



From our CEO—Craig Brennan



Dear Residents,

As we approach the end of another year, I want to take a moment to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you. The holiday season is upon us, and it brings with it a special opportunity to reflect on the warmth and togetherness that defines our community.

This year has presented its unique set of challenges, and your resilience and sense of community have truly shone through. As the CEO of Northern Rivers Housing, I am inspired by the spirit of cooperation and support that permeates our community.

This festive season is a time for joy, unity, and reflection. It's a time to celebrate the bonds we share, the friendships we've forged, and the collective spirit that makes our community thrive. Whether you're spending the holidays with family, friends, or enjoying some quiet moments of reflection, I hope this season brings you peace, happiness, and a renewed sense of hope for the future.

Whilst we recognise that the holiday season can be a time of joy - it can also be for some a time of difficulty - whether financially or emotionally. It's important to recognise that everyone's journey is unique. If you or someone you know is finding this season particularly tough, please remember that support is available.

— For emotional well-being, **Beyond Blue** offers free telephone and online counselling services 24/7. You can reach them on **1300 224 636** or visit their website at beyondblue.org.au.

— **Lifeline** also provides Australians with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services at **13 11 14** or lifeline.org.au, and you can text them at **0477 131 114**.

— **Kids Helpline**, a free and confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25, can be reached on **1800 551 800** or kidshelp-line.com.au.

Remember, you are not alone, and reaching out for support is a sign of strength. Our community is here for one another, and together, we can navigate through any challenges that come our way.



Wishing you a season of comfort, compassion, and community support.

Regards,
Craig

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**Christmas/New Year
NRH Office Closure Details**

**All offices will be closed
from 4pm on Friday, 22nd
December 2023.**

**We will re-open at 9am
on Tuesday, 2nd
January 2024.**

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





Community Villages Update

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What's been happening in our Community Villages?

Spring has been in the air and the warmer weather has been lifting spirits and bringing people together, connecting with each other and nature.

The Community Villages have had a busy program of activities upskilling residents, while getting their hands dirty with the creation of community gardens. We have linked in with a permaculture wiz who has been running workshops on developing gardens, growing micro greens and worm farms.

The creative juices have also been flowing with painting, weaving and healthy eating events. The Jobs and Skills expo's have been rolled out across each of the villages and have also been a success linking residents in with local employment and training services. Each week food has been shared, stories have been told and relationship formed, creating a feeling of community in the villages.

The Community Engagement team, together with residents are now busily planning for Christmas and School Holidays.

Robyn Masters and the Community Engagement Team





Updates & Info *continued*

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Assets Team Update



Annual Smoke Alarm Service

The annual Smoke Alarm Service is now underway and will be completed in stages – we appreciate all tenants allowing access to their property for our contractors.

Our contractors will contact you to organise a suitable time to come to your house and service your alarm, so you will have to be home to let them in on the day.

Testing of smoke alarms is mandatory and they are an essential item to alert you to any fire and potentially save your life, and those of your loved ones and pets.

Do you need to report a maintenance issue?

Give the Property Repairs Hotline a call!



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





The staff in the call centre will then 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.





PROPERTY REPAIRS HOTLINE

 **02 6627 5333** 

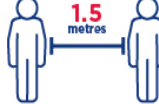
How to stay safe from COVID-19 and the flu over the Christmas & New Year season.

 **Fever**
 **Cough**
 **Sore throat**
 **Shortness of breath**


COVID-19 symptoms



Practise good hygiene

 **1.5 metres**

Practise physical distancing



Stay home if you can



Keep up to date

Would you like to receive your next copy of our newsletter via email?

Let us know by emailing info@nrh.org.au





Updates & Info *continued*

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NRH Scholarships Program

We have included photos below of some of the successful and well-deserving recipients from Round 1 receiving their commemorative certificates in our Lismore and Ballina offices.



Congratulations to **Danecca** who received her commemorative certificate—in the Primary (Sport) category—from our **CFO, Martin Laverty**. Danecca and her mother are greatly appreciative of being awarded one of our Scholarships and look forward to using the funds towards swimming lessons and sporting registrations.



