

Annual Report FY25

Uniting NSW.ACT



Uniting



Uniting NSW.ACT acknowledges Australia's First Peoples as the original and ongoing custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work.

We recognise the continuing sovereignty of First Peoples in NSW and the ACT, and their absolute right to self-determination.

We act on our responsibility to co-create a national dialogue of truth that proudly embraces First Peoples' history, culture, and rights, for present and future generations.

We pay our respects to all Elders – past and present – and to all First Peoples and communities.

This artwork tells our story.

Its course flows through us and around us. It changes as it flows, recognising the diversity of people, culture, and Country at the foundation.

We are an organisation deeply committed to positive change. We find strength and inspiration in our connections with the community. When these bonds are healthy, our people and communities thrive with courage and unity.

Together, we are committed to creating impactful, enduring change to support future generations of First Nations people and communities, empowering them to be strong, thriving, and self-determining.

Everyone at Uniting is a part of this story.

'Journey Flows' by David Williams of Gilimbaa.

We are Uniting.

A small act can sometimes be enough. A helping hand can halve a burden. One kind word can calm the nerves. At Uniting, we act to have an impact. We are the carers, thinkers, doers, darers who strive to make a difference. In everyday trials and triumphs. For everyone, just as they are. We are 13,000 people driven to be there for others. Together, we can do even more. We can draw upon the voice deep within us and raise a collective cry that cannot be ignored. Because for us, enough is not enough. We want safer, fairer, brighter, better. For the people we serve. For all humanity. We are Uniting for greater change.

Uniting NSW.ACT contributes to the work of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT, through community services, spiritual care, social impact and advocacy.

We provide services for people through all ages and stages of life, and drive solutions to systemic issues so people experiencing disadvantage can live their best lives.

Our purpose is to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice.

We value diversity and always welcome everyone exactly as they are.

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Our cover image shows 3 generations living together, taken by Fancy Boy Photography for the inaugural Uniting Families Report. Read more on page 59.



We live our values.

Compassionate

We are nurturing, generous and thoughtful in our words and deeds.

Respectful

We act with honesty and integrity, opening our hearts to all people without exception.

Imaginative

We challenge convention, explore new possibilities and dare to dream for a better future.

Bold

We face injustice head on and stand up for what is right and true with confidence and strength.

Message from our Moderator



It continues to be one of the greatest privileges of my life to serve as Moderator and to support the remarkable work of Uniting NSW.ACT. In every interaction I've had with Uniting frontline staff, volunteers, and leadership,

I have witnessed an unwavering commitment and dedication to justice and inclusion.

This year's Synod's theme of 'Transforming Communities' was both timely and deeply aligned with Uniting's bold and prophetic mission. Transformation is hope in action. It is the power of faith in action, where compassion sparks courage and when we challenge injustice instead of accepting it.

In a world that feels increasingly fractured and uncertain - with a rising tide of conflict, displacement, and suffering - this call to be agents of transformation is more urgent than ever. We are reminded that faith is not passive.

One of the deepest joys in this role is engaging in advocacy with Uniting, lifting our voices together on the issues that matter most to our communities. Whether we are calling for drug law reform grounded in evidence and dignity, or working to advance climate justice, this work speaks to the heart of who we are and what we stand for.

The rising cost of living and increasing unemployment are compounding the pressures already carried by vulnerable communities. Families are being forced to make impossible choices between paying their energy bills or putting food on the table. These real-life challenges reveal how disadvantage intersects with the climate crisis. As temperatures climb and extreme weather becomes more common, energy insecurity becomes a climate justice issue, and those with the least continue to pay the highest price.

Climate justice has remained at the forefront of our shared advocacy. As a daughter of the Pacific, the climate crisis is not theoretical, it is personal. I have been honoured to represent our Church and Uniting's powerful witness at international forums from Tonga to Azerbaijan, where we have stood in solidarity with First Peoples, Pacific nations, and other vulnerable communities already facing the harshest impacts of climate disruption.

The 2025 'Stewardship of the Earth Conference' brought together diverse voices across faith, science, and community to reflect on our sacred responsibility to care for God's creation. It reminded us that stewardship is not simply about sustainability, it is about equity and honouring what has been entrusted to us to protect.

I am also deeply committed to ensuring that the voices of First Peoples here in Australia and across the Pacific are not just included but central in these conversations. Their spiritual and ancestral connection to land and waters offers wisdom the world urgently needs.

To each and every person in the Uniting movement - thank you. Your hope, tenacity and persistence inspire me daily. Together, as we move toward 2026 and beyond, may we continue to transform communities with love, faith, and fearless compassion.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Faaimata', written in a fluid, cursive style.

Rev. Faaimata Havea Hiliau
Moderator, Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of NSW & ACT

Message from our Chair



The Uniting NSW.ACT Board acknowledges Australia's First Peoples as the original and ongoing custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We appreciate that our work takes place

on land that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land. This acknowledgment brings with it the duty to truly listen, reflect, and most importantly, take meaningful action.

Uniting is guided by the Covenant the Uniting Church made in 1994 with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. Our First Nations People and Place Strategy is embedded within Uniting's 10 Year Strategy and extends across all areas of our work as we strive to partner with First Nations people and communities, enabling self-determination and better outcomes through mutual sharing of knowledge, resources, and capabilities. We seek to achieve long-term positive change and contribute to systemic transformation. Over the last year, we focused on growing our First Nations workforce, building cultural capability across services, and shifting decision-making to First Nations-led organisations.

At 30 June 2025 we have concluded Horizon 1 (FY22-FY25), the first phase of our 10-year strategic journey. Over this period, Uniting strengthened its foundations and grew revenue, successfully navigating a complex and dynamic external environment involving regulatory and policy reform across multiple sectors. Over the next 2 horizons of the 10 Year Strategy, Uniting will transform its ability to disrupt entrenched disadvantage by strengthening its organisational and financial foundations, and investing in system-shifting initiatives.

Uniting's work continues to be shaped by the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT's Future Directions for the People of God on the Way, and the Church's enduring commitment to serve those most in need. Through chaplaincy, pastoral care, and shared projects with local congregations, Uniting keeps its faith at the centre of its work.

Uniting's reach extends from children and young people to families and seniors. Yet our impact goes beyond care - we champion change, advocating for fairer laws and policies so no-one remains trapped in disadvantage. Over the last year, our key advocacy efforts have included driving drug law reform, securing greater investment in early learning, supporting young people leaving state care, and demanding bold action on climate

change. We are committed to ensuring that everyone - especially those who are excluded or disadvantaged - can live with dignity and hope.

The Board remains dedicated to upholding the highest standards of governance in line with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Governance Standards, while also adhering to the Australian Institute of Company Directors Not-for-Profit Governance Principles. By employing an ethical decision-making framework, we strengthen our capacity for responsible stewardship and accountability. This approach reinforces our commitment to best-practice governance and enhances Uniting's ability to respond effectively to a rapidly evolving environment.

Over the last 12 months, a key focus has been Uniting's strategic approach to regulatory reform, person-centred care, and operational readiness for the new Aged Care Act. Uniting's commitment to safeguarding remains central to our work with everyone we serve - children, young people, families, seniors, and people with disability. The Board leverages established governance practices and organisational structures to support our effectiveness, responsible stewardship, integrity, accountability and robust risk management on behalf of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT.

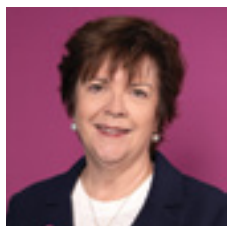
I had the pleasure of assuming the role of Chairperson in November 2024, upon the retirement of Heather Watson. Heather served on the Board from July 2015 until October 2024, becoming Chair in October 2017. During her tenure, Heather gave her time and wisdom generously to fellow Board members, Executive and staff. She was a passionate advocate and supporter of Uniting, acknowledging that we can be the change in people's lives that makes a difference. I express gratitude to Heather and also to Dr Andrew Young, who completed his Board term over the last financial year.

I acknowledge and thank my fellow Board members for their dedication and contributions. And on behalf of the Board, I also express our appreciation to all Uniting staff and volunteers - for their ongoing service and for living out our mission through their actions every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Nicol'.

Liz Nicol
Chairperson, Uniting NSW.ACT

Message from our Chief Executive



At 30 June 2025, Uniting is 3 years into our 10 Year Strategy, completing the foundational phase of our journey. The initial progress and promise we have seen is now translating into tangible outcomes

for the people and communities we serve.

Notwithstanding ongoing operational and sector pressures, we are seeing clearer momentum towards our ambition of disrupting entrenched disadvantage - not just in individual lives, but across the systems that impact them.

Throughout FY25, our work has remained grounded in the values and vision of the Uniting Church. The revised Statement of Missional Intent and the ongoing implementation of the Formation Framework have deepened our connection to purpose and helped shape how we lead, serve, and show up for each other and our communities.

In our Communities directorate, we supported more than 128,000 people and continued to grow access to services in regional areas through place-based and culturally responsive models of care. At the heart of our work was a steadfast belief in the power of lived experience. We listened to the voices of young people, families and communities, and co-designed services that reflect their realities and aspirations. FY25 was a year marked by bold action, deep collaboration, and enduring impact. We reaffirmed our commitment to First Nations self-determination, most notably through the transition of young people in out-of-home care to the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) Goodradigbee Cultural and Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

In Seniors Services, the shift from planning to delivery is now well established with the launch of Home with U, an ambitious 18-month transformation program designed to reshape our home care services and their delivery. The Quality of Care program, launched in July 2024, builds on the aged care reforms and is driving holistic improvements in resident experience. We are also creating integrated seniors communities with flexible support to meet the changing needs of seniors as they age. These initiatives are not only improving the experience of the people we serve, but also reshaping how teams are supported, at scale and under real operational pressure. The progress made this year reflects significant effort across frontline, clinical and leadership teams and sets a strong foundation as aged care standards and expectations continue to evolve.

Our First Nations People and Place Strategy has moved from planning to action, with strengthened governance, leadership development and service transitions led by and for First Nations communities. We want First Nations people at Uniting and beyond to be strong, thriving and self-determining. FY25 saw the release of our first impact report on this strategy - highlighting the voices of First Nations people, demonstrating place-based outcomes, and reflecting on the progress made. This year we also refreshed our Aboriginal Service Delivery Principles - to deepen cultural capability, strengthen community-led partnerships, and embed self-determination into everyday practice.

At the systems level, our impact is becoming more visible and influential. FY25 saw the passage of the 3 Day Guarantee in Early Learning and key recommendations from the NSW Drug Summit reflecting years of sustained advocacy through the Fair Treatment campaign. These achievements signal that long term, relational and values-led advocacy shapes real change. Our role alongside others in progressing climate justice, retirement housing reform, and early childhood inclusion through Future Horizons, shows the breadth and depth of our systems aspirations, and our growing capacity to contribute to change beyond Uniting.

We remain challenged by structural constraints: persistent workforce shortages in thin labour markets, increasing costs, funding arrangements that limit innovation and the pace and scale of regulatory change. However, there are emerging opportunities including stronger digital capability, improved workforce retention, renewed partnerships with government and sharper strategic alignment as we enter the next phase of our 10 Year Strategy.

I am deeply proud and grateful for our leaders, employees and volunteers - their dedication enabled us to support more than 156,000 clients across metropolitan, regional, and rural NSW and ACT this year. I also extend my thanks to our colleagues in the Synod and to the members of the Uniting NSW.ACT Board for their ongoing commitment and guidance in advancing the important work that is critical for the realisation of our 10 Year Strategy.

Tracey Burton
Chief Executive
Uniting NSW.ACT

Messages from our clients

“I’m proud of how far I’ve progressed and continue to find new confidence as each month passes. I enjoy coming to group, as well as watching my daughter grow and change.”

Newpin Ingleburn parent

Read more on page 20

“It was a bit scary at first (to come to therapy) but once I got used to it, it was very nice and I felt safe.”

Participant in therapeutic group for children whose parents are separating - Uniting Counselling and Mediation

Read more on page 22

“Without Uniting I wouldn’t know what or where I would be - not just with housing, but with a lot of things in life.”

Youth Initiative participant

Read more on page 85

“Loneliness is a killer, but people aren’t lonely here. We have an active social life.”

Uniting retirement village resident

Read more on page 47

“I think it’s an honour to see this implemented, and I’m lucky to be an Elder who has lived long enough to be in an aged care facility, given the history of our Elders not living as long. I feel like I’m part of a change, of improvement.”

Aunty Rose Porter, a First Nations aged care resident at Uniting Tamworth

Read more on page 66

“I can only express deep appreciation for the support I received ... it played a crucial role in helping me regain my independence and to start moving forward again.”

Transitional housing resident for 10 months

Read more on page 93

“We don’t get much rehabilitation in here, and you listened to me and made me feel like there’s hope.”

Fathers Support Service participant

Read more on page 19

Who we served in FY25

156,602 Total clients ↑7.4% on FY24

128,063 Communities clients
↑8% on FY24

We aspire for every child in NSW and the ACT to participate in early childhood education, so they can be school-ready by the age of 5.



62,386

Local Area Coordination (NDIS) participants

30,375

Early Intervention clients

6,383

Children enrolled in Early Learning

8,875

Mental Health and Wellbeing clients

6,011

Counselling and Mediation clients

5,731

Intensive Family Services (IFS) clients

5,269

Homelessness Services clients

516

Youth Transitions clients

288

Permanency Support Program (PSP) clients

1,241

Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) clients

988

Disability Services clients



Tanya Plibersek, Minister for Social Services of Australia, visited Foyer Central.

28,539 Seniors Services clients
↑4% on FY24

3,881

War Memorial Hospital patients

3,885

Retirement and Independent Living residents



7,933

People in Residential Aged Care

12,840

Home and Community Care clients

Our diverse workforce in FY25

11,796 Employees ↑1.6% on FY24

9,360
Female employees (79.3%)

2,391
Male employees (20.3%)

348
First Nations employees

45
Employees identified as gender diverse

176
Employees with disability


4,554
CALD* employees (35%)
*Culturally diverse employees who speak a language other than English

105
Chaplains and pastoral practitioners

1,215
People celebrated milestones of between 5 and 50 years of service


Did you know?
32% of our people speak a language other than English. Nepali is our most common primary language after English, spoken by 19% of our total workforce.

Nepali staff showed Uniting Springwood residents how to make momo (dumplings) this year.



1,321 Volunteers

Volunteer artist-in-residence
Grace Westera, Pastoral Carer at Uniting Caroon Yamba suggested to her husband, Harry Westera, a renowned local artist, that he volunteer there. Over the past 2 years, he has drawn 91 portraits of residents; 52 of which adorn the walls of Caroon, with more being added regularly.



16 years of pastoral care
In May this year, residents of Uniting Mirinjani Village ACT, together with staff and the chaplaincy team, gathered to celebrate and thank pastoral volunteer Helen Palmer for her remarkable 16 years of ministry. The gathering was filled with heartfelt stories, recognising Helen's compassionate support and gift for non-judgemental listening.



Year 3 of our strategic journey

FY25 marked the 3rd year of Uniting's 10 Year Strategy and the conclusion of Horizon 1 - the initial phase of our strategic journey. Over Horizon 1 (FY22-FY25), we strengthened our foundations and grew revenue, successfully navigating a complex and dynamic external environment involving regulatory and policy reform across multiple sectors.

The groundwork for our transformative work was laid by deepening our systems change capabilities, building a strong financial base, and beginning the transformation of our Seniors Services operations. From the foundations laid in Horizon 1, our next phase will build momentum through targeted investments in the first third of life, while ensuring a high-performing organisational core.

Horizon 2 is not just a continuation of our 10 Year Strategy - it's a bold step into transformation. It involves nurturing new models, expanding partnerships, and embedding inclusive practices that reflect Uniting's values and purpose. This phase will be marked by a renewed commitment to listening, learning, and acting in collaboration with communities, especially those facing entrenched disadvantage.



Uniting Seniors Gyms ensure older people stay active and social as they age.

Create a better future for more people and communities by disrupting entrenched disadvantage.

Uniting NSW.ACT contributes to the work and mission of the Uniting Church through community services, spiritual care, social justice and advocacy to serve humanity and create an **inclusive, connected and just world**.

Our strategy reflects Uniting's role in supporting the commitments identified in the Synod's **Future Directions**.


SOCIAL IMPACT

Drive solutions to systemic issues that prevent people and communities from living their best lives.

First Nations people and communities are strong, thriving and self-determining.

COMMUNITIES

Deliver more services to more places, supporting people and communities to thrive.



People are at the heart of everything we do.

SENIORS

Enhance and evolve our support for seniors, particularly those experiencing social and economic exclusion.

AN ENGAGED, EMPOWERED AND PRODUCTIVE TEAM

A workplace where every person feels they belong, is inspired by our purpose, and accountable for productivity and impact.

ENTERPRISE EFFECTIVENESS

Where people, processes and technology are aligned and cohesive.

FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

Optimise our assets and resources to generate sustainable income and reinvest in our purpose.

Mission

Read Pastoral Practitioner
Michael Ramaidama's story on page 15.

Uniting's Christian foundations ensure clarity of purpose and a commitment to the values and ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia.

These foundations not only shape our mission, but also empower Uniting with a voice to prophetically challenge injustice, exclusion, and the systems that perpetuate disadvantage.

This year, 105 Uniting chaplains and pastoral practitioners provided:

69,528

Hours of spiritual support

3,626

Church services in Uniting facilities

399

Memorial services

141

Funeral services

127

Connections with congregations

In FY25, Uniting's Mission team strengthened our Formation Framework; advanced our advocacy work by connecting with congregations for Climate Action, Fair Treatment, and Aged Care Forums; expanded spiritual and pastoral support for Uniting home care clients; continued our chaplaincy across aged care, prisons, hospitals, and local communities; and welcomed a new Head of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice.

At the heart of Uniting's mission is a bold intention: to challenge and disrupt cycles of entrenched disadvantage and help build a more just and equitable society. This mission isn't separate from the Church, but born from it, rooted in the Uniting Church's call to live out a vision of compassion, justice, and inclusion. Uniting's work continues to be shaped by the Synod's strategic priorities and the Church's enduring commitment to serve those most in need.

Informed by theological insight, grounded in research, and strengthened by deep engagement with individuals and communities, Uniting's approach reflects the Church's own mission in action. It's a shared expression of faith and service, offering hope, restoring dignity, and working for lasting change.

Read our Uniting Statement of Missional Intent.



You can click on these QR codes!



Induction Service for Rev. Neale Roberts (second from right), our new Head of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice, and Rev. Graeme Tutt (centre), who took on the role of Head of Formation and Church Relationships in FY25.

Forging our Formation Framework

Uniting's Formation Framework is a long-term initiative designed to deepen alignment with the identity, ethos and values of the Uniting Church across all levels of the organisation.

The framework helps everyone understand Uniting's relationship to the Church, the theological foundations of its values, and the importance of shared purpose. It supports reflective practice, emotional resilience, and values-based decision-making; grounding people in their own spirituality and encouraging personal growth.

Uniting Board members, executive leaders, people leaders and many frontline staff participated in formation activities throughout FY25. These explorations have strengthened understanding of the Church's values, fostered deeper connections between Uniting services and the Church community, and encouraged reflection on First Nations justice in the context of the 1994 Covenant. A key mechanism for these reflections was a series of 4 videos highlighting the significance of Uniting's values as an expression of the Church's faith – accessible via the QR code below.

As a result, Uniting has embedded our Church-derived values more deeply across teams and expanded opportunities for collaboration between Uniting and local Church congregations. The Formation Framework remains a critical tool in ensuring that Uniting's strategy and culture remain grounded in its foundation – Christ invites us to serve humanity to create an inclusive, connected, and just world.



Watch our values video.



Employee spotlight: Paul Jabez

Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice Lead South West Sydney and Western NSW

Since joining Uniting in 2018 as a casual Pastoral Practitioner, Paul Jabez has grown into a regional leader with a deep commitment to spiritual care and cultural inclusion. With his background in statistics, economics, and finance, Paul's transition into chaplaincy was driven by a desire to make an impact. His early roles at aged care services in Waverley and Peakhurst allowed him to gain experience while studying chaplaincy.

Paul's dedication saw him win a With Heart Excellence Award for Quality, for his creative approach to chapel services during COVID-19 lockdowns, and in 2022 he stepped into a full-time chaplaincy role overseeing 6 aged care facilities in the Georges River region.

This year, Paul was appointed Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice Lead for South West Sydney and Western NSW. His current role spans aged care, correctional services, home and community care, and broader community programs from Campbelltown to Broken Hill. Paul's leadership is informed by his Master of Mental Health Practice, completed in February 2025 with Uniting's support through provision of study leave.

"It deepens my understanding of human connection, which I put into practice every day."

– Paul Jabez on his Master of Mental Health Practice

Paul is also an active member of Uniting's Cultural Diversity Network, contributing to inclusive communication and spiritual expression across cultures. His journey reflects Uniting's commitment to nurturing leaders who serve with heart, purpose, and a deep respect for the communities they support.

Collaboration and regional reach

This year, our commitment to place-based mission was deepened with the Mission Mapping Project and the establishment of a new regional chaplaincy structure.

Coordinated by Corrina Coates, Church and Community Collaboration Lead, the Mission Mapping Project has charted the geographic footprint of our Chaplaincy team, Uniting services, and Uniting Church congregations. This work is helping us better understand the breadth of our relationships and identify opportunities to strengthen connections and foster deeper collaboration.

A key initiative of the Church and Community Collaboration team is the facilitation of Collaborative Leadership Groups (CLGs) - forums that bring together representatives from local Uniting Church congregations and Uniting services to strengthen communication, share insights, and explore collective responses to place-based challenges. These groups cultivate partnerships and encourage coordinated action for positive community impact.

Focus areas include intergenerational engagement, family health and wellbeing, housing insecurity, and social isolation. Emerging collaborations include Intergenerational exchanges between Uniting Residential Aged Care homes and local Uniting Early Learning centres, referrals to congregation-run food pantries, and new channels for communication such as newsletter and calendar exchanges to promote awareness of upcoming events and activities. CLGs are currently active in 11 metropolitan and regional locations with plans to expand to 4 more in FY26.

The Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice team also added a new 5th region to their structure in FY25, to better serve people in rural communities. This strategic move was prompted by Uniting's recent acquisition of residential aged care homes in Southern NSW, reflecting the Synod's renewed Future Directions commitment to reimagine rural and regional ministry.

The Mission Mapping Project and our expanding regional reach demonstrate Uniting's evolving approach to mission - one that is grounded in collaboration, responsive to community needs, and strategically aligned for long-term impact.



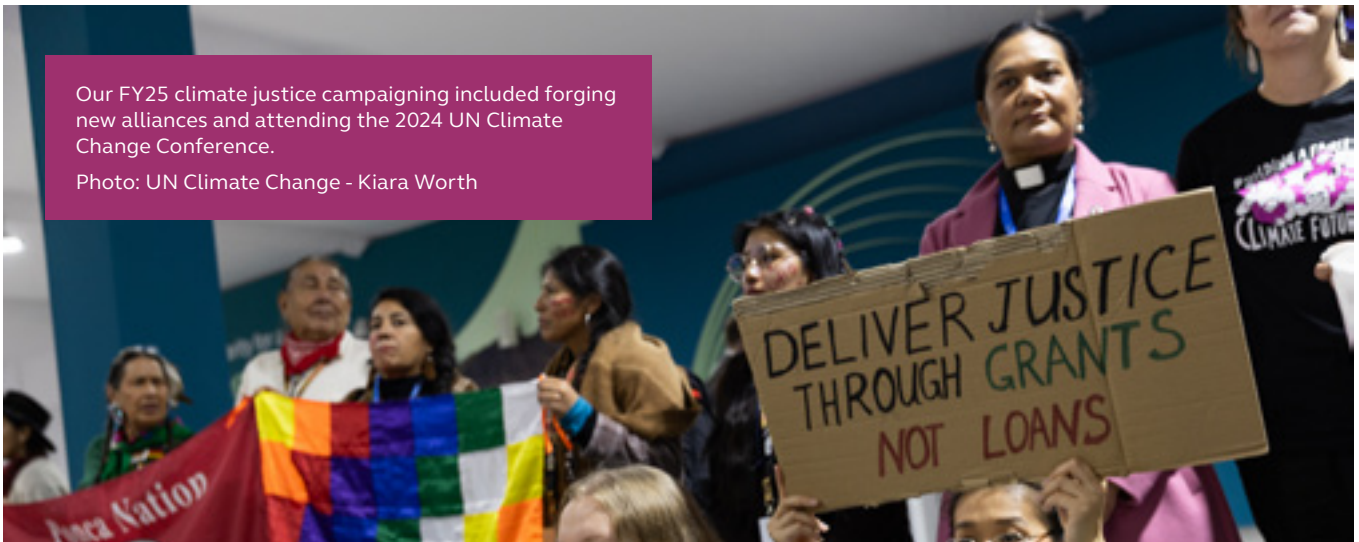
Cobie Vermeulen, Church and Community Collaboration Coordinator (front, left) at Thornleigh Hillcrest Uniting Church - bringing an Aged Care Forum to the congregation, with the support of our Seniors Services team.



May 2025 inaugural meeting of the Central Coast Collaborative Leadership Group (CLG) at Gosford Uniting Church.

Our FY25 climate justice campaigning included forging new alliances and attending the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference.

Photo: UN Climate Change - Kiara Worth



Continued Climate Action

Together with the Uniting Church, we're building a powerful movement for climate justice and we continued to push for bold action in FY25. We joined a new alliance - Renew Australia For All – bringing together over 50 organisations from social services, faith groups, unions, regional communities, clean industry, and environmental sectors to advocate for urgent government investment in renewable energy. The alliance's proposed Energy Bill Savings Plan called for an initial \$5 billion investment to support home energy upgrades, including rooftop solar, batteries, and electric appliances, with a focus on people who rent, people living in apartments, and low-income households. The plan aims to reduce energy bills by an average of \$1,390 per year and ensure equitable access to clean energy solutions. The alliance highlights the dual benefits of climate action and cost-of-living relief, urging the government to prioritise renewables over costly alternatives like nuclear or coal.

“Every day we hear from people in our congregations and those who access Uniting services, who are finding themselves having to make difficult decisions - like whether to buy groceries or pay their power bill. Unfortunately, as always, it's those who can least afford it, who are suffering the most. We need urgent investment to stop Australians from being forced to make these impossible choices.”

Rev. Faaimata (Mata) Havea Hiliau, supporting the Renew Australia for All alliance

As part of the alliance, we welcomed the Labor Government's Cheaper Home Batteries Subsidy commitment this year – a \$2.3 billion pledge that will enable millions of households to have more control over their power bills and a real step towards ensuring that all Australians can benefit from a mix of affordable, clean, and reliable energy.

In November 2024, Rev. Havea Hiliau also attended COP29, the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference constituting the world's only unilateral decision-making forum on climate change, bringing together almost every country on Earth. Held in Baku, Azerbaijan, a range of forums, panels and discussions were held with colleagues and partners including the World Council of Churches, the Renew Australia Campaign, and the Australian Council of Social Services.

