

Annual Report

2017–18

unison^{LL}



Communities
that thrive

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Our Vision

Communities that thrive.

Our Mission

Collaborate to create vibrant, sustainable communities that meet the needs of renters, owners and people who are homeless by developing, managing and providing access to affordable housing.

We are Unison

Unison is a Community Housing Association.

Thriving communities need a range of housing options to suit different people's circumstances and incomes. This is why we provide social housing, affordable housing, private rental, transitional housing and owners corporation management.

We develop new social and affordable housing and provide homelessness services in Melbourne's west.

Where possible we aspire to create mixed tenure communities, which blend private and social housing together. The suite of services we offer means that we can support strong and integrated communities.

We are based in the places where we work. This helps us link residents with local services and social and economic opportunities. This approach also fosters a connection to our neighbourhoods and gives our communities a strong sense of home.

Together, our Housing Association status and our not for profit real estate and owners corporation management business enable us to assist all our customers with a full suite of housing and property services, in addition to housing pathway opportunities. It makes good social sense.

As a not for profit organisation we reinvest our operating surplus back into our services, our properties and communities. Importantly, this allows us to invest in the development of much needed affordable housing.

Unison is about more than housing, we are about communities that thrive.

Acknowledgment of Country

Unison acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which our services and properties are located, the Wurundjeri and Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains. We pay our respects to elders elders past, present and emerging.

Message from the Board



L–R: Barry Diamond, Yvonne Turner,
Ian McHutchison, Jane Evans, Barry Shepherd,
Michelle Crawford, Jane Hunt.
Not pictured: Carolyn Healy, Lou Panaccio

This year has been one of change for Unison. The Board farewelled Michael Perusco, Unison’s first CEO and we thank him for guiding the organisation through a merger and helping us to shape the vision, mission and strategic plan for Unison.

Michael now heads up Berry Street, Victoria’s largest independent child and family services organisation.

We were pleased to appoint Jack Panton as CEO in March. Jack was previously at Port Phillip Housing Association and came to the community housing sector with extensive private property industry experience. Unfortunately, due to personal events, Jack resigned as CEO in September 2018.

We have recently appointed Unison’s Director of Corporate Services Ed Holmes to the role of CEO. Ed brings a wealth of experience from both the community services and private sector to the role. Prior to Unison, Ed worked in senior roles across disability, aged care and justice, and in the mining and manufacturing industry. Ed has been with Unison along the journey of our first 18 months and will provide strong leadership as we grow the organisation.

This year the Board was pleased to welcome Michelle Crawford in October 2017. With 25 years of experience in the community sector, Michelle has overseen programs in the areas of microfinance, financial inclusion, employment, education,

and training. Michelle holds a Masters in Social Science, Graduate Diploma in Adult Education and Bachelor of Business and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and currently serves as a Director on the Board of First Nations Foundation.

This financial year, Unison has had great success, amid a lot of organisational change. We have expanded and improved our homelessness services, commenced three new developments to deliver over 100 new social housing dwellings and started our longitudinal research study through the Unison Housing Research Lab, our groundbreaking partnership with RMIT.

These achievements have been made possible by the hard work of the Unison team and we would like to thank them for their continuing efforts and commitment to building communities that thrive.



Message from the CEO

With new funding for social housing on the horizon, this year Unison has been investing in our organisational capability.

This involved scoping new IT system requirements, migrating to a cloud based server and introducing Sharepoint to allow staff to work across sites in the organisation, embedding our Tenancy Management Practice Framework and working with the Tenants Advisory Group to put our customers at the heart of everything we do.

The Unison Housing Research Lab, our partnership with RMIT, has delved into our data and is providing us with insights that we can use to enhance service development and advocacy.

All this work puts Unison in the best position to grow and deliver high quality housing and homelessness services to more people.

With 82,000 people waiting for social housing in Victoria and many more struggling to find affordable housing in the private rental market, the growth of the community housing sector is critical. That's why we welcome the Victorian Government's Social Housing Growth Fund. For the

first time, the community housing sector has a funding pipeline that will allow us to plan new developments and explore creative partnerships to deliver social and affordable housing.

Unison is working on a number of exciting development opportunities and we can now enter into discussions with confidence that there is a funding stream available to support the growth of community housing.

Given the size of the affordable housing challenge, there is so much more to do. Unison is ready to work with Government and the private sector to do all we can to create more affordable housing solutions.

Ed Holmes
Chief Executive Officer

Our Strategic Direction

Unison's Strategic Plan focusses our efforts on five key directions.



Foster communities to create places for everyone

Our partnerships with support services help Unison to create communities with a place for everyone. We have organisations co-located at six sites, and 17 partnerships with 12 different organisations to provide support to tenants when they need it.

Unison expanded our Private Rental Access Program in 2017–18 to deliver services across the inner and outer west. We assisted more than 1000 households to secure stable housing in private rental.



Make places to be proud of

Replacing ageing and outdated rooming house accommodation and renewing our housing portfolio is part of delivering places to be proud of.

Unison has started redevelopment of two rooming house sites, replacing small rooms and shared facilities with brand new one bedroom and studio apartments. Both sites have planning approval and construction will commence in 2018–19.



