do upgrades work?

There is a difference between a repair and an upgrade. The above list would be classed as repairs, but an upgrade may include painting, replacement of kitchen cabinets, re-tiling and replacing bathroom fixtures, and replacing flooring.

Upgrades are planned for and managed by the Property Team and prioritised based on need and urgency.

Housing Choices SA is committed to ensuring that properties requiring upgrades are attended to. We prioritise this work based on several factors and assess each request on this basis.



Above: Lance with his pet Bearded Dragon 'Opi'.



Lofty goals and lovable lizards – life with Lance

While most companion animals are a little fluffier, there's an unmistakable bond between Lance - our newest Specialist Disability Accommodation resident - and his two Bearded Dragon lizards called Opi and Jax.

Opi, named after the lovable Sons of Anarchy TV character, sleeps on Lance's chest each night, having truly settled into Adelaide apartment life.

Lance was living in the Northern Territory and working at a BBQ store prior to moving to Adelaide four years ago. Lance moved to access better diabetes treatment, however, after more than 30 hospital admissions and progressive amputations, Lance lost his leg earlier this year.

After a lengthy process to secure NDIS funding, Lance was able to move out of a cramped share house and into his very own Specialist Disability Accommodation

apartment with Housing Choices South Australia.

While the privacy and access to local amenities are great, the sizable apartment with a view is also life changing for someone as social as Lance.

"I have the biggest apartment in the building. I think my old room in the share house was as big as my new bathroom here."

Housing Choices has worked with provider NEXTT to support Lance as he adjusts to his new environment – such as making bathroom modifications.

"The rails they installed definitely help, I don't think I could shower or go to the toilet without them. And NEXTT are in contact every day to see if there's something they can do to help me – but I'm also trying to be as independent as possible."

Moving into one of Housing Choices' apartments is just part of Lance's new journey.

There are very clear goals for the foreseeable future – the first is getting a power-assisted wheelchair to make it three times faster to get around and support him in his desire for independence.

The next goal is to the long and involved process to have a prosthetic limb fitted,

then to walk and to get back in the pool swimming – a hobby from his Darwin days. There's even a trip to Darwin planned, to see his beloved kids and do a bit of fishing – despite the dangers lurking under the water.

"One day my dad and I were putting mud crab pots in the water – I had to yell to get himself back in the boat as there was a 5-metre crocodile waiting just a few metres away, eyeing him off!"

Lance is happy to be in Adelaide, managing his new home and health - and not just because of the lack of genuine wildlife;

"There's so little infrastructure to support someone in a wheelchair there, plus the heat and humidity don't agree with managing my health."



Housing Choices SA currently owns 10 SDA properties in both Adelaide CBD and Bowden, both with exciting vacancy opportunities.

If you or a family member or friend are a NDIS participant, and would like to know more about HCSA's SDA housing available, please visit our website **housingchoices.org.au/properties**

Alternatively, for further information contact Adrian McHugh, SDA Participant Engagement Specialist at **sdainfo@hcau.org.au** or on **0448 597 465**.



Home Stories Summer 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.



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

FIND THESE WORDS



**Summer
Fishing
Beach
Sunglasses**

**Vacation
Celebration
Jolly
Sand**

**Camping
Ocean
Sprinkler
Rest**

Please tell us the remaining word before
Friday 1 March 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!



What to do if you can't get through!

Responding to our residents is important to us, but on occasion, you might have a little trouble getting through.

Sometimes we have lots of calls at the same time, or we might have a team meeting where many staff are away from the phones for a short period.

If you've called outside of business hours or you can't get through, please leave a message so we can call you back ASAP.

We will call you back within the very same day that you called and left a message, or the next day if you've called outside of business hours.

If it's an emergency or urgent maintenance request, please let us know when you leave a message. (Maintenance request call backs are within the same time frame above)

If you have emergency maintenance after hours, please ensure you call **1300 153 850**, to get through to an after hours contractor.

**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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