

AMÉLIE NEWS

Winter 2023



Amélie Housing
Building hope through housing

Issue No. 5



HIGH TEA AND HIGH SPIRITS

The verandah tables were laden with fresh flowers, china tea sets and home baked goodies that had been lovingly prepared by members of the St Vincent de Paul Society Conference in Caringbah, at a 'High Tea' event held on Saturday 20 May this year.

The event took place at Burraneer in Vinnies' purpose-built complex that provides social housing for seniors at risk of homelessness and hardship. It saw 20 residents and nine members of the Conference come together to enjoy

a tremendous array of food and engaging conversation on a day featuring beautiful, sunny weather.

One of the things that makes Amélie/SVdP Housing so unique is the additional support our customers and communities receive thanks to our relationship with the St Vincent de Paul Society and the SVdP Society Conference members.

SVdP Society members are passionate about helping people in need in their local community. Not only do they serve their local

community and provide tenants with opportunities to engage in community with others (e.g. through barbecues, morning and afternoon teas, community gardens, celebrations etc), they are also available to support people in their homes and communities, providing friendship and a listening ear.

For more information about how Vinnies can support you or your community, check out the new Vinnies website: www.vinnies.org.au or speak to one of our friendly staff.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO, GRAHAM WEST



Welcome to the latest edition of Amélie News.

I want to start by saying thank you to many of you.

Thank you to our Vinnies support services teams, and the St Vincent de Paul conference members who volunteer their time to create community.

Thanks also to our staff who are committed to working with you to smooth out the bumps that happen in our tenancies and properties.

And thank you to all of you: our tenants and community.

It's been wonderful to see the number of gatherings, barbecues and community gardening events that have taken place in our communities in recent months; and we know that those things are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to community! We don't hear about every instance of you stopping to check in on a neighbour, and we can't witness every morning wave or smile shared between community members. But these interactions exist and these things are happening every day. In fact, these are the very things that are helping to build community and foster a sense of home, and so for that, I thank you!

Thanks also for the way you continue to share with us; from filling in surveys to letting us know when someone is in trouble or in need of support. We are grateful for the strong partnerships we have with you, and the trust you have in us.

We look forward to hearing more from you – about your experiences and your hopes for the future, our community and the wider Society.

In the meantime, stay safe and stay warm as we endure these colder months.

Graham West

COMMUNITY NEWS

SAHF tenants leading the way at Albury

Chelsea Ward and Mark McNeil recently started as volunteers at Vinnies Nagle Community Centre in Albury. As residents in the Vinnies Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) program, Chelsea and Mark have dived straight into their new roles, demonstrating great leadership and initiative by getting involved in activities across the Centre.

On Tuesday nights, in conjunction with Carevan, Chelsea and Mark have been serving hot meals to residents and members of the community. On Wednesday afternoons, they assist in providing a safe, inclusive environment for residents to come together and socialise over afternoon tea and community engagement activities. On the last Wednesday of each month, they also provide a



SAHF tenants, Chelsea Ward and Mark McNeil community BBQ for residents.

In addition to all of this, Mark is currently creating a community garden for the residents to enjoy, and a memorial space to remember residents that have passed away. Chelsea is also learning to develop the quarterly tenant newsletter which will eventually become her primary responsibility.

Thank you to Chelsea and Mark for your fantastic contribution!

Back to Nature at Duck Flat Community Gardens

Amélie Housing Officers recently organised a community event for local tenants at the Duck Flat Community Garden, in Mount Barker, South Australia.

The event was designed to promote the development of independent living skills in a beautiful, outdoor community environment. Two of our tenants, Tim and Frances, demonstrated the ways they have been giving back to the community in a voluntary capacity.

Following a tour of the gardens, Frances showed attendees where they could purchase low-cost plants, fruits and vegetables from the



Duck Flat Community Gardens

nearby nursery; and Tim shared various recordings he had captured of nature.

A huge thank you to the tenants and staff that attended. The event was a wonderful opportunity to experience the beauty and resourcefulness of the great outdoors.

SAHF Satisfaction Survey

A special thank you to our Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) tenants who participated in our annual SAHF Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

We received an outstanding response rate of over 60%; well over the sector average of 25%. Your feedback is vital to us as we seek to improve our services.

All survey participants went in a draw to receive cash prizes as a token of our appreciation for your time and feedback. Ten lucky winners were drawn. These winners will be notified by our team over the coming days.



Vinnies CEO & Community Sleepouts

As the cold of winter hit, you will have noticed that the CEO Sleepout took place at most major cities around the country. Representatives from Amelié/SVdP Housing rugged up and participated, with a goal to raise awareness about homelessness and vital funds for Vinnies homelessness support services.

The exciting news is that there are also a number of community sleepouts taking place this year, including the Albury Community Sleepout, that is being organised and hosted by Shantelle Lidden, Vinnies' Social and Affordable Housing Fund

Tailored Support Worker.

