



Our response to climate change

Uniting Communities accepts the scientific basis of human-induced climate change.

We believe that individuals, companies, not-for-profit organisations and governments must all take responsibility in addressing climate change and reducing emissions.

From 2010, Uniting Communities began planning and implementing sustainable practices to reduce our own carbon emissions.

Through our extensive range of social services, Uniting Communities is aware that the deleterious effects of climate change will impact most significantly on the more vulnerable members of the South Australian community.

Given our ongoing commitment to being certified carbon neutral, it is our view that reducing our emissions demonstrates our commitment to protecting the environment and those vulnerable people who are least able to protect themselves against the effects of climate change.

Collective action is the most effective way to address the damaging impacts of climate change. As our response Uniting Communities' Carbon Neutral Committee has drawn its expertise together to develop and implement effective strategies across our whole organisation.

The benefits of the dedicated application of these strategies towards a more sustainable environment were recognised externally in 2015, when Uniting Communities became the first social service charity in Australia, and the first South Australian organisation to achieve carbon neutral certification.

As a significant part of our journey on the approach to working and living sustainably, our new building U City was recognised in 2018 as South Australia's 'greenest' building design to date by the Green Building Council of Australia, with a 6 Star Green Star design rating. It is designed to use 45 per cent less energy and 30 per cent less water than a comparable new building. In this way our organisation is adapting to the potential impacts of climate change.

Uniting Communities is not only cutting its carbon emissions but invests annually in the purchase of carbon offsets for our remaining emissions to achieve carbon neutrality. Our offsets are purchased from local native biodiverse revegetation projects. These contribute to South Australia's economy as well as benefitting the environment and local communities. Uniting Communities has also bought offsets from overseas ranging from wind power generation to projects that avoid deforestation.

As the Inaugural Ambassador for Carbon Neutral Adelaide we will share our learning to expand the success of our carbon neutral commitment to others.

We offer our guidance and experience to companies and not-for-profit organisations willing to join us in this important work.

We call on all levels of Government to take seriously the consequences of climate change. Urgent policy action is required to develop practices that reduce the impact of climate change on all Australians.

Uniting Communities has an ongoing commitment to reducing its carbon emissions. We are acutely aware of the emerging impacts of climate change and our responsibility in taking action in the interests of our clients, staff, volunteers and the broader community.

We are committed to leading a low-carbon future.

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