

AROUND THE HOUSE

SUMMER 2024 EDITION 31



Neighbours doing extraordinary deeds

The Good Neighbour Awards were held at The Terrace boarding house on 12 November to celebrate tenants who make a big difference in their community.

The awards recognise and honour neighbours who are exceptional in making their neighbourhood and community friendlier, and who make a real difference with their acts of kindness, compassion and generosity.

Frank was announced the overall winner and received a \$300 gift card. "I enjoy what I do here," he says. "It gives me a reason to get up out of bed – to feed the birds, do the bins and help people in general.

I know I have got a good heart, and I know this is really well appreciated."

The ceremony was filled with heartwarming stories of how our tenants support and care for each other. Their efforts have made a significant impact, and we are proud to celebrate their contributions to making our community a better place to live.

Congratulations to all our nominees for their kindness and dedication:

Anthony, Conor, David, Frank, Jerome, Shannon, Stephen, Steven and Tina.

CHRISTMAS CARD ARTWORK COMPETITION ~ WINNER ~



Congratulations
Sue from Dover Gardens

Your Christmas card is included with this edition.

Sue created a stunning Christmas wreath on canvas. She painted leaves from her garden, dipping them in paint and transferring them to the canvas. We just love the creativity and elegance of her piece.

"I wanted to make use of what I've got, so I thought why not paint leaves?" she says. "I wanted it to be Christmas-sy and bright and a lot of people have wreaths up at Christmas time. I encourage other people to enter in the future. I've won something for the first time, I've got some validation now. I'm still beaming."

See all the artwork that was entered into the competition.



<https://unityhousing.org.au/christmas-card-artwork-gallery/>

FROM THE Editor's desk

Welcome to the final edition of *Around the House* for 2024!

The Christmas card you receive with this edition was decorated by our very own tenant Sue who won our Christmas card artwork competition with her wreath which incorporates leaves from her garden. The three runners up are also very well-deserving.

And while Christmas is generally a merry and fun time, we understand that's not the case for everyone so check out our tips on this page for how to look after your mental health during this time. Additionally, if you need financial support, there are two very helpful services available – see page 5 for details.

A big congratulations goes to Frank at The Terrace boarding house for winning the overall Good Neighbour Award. This is the second round of awards we've held in metropolitan Adelaide and it's proving to be a popular event that celebrates tenants who make a difference to their neighbours' lives.

Check out the striking mural at our Hocking Place building on page 4 along with an update on our second Reconciliation Action Plan called *Innovate*.

There's heaps more to check out – results from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey; winners of our gardening competition; details on the green waste collection starting in Port Augusta; a wrap of the All Abilities art exhibition in Millicent; and photos from *Around the Community*.

As one year ends and a new one starts, all of us here at Unity Housing wish you a safe festive season. We look forward to bringing you our first edition for 2025 in April. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

If you would like to submit content for the next issue of *Around the House*, please send your contribution to editor@unityhousing.org.au by Friday 21 February.

Take care of your mental health this festive season

By Bhavna Chaudhary, Social Work Student

Christmas for some is a festive, happy time filled with presents, family, friends, and delicious food. For others, Christmas can be a time of loneliness, disappointment, or anxiety. If Christmas is a hard time for you:

Focus on the present ~ Enjoy the moment. Don't worry about the past or future. Being in the present can help you feel calm.

Think about your goals ~ Think about things you want to achieve. The holidays can be a good time to reflect.

Share your goals ~ Talk to friends and family about them. They might even want to join in!

Be grateful ~ Focus on what you have, not what you don't. Try writing down what you're thankful for.

Limit media time ~ Remember, what you see on social media isn't always real. Everyone has different holiday experiences.

Connect with loved ones ~ A simple text or call can make you feel supported.

Be kind ~ Helping others can make you feel good too. Try volunteering or helping someone in need.

Look after yourself ~ Do things that relax you, like reading or exercising.

Start new traditions ~ Create new ways to celebrate that focus on fun, not stress.

Recognising what is impacting on your mental health and then taking steps to overcome these issues will help you get through the festive season. But if you feel you need a bit (or a lot) more support, please contact

Lifeline: 13 11 14

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

or **Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636**

www.beyondblue.org.au



Would you like to be involved? GET IN TOUCH!

