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10,000 stars

On White Ribbon Night, we reached our target of 10,000 stars in the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander colours.

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Title Transfer:

ABORIGINAL HOUSING NOW OWNS 1,071 HOUSES

Another significant milestone was realised for Aboriginal Housing Victoria on 29 June 2017, with the signing of the second round of title transfers of properties from the Victorian Government to AHV.

In July 2016, the Director of Housing signed off on the transfer of 511 metropolitan properties to AHV and in June 2017, a further 474 properties were signed over to AHV in the Loddon and Hume regions.

AHV Chair, Tim Chatfield said "Thank you to the Victorian Government for its continuing confidence in AHV to best meet the housing needs of the Aboriginal community through this second transfer. It is a great honour and a privilege.



L:R - Darren Smith, Tim Chatfield, Nick Foa, Ken de Vries, Bernard Gastin, Rob Leslie and Abigail Burchill.

When the final transfer takes place next year, AHV will own 1,522 properties, making AHV the largest non-Government owner of Aboriginal housing in the country."

The successful signing of the second transfer of properties enables AHV to build on our founding Elders vision that Aboriginal Victorians will prosper through securing appropriate and affordable housing that will enable a pathway to better lives and stronger communities.

With the continued commitment and backing from the Victorian Government, we will be empowered to purposely lead AHV to ensure that we are best placed to align our "community owned" assets to Victorian Aboriginal housing and community needs.



Director of Housing, Nick Foa and AHV Chair, Tim Chatfield, stamping the title of transfers.

DO YOU HAVE A MAINTENANCE REQUEST?

Please contact our friendly Client Services Team on (03) 9403 2100 or email: clientservices@ahvic.org.au

NAIDOC Family Day at the Farm

We had a deadly turn out at our annual NAIDOC Family Day at the Collingwood Children's Farm, with over 1,600 people coming along to enjoy a fun filled free day out for the whole family. The NAIDOC 2017 theme "Our Language Matters" was embedded into cultural craft and kids activities on the day.



Know your rights as tenants:

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AROUND THE STATE



AHV took a fresh approach to community meetings by inviting the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS), Victorian Legal Aid (VLA), Tenants Union Victoria (TUV) and Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to combine forces with AHV to host some workshops to speak with tenants and help them to know their rights and understand their responsibilities.

The key messages from these community meetings were to:

- ⦿ Increase awareness about Title Transfer;
- ⦿ Increase the total number of tenants maintaining their tenancies;
- ⦿ Broaden tenants' awareness of their legal rights and responsibilities;
- ⦿ Increase tenants' understanding of available support services; and
- ⦿ Deliver a unified approach to supporting Aboriginal tenants to sustain their tenancies.

New CEO, Darren Smith wanted to get around the state to meet with tenants and to meet with key stakeholder Aboriginal community controlled organisations and community members to talk about how title transfer and property ownership for AHV brings "community owned" housing to life for future generations of Aboriginal Victorians.

"AHV is not just a housing provider, we are the custodian of housing assets for the Aboriginal community." Darren told community members. This means that your home is more than just a house!

AHV are working to meet the needs and aspirations of the Aboriginal Community. We are doing this by:

- ⦿ Growing our housing portfolio and improving the quality of housing;
- ⦿ Improving our housing services;
- ⦿ Improving outcomes for tenants;
- ⦿ Building more housing for the future; and
- ⦿ Closing the Gap.

Taking responsibility for "community ownership" of Aboriginal Housing is a shared responsibility! We can't do this alone and we need your help to ensure there is enough housing for Aboriginal Victorians in the future.

At time of print, AHV has hosted meetings in Bairnsdale, Morwell, Ballarat, Geelong, Werribee, Warrnambool, Heywood and Echuca.



Community meeting at the Koori Hub in Ballarat

Further meetings will be held on:

DATE	LOCATION
4 August	Dandenong
16 August	Healesville
17 August	Thornbury
8 September	Mildura
21 September	Shepparton

More info on our website:

www.ahvic.org.au/about/latest-event

and on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/Aboriginal-Housing-Victoria

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY - WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

AHV relies on tenants doing the right thing – looking after their properties and paying their rent on time - in order for us to continue to grow our housing to meet future housing needs. We know that lots of tenants already do the right thing.

AHV is self funded from tenants' rent and we use that money for covering the costs for repairs, maintenance, renovations and building new houses!

