



# Uniting Tenant Advisory Forum 2022

## Purpose

The Uniting Tenant Advisory Forum (UTAF) was established in 2020 as a platform for ongoing dialogue and feedback between tenants, carers and the Uniting WA Community Housing team.

It aims to assist the Uniting Community Housing team develop continuous improvement goals in order to achieve person centred outcomes for tenants.

## Objective

- Positively engage tenants and carers;
- Create platform to inform tenants of any new changes within the service;
- Discuss and obtain feedback on service delivery;
- Opportunities to voice and raise issues around tenancy matters and customer experience;
- The forum will be held every 12 months at a location central to our tenants.

## Summary

This was the third UTAF held by the Community Housing team. The previous 2 years, the forum was structured by using different themes highlighted in the survey as areas for service improvement. This year we felt it appropriate to keep the discussion open to see if it uncovered any new themes or areas for improvement. The Housing team continually look for ways on to improve and deliver the services our tenants receive.

A total of 12 Uniting tenants including a carer, attended the UTAF held on 6 September 2022. Each tenant and carer were provided with lunch and a voucher as recognition for their valued contribution and feedback.

To ensure the forum ran smoothly, the 1.5-hour session was organised into 3 segments: Introduction, workshop, and a Q & A session. The Q & A session at the end of the UTAF gave tenants an opportunity to ask questions about the forum, the service and discuss matters personal to them.

To ensure the workshop component of the UTAF was engaging and interactive, attendees were split into 3 groups across the room, each with a Uniting Community Housing team member as facilitator. The 3 groups shared experiences and provided feedback on flip board paper all discussing a different open question. Attendees had 15 minutes on each question before moving to the next question.

## The 3 questions focused on were:

- What is important to you as a tenant?
- What works well within Uniting Housing service?
- What does not work so well within Uniting Housing service?

## Feedback and action:

The Housing team reviewed and workshopped feedback from the UTAF and incorporated this feedback into the Community Housing annual team planning day, which focuses on service improvement for the next 12 months.

The table below summarises the feedback received at the UTAF from our tenants and details the actions the Community Housing team intend to take as a result. With no specific theme this year, in addition to what needs to be improved, we were interested in finding out what is important to our tenants and what works well. This helps the Housing team clarify what is working well and to continue to maintain and build on in that area.

The 'we will do' actions have now been incorporated into the annual Community Housing Improvement Plan and will be published in the Community Housing Newsletter – Autumn 2023 Edition.

Incorporating the UTAF feedback into the annual Community Housing Improvement Plan and the Community Housing Newsletter, ensures that views and responses from our tenants have a direct impact on service and closes the loop on feedback.

Below provides a summary of the common themes and feedback provided by the attendees.

You Said	We will do
<p><b>What is important to you as a tenant?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14% responses indicated <b>good maintenance</b> in the home</li> <li>• 14% responses indicated <b>feeling safe</b> and <b>secure</b> accommodation</li> <li>• 42% responses indicated good <b>communication</b> and <b>relationships</b> with staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to be responsive to maintenance requests in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Continue to provide long term accommodation for as long as is required and support tenants to feel safe in their homes and community.</li> <li>• Continue to build positive relationships with tenants through Tenancy Star, inspections, supportive engagement activities and social activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What works well within Uniting housing service?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% of responses indicated <b>feeling inclusive</b> and <b>connected</b>.</li> <li>• 21% indicated feeling <b>safe</b> and <b>secure</b> in their accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to trial new activities for participation and connection. New activities such as a movie day and mindfulness workshop will be organised for 2023.</li> <li>• Continue to provide long term accommodation for as long as is required and support tenants feel safe in their community.</li> </ul>

## What does not work so well within Uniting service?

- 19% responses indicated **timeframes are too long** for maintenance.
  - 5% responses indicated **furniture package** not inclusive of all tenants needs.
  - 5 % responses indicated **transport** to tenant events could be better.
- Due to contactor and material shortages Uniting have been experiencing delays in completing maintenance. Although some of this is beyond Uniting's control, Housing staff will be transparent in communicating with tenants if the work will take longer than usual.
  - Unfortunately, furniture items within the furniture package are limited by the revenue generated from the service. Uniting staff will however ensure the limitations of this service are clearly communicated to all tenants upon entry into the package. All tenants are also welcomed to opt out of this service at any time.
  - Continue to offer transport to tenants at central meeting points going to and from activities.

## Evaluation of Forum

Overall, the forum was another success. Many of the tenants were familiar with each other through other various activities run by Uniting Housing service and appeared to very comfortable to join in and contribute to the conversations. One tenant stated, "I feel very safe to give feedback as I usually sit back and listen without contributing much."

This year was different from previous years as there was no specific theme, so it was interesting to find out what works well and what is important to our tenants. In addition to what doesn't work well and what needs to be improved on. The tenants said they struggled to find areas for improvement as they are very happy with the service they receive.

Maintenance is an ongoing to area for improvement. The tenants did say they are aware of the contractor and material shortages and know the timeframes for the work to be complete is taking a bit longer than usual.

This year, a tenants carer attended the forum. It was great to gain valuable feedback from a carers perspective. Overall she said we provide an excellent service and her brother is lucky to be in a Housing program like ILP.

## Conclusion

The UTAF was a great way to obtain valuable feedback from tenants and carers on service delivery and to ensure that Uniting tenants and carers play a key role in continuous improvement to the services they receive. It was a successful opportunity to connect our tenants with each other, our Uniting Community Housing team, and our services.