We encourage tenants to get involved in submitting ideas and helping us find good stories to be included in future editions of *Around the House*. Share your ideas and send us interesting and informative content for other Unity Housing tenants to enjoy. If you have any ideas for the April 2025 edition please email editor@unityhousing.org.au by Friday 21 February.



Runner Up
Mandy, Millicent



Highly Commended
Vicki, Mawson Lakes



Highly Commended
Elizabeth, Findon

CHRISTMAS CARD ARTWORK COMPETITION ~ RUNNERS UP ~

Congratulations
Mandy, Vicki and Elizabeth

UNITY CELEBRATES TWO AWARD WINS

We are thrilled we won two awards at the 2024 CHIA SA Excellence in Community Housing Awards, held at Adelaide Pavilion in September.

Congratulations to the Unity Housing and Tesla SA Virtual Power Plant project team for winning the award for 'Excellence in Community Housing'. This project is making a significant impact by providing tenants with access to the South Australian Virtual Power Plant, which offers lower electricity prices and renewable energy solutions. This achievement highlights

Unity Housing's commitment to benefiting tenant households and the environment.

Additionally, the Street Speak project won the 'Leading Community Development Practice' award for Unity Housing and our partners – KKY Aboriginal Corporation, Point Heard, CHIA SA, and the Department of Human Services – for improving cultural understanding and engagement with Aboriginal tenants in the Limestone Coast. This initiative will continue into 2025 and we'll keep you updated on progress along the way.



Unity Housing staff Lauren, Annie, Brendan, Beck, Kylie, Jo, Megan, Lesley and Heath at the awards night.

Announcing our second Reconciliation Action Plan *Innovate*

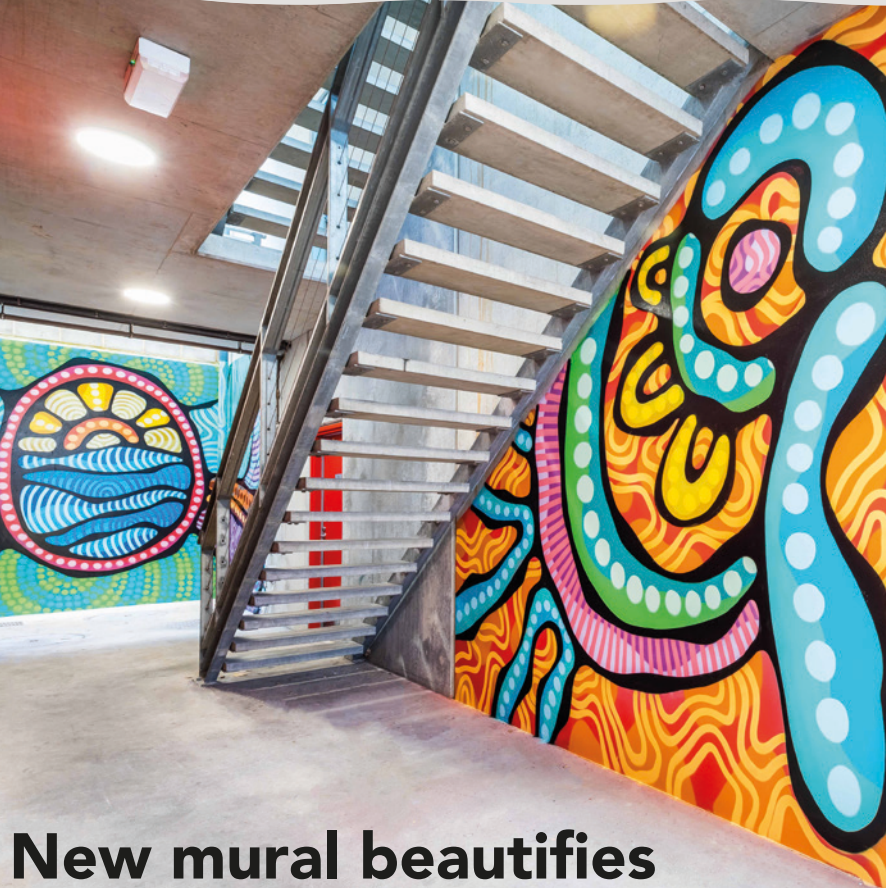
Unity Housing provides homes for more than 700 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tenants and is committed to celebrating their cultures.