Develop effective systems to support creative solutions

The merger of Yarra Community Housing and Urban Communities Ltd and the formation of Unison resulted in eight software systems being used to meet operational, finance, payroll and Human Resources, fixed asset management, compliance, Key Performance Measurement (KPM) and statutory reporting requirements.

Work is well underway to modernise and merge Unison's IT systems. This financial year Unison has developed an IT strategy, implemented a new shared server environment, scoped software requirements for the organisation and gone out to tender for a new software provider. The implementation of a new software system is planned over the remaining years of the strategic plan.



Grow the supply of affordable housing

Unison has grown the supply of affordable housing with 79 new properties under management. This includes management of 66 NRAS dwellings and the purchase of 13 units with funding from the Victorian Government. Three new developments are underway that will deliver over 100 new units of social housing.



Create knowledge to change practice, policy and public perception

In 2017, the Unison Housing Research Lab developed a five year research agenda including the flagship longitudinal study "Maximising Impact" following over 300 to 400 new tenancies at Unison. This study received ethics approval and started recruitment this year.

The Lab has reviewed Unison's data collection systems and produced two research "think pieces". The first research report analysing data from Unison's IAP service was completed this year and provided new insights into the client group accessing homelessness services in Melbourne's West.

We're increasing the profile of housing and homelessness issues with media coverage in major news outlets including The Age, The Australian and ABC Radio and television throughout the year.



Tenant Advisory Group Report



The Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) provides advice on ways to improve performance, enhance tenant engagement and meet the needs of tenants.

TAG meets every two months and includes our ten members as well as the Unison CEO and Board Chair.

This year has been an interesting year for TAG. There have been lots of changes in Unison and the issue of homelessness is becoming bigger in the wider community.

TAG members have got to know each other pretty quickly and thus members feel free to speak up when they wish. Our meetings are informal but uphold to the rules of debate, ensuring everyone gets a say.

Our ten TAG members are

Frank Otis, Convenor
Tuan Ibrahim
Senol Celiker
Erika Lodge
Ros Sultan
Sonny Resos
Jennifer Hodgson
Cameron Powell
Annette Hutchison
Colleen Howell

Our achievements this year include

- o A TAG annual work plan
- o Two TAG members attended the Victorian Council of Social Service Summit
- o Advised on increased place manager community presence/positive tenant engagement including holding regular tenant meetings
- o Assisted with improved maintenance processes and communication including input into the Tenant Newsletter maintenance feature
- o Advised regarding anti-social behaviour including management approaches and early intervention. The issue is very complex and we will no doubt spend more time on it
- o Provided feedback to rent review reports, Unison Housing Research Lab paper and Tenant newsletters

There is always more work to be done. But may I say as the Chair, we have a great cross section of residents involved and we can only be positive about TAG's ongoing role in the future.

Frank Otis – Convenor



“TAG members have got to know each other pretty quickly and thus members feel free to speak up when they wish. Our meetings are informal but uphold to the rules of debate, ensuring everyone gets a say.”

– Frank Otis

L–R Back: Frank Otis, Sonny Resos, Cameron Powell, Jak Burstal
L–R Front: Ros Sultan, Tuan Ibrahim, Erika Lodge

Our Work. Our People. Their Homes.

Unison's customers come from many different walks of life, but they all have the same thing in common – they want to live in a safe, welcoming and thriving community, they want to feel supported and connected and be proud of where they live. We provide services for:

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Unison is the first point of contact for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Melbourne's West. We connect people to safe and affordable short and medium term accommodation and support services to assist with addressing issues that may have contributed to their unstable housing situation. We also deliver a Private Rental Access Program to help people re-establish and maintain a secure home.

3563

households sought help in 2017–18

We manage **277** Transitional Housing properties for people exiting homelessness

People on a low income looking for affordable rental

We provide long term social and affordable rental accommodation in Victoria and in Adelaide for people who are on a low income. Tenants can be employed or on Centrelink benefits. The properties include rooming houses, apartments and houses. Our homes offer security of tenure and cater for all household types including singles, youth, seniors, couples and families.

We manage



- **1717 social housing properties** (including 433 Public Housing properties)
- **493 affordable housing properties**



People looking for private rental

Unison is a licensed real estate agent and manages a range of market rental properties in Melbourne and Adelaide on behalf of private investors.

Our market rental properties are located in our mixed tenure communities. Our community building agenda provides opportunities for our private tenants to connect and participate in their community.

We manage

100

private rentals



18 Owners Corporations

799

Properties plus lots under Owners Corporation management



Owners Corporation members

Unison is a registered owners corporation management company managing residential and commercial properties in both Melbourne and Adelaide on behalf of owner occupiers, private investors and Government.

The lots we manage as part of owners corporation management are located in our mixed tenure communities, blending owner occupiers, investment properties and affordable housing. We are located within these communities with an aim to create a thriving diverse community and a great place to live and invest in.

Partners

Partnerships are critical to our work and help us achieve more than we could working alone. We collaborate with many like-minded organisations across the government, business and community sectors. One such partnership is with RMIT University, with whom Unison has created the Unison Housing Research Lab. Our applied research partnership with RMIT University will investigate issues of urban housing and homelessness over the five year research program.

