

MEDIA RELEASE

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To: News Editor
From: UnitingCare West, Media Contact – Wendy Palmer on 0408 923 864

UnitingCare West and Mirvac work together to improve support for homeless men

A house for homeless men in the inner suburb of Perth has been upgraded through the generosity of the staff of Perth property developer Mirvac and The Mirvac Foundation.

Major upgrades to the facility, which is owned by the Uniting Church's charity UnitingCare West, showcase the remarkable community benefits that can be achieved when a business partners with a community service organisation.

The upgrades will increase the number of homeless people who can receive assistance plus the extent to which they can practice the skills they will need prior to being ready to move into more longer term and stable accommodation have been completed.

Mark Beyer, Editor, WA Business News will officially re-open the facility in Lincoln Street, Highgate on Tuesday 11 August at 10:00am.

"We assist a large range of individuals and families each year who are homeless and who experience difficulties such as unemployment, financial stress, mental illness and alcohol and substance abuse", said Mr Chris Hall, Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare West.

"The upgrade of this facility means that we now have adequate bedroom and bathroom facilities to support six men whereas before the house could only support four."

"It will also enable all six men to separately manage their own food stores, cooking and cleaning as part of their independent living skills program" said Mr Hall

"Mirvac has designed and installed some fantastic modifications creating a functional kitchen with two cookers, two sinks, 6 pantries and 6 bar fridges."

The renovations have been completely funded through The Mirvac Foundation, with Mirvac WA contributing \$20,000 and a further \$15,000 being raised through staff salary sacrificing and fundraising. In addition Mirvac staff committed many hours planning, renovating and seeking in-kind support from suppliers.

Mirvac WA chief executive Evan Campbell said without the support of Mirvac staff and suppliers the major upgrades to the facility would not have been possible.

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"It has been great to see so many people come together to support this worthwhile cause and deliver a new accommodation facility that will make a difference in the lives of homeless people," he said.

"This is one of the first projects for The Mirvac Foundation, which was formed last year to support charitable organisations in the communities in which we are active throughout Australia.

"We look forward to continuing this program for many years to come and have been thrilled to see it embraced so quickly by our staff and suppliers, whose contributions have been invaluable."

UnitingCare West provides the residents in this facility with integrated case management support that aims to help them make the lifestyle changes needed to move from homelessness into secure accommodation. Services such as financial counselling, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, medical support, relationship counselling and job placement services are accessed for the men.

The Lincoln Street house is a last step for these men before they are reintegrated into the community.

Mr Hall said, "The central location means residents have easy access to necessities for everyday life, such as supermarkets, banks and public transport, making it easier for them to move forward in their lives."

Lincoln Street is also walking distance from the UnitingCare West Inner City centre where the residents can access other services such as financial counselling and emergency relief.

UnitingCare West provides assistance and support to in excess of 30,000 individuals and families each year.

CONTACT DETAILS

For further information please contact Wendy Palmer on 0408 923 864.