

# A snapshot of people experiencing homelessness & insecure housing in Newcastle

There are different ways of estimating and measuring people who are homeless and in marginal housing:

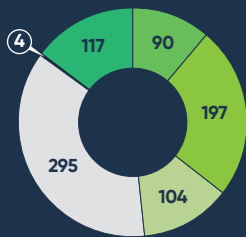


**1,814** people in Newcastle LGA were assisted by **Specialist Homelessness Services**<sup>1</sup> in 2019-20 - this has been rising each year from 1,014 in 2014-15



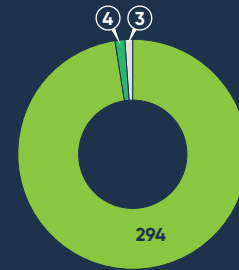
In 2019-20, the highest numbers were in Newcastle-Cooks Hill (**420**), Wallsend-Elernmore Vale (**249**) and Mayfield-Warabrook (**237**)

## Homeless Categories



- Persons living in 'severely' crowded dwellings
- Persons living in improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out
- Persons in supported accommodation for the homeless
- Persons staying temporarily with other households
- Persons living in boarding houses
- Persons in other temporary lodgings

All homeless persons - **802**



## Marginal Housing Categories

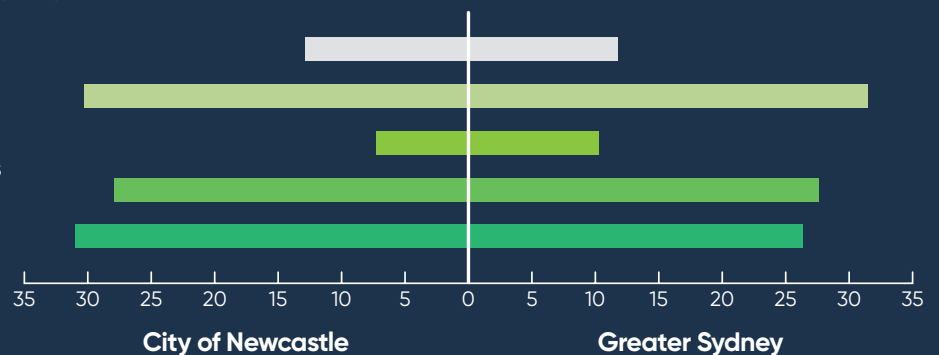
- Persons living in other crowded dwellings
- Persons in other improvised dwellings
- Persons who are marginally housed in caravan parks

All in marginal housing - **301**

## Housing Insecurity

Due to COVID-19, the likelihood of rental stress has increased for households in Newcastle, with mortgage stress not having as great an impact<sup>2</sup>.

- Share of households under housing stress
- Share of households owned with mortgage
- Share of households under mortgage stress
- Share of households privately rented
- Share of households under rental stress



In the Newcastle region, between March to October 2020, **median rents rose by 5% and vacancy rates almost halved**<sup>3</sup>.

There are further concerns that homelessness in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie may increase by up to **40%** in the coming year due to the COVID-19 economic recession<sup>4</sup>.



## Who Were Homeless & Marginally Housed People In 2016?

- One fifth were men in boarding houses
- People over 70 were minimal (21)
- Half were women, and children under 10
- Half were men over 20 years
- One third were women over 20 years – a third of these living in 'dwellings that required 3 extra bedrooms'
- One third of the 200 people in 'supported accommodation' were children and young adults under 20 years. Another third were women between 20 and 50
- The Census does not record whether homeless or marginally housed people have a mental or physical illness

## What types of housing were people staying in?

More than half of the estimated **550 people** housed in a dwelling lived in a medium density dwelling

Of the **106 people** 'staying temporarily with other households', **21%** lived in a dwelling that was owned outright, **18%** were in housing rented from the State government, **17%** were in housing that was owned with a mortgage and **16%** rented from a real estate agent.



Of the **198 people** in 'supported accommodation for the homeless', **38%** lived in housing rented from the State government, and **21%** rented from a 'housing co-operative, community or church group'.