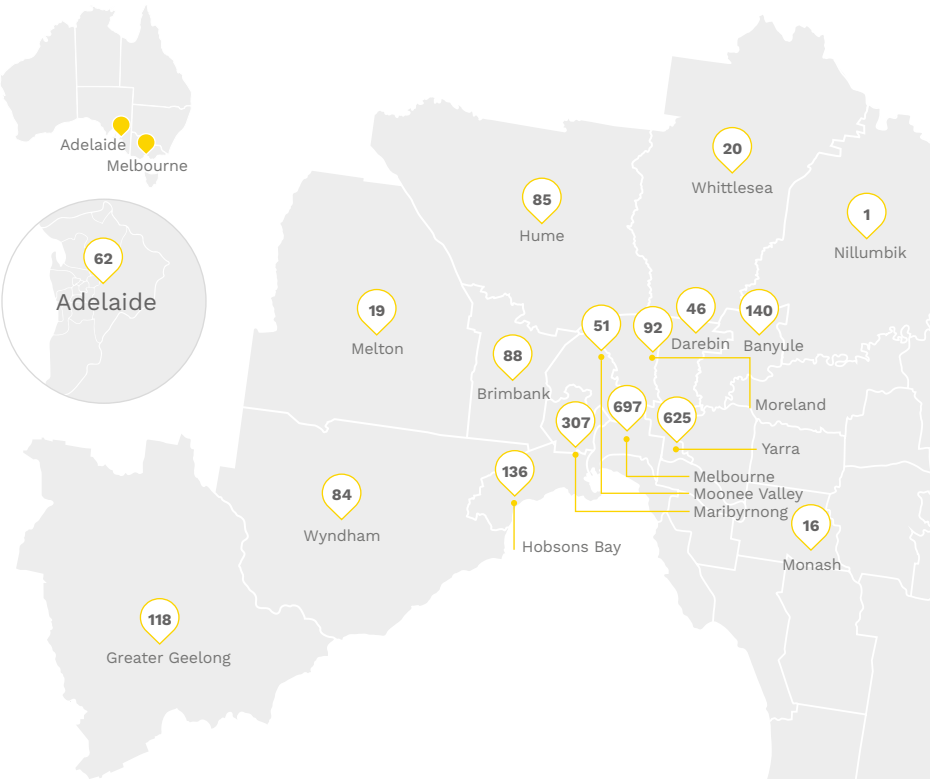
Housing Services

Our housing service area focusses on what it takes to create a home. The team works to a Tenancy Management Practice Framework facilitating a sense of connection and engagement in community.

We provide 2210 social and affordable homes offering long term secure tenure and 277 Transitional Housing tenancies as a pathway out of homelessness. Our diverse property types cater for families, singles, couples and seniors.

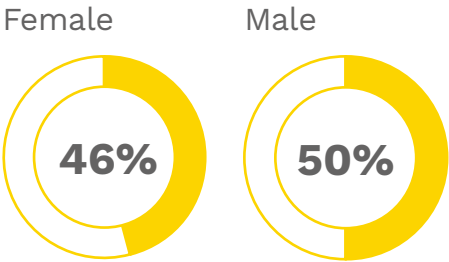
Central to Unison’s strategy is being based in the places we own and manage. Our place management teams work with their communities and partners to assist people with their tenancies and connect with neighbours, support services and local agencies.

2587 Property Locations



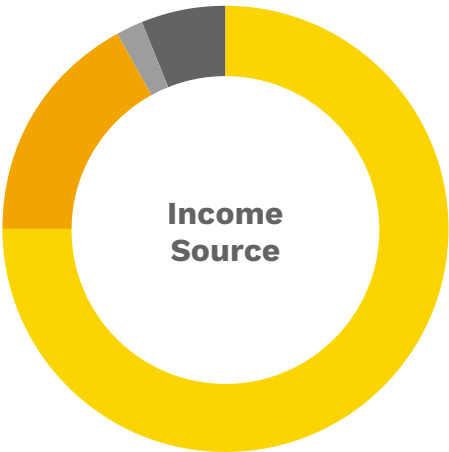
Tenant demographics*

Gender

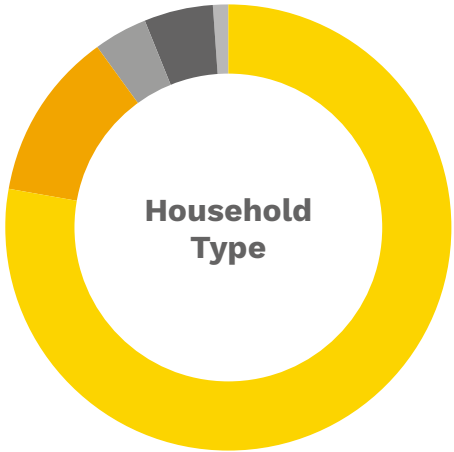


Other 4%

22+ languages spoken



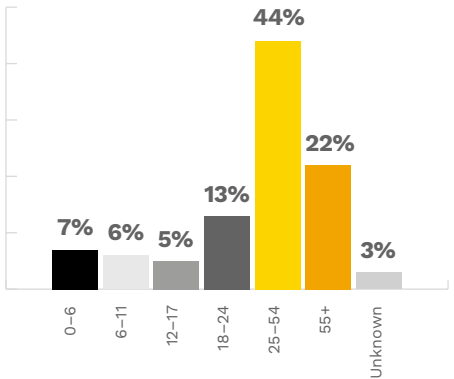
- Centrelink
- Wages
- Other
- Unknown



- Single person
- Single parent
- Couple
- Couple with children
- Group

5% households identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Age Range



