

Year In Review

2020-21



From Our Chair and CEO

We couldn't start this report without acknowledging that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present significant challenges for the community, including our renters, clients, staff, partners and contractors.

Despite the challenges, we have worked steadily on further refining our practice and the best way in which to deliver our services in the current environment. We have continued to adapt, harness opportunities and support our community by providing affordable housing to more than 2,600 households and homelessness assistance to nearly 2,300 households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Throughout this year, the health, safety and wellbeing of all our renters, staff, contractors and the community remained our priority. We are extremely proud of the way everyone at Unison, from staff to Board members, has worked tirelessly to keep our community safe and connected; and to support each other.

This year, we welcomed the Victorian Government's \$5.3 billion investment in community housing.

The *Big Housing Build* initiative is the largest social and affordable housing building program in Australia's history, with the Government and not-for-profit community housing organisations co-investing to develop more homes for people on low incomes.

Unison is one of the key delivery partners of the landmark program, working closely with Homes Victoria to build high-quality homes with a focus on positive outcomes for renters.

This project aligns with our commitment to tackle the housing affordability crisis in

Victoria by increasing the supply of good quality affordable housing.

In 2021, tenants have moved into our brand new \$11.5M apartment complex in Fairfield, where we revamped a 22-bedroom rooming house and built a new building to provide a total of 38 modern self-contained homes for women in need.

We also kicked off construction on a \$30M social and affordable housing development in Werribee. Since the turn of the first sod in April 2021, the team has been working hard under COVIDSafe measures to build 74 high-quality homes for disadvantaged Victorians.

Unison's commitment, depth of expertise and experience in developing high-quality community housing was recognised with a National UDIA Award for Excellence for our 52-apartment building in Footscray. We are incredibly proud to be recognised nationally as raising the bar in developing affordable housing.

Another highlight for the year was the range of strategic partners we worked with. Partnerships are critical to our work and help us achieve more than we could working alone. We collaborate with many like-minded organisations across government, business and community sectors to create vibrant and sustainable communities that thrive.

One such partnership is with Melbourne City Mission and cohealth. Together, we deliver the State Government's *From Homelessness To a Home* program, transitioning people experiencing homelessness out of the emergency accommodation they were placed in during the lockdown of 2020 into supported, longer-term housing.

Our flagship research partnership with RMIT University, the Unison Research Lab, saw more evidence-based research delivered and shared with the sector, to inform practice and policy.

As we write these words, a few months into the new financial year, we are on the verge of commencing an ambitious program, in partnership with City of Melbourne, to develop and provide safe and secure transitional housing to people sleeping rough in the inner city.

We look forward to a year of growth as we continue to advocate for more social and affordable housing and strengthen the organisation to deliver the best possible outcomes for our community.

