

# AROUND THE HOUSE

SPRING 2021 EDITION 21



STRENGTHENING OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY



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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Welcome to the September issue of *Around the House*.

It seems that our community connection is becoming stronger with every edition. Unity Housing's attitude towards reconciliation sets an example for all. The way they are engaging elders and their experience with the planning of the Reconciliation Action Plan is outstanding.

The feedback sessions involving Unity Housing tenants to discuss the planning of more initiatives to improve services was very productive. I did participate in the meeting in Morphett Vale in May and we came up with plenty of suggestions, including a recipe book with tenants' favourite recipes, and a garden competition is also on the cards.

Information on mental health support is vital and hopefully helps a lot of people with mental health problems, especially during the pandemic. I would like to mention my own experience with finding the cause of mental illness in a genes test, organised by a naturopath (not approved by the medical profession). It showed I had a lack of folate which can cause mental illness and, in my case, bipolar. With a remedy of folate, I have been stable for four-and-a-half years, in spite of the toughest challenges of my life (published in my book *Shadows Over the Sun*).

The Christmas card artwork competition is on so show your talent!

Keep well and safe.

Thank you,  
**Giselle**

Please send your contributions to [editor@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:editor@unityhousing.org.au)



# STRENGTHENING OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

We are excited to share the progress we are making in creating our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 'Reflect' for Unity Housing. Our RAP will support us to build strong and respectful relationships and develop opportunities to improve the way we connect with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants and communities. We are grateful for the expert assistance of Aunty Yvonne Agius – a respected Kaurna-Narungga elder and Vince Buckskin – a Narungga man and highly acclaimed Aboriginal Cultural Advisor.

The front cover of *Around the House* features artwork by Ngarrindjeri artist Jordan Lovegrove that has been designed for Unity Housing's RAP.

Jordan's artwork shows people on a housing journey from homelessness to safe, short-term accommodation to a long-term place to call home. The large central meeting place represents Unity Housing providing safe places for people to live. The meeting places on the bottom left are homeless people and communities at the start of their housing journey. The meeting places on the upper right show these same people and communities after receiving support from Unity Housing.

Unity Housing staff have also been completing Cultural Awareness Training and participating in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events including having Boandik Elder Ken Jones and members from Tiraapendi Wodli join us at these events. Unity Housing looks forward to the completion of our RAP and its launch in September 2021.



Unity Housing's RAP Working Group (from left) – Paul Reardon, Trish Burden, Vince Buckskin, Aunty Yvonne Agius and Andrew Davis.



# Mark's creativity shines through diamond art



"It makes me happy and I enjoy doing it."



Inspired by watching people online create diamond art, Millicent tenant Mark has been making his own creations for more than a year.

Diamond art involves applying colourful resin rhinestones to richly-pigmented canvas paintings. The result is visually-dazzling, mosaic diamond artworks that sparkle, shimmer and shine.

"I was in a group chat and found that a lot of people were doing diamond art," Mark says. "I started watching people online and learnt from there. It usually takes around two to three days to complete a piece. The big one is taking me longer because I do it at my art group."

Mark's favourite pieces he's created include the tiger – which is 5D – and the skull. "I really like the colours," he says. "It makes me happy and I enjoy doing it. It keeps me out of trouble. I was doing it through COVID. The local football club have offered to sell some when I get to 20 pieces."

Despite the challenges Mark faced during 2020, he made an effort to stay connected to his community and is grateful for the support around him.

"The loneliness through COVID was a challenge," he says. "I attend an art group and have support from local services. I am interested in the Lions Park project and I attended the Neighbour Day event this year. I also keep a diary. I like going to Lake McIntyre – there are swans there and they are building a nest, and we have barbecues there."

**Mark's artwork is featured in our 2021 SALA Festival exhibition and can be viewed at the Hutt Street Library or online at [www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au) until Monday 27 September.**

Unity Housing is proud to be part of  
**SALA FESTIVAL 2021**  
– a state-wide festival of visual art.  
Unity Housing is curating a SALA Festival art exhibition  
at the Hutt Street Library  
(Level 1, 235 Hutt Street, Adelaide)  
and online at [www.unityhousing.org.au](http://www.unityhousing.org.au)  
until Monday 27 September.