Of the **114 people** 'living in 'severely' crowded dwellings', **38%** rented from 'a person not in the same household', **26%** were in housing that was owned with a mortgage and **25%** were rented from a real estate agent.

## Employment and Participation in the Workforce

There were large differences between homeless & marginally housed people and the general population in 2016:

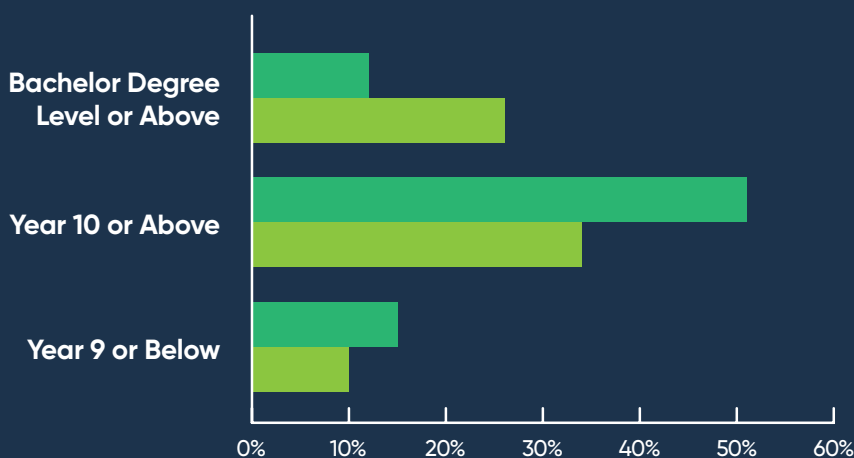
- Unemployment rate of homeless & marginally housed people (37%) was 5 times as high as the general population (7.5%)
- Unemployment rate for homeless & marginally housed males = 41% and females = 29%
- Workforce participation rate for homeless & marginally housed people = 50% (general population 61%)

Of homeless & marginally housed people:

**250** were employed, out of a labour force of almost 400.

**60** of the almost 150 unemployed were residents of boarding houses

**60%** of the employed people lived in crowded and severely crowded dwellings



### Education Level

Homeless & marginally housed people in 2016 were more likely to have lower levels of education than the general population

- Homeless & marginally housed people
- General population

## Income

Of the 408 homeless & marginally housed men and 295 homeless & marginally housed women who stated their income in 2016:



**58%** of males earned less than \$400 per week (Newcastle SA3 males = 28%)

Only **16%** of males earned over \$1,000 per week (Newcastle SA3 males = 50%)



**54%** of females earned less than \$400 per week (Newcastle SA3 females = 34%)

Only **7%** of females earned over \$1,000 per week (Newcastle SA3 females = 35%)

## Occupation

Of the homeless & marginally housed 130 men and 54 women who had an occupation in 2016:

- The highest occupation group was a Labourer (**36% of males and 39% of females**)
- The next highest group for men was Machinery Operators and Drivers (**18%**) followed by Technicians and Trades Workers (**15%**)
- The next highest group for women was Community and Personal Service Workers (**27%**) followed by Sales Workers (**14%**)



<sup>1</sup> Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) data cubes, <sup>2020</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> Reference: City of Newcastle – Impact of COVID-<sup>19</sup> on population growth, .id (informed decisions), May <sup>2021</sup>  
<sup>3</sup> Pawson, H., Martin, C., Sisson, A., Thompson, S., Fitzpatrick, S. and Marsh, A. (2021) 'COVID-<sup>19</sup>: Rental housing and homelessness impacts – an initial analysis'; ACOSS/UNSW Poverty and Inequality Partnership Report No. 7, Sydney  
<sup>4</sup> Equity Economics (2020), A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW: Impact of the Covid-<sup>19</sup> Recession, A Report Prepared for the New South Wales Council of Social Service, Sydney.

A summary sheet of 'A demographic profile of diverse communities within the City of Newcastle'  
Prepared by Jan Falding, May 2021

NB:

- SA = Statistical Area (geographical area used in Population Census)
- All references unless specified are: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census: Estimating homelessness, 2016 for Newcastle SA3



City of  
Newcastle