

# UHHS Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029

Homelessness is not just a housing problem.

*NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2023*

- Executive Summary**
- Meeting the challenge – Homelessness as a systemic issue not a personal failure.
  - Upper Hunter Homeless has created the following Strategic Plan to facilitate and grow a service which effectively manages the support of people throughout the Upper Hunter experiencing homelessness, the threat of homelessness or who are affected by domestic, family & sexual violence (DF&SV).
  - This involves a mix of strategies which focus on client supports, community engagement and responsible financial management.
  - Underpinning all strategies must be the support of our people at the front line, the UHHS staff who deal with clients experiencing trauma, heartache and who are frightened and insecure. To successfully administer a Specialist Homelessness Service we must first look to the welfare of a skilled and fulfilled team.
- Vision**
- Shelter | Safety | Dignity | Opportunity
  - Serving people of the Upper Hunter with support and information about homelessness and domestic violence.
- Purpose**
- To actively support people in our communities who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and those who are affected by domestic and family violence.
  - To provide a client-centred, trauma informed and wraparound service where people are respected and empowered.
  - To work collaboratively with other service providers to save tenancies and provide accommodation options.
  - To educate and create awareness about homelessness and domestic and family violence.
- Plan Approval**
- This Strategic Plan was adopted by the UHHS Board of Directors on 18 June 2026.

## PESTEL Analysis

External factors influencing Upper Hunter Homeless Support, clients and communities

Political Factors	Economic Factors	Social Factors	Technology	Environmental	Legal
Government funding for homelessness and related social issues	Increasing cost of living and housing	Prevalence of community using social media to criticize people and services – effects on staff and morale	Increasing divide in society where vulnerable elements of community left behind	Need for sustainability vs service need for cost effectiveness	Need more support for court services. Legal aid is hard to access
Funding for Police – both presence and training	Lack of financial literacy in vulnerable communities. Low levels of overall education	Staff safety – both physical and psychological. Increased client mental health, drug and alcohol and other untreated issues.	Elderly and poorly educated left behind		Child Protection big issue for community
Ability of services such as UHHS to lobby – access to politicians	Increases in client demand not met by funding increases	Increases in hard drugs in community. Money being spent on drugs leads to other issues	Lack of funding in the community for technology education		Lack of local services – all the legal supports centred on Maitland and Newcastle
Lack of real push towards ending Aboriginal disadvantage	More single men experiencing homelessness	Increasing numbers of DV assaults, drug use crimes.	AI creating issues of security eg identity theft.		Lack of supports for people leaving incarceration means more chance of reoffending.
Issue of homelessness being pushed in the media	Increases in divide between the haves and have notes of community.	Increases in numbers of teens accessing assistance	Deep fake videos and pornography		



Local instability with member going to One Nation	Closing down of mines will mean the end of some funding sources	Increasing lack of skills in community necessary to keep tenancies			
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## SWOT Analysis

External Factors		Internal Factors	
Opportunities	Threats	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Business &amp; Financial</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary accommodation grants and partnerships</li> <li>• Increase availability of social housing stock through HIP maintenance programs</li> <li>• Strengthening partnerships with Home in Place, local neighbourhood centres, councils, and other specialist services.</li> <li>• Expand local accommodation pathways through George Street Tiny Homes and the Singleton Core and Cluster Refuge.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding not keeping up with demands</li> <li>▪ Lack of specific accommodation locally.</li> <li>▪ Increases in numbers of people needing service outstripping funding capacity.</li> <li>▪ Spending time on small grants which add to workload. Need to work towards large amounts</li> <li>▪ Housing affordability, rental shortages and cost of living pressures are increasing client need and reducing housing pathways.</li> <li>▪ Funding and recommissioning uncertainty may affect long-term planning, staffing and service delivery.</li> <li>▪ Loss or reduction of other local services may increase pressure on UHHS and reduce referral options.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clear established role supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and women and children impacted by DF&amp;SV.</li> <li>▪ Major projects, including George Street Tiny Homes and Singleton Core and Cluster Refuge, will grow local accommodation capacity.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need for more transitional accommodation.</li> <li>▪ Danger of silo thinking with not enough collaboration</li> <li>▪ Funding reliability remains a pressure, with dependence on core government funding, grants and donations.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>

