



CEO's Intro

**Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022**

Dear NCCH Tenants,

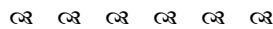
Welcome to the Winter issue of our Tenant Newsletter which will be my last newsletter, as you might recall that I am retiring at the end of August.



Thank you and farewell to our Operations General Manager, Tania Crosbie

Tania joined us in late 2020 in the middle of the Covid-19 issues and has had a major impact on improving the systemisation of the operational side of the business, over what has been a testing time for NCCH. I would like to thank Tania for her contribution to

NCCH and we wish her all the very best in her future endeavours.



If you'd kindly indulge me as I reflect on my 13 years with NCCH ... I won't take up too much space.

I joined NCCH on the 27th of July 2009. We had 15 staff and were managing about 550 properties with a turnover of just over \$5 million.

As I write this article, we have over 40 staff and are still recruiting. We currently manage 964 properties, have a budgeted turnover of over \$22 million and have added support services (from our Together Home Team and the Flood Recovery Community Villages management) to our list of services.

I would like to thank all of the staff I have had the pleasure of working with over the 13 years for their efforts and support in running what is, at most times, a complicated business, with special mention to my Executive Assistant **Julie Dukes**, who has managed to keep me reasonably organised for the last 13 years; **Tanya Harmon**, our CFO for managing our finances since 2012; **Helen Maher**, our longest serving employee, for being 'the rock' in the Grafton team as well as the newest members of the Executive Team, **Carly Bairstow** and **Frank Tamburro**, for the skills and experience they bring to the organisation.

I would like to thank our **Chair Robyn Hordern** and the **Board of Directors**, past and present, for the support they have given me during my time here, with special thanks to **Anders Halvorsen** and **Carolyn Parker**, who have been on the Board for my whole journey and were part of my interview panel.

I would like to thank all of the tenants who have been part of the Tenant Council over the past 13 years, with particular mention to **Dolores Close**, **Barbara Waters** and **Peter Harris** for their many years of service on behalf our tenants.

My successor, **Craig Brennan**, has been appointed by the Board and will commence on the 1st of August, so we will be able to have a good handover, and you will get to meet Craig in the next newsletter.

So, signing off for the last time ...

John McKenna



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- CEO's Intro 1
- Community Villages Update.....2-3
- Meet Your Tenancy Manager 4
- Contacting NCCH..... 4
- Tenant Rent Review..... 5
- Reporting Maintenance Issues 5
- Volunteering 5
- Keeping Warm this Winter6 & 7
- Community Noticeboard8-12

SPECIAL ITEMS OF INTEREST

- TAFE Flood Recovery Course info 8
- Energy bill concerns—EWON..... 8
- Regional food pantries9 & 10
- Saving money with rebates..... 11
- TAFE Flood Recovery Course Flyer..... 12
- Farewell to retiring CEO John McKenna in photos 13-20

How to stay safe from COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms

Practise good hygiene

Practise physical distancing

Stay home if you can

NCCH acknowledges the Bundjalung, Arakwal, Gumbaynggir and Yaegl peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land that comprises the Northern Rivers.





Community Villages Update

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Community Villages Program

Healing our community with a home and heart.

About The Community Villages Program

Housing is the most pressing challenge being faced by the thousands of people displaced by the unprecedented disaster of the flooding events in February and March 2022.

In response to this, the NSW Government is working closely with local councils and community stakeholders on medium-term housing solutions that keep communities together, supporting residents to continue living in their local area while they rebuild and recover.

As part of this commitment to support those impacted, \$350 million has been invested in temporary modular housing to give people displaced by floods a place to call home while they rebuild their lives.

All available Crown Lands in the region have been assessed and the selected sites have been determined as potentially suitable as temporary housing sites.

NCCH appointed to manage the first Community Village at Wollongbar

As an experienced and passionate community housing provider in the Northern Rivers, NCCH is proud to have been appointed to manage the first temporary housing village at Wollongbar and to be delivering services and support to those in our community who have been displaced by the floods.