Exhibition times are as follows:

**Monday to Friday: 10am – 5pm**

**Saturday: 10am – 2pm**

**Sunday: Closed**

Please visit and support our exhibition which features mixed medium artworks by established, emerging and hobbyist South Australian artists.

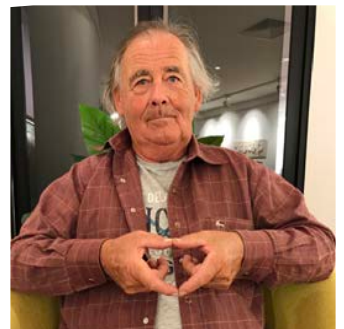
**SALA** South Australian Living Artists Festival

**A**  
CITY OF ADELAIDE

**UNITY**  
HOUSING COMPANY



# NEW IDEAS for tenant engagement



For the last four years, Unity Housing’s tenant engagement initiatives have been guided by our Community Connect Strategy and Delivery Plan which expired in June this year.

To update this plan, we set about speaking with tenants, staff and partner agencies in May and June to listen to their ideas about how our approach to tenant engagement could be improved.

Seven face-to-face tenant feedback sessions were held in country and metro locations; two staff sessions were held via Zoom; and partner agency feedback was provided verbally and by email.

Around 30 tenants attended the sessions, with the youngest being 18-months-old and the oldest 81-years-old. A number of good ideas were generated, so much so that we have included two additional areas of focus (headings) in our plans for 2021-2024 which include actions suggested by our tenants.



Some of these include increasing our focus on children and youth; finding ways for tenants to give back to the community through tenant-led donations and volunteer work; increasing the cultural diversity of our tenants; and to remember that some tenants prefer to engage with us outside of usual business hours. How’s that for quality feedback?!

All tenants in attendance had the opportunity to win a lucky door prize, with three \$50 vouchers up for grabs at each session. The lucky winners were Viv, Lorraine, Giselle, Andrew, Tanya, Chad, Braiden, Sareth, Mark, Big John, John B, Liz, Mandy, Omar and Barbara who were all thrilled to have won something of this value.

Tenants told us they appreciated being involved in sharing their ideas for the future with one tenant saying, “I feel like you’ve treated me as an equal”.

Many thanks to everyone involved so far in helping Unity Housing progress our thinking for the renewed Community Connect Strategy and Delivery Plan for 2021-2024.

**Keep an eye out for more details in future editions of *Around the House*.**



# Safe and inclusive centre for urgent mental health support



Neami National is proud to announce Australia's first Urgent Mental Health Care Centre (UMHCC) has opened in Adelaide, providing immediate assessment, triage and treatment to people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Adults can be seen by a clinical team including nursing, allied health, and medical staff, along with mental health peer workers as an alternative to presenting at a hospital's Emergency Department.

Designed in collaboration with the community – including people with a lived experience of a mental health crisis – the UMHCC offers a welcoming place to help everyone feel safe and accepted. Consultation rooms and a living room environment – instead of hospital-style cubicles – provide a calm and comfortable environment.

The centre is currently open to referrals from SA Ambulance Service, SA Police and the SA Health Mental Health Triage Service and also accepts walk-ins, although calling ahead on 8448 9100 is encouraged.



If you or someone you care for needs immediate emergency assistance, call 000 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

## Christmas card artwork COMPETITION 2021

Would you like to see your artwork featured on the front of the 2021 Unity Housing Christmas card?

See the flyer included with this edition for all the details.



# MURAL PROJECT

## brings tenants together

Tenants at a group housing site called Avalon have expressed their creativity and enthusiasm to beautify the site by taking part in a collaborative art project between Unity Housing, UnitingSA, City of Marion and southern mental health services.

Contemporary artist Kaylie Weir has worked closely with the tenants during the year to facilitate and direct their collaborative efforts towards producing a mural which will be installed at the site in coming months.

Exploring individual ideas, experiences and interests through to sketching, discussion and social chatting naturally led to ideas which were then used to make a couple of designs which everyone was invited to critique and choose.