* known data, excludes private rental and NRAS tenants



Housing Services 2017–18 Highlights

Keeping tenants together

In late 2017 we sold a North Fitzroy rooming house to enable us to renew our housing portfolio. The community of ten residents were supported by Arbias and had lived under the one roof for some time. To keep this group together we head leased a property in North Melbourne and have been able to move all residents at the same time. The property in North Melbourne is larger so we can offer an additional 10 rooms to the Salvation Army's Open Door program.

Homes for rough sleepers in Wyndham

Under the banner of the H3 Alliance, Unison received funding from the Victorian Government to purchase 12 social housing properties for people sleeping rough in the City of Wyndham. We purchased the homes in record time and worked quickly to tenant the properties in partnership with cohealth and Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons Program.

UNO partnership a winner

The Unison team in South Australia along with our partners in the UNO building, the SA Housing Authority and St John's Youth Services were State winners and nominated for a national Australasian Housing Institute award for Leading Asset Management at Youth110, the youth crisis accommodation integrated in the UNO mixed tenure complex.

The partners share a commitment to communicate, respond, encourage independent living skills and create a supportive place for vulnerable young people.

TLC for our Footscray garden

Frasers Property Australia selected Unison as a community partner as part of their corporate volunteering activity. The garden at our women's rooming house in Footscray was selected as a site that would love a bit of TLC. The project was discussed with the women beforehand and everyone loved the idea. One of the residents has put her hand up to help maintain the garden.

Homelessness Services



At Unison's Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) service we see the impacts of the shortage of affordable housing every day as we support people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

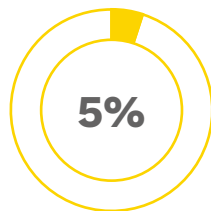
IAP is the primary access point for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Melbourne's West with offices in Seddon and Werribee. We see people who live on the streets, in refuges, sleeping on friends' couches or living a day-to-day existence in hotel rooms, caravan parks or their cars to avoid sleeping rough on the streets.

Our services include assessment of housing and support needs, referral to crisis, transitional or longer term accommodation and specialist support providers, as well as financial assistance.

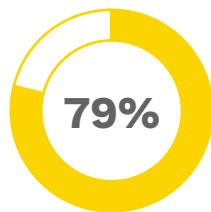
This year we have seen

3563

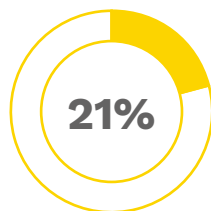
individual households
up 21% from
2016–17



of people identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



aged 25–49



needed support twice or more

9899

days of accommodation purchased by Unison

Homelessness Services 2017–18 Highlights

Housing crisis response

As more people in housing crisis are coming through our doors in Melbourne's West, Unison has had to respond smarter and faster. The team has focused on pairing up to share crisis tasks to help ensure housing and supports are confirmed quickly.

Initiatives such as kids' Buddy Bags (filled with kids' activities and health essentials such as toothpaste and a toothbrush) and quick links to short term supports such as health, schooling and material aid, have formed part of our holistic response to people in a time of crisis. To meet this need our team has expanded with an additional staff member at our Seddon office and are soon to have another staff member in Werribee.

Homelessness in the west research

Unison released the first research report from the Unison Housing Research Lab, our research partnership with RMIT. The report *Diversity and complexity: examining characteristics of 'at risk' and homeless households in Melbourne's West*, analysed the records of 2933 households that accessed Unison's Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) service in 2016–17.

The report's recommendations have armed Unison with solid evidence to better target our homelessness service response, improve our information collection and connect people to the right support services.

More information about the Unison Housing Research Lab and research reports are on our website

www.unison.org.au.

Private Rental Access Program (PRAP)

Working alongside our IAP service, PRAP supports people to secure and maintain private rental through advocacy and support. PRAP has expanded, adding an additional team member this financial year.

PRAP saw over 1000 households in 2017–18, and provided 792 financial assistance packages (both rent in advance and arrears payments) to secure and save tenancies. The team has built strong relationships with local real estate agents, helping to get families into homes quickly and reducing time spent in crisis accommodation.



“I feel really good living here. I feel safe and settled and I can pay the rent!”

– Selam

Pathway out of homelessness

Our full suite of housing options enables people to progressively move through crisis and transitional housing to more long term and sustainable housing as they find their feet and become settled.

