

We released the third Action Plan to guide the State Government's delivery of A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020–2030 which lays out a pathway towards making our communities, businesses, services, places and spaces more accessible, inclusive and welcoming to all.

We continue to support Western Australian young people and launched the Koorlangka Bidi – WA Youth Action Plan 2024–2027 to guide the delivery of a wide range of initiatives to improve outcomes for young people in WA. We also administered close to \$7 million in funding to continue support of programs such as the 183 units within the Cadets WA program, nine Youth Program Services, and the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA).

**Communities continued its commitment to gender equality through the Women's Grants for a Stronger Future program, supporting initiatives aligned with the priority areas of Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality. Building on the success of previous years, this round of funding marked a record investment of \$1.085 million, enabling the program to support more projects than ever before.**

We supported Western Australian seniors with the rising cost of living through the launch of a fuel discount partnership with United Petroleum; WA Seniors Card benefits including a \$400 Safety and Security Rebate; a Cost of Living

Rebate; and ongoing discounts on public transport, water rates, and local government rates.

The WA Volunteer Service Awards provided an opportunity to formally acknowledge and thank volunteers for their outstanding service. Since the awards began in 2012, 4,070 individuals have been honoured for their exceptional dedication to community service across the State.

During National Carers Week (NCW) we celebrated a significant milestone for carers and their loved ones with the 20th anniversary of the *Carers Recognition Act 2004*, which made WA the first jurisdiction nationally to grant unpaid carers legal recognition and rights.

## Looking ahead

At Communities we will continue to build on the progress made over the past year to provide safe, secure and inclusive environments for the children and families we support.

We have identified six Annual Priorities that will focus our work in 2025–26:

- Efficiently and effectively deliver our Government priorities and essential frontline services for the people we serve.
- Serve our clients to create safe, secure and supported environments.

- Drive implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and continue to strengthen the cultural competence of our people and agency.
- Value and retain our people by maintaining a great and safe place to work.
- Establish and define a high performing, financially sustainable Department of Communities with clear purpose and outcomes.
- Ensure a seamless transition of housing functions, while upholding service continuity and fulfilling all service agreement commitments.

**In 2025–26 we will remain focused on child protection initiatives and continue to invest in family carers, foster carers and support services to provide care to children and young people.**

To strengthen culturally safe and responsive practices across Communities we are leading the Aboriginal Cultural Capability Reform Program. In parallel we are implementing the Aboriginal Cultural Framework across Communities and developing an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy.

We will also deliver the Aboriginal Community Connectors Program across the State and implement Aboriginal Economic Reform initiatives to support strengthening the ACCO sector.



## Women

**Communities has continued its commitment to gender equality through the Women's Grants for a Stronger Future program, supporting initiatives aligned with the priority areas of Stronger Together: WA's Plan for Gender Equality.**

Building on the success of previous years, this round of funding marked a record investment of \$1.085 million, enabling the program to support more projects than ever before. For the first time, grants of up to \$250,000 were made available, significantly expanding the scale and impact of funded initiatives.

This year's program offered four distinct grant opportunities and supported a diverse range of initiatives across the State. By funding projects that promote health and wellbeing, safety and justice, women's economic independence, and leadership, the Women's Grants for a Stronger Future program continued to play a vital role in building a more equitable and inclusive WA.

## Aged Care and Seniors

**In 2024–25, the WA Government delivered a suite of targeted initiatives to support Western Australian seniors with the rising cost of living, ensuring older community members remain financially secure, connected and supported.**

A key initiative was the launch of a fuel discount partnership with United Petroleum, giving WA Seniors Card holders access to four cents per litre off fuel at over 30 locations across WA and more than 400 nationally. This initiative offered potential savings of up to \$70 per year per member and reinforced the Government's commitment to practical, everyday relief.

WA Seniors Card members continued to benefit from a wide range of State Government concessions and rebates, including:

- the \$400 Safety and Security Rebate, with over 30,000 seniors claiming support for home safety and fire protection items.
- the Cost-of-Living Rebate, which delivered more than \$32.7 million in direct financial assistance to card holders this financial year.
- ongoing discounts on public transport, water rates, and local government rates.

To further support seniors in making the most of their entitlements, Communities released the 2024–25 WA Seniors Card Discount Directory. This free resource featured hundreds of discounts from local businesses, including 133 regional businesses, as well as for the first time, those in the Indian Ocean Territories.

The Directory also included images from the 2024 Golden Lens photography competition, celebrating the lives and contributions of older Western Australians.

Together, these initiatives reflect a strong and ongoing commitment to easing financial pressure on seniors, while encouraging active participation in community life across the state.