Rev. Havea Hiliau spoke passionately about the Uniting Church having always been committed to caring for God's creation and ensuring social justice guides our actions. At COP29, we stood in solidarity with some of the most vulnerable countries and communities being directly impacted by climate injustices, to uphold the '1.5 degrees climate commitment'. This is a goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, to mitigate the most severe impacts of climate change. Exceeding this threshold, even temporarily, carries significant risk of more frequent and intense droughts, heatwaves, floods, and other extreme weather events.



Rising tides, rising voices

In the wake of Tropical Cyclone Alfred earlier this year, Pastoral Practitioner Michael Ramaidama, reflected on the growing impact of climate change on Pacific Island communities, including his own in Fiji, and the deep connection between the land and identity. Fiji's rising sea levels have forced entire villages to relocate; some to higher ground, others away from their ancestral homes altogether.

“Imagine introducing yourself as a person from a place that no longer exists.”

Michael Ramaidama, Pastoral Practitioner at Uniting Annesley in Haberfield

Michael has long been advocating for Pasifika climate justice and in March 2025 he joined a roundtable convened by the Uniting Climate Action Network (UCAN) – a group organised by Uniting's Advocacy team which helps to mobilise the Uniting Church. At the roundtable, Pasifika faith leaders met with Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen. Hosted by Blacktown Regional Uniting Church, the meeting was led by Uniting Church President Rev. Charissa Suli and Moderator of the Synod of NSW & ACT, Rev. Mata Havea Hiliau. The group called for an urgent end to new fossil fuel projects and for clean energy transition policies that are fair, affordable, and responsive to the cost-of-living crisis.

Compelling personal stories of impacts on small island states were a powerful reminder of the human cost of climate change and the importance of listening to those most affected. Michael's work with Pasifika climate campaigns continues to amplify voices that are too often unheard, urging us all to act with compassion and courage for climate justice.



This year's UCAN roundtable called for an urgent end to new fossil fuel projects.



Rev. David Nix, checking in with Isabel Parr at the ward reception desk, before visiting patients at Westmead Hospital.

Civil chaplaincy

Meeting people wherever they are

“I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 25:36

Civil chaplaincy is a ministry of presence - one that meets people at their most vulnerable - in hospitals, correctional centres, aged care homes and community centres. Whether offering comfort in a hospital ward or spiritual support in a correctional facility, chaplains play a vital role in providing holistic care.

At Westmead Hospital, Rev. David Nix describes a typical day as anything but predictable. While time may be set aside for reflection or planning, urgent calls for spiritual care can come at any moment - from multiple wards and faith traditions. “It's about being faithfully available,” David shares, “so that you find those needs - or they find you.”

His work includes everything from celebrating recoveries to offering prayer and presence in moments of deep uncertainty. Uniting's team of civil chaplains like David are a visible sign of compassion, offering emotional, spiritual, and pastoral support to patients, families, and staff alike.

This year, Jason Street was inducted as Uniting Chaplain at St Heliers Correctional Centre in Muswellbrook. Correctional chaplains, like all civil chaplains, are trained to minister to people of any faith - or none - supporting inmates and staff to draw on their own beliefs, culture, and networks. They work independently under NSW legislation, and they are accredited by the Commissioner of Corrective Services so they can contribute to case management as part of the Offender Services and Programs team. Their presence is a steadying force, offering trust, care, and dignity in a complex environment.

Children at Uniting Early Learning North Bondi love looking after their resident chickens, and cooking with the fresh eggs they lay.

Read more on page 22.

Communities

A close-up photograph of a young child with dark hair, wearing a bright pink hat, holding a small black chick. The chick is wrapped in a thick, light-colored fuzzy blanket. The child's hands are visible, gently holding the chick. The background is a blurred brick wall, suggesting an outdoor setting. The lighting is bright and natural, casting soft shadows on the child's face.

We're supporting people and communities to thrive, by delivering more services to more places.

Uniting has a proud legacy of investing in programs that support and empower children, young people, families, First Nations peoples, and communities experiencing social and economic exclusion - enhancing their opportunities, outcomes, and connection to society.

Our Communities directorate delivers a broad and responsive portfolio of services, including early learning, family reunification and parenting support, permanency support for children in out-of-home care, youth transition programs for young people with a lived experience in care, mental health and disability support, homelessness services, and counselling and mediation.

This year Uniting Communities continued to deepen our place-based partnerships, recognising that trusted relationships are the foundation of effective service delivery. Our approach is underpinned by a strengthened emphasis on cultural responsiveness and inclusion, ensuring programs are attuned to the lived experiences of First Nations peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disability.

Our commitment to co-designing programs with the communities we serve is driving our expansion into new regions and embedding trauma-informed, culturally safe and inclusive practices across our services. We're focused on equipping our teams to deliver high-quality, person-centred support that reflects local goals and priorities, while advancing our broader aspirations for systems change.

128,063
Communities
clients ↑8% on FY24

What we want

1. Every child in early learning

Every child in NSW and the ACT participates in early childhood education and is school-ready by age 5.

2. Keeping families together

The number of children in out-of-home care is reduced, and the over-representation of First Nations children is reduced by 45%.

3. Transitions to independence

All young people leaving state care have appropriate accommodation and are engaged in education or employment by age 25.

We're delivering effective early intervention and prevention services.

Uniting's early intervention and prevention services support children, young people, and families facing challenges that may impact long-term wellbeing.

We focus on key life transitions - such as parenthood, early childhood, and entry into education or employment - as well as periods of stress, including natural disasters or family separation.

Listening to children

In FY25, Uniting's Permanency Support Program (PSP) deepened our commitment to child-centred practice through 2 initiatives that amplify the voices of children and young people in care.

Child Journey Project

Partnering with design consultancy Portable, Uniting undertook the Child Journey Project to better understand the lived experience of children and young people in out-of-home care. The project revealed that administrative demands and regulatory obligations were limiting the time staff could spend building the trusting relationships essential to children's safety and wellbeing. Children reported feeling like a task, while staff shared that 44% of their time was consumed by paperwork.

The project identified 5 'moments that matter' to children - entering care, connecting with family, goal setting, learning life skills, and connecting with peers who share their experience.

From these insights, 3 opportunities emerged:

- More simplified, relational planning to build trust and connection
- Measuring what really matters for children and young people's wellbeing, from frontline practice to executive decision making
- Rituals for feedback, creating regular loops between children and young people, staff, and leadership.

These changes are now being embedded across PSP to ensure children's voices shape the support they receive.

Child and Young Person Survey

In February 2025, Uniting launched its first PSP Child and Young Person Survey, exploring the domains of emotional wellbeing, relationships, and enjoyment.

- 91% of survey participants said they felt OK, rising to 100% among those supported by family engagement teams
- 92% felt safe, also increasing to 100% with family engagement support
- 67% said they had a talent they were proud of - the lowest scoring aspect, prompting caseworkers to explore broader definitions of talent with children.

These surveys will now be conducted regularly alongside carer surveys, forming a key part of PSP's commitment to listening deeply to children and young people, and ensuring their voices shape the services designed to support them.

HIPPY Bidwill's impact

This year HIPPY hosted 18 parent gatherings from our house in Bidwill in Greater Western Sydney, supplementing our mission to support early learning and parental engagement in the family home. The Bidwill site is one of several Uniting-run HIPPY locations across NSW, including Fairfield, Forster/Taree and Wyong

HIPPY - short for Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters - is a free, evidence-based program that empowers parents as their child's first teacher. Designed for families with children aged 3 to 5, HIPPY builds school-readiness and confidence through structured, play-based learning activities delivered at home and supported by trained HIPPY Tutors, who are often graduates of the program themselves.

Our gatherings were enriched with activities such as no-bake cooking classes, skincare sessions, mental health awareness talks, and other fun experiences for mums - strengthening their connection to the program and encouraging active participation. Also acting as informal peer support networks, the gatherings strengthened community ties, especially for families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Beyond the gatherings, HIPPY Bidwill ramped up community and stakeholder engagement this year, focusing on promoting the program across Mount Druitt. We met with representatives from local services including preschools, primary schools, health centres, churches, and community hubs - to build relationships and raise awareness of HIPPY's benefits.

We also shared updates, promoted events, and connected with families online. Letterbox drops and outreach at local shops and swimming pools further expanded our visibility. These combined efforts have strengthened our partnerships, increased community engagement, and encouraged expressions of interest for the year ahead - ensuring HIPPY Bidwill continues to make a meaningful impact in the lives of local families.



Parent and child attending their 'graduation ceremony' after participating in HIPPY over the months leading up to primary school.

Fathering hope

In FY25 Uniting's Fathers Support Service in South West Sydney continued to make a meaningful impact through innovative, community-led initiatives that strengthen relationships between fathers and their children.

The Father-Son Garden Bed Project brought together 10 fathers and grandfathers with their sons in a hands-on gardening initiative designed to foster connection, communication, and life skills. The project not only strengthened family relationships - with 100% of participants reporting improved bonds - but also deepened ties within the local school community. Importantly, it demonstrated the value of listening to families and offering relational support through practical, non-traditional formats.

In collaboration with our Cabramatta Multicultural Family Centre and the Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre (MRRC), Uniting delivered the Circle of Security parenting program to 15 incarcerated fathers over 8 weeks this year. The program, inclusive of First Nations families, focused on rehabilitation through relational healing and reflection.

Participants used journals to explore parenting concepts between sessions, and the success of the initiative led MRRC to sign a new Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) for continued delivery - affirming alignment with their vision for rehabilitation.

Peta Wallace, Coordinator of Uniting's Cabramatta Multicultural Family Centre, shared:

"For 2 hours on a Tuesday morning, fathers open up in the education room on the notorious G Block of Silverwater Correctional Complex. Light is artificial and the high windows only offer a small glimpse of the sky and promise beyond.

It's an unfurling of stories, slow and painstaking at first, until the message is clear: fatherhood matters and there is hope for the future, for them and their children."

"We don't get much rehabilitation in here, and you listened to me and made me feel like there's hope."

Fathers Support Service participant

Both programs reflect Uniting's commitment to place-based, culturally responsive support that empowers fathers to rebuild positive relationships with their children. As research shows, strong parent-child relationships are a key factor in children's resilience and can buffer the adverse effects of paternal imprisonment.



Uniting Fathers Support Project Officers, Michael Mai (above left) and Leroy Afford, see the benefits of dads building early bonds with their children.



Expanding support for families: Newpin Ingleburn pilot

In April 2025, Newpin Ingleburn launched a pilot initiative to better serve families working towards reunification – by extending the program’s reach to include children aged 7-10 who are in out-of-home care. The previous age limit was up to 6 years old.

Through weekly therapeutic family play sessions, Newpin practitioners facilitate age-appropriate activities that strengthen parent-child bonds and amplify children’s voices, giving them meaningful opportunities to express their wishes to both parents and staff.

“I’m proud of how far I’ve progressed and continue to find new confidence as each month passes. I enjoy coming to group, as well as watching my daughter grow and change.”

Newpin Ingleburn parent

This initiative reflects Newpin’s commitment to evolving its model to meet the needs of a wider cohort of families, while maintaining its core focus on relational healing and reunification of parents and children.



Uniting launched a targeted enrolment campaign this year, to welcome more families into our long day care centres. Communicating our commitment to child wellbeing, school readiness, and inclusive, high-quality care via the ‘We take happy seriously’ messaging, the campaign generated nearly 5,000 enquiries and over 800 new enrolments across our centres.

At the heart of our philosophy is the belief that happiness is essential to quality early learning. Children thrive when they feel safe, connected, and free to explore. Our thoughtfully designed environments promote discovery and are grounded in the highest standards of care. Everyday experiences, such as bubble play, become opportunities for meaningful learning, supporting children’s scientific thinking, social skills, and emotional wellbeing through play-based, evidence-informed practice.

Each Uniting centre is a place where children are known, valued, and respected. We create emotionally safe and inclusive spaces through family photo displays, cultural celebrations, and warm daily routines. Our educators also build strong, respectful relationships with families, using tools like Storypark to keep them connected to their child’s learning journey. At Uniting, taking happy seriously means providing the care, safety, connection, and quality education every child needs to thrive.

Watch our Bubble Play video.





Kamilia (centre) with her team and Prospect Local Woman of 2025 Award

Congratulations to Kamilia

Uniting Grantham Heights Early Learning Director, Kamilia Mahfouz, has been honoured as the Prospect Local Woman of the Year 2025 at the NSW Women of the Year Awards. The award celebrates women and girls who are making a meaningful difference in the lives of people across NSW.

Kamilia's journey is one of resilience, community spirit, and deep compassion. After migrating from Egypt, she arrived in Australia feeling far from home. It was the inclusive atmosphere at Uniting Grantham Heights that inspired her to begin volunteering there - a decision that would shape her future.

Kamilia honed her English, earned a Diploma in Early Childhood Education, and joined the centre's staff. Her dedication and leadership quickly saw her rise to the role of Director.

“Kamilia is a shining example of compassion, community spirit, and determination - and a wonderful ambassador for our local Prospect Electorate.”

Dr Hugh McDermott, Member for Prospect

Today, Kamilia continues to go above and beyond to create a welcoming, nurturing environment for children and families. Her passion for supporting developmental milestones ensures every child gets a head start towards reaching their full potential.

Congratulations, Kamilia - and thank you for the lasting impact you make at Uniting and in the lives of the families we serve.

Community Partnership Grant

Uniting Grantham Heights Early Learning Centre also won a Community Partnership Grant this year, presented by Dr Hugh McDermott, Member for Prospect. Grants in this program are awarded to not-for-profits for projects that deliver positive social, environmental and recreational outcomes for the community. The money will be used for an upgrade to their entrance area.



Embedding child safety at the heart of care

Uniting places child safety at the heart of our organisational culture, embedding it across leadership, governance, and frontline practice. We're committed to creating physically and emotionally safe and inclusive environments where children and young people are empowered to understand their rights, express their voices, and actively participate in shaping their communities.

Through inclusive practices, continuous policy improvement, and mandatory training for employees, volunteers, and carers, Uniting ensures that child safety is not just a compliance requirement but a lived value.

Our approach includes transparent complaints processes, proactive risk mitigation in online and physical spaces, and a strong emphasis on listening to children and families. This year we asked children and young people across our Uniting programs about the things that made them feel safe and happy, and what having rights meant to them:

Being able to do the things I want to do.

The most important right to me is being able to have a say about things that affect me. If you don't speak up, other people will talk for you.

It was a bit scary at first (to come to therapy at Uniting) but once I got used to it, it was very nice and I felt safe.

My favourite right is the right to play.

Friendships and being able to connect with people make me feel happy.



Community Partnership Grant

In FY25 Kellie Sloane MP, Member for Vaucluse, visited Uniting Early Learning North Bondi following our successful application for a Community Partnership Grant to renovate the centre's bathroom and craft sink. The team took Kellie on a tour, then the children hosted a tea party with yummy cupcakes baked from the fresh eggs laid by their resident chickens.

We're delivering community-led and place-based solutions.

In FY25, our place-based services for regional communities continued to grow and evolve. By investing in approaches that meet people where they live - and listening deeply to understand their real challenges - we're seeing positive outcomes.

Built on mutual trust and respect, this model empowers communities to shape solutions tailored to their unique circumstances, ensuring support is both relevant and effective.

Mental health care without barriers

The launch of the Blacktown Medicare Mental Health Centre this year stands out as a bold and compassionate step forward, as we continue to expand our range and reach of mental health services. Delivered by Uniting, the centre offers free, walk-in support to adults experiencing psychological distress or complex mental health needs - no referral, no waitlist, and no Medicare card required. It's a model built on accessibility, dignity, and immediacy.

Right in the heart of Blacktown, the centre welcomes everyone, including those without Australian citizenship or fixed addresses. Sessions are available in person or via telehealth, and whether someone is in acute distress or navigating long-term mental health challenges, the dedicated team provides tailored support, follow-up care, and connections to broader health, housing, and employment services.

This initiative reflects our strategic focus on closing the gap for the 'missing middle' - those who fall between primary care and hospital thresholds. It also complements our broader mental health portfolio, which this year supported thousands of individuals through services such as the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support (CPS) program, Family and Carers Mental Health program, LikeMind and headspace.

As we continue to expand our mental health services, the Blacktown Medicare Mental Health Centre serves as a blueprint for what compassionate, community-based care can look like.



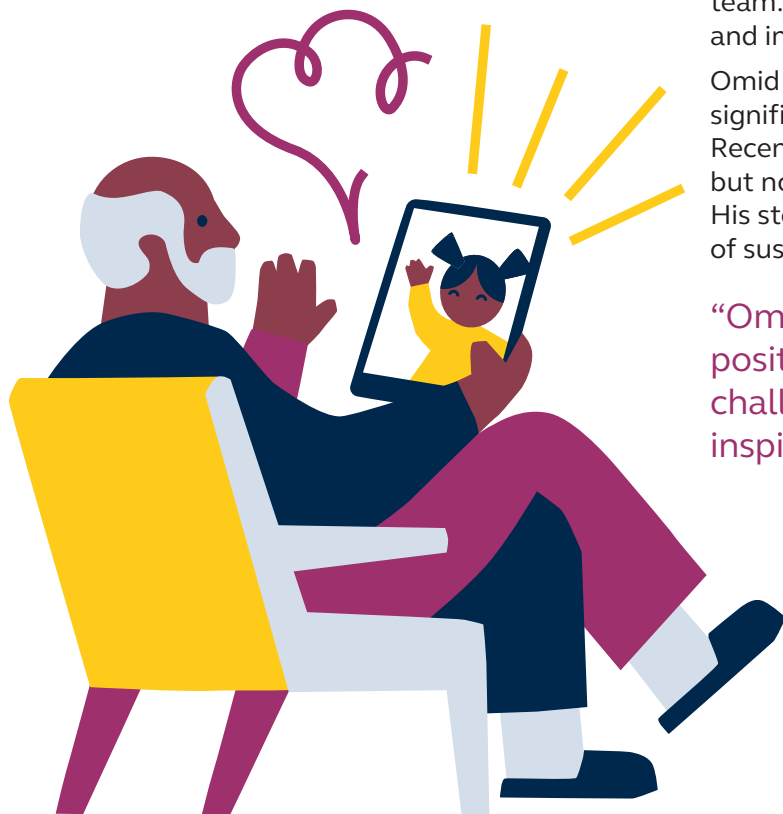
Chantal Nagib, Head of Wellbeing and Mental Health Services (centre) and Liz Jackson, Government Relations Lead (third from left) joined Chris Bowen MP, local member for McMahan (third from right) and Emma McBride MP, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (second from right) to launch the Blacktown Medicare Mental Health Centre in April 2025.

No wrong door

Uniting defines the 'missing middle' as individuals whose mental health needs are too complex for primary care, such as with a GP, but not severe enough to qualify for hospital services. These people often fall through the cracks - unable to access timely, appropriate support due to rigid eligibility criteria, fragmented systems, and a lack of coordinated care pathways.

Our approach is grounded in a 'no wrong door' philosophy. This means that for anyone seeking help - regardless of diagnosis, Medicare status, or referral - our model of care offers low-stigma entry points, multidisciplinary teams, and flexible service delivery including online and after-hours options.

Uniting's Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Framework reinforces this ethos, emphasising person-led care, trust-building, and the belief that recovery is not about fixing symptoms but about helping people lead meaningful lives.



Support that shows up

Omid's story

When Omid entered our Commonwealth Psychosocial Support (CPS) program, he was living in deep isolation. A refugee from Afghanistan with experience of trauma, Omid was struggling with alcohol use, disconnection from family, and a lack of access to basic services. He had no mobile phone, no stable income, and no-one to advocate for him.

The CPS team began with the basics: regular welfare checks, coordination with hospital staff and social workers, and tireless efforts to link Omid with the supports he needed. Over time, this consistent and person-centred approach began to yield powerful results.

One of the first breakthroughs came through collaboration with Omid's GP. Together, they gathered the necessary documentation to support his application for the Disability Support Pension. The CPS team also maintained close contact with Centrelink to ensure a mental health assessment was completed. Omid was eventually approved for the pension - a vital step towards financial stability and access to further supports.

Omid's support wasn't just administrative. With the encouragement of his CPS Senior Support Worker, Omid learned how to use and maintain a mobile phone - something he had previously found overwhelming. This small but significant change allowed him to reconnect with his family and stay in regular contact with the CPS team. It also gave him a renewed sense of agency and independence.

Omid has since reduced his alcohol consumption significantly and is re-engaging with everyday life. Recently Omid shared, "I felt forgotten and alone, but now I feel like someone is looking after me." His story is a powerful testament to the impact of sustained, person-led psychosocial support.

"Omid's determination to achieve positive change - even in extremely challenging circumstances - has been inspiring to witness."

Senior Support Worker, Commonwealth Psychosocial Support program

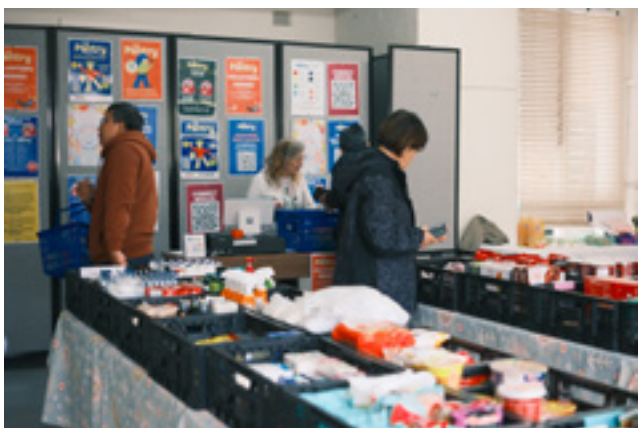
Much more than a meal

Every Wednesday afternoon, The Pantry doors open at the Uniting Harris Community Centre in Ultimo – it's a weekly pop-up shop offering low-cost pantry staples and toiletries to anyone in the community who needs them. More than just a place to pick up essentials, it's a space built on dignity, connection, and care.

The Pantry was born in FY25, out of a simple but urgent need: to help locals navigate the rising cost of living. With food insecurity affecting more families than ever, the initiative provides affordable access to non-perishables and hygiene items, ensuring no-one has to choose between dinner and dignity. But it's not just about what's on the shelves. The Pantry is powered by a team of volunteers and social work students, supported by grants from the City of Sydney and partnerships with organisations like Christmas in July, CHEX and Mustard Seed Uniting Church. Their presence turns a shopping trip into a connection.

Surplus groceries are purchased from Foodbank NSW to sell at affordable prices. Donations – both financial and in-kind – help to keep the shelves stocked and the community spirit alive. Food drives and fundraising events bring neighbours together, while local businesses lend their support in quiet, generous ways. The Pantry's success is a testament to what happens when a community decides to look after its own.

Beyond the groceries, The Pantry is part of a broader ecosystem of support offered by the Harris Community Centre. From multicultural playgroups to toy libraries and music workshops, this centre is a hub of warmth and welcome. It's a place where people come not just to receive, but to belong. The Pantry doesn't just fill cupboards – it fills hearts. And in a world where connection is often the first casualty of hardship, that might be its most important offering of all.



The amazing volunteers at Uniting Harris Community Centre bring joy and connection to every interaction with local Ultimo residents.

We're growing our government, sector and community partnerships.

This year we forged new partnerships and strengthened existing relationships to drive meaningful change - impacting individuals, communities, and broader systems. Expanding our partner ecosystem remains vital to reaching more people in more places with the services they need to thrive.



Uniting headspace Hawkesbury joined the YouthFest planning committee this year, contributing to a vibrant community event at Richmond Oval in April 2025. The festival featured live performances from talented local youth, alongside food carts, market stalls, and dedicated chill-out zones.

Village Connect

Extending support for young families

In FY25 Uniting's Village Connect pilot - a culturally-led, community-designed hub supporting parents under 25 in South Western Sydney - received a 1-year extension from the Department of Communities and Justice. In partnership with parenting not-for-profit Karitane and wellbeing technology group Sonder, the extension will enable us to continue delivering integrated services that help children and families thrive.

The Village Connect model is unique in its multidisciplinary approach, offering child and family health services, parenting support, therapy, education, and 24/7 wellbeing assistance. Its community-designed model ensures services reflect the lived experiences and needs of young families.

“We've seen firsthand how this model empowers young parents to build confidence, strengthen relationships, and access the tools they need to create safe and nurturing environments for their children.”

Louise Smeaton, Head of Communities Operations - Southern NSW and ACT

The program's funding comes from the Investment Approach for Social Impact Strategy (IAFSIS), a cross-agency initiative that applies a whole-of-system lens to achieve the greatest social and economic returns. IAFSIS aims to redirect the child and family system away from crisis and towards early intervention and prevention - an approach that aligns closely with Uniting's values and long-term vision.

The 1-year extension will also enable the completion of an external evaluation conducted by the University of Western Sydney, expected to provide critical insights into the program's impact and inform future scaling opportunities beyond 2026. “Having the year extension means we can finish the evaluation properly and share the findings with our partners and stakeholders,” explained Louise. “It's a vital step toward ensuring Village Connect can grow and reach even more families in need.”

VILLAGE
CONNECT

Foyer Central highlights

Foyer Central is our housing and wraparound support initiative designed for young people with lived experience of out-of-home care. The Chippendale complex provides safe, stable accommodation alongside tailored coaching, education and employment pathways, and life skills development. The program empowers young people to build independence, resilience, and a strong foundation for their future.

This year we focused on:

Peer-led engagement

Foyer Central has strengthened its peer-led engagement model, resulting in improved community participation and social connections among residents. Activities like breakfast clubs, trivia nights, and creative workshops have helped young people build strong friendships and support networks.

First Nations partnerships

Aligning with Uniting's commitment to First Nations self-determination and culturally responsive practice, we've partnered with Mob Ready and Indigecco to support Aboriginal youth employment opportunities.

Youth Advisory Group and co-design

Residents at Foyer Central have played a key role in reviewing and co-designing policies and procedures in FY25. Their feedback has helped shape culturally appropriate tools for evaluation and engagement, including surveys and interview guides developed with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI).

Self-driven support

Everyday stories like Paul's - who helped a fellow resident through anxiety during a community event - highlight the compassionate and self-driven culture at Foyer Central, where young people lift each other up through their shared experiences and understanding.



Watch our Foyer Central videos and meet the residents.



Busting foster care myths

Tim Bishop and Kylie Johansen-Rickard from Uniting's Permanency Support Program sat on The Parenting Couch podcast to unpack common misconceptions about foster care. They highlighted Uniting's flexible care options and encouraged those considering becoming carers to take the next step.

Listen to their podcast episode.



Uniting's Permanency Support Program in Dubbo strengthened its Sass Strikers Football Club partnership this year, with the team proudly advocating for children in care. Their support has brought further attention to the vital need for local foster carers, and we hope the visibility from their jerseys will keep this important message front and centre in the community.

We're building First Nations partnerships and cultural capability.