When Selam* had neither a bed, couch or mattress on the floor to sleep on, she came to Unison’s homelessness service in Melbourne’s West. We were able to provide her short-term crisis accommodation and Selam was linked to agency Wombat Housing and Support Services. The Unison/Wombat partnership supported Selam in her move to a transitional housing unit, which provided her a place to settle and

find her feet. Our transitional housing program is a short term stepping stone to more permanent housing. Partner agencies such as Wombat provide support for that transition.

With housing stress out of the picture, in time Selam was able to get a job, save and look for a more permanent home. The Unison/Wombat collaboration found Selam an affordable new long term home, owned and managed by Unison.

* Name changed due to privacy reasons

Community building

Unison's work extends beyond managing tenancies and the bricks and mortar. Collaborating with our partners and customers, we develop community based initiatives using local skills, resources and energy.



Food

It's amazing how much community life centres around the preparing and sharing of food. With our support partners, Unison hosts community lunches across our properties in Fitzroy, Melbourne and Kensington with Christmas feasts featuring heavily in our annual events. Through Healthy Living and gardening projects, our residents learn about nutrition, healthy cooking and growing food.

We also host a weekly Foodbank with MOSS and Second Bite in Broadmeadows, giving residents access to fresh food and reducing food waste.

Gardens

Gardens are thriving at Unison thanks to the commitment of tenants and neighbours. We have community gardens across our portfolio. These community spaces not only give people the opportunity to connect with the outdoors and grow healthy food, but also provides exercise, information exchange and connects people with a common interest.

Events

Regular information sessions, resident meetings, community groups and cultural celebrations bring residents together to share information, discuss issues of concern or just have a chat. In 2017–18 we hosted over 120 events for residents.



54 Community initiatives

\$80,000 Community building leveraged funding

Creativity

Many residents share a creative passion, from our writing group in Fitzroy, to our children's art classes in Broadmeadows. Unison is also a long time supporter of *Roominations*, a weekly radio program on 3CR dedicated to housing issues and hosted by people who have experienced homelessness or live in insecure housing.



Exercise

Tai chi, walking groups, table tennis and pool competitions keep our residents fit and healthy. Soccer is a big favourite amongst our young people with a very successful program run at the Kensington Community Recreation Centre.

Education

Learning is important to our communities and many of our residents lead and volunteer in our education programs. The Somali women's group brings together women and children to learn about the Somali language and their culture. There are homework clubs for school age children and the Sorghum Sisters, a catering social enterprise, has delivered hospitality training to a number of community members.

Communities that thrive

To achieve our vision of *Communities that thrive* we work with our many valued partners and customers as we connect people to activities and services that promote social connection, positive relationships and a sense of home and place.

Healthy Living and Learning

Victor's chickpea burgers, Mohammed's middle-eastern dips and the Chinese group's dumplings are healthy and delicious recipes featured in the gorgeous Healthy Living and Learning project's recipe book produced to celebrate the cooking and food education program.

Accessing fresh nutritious food can be difficult if you live alone, are on a low income or having difficulty getting around. Each week delicious smells waft from the community hub kitchen in Kensington as participants learn about food nutrition, increase their gardening and cooking skills and enjoy a healthy lunch together.

This program generates a whole host of great outcomes, collaboration being key. Initially the project was piloted with funding from State Trustees and with partners the Kensington Neighbourhood House, cohealth, Second Bite, 78 Seniors Club and Vincent Care.

As participants have grown, so have those involved. Students from the local area have helped out and Uniting Care and Hotham Mission are also on board.

The program creates a lovely sense of community. Neighbours are invited along and those who are unwell are delivered meals made on the day. People really look out for each other.

– Anne Douglas, Kensington Neighbourhood House

Kensington

Our flagship mixed tenure community

Across six and a half hectares, the Kensington Estate offers housing to people of all incomes. This flagship mixed tenure estate provides a model for an integrated community that includes families, singles and people with complex needs.

We have place managed Kensington for over ten years, working with Government, residents and community stakeholders to create a place that people are proud to call home. Walking through the site it is hard to tell the difference between social and private housing. The area is open, welcoming and connected to the broader community.

Place management enables us to really get to know our residents, their interests and needs, the buildings and the neighbourhood. As the place manager, we take into account the characteristics of the community and work with our residents and partners to make local decisions in response to local needs.

Community Food Forest

The Community Food Forest, a partnership project with Living Learning Australia and the City of Melbourne, is a genuine whole of community project nurtured by social, affordable and private renters, as well as owner occupiers from our mixed tenure community, and people from the surrounding neighbourhood.

Planted out with olives, nuts, fruits and berries, vegetables and herbs, the Forest will grow to a thriving sustainable green space within high density living.

This year with support from the Department of Health and Human Services, we upgraded the area to link the Forest to the playground and create a shady BBQ space to enjoy in the warmer months.



“What an amazing day! There were huge smiles all round as our young people were proud to show off their skills, cheer and be included and involved in this awesome event.”

– Colleen Howell, Kensington resident and Unison Tenant Advisory Group member

Youth soccer tournament

At community meetings in Kensington, residents identified a real service gap for young people in the area, particularly those from the Horn of Africa.

To help bridge that gap, along with partners the Kensington Recreation Centre, cohealth, The Venny and the City of Melbourne, Unison hosted a youth soccer tournament during Youth Week.

