The theme of this year’s NAIDOC Week celebrations was ‘our languages matter’. It marked the unique and essential role that languages play in linking people to their land and water, and in sharing Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander history, spirituality and rites through story and song. The City is proud to not only recognise, but experience and celebrate the world’s oldest living continuous cultures. There were more than 250 distinct Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander language groups at the time of the first European contact. Only 15% of these languages are still spoken and many are at risk of being lost.

A highlight of this year’s event was the installation of a ‘gunya’, a ceremonies site and shelter constructed from cane and bark. The gunya was home to Indigenous and dance workshops and storytelling sessions.
The City of Sydney has announced new projects to significantly increase the number of affordable housing units in the city and help at-risk young people from becoming homeless.

**The new projects include:**
- $5 million City grant to St George Community Housing for 92 affordable housing units on Oxford Street to house and support up to 79 young people at risk of homelessness in our local area.
- The acquisition of 22 residential properties in Alexandria to provide affordable housing.
- Additional land in Alexandria earmarked for negotiation and sale to providing community housing units, with space for around 100 more affordable rental housing units.

Although affordable housing is primarily the responsibility of state and federal government, the City is using all the levers available under existing planning laws to deliver a steady stream of affordable homes. The City’s strategic affordable housing projects through an affordable housing contribution scheme—a key on development in Green Square, Ultimo and the new Southern Employment Lands Areas. The City has also focused on creating more than 800 affordable housing units, as well as supplying grants for housing projects including $1.5 million to HomeReach for the purchase of a South Sydney property to provide 22 homes for homeless young people. The City has invested around $63 million of rental revenue each year. We are now looking to increase that sum to $86 million to help create our strong, debt-free financial position and generate more rental income and we’re exploring ways to work with the private sector to secure these necessary upgrades with long-term leases.

The strategic management of the City’s property portfolio has enlivened commercial shopfronts (as we open a new major southern depot at Zetland, Redfern and social workers.

Our three Oxford Street properties need significant capital investments and social workers. Our three Oxford Street properties need significant capital investments.