At the moment, some of our most significant costs are associated with property repairs and maintenance costs and rental arrears:

Right now

33% of tenants or 474 tenants are behind in their rent

\$514,000 total current rental arrears

Cost of repairing tenant damage to properties

\$700,000 approximate annual cost to repair tenant damage

Repairs and maintenance budget in 2016-17 (excluding tenant damage) is \$3,000,000.

“*AHV relies on tenants doing the right thing – looking after their properties and paying rent on time*”

WHO IS YOUR HOUSING OFFICER?

Glenn Pellegrin – Senior Housing Officer,
Eastern region: 0438 976 522

Rena Vlahopanagos – Housing Officer,
Northern and Western region: 0417 049 514

Denis Sado – Housing Officer,
Southern region: 0438 976 522

Ben Atkinson – Senior Housing Officer,
Grampians region (Ballarat): 0430 902 257

John Martin – Senior Housing Officer,
Loddon Hume region: 0427 100 873

Robyn Gatgens – Housing Officer,
Loddon Mallee region (Mildura, Swan Hill):
0437 730 595

Kevin Atkinson – Housing Officer,
Hume region (Shepparton): 0425 892 292

Danny Chatfield – Housing Officer,
Barwon/South West (Warrnambool, Geelong):
0425 777 694

Steve Esler – Housing Officer, Gippsland,
Mornington Peninsula: 0430 707 639

Debbie Leon – Housing Officer,
Gippsland (Sale, Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance):
0418 547 775

Kim Mackay – Housing Officer,
Bendigo, Echuca: 0430 082 907

**Please contact our head office, if you are not
sure who your Housing Officer is: 9403 2100**

Your Housing Officer should visit you every six months. These visits are important in ensuring your house is meeting your needs, repairs can be identified before becoming urgent, as well as to check-in with you that you are doing okay.

If you haven't had a visit in more than six months, please call our head office on 9403 2100.

Giving tenants a voice

AHV established a Melbourne Tenant Reference Group in October 2016, which consists of 8 tenants on the group who come together and meet regularly to talk about what title transfer means for tenants in Metropolitan Melbourne.

In July 2017, AHV is setting up a Loddon Hume Tenant Reference Group to continue the conversations with regional tenants about what title transfer will mean for them.

The role of the Tenant Reference Group is to provide advice to Aboriginal Housing Victoria on:

- ⦿ Ideas and opportunities that arise from AHV's ownership of housing properties;
- ⦿ How AHV's housing services might be improved;
- ⦿ How to improve broader outcomes for AHV clients and tenants;

- ⦿ How ideas and opportunities might be delivered as projects or initiatives; and
- ⦿ Emerging issues that may inform how housing services are delivered.

As a consequence of its role the Tenant Reference Group may also provide advice on improving policies and procedures.

In providing advice to AHV, tenants may need to consider the practical limitations on housing services provided by AHV.

If you live in the Loddon Hume region and would like to be involved in the new Tenant Reference Group, please contact

Jo Thitchener on 03 9403 2116 or
email: jo.thitchener@ahvic.org.au

NAIDOC FAMILY DAY AT THE FARM







We reached our target: 10,000 stars!

AHV is excited to say we reached our target of 10,000 stars in the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander colours! AHV joined the 1 Million Stars to End Violence project on White Ribbon Day on 25 November 2015 and reached our target on White Ribbon Night on 28 July 2017. We have since star weaved our way around communities, Aboriginal Co-operatives, conferences, schools and events to share the message that we say no to family violence.

If you or someone you know is in danger, please call 000 immediately. There is no shame in calling the police.



“
As a White Ribbon accredited organisation, AHV has a zero tolerance approach to family violence.”

This provided us with a way to have informal conversations about how we can collectively work together to end family violence in our communities.

Our stars will join the 1 million stars that will be shining brightly on the Gold Coast for the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in April 2018.

As a White Ribbon accredited organisation, AHV has a zero tolerance approach to family violence. Our staff are trained in how to respond to disclosures of family violence and how to support both victims and perpetrators.

For support:

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Service (24 hours):
1800 015 188 / 9322 3555

Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service:
9482 5744

Aboriginal Centre for Males Referral Service (24 hours):
1800 352 624

Men's Referral Service:
1300 766 491 (9am—9pm)

Parentline:
132 289

Kids Help Line:
1800 551 800

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service:
1300 792 387