NCCH has developed a corporate structure that supports the delivery of services to the Wollongbar Community Village which includes: village and tenancy management, allocations, support services, activities, ground works and maintenance, cleaning and security to ensure residents have a safe, secure and healthy living environment while they rebuild their lives.

Residents make Wollongbar home

We have close to 50 residents living in the village now, which will continue to increase, who are a mix of local workers, home owners, business owners, couples, parents and singles, all who are so grateful to have a safe and dry home.



Pictured:

The NCCH Team, alongside Resilience NSW and our very first resident on Day 1





Community Villages Update

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Community Villages Program continued

Healing our community with a home and heart.

Pictured below: Inside one of the temporary homes: Mindaroo Foundation Pod



Pictured: External view of one of the temporary homes: Mindaroo Foundation Pod

Wollongbar locals welcome new residents

We have heard some great stories already about how the locals in Wollongbar are welcoming new residents at the Village.

One of our residents met some lovely locals who were curious about the pods during an afternoon walk.

The next day the same locals came back with a housewarming gift.

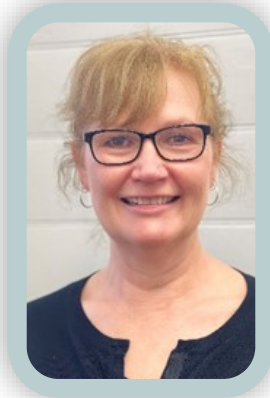
Pictured: Gifts from local Wollongbar residents for members of the Wollongbar Village.





Updates & Info

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Meet Your Tenancy Manager—Allison Leo

Allison is one of our Tenancy Managers based in the Richmond Office.

Where are most of the properties you look after?

As a Tenancy Manager in the Richmond portfolio, the properties and tenants I look after are in the Ballina, Lismore and Goonellabah, Casino and Nimbin areas. It's a large and diverse region – we live in such a beautiful part of NSW.

.....

How long have you worked for NCCH?

I joined NCCH just over a year ago now and love my job! I love the tenancy team and love the culture at NCCH. It's been a long time since I have worked in an organisation which feels like family. The caring workplace culture makes coming to work so enjoyable – and that old saying really is true - find something you love to do and then it doesn't really feel like work!

.....

What do you like most about your job?

Community services and community housing - it's all about helping people. As a tenancy manager we help people find a home; maintain and sustain their tenancies. At a time when our community is really struggling to get back on track after the devastating February floods, working and assisting people in difficult situations is a privilege and a pleasure.

.....

What do you love about the Northern Rivers?

What's not to love? It certainly seems like the whole of Australia loves it here too! The Northern Rivers is full of beautiful beaches, gorgeous forests, interesting hinterland trails, great cafes, restaurants, art galleries and eclectic shops, beautiful and quaint villages, and interesting and friendly people. Plus, we get the best music festivals with artists from all over the world; plus great theatre! And markets! The list goes on. As a long-term environmentalist, the natural beauty of our region is outstanding and I just love getting out amongst it.

.....

What do you like to do in your down time?

For me it's all about the natural world. I love camping and hiking and try to find time to get to different national parks every chance I get. For the past 9 months or so La Nina has been making that a very wet experience (lately it seems if I'm going camping - then it will rain for sure!). But short of a cyclone—or a flood—I never say no. There are just so many beautiful places to explore and discover.



Your local NCCH office

- Lismore: (02) 6627 5300
- Tweed: (07) 5523 5800
- Grafton: (02) 6642 9100
- General email: info@ncchc.org.au



<https://www.facebook.com/northcoastcommunityhousing/>



Updates & Info

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

Tenant Rent Review



Tenants are advised that it's nearly time for the bi-annual Tenant Rent Review process to get under way.

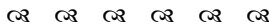
The process was originally meant to take place in April this year but it was cancelled due to the floods in the region.

Letters will be sent to tenants in September in preparation for this rent review to commence in October. You may be asked to provide information below:

- ◆ If we do not have your Centrelink consent you may need to provide your most recent Centrelink Income Statement
- ◆ If you are working you may be required to provide twelve (12) weeks of payslips
- ◆ If you are self-employed you will need to provide a current profit and loss statement.

Look out for the rent review letter in your mail in September.