Congratulations to **Axel** who was presented with his Scholarship certificate in the Education (TAFE) category by NRH CEO, **Craig Brennan**. Axel and his mother told us that the funds would be used towards purchasing a new laptop for Axel, as well as other costs associated with his studies.

We also congratulate our other successful Scholarship applicants in 2023: **Georgina, Indigo, Nikkita, Wyatt, Kealy, Malakai, Kristy and Freja**. Funds will be used towards computers, equipment & other course-related costs for their Degree/Diploma courses in psychology, graphic design and nursing, as well as music tuition, obtaining licences, and other creative pursuits. We wish all of our successful recipients all the very best with their studies and hope that the Scholarship funds help them in their journeys!



The NRH Scholarships Program is designed to support and encourage our tenants to pursue higher education and training opportunities. We strongly encourage NRH tenants to apply for a scholarship if they meet the criteria.

It's important to note that training providers must be a Registered Training Organisation in Australia for applications to be considered.

For more information on the Program, please visit our website <https://www.nrh.org.au/news/nrh-scholarships-program/>.



Updates & Info continued

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The festive season isn't always festive for some

'Tis the season to be asking "R U OK?"

Christmas and the holiday season can be a difficult time for some people who struggle to navigate the celebrations and festivities going on around them. They might be dealing with the strain of financial pressure, work demands, recent events, grief, or a challenging family situation.

If there's someone who's finding this time of year tough, you can make a difference by checking in and having meaningful conversations with the people in your world who:

- Are grieving
- Have had a tough year
- Don't feel safe in their home
- Are struggling financially
- Have been affected by natural disasters
- Are working over the holidays
- Find the holiday season stressful
- Are unwell
- Have challenging family relationships
- Are spending the holidays alone
- Feel excluded at this time
- Are feeling overwhelmed by world events

'Tis the *season* to be *asking*

RUOK?

Get tips at ruok.org.au

The R U OK? Website has some great resources available. You can check them out at:
<https://www.ruok.org.au/supporting-someone-at-christmas>



Do you need to get in touch with NRH?

Lismore: (02) 6627 5300 **Tweed:** (07) 5523 5800
Grafton: (02) 6642 9100 **Property Repairs Hotline:** (02) 6627 5333
General email: info@nrh.org.au **Website:** <https://www.nrh.org.au/>

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

Instagram—@nrhousing



Update your contact info!

Do you need to update your contact details?

You can easily do this by:

- calling one of our offices listed above
- emailing us at info@nrh.org.au
- visiting our website (www.nrh.org.au) and clicking on the "Contact Us" page and completing our online form.



Community Noticeboard

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FREE

- BIRTH CERTIFICATE APPLICATION
- DRIVER'S LICENSE & DRIVING TRAINING
- JOB PLACEMENT SUPPORT

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO JOIN MOMENTUM?

- Are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Are living in North-East NSW
- Aged between 16-55 years of ages
- Do not have a birth certificate
- Do not have a driver's license
- Are currently not employment

The **Momentum Program** is designed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in North-East NSW to attain birth registration and certification driver qualifications (Learner Licence and Provisional Driver Licence), and sustained employment.

The **Pathfinders* National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program (PNABC)** is making it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for and receive their birth certificate. The Program is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program that conducts sign-up days in towns and areas where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who don't have birth certificates. Without a birth certificate, First Nations people are excluded from many of life's important moments – driving a car, applying

for a job, enrolling in school and sport, opening a bank account, voting, and accessing government services. The PNABC can help you with a birth certificate application, getting a driver's licence and driving training, and job placement support.

How to apply—Applicants for the Momentum Program will need to first attend a roadshow event. Roadshows will be held every 6-8 weeks and will be travelling to these regions soon: Richmond–Tweed and Coffs Harbour–Grafton. For more information, email momentum@pathfinders.ngo or call Mark on 0438 096 485.

* Pathfinders Ltd is a not-for-profit company and registered Charity with a large footprint across regional New England North West and Mid North Coast regions of NSW. Pathfinders operates a broad suite of programs, projects and services aiming to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for children, youth and families within the communities we service. The Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program is one of the programs offered by them.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE.

STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Hands should be used to help rather than harm.
Together, let's take a stand against domestic violence.