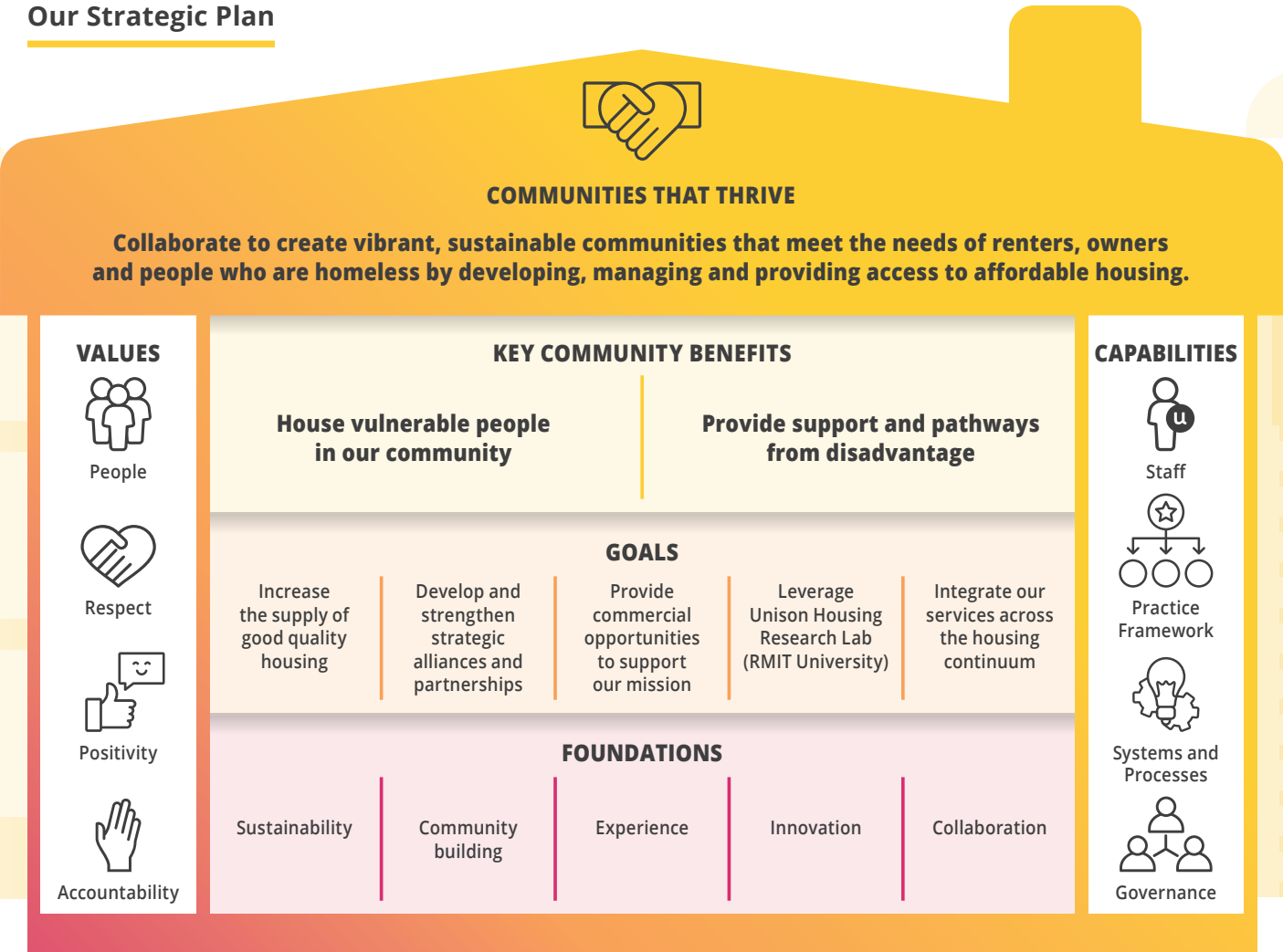


James King
CEO



Ian McHutchison OAM
Chair of the Board

Our Strategic Plan



Acknowledgment of Country

Unison acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which our services and properties are located, the Wurundjeri people, the Boonwurrung people and Wathaurong people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their culture, their customs and to Elders past, present and emerging.

Our Impact

We have provided housing to:

2,234

households in long-term housing



95

households in long-term head leased properties



324

households in transitional housing



86%

of renters maintained their tenancy over the full financial year



The Unison Place Management teams adapted effectively to working from home and provided valuable support to renters throughout the pandemic. This included regular communication and check-ins via phone and SMS, distribution of PPE and hand sanitiser,

distribution of food hampers and food vouchers, set up of pop up vaccination clinics, and close collaboration with the Victorian Department of Fairness, Families and Housing and High Risk Accommodation Response to manage outbreaks in our properties.

Our IAP and PRAP services have assisted:

2,266

households who were homeless or at risk of homelessness



618

families assisted to establish housing in the private rental market



281

households supported to avoid eviction and maintain private rental tenancies



348

Housing and support packages to transition people who were accommodated during the pandemic to stable housing across North and Western Melbourne



Unison's IAP service played a key role in supporting people who are homeless to stay in hotels where they were able to self-isolate and stay safer from infection.

Although the service provided assistance to a slightly lower number of households than previous years, the assistance provided was prolonged and the number of people we were assisting grew every week.

Following the end of the first lockdown, Unison was pleased to receive funding from

the Victorian Government to deliver the *From Homelessness to a Home* program (H2H) in partnership with Melbourne City Mission and cohealth. Together, we are providing 348 packages of housing and support across North and Western Melbourne.

Unison's Private Rental Access Program (PRAP) was also crucial throughout the pandemic, assisting families to exit hotels into self-contained, long-term accommodation and preventing eviction for many more.

We continue to raise the bar in developing high-quality social and affordable housing

38

new social and affordable homes delivered for vulnerable women in Melbourne's north



82

modern apartments in development in Werribee



We were honoured to win the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) National Award for Excellence in Affordable Development and two State awards for our 54-unit social housing development in Footscray.

