

RENTS: Impossible for low income earners in Sydney and Melbourne

The private rental market has failed low income Australians according to the Executive Director of Anglicare Australia, Ms Kasey Chambers.

In one weekend in April, Anglicare found that only 40 properties out of 20,000 advertised in Sydney and Melbourne were suitable and affordable for low income earners.

In regional areas, there is hardly any housing for families on low incomes. Only two per cent of advertised properties in the NSW Southern Tablelands was suitable for low income earners. Six per cent of properties advertised in Gladstone were affordable and suitable for a family of four.

Anglicare agencies researched rents for advertised rental properties around Australia. They checked how affordable these properties were for households depending on Government benefits or the minimum wage. 'Affordability' is classed as spending up to 30% of a low household income on rent.

"What the Snapshot shows is that people on the minimum wage need two incomes to rent a house. In many places even that is not enough," Ms Chambers said.

"And for those trapped on NewStart, supporting parent or youth allowance there is absolutely nothing suitable available at all."

Ms Chambers said the Anglicare Snapshot gives a glimpse into housing stress. Safe and secure housing is out of the reach of hundreds or thousands, or even millions of Australians, she said. The report "raises the question of why it [affordable housing] isn't a true national priority".

You can read the full report at www.anglicare.org.au.