1800RESPECT
1800 737 732

1800RESPECT
NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE
1800 737 732

We are here.
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you are impacted by domestic or family violence, call 1800 737 732 or web chat at 1800respect.org.au

If you are in danger, call 000.



Give batteries a safe goodbye – drop them in a collection bin

Many people don't realise that throwing flat (used) batteries—AAs, AAAs, Cs, Ds and 9Vs—into their regular bins can spark a fire.

Used batteries have started fires in garbage trucks and waste facilities.

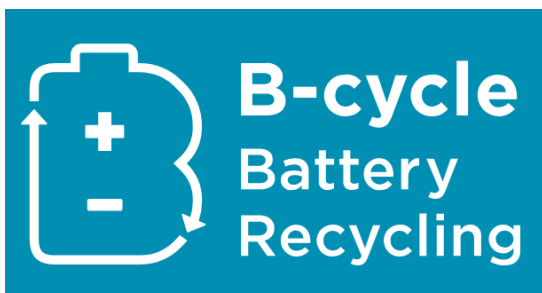
The safest way to get rid of old batteries is through battery recycling – and it's now easier than ever.

Visit <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/household-recycling-overview/safe-battery-recycling> for more information.

Drop them off when you shop—Instead of your home bin, take them to your nearest **B-cycle battery recycling bin**. B-cycle is Australia's official battery recycling Scheme.

You can find them at Aldi, Bunnings, IGA, Officeworks, Woolworths and at community recycling centres too.

Visit the [B-cycle Battery Recycling website](https://bcycle.com.au) to find a B-cycle drop-off point in your area and other useful information via this link ... <https://bcycle.com.au>



STAYSMARTONLINE

With Christmas practically on our doorstep, you may be purchasing Christmas gifts online for your family and/or friends.

It's a timely reminder that there are resources available on the Australian Government's Australian Signals Directorate's Australian Cyber Security Centre's website where you can find hints and tips on how to be safe online ...

<https://www.cyber.gov.au/>



Protect yourself

Advice and information about how to protect yourself online.



Australian Government
Australian Signals Directorate

ASD AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS DIRECTORATE
ACSC Australian Cyber Security Centre





Easy Stay Fresh Scones

6 ingredients | 0:15 Prep | 0:40 Cook | Makes 10

These stay fresh scones are the ultimate old fashioned scone recipe that never fails and lasts for days. Fresh and fluffy with every bite, it's hard to stop at just one.

Equipment you'll need:

- ◆ 1 bowl
- ◆ 1 baking tray

Ingredients:

- ◆ 500g self-raising flour
- ◆ 1 egg
- ◆ 1½ cups milk
- ◆ 1 tbs icing sugar
- ◆ 2 tsp baking powder
- ◆ 60g butter, melted

Method:

1. Sift dry ingredients into a bowl.
2. Add beaten egg, milk and butter.
3. Quickly combine all ingredients into a dough.
4. Stand dough on a floured board for 20 minutes.
5. Gently roll out to required thickness (about 2cm).
6. Cut out circles using the rim of a glass dipped in flour.
7. Stand scones close together on a lightly floured baking tray for a further 15 minutes.
8. Bake at 210°C for 10 minutes.

Notes: Dough will be fairly sticky. When working the dough, try not to add too much extra flour.

This recipe is courtesy of the "Australia's Best Recipes" website





Let's Get Cooking



Mini gingerbread house biscuits

6 ingredients | 0:30 Prep | 0:10 Cook | Makes 24

Instead of attempting an ultra-challenging gingerbread house, try these much simpler mini gingerbread house cookies instead.

Ingredients:

- ◆ 150g butter, softened
- ◆ 1/2 cup brown sugar
- ◆ 1/2 cup golden syrup
- ◆ 1 egg
- ◆ 1 tsp vanilla essence
- ◆ 3 cups plain flour
- ◆ 1 tsp bicarb soda
- ◆ 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ◆ 1 tbsp ground ginger

For Royal Icing

- ◆ 1 egg white
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups icing sugar, sifted
- ◆ squeeze of lemon juice

This recipe is courtesy of the "Australia's Best Recipes" website

Method:

1. Using a stand mixer or hand-held beaters, beat butter, sugar and golden syrup until pale and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla and beat to combine. Add dry ingredients and beat until mixture comes together as a dough. Shape dough into a flat disc and wrap in cling film. Refrigerate for 1 hour to chill.
2. Create some paper templates for your gingerbread house shapes.
3. Preheat oven to 180°C. Remove dough from fridge and roll out on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of about 5-8mm. Cut house shapes from the dough using paper templates. Use small cookie cutters to cut out windows and doors. Place on lined baking trays and bake for 10 minutes. Repeat with remaining dough.
4. To make the icing, combine egg white with icing sugar and a squeeze of lemon juice. Add more or less icing sugar to get the desired consistency - you want it to be fluid but hold its shape once piped. Spoon into a piping bag with a small circular tip. Once the cookies have cooled, pipe patterns using royal icing.



Notes: Practice makes perfect when it comes to piping. Don't worry if you don't get it right the first time, the cookies will still be delicious!





Community Noticeboard
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Saving Money



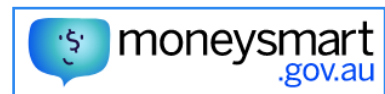
With the cost of living going through the roof, everyone is looking for even more ways to save money.

The Australian Government’s website—[MoneySmart.gov.au](https://moneysmart.gov.au)—has some great information available on how to make the most of the money that you have.



The website covers a lot of different topics—Find Out How To Save Money Every Day And Make A Savings Plan To Stay On Track; Achieve Your Savings Goal With The Help Of Monthly Budgeting System; Managing Money; Seeking Help; Find Money Help; Financial Decisions.

Visit their website at <https://moneysmart.gov.au/> for more hints and money saving tips.



Cost of Living Rebates



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

Visit the [Cost of Living Hub](https://www.nsw.gov.au/money-and-taxes/cost-of-living-hub) (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/money-and-taxes/cost-of-living-hub>) 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! If you receive assistance from the Department of Human Services (such as concession cards) you may be entitled to receive other rebates. *Please note, not all rebates & savings are directly applicable for clients who hold Department of Human Services’ benefit cards.*

Visit <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/cost-living#get-started> then click the link “Find savings now” and see if you are eligible for any rebates.



You may be eligible for a government **National Energy Bill Relief package** to receive a one-off payment of \$500 for households or \$650 for small businesses towards electricity bills. Eligible low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, families and carers will receive a one-off \$500 bill relief payment towards their electricity bills. New energy payments available financial year 2023-24 and most households will receive their payment in quarterly instalments of \$125 from 31 July 2023. Visit <https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/households/rebates-grants-and-schemes/national-energy-bill-relief> for info on how to apply.



CHOICE is another great place to find some money saving tips, such as How to save money at the supermarket; How to save on power and gas; How to save in the car; How to save on insurance; and Things to avoid if you want to save money. They also provide information on where to get help if you find yourself being overwhelmed by bills. Visit: <https://www.choice.com.au/money/budget/cost-of-living/articles/our-top-money-saving-tips>



Family Support Network have moved to new premises in Lismore ... upstairs at 1/73 Magellan Street, and downstairs in Shops 5 & 6—a fully accessible space—in the arcade at 73 Magellan Street (both opposite the Mecca). Access is also available through in-home visits. Appointments are recommended. Open weekdays between 9am and 4pm.
Phone (02) 6621 2489

They also have an office in Nimbin at the Nimbin Family Centre, Lilly Pilly House, 81 Cullen Street, Nimbin (operated by appointment only).

Services are offered to parents, carers, and their children—designed to assist families throughout their journey of parenting from the prenatal stage through to raising teens.





Community Noticeboard
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Local Food Pantries providing assistance in these tough economic times

Please note that some services may not operate over the Christmas/New Year period

Five Loaves (Ballina)

Location: Cnr Kerr & Tamar Streets, outside the ADRA store | **Open:** Thursdays 5—6pm

Liberation Larder Inc (Byron)

Location: Fletcher Street, behind the Byron Community Centre Kitchen,
69 Jonson St, Byron Bay | **Open:** Mon & Thurs 7am—2pm | **Ph:** 0435 879 778

Casino Community Kitchen

Location: 67 Richmond St, Casino | **Ph:** 0400 155 392 | **Closed until late January.**

Usual service days are Fridays 4:30—5:45pm. Freshly cooked 3 course meals (dine in or takeaway).