Fixed Rent Review Team

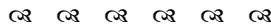


Reporting maintenance issues

Tenants are reminded to call our Property Repairs Hotline **anytime**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report any maintenance requests.

The call centre will decide if a contractor has to attend as an emergency response or not and then organise for the work to be attended to within the correct timeframe.

Phone—(02) 6627 5333



A few words of wisdom about Volunteering by former Tenant Council Chair, Dolores Close

Volunteers need a sense of purpose. They need to know how much time they'll need to be away from home – for both travel and on the job.

But it is the pride, honour and respect we come home from a volunteering job that makes us happy; the feeling of being a valuable part of a team that recognizes your contribution.

Confidence is empowerment that carries over into all aspects of your life. Inspiration, creativity, and the productivity comes from the expansion of knowledge gained by volunteering.

Cheers, Dolores

BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE





Winter Warming Recipes

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Tuck into these recipes to warm you up this winter!

Jamie Oliver's Pumpkin & Ginger Soup

Serves 4 | Cooks in 1 hour | Difficulty: Not too tricky

Dairy free | Vegetarian | Gluten-free | Vegan

Ingredients

- 1 kg pumpkin
- 2 shallots
- 75 g ginger
- a few sprigs of fresh herbs , such as chives, mint
- extra virgin olive oil
- 1 litre organic vegetable stock
- 125 ml coconut milk , plus extra to serve
- ½ tablespoon chilli powder
- 1 lime

Method

1. Deseed and roughly chop the pumpkin, peel and chop the shallots, then peel and finely grate the ginger. Pick and finely chop the herbs.
2. Place the pumpkin, shallots, ginger and some oil in a large saucepan and sauté until soft.
3. Add the stock, coconut milk and chilli powder. Season, then bring to the boil and simmer for 40 minutes
4. Blitz in a food processor then serve with the fresh herbs, lime juice and a splash of coconut milk.

Recipe courtesy of www.jamieoliver.com



Easy golden syrup sticky date pudding

Serves 6



Ingredients

- 200g pitted dates
- ½ tsp bicarb soda
- 1¾ cups (260g) self-raising flour
- 150g golden syrup
- 120g unsalted butter, chopped, melted, cooled
- 1 cup (250ml) buttermilk
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten

Method

1. Place dates and bicarb in a bowl with ½ cup (125ml) boiling water. Set aside for 20 minutes to soften, and then whiz to a puree.
2. Preheat oven to 180°C. Lightly grease a 2L-capacity baking dish. Sift flour into a large bowl. Add date mixture, golden syrup, cooled melted butter, buttermilk and eggs and whisk until combined. Spoon mixture into the prepared baking dish. Bake for 40-45 minutes until golden and slightly soft to touch.
3. Meanwhile, for the golden syrup caramel, place all ingredients in a small saucepan over medium heat and stir until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly, then pour caramel over the hot pudding and allow to soak in. Serve immediately.

Recipe courtesy of <https://www.delicious.com.au/recipes/>





Staying Warm this Winter

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Eight free things you can do now to stay warm this winter ..

See how many of these top tips your household can adopt!

1. Dress for the season

Put on some warmer clothes before you crank up the heating.

2. Shut the door on wasted energy

Heating the entire house can be costly. Shut the door to areas you aren't using (like bathrooms, or the bedrooms during the day). Only heat the rooms you're using and save on energy and cost.

3. Turn it off

Avoid heating your home unnecessarily. Turn off your heaters before going to bed and when you're leaving the house.



4. Let the sun shine in



Use the free heat from the sun. Open your curtains when the sun is shining and close them before it gets dark.

5. Don't use the shower to warm up

Heating your hot water can account for over 20% of your household energy use. Try to avoid the temptation of using the shower to get warm. Aim for a 4 minute shower.



6. Shop around and switch to save

Don't assume your current energy provider is offering you the best deal available. Look at government price comparison websites to check which provider has the best rate. You can also contact your current provider to ask them if there's a better deal they could put you on right away.

7. Include active transport choices

Swapping short car trips for walking or cycling can save money. It can also keep you fit during the winter months.