Valuing relationships and listening deeply is central to our First Nations-led approach, and vital for strengthening partnerships and building cultural capability across Uniting's service delivery.

Recognising that transferring First Nations clients and services to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) is a powerful step towards self-determination, Uniting actively supports these transitions. This important work not only expands culturally responsive choices for Aboriginal people and communities, but also holds us accountable to the ambitions laid out in our First Nations People and Place Strategy.

Deepening place-based partnerships for First Nations outcomes

Uniting, in collaboration with the Paul Ramsay Foundation, visited communities across Coffs Harbour, Nambucca, and Toormina this year - to strengthen relationships and witness the impact of local partnerships driving First Nations outcomes.

Highlights included the Giiguy Gambambi Preschool, a First Nations-run centre hosting Uniting's Aboriginal Families Together (AFT) playgroup and working closely with our Links to Early Learning (L2EL) team. This partnership exemplifies trust-based, inclusive transitions into education for young children.

In Nambucca/Macksville, our Becoming U team and grassroots partner Shore Track demonstrated the power of community-led youth engagement.

Shore Track provides an alternative approach to education, training, and school-to-work transitions for young people who are disengaged from the school system – delivering opportunities for them, and hope for their families and community. Their collaboration with Becoming U is fostering resilience and leadership among participants, with events like the Toormina Community Dinner showcasing intergenerational connection with Elders and cultural pride.

At William Bayldon Public School, L2EL has been invited to support a playgroup aimed at building trust within the community and bridging the gap to early learning – a crucial initiative in a location where service availability is limited.

Connecting the Paul Ramsay Foundation with Uniting's First Nations employees in the region demonstrated the strength of our Ngumbadal Network. The relationships being forged by Katie Ambrosini, Children and Families Lead for the Mid North Coast, with our network in this area is a clear example of the fearless allyship that is critical to the long-term success of our First Nations People and Place Strategy.

The visit affirmed that deep community engagement is central to sustaining our impact. Our partners at the Paul Ramsay Foundation were impressed with the outcomes achieved so far, reinforcing the value of Uniting's place-based model of support.



Belinda's story

From surviving to thriving

Belinda, a single mother of 6 and grandmother of 4, has lived through years of emotional abuse, instability, and isolation. After relocating to the Nambucca Valley in 2019, she made the courageous decision to cut ties with her former partner and begin rebuilding her life.

Her turning point came when she met Valla, a trusted community member and facilitator with Aboriginal Families Together (AFT) – Uniting's culturally responsive, trauma-informed program that supports Aboriginal families through healing, connection, and community-led care.

AFT offers wraparound support through casework, playgroups, women's groups, and peer networks, helping families strengthen their relationships and navigate complex systems.

“AFT is like extended family - the one you get to choose.”

Belinda, Aboriginal Families Together participant

Through AFT, Belinda accessed counselling for herself and her children, gained her driver's licence through Uniting's 120 Countdown program, and received support with housing applications. More than that, she found a network of women who became her friends, protectors, and extended family.

Belinda now contributes to her community by sitting on AFT's Advisory Committee, shaping group programs, and mentoring others. Her presence has become a magnet for new participants - like Lizz, a grandmother who joined playgroup because of Belinda's warmth and stayed because of the community it created.

Belinda credits AFT with helping her become a better mum and inspiring her to give back. She dreams of working in community support and law to help others navigate life after domestic violence. Her story is a testament to the power of trust, connection, and lived experience in transforming lives and strengthening communities.

28 children, one powerful partnership

This year, 28 children and their foster and kinship carers transitioned into the care of Goodradigbee Cultural and Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. This milestone reflects Goodradigbee's leadership in creating culturally safe care, supported by our strong partnership approach.

This achievement was made possible through extensive and consistent collaboration. Uniting supported Goodradigbee in securing accreditation with the Office of the Children's Guardian, and a funding contract with the Department of Communities and Justice. To assist Goodradigbee's operational readiness, we shared resources and tools including policies, client recording systems, and carer transfer assessments. Importantly, existing Uniting Aboriginal staff joined Goodradigbee, strengthening the organisation's workforce with community knowledge and continuity of care.

Uniting remains committed to transferring Aboriginal children to ACCOs to strengthen connections to kin, community, and culture. This project stands out as a sector-first in scale and depth, demonstrating the capability of Aboriginal-led organisations like Goodradigbee to deliver the best outcomes for children. It reinforces the importance of Aboriginal communities leading services for their own families – with Uniting walking alongside and supporting that vision into the future.





Wiradjuri corroboree for kids

Uniting Family Preservation in Orange, led by Regional Program Manager Rochelle Gillies, partnered with Wiradjuri cultural group Dirraybang Footprint and Uncle Dale Carr to deliver an after-school cultural group over 6 weeks this year.

This culminated in a vibrant Kids Corroboree on 4 June 2025, with over 40 young dancers taking to the floor and a 70-strong crowd of proud family members cheering them on. We hope this program will be the first of many across Wiradjuri Country, to better support children in building positive cultural and family connections.



Uniting with The Glen

A stronger path to healing

This year we formalised our partnership with The Glen Group through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), deepening a relationship that began in 2021. The Glen operates residential rehabilitation centres for men and women on the NSW Central Coast, providing culturally safe and trauma-informed support for First Nations and other clients to recover from drug and alcohol addiction.

Uniting Counselling and Mediation (UCM) Central Coast has been providing onsite counselling at The Glen for Men since 2021, expanding to The Glen for Women in the following year. Under the MOU, UCM now delivers weekly counselling to 6 clients per week at each centre. The partnership also facilitates referrals to other Uniting services that support recovery, including our Doorways homelessness service and Newpin family reunification program.

A key feature of our collaboration is having a UCM-funded Child and Family Therapist at The Glen centres. This counselling focuses on trauma, grief, loss, and relationship breakdown - helping clients integrate new skills in self-care and connection.

UCM has also developed a new initiative for the families, carers, and friends of The Glen's clients. Warm referrals are provided to our individual, couple, and family therapy services across NSW, ensuring that clients transitioning from The Glen - and their loved ones - have access to the support they need for successful reintegration into community and family life.

Our partnership with The Glen centres exemplifies Uniting's commitment to walking alongside ACCOs to deliver holistic, culturally responsive care. It's a model of what's possible when like-minded organisations come together to support healing, dignity, and long-term recovery.



Anita Le Lay, Head of Specialist Programs at Uniting (left) signs the MOU with Joe Coyte, Executive Director for The Glen drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres on the NSW Central Coast.

Culturally safe homelessness solutions

Uniting's partnership with ACCO Birribee Housing marks a significant step in strengthening culturally responsive homelessness services in Western Sydney. Birribee Housing brings deep cultural knowledge and community connection to the collaboration, formalised through a new Memorandum of Understanding.

This partnership responds to the disproportionate number of First Nations people experiencing homelessness, and aims to embed culturally safe practices across service delivery. Our working relationship has already led to joint planning for tenancy and wraparound services; identification of potential housing, including at a Blacktown Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) site; and exploration of seniors housing opportunities.

We're breaking down barriers for people with disability.

Uniting continues to be the largest provider of Local Area Coordination (LAC) services in NSW, providing support to over 62,500 people with disability this year.

Our LAC in FY25:

51

Local Government Areas supported

20%

of team members with disability

31%

of team members have Mental Health First Aid training

25%

are carers of people with disability

22%

come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

8%

of team members identify as First Nations



Celebrating Robyn Taylor Finalist for NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year

Robyn, a Uniting LAC First Nations Project Officer, is passionate about improving health outcomes for Aboriginal communities. She's known for creating free, culturally safe health programs that empower families and strengthen community wellbeing.

This year her tireless work was recognised at the NSW Women of the Year Awards.

"It was an unforgettable experience," Robyn said of meeting Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley at Government House. "I am incredibly grateful for this nomination, the recognition of my community work, and the chance to be part of such an inspiring event."

Robyn also paid tribute to her colleagues:

"I celebrate the outstanding contributions of those who work to make a real difference in our communities every day."

Her story is a powerful reminder of the impact that dedicated individuals can have - and the importance of recognising and amplifying First Nations leadership.

LAC plays a vital role in empowering people with disability to pursue their goals by helping them navigate the NDIS and connect with other services. In FY25 our LAC team expanded their focus on community capacity building and engagement, fostering stronger, more inclusive communities. Their work is driving improved outcomes in economic participation and security, inclusive and accessible environments, rights protection and justice, and the development of skills that support health and wellbeing.



← That's Robyn on the right.

Fostering ACCO partnerships in LAC

This year Uniting's Local Area Coordination team deepened their commitment to First Nations communities, by working with 25 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs).

The LAC team partnered with these ACCOs to enhance disability inclusion and accessibility by:

- ✓ Embedding culturally safe inclusion practices across service delivery
- ✓ Creating clearer NDIS pathways for First Nations participants
- ✓ Strengthening community-led collaboration to ensure services reflect local needs and values.

Our ACCO partnerships are about much more than making service connections. They are pathways to culturally safe, community-led inclusion for people with disability.

The leadership and cultural insight of Uniting's First Nations Project Officers has been instrumental to the successful development of this work. Their presence has helped build trust-based relationships, created genuine engagement, and ensured that First Nations voices are embedded in every step of the process.

Jennine Blundell, Head of Uniting Local Area Coordination, reflected: "What's made a lasting impression this year, is seeing the genuine engagement from our First Nations Project Officers as they take an increasingly active role in partnering with ACCOs. Their leadership has added enormous value and helped build stronger relationships."

By working alongside ACCOs, Uniting is strengthening the service ecosystem through shared capacity-building, promoting systemic inclusion, and helping to lay the foundation for long-term equity in service delivery.

Jordan's journey

Jordan Kurt Ginete is a young NDIS participant in the Nepean Blue Mountains whose journey towards independence has been shaped by determination, family support, and the guidance of Uniting Local Area Coordinator, Claribel Aquino.

Jordan migrated to Australia with his mother in 2013 and became a permanent resident in 2016. Diagnosed with cerebral palsy, he experienced frequent falls and injuries, often requiring hospitalisation. For 5 years, Jordan went without therapy due to financial barriers, relying instead on a TENS machine at home.

In 2018, Jordan joined the NDIS and began receiving tailored supports that transformed his daily life. With Claribel's help, Jordan accessed physiotherapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy - services his family hadn't known were available. Claribel also connected Jordan to Uniting's travel training and road safety programs, helping him gain confidence in navigating public transport independently. Today, Jordan wears orthotics and ankle-foot orthoses, enabling him to walk safely in public spaces, and he's proudly earned his Learner's Licence.

Jordan is currently in a Year 11 support class and studying a Certificate II in Warehousing/Retail at TAFE. His mum credits Claribel for helping them understand the NDIS system and unlocking supports that have improved Jordan's mobility, wellbeing, and confidence.

Beyond education and therapy, Jordan is exploring his passions - Comic-Con and cosplay. His story is a testament to the power of inclusive, person-centred support and the impact of dedicated LACs like Claribel Aquino, who walk alongside participants and their families every step of the way.



Igniting the power to achieve

Ignite Empower Achieve won the 2025 ZEST Award for Outstanding Community Partnership by the Western Sydney Community Forum. Launched by Uniting's Local Area Coordinators in response to a critical need, this program delivers free, on-site mental health support: 260 sessions weekly across 28 public schools in Western Sydney.

The program is delivered by postgraduate counselling students from Western Sydney University, who provide accessible, stigma-free support to young people where they are - at school. This innovative partnership breaks down barriers to mental health care while offering valuable, hands-on experience to future practitioners.

"The collaboration between Western Sydney University and public schools has been a win-win. Students gain tools to grow, and university counsellors gain real-world experience."

**Alicia Davis, Service Area Manager
- LAC Nepean Blue Mountains**

Uniting Local Area Coordinator Danielle Bampton shared, "We're honoured to see this work recognised and we look forward to expanding Ignite Empower Achieve to support even more students."



Uniting Local Area Coordinators Bek Seymour (left) and Danielle Bampton (right) with the ZEST Award for Outstanding Community Partnership

Otto's colourful world

Autism, art and advocacy

Meet Otto Van De Wijngaart, an award-winning professional artist and proud ambassador for Uniting's 2025 Abstract Abilities Art Competition - our annual celebration of artists with disability.

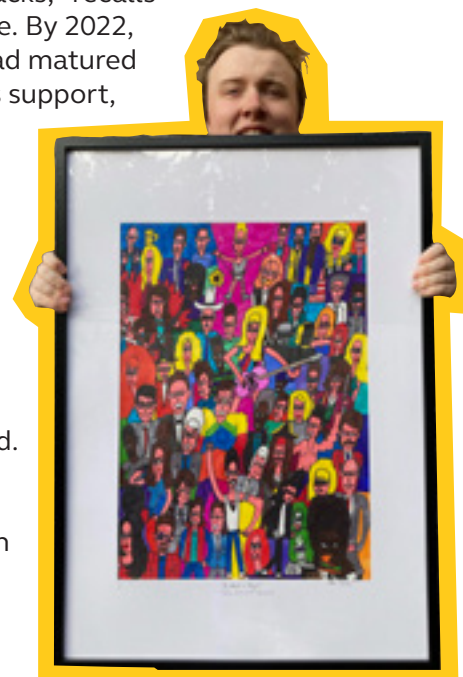
Embracing his Autism as a creative strength, Otto's art is inspired by his childhood love of pop culture and his unique way of seeing the world. "Otto creates artworks as unique as he is - colourful, clever and above all, joyful," reported NBN News.

Otto's artistic journey began in 2019, with "trials, successes, and setbacks," recalls his mum, Bernadette. By 2022, Otto felt his work had matured and with his family's support, he began seeking opportunities to exhibit. That's when he discovered Abstract Abilities - and made one of the competition's first sales.

Since then, Otto's career has flourished. His work has been showcased at the Mitch Revs Gallery in Newcastle, featured in the Terrace Reflections display in Raymond Terrace, and commissioned for public murals. One standout piece - a mural in the style of the classic Guess Who? board game - was praised by Port Stephens Mayor Leah Anderson for its creativity and community impact.

"Otto's art is a conversation starter," said Mayor Anderson. "It's brought joy and excitement to the community." Now in demand for commissioned pieces, Otto continues to pour his passion into every artwork. "I'm very proud of myself," he shares. With each vibrant stroke, Otto invites us to see the world through his eyes - bright, bold, and full of possibility. We can't wait to see what he creates next.

Watch Otto tell his story.





988 Disability Services clients

In addition to LAC, we provide disability services including daily living support and accommodation options – for people who want to be independent and participate in their local community.

This year Uniting received confirmation of re-registration from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, to continue delivering NDIS services as an approved provider. This reaffirms our commitment across all directorates, including Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Seniors Services to:

- Uphold the principles of choice and control for people with disabilities
- Promote lives free from abuse, exploitation, and neglect
- Ensure compliance with the NDIS Act, Rules and Practice Standards .

Rebuilding lives beyond injury

Community Support Services (CSS) is an icare (Insurance & Care NSW) initiative, co-designed with Uniting to support injured workers in NSW. For people with open claims whose needs extend beyond what their insurance agent can provide, CSS offers a vital bridge to government and community-based services. This support also extends to household members, recognising that the impact of workplace injury is rarely isolated.

In May 2025, the CSS team proudly supported their 1,600th participant.

Injuries can trigger a cascade of challenges - financial instability, housing insecurity, social isolation, and emotional distress. CSS responds with tailored, in-person case management and advocacy, helping individuals and families regain stability, purpose, and connection.

Using the Personal Wellbeing Index, the CSS team measures their impact across life domains, with results reflecting meaningful improvements in health, social engagement, and financial security.

Sharing smiles and swapping hats - older residents enjoy intergenerational playtime with the children in our early learning centre at Uniting Westmead.

Seniors Services

We're enhancing and evolving our support for seniors, particularly those experiencing social and economic exclusion.

This year our Seniors Services directorate focused on reinforcing quality, workforce capability, and governance in anticipation of the new Aged Care Act from November 2025. We re-established a Consumer Advisory Body (CAB) to ensure the voices of Uniting residents, clients and their representatives are heard, valued and included in shaping our delivery of care.

In FY25 we served
28,539 seniors
↑4% on FY24

The Quality Care Advisory Body (QCAB) has also continued from FY24 to enhance transparency, engagement, and clinical oversight across our services. Alongside the feedback, recommendations and actions from these advisory bodies, we've also invested in staff recruitment and development to ensure our teams are fully equipped to deliver safe, inclusive and person-centred care under the strengthened quality standards.



CAB and QCAB driving quality care

Our advisory bodies submitted 15 recommendations in FY25 - all endorsed by the Uniting Board. Two of the recommendations are already delivering significant improvements across our aged care services:

1. Enhanced food and dining experience

The first key recommendation focused on enhancing mealtime quality in our residential aged care homes. This led to:

- Rollout of a consistent 24/7 dining experience across all homes
- Recruitment of dining specialists for each region, to elevate meal quality, flavour, and presentation
- Implementation of a Food and Dining Action Plan to ensure sustainable improvements and stronger engagement with residents and families around individual preferences.

2. Expanded mental health support

The second key recommendation addressed mental health care for our aged care residents and clients. Actions taken included:

- Appointment of a Mental Health Specialist to target psychological support
- Full review of our Mental Health Framework, including referral pathways and outcome tracking
- Integration of mental health clinical indicators into reporting, for ongoing oversight and improvement.

We're delivering great choice and dignity to seniors, while inspiring sector-wide support for all Australians to live safely, be healthy, and stay connected for longer.

At Uniting, we're committed to going above and beyond compliance with aged care reforms. Our goal is to create homes where our loved ones would feel truly at ease - and where we ourselves could imagine living with comfort, dignity, and joy.



**Your day,
your say.**
Household Living

Uniting Berrigan dining transformation

Since joining the Uniting family in December 2023, our Amaroo Berrigan home has radically changed the way aged care residents experience mealtimes. Previously, most meals were delivered to people's rooms - a longstanding routine known as 'tray service.' At its peak, entire households received breakfast this way.

To foster social connection and improve wellbeing, the team introduced true household dining, encouraging residents to join communal meals in the dining room. The change was communicated through resident meetings and newsletters, but many still preferred room service.

The turning point came with the appointment of a Dining Experience Specialist, whose audit of tray service volumes sparked collaborative discussions among care staff, homemakers, and nurses. This led to targeted training on the risks of isolated mealtimes, the operational challenges of room service, and personalised ways to encourage residents to dine together.

One staff member's tailored approach - adjusting tone and language based on each resident's mood - resulted in nearly full household participation at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Their method was documented and shared, helping embed the change across the team.

To respect individual preferences, a quieter 'end pod' was created in a corner of the dining area, for residents who preferred privacy - ensuring dignity and safety remained central.

This transformation has strengthened community spirit, improved the dining experience, and shown how thoughtful, person-centred care can lead to lasting positive change.



No more systematic 'tray service' at Uniting Berrigan, where residents are encouraged to dine together - for health and pleasure.



Taste of memory

At Uniting Berry this year, a simple gesture turned into a powerful moment of connection for resident Rod Tervoot, a former professional chef living in the Memory Support Unit. Drawn to the white chef's coat worn by Chef Raj Katuwal, Rod often lingered near the servery, quietly expressing his love for cooking.

After learning about Rod's culinary background, Raj arranged a special visit to the main kitchen. With a hairnet on and utensils in hand, Rod explored the space with quiet joy and deep emotion. Though the experience was brief, it sparked meaningful reminiscence and visibly moved him.

Moments like these highlight the value of personalised engagement in dementia care - honouring past identities and creating space for dignity, memory, and connection.

"I enjoy helping with the dishes, as it makes me feel included and involved - and gives me something to do rather than sit around watching TV. I take pride in making sure things are done properly, like removing the coffee stains from the mugs."

Uniting Berry resident, Pam, loves her home's 'meaningful living through helping' initiative

Championing mental health reform for seniors

In FY25, Uniting's award-winning Continuing to be Me at Home (C2bMe@Home) program was featured in Australian Ageing Agenda (AAA) for its transformative impact and to stimulate national conversations around mental health and person-centred care.

"Mental health doesn't discriminate, but people still do. Older people are often overlooked, facing stigma, isolation, and loss of purpose."

AAA contributor Chantal Nagib, Head of Uniting Mental Health and Wellbeing Services

Delivered in the comfort and familiarity of participant's own homes, C2bMe@Home offers free, tailored psychological support from a multidisciplinary team. It prioritises dignity, optimism, and individual agency - giving older people space to shape their own care journey.

Currently only available in South West Sydney, Uniting is calling on government for broader investment in integrated mental health and social support to reduce pressure on emergency housing and healthcare systems.

Older Australians deserve to live full, purposeful lives - wherever they call home.

Read the full story.



Starrett Lodge rocks with Famous Singers calendar

At Uniting Starrett Lodge in Hamlyn Terrace, creativity and community spirit continue to shine. For the 15th year running, residents have come together to produce a themed fundraising calendar - this time celebrating famous singers and pop stars.

Following last year's cinematic tribute, the 2025 calendar features residents dressed as icons like Elvis, Tina Turner, ABBA, Dolly Parton, the Spice Girls, The Beach Boys, and Barbra Streisand. The project, led by Service Manager Tracey Chapman, involved weeks of costume sourcing, with staff, volunteers, and local shops pitching in.

More than just a photoshoot, the calendar is a joyful expression of resident identity and creativity. It also raises funds for bucket list experiences and activities - making magic that lasts well beyond the camera flash.



88-year-old resident, Margaret, as Olivia Newton-John



Meet Jannine Senior Mental Health Nurse, C2bMe



Having originally trained in general nursing, Jannine Groninger began specialising in mental health nursing more than 25 years ago. She currently works in our C2bMe program, addressing the needs of older people in aged care homes who experience depression and anxiety as they age and their circumstances change.

“It’s really rewarding to work with older people, ensuring that they maintain their identity, dignity, and connection with others as they age.”

Jannine Groninger - C2bMe program

The C2bMe team also plays an important role in educating aged care workers, managers and GPs, about mental health and how to identify when someone is struggling and needs specialised support.

Meet Heather Celebrating 40+ years of nursing with us

Heather Moran began her nursing career at Uniting Kingscliff in 1984 and has grown up in this tight-knit community of staff and residents over the decades. She shares that being a good nurse is, of course, about being patient, compassionate and kind, but it’s also about having a sense of humour:

“I just love seeing smiles on the residents’ faces and giving them joy in their final years of life.”



Heather

Watch Heather’s video.



Language-inclusive learning builds confidence in care

At Uniting Quong Tart, our Ashfield aged care home tailored for Chinese-speaking residents, staff are embracing changes to the Aged Care Act with renewed confidence - thanks to the introduction of a Chinese-language version of the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards Participant Journal and learning circle cards.

Care Coach Calvin Yong shared how the translated journal has made a meaningful difference for bilingual staff, especially those more comfortable reading in Chinese. "It's easier to understand and more relatable," he said. "It's helping our team connect with the standards in a way that feels natural and empowering."

"After reading the Chinese version, I now understand the 'why' behind what we do."

Uniting Quong Tart team member

The journal is now a practical tool for ongoing education and has been integrated into onboarding for new team members. It's helping foster professional growth and quality care in a culturally respectful way - showing how inclusive resources can truly deepen understanding and practice.



The Uniting Abrina care team in Ashfield have embraced the Chinese-language version of the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards Participant Journal.

Uniting by Pen

At Uniting Eden this year, a heartfelt new initiative called Uniting by Pen was developed. Residents were invited to write letters to peers at their sister site in Berry, reviving a once commonplace activity while building new friendships across our locations.

Inspired by the observation that many residents had stopped writing, the program offers a gentle, meaningful way to reconnect with the written word.

Whether shared in group settings or enjoyed as a solo pursuit, residents have embraced the opportunity to express themselves and engage in thoughtful exchange.



We're sustainably growing our support services to seniors in their own homes and communities.

In FY25 we served

12,840 Uniting Home and Community Care clients
↑10% on FY24

Transforming home care for the future

This year Uniting launched Home with U, an ambitious 18-month transformation program designed to reshape our home care services and delivery. With more older Australians choosing to remain at home longer, and major government reforms on the horizon, this initiative positions Uniting for sustainable growth and consistent service excellence.

To support our strategic goal of expanding services for seniors in their homes and communities, Home with U prioritises improving systems and processes, strengthening clinical leadership, and evolving our operating model for scalable, financially sustainable care.

The transformation is powered by our people, with Initiative Owners leading projects end-to-end and gaining skills in planning, engagement, and communication. Weekly recognition of transformation behaviours like accountability and bias for action is helping build capability across our workforce. Initiatives include smarter tech such as AI tools and voice-to-notes apps for Uniting Support Workers, improved training on how to recognise changes in the mental and physical capacity of clients, and faster onboarding of new recruits - reducing the time it

takes to begin providing care, from weeks to days. Our clients' care experiences are also being enhanced with innovations like wellbeing wearables and safety sensors.



Home with U represents our collective commitment to delivering better care, empowering our teams, and preparing for a future where more people will be living at home as they age.



Home with U transformation initiatives are developed and owned by our people - those with firsthand insight into what needs to change to improve how we work and deliver services to our clients



Buddy to the rescue

Buddy, Uniting's generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) digital assistant, was launched this year. While it's designed - and evolving - to support all Uniting staff, it's proving to be an invaluable tool for our home care support workers: streamlining daily tasks, improving efficiency, and enhancing client care.

Buddy enables staff to:

- ✓ **Capture AI-generated notes** after each client visit, integrating directly with other systems like AlayaCare.
- ✓ **Access policies and procedures instantly** via mobile phone, reducing onboarding time and improving confidence for new employees.
- ✓ **Save time on documentation**, with frontline workers reporting savings of 60 to 120 minutes per day - time that can be reinvested in client interaction.
- ✓ **Receive hands-on training** through Buddy squads, who shadow support workers on the road and gather real-time feedback to improve the tool.
- ✓ **Stay digitally connected** with help from regional Buddy leaders who support login setup, device use, and ongoing engagement.

Buddy is more than a tech tool - it's a practical companion that empowers staff, simplifies workflows, and helps deliver more person-centred care in the field.

"I love, love, LOVE it! Buddy is a great way to maximise my time and I use it so often. I'm saving an hour or more in my day."

Roanne Morton, Uniting Home Care Partner on the NSW North Coast



Figen creates community

Recognising the loneliness and isolation experienced by two Turkish-speaking women living in different suburbs - one Armenian, one Cypriot - Uniting Home Care Team Leader for North West and Northern Sydney, Figen Tuzcuoğlu, took the initiative to bring them together for weekly visits.

With limited support worker availability and language barriers, Figen personally arranged for one client to visit the other, creating a culturally familiar and meaningful connection. The visits have become a regular part of their schedules, offering companionship and comfort rooted in shared traditions.

Both women were deeply grateful to meet, and Figen is now exploring ways to expand the group to include other Turkish-speaking clients, with ideas like shared meals and picnics.



