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Rental affordability at rock bottom

If you are single and on an allowance in Australia, you can't afford to put a roof over your head if you rely on the private rental market, Anglicare Australia Executive Director, Kasy Chambers said today.

The 2013 Anglicare Australia *Rental Affordability Snapshot* report shows that on Saturday 13 April, when the Anglicare network surveyed 56,414 rental properties across of Australia, less than one per cent of the properties listed were suitable for anyone on Newstart allowance, parenting payment, aged pension or disability support pension.

Particularly hard hit nationally were singles. For those with children in receipt of Government benefits, irrespective of pension or allowance, less than one per cent of the listed properties were either affordable or appropriate for them to live in.

Only 8.5 per cent of the listed rentals were suitable for a family of four living on dual minimum wages. The nearest household type to this was a couple living on the aged pension, with 2.1 per cent of the available listings rated as suitable.

In capital cities, suitable rentals were scarce. There was nothing available for Newstart or Youth Allowance recipients in Perth, Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide, Darwin or Melbourne. Families would struggle to find a suitable rental, with three per cent of listings available in Hobart and just one per cent in Brisbane.

Regionally, the results are just as desolate. Of around 15,000 properties surveyed, the proportion of suitable rentals did not rise above three per cent for any Government benefit and only just above six per cent for single people a minimum wage with children. Given the recession of services and decreasing employment opportunities, this has serious implications for the ongoing sustainability of country life for people on a low income.

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Ms Chambers said while housing affordability is affected by all levels of government, Anglicare Australia calls on the Federal Government to:

- immediately increase allowances by \$50 a week, indexing them in line with average weekly earnings
- investigate the effectiveness of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance
- target the latest round of the National Rental Affordability Scheme to ease the pressure at the lower end of the private rental market
- investigate the legislation and regulations constraining investment and growth in the housing market.

“Every year we release these distressing figures in the hope to unearth the broad based social and political will to ensure a supply of secure and adequate housing. But it seems Australia is instead building more inequity, social division and economic inefficiency into the way we live together.

“This is a shameful reflection on a country that performs exceptionally well in measures of well-being compared to other OECD countries.”

For the purposes of this project, an affordable rental is one that takes up less than 30 per cent of the household's income, a commonly used benchmark of affordability. Household incomes are derived from the maximum rate of Centrelink benefit or the minimum wage (after tax), combined with the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) and Family Tax Benefits (FTB), where applicable. These affordable data points are compared with the listed rentals on the snapshot collection day.

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Hash tag for Snapshot:
#RentalSnapshot



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Aggregate data for national, regional & metropolitan listings

Table 2: Number and proportion of suitable property listings: National aggregate.

Household Type	Payment Type	No. Affordable & Appropriate	% Affordable & Appropriate
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Newstart Allowance (both adults)	503	0.9%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Parenting Payment Single	246	0.4%
Couple, no children	Age Pension	1151	2.0%
Single, one child (aged less than 5)	Parenting Payment Single	342	0.6%
Single, one child (aged over 8)	Newstart Allowance	61	0.1%
Single	Age Pension	346	0.6%
Single aged over 21	Disability Support Pension	149	0.3%
Single	Newstart Allowance	21	0.0%
Single aged over 18	Youth Allowance	13	0.0%
Single in share house	Youth Allowance	13	0.0%
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A	4777	8.5%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A & B	1266	2.2%
Single	Minimum Wage	920	1.6%
Total No of Properties		56,414	

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Table 3: Number and proportion of suitable property listings: Regional aggregate.

Household Type	Payment Type	No. Affordable & Appropriate	% Affordable & Appropriate
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Newstart Allowance (both adults)	409	2.6%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Parenting Payment Single	203	1.3%
Couple, no children	Age Pension	900	5.7%
Single, one child (aged less than 5)	Parenting Payment Single	277	1.7%
Single, one child (aged over 8)	Newstart Allowance	48	0.3%
Single	Age Pension	299	1.9%
Single aged over 21	Disability Support Pension	121	0.8%
Single	Newstart Allowance	19	0.1%
Single aged over 18	Youth Allowance	11	0.1%
Single in share house	Youth Allowance	11	0.1%
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A	3107	19.6%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A & B	985	6.2%
Single	Minimum Wage	627	4.0%
Total No of Properties		15,855	

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Table 4: Number and proportion of suitable property listings: Metropolitan aggregate.

Household Type	Payment Type	No. Affordable & Appropriate	% Affordable & Appropriate
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Newstart Allowance (both adults)	94	0.2%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Parenting Payment Single	43	0.1%
Couple, no children	Age Pension	251	0.6%
Single, one child (aged less than 5)	Parenting Payment Single	65	0.2%
Single, one child (aged over 8)	Newstart Allowance	13	0.0%
Single	Age Pension	47	0.1%
Single aged over 21	Disability Support Pension	28	0.1%
Single	Newstart Allowance	2	0.0%
Single aged over 18	Youth Allowance	2	0.0%
Single in share house	Youth Allowance	2	0.0%
Couple, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A	1670	4.1%
Single, two children (one aged less than 5, one aged less than 10)	Minimum Wage + FTB A & B	281	0.7%
Single	Minimum Wage	293	0.7%
Total No of Properties		40,559	

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