“During these initial sessions, I introduced the participants to a range of painting techniques so they gained some confidence working with paints and mixing colours before starting on the mural,” Kaylie says.

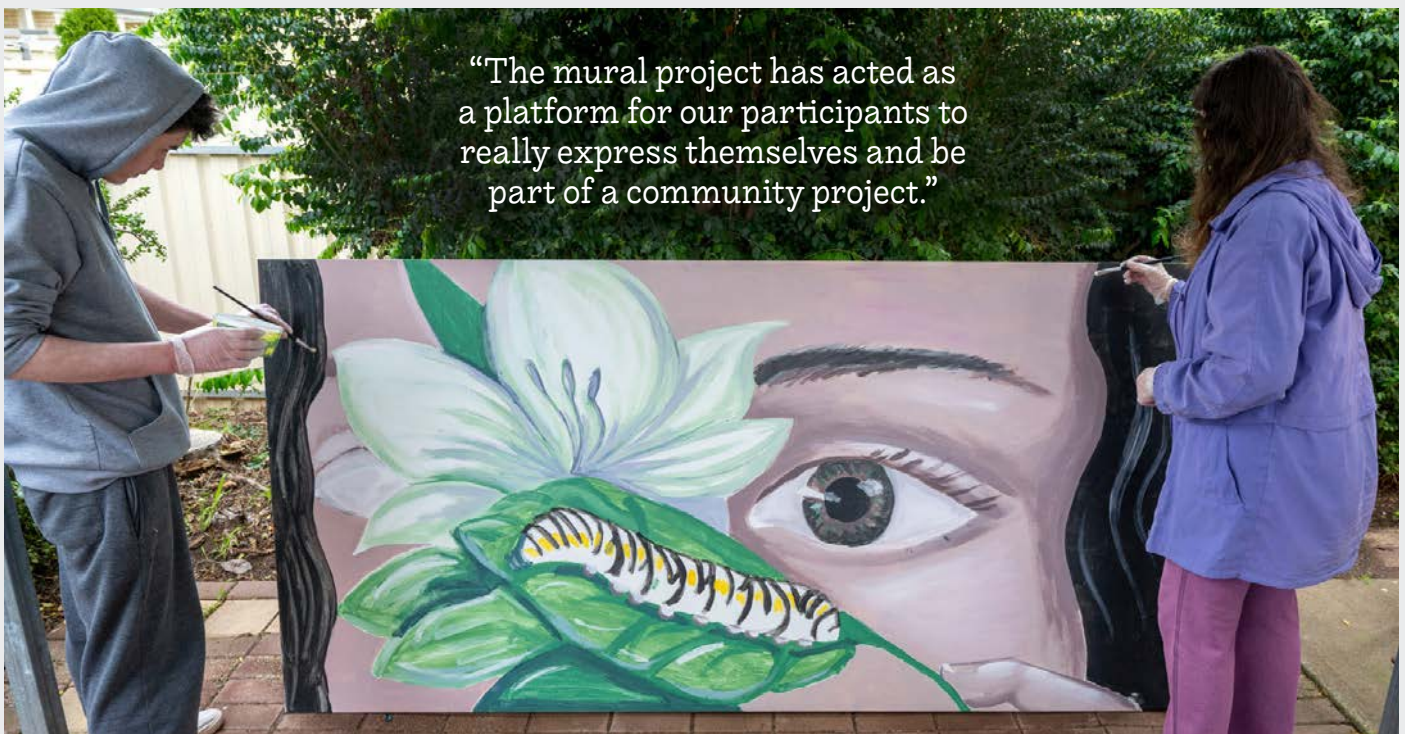
“The social interaction, the satisfaction of work on a regular weekly basis, and appreciation for the work done are some of the benefits. The process of making and the enjoyment of painting helps to ease anxiety and takes the mind to a different level of presence. A positive mindset towards creating – without being overly concerned with mistakes or criticism – can be experienced.”

UnitingSA Avalon Coordinator Wendy Rowe says the mural is an important project.



“We have observed that people with mental health challenges are often highly creative and artistic,” she says. “The mural project has acted as a platform for our participants to really express themselves and be part of a community project. They are building on their skills working alongside a professional artist which has added to their confidence and ability to paint.”