We opened the doors to the Marjorie Oke Apartments, in Fairfield, providing

38 modern self-contained home for single women.

Construction works started for a new 74-unit social housing development in Werribee for people most at risk of homelessness; while we reached the final phase on the construction of 8 self-contained apartments for youth at risk of homelessness in the area.

Through our proactive and responsive asset management, we have:

327

completed property upgrades (both in common areas and internal units)



6,282

maintenance requests, including 2,028 urgent maintenance requests, 93% of which were completed within 24 hours



We continue to improve amenity and sustainability to benefit our renters with a proactive and responsive asset management approach. Our 24/7 Maintenance Helpdesk handles over 10,000 phone calls each year, providing a responsive maintenance service to renters and communities. The safety and wellbeing of our renters, staff, contractors and

community remains at the forefront of our operations. Our team installed hand sanitiser dispensers and signage in all common areas. We also implemented COVIDSafe practices with contractors to continue to deliver important work safely. Despite the challenge of the COVID restrictions, the team has managed to improve the turnaround time for urgent maintenance.

This year, our research team has:

Published two research papers

and the baseline results of our longitudinal study of new tenants in social housing



Launched our 7th research report

– Sustaining Social Housing, by Dr Sarah Taylor and Prof Guy Johnson



Delivered Australia's first

homelessness and housing course at RMIT University for the third year in a row



Produced a series of videos

to share the truths and challenge some of the myths about homelessness



The Unison Housing Research Lab is a unique education and research collaboration between RMIT University and Unison Housing. The largest program of its kind in Australia, the Lab is a unique education and research

collaboration established to inform housing and homelessness best practice and policy. We are deeply committed to sharing our knowledge and research outcomes.

Our Organisation

Our Portfolio

Unison manages 2,551 properties, including over 1,342 owned by the organisation, across 15 LGAs.

Long-term housing

consists of both affordable and social housing (including public housing).

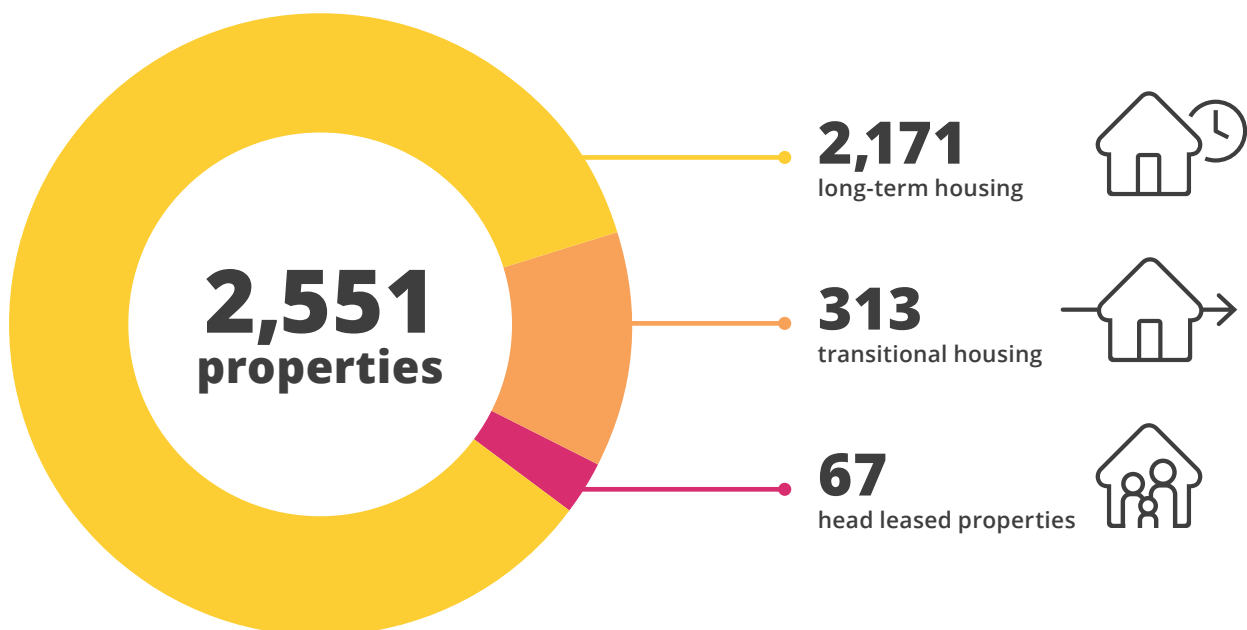
Transitional housing

is a program which provides short-term accommodation with support to assist people to prepare for long-term housing as soon as possible.