Bread, fresh produce & limited groceries are also offered. Anyone facing serious food stress/crisis over the Christmas/New Year period can make contact via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CasinoCommunityKitchen> or text 0400 155 392.

The Community Pantry [Mid-Richmond Neighbourhood Centre] (Evans Head)

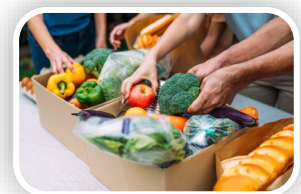
Location: Shop 5, Oaks Arcade, 6 Oaks Street, Evans Head | Closed from 21 December; re-opens 8 January 2024

The Community Pantry

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

Opening Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 11am—2pm | **Closed** public holidays

Enquiries: www.livingwellcommunicare.org.au or Facebook: [@livingwellcommunicare](https://www.facebook.com/livingwellcommunicare)



Goonellabah Community Hub Service

Location: 10 Centenary Drive, Goonellabah. Open: 10am-1pm, every second Tuesday. Will be closed from 23 Dec and reopening on 8 January | **Ph:** 6621 7397

Email hub@nrcg.org.au for an appointment.

Hope Food Pantry (Goonellabah)

Location: 30 Cambridge Drive, Goonellabah | **Open:** Thursdays 9:30—11:30am
(Closing on 21 Dec at 11:30am
and will reopen on 16 January)

Anglicare Food Pantry (Grafton)

Location: 135b Fitzroy Street, Grafton | **Open:** Mon—Thurs 10am—2pm

Closed on public holidays. **Op Shop** will close on Thurs 21 Dec and reopen on Mon 15 January | **Ph:** 0422 981 363





Community Noticeboard
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Local Food Pantries *continued* ...

Please note that some services may not operate over the Christmas/New Year period

Tweed Coast Community Food Pantry (Kingscliff)

Location: Kingscliff Uniting Church, 24 Kingscliff St, Kingscliff (down the lane)

Open: Tues—Fri 9am—11am

Kyogle Lions Community Food Pantry

Location: 33-35 Bloore Street, Kyogle | **Open:** Thursdays 8:30am—3pm

Last trading day for 2023 is Tues 19 Dec | Reopens Thurs 11 January 2024

Five Loaves Mobile Soup Kitchen (Lismore)

Location: Lismore Transit Centre | **Open:** Mondays | **Ph:** 0447 575 686

The Good Pantry (Lismore)

Location: 51 Wyrallah Road, East Lismore

Closing at 1pm on Fri 22 Dec and reopening at 10am Mon 8 January.

Regular opening hours during summer are Mon—Fri from 10am—2pm

Maclean Food Hub

Location: Maclean Seventh-day Adventist Church, 39 Church St, Maclean | **Ph:** 0414 909 630

Open: Fridays 9am-12pm (Last open day Fri 22 December | Opening Fri 19 Jan 2024)

Murwillumbah Food Hub/Pantry

Location: Brisbane Street, Murwillumbah (opposite Sunnyside mall on Knox Park

Open: Wed & Thurs 10:00 am to 3:00pm (closed from 22 Dec and will reopen on 8 January)

Cash only and BYO carry bags | **Ph:** (02) 6672 3003

Pottsville Beach Community Hall

The Hall will be opening its doors to all this Christmas Day for a free Christmas Lunch (12:30-3:30pm)

Bookings are essential. Book online [here](#) or visit their Facebook page for the link

Or phone Katie Tucker on 0421 188 771

Vibe Care Pantry (Tweed Heads)

Location: Vibe Church, 3 Beryl Street, Tweed Heads | **Open:** Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri

9am—11am | **Ph:** (07) 5536 7575

Food Pantries





The Directors, Executive Management Group and the Staff at Northern Rivers Housing would like to wish all of our Tenants and Newsletter Subscribers a safe and happy festive season and we wish you all the very best for the New Year.

A reminder that our offices will be closed from 4pm on Friday, 22nd December 2023 and will re-open at 9am on Tuesday, 2nd January 2024.