Marketing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing and focusing on relevant communities to get better results</li> <li>Increase public awareness of the role of UHHS.</li> <li>Increase community awareness, education, fundraising, and grant opportunities</li> <li>Partnerships and collaboration – building on existing strong relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unhappy clients using social media to “vent” giving negative PR and threatening privacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good knowledge of cohorts</li> <li>Good public image as a helping organization</li> <li>UHHS does a good job and is well known in the community</li> <li>Strong community support, partnerships and referral networks with local services, housing providers, councils and funders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Misunderstandings between services</li> <li>Unrealistic expectations from community</li> <li>Public awareness and perception challenges remain in some areas, particularly around homelessness and client complexity.</li> </ul>
Operational			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use staff consultation, stakeholder feedback and CIMS data to shape the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rising operational costs, technology changes, social media, misinformation and AI may affect service access and client expectations.</li> <li>Not enough resources to help everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible outreach across Muswellbrook, Singleton and Upper Hunter LGAs. Staff meet people where needed when safe.</li> <li>UHHS structure – teams directly meeting funding requirements and client needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of local presence in Scone</li> <li>High service demand, waitlists and caseload pressure create risks for staff wellbeing, responsiveness and service quality.</li> </ul>
Team			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small enough organization to be flexible in meeting needs</li> <li>Approachable as people and as workers</li> <li>Staff know their roles and work well with other community groups eg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upper Hunter location – hard to find skilled staff</li> <li>Acknowledgements and follow up emails.</li> <li>Service parameters – need to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptability</li> <li>Gaining funding for specific needs</li> <li>All of staff training sessions</li> <li>Collaboration with other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inexperienced staff in new starter roles, lack of skills creating poor communication with other organisations</li> <li>Recruitment, retention, skill gaps and training needs remain</li> </ul>

<p>morning teas with other services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to develop staff skills in homelessness, DF&amp;SV, trauma-informed practice, mental health, safety and complex needs.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<p>know when to say no.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing client complexity, including mental health, addiction, family violence, and unsafe behaviours, may increase safety and practice risks.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<p>services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Established Policies and Procedures</li> <li>▪ Staff teamwork, adaptability and practical problem solving across complex client situations.</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<p>ongoing workforce pressures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large geographic coverage creates travel, access, resourcing and outreach challenges.</li> </ul>
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## UHHS strategic goals: July 2026 – June 2029

### Business & Financial Goals

1. Secure funding sources – SHS, Core and Cluster, DF&SV and make operational plans for lifetime of funding. Timeline - 2026/27
2. Create business systems to ensure Tiny Homes is sustainable and adds income Timeline - 2027
3. Ensure future of projects officer role to enable further grant applications and facilitation of programs and expenditure Timeline Ongoing

### Marketing & Community Engagement Goals

1. Create yearly program of marketing aims, diarize and follow through Timeline 2026
2. Create events which focus on core business for UHHS and build on community recognition Timeline 2027
3. Create events or other programs to continually educate community Timeline 2028

### Operational Goals

1. Secure organizational structure to meet service challenges – workload and client complexities Timeline 2026/27
2. Ensure new projects eg Core and Cluster / Tiny Homes are successfully added to UHHS operational processes with dedication to quality service and support staff well-being and education Timeline 2027
3. Build on existing relationships with Core Upper Hunter Community Services partners. Timeline ongoing

### Human Resources Goals

1. Staff Core and Cluster refuge Timeline 2026 / 27
2. Educate and challenge existing staff and provide the opportunities needed to retain skilled operators. Timeline ongoing
3. Create training plans to meet challenges emerging in community eg mental health, drug and alcohol issues Timeline 2027 onwards

Strategic Plan Goals documented in Operational Plan 2026 - 2029