Head leased properties

are properties that Unison leases in the private rental market with funding from the Victorian Government and then sub-leases to renters who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Some units were tenanted multiple times over the year; hence the numbers are smaller than total number of households housed in 2020-21.



The Unison Property Corporation

is a not-for-profit entity related to Unison established to conduct commercial activities in order to generate financial support to Unison and provide additional service offerings to clients. The UPC team manages 13 Owners Corporations representing 518 lots; and provides cleaning and grounds maintenance services to 39 clients.





Our People

We are a team of 119 people deeply committed to making a difference.

- 86 people work full time, 29 people work part-time, 4 are casual.
- 41% of our staff have been with Unison for 3 or more years, and 19% have been with Unison for 7 or more years.

Our Board



Ian McHutchison OAM, Chair

Ian has legal expertise and was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for services to the community in 2009.



Barry Shepherd, Deputy Chair

Barry has over 40 years' experience in the property industry and is critical in guiding Unison's asset management and developments.



Alison McLeod

Alison is an expert property valuer and brings property expertise and a passion about housing affordability.



Anita Chow

Anita has over 17 years of corporate finance experience in the private and public sectors and is passionate about helping disadvantaged communities.



Caroline Radowski

Caroline has executive experience in leading health, community development and higher education organisations.



Daniel Carter

Daniel offers contemporary strategic planning and IT skills tailored to the social services sector.



Lou Panaccio

Lou is a chartered accountant with strong management experience in business and healthcare services.



Peter Weatherby

Peter brings a solid real estate skillset, commercial acumen and a strong strategic focus to Unison, with over 35 years' experience in the real estate industry.



Yvonne Turner

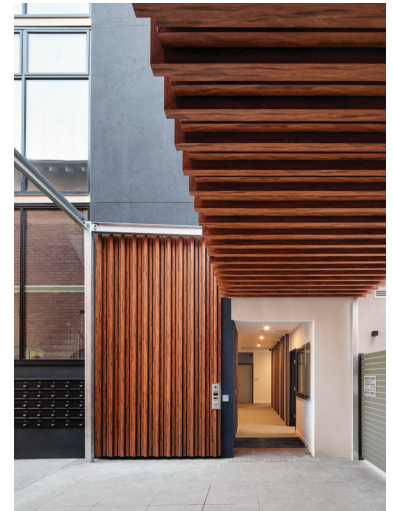
Yvonne shares her expertise in business management, strategic planning, marketing and new business development in both commercial and NFP.

Our Financial Summary

For the year ended 30 June 2021, Unison delivered an operating surplus of \$1.2 million.

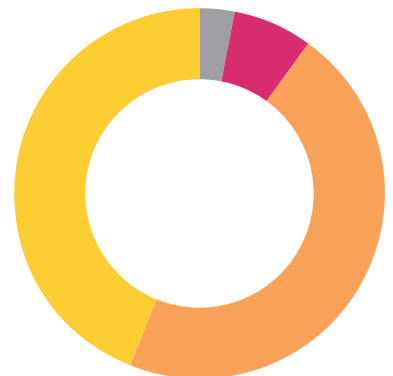
Unison remains in a stable financial position as we continue to deliver our strategy.

Operating income increases are mainly attributable to additional brokerage funding throughout COVID-19 for homelessness services, offset by expenses to deliver these programs. Rental income has experienced an overall decline in commercial and social tenancies due to economic conditions, partially offset by the completion of new developments. Operating expense movements align with new program delivery and maintaining and upgrading properties.



Operating Income

● Rental income	\$14,661,712	44%
● Grant income	\$15,227,400	46%
● Management income	\$2,402,203	7%
● Other revenue	\$787,841	3%
Total	\$33,079,156	



Operating Expenses

● Staff expenses	\$9,172,986	29%
● Housing program expenses	\$8,696,187	27%
● Organisational operating expenses	\$3,228,078	10%
● Brokerage program expenses	\$10,469,075	33%
● Bad and doubtful debts	\$215,381	1%
Total	\$31,781,707	