8. Turn off gadgets and appliances



Many appliances continue to draw stand-by power even when switched off. This can account for up to 3% of your total energy costs. Any appliance with a little light on it is using energy even if you're not using it. Turn off appliances not in use (such as TVs, computers and consoles) at the power point.



SAVE ENERGY!
Please switch off after use. Thank you!

Ref: The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water





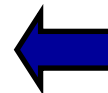
Community Noticeboard

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

Fee free flood recovery training
TAFE NSW Wollongbar Campus – Semester 2 courses
starting soon!

Fee Free Flood recovery training in various skill sets are available for individuals impacted by the recent flood events to assist with upskilling, finding a new pathway or study/career option whilst rebuilding their lives.

To register your interest, you can scan the barcode (on the flyer attached to this newsletter) and someone from TAFE NSW will be in contact to discuss your particular skill set/course interest. For more information, visit the staff at Wollongbar campus Student Central and our customer service representatives can assist you with your enquiries, or phone TAFE NSW Wollongbar campus on **13 16 01**. Refer to the flyer on page 12.



*Roz Potter, TAFE Services Coordinator
TAFE NSW Wollongbar campus*

Concerned about your energy bills?

The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) is here to help communities affected by the 2022 floods in northern NSW. Are you:

- struggling with high energy bills?
- worried there may be an error with your bill?
- experiencing financial difficulty due to reduced employment or more people in your home because of the floods?



Reach out to your provider first—in many cases they may be able to assist. If you can't resolve your issue with them, call **EWON** on Freecall **1800 246 545** or contact us online at www.ewon.com.au. We can check you are getting rebates that you might be entitled to or provide a referral for further financial assistance.

Learn more about the support EWON offers flood-affected customers here:

<https://www.ewon.com.au/page/media-center/news/updates/support-for-flood-affected-customers>





**Community Noticeboard
continued**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

Check out your local Food Pantry!

Food pantries are a great source of healthy and nutritional grocery items that are available to the community either for free or at a low cost.



Vibe Care Pantry

Free and Low Cost Groceries

Location: Vibe Church, 3 Beryl Street, Tweed Heads

Opening Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri 9am –11am (NSW Time)



Liberation Larder Inc

Hot food, fresh produce & emergency frozen meals

Location: Byron Community Centre Kitchen, 69 Jonson St, Byron Bay

Opening Hours: Mon & Thurs 7am –2pm. **Ph:** 0435 879 778



Murwillumbah Community pantry

Free and low cost food and grocery items to all community members living in the 2484 area and surrounding villages. \$5.50 yearly membership fee

Location: Nullum Street, Knox Park

Opening Hours: Wednesday & Thursday 10am –3pm



The Good Pantry

Low cost groceries

Location: 51 Wyrallah Rd East Lismore

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 10am –3pm

Koori Kitchen

Koori Kitchen on Widjabul Wia-bal country, named by the Koori Mail mob, is a group of volunteer chefs dedicated to providing nourishing hot meals to heal a community in the way we know how..... good food.

Location: 40 Molesworth Street, Lismore

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 12–5pm





**Community Noticeboard
continued**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

Check out your local Food Pantry! Continued



Casino Community Kitchen

Providing free, nutritious meals to anyone in need. Some grocery items and breads are also often available to take home for free.

Location: 85 North Street, Casino

Opening Hours: Fridays 4–5:30pm



The Fair Share Kitchen

Fresh fruit, vegetables and bread and frozen meals.

Location: Laneway Community Space, 161 Summerland Way, Kyogle

Opening Hours: Thursdays 10am - 2pm

Maclean Food Hub

Fresh fruit and vegetables and food parcels.

Location: Maclean SDA Church, 39 Church Street, Maclean

Anyone in urgent need can contact

Opening hours: Fridays 9am-12pm

Ph: 0444 541 226 or 0414 909 63



Maclean Food Hub

@MacleanFoodHub · Charity organisation



The Cathedral Pantry

Basic household items, non-perishable food items and food packages.

Location: Grafton Cathedral, 8 Duke Street, Grafton

Opening Hours: Mon, Tue & Thurs 10am –2pm

A fee of \$5.00 applies for a standard shopping bag quantity of mixed items

The Community Pantry

Low cost grocery market.