Tenants living at the site are supported and encouraged to build the skills and confidence needed to secure long-term housing and live independently in the community. Avalon provides both accommodation and psychosocial supports, with Unity Housing and UnitingSA coming together to provide housing and day-to-day supports.



“The mural project has acted as a platform for our participants to really express themselves and be part of a community project.”

## Report local issues to your council with free app

Have you spotted an issue in your community like graffiti, illegal parking, dumped rubbish, noise, sewer issues, trip hazards or abandoned trolleys? Or do you like what you see and want to give a compliment? Then it's time to get snapping!

Snap Send Solve is a free app that allows residents across Australia and New Zealand to photograph and notify local councils, utilities or other authorities of issues that need addressing in the community. You can also send general and positive feedback to help improve services and infrastructure.



Download Snap Send Solve for FREE from the App Store and Google Play.



### Hello Neighbour!



Through COVID-19, we're here for you.

13 11 14  
 Lifeline

The outbreak of COVID-19 has impacted people in varying ways on an international scale. It is understandable that during times like this, people may be feeling afraid, worried, anxious and overwhelmed by the constantly changing alerts and media coverage regarding the spread of the virus.

Lifeline Australia launched their 'Hello Neighbour' campaign in March 2020 to encourage Australians to reach out to those around them, especially those who may struggle through the physical restrictions brought about by COVID-19.

**If you or someone you know needs support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 for a confidential chat.**

# GARAGE SALE

## how our community benefits

**Are you looking for a way to make extra cash?**

**Do you want to give your unused clothes and household goods a second life?**

Then consider hosting a garage sale to divert valuable resources from landfill and make or save some money in the process.

In 2019, more than 400,000 Australians got involved at 18,000 garage sales country-wide. Together, more than 3.2 million kilos of stuff was saved from landfill, proving that when we all work together big things happen.

Eight South Australian councils are taking part in Australia's largest recycling event, the Garage Sale Trail, on November 13 to 14 and 20 to 21. It's free to take part and you're given all the tips, support and promotional materials you need to sell big and stay safe on the trail.



To see if your council is taking part, visit [www.garagesaletrail.com.au](http://www.garagesaletrail.com.au) and stay connected by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/GarageSaleTrail/>



# Congratulations

## TO OUR COMPETITION WINNERS

In the May edition of *Around the House*, a competition was open to tenants to win a Foodbank hamper and a four-ingredient cookbook.

Congratulations to the following winners, who were drawn at random: Kevin of Edwardstown, Elizabeth of Findon, Kirsten of Bordertown, Diedre of Port Augusta and Lisa of Prospect.



See below for a tasty recipe using just **4 ingredients!**

Bordertown winner, Kirsten, was thrilled to win the hamper and is looking forward to cooking recipes from her new cookbook.



Image - istock



SERVES  
**4**

## SAUSAGE BAKE

### Ingredients

- 6 thick sausages
- 2 cups chopped vegetables (onion, carrot, peas and potato are good options)
- ½ cup tasty cheese, grated
- 420g can cream of mushroom soup

### Method

- Cook sausages in a pan or grill and cut into bite-size pieces.
- Combine all ingredients in a casserole dish and season with salt and pepper.
- Bake covered for 45 minutes at 150°C.
- Uncover, stir and bake for a further 15 minutes.
- Serve with mashed potato or rice, if desired.



## Supporting a greener planet

As an alternative to single-use plastic, each edition of *Around the House* is now wrapped in 100% compostable mailing film. The film is corn starch based and has been developed by BioBag (world-leading manufacturers of kitchen tidy bags and a range of compostable products). The wrap is stronger than the plastic we were previously using and contains no plastic so it breaks down completely. Simply pop the film in your compost or green bin where it will biodegrade and not produce harmful microplastics into our environment.

Did you know that by choosing to receive your editions of *Around the House* via email, you help the environment by reducing the amount of paper we print?

**Email**  
[editor@unityhousing.org.au](mailto:editor@unityhousing.org.au)  
with your full name and preferred email address and enjoy reading *Around the House* from your inbox.