The Albury Community Sleepout has previously raised vital funds for the community engagement activities that are delivered at the Nagal Centre to residents of Dempsey Place and Hovell Street, thanks to the Quamby Support Service.

The Sleepout will take place on Friday 25 August from 6pm.

If you are interested in taking part in it or making a donation, please google 'Albury Community Sleepout' for more information.



Carevan meals for Albury residents

A special thanks to Carevan for their continued support. Carevan is a local Albury organisation that exists to feed the homeless and disadvantaged throughout rural Australia.

They deliver hot meals to residents of Dempsey place every Tuesday

night, providing the opportunity for residents to enjoy a home cooked meal while gathering together and building friendships and community in the Nagal Centre community room.



Vinnies Website - Making getting help, even easier!

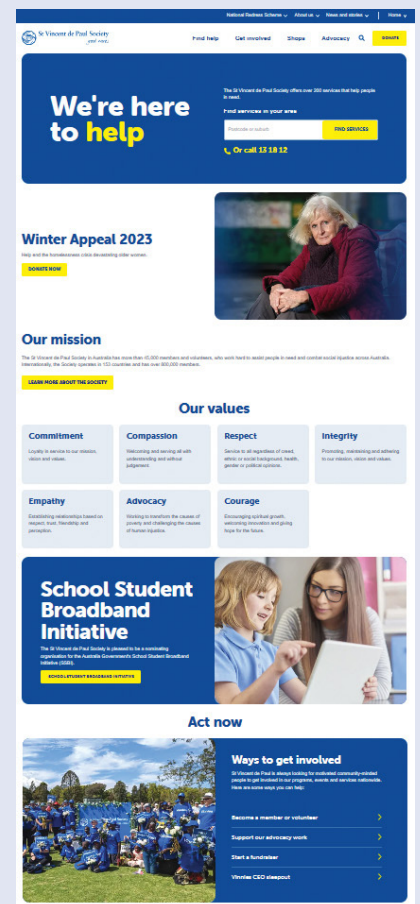
Getting help is even easier thanks to Vinnies' newly refreshed website: www.vinnies.org.au

The Vinnies website now features improved search functionality to help you find services in your area that can meet your individual or community needs.

Simply enter your postcode or suburb and the site will display all of the ways Vinnies can support you in your local area.

Services include:

- Vinnies Assist
- Assistance with food and everyday essentials
- Vinnies Vans
- Alcohol and Drug Support Services
- Aged Care
- Community Inclusion
- Conference Support
- Disability Services
- Disaster Recovery
- Domestic and Family Violence
- Healthcare
- Homelessness and Housing
- Keeping Children Safe
- No Interest Loan Schemes
- Crisis Support



HOME HINTS AND TIPS

A reminder about fire safety

The cooler months see a 10% increase in the number of home fires. Some common causes of fires are from the use of heaters and electric blankets, cigarettes and candles.

To prevent a fire in your home, please ensure you:

- keep things at least one metre away from your heater
- install and use heaters and electric blankets following the manufacturer's instructions
- get indoor gas appliances (like heaters) checked every two years and if you suspect a fault, get your heater serviced or replaced
- always supervise young children near working heaters and candles
- keep candles away from curtains with open windows
- put candles out when you leave



- the room
- keep matches and lighters out of reach of children and use child-proof lighters and deep ash trays
- extinguish cigarettes properly before you throw them away and never smoke in bed
- ensure you have a fire escape plan.

Keep warm this winter while keeping heating costs down

- Ensure warm air can circulate
- Track down and seal draughts
- Switch ceiling fans to reverse (where possible)
- Cover hard floors with rugs
- Use curtain, blinds and shutters.



FoodCare: The Discount Food Shop

Did you know that Parramatta Community Care runs a discount shop that provides fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, eggs, bread, milk, juices and a wide range of pantry items to Centrelink cardholders, refugees, asylum seekers and students at low, affordable prices?

The FoodCare shop is located at 18 Barney Street, North Parramatta.

The shop can be accessed by appointment. To book, please call 0497 805 788.

To access this service, simply bring:

- photo identification
- your Centrelink card or a Reference Letter from your Case Worker.



For more information email: foodcare@pcc.org.au or go to:

FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE: Call 1800 950 575

Feedback and Complaints

Amélie Housing takes feedback, complaints and appeals seriously. If you would like to lodge a complaint, appeal a decision, or provide feedback on what we do well or what we can improve, there are several ways you can do this:

- **Use our online Feedback form**
(Go to <https://bit.ly/ameliefedback> or scan the QR Code).
- **Call us on 1800 950 575 (free call).**
Note: Some charges may apply for mobile users.
- **Access independent support.**
If you need assistance in making a complaint, appealing a decision or providing feedback you can ask a nominated person to help you. You will just need to provide consent for staff to talk with another nominated person on your behalf.



ONLINE
FEEDBACK FORM

Your voice matters to us. For more information or for assistance, please speak to our staff.