Seniors connecting over Turkish coffee and shared language, thanks to Figen.



Find a Carer + Clickability

Expanding access to trusted support

In FY24 Uniting acquired Find a Carer, an online marketplace that empowers older Australians and people with disability to connect directly with trusted, independent support workers. The platform offers a simple, flexible, and transparent way to find care - tailored to individual needs and preferences.

Recognising the ongoing workforce challenges in aged care, this acquisition ensures that whenever our services require independent carers, we have access to a pool of professional, committed individuals ready to deliver high-quality support.

In FY25 Uniting's Find a Carer service took another major step forward by acquiring Clickability, Australia's largest NDIS provider directory. This integration brings together human connection and digital innovation, streamlining how Australians access and coordinate care services.



Together, Find a Carer and Clickability are reshaping the care landscape – leading with compassion, innovating with purpose, and making care more accessible via an easy-to-use platform.

More than modifications

As part of the Home with U transformation, this year Uniting began bringing trade services in-house to improve efficiency, reduce reliance on external contractors, and strengthen client trust in our brand.

Nick Armatas (image below), our first Uniting-employed tradesperson, was warmly welcomed this year. Nick recently made a valuable contribution to client Poppy Da Silva's quality of life - installing handrails and half-steps to improve her mobility and safety around her home.

“We’re creating a sense of belonging and trust, with dedicated services and human interactions aligned to our Uniting brand.”

Joel Prior, Minor Home Modifications and Maintenance Coordinator



← That's our tradie Nick!

ESSA recognition for Steven

This year Uniting Exercise Physiologist, Steven Newton, was nominated for the 2025 Accredited Exercise Scientist Award by Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA). The ESSA Awards celebrate professionals who push the boundaries of exercise and sports science through their expertise, dedication and advocacy.

Steven's nomination is a testament to his outstanding work supporting seniors in their homes. He delivers tailored in-home exercise programs that help older clients build confidence, improve mental and physical wellbeing, and - most importantly - develop long-term healthy habits. His ability to engage and motivate has made a lasting impact on the lives of many seniors in our home care community.



Steven Newton at the ESSA Awards with Elly Williams, Uniting Seniors Gyms Service Manager

In FY25 we served

**3,881 Uniting
War Memorial
Hospital patients**

Redefining dementia care

The Uniting War Memorial Hospital's Integrated Rehabilitation for Early Stage Dementia Intervention (iREADi) program ran its 20th group intake this year. iREADi is Australia's first outpatient rehabilitation program designed specifically for people newly diagnosed with dementia, and their care partners.

Co-designed at the hospital by Clinical Psychologist Dr Wendy Longley and Clinical Nurse Consultant Christine Sender-Ivanov, the 9-week program combines education, therapy and goal setting, delivered by a multidisciplinary team including physiotherapists, psychologists, speech pathologists, dietitians and geriatricians. Legal services can also be accessed, including advice on elder abuse and other support for vulnerable patients who may not otherwise seek help. Participants learn to navigate their diagnosis with confidence, supported by expert care and a community of peers.



Wendy Longley (left) and Christine Sender-Ivanov (right), co-designers of iREADi at Uniting War Memorial Hospital in the Eastern Sydney suburb of Waverley.

Despite strong evidence that rehabilitation can improve wellbeing and slow cognitive decline, programs like iREADi remain rare in Australia. Participants often arrive with little guidance following their diagnosis. "They're told to get their affairs in order and go back when things get worse," shares Dr Longley. "But there's so much we can do - build cognitive reserve, improve function, and enhance quality of life."

iREADi exemplifies how clinical redesign can shift healthcare from being reactive to being anticipatory and person-centred - empowering older Australians with greater control over their health journey.



We're creating integrated seniors communities with flexible support to meet the changing needs of seniors as they age.

In FY25, the Seniors Services team launched Phase One of our Integrated Communities Project - a bold reimagining of Uniting Retirement Living, not just as a place to live but as a community shaped by the people who call it home. Focused on what matters most to current residents and what future customers are seeking, the team developed a Customer Value Proposition based on lived experiences that, together with 5 core service pillars, will guide service delivery and strengthen community connections across our villages as we move into Phase Two in 2026.

In FY25 we served

3,885 Uniting Retirement and Independent Living residents

Design by listening

Through extensive consultation with 54 current residents, 38 potential customers, and 12 customer advocates this year, we listened deeply and embedded their insights into every layer of a new model for retirement living.



“Community is about feeling connected and supported, not just to the people who live here, but to the wider world.”

Consultation participant

By surfacing what truly matters to the people we serve, from support during health transitions to clear communication, we've identified these 5 service pillars to underpin our Future Retirement Living Operating Model.

The 5 service pillars:

1. Personalised Health and Wellbeing
2. Vibrant Community
3. Effortless Convenience
4. Financial Transparency
5. Connection to Nature

We're moving towards a future of semi-independent living - where seniors are empowered to thrive. Our evolving offering will foster vibrant communities by delivering personalised health and wellbeing services within a supportive and deeply connected environment.

What our residents say:

**I've never laughed so much
– it's a joyous place.**

**When I die, my children will
say this was the happiest time
in my life.**

**Since moving
here, I've been
relieved of so many
concerns that I've
stopped taking
anti-depressant
medication.**

**Loneliness is a
killer, but people
aren't lonely here.
We have an active
social life.**

**My wife has never
been more social in
all her life – it's like
she's an entirely
different person.**

Our voices, our lives

This year, a heartfelt collection of Uniting Seniors Services stories captured the voices and experiences of some of our aged care residents and home care clients. From quiet moments of gratitude to vibrant celebrations, each story reveals the deep connections, resilience, and joy found within Uniting communities. Whether it's Michael and Merle's reflections on military service, Winsome's moving words after a Rock 'n' Roll event, or the enduring love of Thelma and Bob, married for 79 years, these narratives honour the lives and legacies of those who call Uniting home. Through compassion and creativity, 'Our voices, our lives' reminds us that every life holds a story worth sharing.

Read their inspiring stories.



We're increasing services for seniors living in regional and disadvantaged communities.

Uniting is committed to ensuring that all older people - regardless of their location, circumstances, or living arrangements - have access to integrated support as their needs evolve with age. This year we focused on addressing nursing recruitment in our regional aged care homes – an ongoing challenge due to competition with hospital roles and limited local training pipelines. Our South Coast aged care team also prioritised fostering inclusive environments, building strong leadership and safety practices, and supporting residents through meaningful, person-centred engagement.



International RN recruitment

In response to the growing demand for skilled nursing staff across regional NSW, Uniting launched the International Registered Nurse Sponsorship Program in August 2024. The program has since brought 48 full-time Registered Nurses into 15 Uniting aged care homes across the state.

Our broader International Pathways Program also built strong momentum in FY25:

In addition, Uniting continued to offer Care and Support Worker Visa Sponsorships. At the end of FY25, 200 permanent staff with 2+ years' experience were given the opportunity to gain temporary visa sponsorship. A further 100 sponsorships have been budgeted for FY26 - ensuring continued investment in a stable and skilled workforce.

Over 100

Interviews conducted for potential sponsorship

51

Offers made for full-time employment and sponsorship

44

Visa applications lodged with the Department of Home Affairs

42

Visa approvals received

30

Nurses and their families successfully settled in Australia.



Ping pong with purpose



This year, a new resident arrived at Uniting Wontama in Orange - a table tennis robot! Gifted through the Ashcroft Group's Let's Make Better charity, the resident robot quickly became a source of joy for residents and staff alike.

It doesn't just serve ping pong balls - when 88-year-old Margaret Jones challenged her automated opponent, it also served up some nostalgia. "It brought back some lovely memories of playing table tennis with my friends 60 years ago", she shared.

Residents Helen Townsend and Sheila Wood have embraced the activity, calling it "great exercise" and "lots of fun." With support from local coach Shin Nakazawa and a clever recycling net system, the robot offers low-impact movement and mental stimulation, especially beneficial for residents living with dementia.

"It's provided so much laughter and entertainment, giving everyone a new and different kind of engagement."

Rosie Dunnett, Service Manager



Uniting Wontama residents enjoy being served ping pong balls from their resident robot, under the guidance of Orange table tennis coach, Shin Nakazawa (back row, right).

Caring for culture



Staff celebrating Holi festival at Uniting Farmborough

This year Uniting Farmborough, on the NSW South Coast, made and shared a short film with Uniting leaders, to spotlight diversity and inclusion challenges and solutions in aged care settings. It captures a powerful journey, sparked by a team member of Punjabi descent who bravely shared their experience of racism in the workplace.

From that moment came reflection, action, and transformation: the birth of the aged care home's Caring With Culture Committee; shared resident, staff and family celebration of the Hindu festival of colours, Holi, and Philippines Independence Day; and a Cultural Appreciation Wall that honours the experiences of the people who help make this home so vibrant.

This story invites us to witness what happens when compassion meets courage - and how a community can grow stronger by choosing inclusion every day. Thank you to Farmborough Service Manager, Liam Fawell, for championing this initiative and for leading his team with heart.

Watch the video.





Social Impact & Advocacy

We're driving solutions to systemic issues that prevent people and communities from reaching their full potential.

Our Social Impact and Advocacy directorate exists to drive social systems change - through innovation, thought leadership, advocacy and partnership – so that entrenched disadvantage is not just disrupted, but dismantled.

The long-term systems aspirations we continue to pursue are:

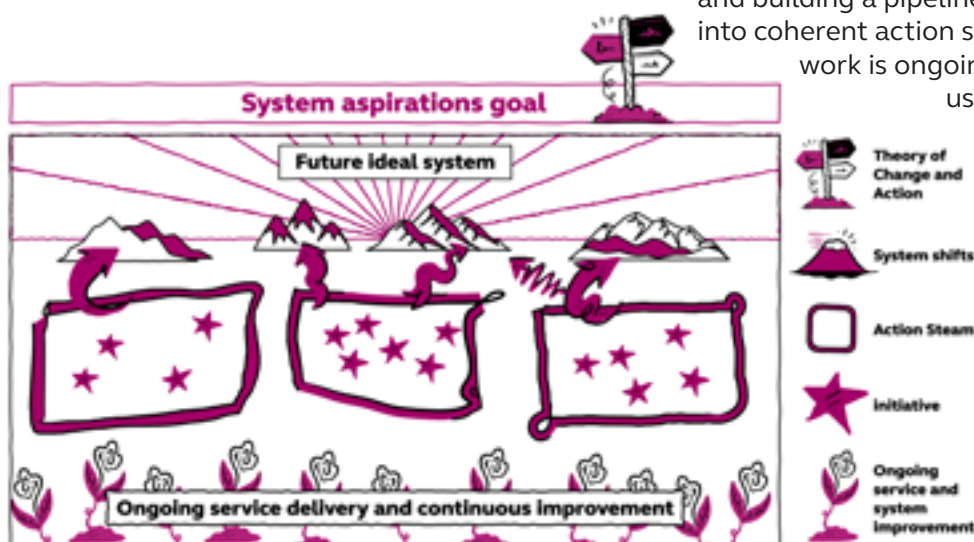
- Universal participation in early learning
- Fewer children entering out-of-home care, including the Closing The Gap target of a 45% reduction for First Nations children
- Improved outcomes for young people leaving the care system
- Better access to care and support for older people to live well and stay connected for longer
- Fairer drug laws and expansion of treatment services
- Just climate solutions that protect vulnerable communities
- Strengthened First Nations self-determination and opportunity.

The way we work is evolving

As we enter the next phase of our 10 Year Strategy, we're evolving the way we work to build on the strong foundations and capabilities across our teams. We've learned a lot over the past 3 years, and we've also recognised that traditional project governance doesn't always suit the complexity of systems change. In some areas, tighter project management is needed while in others, more adaptive and relational approaches are essential.

That's why we're now codifying our systems change methodology, developing a playbook and toolkit, and refining our governance rhythms to better support collaboration, accountability and decision-making as we head into Horizon Two.

This innovative approach was launched at a March 2025 Base Camp workshop, where we began mapping our next horizon of work. We're setting medium-term goals, identifying system shifts, and building a pipeline of initiatives organised into coherent action streams. This collaborative work is ongoing and designed to help us navigate complexity with clarity and purpose.



This diagram illustrates our journey towards any system aspirations goal in our sights, using the symbolic elements of mountains to represent systemic shifts, stars for ideas and innovations, upward arrows for progress, and flowers for growing service delivery and improvement.

We're using our voice, ideas, partnerships and evidence to direct change where it's needed most.

In FY25:

153

Meetings with politicians

16

MP visits to Uniting sites

133

Uniting Church congregations engaged in advocacy actions

3,000+

Media articles published

525

Social media posts with

16.7m

Total reach

Strengthening Communities Alliance

Building momentum for place-based change

Uniting is proud to be a founding partner of the Strengthening Communities Alliance (SCA), actively contributing to strategic direction, advocacy, and partnership development to advance place-based, community-led approaches to social change. Throughout this year, SCA has focused on consolidating relationships and building momentum, positioning the Alliance as a trusted contributor to national policy and practice.

The SCA Leadership Group, comprising senior leaders from 10 organisations, is shaping policy, influencing funding models, and supporting the infrastructure needed for place-based work to thrive. SCA members bring expertise in research, social policy, and community services, and are investing in catalysing place-based change alongside traditional service models. The Alliance is committed to leveraging our collective assets to build a thriving ecosystem for place-based work, this year co-funding a Senior Policy and Partnerships Officer to progress our impact.

SCA has nurtured key partnerships in FY25, including with The Possibility Partnership and PLACE (Partnerships for Local Action and Community Empowerment), to support community-led responses to systemic drivers of wellbeing and equity. Our growing presence in the sector is reflected in regular invitations to contribute to national frameworks and consultations, such as the Commonwealth Whole of Government Framework to Support Community Change – a policy approach designed to enhance how government works with communities to achieve better outcomes.



In April 2025, The Hon. Aileen MacDonald OAM MLC (second from left), met with Uniting Government Relations Lead, Liz Jackson (left), Uniting Director of First Nations Strategy and Outcomes, Gavin Mackey (second from right), and Uniting Head of Media and Advocacy, Alice Salomon (right) to discuss her shadow portfolio responsibilities in Aboriginal Affairs, and gain insights into Uniting's work with First Nations communities.

The Possibility Partnership

Meeting in the middle for systemic change

The Possibility Partnership (TPP) is a bold and collaborative effort to reimagine Australia's human services system. Formed by a coalition of leading non-profits - including Uniting NSW.ACT - this partnership brings together communities, governments, philanthropy, and business to envision a society where everyone has what they need to flourish.

At the heart of this work is a commitment to 'meeting in the middle': convening people from all parts of the system - those delivering services on the ground, those designing policy and rules, and those navigating the space in between - to co-create solutions that drive lasting change.

For too long, people with complex and intersecting experiences of disadvantage have been left behind by fragmented, short-term, and transactional services. The Possibility Partnership seeks to shift this paradigm by building systems based on trust, dignity, and agency - systems that are flexible, relational, and tailored to the needs of individuals and communities.

This year The Possibility Partnership's CEO steward group, of which Uniting's own Tracey Burton is a member, saw TPP's mandate progress from theory to strategy and action - with a dedicated Project Director and other resources co-funded by the partners, to deliver work streams. A 'meeting in the middle' workshop in Taree connected practitioners and senior executives from TPP organisations for 2 days, to explore and define the systemic issues they're committed to solving together. Their work is continuing with an expanded group of stakeholders, including policy makers, government decision makers, and community representatives.

TPP is not a think tank - it's a learning partnership. Our work is grounded in radical transparency, with a commitment to sharing what works and what doesn't.

In FY25 'transforming ourselves' was an important focus for the partnership and included a Youth Accountability initiative to consider how partner organisations can move beyond participation alone, and be more accountable to the young people we serve. TPP also convened First Nations leaders from 6 member organisations to explore the role and potential of First Nations leadership and governance within the partnership. In parallel, communications and policy teams have begun shaping narratives around systems change in human services.

Externally, TPP is engaging with partners like the Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children to explore scaling opportunities for its learning projects, while also initiating conversations with government representatives about TPP's role in broader reform efforts.

Our ongoing involvement in The Possibility Partnership reflects Uniting's deep commitment to place-based transformation, community-led design, and policy advocacy that centres lived experience. By transforming ourselves and meeting in the middle, Uniting and our partners are helping to build a future where services are not just reformed and delivered, but one where systems are reimaged with community.



Firefly Youth Voice Project wins national recognition

Firefly is an initiative supported by Uniting, PLACE, and other partners including the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Vincentia High School, Western Sydney University, and Youth Insearch. Firefly advocates for, collaborates with, and empowers young people in the Bay and Basin region of the NSW South Coast, together with their parents and carers, schools, organisations, governments, and local residents.

The Firefly Youth Voice Project started by engaging young people in discussions about the social issues and challenges impacting them, leading to broader conversations about co-designing positive solutions and outcomes, with the aim of creating lasting change for the local community.

Young people aren't just consulted for this project – they are at the centre of designing the direction and priorities of the work.



Locals enjoy the BMX track developed as a result of the Firefly Youth Voice Project.

Last year, Vincentia High School students researched and developed ideas for projects including a BMX track, a self-expression wall for young local artists, and fundraising for the school's Breakfast Club, feeding students without access to a healthy morning meal.

In May 2025, Firefly employees Tash Busbridge and Christine McInerney-Percy presented the Youth Voice Project at the national Student Voice Conference, hosted by the Australian Council for Student Voice, and were delighted to receive the Highly Commended Partnership for Change Award.

“Everyone was there to learn from each other - students, educators, and policymakers. It reminded us that the work we're doing locally has a place in the national conversation.”

Christine McInerney-Percy, Firefly Community Connector at the 2025 Student Voice Conference

While the national recognition is validating, the team is already looking ahead. “We've always said this work is ongoing,” explained Tash. “It's not a project with an end date. It's about continuing to create spaces where young people are heard, seen and respected.”



The Firefly Youth Voice Project won a Partnership for Change Award this year.

Standing for justice

Children belong in classrooms, not courtrooms

In Australia, children as young as 10 years old can be arrested, charged, and imprisoned. Many of these children are First Nations, and the impacts of early criminalisation and incarceration are lifelong.

This year Uniting NSW.ACT joined more than 150 organisations in the national Raise the Age campaign, calling for urgent reform to protect children and uphold their rights. We hosted a webinar to mobilise awareness and support of this issue among our teams.

Our commitment to Raise the Age aligns with Uniting's broader mission to disrupt entrenched disadvantage and advocate for systems that support children to thrive.

“As a mother of an 11-year-old boy, my belief is that we should not be incarcerating children who have likely offended due to their age, disability, or childhood trauma. Exposing children to these environments can only further damage them, and contribute to an increased likelihood of continued offending.”

Connie Porter, Head of Strategy and Business Support, Uniting Seniors Services

Advocacy in action

Breakthrough for early learning access

In February 2025, the Federal Government passed the Three-Day Guarantee Bill, abolishing the Childcare Activity Test and expanding access to subsidised early learning.

This landmark reform removes a major barrier for families - especially First Nations and low-income households - who previously had to prove work, study, or volunteering commitments to qualify for support.

For Uniting, this is more than policy change - it's the result of years of tireless advocacy, collaboration, and belief in the power of inclusive systems:

“Advocacy wins are rare but sweet. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a truly universal early childhood education and care system. There's more to do, but for now, we celebrate.”

**Tamara Pararajasingham,
Director of Impact and Innovation**

This breakthrough lays the foundation for continued progress and Uniting remains committed to working alongside sector partners, families, and government to ensure every child gets the best start in life.



See Tamara's response here.

Little Lunch at Parliament House

Tackling non-financial barriers to early learning

Despite recent reforms to early childhood education policy, 1 in 10 children in Australia still miss out on quality early learning. And the children who stand to benefit the most - those experiencing disadvantage - are the ones most likely to be excluded.

In 2025, Uniting launched our More than Money campaign at Parliament House in Canberra to spotlight the non-financial barriers that continue to prevent access.

These barriers include:

- Domestic and family violence
- Disability
- First Nations identity
- Kinship or non-parental caregiving
- Language and cultural differences.

Even with subsidies in place, these challenges persist. That's why we're calling for greater investment in navigation programs like Uniting Links to Early Learning (L2EL), which connect families with trained Linkers who help them understand entitlements, find suitable services, and sustain enrolment.

The program has proven impact: 80% of families who start in L2EL go on to enrol their children in early learning.



The campaign launch brought together voices from across the sector, including Minister for Early Childhood Education the Hon. Dr. Anne Aly, Shadow Minister Angie Bell, and leaders from Goodstart Early Learning and Uniting. Together, we reinforced the message that education is a human right, and quality early learning is foundational to lifelong learning and wellbeing.

Uniting continues to advocate for inclusive systems that go beyond financial fixes - because every child deserves the best start in life.

1 in 10

children miss out on quality early learning

5 or more

barriers to access are faced

80%

of L2EL families enrol their children in early learning

Learn more about More than Money and L2EL.



You can click on these QR codes!



Amplifying sector voices

This year, Uniting Airlie Preschool Oatlands and the Uniting More than Money team stood alongside The Parenthood, SNAICC, and The Hive Mt Druitt, calling for the government to address the non-financial barriers preventing 1 in 10 children from participating in quality early learning. This ongoing advocacy project involves many teams, bringing together skills, lived experience, and shared passion for our systems aspiration of seeing every child participate in early learning.



Pictured left to right: Gretchen Young, Executive Director of Programs at SNAICC – National Voice for our Children; Georgie Dent, CEO of The Parenthood; Tamara Pararajasingham, Uniting Director of Innovation and Impact; Rubie Ireson, Director of The Hive Mount Druitt; and Dr Efaq Eva Mohammed, a parent who has received support from Links to Early Learning.

Little Bridges

Our Innovation Framework in action

This year, Uniting’s Social Innovation Hub applied a structured 4-phase approach – our Innovation Framework - to tackle a persistent and deeply inequitable issue: the exclusion of children with additional needs from early learning settings.

Despite growing momentum in policy circles for universal access, many children - especially those with disabilities or developmental delays - remain stuck on waitlists, turned away from centres, and left feeling excluded and ashamed.

1 in 5
 Australian children are impacted by a disability or developmental delay (NDIS, 2023)

Uniting’s Innovation Framework is designed to guide teams through complex problem-solving and service design. It helps move ideas from insight to implementation, especially in areas where traditional methods fall short. The framework supports teams to diverge and converge their thinking, build empathy, test assumptions, and scale impact.

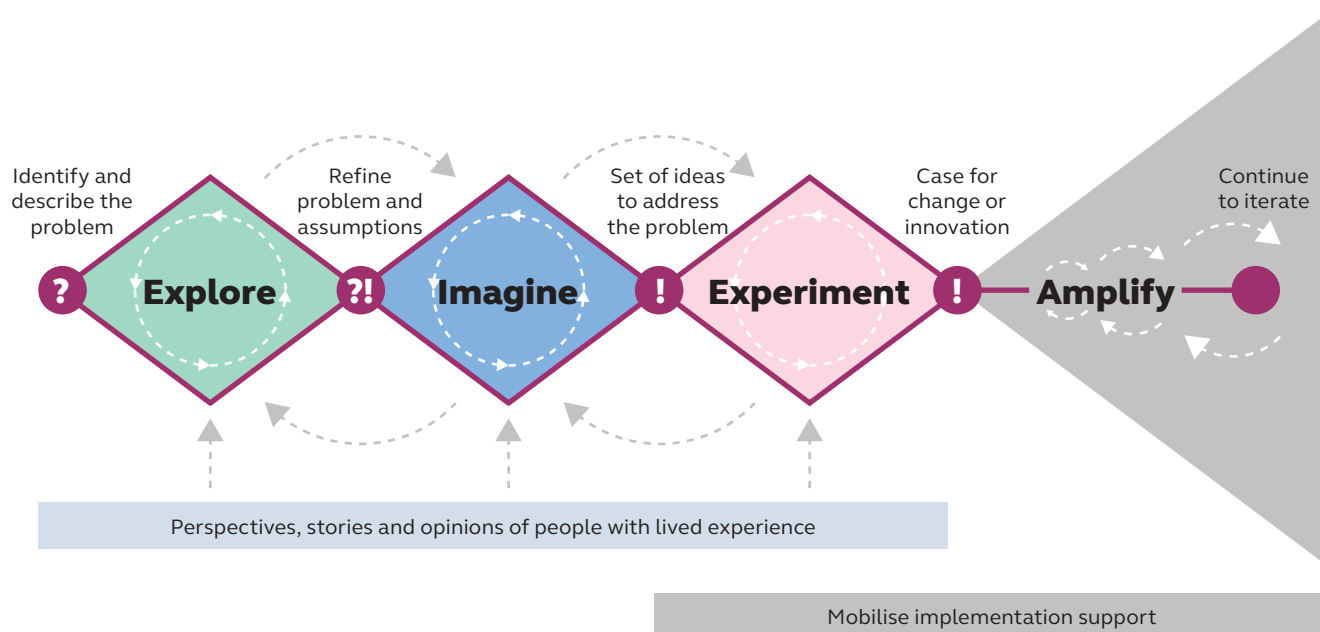
Our Social Innovation Hub applied this Innovation Framework to develop Little Bridges this year:

Using this framework, the team developed Little Bridges, a demonstration project designed to show what truly inclusive early learning could look like. The EXPLORE phase surfaced root causes and systemic gaps. The IMAGINE phase stretched thinking through outcomes and futures workshops, helping define a bold vision for change. In the EXPERIMENT phase, service journeys were mapped, pilot sites analysed, and the model refined using the Desirability, Viability, and Feasibility (DVF) lens.

Finally, in the AMPLIFY phase, the project secured 5-year support from our own Future Horizons Social Innovation Fund, and began preparing for launch in mid-2026. Our Innovation Framework helped the team navigate complexity, stay grounded in lived experience, and move from concept to implementation.

By combining Uniting’s dual strengths in early learning and disability services, Little Bridges delivers a truly integrated approach that challenges segregation and champions belonging for every child. It demonstrates how inclusive practices can become standard, not exceptional.

While Little Bridges is a resource-intensive initiative, the framework itself is scalable and adaptable - ready to support innovation across Uniting, whether the challenge is big or small.



We're collaborating to create, prove and scale solutions for some of the most intractable problems faced by people and communities experiencing disadvantage.

This year Uniting's Research and Social Policy team continued to advance our social impact innovations by generating actionable evidence, shaping public policy, and fostering collaborative partnerships with universities, government bodies, and philanthropic organisations. Their work supports practice improvement and advocacy, helping Uniting build a more inclusive, connected and just society.

In FY25:

41

Projects supported across

15

Universities and research institutes

17

Research submissions lodged

3

Formal university research partnerships:

- UTS Ageing Research Collaborative
- Transforming Early Education and Child Health at WSU
- UNSW Social Policy Research Centre



The launch of the Families Report was widely cited across the sector and helped deepen Uniting's collaborative relationships with research partners and sector peers.

