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# Five star living dream realised

Eleanor Venables

A SEVEN year old dream has finally been realised for many families in Sale, as the construction of 10 affordable units has been finished.

The units have been specially built for young people with mild disabilities, providing them with affordable and independent living.

The completion of the units marks the end of a long, hard fought journey for the Five Star Project group, which came up with the initial idea.

Five Star Project vice chairman Ted Dawson explained the majority of members of the group had disabled family members, or knew someone with a disability.

"I was concerned about the long-term accommodation options for my son, who is disabled," Mr Dawson explained.

"So I had this idea to build a six bedroom house with a shared community facility.

"The basic idea was that it would be affordable accommodation for people who needed a little bit more supervi-



**Leah Pernu could barely contain her excitement as she got her first glimpse of the kitchen in her new home.**

ion or care."

After going through several different incarnations, the final design of 10 separate units with one central

communal room was decided upon.

Mr Dawson said at times it didn't seem like the units would ever come to fruition.

"It's obviously such a huge relief to think that it's all finally happened," he said.

"Up until the start of the construction process there was this constant fear of it all coming down around us."

However, with the assistance of Community Housing Limited, 75 per cent of the project was funded by the Federal Government, and the remaining 25 per cent from CHL's own funds as well as contributions from the Five Star Project.

It wasn't only Mr Dawson who couldn't believe it when the units were finished. Leah Pernu has been waiting on her unit for seven years.

"I've been counting down the months, weeks and days now until I can move in," Ms Pernu said.

"It's all just so exciting and I'm just so happy because I haven't even moved out on my own before.

"I've been waiting and waiting for it to be built. I would ride past the site on my bike while it was being built and I'd be sitting there on my bike watching it and wishing it could just be finished.

"I've never been so happy in my life."