

SEARMS Tenant Newsletter

January 2025 - New Year edition

Welcome to 2025 - Walking Forward Together

As we step into 2025, SEARMS remains committed to listening, learning, and growing alongside our tenants and community.

Last year, we began a workforce review—a deep look at our team, roles, and responsibilities. The aim? To identify any gaps and make sure we’ve got the right people in the right places to support you better.

This work is all about strengthening our service so we can respond more effectively to what matters most to you. The review will wrap up in the first few months of 2025, so keep an eye out—we’ll be sharing updates soon.

In the meantime, have a read through this newsletter—we’ve packed it with helpful info, updates, and community stories that show just how much we can achieve when we work together.

Here’s to a strong and connected 2025!

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2024 IN REVIEW



February

Workforce review commences
Australia Service Excellence -
preparation commences
NAIDOC grant application
DCJ Community Housing Concierge
grant application

April

SHAF Housing grant application



June

Tenant newsletter



August

FRRR Living Library Batemans Bay –
Batemans Bay Highschool
Meeting with AHO CEO



October

Organisation review finalised
Second dwelling update - tenant letter
Community-Led Men's Wellness Centre
grant unsuccessful
RAPP Partnership Program grant
unsuccessful



December

Qbyn Xmas Party
Nowra Xmas Party
ACT Housing yarning circle
Tenant survey closes
Energy Efficiency grant unsuccessful
AHO Sector Capability Grants

January

Community-led Men's Wellness Centre
grant application



March

Community session – Managing
Vacancies
Housing Australia Future Fund grant
application

May

Community session – Rent reviews
NAIDOC Grant successful



July

Community session – Repairs
& Maintenance
NAIDOC celebrations
Australian Service Excellence
accreditation achieved



September

Community session – Arrears Management
FRRR Living Library Mogo – Mogo Public
School
FRRR Living Library Moruya – Arts Central
Moruya
Tenants News Alert
AHO Sector Capability grant application
RAPP Partnership Program grant application



November

Community session – Vacancies & 2nd
dwelling update
Tenant Survey opens
Share the Dignity grant application
Energy Efficiency grant application
Staying Home Leaving Violence grant
application

Listening to Your Voice - 2024 Tenant Survey

Strong communities are built by listening to the people who live, work and thrive in them. Our 2024 Tenant Survey was a chance for you to share your thoughts and help guide the way we work



Your feedback helps us put energy and resources where they're needed most—based on what you say is important.

What You Told Us – Key Insights

● **Overall Satisfaction:**

Most tenants shared that they're having a positive experience living in SEARMS homes—thank you for your trust.

🔧 **Maintenance Services:**

Many of you praised our team's professionalism and the quality of their work. Some let us know that delays in getting things fixed are still a concern—and we hear you.

🗣️ **Communication:**

Most felt well-informed, but a few people shared they'd like more regular updates about housing changes, events, and what's happening in community.

🏠 **Housing Conditions:**

Tenants spoke positively about the quality of homes, but some raised concerns about older appliances or fittings that need a refresh and the old age of their properties - we work closely with the Owners to approve funds.

💛 **Community Engagement:**

You appreciated efforts to build stronger connections—some great suggestions came through for more workshops, yarn-ups, and community gatherings.

Where We're Heading – Your Recommendations

✓ **Speed Up Repairs:**

We're working on making our maintenance response faster and smoother, so you're not waiting too long when something needs fixing. When trades are booked and you can't make the appointment call us! We still get charged a call out

✓ **Better Communication:**

More regular newsletters and info through digital channels are coming soon—so you stay connected and in the loop.

✓ **Upgrades Where Needed:**

There are a lot of older homes across the portfolios! Due to fund limitations we prioritise works to meet the basic standard. You've told us more works are needed and we continue to work closely with the Owners to source funding over and above rents received!

✓ **Stronger Community Focus:**

We're planning more on-Country workshops, social events, and opportunities for connection—because community spirit is everything. This includes applying for grants/funding to help provide more wrap-around support to address cost-of-living and other pressures on the family.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey. Your voice helps shape the future of SEARMS. We're walking this path with you—towards safer, stronger homes and connected communities.



Looking after Your Home

Meet Bagiindj Mana

Bagiindj Mana means “Helping Hand,” and that’s exactly what our Property Care Specialist and their Trainee aim to be.

Our Property Care Specialist is skilled in one or more trades, and they’re here to support your home’s upkeep. They might be joined by a trainee who’s learning on the job and helping with smaller repairs and maintenance—growing their skills while giving back to community.

You’ll often see them during routine tenancy inspections, walking through the property with the Housing Officer. They are doing an annual property check for insurance and compliance purposes.

What they’re here to do:

- Check if anything needs fixing or upgrading to make sure your home is safe, comfortable, and meets all housing standards.
- Fix minor issues on the spot, if they’ve got the tools and skills to do so.
- Record what they see so the Asset Team can work out what’s needed and sort funding or work orders when possible.

By keeping this work in-house through our SEARMS maintenance team, we’re not only saving money—we’re also making sure your repairs get done quicker, with people who understand and respect our communities. We’re here to walk beside you, keeping your home strong and well looked after.



Tenant Stories - Strength, Resilience and New Beginnings

At SEARMS, we walk alongside our tenants, supporting strong, independent journeys toward safe and secure housing. These stories reflect the power of self-determination, community support, and a shared commitment to brighter futures.

A Home That Heals – Property Transfer

One of our tenants, living with serious medical challenges, reached out for support after finding that their current home no longer met their health needs.

Through open conversation and collaboration with their support worker, SEARMS was able to assist in finding a more suitable home. The move was handled with care and respect, ensuring minimal disruption and a smooth transition.

They're now settled, safe, and more comfortable—proving that the right environment can make all the difference in someone's wellbeing.



From Waiting to Welcoming – A Journey Out of Homelessness

After years of uncertainty and being without a stable place to call home, one client—who had been patiently active on the waitlist—was offered a tenancy that met both their needs and preferences.

With strength and perseverance, they remained connected to the process and ready to take up the opportunity when it came.

Now housed in their preferred location, this tenant is building a new chapter—safe, secure, and supported.

It's one step, but a powerful one, toward reducing homelessness in our communities.

Upcoming events

Feb 2025

13

Anniversary of National
Apology Day

March

20

National Close the Gap
Day

Apr

30

Tenant Yarn Up - BBay

May

National Reconciliation
Week

May 27 - Jun 3

26

National Sorry Day

27

Anniversary of the 1967
Referendum



SEARMS

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