Listening differently

Redefining participation with children and young people

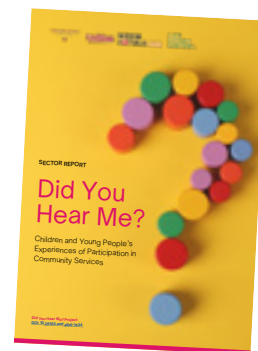
This year, a collaborative research project between Uniting, Western Sydney University, Mission Australia, and Life Without Barriers published Did you Hear Me? –

a sector report exploring the question, “What do children and young people experience when we ‘do participation’?”

The report highlights a critical insight: children and young people don't view participation in the same way that practitioners and services often do. While traditional approaches may focus on consultation, the report reveals that genuine participation means enabling children and young people to influence decisions, shape services, and have their lived experiences recognised as expertise.

Listen to the Did You Hear Me? podcast, discussing the findings with young people and researchers.

Find out more about Uniting's Child Wellbeing Commitment.



Understanding families

Insights from the inaugural Families Report

Uniting launched our first Families Report in FY25 - a landmark research initiative designed to explore the realities of family life and inform systems change through evidence-based insights. Developed in partnership with the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of NSW, this marks the start of a 10-year reporting series that will document and celebrate the experiences of families raising children and young people in contemporary Australia.

69% of children live in couple-parent families

12% live in step and/or blended families

11% live in sole parent families

6% live in multigenerational families

1% live in foster families or families made up of other kin

The inaugural report challenges conventional notions of the nuclear family and highlights the rich diversity of family structures across the country. While 69% of children live in couple-parent families, more than 30% are raised in sole-parent, step and blended, multigenerational, foster or kinship families. These families often face greater financial stress, housing insecurity, and caregiving responsibilities, yet demonstrate remarkable resilience and strong intra-family relationships.

Drawing on national datasets including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census and the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, the report explores how family type influences experiences across housing, health, education, income, and social connection. It reveals that families outside the couple-parent model are more likely to live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rent their homes, and experience financial hardship. For example, foster and other kin families have the lowest average income and highest poverty rates, yet some also report high levels of wealth - highlighting the complexity and diversity within these groups.

The report also examines gendered experiences of family life, showing that women continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of parenting and domestic responsibilities. Sole mothers, in particular, face compounded challenges due to financial stress, housing instability, and caregiving demands. Despite these pressures, most families report high levels of satisfaction with their relationships and a strong sense of connection to their children.

Importantly, this first Families Report calls attention to the need for inclusive policies and services that reflect the full spectrum of family experiences. It highlights the limitations of existing data and systems that often overlook or misrepresent non-traditional family structures - especially those within First Nations communities, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, and LGBTQIA+ families.

The Families Report is more than a research publication - it's a strategic tool for advocacy, systems change, and practice improvement. It will inform Uniting's work across hundreds of services and programs, and support our mission to disrupt entrenched disadvantage. In each reporting period we'll spotlight a key issue affecting families, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative insights to deepen understanding and drive reform.



Find out more about the Uniting Families Report.

We want decriminalisation of the possession of small amounts of drugs for personal use, and expansion of investment in treatment – especially in rural and regional areas.

Driving drug law reform in NSW

Uniting achieved a major milestone with the late 2024 NSW Drug Summit, a direct result of years of persistent advocacy through our Fair Treatment campaign. From bold public actions like the banner drop at St Stephen's Uniting Church, demanding a summit date from Premier Chris Minns, to coordinating regional forums in Tamworth and Lismore to amplify community voices, Uniting mobilised over 130 congregations and partners to push for reform.

The NSW Drug Summit Report, handed to the government in April 2025, included key recommendations aligning with Uniting's longstanding advocacy goals:

- Decriminalisation of personal drug use
- Expansion of treatment and harm reduction services
- Drug checking and education
- Creation of more supervised injecting spaces
- Whole-of-government strategy for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD)

Post-summit, we've been intensifying our efforts to ensure the recommendations are acted upon:

- 1. Joint advocacy with sector leaders** calling for urgent implementation of the Drug Summit Report and to avoid delays similar to those following the 2018 Ice Inquiry.
- 2. Strategic MP engagement** during parliamentary sitting weeks to push for legislative reform.
- 3. Community mobilisation**, including:
 - Over 120 letters sent to MPs by supporters
 - A Changemaker Kit to guide public action
 - Staff engagement through webinars and internal briefing.
- 4. Media and public commentary**, positioning Uniting as a leading voice on drug law reform in NSW.

Looking ahead, Uniting will continue to press for legislative change, deepen place-based partnerships and organising - especially in Western Sydney and regional areas - and elevate lived experience voices to shift public narratives and drive lasting impact.



Members of the Fair Treatment team and reference group gather outside the 2024 NSW Drug Summit.

Support, don't punish

Calling for compassionate reform

On Support Don't Punish Day 2025, Uniting joined forces with our longstanding partners at the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA) to host a powerful event inside NSW Parliament. This global day of solidarity and action for drug law reform brought together people with lived and living experience, community leaders, and Members of Parliament – all agitating for change.

“When a young person is struggling with drug dependency through no fault of their own, the first person they will go to is the Imam. We need laws that will allow us to open a Medically Supervised Injecting Clinic in Western Sydney.”

Hanan Dover, founder of Mission of Hope at the Support Don't Punish event

The event concluded with attendees signing a card addressed to Premier Chris Minns, urging his government to swiftly and faithfully implement the recommendations of the NSW Drug Summit Report. The message was clear: we are united in wanting the people we love to be safe.

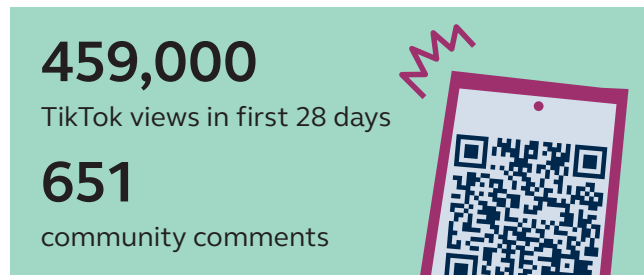


Attendees galvanising at our Support Don't Punish Day 2025 event, held inside NSW Parliament.

Next-gen engagement

This year Uniting also launched The Anti Stigma Project on TikTok - a bold digital initiative aimed at challenging the harmful stereotypes surrounding drug use and amplifying voices of lived experience.

Through short-form video storytelling, the project featured powerful personal accounts, myth-busting facts, and messages of compassion and reform. Each post was designed to spark conversation, shift public perception, and build momentum for drug law reform in NSW.



Find us on TikTok.

Our Fair Treatment team held a roundtable in Western Sydney, ahead of the NSW Drug Summit. Campaign partners from local culturally and linguistically diverse communities, service providers and faith leaders shared their passion, support, wisdom, knowledge, and a deep desire for change.



Joined forces for good

Six leading NSW social service organisations - Uniting, The Salvation Army, Wesley Mission, St Vincent de Paul Society, NSW Council of Social Service and Wayside Chapel - have stood together for fairness, dignity and compassion for every person affected by drug use and/or dependency, joining forces this year to call on the NSW Government to swiftly implement the life-saving recommendations of the NSW Drug Summit Report.

Read the joint statement.



In 24 years of MSIC:

1.35 million

Injections supervised

12,005

Overdoses reversed

18,837

Clients supported

25,276

Referrals to treatment, housing and other community services

2,364

Take home naxolone kits provided



The Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) celebrated 24 years of harm reduction and wraparound support in FY25. Since opening in 2001, there hasn't been a single death from overdose here.



This year Dr Marianne Jauncey, MSIC Medical Director, talked to Dimity Clancey of 60 Minutes about the increasing harms associated with today's illicit drug supply - and the urgent need for effective harm reduction measures.

Watch the interview.

We're leaving as light a footprint on the environment as possible, and advocating to ensure the impacts of climate change do not perpetuate disadvantage.

683

Uniting Climate Action Network (UCAN) and Uniting Church members involved in climate justice training, events or actions.

Uniting for Climate Justice Plan

A people-powered response

The Uniting for Climate Justice Plan was developed in FY25, in response to the growing impacts of climate change across our organisation. As extreme weather events, natural disasters and rising energy costs increasingly affect Uniting employees, clients and services, this plan aims to build the capacity and resources needed to navigate these challenges with resilience and equity. Aligned with our 10 Year Strategy to disrupt entrenched disadvantage and create a better future for more people and communities, the plan recognises that people are at the heart of everything we do, and that climate action must be inclusive and empowering.

Over 1,000 Uniting people have participated in recent climate listening sessions. Their stories confirmed that climate change is not a distant threat – it's already affecting our clients, our staff, and our service delivery. Climate impacts are also deepening disadvantage for many of our communities. Yet, these sessions also revealed the proactive spirit at Uniting, with many of us responding to climate challenges in creative and compassionate ways.

Socially and economically disadvantaged and marginalised people are disproportionately affected by climate change.

United Nations, Climate Change and Social Inequality Working Paper 152

As part of the Uniting for Climate Justice Plan, Senior Social Justice Advocate Thuy Nguyen has established the Uniting Climate Taskforce - bringing together passionate individuals from across our organisation to collaborate on climate initiatives. From hosting guest speakers to exploring solutions and campaigns, the taskforce creates space for shared learning and action.

Recognising that climate change can feel overwhelming, regular workshops and resources equip teams with practical knowledge to help demystify complex issues and foster confidence in taking meaningful action. The Uniting for Climate Justice Plan is not just a framework - it's a movement grounded in compassion, collaboration and the belief that together, we can shape a fairer and more sustainable future.

This year Uniting's Advocacy team explored the connections between catastrophic climate events and vulnerable communities in their Lismore Floods Case Study, offering a deeper look into local lived experiences and the urgency of our collective response.



Graffiti on a house in North Lismore, after the devastating Northern Rivers region flooding.

Uniting at COP29

Climate leadership on the global stage

In November 2024, Uniting NSW.ACT and the Uniting Church were represented at the annual meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, known as the Conference of the Parties (COP). Held in Baku, Azerbaijan, COP29 was our first appearance at the world's largest climate conference. Our participation was a significant step in advancing Uniting's commitment to climate justice, founded in the Uniting Church's longstanding environmental advocacy and embedded in our 10 Year Strategy to disrupt entrenched disadvantage.

Led by Moderator Mata Havea Hiliau, our delegation aimed to elevate Uniting's profile on the international climate stage, advocate for Australia's fair contribution to climate finance, amplify Pasifika and First Nations voices, and support the bid to host COP31 in Australia in 2026.



The Uniting Church Moderator emerged as the most senior faith leader at COP29, offering pastoral support, forging connections with diverse stakeholders, and laying the groundwork for future participation.

Renewable energy victory

Sydney Alliance Assembly is heard

In March 2025, Uniting joined a powerful moment of collective advocacy at the Sydney Alliance pre-Federal election Assembly in Westmead. The Sydney Alliance is a diverse coalition of community organisations, faith groups, unions, and schools working together to make Sydney a more equitable and sustainable city. Launched in 2011, with both Uniting and the Church as founding members, the Alliance uses the tools of community organising to build grassroots power and influence public policy for the common good.

The Sydney Alliance Assembly brought more than 800 people together, including 100 Uniting Church members and 20 Uniting employees, standing together to amplify the voices of those most affected by the cost-of-living crisis, housing insecurity, and climate change. Advocates emphasised the need to ensure policies provide equity of access, particularly for renters, social housing residents, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, heard lived experience stories shared at the Assembly with courage and clarity, backed by clear asks from the Alliance. These asks became harder to ignore in the face of such a strong and unified turnout.

Following the Assembly and sustained advocacy by the Sydney Alliance and its national partners through the Renew Australia for All coalition, the Federal Government announced a 30% upfront discount on home battery systems. This policy win, delivered by Chris Bowen, is a direct response to the community's call for practical, inclusive climate solutions.

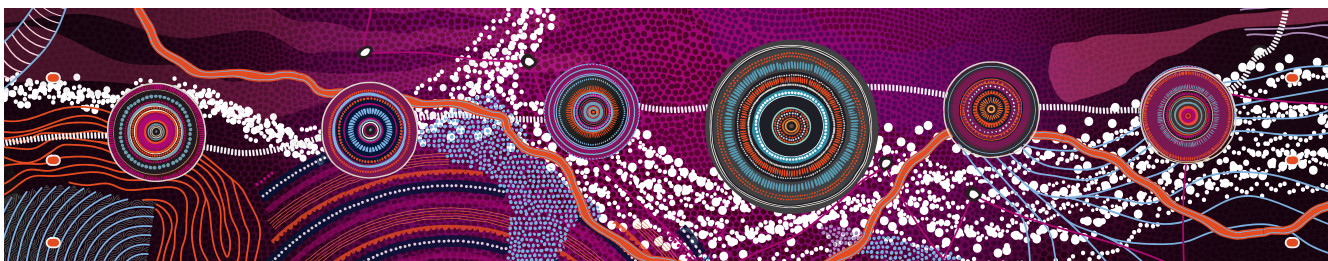
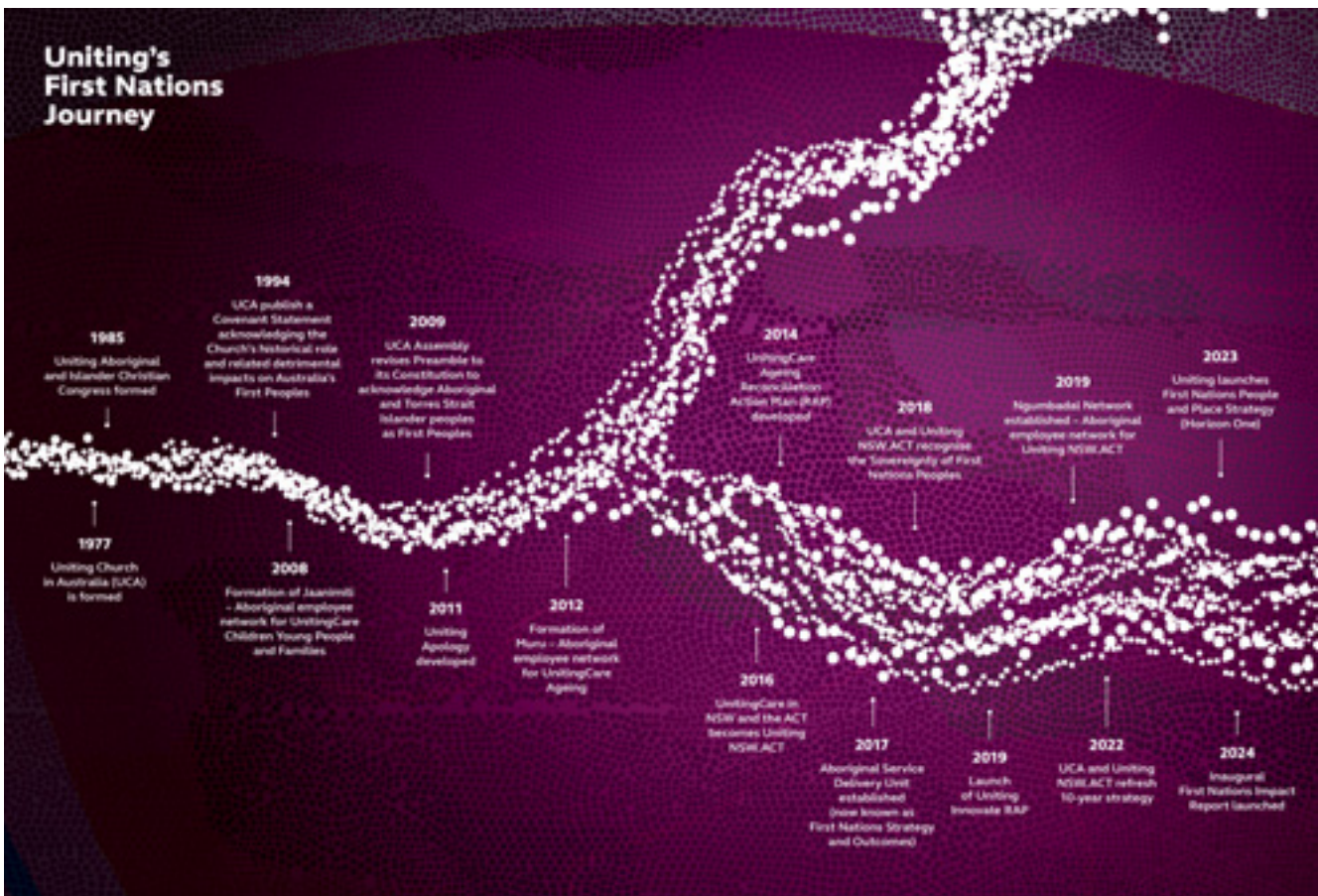
From July 2025, the Cheaper Home Batteries Program will make battery storage more accessible to households and small businesses, reducing energy bills and easing pressure on the national grid. It's a step forward in the transition to renewable energy - and a testament to what can be achieved when communities speak with one voice.



837 people gathered at the Sydney Alliance Assembly ahead of the 2025 Federal Election.

We want First Nations people at Uniting and beyond to be strong, thriving and self-determining.

This vision is central to our First Nations People and Place Strategy, which continues to guide our work across services and communities. FY25 saw the release of our first impact report on the strategy - highlighting the voices of First Nations people, showcasing place-based outcomes, and reflecting on the progress we've made together. This year we also refreshed our Aboriginal Service Delivery Principles - to deepen cultural capability, strengthen community-led partnerships, and embed self-determination into everyday practice.



Our First Nations journey

The First Nations People and Place Strategy Impact Report highlights our progress in cultural capability training, advocacy, and the development of quality partnerships. It also identifies opportunities for growth as we continue working to disrupt entrenched disadvantage and support First Nations people to be strong, thriving, and self-determining.

To celebrate the inaugural Impact Report, the First Nations Strategy and Outcomes team hosted a morning tea at our Pitt Street office in Sydney, with similar gatherings held at hubs across the state. A highlight of the event was the unveiling of a bespoke artwork called 'Journey Flows' (see inside cover) created for the strategy - symbolising our collective journey and the diversity of people, cultures, and Country at its foundation.

"I think it's an honour to see this implemented, and I'm lucky to be an Elder who has lived long enough to be in an aged care facility, given the history of our Elders not living as long. I feel like I'm part of a change, of improvement."

Aunty Rose Porter, a First Nations aged care resident at Uniting Tamworth, who attended a local Impact Report and artwork celebration.

Aunty Rose's words remind us of the deep impact of this work and the responsibility we carry to continue driving positive change - guided by truth-telling, cultural safety, and the leadership of First Nations communities.

Explore the First Nations People and Place Strategy Impact Report.



Our Aboriginal Service Delivery Principles

Working respectfully towards lasting change

This year Uniting proudly refreshed our Aboriginal Service Delivery Principles, a framework that guides culturally responsive, respectful, and high-quality service delivery for First Nations people, families, and communities.

This refresh builds on a legacy of commitment that began with the 2006 Dreaming as One research and initial endorsement in 2009. Since then, the principles have evolved through contributions from our First Nations employees, Jaanimili, the Aboriginal Cultural Governance Circle (ACGC), and most recently, the First Nations Strategy and Outcomes (FNSO) team.

They now reflect stronger cultural capability across our workforce; deeper community engagement and co-design; expanded support for First Nations employees; and clearer pathways for leadership, feedback, and accountability.

The updated principles reinforce Uniting's commitment to:

- Truth-telling and cultural safety
- Self-determination and First Nations-led decision-making
- Place-based, community-driven solutions
- Sustainable capacity-building and respectful partnerships.

By embedding these principles into every aspect of our work - from recruitment and supervision to service design and delivery - we aim to ensure that First Nations people experience services that are not only inclusive and empowering, but also shaped by their voices, values, and lived experiences.

This refresh is more than a policy update - it's a reaffirmation of our purpose: to inspire people, enliven communities, and confront injustice.



Tamara Grant, Uniting First Nations Delivery Lead

Walking together

Strengthening First Nations procurement

We focused on deepening relationships with First Nations businesses this year. Guided by our Aboriginal Inclusion Procurement Policy and a commitment to respectful engagement, our Procurement team worked to build trust and support for the sustainable growth of smaller First Nations organisations.

In FY25 Uniting recorded our highest First Nations spend to date - \$515,000 in Q1 and \$1.3 million year-to-date by Q3 - marking a significant step forward in our commitment to inclusive procurement.

Recent partnerships with Dharug social enterprise Muru Mittigar and Killara Services (one of the largest First Nations owned and operated cleaning companies in Australia), were celebrated with smoking ceremonies - grounding these relationships in respect for Country, culture, and community. This approach reflects our belief that procurement isn't just transactional - it's relational.

Our team also actively participated in community-led events this year, including Yarpa's Meet the Buyer in Parramatta and the Supply Nation Trade Fair in Dubbo - to listen, learn, and connect with First Nations suppliers. These events have already led to new partnerships and opened doors for collaboration in traineeship and workforce development.

Procurement Project Officer Alison Keady explained: "These events are important for us to listen, build trust, and continue walking alongside First Nations businesses."



"It's so good to see a large organisation like Uniting walk the talk. Engaging First Nations businesses who are so committed to providing opportunities for their people will be the number one way to close the gap, and I commend you on your efforts and demonstrated commitment."

Shannon Mallison, Acting Director of Yarpa Hub

As part of broader sector conversations, Chris Heptinstall, Head of Procurement, shared insights on inclusive procurement in the Leading Edge Global Podcast, highlighting the importance of creating culturally responsive systems.

While we embrace progress, we also acknowledge the ongoing challenges of short-term spend, limited supplier pools, unconscious bias, and traditional tendering processes that may not suit smaller First Nations businesses. Tools such as the Uniting First Nations Supplier List, along with consistent engagement and policy guidance, are helping us address these barriers and continue improving towards our broader goal of First Nations self-determination and economic empowerment.

Listen to The Power of Procurement podcast episode.



People Experience



We want to be the best place to work in our sectors, where employees thrive and feel safe and confident to be themselves.

At Uniting, people are at the heart of everything we do. This year, the People Experience team continued to reshape the way we work - enhancing systems, streamlining processes, and adopting new technologies through a human-centred lens. By supporting our teams, we're empowering them to live our values - so they can help to build a better future for the people and communities we serve.

We're striving to attract and retain the best people to serve our residents, clients, colleagues and communities.

This year we began rolling out a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) designed to support resilient and future-ready Uniting teams. We also focused on targeted sponsorships to help address aged care workforce shortages, while strategic workforce planning ensured stability, continuity, and quality of care across Uniting Early Learning services.

myPATH: Putting the 'human' in HR

In February 2025, Uniting launched Phase One of myPATH, our new HRIS powered by Dayforce, a global leader in cloud-based payroll, benefits, workforce management, and talent development solutions. This key milestone in Uniting's digital transformation journey has introduced a single platform for our recruitment, onboarding, and learning.

Since launch, 826 new hire requisitions have been raised, and over 9,500 employees have completed more than 95,000 learning modules. With the initial go-live support period concluding ahead of schedule and only minimal issues reported, the implementation of myPATH is delivering a more connected and user-friendly employee experience.

A post-implementation review captured lessons learned to inform future phases, which will soon expand into payroll and rostering. Phase One has already delivered measurable improvements in efficiency, employee engagement, and workforce enablement, laying a strong foundation for the continued evolution of Uniting's people systems.



Tech is transforming the ways we work

In addition to launching MyPATH this year, Uniting embraced Generative AI responsibly, guided by a new Artificial Intelligence Policy that ensures safe, ethical use across the organisation. Our first in-house AI platform, the digital assistant named Buddy, launched a chatbot function to help frontline teams quickly access policies and procedures, and we've also introduced voice-to-text note capture, multilingual support, and real-time integration with our other care systems – to enhance point-of-care access and reduce admin burden. With strong support across the organisation, Uniting's Digital Technology team is driving transformation that puts people first - improving both employee and customer experience.



Congratulations to Andrew Dome, Chief Digital and Information Officer (2nd from right), who won the Digital Transformation Champion award at the inaugural Digital Nation Awards this year. Doug Hammond, Chief Security Officer (3rd from left), and Ramesh Raghavan, Digital and Innovation Experience Lead (2nd from left), joined Andrew on stage to collect the award.

Sponsoring a better future for aged care

816,000

Care hours secured in FY25
via our sponsorship programs

Over the past 2 years, Uniting has been evolving the way we recruit, retain, and roster nurses and support workers - to ensure continuity of care for our clients and a positive experience for our employees, despite chronic staffing shortages across the aged care sector.

Our Workforce Crisis Response launched in 2023 and, recognising that many aged care workers only held temporary visas, we established a Labour Market Agreement to sponsor care workers as a retention strategy. When only 36 employees were sponsored over the first 18 months, we listened, learned, and redesigned the experience from the ground up.

We set a new goal: sponsoring 150 care workers on 2-year temporary visas. With improved processes and a renewed commitment, we've already successfully sponsored 88 employees, with another 70 on the way.

Like many providers nationwide, Uniting also faced a critical shortage of Registered Nurses (RNs) - a crisis driven by our ageing population, rising healthcare demands, and pandemic-induced burnout. After exhausting domestic recruitment options, we searched beyond our borders.

In August 2024, Uniting partnered externally to begin sourcing international RNs. Internally, our Strategic Workforce Planning, Talent Acquisition, and People Services teams collaborated to build a direct recruitment pathway. The result was the International Pathways Program, designed to support incoming nurses and their families with visa assistance, long-term rental accommodation, furnishings, and local community orientation.

To date, 48 full-time Registered Nurses have joined Uniting under 2-year temporary visas across 15 regional aged care facilities, with 11 more in the process of gaining their visas. Together with our sponsored care workers, these professionals will deliver around 816,000 hours of care across the lifespan of their visas - an extraordinary contribution to the wellbeing of older Australians.

No rental history? No problem!

One of the barriers to attracting international nurses is the difficulty securing long-term accommodation without having a rental history here. Recognising this challenge, Uniting's Talent Acquisition and Property and Housing teams worked closely together – leveraging our size and taking on primary leases, then subleasing those homes to our new RNs, helping them establish stability and build rental credibility.

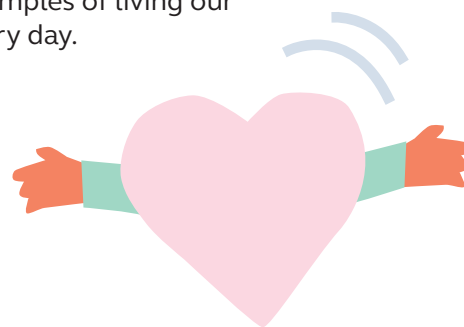


Heartfelt hospitality

Thank you to our incredible Service Managers and local staff for the overwhelming support shown to our newly-arrived international Registered Nurses and their families this year.

From airport pick-ups and town tours to helping set up bank accounts, phone numbers, and even organising shopping trips, games, books, and bikes for the kids - you've gone above and beyond to make their transition seamless and stress-free.

Your kindness, generosity, and commitment to making our new team members feel welcome and appreciated has not only helped them settle in - you've also made them feel at home. You're shining examples of living our values, every day.