We completed our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), *Reflect*, in 2022, guided by Aunty Yvonne Agius and Vince Buckskin, and launched our second RAP, *Innovate*, in November.

Our *Innovate* RAP focuses on building relationships, respect, and opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our recent activities include sponsoring the Kurna football and netball teams, celebrating Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks, surveying Aboriginal tenants in the Limestone Coast and training staff through our Street Speak project.



We're proud to feature original artwork titled 'Togetherness' (pictured) by artist **Tanaya Antony** in our *Innovate* RAP, symbolising community togetherness. Tanaya is a Narungga artist, born and living on Kurna land, who enjoys creating modern, bold art incorporating traditional Aboriginal symbolism.



New mural beautifies **HOCKING PLACE**

We're excited to share an update about a beautiful mural at Unity Housing's Hocking Place building in the Adelaide CBD. It was created by Scott Rathman, a First Nations artist from the Eastern Arrernte community, now living on Kurna Country in South Australia.

Scott's mural, which is part of our Colour Project, features two artworks that tell the story of strangers coming together in search of a safe place. Through sharing their stories, they not only find shelter but also create a new community and fresh beginnings.

Scott worked closely with tenants to gather ideas, making sure the mural reflects their experiences. Tenants have shown their appreciation of the artwork, saying: "The bright colours make the building feel less dull compared to the old concrete walls."

We're glad tenants enjoy the new mural as much as we do!

Struggling with finances?

Help is just a call away

Are you facing financial challenges? You're not alone, and help is available. Taking the first step is often the hardest, but it can make a big difference.



1800 060 462

RentRight SA offers free advice on housing and rental issues, helping you understand your rights and manage financial stress.



National Debt Helpline provides free, confidential financial counselling. Speak with them to find helpful solutions.

Thank you for having your say

1,047 tenants shared their feedback.



86% Overall satisfaction



84% Condition of home satisfaction



83% Repairs and maintenance satisfaction

Result highlights

In July, we invited you to share your thoughts in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, and you responded in a big way! We asked about the quality of our maintenance services to the condition of your home and how you feel about your neighbourhood. We also wanted to know what you think of Unity Housing's services overall.

Congratulations to the five lucky tenants from Adelaide CBD, Grange, Port Pirie, Burra, and Port Augusta who were randomly selected to win a \$100 shopping voucher.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share your thoughts. Our management team is carefully reviewing your comments to understand what's going well and where we can improve.

What our tenants had to say:



"I am pleased to be living in a Unity Housing house, as I feel that my housing situation will be safe and secure going forward, particularly in these times when finding appropriate housing can be difficult."



"The last 10 years at Unity are the most supported and safe I have felt."



"Everything was done in a timely manner and workman was very respectful of myself and the property."

SUGGESTION



"A forum where tenants and Unity Housing can discuss any issues."

COMPETITION winners

A big congratulations to the three lucky winners of our last competition

Wendy from **Port Pirie**,
Jenifa from **Goolwa**, and
Helen from **Albert Park**

who each received a \$100 shopping gift card and two cookbooks.

We had a fantastic response with 31 entries from Unity Housing tenants.

Thank you to everyone who participated.



Stay tuned for more competitions in upcoming editions of *Around the House*!

Start 2025 cleaner and greener

Great news for Port Augusta tenants! Starting in 2025, you can use the FOGO kitchen caddy system to collect food scraps and compostable materials before putting them in your green lidded bin for food and garden organics.

What is FOGO?

FOGO stands for Food Organics and Garden Organics and is a kerbside collection service that allows food scraps (including meat and fish scraps, egg shells and animal droppings) to be added to your garden waste bin so it can be recycled into top quality compost. All you need is a small container; you can use an old ice cream tub or a basket with a lid, and line it with a compostable bin liner (available from the supermarket). Just make sure it has the Australian Standard compostable symbol AS 4736.

