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MEDIA RELEASE

More community housing critical as rental stress grows in NSW

Growing rental stress across NSW highlights the urgent need for action from all levels of government to create more social and affordable housing for local communities from the Tweed to the Riverina, the state's peak not for profit housing body said today.

NSW Federation of Housing Associations CEO, Wendy Hayhurst, said Anglicare's 2018 Rental Affordability Snapshot released today shows that chronic rental stress has spread its tentacles to almost every area of the state.

"It's no surprise that yet again there is not a single property affordable for a young family on a minimum wage or government support to rent within 20km of Sydney's CBD," Ms Hayhurst said.

"However today's report from Anglicare shows it's biting hard in regional areas from the Far North Coast right through to the Northern Tablelands and the Riverina. Even in towns like Tamworth, Wagga and Goulburn a job seeker on Newstart cannot find a single affordable place to rent while they look for work."

Ms Hayhurst said waiting lists for social housing are up to a decade long in more and more areas of NSW.

She said the state's community housing sector is ready to grow to meet demand but needs planning reforms and a commitment from all levels of government to facilitate this growth.

"We need more affordable rental options for households struggling everywhere in our state, particularly people with disability, aged pensioners, job seekers and families struggling to keep a roof over their heads on a minimum wage," Ms Hayhurst said.

"Our community housing providers already own and manage more than 35,000 properties in 115 council areas of NSW, providing affordable rent, care and support for our tenants and a range of high quality housing models for people in housing stress.

"Councils like Shoalhaven are beginning to develop affordable housing strategies for their local communities. We really need the State Government to release a comprehensive Housing Strategy for the whole of NSW that spells out exactly when, where and how we can deliver the social and affordable housing our local communities need, wherever in NSW they live.

"The Federation will continue to work with local councils, the NSW Government and Opposition in coming months to make it happen."

The 2018 Everybody's Home Affordable Housing Conference on June 27 and 28 will highlight the current and growing shortfall of accessible and affordable housing in Australia.

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