Sowing the seeds of community

Mollie’s garden is her pride and joy. Age hasn’t stopped the 93-year-old Marayong tenant from doing what she loves. Every day Mollie looks after the building’s gardens. She is proud of where she lives and has made others feel the same.
Welcome to the last edition of Your Home for 2018.

This year, I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you on my visits to different communities across NSW.

It is good to hear that tenants like Mollie, a 93-year-old gardening lover (front cover) are caring for their home and community.

Mollie wrote to me about how proud she is of sharing her gardening skills with other tenants and creating a safe place where they can socialise.

We achieved a lot this year. We awarded 400 scholarships to support committed young people through their studies. Find out about the 2019 round in this edition.

We also introduced tenant bonds for some people, and strengthened our antisocial behaviour policy to make social housing communities safer. Read more on page 3.

I wish you a happy holiday period.

Pru Goward MP
Minister for Family and Community Services
Minister for Social Housing
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Apply for a FACS scholarship to help with studies

FACS helps young people study by providing $1,000 scholarships.

Jack from Wollongong received a FACS scholarship in 2017. He used it to buy a laptop so he could study at home while finishing Year 12.

It meant Jack didn’t need to stay back after class and do all his homework at school.

The scholarship has given Jack a kick-start to achieve what he wants in future studies like learning video game programming.

Jack’s thankful for the support and wants to see others apply.

You can apply for a scholarship if you are:
• a social housing tenant
• in Year 10, 11 or 12 at a NSW high school or TAFE college
• an Australian citizen or permanent resident
• a previous FACS scholarship recipient.

Applications open soon. There are 600 scholarships available for 2019.

Details: facs.nsw.gov.au/facs-scholarships
**Rental bonds encourage property care**

On 1 November 2018, the NSW Government introduced FACS Housing rental bonds to encourage tenants to care for their property. The vast majority of tenants look after their homes and will not have to pay a bond. You will only have to pay a bond if you cause damage of $500 or more that is discovered and charged at a single point in time after 1 November 2018.

If the cost is less than $500, you won’t have to pay a bond. Damage that was previously reported will not count towards the $500. The bond will be four weeks’ market rent or $1,400, whichever is lower.

Former tenants who caused damage of $500 or more that was discovered and charged at a single point in time in the six years before their new tenancy will also have to pay a bond.

Some vulnerable tenants are exempt from paying a bond, such as tenants who are over 80 years old.

To learn more, visit [facs.nsw.gov.au](http://facs.nsw.gov.au) and search ‘Rental Bonds’.

**Update: Antisocial behaviour policy**

On 30 November 2018, our antisocial behaviour policy changed to encourage tenants to get support to sustain their tenancies.

**When we receive a complaint**

We investigate complaints to let each person tell their side of the story. If we confirm a tenant’s first instance of minor and moderate antisocial behaviour, we help them find a support service.

We give the tenant a form to complete with the support service’s help. If they return the form within 14 calendar days, they get a warning. If it’s not returned or it’s after 14 days, they get a first strike.

If the tenant already has a support service, they may ask for more help or focus on the antisocial behaviour.

If a service is full or not available in the area, the tenant will receive a warning and not a strike.

**Three strikes policy**

We introduced this policy to make social housing communities safer. If tenants receive three strikes within 12 months they may face eviction.


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**Support services**

- Community Justice Centres, for help with neighbour disputes - 1800 990 777
- LawAccess NSW - [lawaccess.nsw.gov.au](http://lawaccess.nsw.gov.au) or 1300 888 529
- Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services - [tenants.org.au/all/taas](http://tenants.org.au/all/taas)
Fun caption contest

Tell us what the koalas are saying. Best caption wins a $25 voucher. Send entries to Your Home, Locked Bag 4001, Ashfield BC 1800.

Congratulations to Gary (Lake Haven), who was last issue's winner.

Word bank

Find these summer related words

BEACH   FERRY   ICECREAM
CRICKET   FUN   PICNIC
SHADE   SUNSCREEN   HOLIDAY
SWIMMING

How to enter

If you need help with interpreting, phone All Graduates on 1300 652 488.

Arabic
إذا كنت بحاجة إلى المساعدة من الجملة الترجمة، اتصل بشركة كوك نيو إنترولitations (All Graduates) على الرقم 1300 652 488.

Chinese (Simplified)
如果您需要口译服务，请拨打
1300 652 488 致电 All Graduates

Dari
agh be kom k drrman darroo. 
agh be kom drrman (All Graduates) be shomareh 1300 652 488.

Russian
Если вам необходима помощь с устным переводом, позвоните в компанию All Graduates по номеру телефона 1300 652 488

Vietnamese
Nếu quý vị cần giúp đỡ về thông dịch, xin gọi All Graduates qua số 1300 652 488.