

It takes a village.

This year, Uniting has continued to lead the way with retirement and independent living solutions for our growing population of older Australians.

We've been building new developments, expanding existing villages, and improving continuity of support for the communities we serve, through co-location with our residential aged care homes.

Key challenge of 2018/19

Due to uncertainty in the property market this past year, many potential residents have been unwilling or unable to sell their homes to facilitate moving into retirement villages.

The rap on our Resident Ambassador Program

Some people experience a lack of meaningful connection after they retire, leaving many social needs unmet. This year, we've continued to grow our Resident Ambassador Program to encourage our residents to use and share their pre-retirement skills and knowledge. Just some of the roles in place to strengthen the bonds of our village communities are:

- Dog walkers
- Librarians
- Gardeners
- Cooks
- Transport assistants
- Village newspaper writers.

Community-minded Anne scoops awards

Congratulations to Anne Mathur, our Health and Wellbeing Lead for Uniting Retirement and Independent Living, who has won multiple accolades this year for her tireless work as a dementia consultant.

Anne advises seniors from multicultural communities on ageing well in Australia. She helps them understand dementia in simple terms, to break the stigma attached to cognitive decline in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

In January, Anne was nominated for the Community Hero Award as part of the 2019 NSW Woman of the Year Awards, and she was also a finalist for the 2019 Altitude Awards in the Climb Every Mountain category.

Anne was further acknowledged at this year's Festival of Colours, a multicultural celebration held every March in Parramatta, as part of Parramasala. And she was recently invited to an afternoon tea hosted by the NSW Minister for Multiculturalism, in recognition of her community work.

“I have been able to reach out to the most disadvantaged members in the community, and link them with the support services they need to be able to live with dignity and respect.”

– Anne Mathur, Health and Wellbeing Lead for Uniting Retirement and Independent Living



124

independent living units built in Normanhurst, Hamlyn Terrace and Shellharbour

108

independent living units under construction in Westmead, Gerringong and Port Macquarie

69

independent living villages across NSW and the ACT



Find out more: uniting.org/independent-living

A place to call home.

In line with our 10-year vision and our Sustainable Development Goals, Uniting is working towards the socioeconomic objective of equal access to safe, adequate and affordable housing by 2030.

We have a range of programs and strategic partnerships in place to tackle homelessness and its root causes, and to provide support for people in vulnerable situations.

Highlights

- In partnership with the NSW Government, Uniting is making housing accessible as part of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF), alongside tailored supports empowering people to improve their lives. During 2018/19, we offered 42 homes in addition to the 99 already available through SAHF.
- Our pop-up boarding house in Leichhardt, for older women experiencing homelessness, provided a safe, welcoming and supportive living environment for 39 women. Of these, 67% have since relocated to suitable permanent housing.
- Veronica Macdonald, Regional Program Manager for our Uniting Youth and Homelessness Services in the South West Sydney and Illawarra regions of NSW, was nominated for 2019 Australian of the Year, for her tireless efforts to find homes for young people.
- Our relationship with St George Community Housing, an affordable housing initiative, grew stronger as we continued to assist tenants at North Sydney's Greenway housing estate to access in-home care and community services.



Access to safe, adequate and affordable housing is a fundamental human right.

Yet, between 2011 and 2016, the rate of homelessness in NSW grew 37%, with 37,715 people experiencing homelessness on the night of the 2016 Census.



330

seniors living in social and affordable housing

↑10%

on previous year

29

leasehold properties funded via the Premier's Youth Initiative

Access to safe, adequate and affordable housing is a key enabler in helping people to find work.

Last year we achieved:

↑23% client employment at the end of the support period in our Uniting Doorways Homelessness programs.

↓33% rough sleeping and **↑27% stable tenure** for clients in our Uniting Doorways Homelessness programs.

Premier's Youth Initiative

Funded by the NSW Government under the Premier's Youth Initiative, we're offering housing, education and employment options to achieve better life outcomes for vulnerable young people. Aboriginal youths supported in this program comprise around half of the young people leaving out-of-home care between Tweed Heads and Port Macquarie, once they turn 18. Together with Aboriginal Employment Strategy Ltd, we're linking them with life-changing training and job opportunities.

Foyer Central will open doors

Under the Foyer Central project, we're helping to combat inner city youth homelessness for young people leaving care. In partnership with St George Community Housing and Social Ventures Australia, purpose-built accommodation is being constructed near universities. Uniting will support the residents with their work and study, mentoring them to build new skills and help them transition to independence.

Our global village.


Uniting works across 3 pillars of sustainability – environmental, social, and economic – to improve the lives of the people we serve and the communities we live in.

We've aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals initiative, to support the protection of the world's poor and vulnerable, and the future of our planet. These international goals for the year 2030 are in place to address extreme poverty, inequality and climate change over the coming decade.

Our 10-year vision synergises with this 2030 Agenda and the core objective to leave no-one behind. We have mapped our 10-year vision to the Sustainable Development Goals and identified key areas where we believe we can make the biggest difference.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



 **Read the full report:** uniting.org/sustainable-goals

Our environment matters

All organisations have a responsibility to use natural resources wisely, reduce waste and protect the environment. As a Silver Partner in the NSW Sustainability Advantage program, Uniting is working with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage to roll out solar energy, reduce food waste, and solve challenges including how to recycle adult incontinence pads.

Protecting biodiversity

Last year, Uniting completed a 5-year bush regeneration project at our Hamlyn Terrace property on the NSW Central Coast. Of the 112,000m² of on-site bushland, 63,000m² is identified as having significant ecological value.

Using specialist environmental contractors, noxious weeds were replaced by native plants and natural regeneration. The resulting improvements have helped restore important ecosystems, and enhance native fauna habitats.

In 2019, we extended our commitment to protecting biodiversity by engaging bush regenerators at Hamlyn Terrace for another 5 years.

“We are concerned with the basic human rights of future generations and will urge the wise use of energy, the protection of the environment and the replenishment of the earth’s resources for their use and enjoyment.”

– from the Uniting Church *Statement to the Nation* at the Inaugural Assembly, June 1977

↓ **13%**

reduction in total carbon emissions since 2010

10%

of electricity used at Uniting this year was produced from

6,967

solar photovoltaic panels on our roofs

27,400

LED lights newly-installed in our aged care facilities are saving us

6,675,000

kilowatt hours per year

100+

hybrid cars in the Uniting vehicle fleet