Securing the Worker Retention Grant

A major milestone for Uniting Early Learning in FY25 was the successful application for the Worker Retention Grant, a sector-wide initiative aimed at uplifting and retaining early childhood educators.

This achievement will deliver a 15% wage increase over 2 years - 10% already received in December 2024, and an additional 5% in December 2025 - alongside a minimum 20% increase in funding for associated on-costs such as superannuation and payroll tax. It recognises the passion, professionalism, and commitment of our educators and positions Uniting as an employer of choice in early childhood education and care.

Accessing the grant required a variation to Uniting's Enterprise Agreement, approved by the Fair Work Commission and supported by staff through a successful vote. This collaborative effort underscores Uniting's commitment to fairness, quality, and strategic workforce development.

The grant has already made a tangible difference - roster vacancy rates have dropped by 68%, from 170 FTE to 54 FTE, and our educators now benefit from competitive wages above the award rate, plus generous salary packaging options. These improvements support a more balanced workload, reduce reliance on overtime, and foster stronger, more connected learning communities.

“The flexibility and recognition we receive at Uniting make it a place where you can grow your career and still have time for your family.”

Uniting Long Day Care Educator

As we move forward, these investments will continue to strengthen our early learning workforce and ensure every child receives consistent, high-quality care from trusted educators.

We're fostering a culture that is person-centred, inclusive, and safe.

Being person-centred

Listening to our people

The annual Your Voice survey gives our people a platform to share their thoughts and ideas about what we're getting right and how we can improve – so Uniting can be the best place to work in our community service sectors.

Record-breaking participation - nearly 80% of our people – confirmed that, consistent with last year's feedback, we're focusing on the right things.

People leaders were encouraged to share the survey results and collaborate with their teams to co-design improvements – around our systems and processes, career opportunities, and training and development – progressing a Uniting culture where people feel safe, supported, and empowered to speak up.



87%

I am proud of being part of Uniting and the contribution we make in society.

84%

I am able to speak up if I see something that may negatively impact client/customer care, employees or volunteers.

84%

I feel included within my immediate team.

82%

We hold ourselves and our team members accountable for results.

76%

I intend to stay at Uniting.

Celebrating our people

5,167

With Heart Awards nominations to recognise our colleagues in FY25

↑34%

compared with FY24 nominations

1,215

people celebrated milestones of between 5 and 50 years of service

This year we also received a record-breaking number of nominations for our Uniting With Heart Awards. Celebrations for finalists and winners across our regional hubs are an annual highlight, acknowledging the employees and volunteers who embody our values of being compassionate, respectful, imaginative and bold – and who actively contribute to our person-centred, innovative, safe and inclusive workplace culture.



Rachel Lowe
Quality winner
ACT

Rachel is a Family Preservation caseworker who consistently reflects on her practice to improve outcomes for clients. She collaborates across teams and stakeholders, shares resources, and ensures families aren't overwhelmed by services, making it easier for them to achieve their goals. Rachel recently worked with a First Nations family facing the uncertainty of a slow reunification process. She engaged the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advocate and connected the family with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation for culturally sensitive case management. Her efforts led to a change of direction, resulting in the children's swift return to parental care and continued support through Gugan Gulwan.

Meet employees With Heart

Bryce Adamson
Imaginative winner
Far North Coast

Bryce recently joined Uniting as a Specialist Aftercare Coach, bringing energy, creativity, and a solutions-focused mindset to his role. He quickly builds trust with young people who are exiting out-of-home care, supporting them along their journey to independence. When an Aftercare participant confided that he wanted to attend his late sister's funeral in a suit, but couldn't afford one, Bryce took action. He launched an online GIVIT appeal, raising \$300 to ensure the young person could honour his sister with dignity.

Peter Huang
Respectful winner
Parramatta

Peter is Team Leader Coordinator of Supports for Uniting Disability Services, and serves as Deputy Chair of our Cultural Diversity Network. He's been actively promoting events like Harmony Week, Lunar New Year, and Eid, to encourage his whole team's engagement. Three of his 11 direct reports now participate in employee networks. Peter supports multilingual inclusion by validating translated materials and involving his team in the process. He also led the 'Listen to the stories of our culturally diverse people' video and toolbox talk, demonstrating his leadership and commitment to strengthening cultural awareness and respectful connection.



This year:

414

leaders participated in Management Fundamentals training



61

employees studied or gained a qualification at the Uniting Institute of Education, our Registered Training Organisation (RTO) delivering nationally recognised skill sets

58

employees studied for the Certificate III in Individual Support, a foundational qualification for aged care and disability support



Including 4 Berry staff members:

115

completed the Assist Clients with Medication Skill Set course, supporting safe medication practices in our care settings



Leading with purpose

Uniting made bold strides in strengthening our leadership capability this year, as a cornerstone of our organisational culture. From foundational skills to transformation readiness, our targeted programs champion person-centred, inclusive, and safe leadership. Management Fundamentals, Leading with Heart, Leader 360 Feedback, and talent mapping are equipping our leaders with the confidence and tools to guide our people and services into the future, with accountability and purpose.

We've introduced key capability shifts to help leaders navigate complexity, make timely decisions, and collaborate across silos. Talent mapping now reaches frontline leaders, supported by development planning and succession frameworks. Safety remains central, reinforced through structured governance, operational plans, specialised training, and workplace inspections.



Connection creates capability

The Connecting U program supported our frontline teams in aged care homes and early learning centres to build their digital capability this year, with easier mobile access to the Uniting policies, procedures, platforms and systems they need, plus the benefits they want.

Through face-to-face engagement with volunteer ‘connectors’ from all over the organisation, employees were shown how to access Uniting systems via their personal mobile devices, and had the opportunity to ask questions and resolve technical issues on the spot.

Connecting U successfully bridged the digital divide by addressing barriers such as device access, digital literacy, and privacy concerns in a compassionate, respectful and inclusive forum. The program ensured our employees felt confident and connected, regardless of their technical background or device limitations.



A Connecting U staff volunteer takes a support worker at Uniting Kari Court in St Ives through the steps to connect to our systems via her mobile phone.

7,400

employees participated in Connecting U

165

site visits across 75 aged care homes

80%

of aged care and early learning frontline staff now connected

63%

increase in access to our staff rewards program

The success of our staff U Rewards program in FY25 was significantly bolstered by the Connecting U initiative. By enabling mobile access to our systems and improving digital confidence, we facilitated \$219,300 in staff savings through exclusive discounts and cashback offers with everyday retailers including Woolworths, Coles, JB Hi-Fi, and Ampol, helping to ease cost-of-living pressures.



You can click on these QR codes!



Could you be saving with U Rewards?
If you work for Uniting you can sign up now.

We're strengthening our volunteer base to support our services.

In FY25:

1,321

Volunteers across NSW and ACT

+70%

Supporting our aged care homes

Uniting volunteers are connectors of generations, cultures, and lived experiences. They reflect the rich diversity of the communities we serve, and bring our values to life through their compassion and care. Whether they're lending a helping hand or offering a listening ear, their presence is deeply appreciated by our colleagues and clients.

This year Uniting continued to strengthen our commitment to volunteer engagement and support. The launch of our Volunteer Information Hub is improving access to shared resources and enhancing the volunteer experience. Updates to our Volunteer Management Toolkit have provided easy-to-access support and guidance for leaders who work with volunteers. The team who manage our volunteers has also expanded in FY25 to coordinate student placements across our services, reflecting our growing focus on inclusive pathways and a future-ready workforce.



Staff and volunteers celebrating National Volunteer Week 2025 at Uniting Bernard Austin Lodge in Liverpool.

Student placement pilot

A successful pilot program was launched this year for student placements in Uniting Home Care. We welcomed 3 TAFE students from Bankstown Campus studying for a Certificate III in Individual Support - Ageing and Disability. Over a 3-week period, these students were hosted by Support Worker Supervisors across the Southwest, West and Nepean (SWWAN), Sydney Central, and Sydney North regions.

Student placements offer hands-on experience in real-world settings, integrating classroom and on-the-job training by practising and demonstrating skills in a supportive environment. The students in our pilot were all identified as high-potential Support Worker candidates, and our Talent Acquisition team is currently exploring employment opportunities for them at Uniting.

"I experienced being a support worker in a variety of settings, from respite care to community services. All the staff gave me great tips on how to provide support in the best possible way. I saw

Uniting's customer-centred approach being actively implemented, and was able to put my study into practice."

Carolyn, Certificate III Individual Support student at TAFE Bankstown



Find out more about Uniting student placements.



Drive to thrive

This year Uniting launched a recruitment drive in Nambucca Heads and Coffs Harbour, for volunteer mentors in our longstanding 120 Countdown program. Aimed at addressing transport disadvantages in rural communities, our mentor drivers support participants to get the driving experience necessary to qualify for a licence.

“Your team made me feel like I was already part of the community.”

New Volunteer Driver Mentor, Coffs Harbour

Meet 3 special volunteers

This year Heather Parsons, Rhonda Gabriel and Marty Thompson were just 3 of many dedicated volunteers who were nominated for (and won) well-deserved With Heart Awards.

Heather’s volunteering journey began while her husband was a resident in the memory support unit at Uniting Nareen Gardens in Bateau Bay. After he died, she continued running activities, managing the kiosk and library, and offering unwavering support. She’s a powerful example of enduring care and commitment.

With 30 years of committed service, Rhonda is the beating heart of the kiosk at Uniting Mullauna in Blacktown. She not only serves behind the counter - she personally shops for those who can’t go out. Her deep knowledge of each resident’s particular preferences and her tireless devotion make her an irreplaceable part of this community.

Marty volunteers as an Activity Assistant at Uniting Locke Haven in Petersham. While he’s deeply appreciated by both staff and residents for his dedication and impact, his standout contribution is working with socially isolated men, through his ‘talk sports men’s group’. Marty makes the time to get to know each participant personally, using care and creativity to foster meaningful connections. Thanks to his efforts, these men - who were previously hard to reach - now meet regularly, check in on each other, and have even started going ‘on tour’ together. The weekly gatherings have significantly improved long-term health outcomes for these residents, showing how consistent, thoughtful engagement can transform lives.



Thank you to our hundreds of amazing volunteers! Know someone who’d make a great Uniting volunteer? Find out more.



That’s Marty, holding his award!

Our employees love volunteering too!

For many at Uniting, an annual highlight is having the opportunity to give back by helping at end-of-year Christmas parties in our aged care homes:

This experience always 'fills my cup' - it's hands-on and humbling.

What a fantastic day at The Marion in Leichhardt - I played a game of giant Connect 4 with a 99-year-old.

The residents really appreciate new faces to chat with, and it's inspiring to see our frontline teams in action.

37 years and counting

During National Volunteer Week in May, we proudly honoured the incredible dedication of 3 of our own from Uniting Healthy Living for Seniors in Chatswood - Lois, Chook, and Natasha - who have collectively contributed over 37 years of service.

Home and Community Care Team Leader Shruti Shukla shared that these women have consistently offered not only their time but also their natural gifts of understanding and friendship to both clients and staff. Lois, with nearly 18 years of volunteering experience, hopes her presence helps make their day more fulfilling. Natasha, who has served for 10 years, loves being helpful and chatting with clients, bringing warmth and connection to every interaction. Chook, grateful for the support she received when she first moved to Australia, sees volunteering as her way of giving back to Uniting.



Singing to lift hearts and spirits

The Sunshiners are a special group of Uniting volunteers who formed in 2016 to share music and spread joy in our aged care homes. Bringing their own audio equipment, singalong screen, and instruments to every concert, they perform tunes from icons like Elvis and Neil Diamond to uplifting hymns.



The Sunshiners perform at Uniting Bowden Brae, in Sydney's Normanhurst.


Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is part of our culture, our identity, and the future we see for ourselves.

Being inclusive


This year, Uniting stepped up our DEI commitments with renewed conviction. At a time when equity and inclusion are under pressure globally, we chose to lead with courage and clarity of purpose. Valuing the diversity of all colleagues and clients, we embrace inclusion to better fulfil our purpose: inspiring people, enlivening communities, and confronting injustice.

In FY25 we focused on: driving the Uniting Disability Inclusion Action Plan to become a more disability-confident workplace that actively removes barriers and champions accessibility; launching the Diversity Lift and Empower to Achieve Potential (LEAP) sponsorship and mentoring program to encourage and support diverse leadership; and investing in reliable diversity data to better understand our people, effectively measure the impact of our DEI efforts, and ensure that everyone at Uniting feels safe, valued, and supported to grow.


Our 4 employee networks continue to lead Uniting's DEI work by setting priorities, providing advice, and delivering on initiatives that matter.




Uniting
CULTURAL
diversity
network



Uniting
disability
INCLUSION
network



Uniting
PRIDE
network



Uniting
NGUMBADAL
network

Network membership
↑30% in FY25

Cultural safety and belonging
↑5%
(Your Voice survey)

The impact of accessibility and allyship

Our DIAP story so far

In 2023 Uniting launched our first Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), acknowledging the need to become a more disability-confident workplace. The plan marked a shift in focus beyond Local Area Coordination, towards attracting, retaining, and developing people with disability at all levels of the organisation.

In 2025 our Disability Network drove a project to make workplace adjustments for better accessibility and inclusion, led by Network Chair Michael Mathias. In addition, the rollout of disability-confident people leader training was spearheaded by Deputy Chair Shay Costello. Launched in March, this training is equipping

leaders with the knowledge and confidence to create truly accessible and inclusive workplaces. A companion guide is also in development to help our teams access government funding through the Job Access Employee Assistance Fund.

Throughout the year, the network also led disability awareness events that went beyond education to inspire action, by creating space to hear lived experiences, deepen understanding, and encourage active allyship.

Together, these efforts are helping Uniting build a workplace where accessibility and inclusion are not just goals, but everyday practice.

“The answer is disability leadership.”



On International Day of People with Disability, our colleague Shay Costello was interviewed on ABC NewsRadio about leadership and her lived experience.

Shay shared, “Through representation and through seeing people with disability in leadership positions, we’re going to be able to take positive steps towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.” Listen to her interview.



Did you know?

Uniting’s gender pay gap fell from
3.4% to 2.6%
this year.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WEGA)
Pay Gap Report published March 2025

The reduced pay gap (based on median total remuneration) demonstrates our commitment to equity, and enhances Uniting’s reputation as an inclusive and progressive employer.



Advancing diverse leadership at Uniting

Uniting is actively working to build a more diverse and representative leadership team through targeted career and leadership development programs. These initiatives aim to support employees from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ communities, and people with disability.

To ensure equitable access to leadership opportunities, Uniting is addressing unconscious bias and systemic barriers that may hinder career progression. By fostering diversity and equity in leadership, Uniting strengthens our innovation, decision-making, and community representation.

Our DEI leadership programs in FY25:

- **Diversity LEAP:** Lift and Empower to Achieve Potential, or LEAP, is our newly-launched sponsorship and mentoring program offering 38 participants the opportunity to pair with experienced Uniting leaders for career advancement.
- **RISE:** Realise Inspire Support Energise (RISE) is a program delivered in partnership with the Diversity Council of Australia, currently supporting 11 women from CARM backgrounds at Uniting in progressing to senior leadership.

- **Asian Leadership Project:** This nationwide project has been supporting diverse talent since 2017, and this year 2 Uniting participants were selected to be mentored and given external networking opportunities as part of a pilot initiative to break the ‘bamboo ceiling’.
- **First Nations Leadership Program** is currently being developed by the First Nations Strategy and Outcomes Unit in collaboration with the University of Technology Sydney, to create culturally inclusive leadership development and pathways for our Ngumbadal Network.

“We know that we can ‘level the playing field’ at Uniting by providing people from diverse backgrounds with better access to sponsorship and mentoring.”

Tammy Pararajasingham, Director Impact and Innovation + Executive Sponsor of Diversity LEAP

Yalbilinya learning hub

Named after the Wiradjuri word for ‘learn’, Yalbilinya is Uniting’s new cultural learning hub – an internal platform designed to deepen our understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, and contemporary realities. It supports all employees in building cultural humility, empathy, and inclusive leadership – honing our commitment to cultural capability and First Nations empowerment. Learning modules launched this year explore the impacts of colonisation, while live sessions were held to discuss unconscious bias and cultural load.

“Uniting’s Cultural Capability training gave me access to parts of Australian history I hadn’t heard before. It was both confronting and deeply important to learn.”

– Andrew Dome,
Chief Digital and Information Officer

Elevating young First Nations voices

In FY25 Uniting launched the Ngumbadal Young Leaders Advisory Group to empower emerging leaders between the ages of 18 and 28. This group will play a vital role in shaping cultural conversations and guiding Uniting’s First Nations People and Place Strategy. Members contribute to key initiatives, including NAIDOC Week events and our annual Ngumbadal Gathering, and provide feedback on First Nations impact programs.

Participation involves monthly meetings and collaborative engagement with teams across Uniting. No prior leadership experience is required - just a commitment to cultural inclusion and justice. Our young leaders are being supported by the Ngumbadal Leadership Group, ensuring alignment with broader governance and cultural safety goals.

Left to right: Mckye Tucknott, Maddi Buckland, Emily Dixon, Rhiannon Alexander, Majayda Darcy, Greg Kennedy.



We're transforming our work practices to support the safety and wellbeing of our people.

Being safe

Building a strong safety culture

In FY25, Uniting made significant strides in strengthening our safety culture - placing people at the heart of every initiative and embedding safety leadership where it matters most.

↑52%

hazard reporting (feeling safe to report)

↑2%

incident reporting

This increase in safety reporting reflects a dual transformation - cultural and technological. The QUASAR system, our central Work Health and Safety (WHS) platform, had a major upgrade to improve usability and accelerate response times.

Enhancements included:

- Clearer incident categorisation
- Immediate notifications to WHS and Injury Management teams
- Streamlined reporting processes.

These changes, aligned with our Keep U Safe safety management system, empower staff to report hazards and incidents more efficiently and accurately. QUASAR's integration with mobile tools like the note-taking Roam app, and its alignment with human-centred design principles, reflect our ongoing commitment to safety, transparency, and continuous improvement.

In our Home Care North Coast/North West region, a spike in workplace injuries during early FY25 prompted a grassroots response. Frontline teams, supported by injury management and safety experts, led a person-centred transformation. Through improvements in processes, education, and reporting, the region achieved an 89% reduction in injuries between the first and second half of the year.

Keep U safe



Smart Starts

For Fiona Burns, Head of Seniors Services on the NSW South Coast, safety leadership is not about ticking boxes. Her Smart Starts approach sets the tone at the beginning of each new day: a clear check-in, a mindful huddle, and a moment to centre the team.



Fiona Burns

Conversation is at the core of Fiona's safety practice. Short toolbox talks, peer-led learning circles, open reflections, and lessons shared across services keep safety real rather than reactive. Safety Champions have also been appointed at every site, while dedicated WHS education days boost skills and clarity.

“We don't wait for a problem. We speak up, we look ahead, and we listen to each other. When someone raises a concern, we act on it. That builds trust.”

Fiona Burns
Head of Seniors Services, NSW South Coast

As Fiona explains, “In our fast-paced lives, we're constantly making time-related decisions. Being in a hurry is rarely the root cause of an incident. More often, it's a symptom of poor planning, poor decision making, and ineffective time management - all of which are preventable with proper preparation and organisation.”

Safety is part of each team's rhythm now. Whether Fiona's inspecting a resident's room or walking the floor with a colleague, everyone is building daily habits that reduce risk.

“Fresh eyes see more. We encourage curiosity and pride in doing things properly, especially when it comes to equipment and electrical safety”, she shares.

When asked how Fiona makes safety matter, she's quick to respond: “Make it personal. Talk about going home safely. Use stories. Involve the team in solutions. And never underestimate the power of visibility and listening - when people lead with care, culture shifts.”

Safety Champions on the job

Our South Coast Residential Aged Care teams exemplify frontline safety leadership. Through their newly-established network of Safety Champions, 2 team members at each home now share these responsibilities:

- Conducting monthly safety walks
- Leading safety meetings and incident investigations
- Driving proactive hazard identification and reporting
- Delivering inspired safety sessions and communications.

As a direct result:

↑38%

hazard reporting and

↓74%

injuries in first quarter after implementation.



Property & Housing



We're investing for social impact from sustainable funding sources.

In FY25 Uniting deepened our commitment to housing equity by launching a comprehensive Housing Strategy that responds to the distinct needs of both older Australians and young people transitioning from care. This strategy recognises that safe, appropriate housing is foundational to wellbeing and independence - whether it's enabling seniors to find secure and stable homes that are suitable for later life, or supporting young people to avoid homelessness and thrive beyond out-of-home care.

To underpin this vision, we've extended our Capital Strategy from 2026 to 2040, shifting from a 10-year to a 15-year horizon. This longer-term approach allows us to plan and invest more strategically in the renewal of ageing assets, the creation of new housing stock, and the delivery of integrated support services. It also ensures we can respond flexibly to market conditions and demographic shifts, while maintaining a strong focus on social impact and financial sustainability.

Together, these strategies position Uniting to lead with purpose - building communities that are inclusive, resilient, and designed for the future.

We're using our assets and investments to improve the lives of the people and communities we serve.

Mattie finds her footing with Uniting's Youth Initiative

When Mattie turned 18 and exited out-of-home care, she faced the uncertainty of independent living. Vulnerable to homelessness, she was welcomed into Uniting's Youth Initiative (YI) - a program designed to support young people at risk.

At the heart of YI is Advantage Thinking, a strengths-based approach that focuses on unlocking potential, promoting positive identity, and ensuring young people are seen, valued, and supported to thrive. It's not about fixing problems - it's about recognising and building on what's strong.

Mattie is pursuing a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education, and hopes to become an educator.

"Without Uniting I wouldn't know what or where I would be - not just with housing, but with a lot of things in life."

Mattie, Youth Initiative participant

"Uniting has helped me get my own place and assisted with rent and utilities," Mattie shares. Her home is now a safe space for her and her 2-year-old son, whose daycare is just a short walk away. Uniting is working with the real estate agency to transfer the lease into Mattie's name - a step towards long-term stability. "I'm going to try and keep staying here," she explains.

Since its launch over 6 years ago, our YI program has supported more than 145 young people, with stable housing and other wraparound supports. As YI Coordinator Christopher Lindeman explains, "This model offers young people a crucial foundation for their long-term stability and independence."

Mattie's story shows what's possible when young people are empowered through Advantage Thinking, and given the tools to build a future on their own terms.

80/20: Future focus on retirement living

Uniting is placing retirement living at the heart of its future developments, with a bold commitment to an 80/20 mix – 80% Independent Living Units and 20% Residential Aged Care beds. This approach, described by Simon Furness, Director of Property and Housing, as a 'continuum of living', reflects a strategic pivot to meet the evolving needs of older Australians and future demand.

This shift is designed to help address Australia's projected shortfall of 40,000 aged care beds by 2030 - a significant gap in a sector with around 209,000 beds currently. Uniting is not only investing in new RAC developments but also re-evaluating the role of existing assets, choosing to extend the life of some of our older RAC homes in response to this forecast undersupply.

“Retirement living is our growth area: 80% of our forecast capital investment will deliver new independent living units and 20% will provide new aged care beds, with a focus on delivering integrated living environments for residents.”

Simon Furness, Director of Property and Housing

“Our capital plan has always focused on new RAC beds,” Furness explained. “But now we’re rethinking the revitalisation of older assets, instead of closing them down as we build new ones. We’re committed to improving our existing homes as well as developing new homes.”

Simon also highlighted several development opportunities on vacant sites in Sydney's growth corridors, including Liverpool, Campbelltown, Leppington, and Penrith. “We want to address areas with a high need for seniors services, particularly for people of low means,” he said.

The 80/20 focus goes beyond infrastructure. It represents an evolution from transitional care models to permanent, supportive communities. Uniting's retirement villages are being designed not as resort-style enclaves, but as places where residents can live independently and be supported until end-of-life, with tailored ageing-in-place services.





2025 National Retirement Living Awards

Hawkins Place by Uniting

Finalist: Best Community Development

People's Choice Award: Best Retirement Community

Being acknowledged as one of Australia's top retirement communities – where wellbeing comes first – is a reflection of the passion, design excellence, and strong sense of community that define Hawkins Place, in the heart of Leichhardt.



We're actively balancing our property portfolio to either achieve high returns that can be reinvested in initiatives with social outcomes, or to provide facilities for people and communities in need.

Jade finds a place to start over

When Jade* received a call offering her a unit through Uniting's Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF), she didn't expect much. Years of instability had taught her not to. But what she found was more than shelter - it was safety, dignity, and the possibility of belonging.

Jade's journey to this point had been marked by hardship. Growing up in Randwick, she knew from an early age that she was different. As a trans woman, she faced rejection, abandonment, and trauma. After marrying a woman who embraced her identity, Jade built a joyful life in London. But when her partner's mother fell ill, they returned to Australia. Soon after, Jade's wife passed away, and her world collapsed.

What followed was a cycle of precarious housing and declining health. At one point, Jade lived in a halfway house where a woman was murdered next door. "This wasn't a place of shelter or safety - it was a crime scene," she explained.

Now, from her new home in Sydney's Inner West, Jade looks out at the rooftops and church spires with cautious hope. "I'm just waiting for someone to tap me on the shoulder and tell me it's time to move out," she admits.

But this time, things are different.

"This is your home now, Jade," she was told by Robert Padilla, Uniting's SAHF Manager. "Unpack everything, settle in, and get involved in your new community."

For the first time in a long time, Jade is beginning to believe in the future again.

*Name changed to protect privacy.



Expanding low-cost rental housing for seniors

Housing insecurity undermines the right to age in place. For older home owners, aged care support is designed to give them the ability to stay in their own home, as they age – if they choose. But for seniors who don't own their home, are unhoused, or at risk of homelessness, this choice is often not available.

Uniting is currently the only Social and Affordable Housing Fund provider in NSW that's dedicated to older people. Through this scheme, known as SAHF, we're providing 600 purpose-built homes for low-income older Australians – most of them women. These are not transitional shelters or temporary solutions - they are real homes: safe, secure, available for the long-term, designed for older people, and connected to community and care. These homes include accessible design, proximity to transport and services, and built-in links to our home care teams. Our residents have options – for support when needed, and for independence when it matters most.

This integrated model works. It supports choice and improves wellbeing. It also reduces pressure on the aged care and healthcare systems, by reducing hospitalisation and preventing premature admission to residential care, which dramatically improves quality of life.

Yet our SAHF work is only part of the story. Beyond those able to access social housing, there is a growing, invisible cohort of older people - especially older women – with no housing security and no way to afford private rent. That's why we've embarked on a deliberate plan to transition many of our registered retirement villages exclusively for low-cost rentals.

As part of our Affordable Rentals Program, 40 retirement villages across NSW and the ACT are currently being converted to rental-only residences. When completed, we'll be providing 1,700 homes across 68 villages with long-term tenure, low-cost rent, and embedded support.