Close to 100 people came along to the tournament to cheer both girls' and boys' teams in the tournament round robin.



Resident led groups

We support many active resident groups. The 78 Seniors Club holds social activities and meal programs to create a sense of community and reduce isolation amongst older residents. The Chinese Friendship Group have weekly get togethers, share meals and the Chinese Choir. Two of our long-term residents lead the Arabic language school holding education sessions three times a week.



Asset Management

The Asset Management team are the custodians of our buildings. The team oversees all repairs and maintenance with over 30 external property services contractors like cleaners, plumbers and electricians to make sure that homes are maintained to a high standard.

They also manage our new developments and asset upgrades helping to grow the supply of affordable housing.

Better systems for faster results

In 2017 we implemented a new Repairs and Maintenance Help Desk Service to simplify the process for our residents and staff. Through this service we delivered over 6,000 repairs and maintenance requests in 2017-18.

We've also established new standards for vacant tenancies to complete works faster, decrease turnaround time, improve property condition and reduce costs.

Safe homes

With many buildings constructed in the last ten years, Unison was aware that we may have some buildings that include flammable Aluminium Composite Panel Cladding. We have now assessed all our properties and started remediation works.

Building more affordable homes

Two new redevelopment projects will convert ageing rooming houses into modern self contained units. With \$5 million in funding from the Department of Consumer Affairs' Victorian Property Fund we will redevelop a 17 unit rooming house in Footscray to 54 new studio and one bedroom apartments. With the support of the Department of Health and Human Services we will convert a 22 bedroom rooming house in Fairfield into 37 self contained units for single women.

With funding from the Department of Health and Human Services we have been expanding the supply of social housing in Wyndham with 12 spot purchases and the acquisition of land to build a new 10 unit Youth Cluster in partnership with the H3 Wyndham Alliance and Melbourne City Mission.

Sustainability

In 2017–18, Unison secured over \$250,000 in grants for various environmental upgrade projects.

With the support of the Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning and City West Water, we delivered water efficiency upgrades to our rooming house properties that will reduce water usage by five Olympic swimming pools every year.

Through an initiative of the Victorian Property Fund and Community Housing Industry Association we secured funding to install Solar PV systems at 17 properties. With an estimated payback period of five years, this is not only an important environmental measure, but a sound business decision.

More affordable homes

“I couldn’t believe the size of the place!” is how Phil describes his new digs in Heidelberg. Phil is one of the tenants who have been relocated by Unison from the run down rooming house in Napier Street Footscray (where he lived for two years after many years of homelessness), in readiness for the property’s demolition and the development of the new self-contained social housing apartments.

Phil attended the tenant meetings run by Unison to keep the Napier Street tenants informed of the relocation process and the support offered. In less than three weeks, a Unison apartment was found, Phil had inspected the new property and had moved in.

“Unison have been 100% supportive the whole way. I am now in a place that I am proud of. There is plenty of space for friends to come over for a meal or a coffee and a yarn. This place has given me a life I couldn’t have had on the streets or living in the rooming house, and I have first option to move back in to the new building once it is finished.”



**“This place has
given me a life I
couldn’t have had
on the streets
or living in the
rooming house.”**

– Phil

Unison Property Corporation

The Unison Property Corporation delivers a host of services to private market clients. Profits from these activities support Unison to provide social and affordable housing and allow us to manage entire communities that mix private, social and affordable housing.

We deliver private market rental and Owners Corporation management services, as well as cleaning and grounds maintenance through our property services social enterprise – the Enterprise Team.

This year the team

- o Commenced property management of 66 NRAS (National Rental Affordability Scheme) tenancies
- o Supported Owners Corporations to navigate risks associated with installation of ACP Cladding
- o The Enterprise Team continued to deliver great property services in our communities.



Corporate Services

The Corporate Services team is our organisation's backbone. The team incorporates Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources and Risk and Compliance, and has played a key role in developing the systems and processes to guide and support our growing organisation.

Investing in IT

This year we have invested in the computer environment that supports our work and investigated new IT solutions. We've upgraded desktop computers for a third of our staff and converted the computer environment to a cloud based server environment in February 2018. This has delivered a more secure and faster connection.

With our server on the cloud, we've rolled out SharePoint to allow staff to work from any site and deliver an intranet for all our organisational resources, news and information.

To make sure the organisation is supported by the right software systems, we started a software review. Approximately 30 staff were involved in scoping sessions and identified over 2,500 requirements for the new software system. This scope has gone to tender and we're now shortlisting the preferred software systems.

Risk management

This year Unison has established a new Risk Management Framework. The Framework has improved our processes to identify and mitigate risks for the organisation.

Accreditation

Unison's homelessness programs are accredited against the Human Service standards. We've successfully completed our midterm audit and we're continuing to review and improve our systems and services.

Our Team

Our 95 team members are a group of talented and passionate people who work with each other, with our residents and with our partners to achieve great outcomes.