Location: Oaks Arcade, Shop 5/6 Oak Street, Evans Head

Opening Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 11am –2pm

Current Community Pantry membership must be held to have access into Community Pantry. Membership costs \$3.00 per person for 12 months from date of payment.





Community Noticeboard *continued*

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

FAMILY ENERGY REBATES

The Family Energy Rebate helps NSW family households with dependent children cover the costs of their energy bills. If you receive your bill directly from your energy retailer and you meet the eligibility requirements, you can apply for the Family Energy Rebate online.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the NSW Family Energy Rebate in a given financial year, you must:

- be a NSW resident
- be the account holder of an energy retailer
- have been the recipient of the Family Tax Benefit (FTB) for the previous financial year and have had your entitlement to the FTB payments finalised by Centrelink
- ensure the person in your household who's registered as the FTB recipient lodges the application. The recipient is the person who receives correspondence on FTB from Services Australia.

WHAT YOU NEED

Before you apply, you'll need to have:

- lodged your tax return for the last financial year with the Australian Taxation Office. If you or your partner didn't need to lodge a tax return, notify Services Australia of this. They cannot finalise your FTB until they have this information.
- received a confirmation letter from Services Australia that your FTB has been finalised for the last financial year.

When you've done both these things, you're ready to apply for a rebate. You'll also need:

- your Services Australia Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- your Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) number (if applicable)
- your personal and contact details
- a copy of your recent energy bill.

HOW TO APPLY

1. Check the [eligibility requirements](#).
2. Select the 'Apply online' button.
3. Complete and submit your application.

If you do not wish to apply online:

1. Download and complete the [Family Energy Rebate Application Form – PDF](#).
2. Attach a copy of your most recent energy bill.
3. Lodge your application by post or email to the details on the form.

For more information, please visit <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-family-energy-rebate-retail-customers>



Applications for the 2022-2023 Family Energy Rebate opened on 1 August 2022.

Cost of Living Rebates

Helping you find NSW Government rebates & savings that are relevant to you.

Visit the Cost of Living website to find a list of over 70 NSW Government rebates and savings, including gas rebates, electricity rebates, free Power of Attorney and Will preparation appointments through the Trustee & Guardian, and health rebates just to name a few!

Go to <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/cost-living#get-started> then click the link **“Find savings now”** and you may find rebates that you might be eligible for.





Fee-free* flood recovery training with TAFE NSW

Register your interest

To support the people of the Northern Rivers and those who have been impacted by the recent flood events, TAFE NSW is offering fee-free* short courses to help people upskill or pathway into further study or career opportunities.

Courses cover a range of areas including:

- Introduction to Care Work
- Introduction to Pharmacy Assistant
- Introduction to Mental Health
- Forklift Operations
- Hospitality (RSA, RCG, Food Handling)
- Barista Skills
- Small Business Cyber Security
- Personal Online Protection
- Chainsaw Operations
- Basic Business administration

Register your interest in 3 easy steps:



Scan QR code



Select your courses
and provide your
contact information



TAFE NSW will contact
you with the next
available class

*Selected short courses only. Eligibility criteria applies

takensw.edu.au
131 601

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TAFE
NSW





Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



John at the Lismore Homeless Sleep Out 2009



International Housing Partnership
Leadership Exchange—London
2014



Awarding Helen Maher with her 10 year work
anniversary certificate 2014



Collecting MBA Award NCCH & KoHo at the 2014
Regional Building Awards



Accepting Excellence Award for
Community & Social Services category 2014



2013 Australasian Housing
Institute Awards



10 year work anniversary award 2019



NSW Community Housing Award 2013



Pictured with then Minister for Housing
Brad Hazzard at an industry briefing 2016



RAP Working Group with
Gilbert Laurie & his artwork 2019



Playing Santa at the 2013 Tweed
Tenant Christmas Lunch



Dressed as Ironman
for CEO Superhero
Fundraising Day
July 2014





**Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



With Chair Robyn Hordern & Ben Franklin
MLC 2020



With Peter Ellem at Grafton office
official opening 2010



Ground breaking ceremony at Bimble Ave,
South Grafton 2021 with Director Phil Belletty
& Chris Gulaptis, State Member for Clarence