CJ, a resident at one of our affordable rental villages, has lived through cancer, divorce, and years of unaffordable rent. She now swims weekly, bakes for her neighbours, and says it's the first time she's felt at home in a decade. Micah, a former tradesman and widower who struggled to afford rent on the aged pension, now lives in one of our units and can golf with mates every Friday. He's surrounded by neighbours and friends who check in, and a support worker who visits weekly.

Stories like CJ's and Micah's tell us that housing equals health. That loneliness, poor nutrition, medication mismanagement and decline can be prevented by something as fundamental as a front door that's yours.

68

retirement villages transitioning to low-cost rental housing

1,700

independent living units will be dedicated for low-cost rental housing

600

SAHF homes purpose-built for lower-income seniors

In partnership with Homes NSW, Uniting provides 600 Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) units that offer stability to more than 700 senior tenants. Our 25-year rental agreements deliver long-term security and have transformed the lives of many residents.

Pod villages: Collaborative crisis response

In early 2022, two catastrophic floods devastated Northern Rivers NSW, impacting around 30,000 people and condemning over 4,000 homes in the region. In response, the NSW Reconstruction Authority established 11 temporary accommodation sites – called pod villages – providing shelter and community connection for more than 1,000 people. Uniting was commissioned to manage 3 of these villages.

At the heart of this initiative is the Wardell Community Village, purpose-built to support the displaced First Nations community of Cabbage Tree Island. The site includes a primary school and Aboriginal Medical Centre, reflecting a holistic approach to recovery.

Each Uniting pod village is led by a Village Manager from our Property team, who oversees tenancies and operations, and a Program Coordinator from our Communities team, who manages casework, youth programs, and service coordination. This dual structure fosters respectful engagement and responsive care.

“What sets Uniting apart is our innovative program design. Our Housing and Communities teams work hand in hand, with clearly defined roles and shared decision-making. This collaboration ensures psychosocial safety and tailored support for our diverse residents.”

Dash Boyce, Program Coordinator at Wardell Community Village

With only 6 villages funded until December 2026, the program is transitioning to Homes NSW. “We’re proud of what we’ve achieved and look forward to working with Homes NSW to secure long-term housing solutions for our remaining residents,” Dash adds. “It’s been incredibly rewarding – but there’s still more to do.”



Dash Boyce, Wardell Community Village Program Coordinator (bottom right), with colleagues: Mick Webb, Wardell Village Asset Manager (bottom left); Csilla Foraita, Brunswick Heads Village Program Coordinator (top right); and Anne McArdle, Brunswick Heads Village Asset Manager (top left).

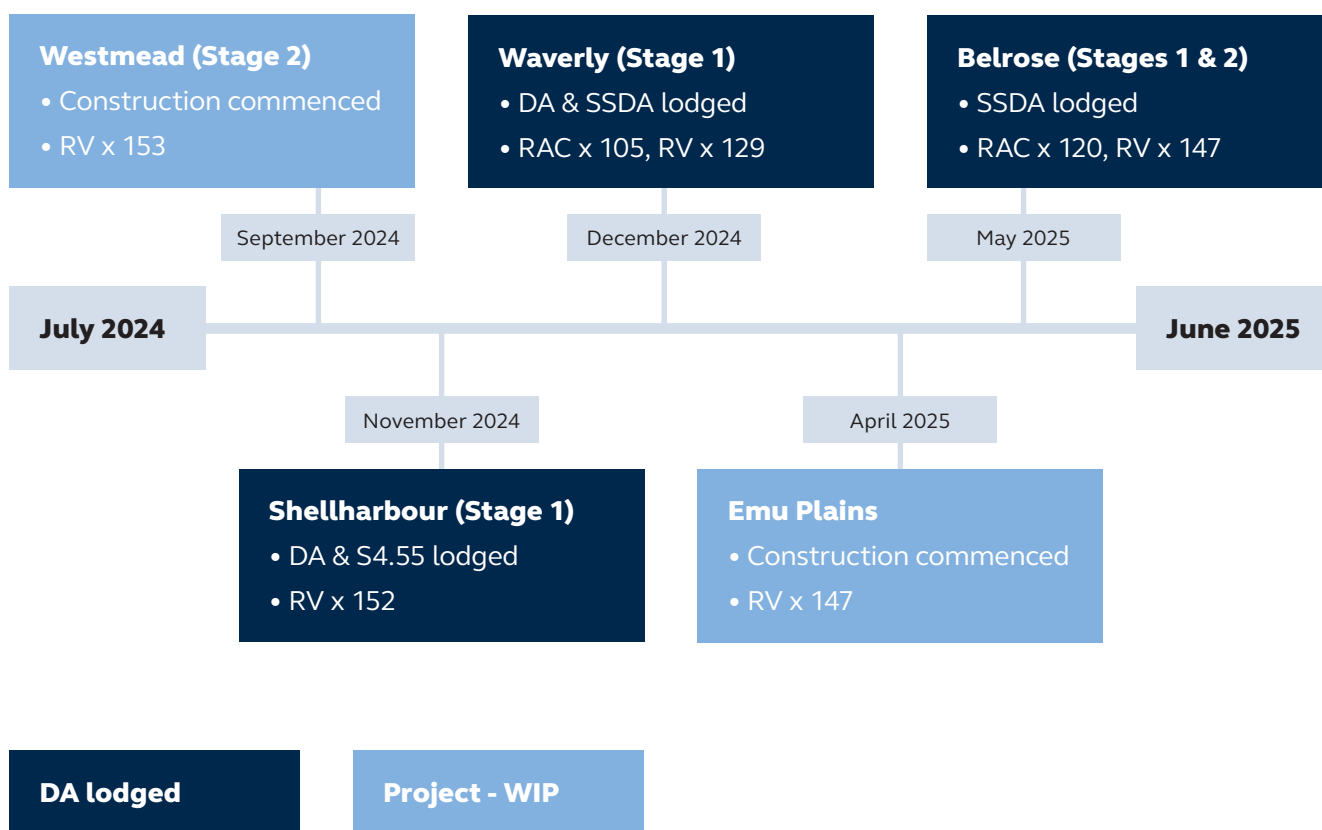
FY25 construction and development milestones

Preparing a Development Application (DA) is an intensive and multifaceted process that demands meticulous planning, coordination, and documentation. From site analysis and community consultation to architectural design, environmental assessments, and compliance with planning controls, each DA represents months - sometimes years - of behind-the-scenes work to bring a project to life.

This year, Development Applications (DAs) and modifications progressed across multiple Uniting sites, including DA approvals for Bateau Bay and Shellharbour, and DAs submitted and under assessment for Kingscliff, Shellharbour, Waverley and Belrose.

Uniting also began construction on Westmead Stage 2 and Emu Plains Stage 2 retirement villages in FY25, while our Yamba apartments received their Occupation Certificate.

Major projects:



Note:

- Section 4.55 (Development Application Modification)
- SSDA refers to State Significant Development Application
- RV = Retirement Village
- RAC = Residential Aged Care
- DA = Development Application
- SSDA = State Significant Development Application
- Section 4.55 or S4.55 refers to Development Application Modification
- WIP refers to work in progress

Capital works and asset management

Delivering impact at scale

This year our Capital Works team achieved a record-breaking milestone - delivering the highest number and value of capital works projects, totalling around \$65 million.

This included refurbishments in 76 Independent Living Units and 349 Residential Aged Care rooms, alongside hundreds of minor projects such as lift installations, roof replacements, and living environment upgrades.

Our Asset Management team stands out for operational excellence this year. Over 70% received With Heart Award nominations across various categories, reflecting their commitment, innovation, and collaborative spirit.

Our ongoing painting program continues to be a cornerstone of asset preservation. It's not just about making spaces light, bright, and welcoming - it's about protecting and sustaining our buildings, both externally and internally. This proactive approach ensures the longevity and integrity of our infrastructure.

Smart 3D printing



Many of our facilities are ageing, and with that comes the challenge of maintaining older furniture, fixtures, and equipment. Often, small but essential components - like the tiny spinners and cogs used in blinds - are no longer available for purchase. Replacing entire blinds due to the absence of a single plastic part can become prohibitively expensive across a site.

To solve this problem, one of our innovative maintenance officers introduced 3D printing and scanning technology to replicate these hard-to-source parts at virtually no cost, saving thousands of dollars in blind replacements. It's a simple yet powerful example of how smart solutions can deliver real value - preserving functionality, reducing waste, and protecting our budgets.

In FY25 the Asset Management team completed:

137,158

work orders ↑10.6% on FY24

980

operational buildings maintained
(Gross Building Area of 797,473m²)

124

operational leases maintained
(Net Lettable Area of 33,885m²)

5,729

Residential Aged Care beds maintained across
110 buildings (Gross Building Area of
406,918m²)

3,142 units

in Retirement Villages and Rental Housing
maintained across 787 buildings
(Gross Building Area of 406,918m²)

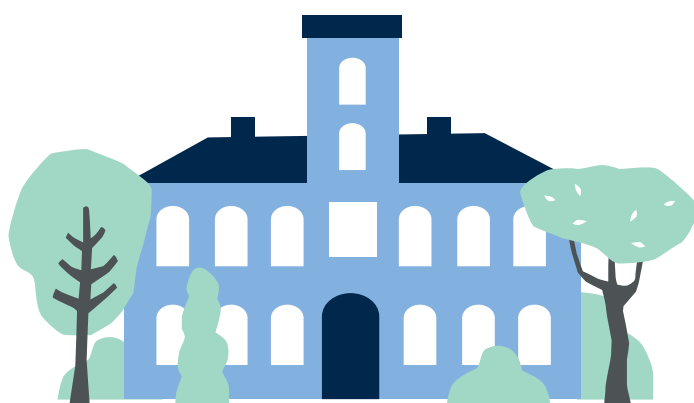
In FY25 the Capital Works team refurbished:

102

Independent Living Units

115

Residential Aged Care rooms



From crisis to comfort

How Edina helped Trisha rebuild

Whenever possible, Uniting embraces a 'meanwhile use' approach, transforming underutilised or temporarily vacant sites into safe, supportive environments for people experiencing crisis. This not only maximises the value of our existing infrastructure but ensures that opportunities to offer shelter, dignity, and stability aren't wasted.

At 70, Trisha made the brave decision to relocate interstate to escape domestic violence, arriving at Edina - one of our transitional housing sites thoughtfully converted from an aged care home into a place where healing and recovery can begin.

Trisha was given her own private bedroom and bathroom, along with access to shared kitchen and lounge areas that fostered connection and community. "Edina gave me the space and stability I needed to focus on my mental health and plan for the future," she shares.

During her 10-month stay, Trisha engaged with support services that helped her apply for permanent housing, reconnect with her daughter, and prepare for independent living. She now resides in a modern apartment in the same suburb as her daughter - and has been joyfully reunited with her dog, Sprocket.

"I can only express deep appreciation for the support I received at Edina. It played a crucial role in helping me regain my independence and to start moving forward again."

Tricia, Edina resident for 10 months

Success at Edina is measured not just in accommodation outcomes, but in dignity, safety, and the ability to rebuild. By temporarily repurposing places like Edina, Uniting ensures our sites realise the potential to change lives.

Renovating with heart: Keeping residents happy at home

In FY25, Uniting successfully delivered major refurbishments at 2 residential aged care homes - The Marion in Leichhardt and Ronald Coleman Lodge in Woollahra - without displacing a single resident. At The Marion, 20 bedrooms were renovated over a 9-month period, while Ronald Coleman Lodge was fully completed in just 5 months.

This was achieved through a carefully coordinated approach: residents vacated their rooms during the day to allow construction teams to work, accessed alternative en suites for personal care, and returned each evening to sleep in their own beds.

Maintaining familiar surroundings and community connections throughout the process ensured continuity of care and comfort, while enabling critical upgrades to be delivered efficiently and respectfully.

Connecting with Country

Uniting is committed to incorporating elements of the NSW Government's Connecting with Country Framework in all current and future development projects. Led by Dillon Kombumerri, a proud Yugambah/Quandamooka man and Principal Architect at Government Architect NSW, the framework seeks to embed respectful consideration of Aboriginal culture, heritage and Country throughout all stages of development planning, design, construction and delivery. It embraces the Aboriginal philosophy that 'If we care for Country, Country will care for us'.

Our Property and Housing team works closely with local Aboriginal communities to incorporate local knowledge and language wherever possible. We actively name our services and sites in First Nations languages, and we embrace their resurgence. Across the Uniting property portfolio, we also monitor and manage sites with cultural or heritage significance to First Nations peoples at both the state and local levels.

We're ensuring our activities, services and buildings leave as light a footprint on the environment as possible, and supporting our communities to be carbon neutral by 2040.

Treading lightly, leading boldly

Since 2009, Uniting has pursued a bold and systematic approach to sustainability - one that balances environmental stewardship with social justice. From biodiversity conservation and energy efficiency to climate activism and ethical investment, our commitment is to tread lightly on the earth while supporting those most impacted by climate change.

Uniting's designation as a Gold Partner with the NSW Government's Sustainability Advantage Program continued this year, recognising our ongoing and outstanding environmental leadership.

In FY25:

4,379 kWp

solar panel capacity (↑20% on FY24)

314,467 kilowatt hours

of solar production exported to the electricity grid (↑18% on FY24)

8 electric vehicles

and

542 hybrid vehicles

in the car fleet (↑37% on FY24)

35%

renewable energy purchased from the electricity grid (↑16% on FY24)



Did you know?

Uniting's fleet of buses, for transporting aged care residents and home care clients to activities and appointments, is actually one of the largest in NSW. So it makes sense for us to explore V2X (Vehicle-to-Everything) electric buses as part of our sustainability strategy.

V2X electric buses are equipped with bi-directional charging technology that can send energy back to the grid (V2G), buildings (V2B), or other loads (V2L).

We're investigating the potential for V2X buses to:

- Be charged using solar energy generated at our sites during the day
- Return stored energy back to our sites while parked overnight.

This 2-way energy flow could potentially allow our aged care homes and retirement villages to operate off-grid, enhancing energy independence and reducing carbon emissions.

How we've lowered our footprint this year

• Solar energy expansion

We've installed 1,004 additional solar panels with 441.84 kilowatts of solar capacity across 9 sites, including aged care homes, early learning centres, and disability accommodation.



• Waste reduction

A food organic waste trial was implemented, with full rollout planned across our aged care homes and early learning centres by 1 July 2026.

• Sustainable design

Environmental sustainability guidance has been embedded into the Uniting Design Guide this year - a framework that integrates sustainable and inclusive design principles with brand consistency across Uniting's built environments.



• Energy benchmarking

NABERS energy audits were completed across 20 aged care homes this year, helping us benchmark and improve energy efficiency.

• Electric maintenance van and lawn equipment

This year we introduced an electric maintenance van and rolled out electric lawnmowers in the ACT - eliminating fuel handling, servicing, and noise disruption for residents.

• Electric buses with V2X technology

We began investigating electric buses with Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) capabilities that can further reduce our emissions.



Carbon emissions reduction progress

In FY25:

↓12,440 TCO₂
= 34.1%

carbon emissions reduction since FY10

Uniting has achieved a 34.1% reduction in our carbon emissions since measurement began in 2010, equivalent to 12,440 tonnes of CO₂. This milestone reflects our ongoing commitment to reaching carbon neutrality by 2040.

We're actively reviewing our operations and supply chains to uncover further opportunities for emissions reduction, renewable energy usage, and carbon offset programs. Our engagement with customers, suppliers and employees fosters a shared culture of sustainability and encourages the adoption of best practices across all areas of our work. Uniting remains firmly on track to meet our green goals.



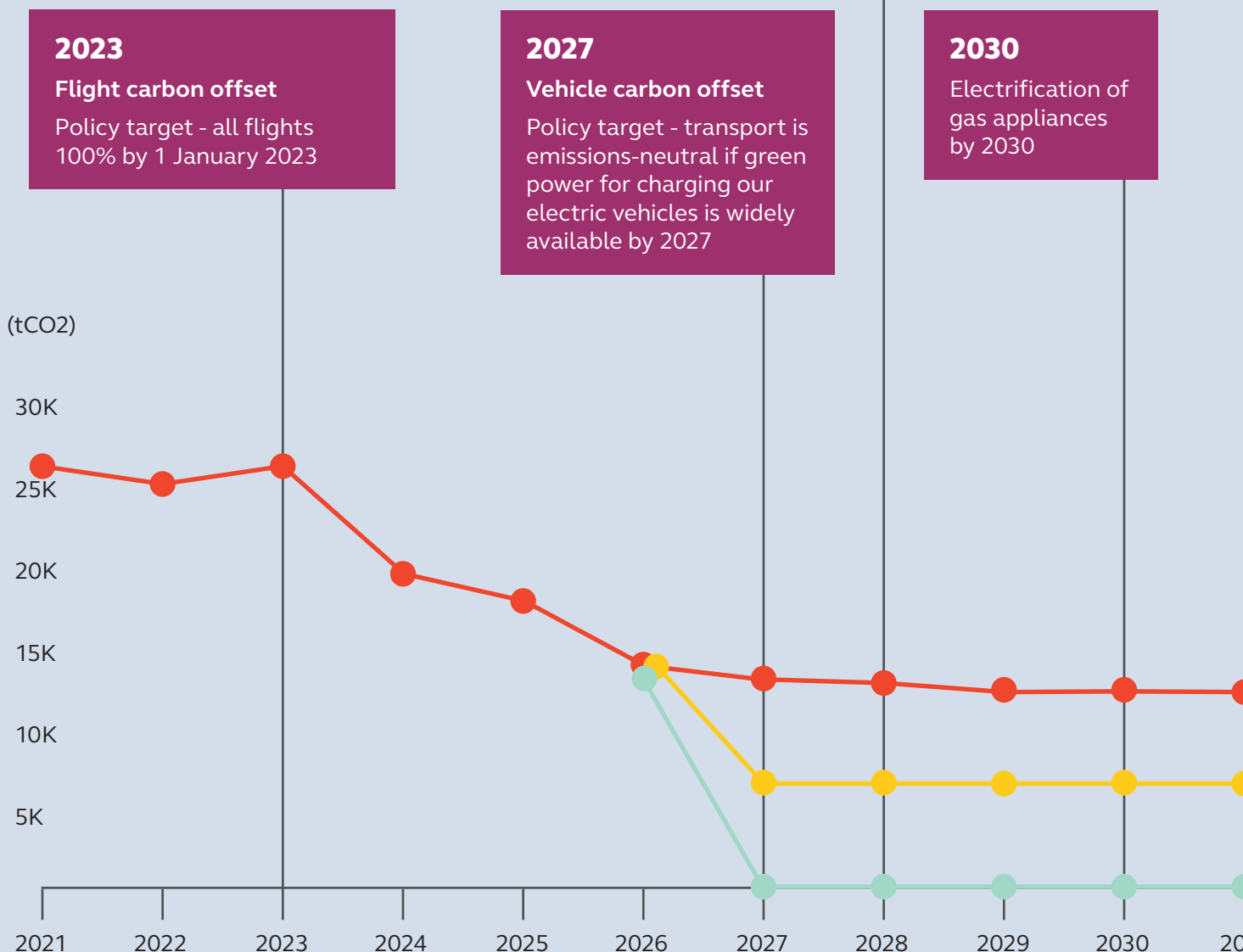
Our evolving roadmap to net carbon neutrality by 2040

Uniting's commitment to carbon neutrality is strengthened by the Synod of NSW & ACT's forward-thinking emission reduction policies. While implementing their policy targets, we're continuing to increase solar power on our own buildings and purchasing more green power.

We're increasing energy efficiencies through benchmarking sustainable performance with NABERS, which is reducing the amount of power we purchase from the grid.

Key

- Project with no solar farm
- Project with 5MW solar farm
- Project with 20MW solar farm



2023

Flight carbon offset

Policy target - all flights 100% by 1 January 2023

2027

Vehicle carbon offset

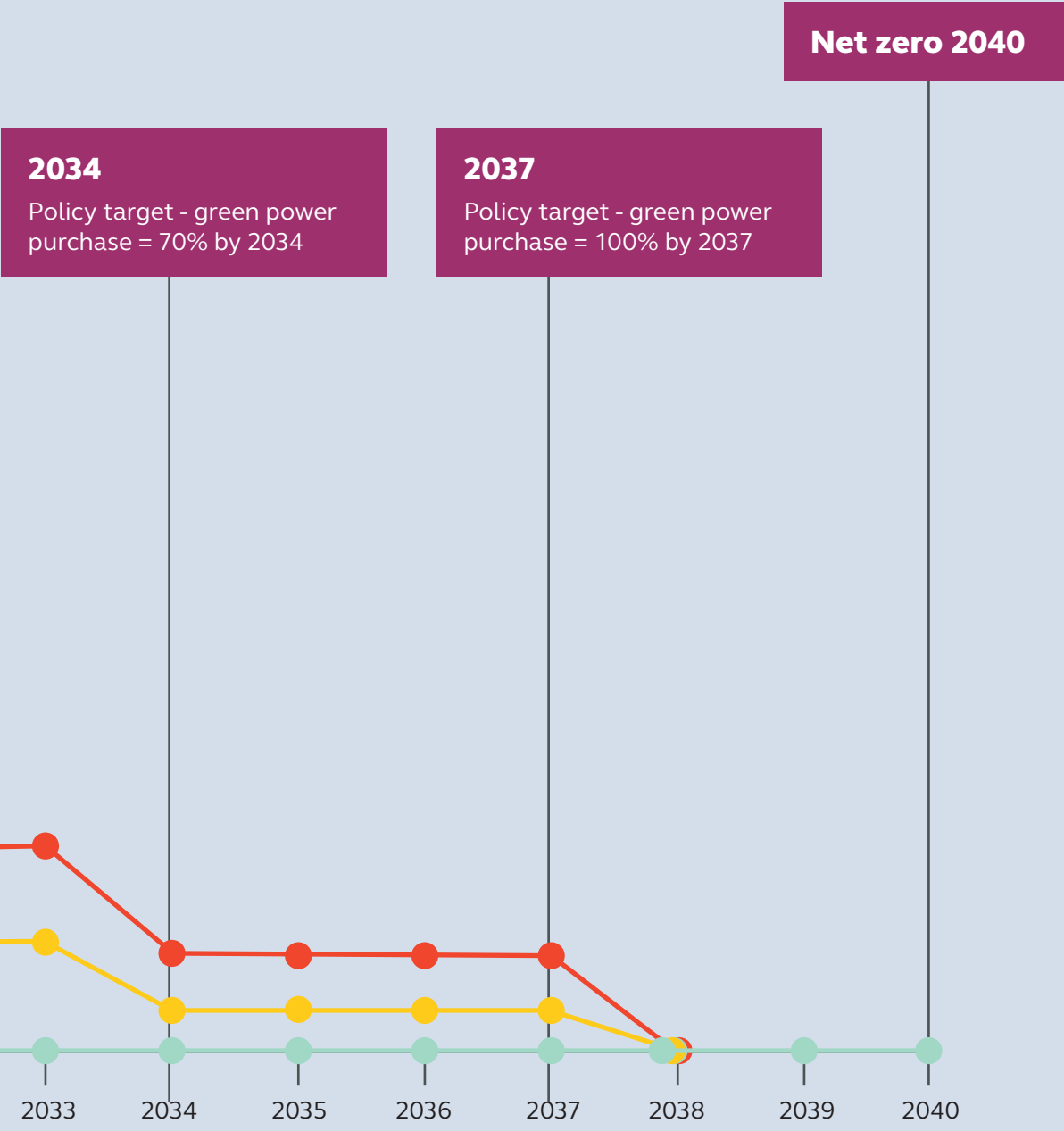
Policy target - transport is emissions-neutral if green power for charging our electric vehicles is widely available by 2027

2028

Policy target - green power purchase = 40% by 2028

2030

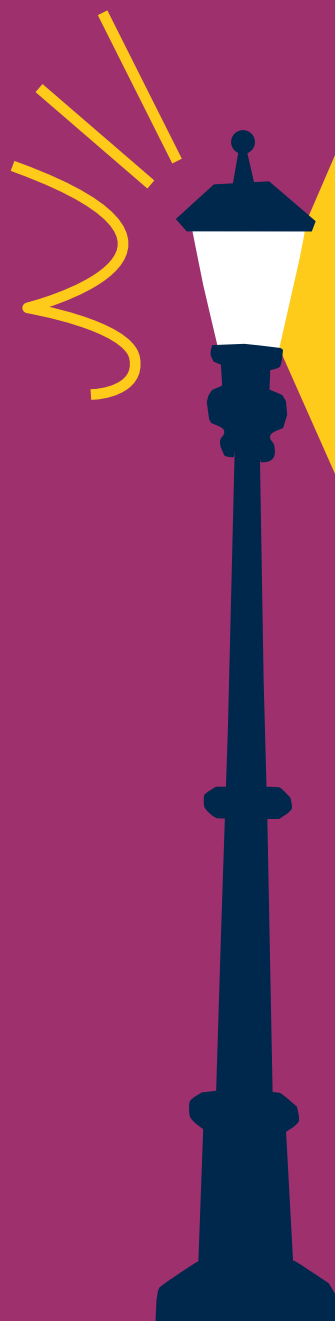
Electrification of gas appliances by 2030



Thank you to all our givers.

Thousands of volunteers, donors, businesses, community groups, schools and congregations support the important work of Uniting every year. Thank you for giving your time, energy, skills, goods and services, and funds to the people communities we serve. We appreciate your generosity and the genuine difference you're making in people's lives.

**Together we are creating
a better future.**



Volunteer with us

If you're interested in sharing your skills and giving back to your community, we'd love to hear from you. Your spare time is valuable and we're flexible – so you'll be able to do what works for you.

[Uniting.org/volunteer](https://www.uniting.org/volunteer)

Make a donation

Any amount, big or small, helps us to provide much-needed services to people experiencing disadvantage, and to champion social equality for everyone.

[Uniting.org/donate](https://www.uniting.org/donate)

Leave a Gift in your Will

If you, like us, believe in inspiring people, enlivening communities and confronting injustice, we'd appreciate you thinking about leaving Uniting a Gift in your Will.

[Uniting.org/gifts](https://www.uniting.org/gifts)

Become a foster carer

For children and young people unable to live with their birth families, a safe and supportive home environment can be life-changing. We arrange short-term and long-term foster care opportunities, and welcome all enquiries.

[Uniting.org/foster-care](https://www.uniting.org/foster-care)

Partner with us

Uniting's social impact initiatives create opportunities to address the social challenges Australia is facing today. It's no small undertaking, and it demands a collaborative effort for the greater good. If you share our values and purpose, and your organisation can help us scale these vital projects, we want to hear from you.

Call 1800 864 846

Giving is in our DNA

Launched in FY25, Fuse is Uniting NSW.ACT's exclusive Donor Circle, bringing together a passionate community of supporters who share a commitment to creating a better future for individuals and communities in need.