Note:
biodegradable bags are not compostable

Ruby demonstrates which food scraps can go in a compostable bag and in the green bin.

Not sure which bin to use?

Which Bin SA has a simple A-Z guide online to help you sort it out at

www.whichbin.sa.gov.au/a-z-items

If you're still unsure, call the
Which Bin SA Hotline on
1300 137 118.

Let's all work together to keep Port Augusta cleaner and greener!

Unity's green-thumbbed champions

The first-ever Unity Housing Tenant Garden Competition was a big success! Tenants were excited to join in and show off their gardens. With six categories, there was something for everyone: Best Garden, Best Fresh Produce, Most Creative, Best Small Garden, Most Improved, and Best Neat and Tidy. The competition brought tenants together, sharing gardening tips, plants, and community spirit.

The judging panel, including two Unity Housing tenants and Jonathan from UrbanVirons Group, looked at creativity, sustainability, and garden beauty to pick the winners.

At the awards event at our Bowden office, winners and runners-up received certificates, Bunnings gift cards, and personalised seeds. The day ended with an afternoon tea, celebrating both the winners and the community spirit the competition created.



Congratulations to Winners:

Michael T, Lola and Michael N

Runners up:

Mark, Sharon and Robert, Kari, and Conor

Safety at home with batteries this Christmas

Using and storing batteries safely plays an important role at Christmas. Many elements of the Christmas spirit are powered by batteries, from toys and gadgets to Christmas lights and décor.

Lithium rechargeable batteries

House fires are becoming more severe because of the increasing use of rechargeable lithium-ion battery products in homes. The complex chemical nature of these batteries can make them unstable by overcharging, not being connected correctly or overheating the battery. Lithium batteries are found in everyday items like phones, TV remotes, and power tools. If you're buying presents that require lithium-ion batteries, make sure they're manufactured by a trusted company.

Lithium coin batteries

Lithium coin batteries are dangerous small batteries for young children. Not only can they cause choking; if a lithium coin battery gets stuck in a child's throat, the saliva triggers an electrical current. This causes a chemical reaction that can severely burn the esophagus and become fatal in under two hours. If you believe a child has swallowed a battery, visit the emergency department immediately.

How to store used batteries

Store used batteries in a glass container. Ensure the container is not airtight as pressure can build up. Don't store batteries in a metal container, or with metal objects like staples and paperclips, as they can spark and create a fire hazard. Keep batteries in a cool, dry place, away from heat sources like stoves.



Here are some simple safety tips when using lithium rechargeable and coin batteries:

Keep away from children: Store batteries safely out of reach

Charge on hard surfaces: Unplug when fully charged

Store somewhere cool and dry: Avoid hot places like cars

Don't use damaged batteries: If the battery is no longer working or is swollen or leaking, dispose of it properly at a drop off point near you – for locations visit <https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/batteries/AdelaideSA> or visit <http://www.whichbin.sa.gov.au/>

Millicent art exhibition creates a buzz

The first All Abilities Art Exhibition, 'Dreaming', was held at the Millicent Visitor Centre from 27 September to 13 October 2024. It was organised by Unity Housing, Perfect Circle Disability Services, and Wattle Range Council. The event gave local artists a chance to show their amazing art, including many who don't usually get such opportunities.

With more than 40 artworks from 30 artists, the exhibition was a big success. Mayor Des Noll and Unity Housing's Tenant Engagement Officer, Jacqui, opened the event and thanked everyone involved.

Special congratulations to Unity Housing tenants:

- Mayor's Award: 'Water Hole' by Lora
- Most Creative Award: 'Snail Tea Pot Cosy' by Mary (pictured)



"This is the highlight of my year. I feel honoured to be recognised publicly among such talented artists where our disabilities do not constrain us." *Participating artist*

Well done to all the artists!

AROUND THE COMMUNITY



Luxe Luncheon at Gilles Lodge boarding house



Spring Carnival at Christie Downs



SALA Festival in Adelaide



Spring Picnic at Strathalbyn



SALA Festival in Millicent

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