Pictured with fellow CHIA NSW Board of Directors at the 2018
Affordable Housing Conference



Celebrating 30 years of NCCH with Directors Anders Halvorsen,
Allan Johnson, Carolyn Parker, Chair John Stone and Robyn
Hordern 2014



Pictured with Janelle Saffin, State Member for
Lismore and other delegates at the Housing
Affordability Supply & Homelessness Forum
(Summit) 2019



Pictured with local artists Gilbert Laurie & Luke Close and NCCH Directors & Exec Team
members during 2019 National Reconciliation Week





**Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Pictured with Janelle Saffin, State Member for Lismore and other delegates at the Housing & Homelessness Forum 2021



Giving his speech at the 2016 Tweed Christmas in July function



Pictured with Director Jan Mangleson and Tenant Councillor Barbara Waters at the Tweed Christmas in July function 2015



John as a guest panellist at the 2017 Housing Summit



With staff at the 2010 AGM



With Chairman John Stone during the 2010 AGM proceedings



Addressing the 2010 AGM



← Presenting staff member Terri with her Certificate IV in Community Housing 2014

2017 cheque presentation to Paul Murphy from the Winsome Hotel, Lismore →





**Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Launch of the NCCH
Reconciliation Action Plan 2019



Official opening of Dry Dock Road Tweed Heads
complex June 2014



Presentation at the 2015 PHA Exchange



Presentations to successful NCCH Scholarship Recipients



Minister Brad Hazzard, Chair John Stone, John and
Thomas George MP at the official opening of the
Lismore office 2015





Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Attending the Housing & Homelessness Forum 2021



Signing MOU with Georgina Cohen from
Rekindling the Spirit 2021



PowerHousing Conference 2019



John, Chair Robyn Hordern & Tamara Smith, MP 2020



With his EA Julie Duker

The launch of NCCH's 30th anniversary
publication of tenant stories called
"From There to Here" November 2014



With author Barbara Waters



In the media





Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (*continued*)

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Accepting Lismore Business
Excellence Award 2014



Mullumbimby Affordable Housing Rally 2016



John & with guest presenter at staff
professional development day 2018



Official opening of NCCH's Rainforest Creek development 2016



Office of Environment & Heritage—Enova—NCCH
Solar Project launch 2018



Social Housing Community Improvement Fund (SHCIF) grant projects announcements 2017

At left—Elders Park Goonellabah SHCIF project announcement with Thomas George, MP
At right—Grafton Basketball Stadium SHCIF project announcement with Chris Gulaptis, MP



Robyn Hordern & John with artist, Luke
with backboards for SHCIF
basketball court project



← John with the Goonellabah community
mural project stakeholders 2019

Presenting at the
Byron Shire Affordable
Housing Summit 2017 →





**Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022



Ground breaking ceremony—Casino 2021



Ground breaking ceremony—
Grafton 2021



Ground breaking ceremony—Mullumbimby 2021



At left—John with Ben Franklin, MLC



At right—John with official party

Official opening of Laurel Lodge Lismore complex 2021





**Photo montage—Farewell to CEO
John McKenna (continued)**

Tenant Newsletter
Issue 56 | Winter 2022

2022 Floods



John meets with Minister Natasha Maclaren-Jones (NSW Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services)
April 2022



Heart banner on our Lismore office building



John with staff member Paula at the 'corner store' set up for residents at our Laurel Lodge complex after the flood



John with Janelle Saffin - Member for Lismore and Minister for Emergency Management, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Murray Watt - Senator for Queensland, who visited our Community Village in Wollongbar, June 2022



Site visits after the floods with



At the announcement that NCCH was appointed by the NSW Government to manage the first temporary housing site at Wollongbar, May 2022 →



On behalf of everyone at NCCH, I would like to wish John all the very best for the future, in his life after work.
We thank him for the leadership and friendship he has provided over the past 13 years and wish him well.
Julie Dukes—John's Executive Assistant since 2009!