● Housing & Homelessness	55
● Corporate Services	17
● Unison Property Corporation	15
● Asset Management	9



Workplace Gender Equality Report

For the first time, Unison was required to submit its Workplace Gender Equality Report, under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*. We're pleased to report that almost 60 per cent of Unison's workforce are female, and 100 per cent of promotions awarded to senior staff in 2017–18 were to women.

Unison Showcase

With staff across eight offices, it can be hard to get to know each other. The Unison Showcase was a whole of organisation event designed to assist staff to meet their colleagues and learn more about the range of services offered across Unison. Staff explored Unison's culture, the connections between our values and our day-to-day practice and developed a shared understanding of Unison's achievements and our future strategic direction.

The Social Club

Unison's Social Club was established in early 2018 and is an integral part of the culture of Unison. The Social Club supports a chosen charity annually and the social events provide an opportunity for staff to meet and mingle outside the workplace, promoting staff morale and greater awareness of other parts of the business.

Professional Development

This year the HR team has created an accessible training and event calendar that includes all the training and professional development opportunities available to staff throughout the year.



Unison Housing Research Lab



The Unison Housing Research Lab, established through a five-year partnership between Unison and RMIT University, provides relevant and pioneering research that examines ‘real world’ problems that exist in the housing and homelessness sector. We are building a strong body of work, steeped in academic rigour and engagement with both staff and tenants, which will position Unison as a leader in housing research.

The Lab has commenced Stage one of its flagship project – *Maximising Impact: a longitudinal study of social, affordable and transitional housing*. This involves surveying new tenants about their perceptions of their housing, the neighbourhood and how they are settling in to their new homes. The tenants will be surveyed another three times over four years to track movement and changes that occur. This will provide Unison, and the wider social housing sector, with a fuller picture of tenants and how they can be better supported.

Our team, led by Professor Guy Johnson and Dr Juliet Watson, expanded in 2018 by taking on two PhD students – Susan Rouch and Fiona Carey. Susan’s PhD is a qualitative study that will examine settling in and early tenancy loss for people living in Unison community housing. Fiona is conducting a comparative ethnographic study of two Unison sites.

A key focus of our work is providing opportunities for Unison staff to be exposed to the latest local and international housing research. This year the Lab initiated a forum series. The first forum included a presentation on tenancy evictions by

Professor Sten-Åke Stenberg from Stockholm University, Sweden. The second forum included a presentation on Housing First initiatives by Professor Nicholas Pleace from the University of York, UK, and was held in conjunction with the launch of the Lab’s first research report, *Diversity and complexity: examining the characteristics of ‘at risk’ and homeless households in Melbourne’s west*. The report analysed data on 2933 households that were supported by Unison’s Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) service during the financial year 2016–17 to better understand the social characteristics and housing circumstances of people using the service.

We have also produced two think pieces on current hot topics in social housing. *Does place matter?* examines the influence of neighbourhood conditions on people’s opportunities. In *What is tenure mix?* we explore the rationale and evidence underpinning urban housing policy that supports the development of mixed tenure social housing sites.

The Lab continues to develop its education program. In 2019, the new homelessness course will be offered to undergraduate students at RMIT University as well as an interdisciplinary student project for postgraduate students that will be hosted at Unison.

Guy Johnson & Juliet Watson

Financial Statement

Unison is pleased to present our profit and loss statement and balance sheet for 2017–18. Grant income includes operating grants of \$5.5million for the IAP, PRAP and Transitional Housing Programs, as well as capital grants of \$5.9 million to spot purchase 12 units in Werribee and the first stage of funding for the redevelopment of 52 Napier St.

We have provisioned \$2.4 million for repairs expenses to remove APC cladding and repair building defects in a large multi-storey building.

Unison's full financial statement can be found at www.unison.org.au/publications

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Revenue and other income			
Management Income		2,282,120	2,705,783
Grant income		11,521,693	8,868,159
Rental income		15,822,916	15,314,921
Interest and other revenue		676,697	980,206
Other income		<u>760,323</u>	<u>47,288</u>
	3	<u>31,063,749</u>	<u>27,916,357</u>
Less: Operating expenses			
Depreciation and amortisation expense	4	(6,532,533)	(6,286,706)
Employee benefits expenses	4	(8,749,042)	(8,612,632)
Housing program expenses		(8,533,651)	(8,696,907)
Repairs expense	4	(2,434,623)	-
Borrowing costs	4	(1,555,678)	(1,721,323)
Administration expenses		(2,280,249)	(1,961,471)
Other expenses		<u>(2,419,377)</u>	<u>(1,420,963)</u>
		<u>(32,505,153)</u>	<u>(28,700,002)</u>
Deficit		<u>(1,441,404)</u>	<u>(783,645)</u>
Other comprehensive income			
<i>Items that may be subsequently reclassified to profit and loss</i>			
Movement in fair value of cash flow hedges		<u>286,646</u>	<u>726,569</u>
		<u>286,646</u>	<u>726,569</u>
Other comprehensive income for the year		<u>286,646</u>	<u>726,569</u>
Total comprehensive deficit		<u>(1,154,758)</u>	<u>(57,076)</u>