This year our giving focus was on Uniting's aspiration for all young people leaving out-of-home care to have appropriate accommodation and be engaged in education or employment by age 25. Support from Fuse has contributed directly to initiatives that build young people's personal resilience, relationships, and community connections, providing them with opportunities to thrive, and to be prepared for a better future.



The Uniting Fuse Donor Circle is led by Heather Watson and Peter Worland.

Discover their inspiration for giving and their connection to the history of Uniting.



Governance

Uniting is established under By-law 4.1.2(a) of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of NSW and the ACT, as an institution for the Ministry Area of Social Responsibility, which includes social justice, community services and related chaplaincy work of the Church. It has the regulatory responsibilities of a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI), which reflects its main purpose to provide benevolent relief for people suffering from poverty, sickness, distress, misfortune, destitution or helplessness, operating within the mission and ethos of the Church.

For details on how the Uniting NSW.ACT Board governs our organisation, visit uniting.org/governance.

Meet our Board



Liz Nicol

Chairperson from November 2024

Liz is an experienced executive and non-executive director with expertise in risk, leadership, organisational behaviour and culture change. With more than 15 years in non-executive director roles, she currently serves on the boards of Hunter New England Local Health District, University of Newcastle Council, NUSport, and the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT. Liz is passionate about supporting the growth of leaders, chairing the Northern NSW Advisory Forum of the AICD and supporting a range of mentorship activities.

As former CEO of SafetyWorks Group, Liz worked across a wide range of sectors and brought skills in leadership and collaborative approaches to engage people towards achieving organisational vision around culture change, risk and assurance.

Liz is a Fellow of both the Australian Institute of Company Directors and Governance Institute of Australia. She has a Master of Business Administration, as well as qualifications in occupational health and safety, and nursing.

Liz joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in October 2017 and was appointed Chairperson of the Board in November 2024.



Heather Watson

Chairperson from October 2016 to October 2024

Heather is a specialist charity lawyer and non-executive director with more than 30 years of commercial, governance and legal experience spanning aged care, health and community services, transport, affordable housing and First Nations communities.

She holds directorships with Queensland Children's Hospital and Health Service (Chair), Queensland Rail (and is Chair of its Audit and Risk Committee), Like Family (Chair), and SpArc Foundation (Chair). She was appointed Chair of UnitingCare Australia in July 2024.

Heather joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in July 2015 and was appointed Chairperson in October 2016. She is also a Board Member of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT and is a lifelong member of the Uniting Church.

Heather retired as Chairperson and Member of the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in October 2024.



Dr Andrew Young

Retired Board Member

Andrew is dedicated to improving the effectiveness of social impact across sectors. He brings a systems approach and is passionate about having a strong outcomes focus, evidence and measurement, collaboration and leadership development.

Andrew is an engineer with a background in business strategy with Andersen Consulting. His first not-for-profit role was head of marketing for The Smith Family from 2000. He then served as CanTeen Australia's CEO for 8 years, winning Equity Trustees' Not-for-profit CEO First Year Achiever Award in 2005. He was the CEO of multi-university partnership, the Centre for Social Impact, from 2012 until 2016; CEO of mental health charity Stride from 2017 until 2021; and CEO of NDIS provider My Supports since January 2022. He is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Andrew retired from the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in October 2024.



David Barrow

Board Member

David has nearly 20 years of experience in strategy and organisational development in both executive and non-executive director roles. Currently, David is the Regional Director of the Industrial Areas Foundation Pacific, supporting community organising efforts in Australia, Aotearoa, Canada and the Pacific Northwest of the United States. Previously, he was the Chief Executive Officer and Lead Organiser of the NSW Community Alliance.

David holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and International Studies from University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Previously, David was the President of the UTS Union Board, and both the NSW and then the National Union of Students. David is a committed Christian, member of the LGBTQIA+ community, and served 8 years on Leichhardt Uniting Church Council.

David joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in December 2023, after serving 3 years as an external committee member of the Board's Mission Governance and Collaboration Committee. David served 9 years on the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT, and worships at New Lambton Uniting Church.

David commenced as Chairperson of the Board's Communities Committee in August 2025.



David Pigott AOM

Board Member

David has worked in senior levels across the charity and government sectors. He has been a member of Mission Australia's executive team, private secretary to NSW premiers, and served as an advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Federal Treasurer.

He is a member of the Council of Wesley College within the University of Sydney and has been a member of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Advisory Board, the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing, and was a former board member of ChildFund Australia and Chair of the Ella Centre. David is also an Elder of St David's Uniting Church in Haberfield.

David joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in November 2020.



Rev. Dr Elenie Poulos

Board Member

Elenie is an Adjunct Fellow at Macquarie University and past Visiting Fellow at Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford, specialising in religion and politics. She is a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal for the Academic Study of Religion and a well-known public commentator on religion and society, social justice, and human rights in Australia.

Ordained in the Uniting Church in Australia, Elenie has almost 30 years' experience in the not-for-profit sector, working in public policy, advocacy and government relations, including 15 years as the Director of the Uniting Church's national justice policy and advocacy unit. She also consults for not-for-profits and civil society groups.

Elenie is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has served on committees and boards for the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches in Australia, and the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).

Elenie joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in July 2019 and is Chairperson of the Board's Mission Governance and Collaboration Committee.



Jackie Howard

Board Member

Jackie is an experienced executive and non-executive director with an extensive career in health, aged care, community services and clinical governance. She has worked in the public and private health sectors, in acute and primary healthcare, and the not-for-profit aged and disability sectors in the UK, Germany and Australia. She previously held the role of CEO Masonic Care Tasmania.

Jackie currently serves on a number of boards across Australia, including the National Aged Care Peak Body, Ageing Australia, The District Nurses (Tasmania), Resthaven Inc. (South Australia) and South Eastern Community Care (Tasmania).

Jackie has a nursing background, holds a Master of Business Administration and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Jackie joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in December 2023 and is Chairperson of the Board's Seniors Services Committee.



Rev. Jane Fry

Board Member

Reverend Jane Fry commenced as General Secretary of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT in September 2017, following 5 years as Associate Secretary.

Jane was ordained as a Minister of the Word in 1995, and has worked in congregational ministry, police chaplaincy and presbytery leadership. Her ministry experience has given her a broad perspective on the opportunities and realities facing the Uniting Church today.

Jane believes that the Uniting Church's vision remains as compelling now as it was in 1977. Bringing together disciples with a passionate imagination, creativity and commitment to changing the world in God's image is core business for the Church today.

Jane has served on the Uniting NSW.ACT Board since 2017, as an ex officio member.



Kristal Kinsela

Board Member

Kristal is a proud Aboriginal woman, a descendant of both the Jawoyn and Wiradjuri nations. Kristal has almost 20 years' experience in education and training, organisational and workforce development, and supplier diversity across government, corporate and not-for-profit sectors. Kristal is passionate about creating lasting pathways and growing the capabilities of First Nations businesses and individuals.

Highly regarded in stakeholder engagement and project management, Kristal is recognised as a national expert in supplier diversity and is the author of the only Australian book on First Nations business procurement.

Kristal is a Director of Many Rivers, an independent member of UnitingCare Australia, a member of the Woolworths Group First Nations Advisory Board, a Council Member of Charles Sturt University and an Independent Advisor to the Family Friendly Workplaces Advisory Group.

Kristal joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in November 2020 and was previously Chairperson of the Board's Communities Committee 2021-2024.



Michael Talbot

Board Member

Michael is an experienced non-executive director and former C-Suite executive responsible for business development and strategy, organisation design, and digital innovation in large service based organisations. This includes roles as National Group Manager for retail operations of Australia Post, and as Deputy Secretary, Courts and Tribunals in the NSW Department of Justice. Michael serves on not-for-profit boards and their committees, including as Chair. He consults to justice and public sector organisations on reform and coaches and mentors executives transitioning to higher responsibilities.

Michael holds a Bachelor of Commerce, Majoring in Finance, Accounting and Systems (UNSW), is a Fellow of CPA Australia and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Michael joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in October 2017 and is Chairperson of the Board's Remuneration and Board Governance Committee. Until November 2024 he was also a Board Member of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT.



Michelle Tierney

Board Member

Michelle is a proud Aboriginal woman and Wiradjuri descendant with over 30 years of leadership experience in the property industry, spanning funds management, real estate investment, corporate strategy, and sustainability. She has held senior executive roles with ASX50-200 organisations including Chief Operating Officer and is a highly experienced professional non-executive director on ASX and NZX listed, unlisted, federal government statutory body and not-for-profit boards.

Michelle currently serves on the boards of Stride Property Group, Growthpoint Properties Australia, PEET Ltd, the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, and Assemble (HESTA nominee director) which develops social and affordable housing. She is also a board member of Message Stick Foundation and is Chair of CareerTrackers.

She actively contributes to social impact initiatives as a member of the NSW Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Council's Corporate Leadership Group and the Property Council of Australia's Indigenous Advisory Group.

Michelle is committed to Indigenous leadership, First Nations youth, and corporate responsibility.

Michelle joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in December 2023.



Sara Watts

Board Member

Sara is an experienced non-executive director and audit and risk committee chairperson with more than 20 years of financial and operational experience in a range of sectors including technology, education, government, and mineral resources. Sara is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of CPA Australia.

Sara serves on 3 listed company boards (Syrah Resources, Trajan Scientific and Medical, and Nuix), is a trustee of the Sydney Opera House, and chairs the audit and risk committee of each entity. Sara continues to mentor emerging and transitioning leaders, and teaches ethics at a local primary school.

Sara joined the Uniting NSW.ACT Board in November 2019 and is Chairperson of the Board's Audit, Risk and Treasury Committee.

Meet our leaders



Tracey Burton
Chief Executive

Tracey joined Uniting in April 2018 and brings more than 30 years' experience in the Australian health and community services sector, including leadership roles in public and private hospitals and within the Catholic healthcare sector across NSW, Queensland and Victoria.

Tracey has a strong reputation for building high performing teams and achieving growth in response to changing community needs, and is uncompromising when it comes to safety.

Tracey's previous roles include Executive Director Eastern Hospitals for St John of God Health Care and CEO St George Private Hospital, Ramsay Health Care.

Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Health Administration (UNSW), Master of Business Administration (AGSM), Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and an executive program at Columbia University (NYC). Tracey joined the Board of UnitingCare Australia in 2019 and The Foyer Foundation in October 2022.



Dr Andrew Montague
Director of Communities

Andrew joined Uniting in February 2024. Starting his career as a general practitioner, he has subsequently held executive and board director roles in health, disability and aged care services in the public and not-for-profit sectors, and in both metropolitan and regional areas.

Andrew joined Uniting from Hammond Care, where he was General Manager Health and Palliative Care, responsible for managing the organisation's hospitals and health services, as well as integration with their aged care services. Andrew has previously worked for several Local Health Districts and was CEO of the Central Coast Local Health District for 5 years post-2016.

Andrew has achieved Fellowships with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators, and holds a Masters in Health Administration. He is a member of several boards and external committees, including the Coast and Country Primary Care Board, which provides NDIS services, mental health services and a homelessness Health on the Streets service.



Mary Ducusin
Chief Customer Risk and Governance Officer

Mary joined Uniting in March 2019 and was previously Chief Quality and Risk Officer at Estia Health, and other aged care providers including Allity Aged Care and Bupa, with responsibilities across risk, compliance and operations including customer experience and service transition. Mary has also worked as Investigation Manager at the Department of Health and Ageing.

Mary began her career as a registered nurse, in the acute and sub-acute health sector, and has since studied law. She's recently completed a Certificate in Clinical Governance with the Australasian Institute of Clinical Governance (AICG). Mary holds a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD), and is an affiliate member of the Risk Management Institute of Australasia (RMIA) and Institute of Internal Auditors Australia (IIA - Australia).

Mary brings a people-first approach to leadership through her portfolios in Risk and Assurance, Child Safety, Quality Management, Customer Service Delivery, Sales and Marketing, Nursing and Clinical Governance. She also represents Uniting on the Australian Government's Aged Care Quality Sector Reference Group.



Saviour Buhagiar

Director of Seniors Services

Saviour joined Uniting in 2013 and was Director of Residential and Health Care, and Director of Ageing before he was appointed as Director of Seniors Services in July 2022.

He is responsible for Residential Aged Care, Home and Community Care, Retirement and Independent Living, and the Uniting War Memorial Hospital.

Prior to Uniting, Saviour managed services supporting people with intellectual disability living in both group homes and specialist support services with Family and Community Services, and before that he worked in various roles with the Home Care Service of NSW.



Simon Furness

Director of Property and Housing

Simon joined Uniting in October 2016. He has a proven track record in delivering strategic and operational objectives in a range of blue-chip corporations and government authorities.

Most of his career has been in large organisations whose success depended heavily on the performance of infrastructure and property assets. Simon has held senior executive and line-management roles in market-leading, service-based companies including CBRE, Vodafone, Telstra and Spotless, as well as 8 years as a senior executive in government.

His early career was as an officer in the Royal Engineers and Royal Australian Engineers. Simon is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has a Master of Business Administration and Honours degree in Civil Engineering. He is also a member of the boards of the Retirement Living Council and Faith Housing Australia.



Rev. Suzanne Stanton

Director of Mission

Suzanne joined Uniting in June 2022. She is an ordained Minister of the Uniting Church and a member of the Leura congregation.

Prior to her appointment as Director of Mission, Suzanne worked in placements and on projects in Parramatta Mission, Uniting Mission and Education, Sydney Presbytery, and as the Minister for the congregation of St Johns at Wahroonga from 2018 to 2020. Suzanne has previously held a number of non-executive board positions with the Uniting Church, including on the NSW & ACT Synod Board and Uniting Financial Services.

Before studying her Bachelor of Theology and becoming an ordained minister, Suzanne held roles in both the public and private sector, working in finance and superannuation. Suzanne has also studied economics and applied finance and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Dr Anat Hassner

Chief People and Strategy Officer

Anat joined Uniting in July 2022 and was most recently working as Chief People Officer at John Holland Group. She has also held a number of senior roles in NSW Government departments, including Assistant Commissioner, Public Service Commission, and Chief People Officer for the Department of Industry and the Department of Regional NSW.

Prior to these roles, Anat was Head of Transformation at Woolworths Meat Company. Anat holds a PhD in Change Management from Bond University as well as a Master of Organisational Psychology, and Bachelor of Psychology and Social Science. Anat has authored 2 books on change management and co-authored a book on project management: *The Agile Change Methodology* (2012); *Who is the Change Manager?* (2011); and *Project Management and Organisational Change* (2014).

Anat completed her employment with Uniting in August 2025.



Tamara Pararajasingham

Director of Impact and Innovation

Tamara joined Uniting in June 2019, as the Head of Social Impact and Communities. She now co-leads the Social Impact and Advocacy directorate, which drives Uniting's contribution to systemic change for disrupting entrenched disadvantage. This includes overseeing Uniting's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Research and Social Policy; Social Innovation; and place-based initiatives.

Tamara's career has spanned commercial finance and international aid and development. She has spent the last 16 years in the Australian not-for-profit sector, with a focus on systems innovation and evidence for impact.

Tamara holds a Bachelor of Accounting, Master of Development Studies, Graduate Diploma of Human Rights Law and Policy, and is a graduate of the Centre for Social Impact.



Emma Maiden

Director of Advocacy and External Relations

Emma joined Uniting in 2019 and co-leads the Social Impact and Advocacy directorate with Tammy Pararajasingham. She was formerly Uniting's Head of Advocacy and Media, and previously Assistant Secretary at Unions NSW. Emma is also a Non-Executive Director of HESTA.

Emma oversees social justice campaigning, government relations, brand, media, social media, thought leadership, philanthropy, partnerships, and management of Uniting's creative and digital teams. Emma leads Uniting's systems change work in relation to drug law reform, young people transitioning from the care system, aged care reform and climate justice.

Emma is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She also has a Bachelor of Economics (Hons 1) from the University of Sydney and is admitted as a lawyer in NSW.



Gavin Mackey

Director of First Nations Strategy and Outcomes

Gavin joined Uniting in October 2023, bringing 15 years of experience in supporting health and aged care organisations to embed First Nations impact and inclusion practices for stronger organisational culture.

Gavin is a descendant of the Tagalaka people from Gulf Country in northwest Queensland, and has a background in human resources, learning and communications, and community impact. With extensive experience in large not-for-profit health organisations, including UnitingCare QLD and Silverchain Group, he has worked to expand their footprint in delivering positive outcomes for First Nations communities.

Additionally, Gavin serves as a Board Director at Act for Kids, a for-purpose organisation providing evidence-led professional therapy and support services to children and families at risk of harm.



Clare Baxter

General Counsel and Company Secretary

Clare joined Uniting in March 2025, bringing over 20 years' executive experience in legal, governance, and transformation roles across energy, education, and community services. Clare is a purpose-driven leader known for aligning strategy with values, fostering inclusive systems, and guiding organisations through complex change.

Clare's leadership is shaped by empathy, integrity, and a personal commitment to diversity and inclusion, informed by her experience as a mother of children living with disability.

Clare has held senior roles including Executive General Manager, Legal and Governance at Intellihub Group and Landis+Gyr, and has served on the boards of Sydney Catholic Schools and Radio 2RPH. Clare holds a Master of Laws from UNSW, undergraduate degrees in law and commerce from Victoria University of Wellington, and is admitted to practice in both NSW and New York. Clare is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and IMD Switzerland's executive development program.

Clare completed her employment with Uniting in September 2025.



Iain Keddle

Chief Operating Officer – Finance, Technology and Property

Iain joined Uniting in August 2022 with considerable experience from roles in corporate and community services organisations.

Iain was formerly Chief Financial Officer of Mission Australia, where he was responsible for several corporate functions. Prior to this, Iain held CEO, CFO and executive roles in ASX-listed, public and private companies across a diverse range of industry sectors including banking, property services, retail and technology services.

Iain is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, and has a degree in Maths and Theoretical Physics from the University of St Andrews in Scotland.

Iain completed his employment with Uniting in April 2025.

Financial update for the year to 30 June 2025

Total revenue for Uniting NSW.ACT in FY25 was \$1,448m (up 7% on \$1,358m in FY24). This was primarily driven by Residential Aged Care (RAC) funding indexation in our Seniors Services directorate to support Fair Work wage increases and inflationary pressures, alongside modest growth in our Communities directorate. Significant transformational project expenditure was also made this year, resulting in a net surplus of \$38.1m (FY24 net surplus was \$112.3m).

Investment income remained strong this year, with \$40.4m generated through fair value gains and fixed-term interest returns. Cashflows reflected lower inflows from Operating Activities, increased major Capital Expenditure Developments, and reduced Retirement Living incoming contributions, offset by improved investment returns due to higher interest rates.

Residential Aged Care revenue benefitted from measures to support sector sustainability, such as increased maximum room prices and bi-annual indexation of hotelling supplements. Workforce shortages, while improved from prior years, remain a challenge and the important imperative to meet increased care minutes has led to higher labour costs from agency use and overtime at some services. While Uniting Home Care faced ongoing challenges due to low package growth and high delivery costs, our Home with U transformation initiative in response to the government's announcement of the Support at Home program, is improving service offerings, workforce efficiency, and client experience.

Uniting invested \$56.9m in capital projects this year. Retirement Living experienced revenue growth from recent village developments in Westmead, Emu Plains and Yamba, along with strong occupancy. Rental Housing also benefitted from increased Social Affordable Housing Fund subsidies and high occupancy levels, supported by rising interest rates and rental demand. While construction environments remain challenging, our 15-year capital strategy focuses on supporting underserved regions including Shellharbour, Charlestown and Bateau Bay, and is expected to deliver 1,947 replacement and new Residential Aged Care beds, 4,117 Retirement Village units, and 98 replacement Rental Housing units.

Our Communities client base grew by 8% this year, contributing to revenue gains through expansion of our Mental Health and Wellbeing services, and stronger enrolment in Outside School Hours Care. The Communities directorate is also exploring potential underserved regions for Early Learning expansion and Youth Transition Housing, in line with our strategic goals focusing on place-based and culturally responsive models of consultation and care.

As Uniting embarks on the 4th year of our 10 Year Strategy, we will continue to invest in disrupting cycles of disadvantage by driving solutions to systemic issues that prevent people and communities from reaching their full potential. Strengthening sustainable funding sources and growing our government, sector and community partnerships will support our social impact investment, enabling more services to be delivered to more individuals and places in need.

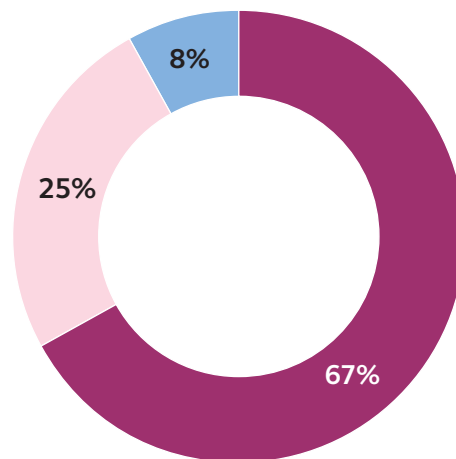
How did we fund our work?

Government subsidies, grants, and program funding represented our main sources of revenue in FY25, followed by resident fees, client fees, and other revenue.

Revenue increased by 7% compared to the previous year, primarily driven by Residential Aged Care funding indexation to support Fair Work wage increases and inflationary pressures, alongside modest growth in Community Services.

Revenue and non-finance income	(\$m)
Government subsidies, grants and program funding	971
Resident fees, client fees and charges	367
Other revenue	110
Total revenue*	1,448

*excludes finance income

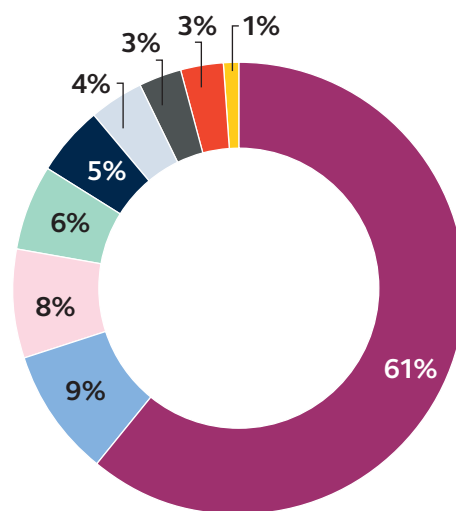


How did our services contribute to revenue?

Residential Aged Care continued to be our highest revenue-generating service stream.

Revenue from operating activities	(\$m)
Residential Aged Care	882
Home and Community Care	127
Families	114
Investment and other income	92
Retirement and Independent Living	74
Local Area Coordination	54
Mental Health and Wellbeing	54
Early Learning	40
Disability	11
Total revenue* and non-financial income	1,448

*excludes finance income

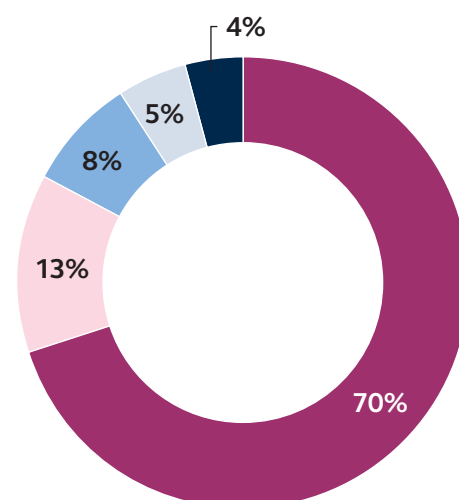


What did we spend?

Expenses increased by 14%, primarily driven by increased care costs and wages increases.

Expenses from operating activities	(\$m)
Wages, salaries and related expenses	978
Program costs and consumables	183
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	107
Property costs	76
Other expenses	62
Total expenses*	1,406

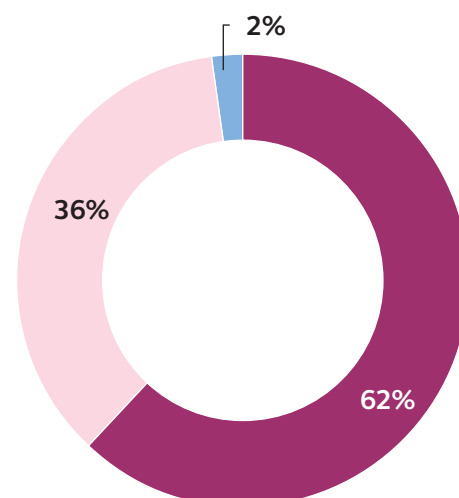
*excludes finance expenses



What are our assets?

Overall assets increased 4%, driven by higher construction work-in-progress related to the Yamba Apartments and Villas and Westmead Stage 2 projects.

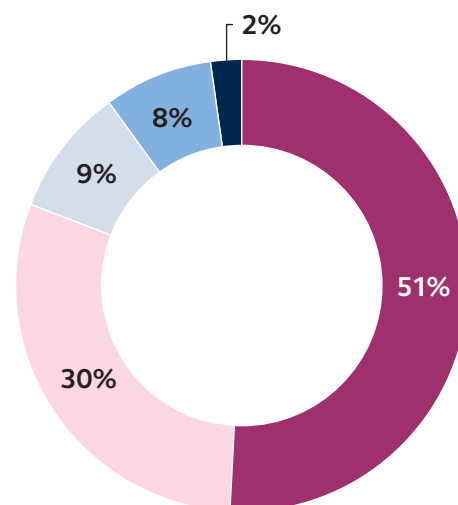
Assets	(\$m)
Property, plant and equipment	1,776
Financial assets, including cash and investments	1,026
Trade and other receivables	70
Other assets	9
Total assets	2,881



What are our liabilities?

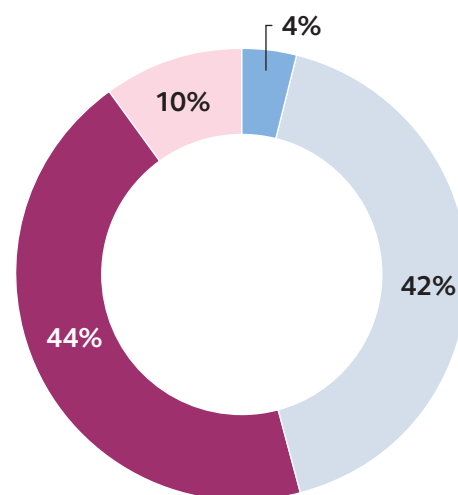
Total Liabilities increased by 3%, due to higher Refundable deposits and increased employee benefits.

Liabilities	(\$m)
Residential Aged Care refundable loans	1,020
Retirement and Independent Living refundable loans	600
Employee benefits	173
Trade and other payables	154
Other	32
Total liabilities	1,979



What is our major capital expenditure?

Capital expenditure	(\$m)
Residential Aged Care major expenditure	5
Residential Aged Care minor expenditure	58
Retirement and Independent Living major expenditure	62
Retirement and Independent Living minor expenditure	14
Total capital expenditure	139





This year Uniting supported more than 156,000 clients across NSW and the ACT. Here is where you'll find us.



Uniting



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