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	3,942,696	5,168,920
Receivables	7	587,062	1,173,987
Other financial assets	8	8,971,431	13,349,974
Other assets	9	1,734,323	629,296
Assets classified as held for sale	10	<u>2,411,897</u>	<u>1,827,606</u>
Total current assets		<u>17,647,409</u>	<u>22,149,783</u>
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	11	<u>264,526,153</u>	<u>267,095,994</u>
Total non-current assets		<u>264,526,153</u>	<u>267,095,994</u>
Total assets		<u>282,173,562</u>	<u>289,245,777</u>
Current liabilities			
Payables	12	3,601,133	2,256,980
Borrowings	13	-	936,000
Provisions	14	3,135,729	841,605
Other financial liabilities	15	995,391	1,282,037
Other liabilities	16	<u>3,847,939</u>	<u>3,309,466</u>
Total current liabilities		<u>11,580,192</u>	<u>8,626,088</u>
Non-current liabilities			
Borrowings	13	26,344,542	35,210,500
Provisions	14	<u>105,108</u>	<u>110,711</u>
Total non-current liabilities		<u>26,449,650</u>	<u>35,321,211</u>
Total liabilities		<u>38,029,842</u>	<u>43,947,299</u>
Net assets		<u>244,143,720</u>	<u>245,298,478</u>
Equity			
Reserves	17	6,499,730	6,213,084
Accumulated surplus		<u>237,643,990</u>	<u>239,085,394</u>
Total equity		<u>244,143,720</u>	<u>245,298,478</u>

Thank you

Partnerships are critical to our work and help us achieve more than we could working alone.

We say thank you to our valued partners who we team up with to provide services for our customers and to create communities that thrive.

Funders

We'd like to acknowledge the contribution of our major funding partners in 2017–18:

Department of Health and Human Services (Vic)
Consumer Affairs Victoria
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Department of Human Services (SA)

Community Partners

3CR Community Radio Station
78 Seniors Club Inc
Aboriginal Family Support Services (SA)
Adelaide West End Association
AMES Australia
ARBIAS Inc
Australian Community Support Organisation
Australian Services Union
Barwon, Children Youth and Families
Bethany
Brotherhood of St Laurence
Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons' Program
Caroline Chisolm Society
cohealth
Community Housing Industry Association Victoria
Connie Benn Centre
Corrections Victoria
Council to Homeless Persons
Crime Stoppers
Farnham St Neighbourhood Learning Centre
First Step
Fitzroy Adventure Playground
Foodbank Victoria Ltd
Good Shepherd
Helen McPherson Smith Trust
H3 Wyndham Alliance
Hotham Mission

Hutt Street Centre
Independence Australia.
Indo Chinese Elderly Refugee Association
Jesuit Social Services
Kensington Adventure Playground (The Venny)
Kensington Association
Kensington Child and Youth Committee
Kensington Chinese Friendship Association
Kensington Community Children's Co-Operative
Kensington Community Network
Kensington Community Recreation Centre
Kensington Forest Care Team
Kensington Horn of Africa Community
Kensington Neighbourhood House
Laos Association
Latitude: Directions for Young People
Launch Housing
Lighthouse Foundation
Living Learning Australia
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
Melbourne City Mission
Melbourne Metro Rail Authority
Merri Health
Merri Outreach Support Service
MIND
MSS Security
Multicultural Youth South Australia
Neighbourhood Justice Centre
Owners Corporations – Kensington
PowerHousing Australia
RecLink Australia
Relationships Australia (SA)
RMIT
Sacred Heart Mission
Salvation Army Adult Services
Second Bite
Service to Youth Council (SA)
Somali Women's Development Association
State Trustees Australia Foundation and Charitable Trusts
St John of God
St John's Youth Services
St Vincents Mental Health Service
The Drum Youth Services
The Vinnies (SA)
Uniting Communities (SA)
Uniting Wyndham
VACRO (Victorian Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders)

Victorian Council of Social Services
VincentCare Victoria
Weekend Arabic Language School
Werribee Support & Housing
Western Health
Wombat Housing Services
Women's Health West
Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS)

Corporate and industry partners

Affordable Housing Industry Action Group
Australian Essential Services Compliance
BMR Law
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Centennial Property Group
CHT Architects
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Energy for the People
Frasers Property
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Grosvenor Consulting
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KMT
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NAB
Napier and Blakely
Piper Alderman
Pitcher Partners
Pahran Malvern Community Housing
PSC Hiscock Insurance Brokers
PWC
Reshape Developments
Roscon
SJB Planning
Stoll-Long Architects
The Barnett Foundation

Urbis
VOTAR
City West Water
All our Property Services and Maintenance Contractors

State and local government

Adelaide City Council
Banyule City Council
Consumer Affairs Victoria
Darebin City Council
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Human Services (SA)
Department of Treasury and Finance – Registrar of Housing Agencies
Department of Treasury and Finance “SHGF team”
Development Victoria
Maribyrnong City Council
Melbourne City Council
Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade
Moreland City Council
Victorian Electoral Commission
Victorian Multicultural Commission
Victoria Police
Victorian Building Authority
Wyndham City Council
Yarra City Council

This document is available in accessible formats upon request. Electronic copies of this report are available on our website unison.org.au

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